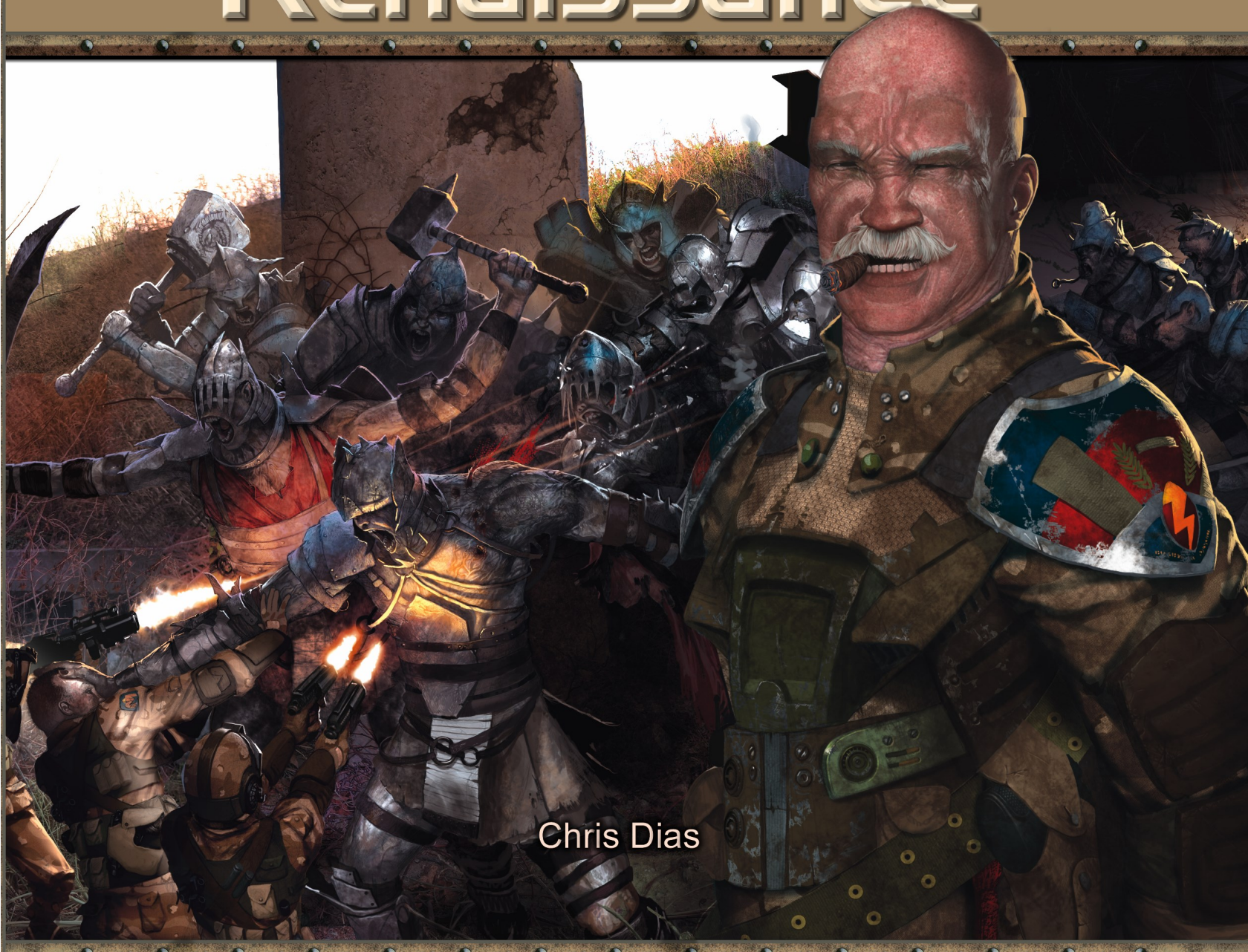
Amethyst

Renaissance 2.0



Chris Dias

Pathfinder® Roleplaying Game Compatible

DEM
Dias Ex Machina

Amethyst

RENAISSANCE 2.0

Dias Ex Machina

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CHAPTER ONE: FUNDAMENTALS

When Aiden Camus was twelve, his watch stopped.

He sat frozen on a field of broken glass, eyes fixed on the sky. Screams filled his ears coming from the wounded, the dazed onlookers at the edge of the devastation, and from the fallen boy beside him.

He was older than Aiden by several years, with mottled chin stubble and crewcut hair. His eyes were shut as he wailed. He reached for Aiden, still locked out of time as the events of the past minute began to sink in.

Blood dripped from deep slices across Aiden's palms as he held up his weight. Pain started to jostle his attention. His eyes fell back to the destruction surrounding him. The overturned cars, the shattered windows, the buckled pavement, the memories that would never fade.

On its surface, his watch looked undamaged. It hadn't broken when he fell. The battery hadn't died. It had a miniature electric motor powered by the motion of his arm, intended to keep perfect time forever.

Both children lay crumpled in the middle of the street, flanked by splintered wood and twisted steel. A fountain sprayed from a broken hydrant at the intersection corner a few yards away, trickling water over Aiden's matted brown hair.

He noticed survivors at the periphery desperately attempting to rally support. The vehicles on the fringe had stalled, blocking traffic into the scene. Traffic lights had gone dark. Cellular phones refused to turn on. Scores of people were still fleeing from what they saw, or rather what they refused to believe they saw.

Aiden remained still, even when the surrounding yells blended into sirens or when the aircraft began swarming above. He felt emergency workers attempting to rouse him from his daze. He repeated the last few moments over in his mind, trying to find some rationale for what had happened and why. It wasn't that it shouldn't have happened, rather that it couldn't have.

His watch's balance wheel which charged the battery had seized. The ratchet and rotor locked the hands three seconds into the third minute past ten o'clock.

It was a Sunday.

Aiden's life until then had been filled with concessions—moments of happiness he accepted only because his dreams could never be fulfilled. He preferred aspirations over practical goals. Aiden, like all children, desired the impossible, until reality forced its way in.

The recovery would be orderly. The damage would soon be repaired. The dead would be mourned. The events of the last few minutes would be reported and then forgotten. Everything would fall back into place.

Except Aiden and his stopped watch.

• • •

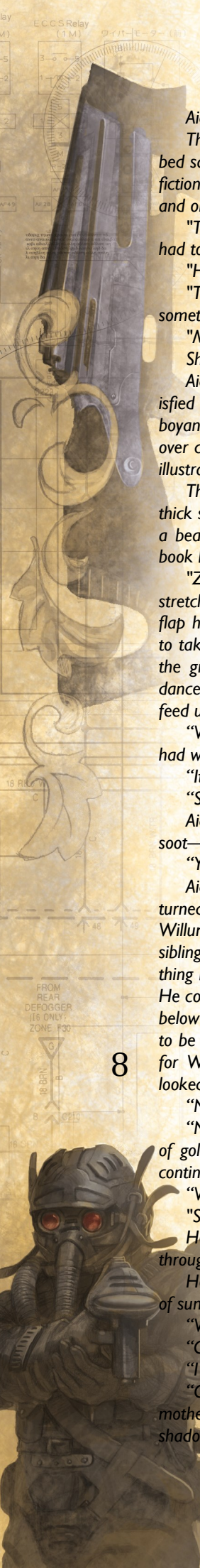
It wasn't his birthday. Aiden could tell it was a book. He knew to be careful in unthreading the burlap knot and tearing the hemp paper away. He rolled his fingers across the swells and dimples of the embossed cover, then rattled his nails across the uneven pages, thick with coarse edges. Aiden was impressed. It looked recently unearthed from an ancient tomb, brushed of errant dust, and dropped into a shopping bag. The pearl-shaded dragon on the cover had perfectly enmeshed scales, making its skin a uniform matted silver. Only the spine showed the title.

The Codex Dracontis.

"Where do you find these?" Aiden asked his mother.

Aiden had passed that age when parents read to their kids. He missed that. From her, every word was impeccably pronounced, never a slur or stumbled phrase. Through his mother's lips, those stories had carried the weight of gospel.

"Is it good?" his mother asked.



Aiden kept his eyes on the book. "Best one yet."

The window was open. Between them and Martin's empty bed sat his own collection of books, modern stories and science fiction. Aiden liked the ones with frayed edges, bent spines, and old words.

"This old, must be magic," she teased. "Looked like no one had touched it in a century."

"How much did this cost?" He turned to her.

"Twelve year olds are never supposed to ask how much something is."

"Mom?" he pushed.

She patted his lap. "Come on, read me one."

Aiden swung the wooden cover open; it groaned like a satisfied lion. The first cockled leaf repeated the book's title flamboyantly, like it was hand written on the page. Aiden rolled it over carefully. He flipped several more until reaching the first illustration.

The dragon was sketched in graphite and accented with thick strokes of India ink. The image's title was fitting for such a beast, The Death Dragon, Zmey Gorynych. They held the book between them.

"Zmey was a sickly creature," Aiden started. "Muscles stretched tightly around his bones. He appeared too feeble to flap his pitted wings, let alone fly. This dragon needed magic to take to the air. He belched soot and flame and blackened the ground when he landed. Where death lurked in abundance, one would find him. He required the long deceased to feed upon."

"Well that's…appropriate," his mother muttered. Aiden had weathered far worse stories.

"It's a story, Mom," Aiden replied.

"Sorry, go on."

Aiden scanned his finger to find his spot. "He belched soot—"

"You read that part."

Aiden smirked. "It was worth mentioning twice." He returned to the story. "But he was no match for Willum Raenis. Willum was a farmer's child. Neither a favored son nor a fond sibling, he dreamt himself as a knight of legend. But the only thing bigger than his dream was his appetite. He couldn't run. He couldn't he lift great weights. In school, brothers above and below excelled where Willum faltered. He desperately wanted to be special. Without stature or charisma, there was no way for Willum to win the heart of one to suit his wishes. He looked no higher than the nice—"

"Niece—" his mother interjected.

"Niece of the elven lord, Elisa Stormbringer, a petite flower of golden petals. She was…" Aiden fell silent as his finger continued to run down the page.

"What are you doing?" his mother asked.

"Skipping."

He flipped a page. And then another. His finger skimmed through the paragraphs.

He resumed, "Zmey's shadow was peppered with breaks of sunlight—"

"Wait, wait. Why did you—" his mother started.

"Girl stuff," Aiden answered.

"I think I'd disagree with that—"

"Can I continue?" Aiden interjected with a smirk. His mother shrugged and pointed back to the book. "Zmey's shadow was peppered with breaks of sunlight, piercing through the cracks and holes in his leathery wings. He swooped down and sliced open Willum's brothers as they tended the crops. Willum knew the legend of the dragon of death as well as its appetite. It had already turned its sights to the nearby castle. Willum offered no deal to the kingdom."

"You know the rest of the story would probably make more sense if you knew what the elf princess was like–" his mother said.

"Nope," Aiden interrupted. Cut to the dragon. He flipped a page. "Willum's father, a once proud servant of the realm, owned a blade of refined steel and nobility. Willum took his father's blade and wielding no skill, cut down his farm's livestock. The meat rotted until the aroma was irresistible to the mighty creature—"

"It takes days for food to spoil," said his mother. "Wouldn't the dragon have killed them all?" Aiden gave her a frustrated look. She chuckled, shook her head, and beckoned him back to the book.

"The beast turned from its pillaging to enjoy the impressive feast placed before it by an obvious admirer," Aiden continued. "Little did Zmey know that in the stomach of every corpse, Willum had sewn in fresh food. Berries, plums, turnips, even a bushel of green bananas. This meal didn't sit well. Zmey tried desperately to spit up its meal, but the food sat. It gripped the beast in unbearable pain. When the creature breathed its last, all Willum had to do was pull on the withered carcass to tear the head from its body. Willum then carried his trophy to the castle."

Aiden closed the book. He looked to his mother.

"Awesome," he admired, then rolled more pages by. "Dozens more."

"Yes, but enough for now," said his mother. She closed the book and placed it among his collection.

"I missed it when you read to me…but I know I'm too old."

"Doing quite fine on your own," she replied.

"But they sounded real coming from you."

"Well, stories don't need a voice to be any more real." She patted his lap. "They don't even need a reader."

He slumped into the bed and rolled on his side. She kissed his cheek. His eyes were closed, but he wasn't close to being tired. His mother exited quietly.

As she slinked to her bedroom, she noticed the stern look Martin was giving her from the end of the hall. Four years older than his brother, with pruned hair and optimistic goatee, he already resembled their late father. He inherited the same stare mixing bewilderment with annoyance. She paused to offer a forehead kiss and made for her room. He didn't respond and waited for the door to close before returning to the computer and his blog that no one read.

Aiden opened his eyes moments later and stared through the open drapes to the night sky where a thin film of orange pollution garnished the skyline. The view, half way up a strata juggernaut of a thousand apartments, the city appeared to spread to the vanishing point. Aiden couldn't see the city wall. Bright lights and a narcissistic waning moon blotted out the stars, except for one brilliant white spark hanging off the edge of a lunar sea.

Aiden stretched out his arm to the shelf and dug his nails into the headband of the codex. He held it precariously by the edge of its spine and carried it back to the bed. The glow

bleeding from the window precluded the need of a nightlight. Aiden flipped to the first story, past the sketch of Zmey, past the introductions, to the part about the elf.

Elisa and Willum married. The magic of an elvish bond gave him centuries of youth. And she bore him sons for a new kingdom they would create.

Aiden turned another page, before the start of the next story, to a pencil sketch of the fictional couple. Willum on his knee, the tall elf princess smiling upon him. Aiden angled the book under the window light to illuminate the girl. Unlike the rough interpretation of the dragon, lacking features from a deficient imagination, the elf showed detail like she had posed for the artist. Flawless skin, a pointed nose, almond eyes, and a delicate figure. The sharp ears were subtle, barely nudging through straight uncolored hair.

Aiden just remained there a moment, hoping for that impossible chance when her eyes might meet his.

• • •

A close second to Aiden's obsession with books was his affection for video games. Martin's favorites had guns, robots, and tanks vaporizing whatever monsters moved before the reticule. Aiden favored sword-wielding and spellcraft, but those were growing difficult to find. His mother located a free download from an obscure website.

"Hey! Homework!" Martin barked as he approached behind Aiden.

"Done," Aiden replied, attention fused to the screen. His warrior dodged and flipped in burdened armor, cleaving with a blade that never wore down. The hero's meal was some generic ration devoured in a single swallow and supplying energy for another twelve hours of continuous movement. Wounds sustained vanished with a moon's pass.

"Where?"

"In the kitchen," Aiden replied with a nudge.

"I have to get on their by the way." Martin poked him.

"Mom said I had until 5:00."

Martin stepped closer, offering a distracting shadow on the screen. "How many hours you into it?"

"Last save was sixty five."

Martin coughed a laugh. "Why don't you go out?"

Aiden's retort was worth him breaking his focus from the monitor, "This is more interesting." Aiden returned to his game.

"You're going to have to do something with your life eventually, you know."

"Honor roll. How are your grades?"

Aiden's hero's clothes were always comfortable, the romance always willing. The woman the champion had won was a meagerly decent falsehood with long lines of exposed skin and the brassiere of a medieval dominatrix. She never complained of the cold and fell at the hero's feet when the programmer deemed it appropriate. Death was as quickly resolved as one's finger moved to the hotkey. Castles were a minute's walk apart. Money was easily acquired from the bellies of wandering beasts.

Before leaving, Martin reached a foot across to the machine's power supply and turned it off.

"Marty!" Aiden screamed. Martin laughed as he was chased from the room. Aiden had only lost a few minutes progress. The hero and his world, secured within the last save file, waited patiently for his player's return. The sprite never complained to its god about the lack of refrigerators, central heating, or proper medicine.

• • •

Aiden's eyes followed the passing lights of the tunnel in the Underground Transit Rail. While the train wasn't moving, a flush flat panel television on the outside of the train played through various ten-second commercials, most involving the necessity to improve one's appearance with cosmetics or the latest synthetic drug made to placate the anxieties of modern life.

The transit system was meticulously controlled, with stringent fines against litter and vandalism to keep it and the city above clean. Walls were unspoiled by graffiti, the floor was practically hygienic, and the air was conditioned.

Aiden's mother sat beside him, holding his books under her arm. Aiden saw a portable electronic game in the hands of a boy half his age on an opposite seat. The boy's father ignored him as he held onto the railing.

Aiden leaned forward to see the inside of the train bending through the tunnels at speeds he couldn't comprehend. He imagined the transit rail was a giant serpent, gnawing its way through the rock. Aiden embraced the creature's course mane, or perhaps boney frill, and commanded the monster to burst from the shell of the Earth. It lifted the child on its head, taller than the tallest tower in the city. Maybe it dangled little legs behind so it could shuffle about the ground. He would trick the beast to dig too deep or breach a barricade to the canal and drown. Then Aiden could follow the tunnel to the monster's lair and rescue his own princess.

• • •

Mother and son scaled the crowded stairs and exited the UTR station into downtown. Pine trees genetically altered to survive in the shadow-plagued skyscraper forest flanked the sidewalk. The cars whizzing by them hummed like single-note violins. The sun was bifurcated by the dagger-tip of a corporate monolith looming several blocks down. The ivory tower, covered in a checkerboard of white tinted windows and photovoltaic panels, paved a shadow ahead of them.

Aiden asked for bubble-gum at a passing vendor. His mother relented but told him to choose quickly. Between cherry, apple, watermelon, long-lasting, sugar-free, and extra-chewy, there were a hundred varieties. Eventually, his mother stepped in and snagged a cinnamon and paid with a bank card. He didn't want cinnamon but didn't object.

They walked leisurely down the walkway. Occasionally, the cloudless sky would be invaded by a passing aircraft—helicopters mostly—hopping between the peaks.

An elderly man with clean skin and weathered eyes stood at the summit of the ashen citadel, breath slow and calm. He was topped with unkempt white hair which blew madly around his face. The people below looked only as a mélange of reds, oranges, and blues.

The noises below resonated up the spine of the building. The stranger smiled as he leaned forward. Workers, prioritizing their own safety, crawled upon the ridge, screaming for

sanity. The stranger spread his arms wide and drifted over the edge. Swollen white garbage bags flopped firmly in his grip. They were stuffed but nearly weightless in the wind. The workers failed to catch him.

From the altitude, his descent resembled a crawl. The wind didn't slam him into the tower or drift him away from its shadow. He fell straight, the rushing torrent rupturing the bags in his hands. Thousands of wisps of paper fluttered away like feathers from a dying bird.

At ground level, iron-gilded stone supports lent themselves to some dictator's dystopia. Two storey glass shutters opened quickly and effortlessly for customers. The crowds shuffling about the entrance didn't notice the body until the stranger disintegrated through an empty bus. Screams followed, and people gathered quickly.

Aiden's mother noticed the swarming onlookers before her son did. She could see the crushed vehicle and stopped a block away. Aiden was an inch too short to catch the commotion. His mother guided him down another street. "Honey, let's…let's walk around that."

"What's going on?" he asked.

"Let's just avoid it."

Aiden spotted the falling shreds of paper.

"Mom, look!" he shouted, waving his hands to swat the tatters around. One wrapped around his finger. "Like snow…" He noticed hand writing. "It's raining words."

"What's it say?" He showed it to her. She read it, and then grimaced. She pulled him down the side street. "Let's go, we'll be late."

Aiden stroked the paper in his hand as he read it again.

Our dreams are a prison.

• • •

Aiden's school was separated from neighboring skyscrapers by an alienation of white walls, heavy iron gates with brass balls atop the posts, and a stretch of genetically engineered, perfectly permanent emerald grass. Aiden's mother fixed his clip-on tie under his brown sweater. "I know it's a Friday but no walking home this time," she said. "Wait for Marty."

"Gotcha."

"You didn't lose the essay did you?"

"No. There's not going to be a test on it, you think?

"Test? What do you think this is, school?" She smiled; he smiled. "Here." She reached into her pocket. "I got something for you." She pulled out a necklace, a delicate silver chain. Hanging from it was a coin bearing an embossed image of an elderly man wielding a staff in one hand and an infant in the other. The letters that ringed the coin were in an old tongue that few people in the city could read. She dropped it around his neck. "It's a charm. He protects children. Especially brave ones."

Aiden lifted it to his eye and could tell it was old. "Is it magic?"

She tucked it in his shirt. "It's a flashlight to remind God where you're standing."

"He can see us all the time?"

"Every second, every step. Where you've been and where you're going."

"How can he know that?"

"He knows everything."

"But he can't control everything."

"No...You're right." She pointed at Aiden's chest. "He can't control you."

"Then how can he know where I'm going?"

She thought about it. "Because he knows you so well, he knows where you'll go, what you'll do and what you'll see. We all have a place."

Aiden looked at the pendant again and whispered, "But what if I want to do something else?"

"All right, enough of that." She eased him past the gate. "Off with you and for everything you learn, teach something."

• • •

"Camus-kun," interrupted the teacher.

Aiden snapped his attention back from the window, the scrap piece of paper still rolling around his fingers. His thoughts had been on the bedtime story, about the parts he skipped. What was she like? Did she read books or play sports? Would she finish Willum's sentences and laugh at his jokes?

"Yes...sorry, Leach-sensei," Aiden answered.

It was a class for advanced students, and Aiden was the youngest by a year. Unlike Willum Raenis, Aiden Camus was exceptional. "You know, you might actually find this subject interesting."

"I was following," Aiden lied.

"Eyes on me then, please." Leach shifted across the front of the small class waving a thousand page opus in his hand. The blank digital tablet hanging behind him had the color of a chalk blackboard. "What defines a civilization?" He let the moment linger, the students wondering if it was rhetorical. "It could be said that the author believes it's based entirely on its builders and thinkers, and not the kings and presidents at the top or the consumers and peasants at the bottom. You take them away, civilization collapses. A society is worthless if it doesn't develop...both socially and technologically. So what causes a civilization to stop growing?"

As in every class, the students looked to each other and waited for one of them to break the silence. "War," Lara popped up.

"War. I don't think so," Leach corrected. "Actually war, and the prospect of it, encourages change. War gave us nuclear power. The potential of war gave us computers, rockets, the internet."

"Segregation," spoke up William, another student, the oldest and largest. Leach nudged for clarification. "The separation of upper and lower class," he continued. "Peasants farm, soldiers fight, nobles rule...and sometimes think."

Leach nodded. "That can cause a civilization to slow down."

A fourteen year old girl across from Aiden asked "Religion?" Leach waited for her to continue. "Burned libraries," she continued, "executed or imprisoned anyone questioning the church."

"Absolutely. We've had famous libraries burned, technological breakthroughs suppressed as being too dangerous… all from religion. They may claim to encourage scientific progress but they've always been its rival." Leach made his way back across to Aiden's side. "A great author once said that if suppressed breakthroughs and progressive ideas had been embraced by their societies, we'd be living in an era 3,000 years advanced from where we are now. Civilization has to expand. It can't help it. We teach our children, and they learn and better our achievements. Something like religion can slow progress but can't stop it. For one, the world is big. You halt the progress of a civilization on this part of the planet; it won't stop another civilization on the other side.

"Take pasta. It wasn't Marco Polo that cultivated it across the world. Pasta just appeared naturally around the same time across the globe. It's necessity that forces us to build and expand." Leach brought up the novel again. "This is why the book has that flaw. If you take away the builders, new builders will emerge from the rabble. You remove a ruler, someone else will step forward." Aiden was listening now, but his thoughts were to the books he had been reading, of ancient mythologies and empires that marked their progress by millennia. "You can impose religion," Leach continued, "suppress dangerous knowledge, but you can't stop progress. Eventually, people will start building."

"Magic?" Aiden offered. The class turned to him. An awkward pause followed, broken by the larger William.

"Magic?!" William mocked.

"What do you mean?" Leach asked calmly.

Aiden cleared his throat, keeping his eyes on the teacher rather than the class. "If you can create anything you want out of thin air, you wouldn't need to build it."

"That's stupid–" William barked

"No," Leach interrupted, "that's actually a good point. In a fantasy world, thousands of years pass without even the hint of technology, beyond carts and swords. But that can never happen."

"Why?" Aiden asked.

William butted in, "Because magic isn't real!"

Leach flicked William's ear as he answered. "Because like I said, necessity forces us to build. That's why it's a fantasy." Leach worked his way towards his youngest savant. "I read one of those when I was your age. George-something. There was magic but it was uncommon. Kingdoms lasted centuries without ever changing. You can include a caste system, religion, ironclad traditions, some ancient law against the use of machines, but eventually, technology will develop. Fantasy novels don't need to explain why. It's fantasy. It doesn't have to make sense. The moment you apply logic to a fantasy novel, it falls apart. Their worlds are too small, timelines are too long. Monsters are too many and there's usually a frighteningly insufficient lower class. And if that world has magic, there'd be chaos. If any child could be raised to wield a wand, you'd have anarchy. But even considering that, those without magic would still build. In our history, there were empires which lasted beyond a thousand years, but even those had moments of social and technological innovation." Leach was imposing but lowered his voice to not impose. "You simply cannot suppress the desire for humans to grow. I'll also say that I would loathe any civilization that existed for thousands of years and not be able to figure how to make a machine that washes my dishes." The class laughed, and Leach returned to head of the room. Aiden could still see a few eyes on him from the older students. From Lara, smiling at him. From William, annoyed at the time wasted.

As the class ended, Aiden filed out last, avoiding William's hex-vision stare. As he passed the teacher's desk, Mr. Leach called out, "Aiden?"

"Yes, Mr. Leach?" Aiden answered, noticing the teacher beckoning him back. After the last student departed, Aiden stepped back to the desk. "Was I out of line?"

"Nothing of the sort," Leach answered. "But perhaps it's best you keep such talk about magic private?"

Aiden furrowed his brow. "Why?" he asked.

Leach prepared a detailed answer, but then paused and answered simply with, "It's just best…for now." Aiden still didn't comprehend the issue. Leach leaned forward and spoke, "The people around you, parents, teachers, engineers, they need the world around them to work…in a specific way. They lay down rules and permit only a narrow field of thought. Nationality, technology, theology, they can't allow something rejecting those tenets."

"I don't understand," Aiden replied.

"Do you believe in Santa Claus?" Leach said suddenly.

Aiden shot glances about the room as he answered. "Of course not."

"Why?"

"Because he's not real."

"And what if he knocked on your door and said 'Hello'?"

Aiden's answer came quickly. "I'd ask for a bike."

Leach chuckled, covering his mouth to prevent a louder reaction. "And that's the difference between you and the rest of the world," he answered. "They would point and say, 'you're not real'. They can't allow something to break from what they know. They need order; they need a reflection of their beliefs." Leach pointed to the fantasy novel nestled under Aiden's arm. It was an old edition, and one of the last printed. Aiden glanced down at it. "And not to be reminded of what can't exist."

"That's odd," Aiden answered, still honestly confused. He knew there was something not being said. "I still don't understand the big deal."

Leach smiled and patted the desk in front of Aiden. "You'll have to ask your mother that one day," he said.

• • •

William expressed his dissatisfaction with Aiden after school, only feet away from the exit. "Don't waste the class's time, Aiden!" he snapped. He loomed inches over Aiden's face, ensuring a moderate amount of spittle landed in the boy's eye.

Aiden wiped his face and leaned back. "Okay," he answered calmly.

"You don't belong in that class. You're too young anyway. And why you reading this?" He snatched the novel under Aiden's arm and gave it a glance.

"Pratchett!" he snapped. Aiden jumped up to the taller student, flimsily pawing at the distant book over his reach. "Magic isn't real!"

"Give it back," Aiden shouted, slapping around William's limbs. William pushed Aiden to the pavement with his free hand. The Pratchett novel fell to the fallen boy's lap as a pair of larger arms wrapped around William's collar and lifted him off his feet. Martin had three inches, twenty pounds, and two years on the bully.

"Bill!" Martin barked. "You're smart. Smarter than me. So, I'm going to start hitting you until you talk me out it. Good?!"

William wrestled free and made his escape. He grabbed his bag and ran for the gates. Aiden retrieved his book and accepted Martin's offer of a hand.

"Okay?" Martin asked.

"Thanks," Aiden muttered.

"What d'you say to piss him off?"

"I didn't say anything!" Aiden snapped

"Let's just go." Martin pushed Aiden ahead of him. Aiden check his book for damage. A corner had frayed and a new rip had appeared on the casewrap.

"So that's why?" Martin said.

"What?" Aiden replied.

"Aiden, I don't care for those books Mom gets you, and a lot of people would agree. And if I wasn't your brother, I may act the same, so keep that stuff guarded. Don't tell anyone you read them, and don't show it off."

"What's the big deal?" Aiden replied. "Teacher said the same thing. How are mine any different than yours."

Martin stopped and spun around to face his brother. Aiden instinctively dropped the book to his side in case Martin tried to reach for it. "Because mine deal with what can happen," Martin snapped, "They're about science, progress. Fantasies are not about that; they're about what can't happen. They're about dreams and myths."

"But…we go to church," Aiden muttered. Martin resumed his walk.

"Yeah, well, let's not go there," Martin grumbled. Aiden kept still, glancing at his book. He gently nuzzled it back into his pack and raced to catch up to his brother.

"I liked what you said to William, by the way," Aiden said.

"I've wanted to say that to him for like a year."

• • •

Their mother was not one for the kitchen. Dinner was prepackaged imitation parmesan cheese and powdered milk mixed with stabilizers and corn starch. It was layered over a bed of rock-hard tortellini softened after five minutes in the microwave. Aiden moved his eyes across the open book beside his plate as his mother followed the rhythms of an artificial cook.

The book was grey with green letters and gilded pages. Aiden read about the lives of pale skinned, subterranean fae called the tenenbri that lived in underground lairs and had vestigial cataract-covered eyes. Oversized pointed ears gave them the senses of a bat. They were an arrogant sort, clashing often the dwarvish race called the narros that shared some of the tenenbri's religious beliefs.

The book was advanced. Aiden had to look up some of the words. He didn't care. Octagon-shaped glasses edged precariously off his nose.

After the meal, his mother began to fill the dishwasher. Aiden remained at the table and stared at the cover of his novel. "Mom?" he asked.

"Yes."

Aiden ran his fingers around the crevices and grooves in the book. "...Someone died today, didn't they?"

She stopped loading and turned to him. "Yes." She never lied. "Yes, someone died."

"Why'd he do it?"

She placed a mug down and orbited around to sit beside him. He didn't look at her. "I don't know, honey. Some people have a pain that no medicine or words can cure. To them, death is the solution; but they don't realize how selfish and narrow-minded that solution is."

"But what he wrote. It was like he was trapped. Are we trapped?"

She smiled, patted his shoulder, and returned to her dishes. "You're only trapped if you can't find the door."

She cleared out half the machine when Aiden closed the book and made for the living room, dominated by its 47" liquid crystal flat-screen television. Aiden stopped and voiced another question. "Mom, is Santa Clause real?"

She stood up quickly, bewildered. "That's a strange…" she answered, "No."

"Just checking," Aiden said as he left.

• • •

A Sunday morning meant Sunday service. Aiden refused to set his alarm. Face crammed into his pillow, he rolled his head as his mother parted the blinds. The window was open and the sirens and screams of morning traffic were already polluting the city. The orange sun was poking between several distant buildings. Aiden could see the peaks of the tallest towers parting clouds. Solar cells twisted like blossoms. On the horizon, a forest of smokestacks belched pollution to be carried by the wind out to the ocean. A helicopter caused a mild distraction as it passed by Aiden's window.

Before Aiden had swallowed his morning yawn or flicked the crust from his eyes, his mother laid out the good clothes. By the time his mother had returned, Aiden was still undressed, listening to the news broadcast from the screen in his bedroom. "Find out which food supplement is deadly, after the next break–" Aiden changed the channel. "Guilty is the verdict today in the murder of pop sensation–" Click.

"Get dressed, come on," his mother said.

"Just trying to find a channel while I change," Aiden pleaded. "There's nothing good on. All this news."

She left and called out from the hall, "You've got five minutes." Another channel showed green grass and tall trees put to old music.

"Aiden!" Martin shouted, already dressed with his head poking through the doorway, "let's go!"

• • •

Aiden, Martin, and their mother took the UTR to church. On the train, Martin sat on the left of his mother, Aiden on the right. Martin watched a rerun on a portable flat-panel screen. Aiden watched the train. Their mother's left hand held a purse; her right played with Aiden's hair.

The church of the Sacred Mary was a five-storey wooden A-frame as old as the city. No ration was given to parking and every curb was filled with a variety of electric vehicles.

Aiden's mind wandered during the plodding repetitious mass. The priest was old with a comical lisp and mumbling words. Aiden ran grooves in the soft wood of the bench with his nails. A hand slap from Martin only discouraged Aiden for a short time. A prayer, a passage, and a Eucharist later, and Aiden was clear from his obligations for another week.

As they left the mass, Aiden pondered his day's plans. Part of it involved his armor-clad digital warrior slashing through an improbable number of foes in an equally preposterous dungeon built illogically to geometric precision.

The three of them quickened their pace from the church doors to the sidewalk to catch the street lights before they changed. Aiden checked his watch. It ticked two minutes past 10:00.

An air siren jolted the crowd, the high pitch oscillation bouncing off buildings. People ran blindly into the streets, some to their vehicles. Martin's instinct pulled Aiden and his mother close, wrenching them to the UTR tunnel entrance a block away. "Come on, let's go! Hurry!"

The second sound was not a siren, not a helicopter. It was louder, not mechanical, from an empty sky. People followed with their own yells. The source of the sound revealed itself as a silhouette unfurled its wings to eclipse the sun.

Daggers of daylight broke through the holes in its leather wings. Talons as long and sharp as swords tore the church peak apart as it landed. Wood splintered, and a poorly carved soapstone Christ shattered upon the pavement. Twice the size of the church, the beast roared and spit a torrent of liquid fire across the sky. Aiden was unable to look away as his brother dragged him by the cuff. The creature's black skin was drawn tight across its body. Its eyes like drops of cream in strong coffee. Its teeth were jagged and jumbled. Lips were too thin to close around its mouth.

"Zmey?" Aiden whispered. He was sure of it. He had pictured it larger and more pestilent. The stream of flame struck an approaching military helicopter. It melted the craft instantly. The vessel toppled to the ground as a forged chunk of glass and iron.

"Aiden! Come on!" his mother snapped.

The creature looked down at the scattering masses before it. Leaping from the church peak, it crushed a half-dozen of them underfoot. It snatched more from across the road, throwing them against the walls of nearby buildings.

Its rampage migrated down the street towards the crowd rushing to the safety of the UTR entrance. Martin held his younger brother's collar, pulling vigorously, indifferent to the monster gaining ground. Aiden's curiosity forced his gaze back. If it was Zmey, why was it not dead? How much of that story was wrong?

"Is that Zmey, mom?" Aiden shouted.

"Shut up!" Martin snapped.

"Mom?!"

"Aiden, I'll explain everything later!" she answered.

Her heel broke, and she fell to a knee behind her boys.

"Mom!" Martin shouted, turning quickly back. Aiden stopped as well, but his attention was still on the dragon. The more he stared at it, the more real it became; the less Aiden believed he was dreaming. Perhaps then he could be frightened of it.

Zmey's claw came down in front of them. Martin fell back with a slash suffered on his arm. The concussion of air brought Aiden to his knees. Martin ignored his wound and clenched his fists. He closed his eyes waiting for his end.

Aiden could smell the putridness wafting from the dragon, felt the heat of the inferno brewing in its belly. A part of Aiden kept reminding him that this couldn't happen. This was a normal world and a dragon can't fly, can't spew flames from its mouth. Aiden believed he would awaken, perhaps in his bed, perhaps in a pew.

As Aiden fell, he cut his hand on a shard of glass. The quickness of the pain pulled the air from his lungs. The numbness, the detachment that accompanies a dream, started to pass. Aiden began to notice what had happened, what was happening. People had been killed. Buildings had been destroyed. Crowds were fleeing. Aiden felt a cool sprinkle from a broken hydrant. He heard his brother wailing. Like a shock through this spine, Aiden saw the beast for what it was, the monster he should fear. It was real.

As Zmey's brought its claw back up to claim another victim, the beast fell back from a tackle, tossed into the empty church. The cathedral collapsed from the weight of two monsters. No one had seen the other beast slam into Zmey. Zmey's opponent pulled away to plot another attack. The new

arrival was longer with smaller wings. Its gold and blue scales broke light into colors. Long white whiskers flapped like gravity had no control of them. Each of its four arms ended in four ivory claws. The monster snaked in the air, and its jaws opened wide enough to swallow a car. Its forked tongue sparked a flame, but it only bellowed. As the echo bounced off the buildings, lights within rooms went dark. The traffic signals went dead. Cars drifted to a stop.

The newcomer's eyes were those of a man's, soft blue and brilliant. Its body twisted around Aiden and Martin. It blocked them from harm as Zmey slashed with a bladed tail. The monster of gold and blue scales kept its defense and suffered a deep gash to its belly. In its counterattack, it leapt across the road and dug talons and teeth into decaying flesh. The creatures coiled around each other, but the black beast could not match the dexterity of its rival. A solid bite and its golden opponent had torn off an arm. Dark molasses dripped as blood from the wound. The black beast tore itself free from gripping claws, causing more damage as it took to the sky.

The one with golden scales swiveled its head to look at the boys. Its eyes were the same shape but the size of a child's head. Aiden couldn't help it. He raised his bloodied palm from the pavement and offered a feeble wave.

The dragon smirked back. It winked.

It twisted its form again and leapt back to the sky to chase down its opponent. It pursued the cripple around a distant building where Aiden lost sight of them. A dozen military fanjets slipped overhead to take up the chase.

Martin shouted Aiden's name and repeated it until the syllables merged to a wail. Aiden's attention drifted back to where the beast had come down. Aiden's daze had begun to lift; his breathing quickened. Whatever lingering strength he had bled away, and Aiden felt a sharp tightness in his chest. His fingers began to tremble as he realized what had happened.

She was gone.

Martin crawled to his brother. He lost the strength to pull Aiden to him but refused to let go. He slumped to the ground. Aiden turned his attention back to the sky while Martin cried.

• • •

The brothers had barely talked since the morning. Aiden sat on his bed with the opened Codex Dracontis on his lap. Aiden ignored the clothes he was supposed to take. He rummaged in his coat pocket for his glasses. He curled them around his ears. He tried to ignore the stabbing pain from the stitches in his palms but couldn't avoid the tension in his chest when he thought of his mother. When he thought about the dragon, about the questions he had, the weight would lift slightly. Aiden had blisters over his lips and rings around his eyes from previous breaks in concentration. He sniffed and rubbed his nose as he frantically flipped through the pages.

Finding the entry for Zmey, he studied the sketch. There were differences. Its head was larger in proportion to its body in the drawing. Eyes were white, not black. Aiden was positive the book took inspiration from the real beast, which was then altered by the artist's foggy recollection. Aiden slumped upon his bed and stared at it. He flipped through the other pages, other dragons, some with white feathers, others with silver scales. He searched for the one that saved him. Aiden glanced at the other books he had acquired, ones on elves, sorcerers, and sword wielding.

"What are you doing?" Martin asked from the doorframe, an empty suitcase under his arm.

Aiden looked up from the book. "I can't find it."

"What?" Martin responded, quickly and cold.

"The gold and blue dragon. He's not here. It has Zmey but not the other."

"Mom's dead, Aiden."

Aiden paused. His bottom lip quivered and this throat clenched. He didn't want to cry in front of his brother. "I know...But–"

"Enough..." Martin whimpered. "Just leave it. Please... leave it. Pack and let's go. People are waiting." He left his

brother alone, staring at the book. Both brothers had wanted to remain home, but Martin wasn't old enough, and there was no one willing to stay with them. Cousins willing to take them in lived half way across the city, closer to the "crown".

Martin lingered on his locked softside suitcase and did so for five minutes. He crammed and crinkled five changes of underwear, three dress pants and five shirts, leaving substantial space for a pair of albums and a photo of him and his mother from his Confirmation. He had previously wedged in more photos but realized he hadn't packed any shirts. He always considered himself the surrogate adult, the proxy for his father, someone that Martin knew but Aiden never did. When Martin returned to his brother's room, he noticed the half-full holdall occupied by one change of clothes and topped with the codex. "Leave the book," he said.

"No," Aiden replied, still focused on the tome.

"Aiden–-"

"You knew." Aiden could discern with his brother the difference between fear and surprise. Martin was frightened of the beast, but its existence was not a shock to him.

"Please Aiden," Martin answered.

"You knew."

Martin opened for a lie but couldn't. "Not everything. Just that…this city…is all people like us have left."

"And what's past it?"

"I don't know."

"Has anyone left?" Aiden asked.

"No one leaves," Martin replied. "They only try to get in."

"Then someone knows. There are dragons." Aiden reached for the book.

"They killed mom–-"

"And saved us–-"

"They took everything Aiden," Martin snapped. They took...everything we were and could ever be."

"You never wanted to look?"

"Don't have to."

"Why not–-"

"Aiden!" Martin shouted. "It's not our world. She wanted you innocent. Everyone is…for a while. That's over. I'll make sure we stay together. It's just us now."

"But the other dragon?"

"Who cares?! It's done! No more of this!" Martin stepped forward hastily to snatch away the book. Aiden instinctively clutched it to his chest. He grasped it tightly as his armor, tears rolling as he began to cry. Martin tried to wrest the tome from his brother's grip. He shouted as he tried to separate book and boy. "Burn them all! They killed mom!" Aiden curled fetal around the book. He stayed tightly wound in a bundle of clenched limbs. Martin pinned one leg on Aiden's shoulder and pried an arm free, ripped the book from his brother's hand. Martin was hurting Aiden; cries turned to yells. Martin felt it had to be done, like tearing a bandage off or striking a disobedient child, the act of an adult.

It's not a fantasy, Aiden! Grow up!" Martin stormed out of the room. "Two minutes! I'll drag you if I have to!" Aiden could hear the sound of the kitchen garbage can opening and the loud thump as Martin dropped the book into it. Martin knew Aiden could just take it back from the trash, but Martin knew rules needed to be followed and he expected Aiden would respect that.

He didn't.

Aiden waited until hearing the slam of his mother's bedroom door down the hall before shuffling quickly to the kitchen to take back his book. Martin fell upon the queen mattress and began crying while Aiden stroked his fingers across the front cover of the codex, at the embossment, at the image of the dragon's eye.

Aiden glanced across his arm to his watch.

There were no cracks or scratches, no signs of impact damage. It had stopped three minutes past ten.

He opened the book again and noticed the stamp at the bottom of the inside cover. It was printed in two languages, English and some Asian type Aiden couldn't understand. The ink had faded. Aiden read the book's origin: David Obatala Chen's Biblio, 23C Huangxia Street, Genai.

A STORY

Don't check your brain at the door.

Don't settle for the dream.

This is real.

Amethyst is a Role Playing Game that postulates what would occur if a true-to-book fantasy setting was forced upon our reality. Our world is populated by many people wanting more from their lives. Our fantasies are filled with nymphs, valiant knights, and fire breathing dragons. We dream about being carried away by the fancies our mothers tell us every night. But what if it was real for everyone? What if it invaded our society? How would humanity truly respond?

This is not some stylized fanciful view of Earth seen in books and on TV. It is a world with all the problems, both social and political, intact. Would we welcome the world of fantasy into our lives or would we fear its very presence? Magic cannot exist; there's no scientific basis for it. How could these creatures of whimsy exist and match so closely to our mythology and religious canon?

This future emerged from the world we know— a world where books and movies written about fantasy existed. People that survived into this new age saw firsthand what they had previously thought to be fiction. The new world matched so closely to their imaginations. How would major religions respond given such a massive shock to their dogma?

On top of this dilemma, magic breaks down many of the normal rules of the universe which technology requires to operate. It is a chaotic system that overwrites itself on reality, and although this influence won't destroy life, it does retard the progress of civilization, preventing technology from operating beyond simple mechanisms like windmills and bicycles. Where magic is prohibited, normality returns and evolution and technological advancement can continue.

What remains of our modern society and its technology survive in cities resembling those of the previous age, walled in against the encroaching magic around it. Here, they have their cars, their central heating, and their televisions. Outside, the fantasy world may be wondrous, but it is also real. People die from the simplest calamities. Despicable rodents with

weapons and wicked brains prey on the innocent and unarmed.

Will mankind be able to retake the planet and push the fantasy back into the realms of our imagination, able to resume our blind passion for consumerism and industrialization?

Or is this world better than the one mankind squandered?

From the fantasy world rises a mythology suggesting that there are two realms of magic: one dark, the other light. The source of this energy originates from two powerful gates, the white star of Attricana and the black gate of Ixindar. The main axis between evil and good is not one where the law-abiding, civilized nations of good battle against the destructive force of chaos, but where the chaotic tendencies of life clash with the controlled and methodical might of syntropy. The conflict – at its root – sets anarchy against order, uniformity against unpredictability, and determinism against free-will. Where life needs a level of uncertainty to blossom, homogeny breeds only death. The fantasy world is not some singular entity, but a complicated multi-layered world of warring nations, political strife, and monsters clever and powerful, as well as dumb and many.

AMETHYST EVOLVES

Cities collapse, heroes rise, and the future falls into the hands of a few. The world alters, grows, and plummets into shadow. These heroes encounter their greatest fears and challenge true evil in all forms. They find depth in an easy situation, complexity in a single idea. A world that changes around a band of adventurers. A setting with a point and a climax. A world where an ending waits. Solve it and discover the truth. Fail and the planet crumbles underneath.

The setting of *Amethyst* relies on the clash between magic and technology. Many fantasy worlds blend the two, usually with magic gaining the foothold and technology falling behind. *Amethyst* presents a world where the two sides stand almost at war and – from a metaphysical point of view – actively disrupt each other's existence. This is not to say that individuals from both sides cannot coexist: it is the differences between people that make them stronger when together. Although an individual might not be able to wield both a spellbook and a gun, this does not extend to the limits of the group. Perhaps, despite growing tensions and mounting enmity, a balance between the two worlds can be found.

Player characters in *Amethyst* are neither sitting on the sidelines nor are they following braver and more powerful leaders into glory: they are meant to change the world. They do not dig ditches or hand out food while armies march into combat, but command legions, infiltrate empires, save princesses and slay kings. The end of the game should be different from the beginning. Of course, a player can claim a kingdom after vanquishing his enemies, but the real journey takes one's soul across the world, to meet one's final destiny after a very long crusade. A GM is encouraged to plan out her strategy for the game—whether the characters will travel to their final destinies in Canam (the continent described herein) or only progress part of the way before tackling the next chapter in a foreign land.

THE HISTORY

The history of the world begins with the conundrum of the chicken and the egg.

Millions of years ago, a fracture occurred in the fabric of space and time. It exhibited traits that were scientifically measurable yet broke many acceptable rules regarding electromagnetism, gravity, and quantum mechanics. Scientists later deduced that this rip, called Attricana, was a bridge between two universes. The alternate side contained a cosmos with rules of physics and chemistry abnormal to our own. As this universe spilled into ours, the conflict of two orders of nature encouraged aberrations upon the Earth impossible until that point.

But what or who opened the gate?

Amethyst is a modern name given to a dragon from this age—the first creature of fantasy born upon the Earth. Legends also maintain Amethyst was the architect of the gate's creation. But if Amethyst created the gate, then what created Amethyst? Creatures born from magic require magic to survive. If Amethyst came before, then he would be the single exception in this world. Some historians believe he is not a dragon at all but something else.

Some proclaim him a god, but gods cannot die.

For millions of years, before Earth was called Earth, the denizens of the planet called it Terros—a land of magic and wonder, spared from the wrath of malevolence. Dragons flew overhead while fae creatures scurried below. Attricana encouraged life in every possible form. Monsters did emerge but never with the coordination to form an organized civilization. Meanwhile, the elder races were witnessing a slow degradation of enlightenment. The fae were not evolving; they were degenerating. Their descendants were begetting feral beasts. At the bottom of this inverted tree were uncultured boggs, violent skeggs, and voracious and swarming puggs. The chaparrans hid in their forests. The laudenians took to the sky. Damaskans recorded knowledge and history. Narros defended the cities. This left the gimfen to ignore such concerns and remain forever at play, remaining innocent against the encroaching violence.

Whether or not this could have endured would never be known.

The residents of Terros never questioned the origin of Amethyst. He was the greatest and wisest of them. They called him a god. They called him an avatar. He was connected to Attricana more intimately than any other entity. No one really knew the truth.

This changed when Ixindar arrived.

Unlike Attricana, records on the black gate's arrival are detailed. It drifted over the planet, sweeping across the night. From it spilled the corruption of order. If Attricana was a wellspring from a chaotic universe (perhaps one in the founding minutes of its creation), then Ixindar was the fountainhead of syntropy. It led to a realm of perfect harmony, perhaps to a cosmos of death and tranquility—a universe in its final moments. This gate had its own avatar, its own god to warrant worship. This was Mengus, a disembodied entity that whispered corruption without creating anything of its own. In one night, Ixindar had distorted a million fae to follow it. Servants gathered at the place where Ixindar came to rest, a spreading expanse of black glass later dubbed Kakodomania.

The noble forces of chaos had difficulty forming an army while their opponents quickly expanded and reproduced into battle lines. Within a thousand years, war had torn the planet apart. It would be several millennia before both sides realized mutual attrition was the only possible outcome. But elements from beyond the world would prevent this ultimate fate.

Mankind knew this incident at the K-T Extinction event—when a ten kilometer bolide impact off the Yucatan Peninsula created the 180 kilometer Chicxulub crater, wiping out the vast majority of plant and animal life on the planet. The fae called it the Hammer of God. Both sides of fantasy agreed separately to seek refuge on the other side of their gates, within dream realms formed by those gate's avatars. Mengus faked complicity in order to ambush Amethyst when isolated, believing Ixindar would survive the calamity to come.

The forces of chaos gone, Amethyst found himself surrounded by the soldiers of order. The general of this army, an intelligent construct known only as Gebermach, inflicted the killing blow, driving the dark sword Dogurasu into Amethyst's heart.

In his reprisal, Amethyst sacrificed his physical body. The resulting eruption of chaos wiped out the armies of Mengus and shattered the sky above them. A single beam of light from the gate before its closing drove Ixindar deep underground, sealing it under impenetrable stone. Attricana closed upon Amethyst's death. All remaining constructs and creations of magic fell to dust. All evidence was washed away. Earth belonged to no one.

With nothing to compete with, the principles of our universe regained control. The natural order of evolution took root, leading eventually into mankind. Through his history, he told stories he could not possibly know, about mythical monsters and warring gods. These tales came from the whimsy of imagination but all carried a portion of truth, some more than others. These stories became myths, books, films, and religions. This influence from a time no man had seen carried onto crests, flags, and banners. Their origins were explained, connected to other stories and faiths. Some were tied to science—seeing a manatee and believing it to be a mermaid. Fantasies remained locked in the dreams of a real world. Pushed aside as fancy, mankind continued his evolutionary drive to build, understand, and conquer. Society advanced as did the machines in servitude. Gaining a full understanding of science in all its unchanging rules, there was nothing man could not achieve given enough time.

History unfortunately would repeat itself.

A second bolide impact occurred, this time directly over Ixindar. To this day, no one knows the cause, as there was no warning before impact. It was a smaller event compared to the last but enough to reveal Ixindar to the world. The forces of syntropy emerged and corruption followed.

The following events are muddled, another case of a chicken and an egg. Ixindar opened, and some indeterminate time later, Attricana followed – but did Attricana's first stirrings perhaps provoke Ixindar's reemergence, or was some mechanism in place to open the white gate if Ixindar were ever exposed? By the time of the white gate's reappearance, mankind had already been reduced to less than a tenth of its peak population, though whether due to disasters born in the wake of the Second Hammer or through wars over resources or ideologies, no one is truly certain.

Mankind did not have the luxury of philosophy. He was fighting a losing battle on two fronts, from order and from chaos. To make the situation even more desperate, the technology mankind had been relying on for hundreds of years had begun to fail. From the fountain of Attricana flowed rules of nature antithetical to the science machines required to function. The more advanced the technology, the greater the chance of disruption. Surviving humans had to make a choice: wall themselves in from the flood of encroaching enchantment, or settle for a primitive life surrounded by the wonders of fantasies they once could only read in fiction.

Five hundred years later, the humans that clove to their machines have built immense cities of technology. These bastions are the last bulwarks of a time these men and woman refuse to surrender, a world run by science where mankind held dominion. Some of these cities have grown to the size of small countries. Outside the bastions live the empires and wastelands of fantasy. Dragons and fae have returned to lay claim to the mountains, woods and fields. Monsters hide in dungeons and prowl in murky forests. The wilderness has become dangerous but at the same time all the more romantic. Magic will always be a lure to those willing to wield it.

Order versus chaos, science versus magic; these conflicts make fanatics of everyone. An unspoken stalemate has arisen, with none gaining the upper hand. This may change with the proof of a once forgotten legend. When Gebermach slew Amethyst, the dragon's crest of stone fell upon the ground and shattered. For millions of years, the fragments drifted to the far corners of the world. Now, one has been found, and the crusade to find the others has begun. The legend claims that if the pieces of Amethyst's crown were

brought together at the place of his death, one could call the god back to life, or take the mantle of command from him. With such a power, one could resurrect the most powerful creature to walk the Earth, or close the gate of magic forever. Who will find these artifacts? Who will emerge victorious?

And, ultimately, will it be worth the cost?

THE CONFLICT

The world is not engulfed in war, but widespread peace across the land is still a distant dream. Not only are the remaining bastions of pre-Hammer mankind fighting a desperate and seemingly hopeless struggle against encroaching enchantment, but the individual bastions themselves are also paranoid about their own technological sovereignty over rival bastions. Further, the world of fantasy is not all of wonder. There are two realms of magic flowing from two different breaches in the normal universe: the white gate of Attricana floating high above the sky and the black gate of Ixindar half-buried in rock in the land of Kakodomania. Their influence and the armies loyal to them provoke conflicts whenever both sides meet. While Attricana encourages creation and chaos, Ixindar promotes order and syntropy. While many people directly involved in this conflict do so from an obsessive desire to protect their ways of life, others have been tempted to cross over, embracing an alternative way of thinking.

MAGIC AND FAITH

In *Amethyst*, there are only three ways magic can be focused, and thus, at least partially, controlled:

- **The Language of Dragons.** The power of these god-like creatures is to create something by naming it—the magic possessed in the language of the greatest species. Even the script extends itself into multiple dimensions. Wizards utilize this for all their magic. This language is called Pleroma.
- **Magical Reactivity**. There are thousands of elements and combinations of elements that produce different magical results. The practices of alchemy and metallurgy have returned. Those with such knowledge forge items of enchantment by simply being aware of the exacting ratios of components required. Fae iron, coruthil, and angelite are such examples as well as the myriad forms of magical potions. Nearly every magic item features this to a degree.
- **Inborn Magic.** Fae beings and monsters are magical by their very nature, even if they cannot consciously wield magical forces. Some, be they fae, monster, or even human, possess magical abilities on their own from birth. A few claim this power as divine, but many others refute that. Just as it was with man's time, god or gods are as silent as he, she, or they always were. There are no proven sanctified or blessed users of magic in a world with a silent and unproven god. Still, the rare cleric or druid often finds no other reasonable explanation.

Religion does exist in *Amethyst*. Most are old-established, dating back through humanity's history – Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, and the like; others are far older and yet new as well, reconstructed from the memories of the fae; still others blend disparate elements as it suits their practitioners. Every faith can claim to possess one or two folk supposedly blessed with the spark of divinity. There are also those with no faith able to wield magic purely from a natural endowment they cannot explain. Others know very well where their power originates and understand there is no intelligence or deification beyond said gift. Because of this doubt, there is still no proof of god in Amethyst, despite the claims of many who believe.

ALTERED MAGIC

Despite appearances, the world of *Amethyst* is a low-magic setting; high level spells are rare and obtained only at great cost and difficulty; major magical items are just as rare and hardly can be found outside the hands of the great and powerful; artifacts are the stuff of legends, and most are completely mythical.

All magic, whatever its supposed provenance, comes from the gates, but spell casting techniques are unique depending on the caster. Clerics, called either gneolistics or vivicators, gain their power directly from Attricana. Whether this power is granted to them by some unknowable intelligence, drawn into their soul by the power of their belief, or merely a quirk of birth is unknown. Druids also obtain their power from the gate, though not directly. They receive their abilities from a conduit, namely the Earth. They worship nature and the world around. In their belief, the world channels the power from the gate and casters gain their power from below, not from above. Druids harness the wind, earth, fire, and water as well as the animals and plants around them, shaping and controlling them as they wish.

Mages disregard channeling and mysticism, approaching the gate with an almost scientific eye. They claim while clerics and druids blind themselves to the mysteries of the gate, mages dive head first, taunting the cosmos to reveal its darkest secrets. Long before man or even fae, the first power from the gates was channeled through the immense capacity of the draconic language, known as Pleroma. This practice continues today and remains the most popular form of spell casting. Only with lifelong persistence and an innate gift for understanding such intricate mysteries can the extremely rare few channel anything more than cantrips.

GLOSSARY

After Enchantment (A.E.): The progress of time in this new era. The game begins for many in the year 508 A.E., just a little over five-hundred years from when the white gate reopened. Note that many communities retain their own system of recording, and there is no consistent calendar accepted by all.

Arkonnia: The region occupied by the continent of Africa in old Earth.

Alternate Quantum Vibrational States (AQVS): The generic term for any physical state out of phase with our own. Some scientists refer to the realms beyond the gates as AQVS and claim the Enchanted Disruption Field (EDF) derives from this. They also claim Attricana and Ixindar are portals to different dimensions or different universes. AQVS may also be the source of incorporeality. Those without a mind for acronyms call it 'aether.'

Amethyst: The first intelligence to emerge on Earth, Amethyst was a powerful dragon-god whose death ended the time of magic millions of years before man.

Attricana: The term given to the enchanted realm existing beyond the white gate. It hovers in high orbit between the Earth and the Moon and is bright enough to read by at night.

Bastions: Sanctuaries of men and machines. These are technological enclaves heavily fortified and densely populated. Most are echaphobic and forbid the use of magic within their walls. Each bastion stands as its own country, with very little to no contact with either the outside world or other bastions.

Blinder: A common derogative nickname mages and other magically imbued individuals call techans.

Canam: The continent previously occupied by Canada, the USA, and Mexico. It is commonly separated into Eastern Canam and Western Canam.

Corpus Continuity: This is the belief, mostly spiritually-based, that the humanoid form shared by humans and fae descends from a common origin. While some claim it related to echalogical influence—that humans look humanoid because of a lingering echo from the fantasy age—others claim a divine origin, proving the existence of God.

Disruption: This is magic's capacity to disrupt the laws of nature that technology requires to function. This process only occurs in one direction—technology cannot disrupt magic. The entire planet is covered in a disruption field (see **EDF**, below), though the risk of disruption is not uniform, meaning certain areas have a higher rate of disruption that others. Disruption is at its minimum within bastions.

Echa: The slang term for magic or 'enchantment'. It often refers to visual use of magic (spells and magically infused items) as well as being used as a blanket term for the fantasy world.

Echan: Someone touched by magic or using magic. This term often refers to humans specifically embracing the path of enchantment, and occasionally to fae in mixed communities. Some still consider this ugly bastardization of 'enchantment' derogatory, but it is now too widespread to do anything about.

Echagenics/Echalogy: The study in both echan and techan cultures of the similarities between humanity and its recorded history against the fae, dragons and their recorded history. This analyzes the obvious physical similarities between fae and man in conjunction with historical coincidences in their religions, legends, and mythologies. Theologians studying echalogy are referred to as echalogians.

Enchanted Disruption Field (EDF): The enchantment disruption field prevents radio communication, inhibits electrical conductivity and disrupts electronic circuits like an electro-magnetic pulse when extremely powerful magic is nearby. It also carries the tendency of jamming mechanical devices above a certain complexity (the limit of which varies based on the strength of the field).

Echalogical Influence: The belief that the history of the fae and dragons inspired human fiction through an immeasurable, unproven, undetectable echo which somehow resonated through sixty million years of evolution until minds advanced enough to understand that echo listened.

Lauropa: The term given to the region covering the lands of Europe west of the former Ural mountains.

First Hammer: The first impact that destroyed the dinosaurs and ended the first reign of magic. It initiated the Cretaceous-Tertiary extinction event.

Inosi: The region of Earth previously referred to as India.

Indaus: The region of land previously occupied by Australia and Indonesia.

Ixindar: The name given to the realm existing through the black gate. The gate is across the world, sitting half buried at the center of Kakodomania.

Kakodomania: A smooth obsidian glass which spreads radically from Ixindar. This realm envelops most of central Slav in permanent darkness.

Second Hammer: The second impact that destroyed the technological empire of man. It struck Siberia, exactly where Ixindar lay buried and exposed its influence to the world.

Slav: Often separated into Western and Eastern Slav, this region on Earth covers the majority of China and the entire former Eurasian region east of the Urals.

Southam: The region of Earth formerly known as South America.

Techa: The slang term given to the technology of man and is usually reserved for the bastions and their machines.

Techan: One using technology. Unlike echans, techans wear this title like a badge of honor.

Terros: The era before man, from when the dragons and fae appeared until their disappearance 65 million years ago.

U.C. (Universal Credits): A currency that most bastions and wandering techans trade in. Only techans accept and use uc. Unlike fantasy currency like gold and silver coins, uc has no face value.

Experts in dressing death had reconstructed what was left of her body. They placed a plastic smile on her face. The waxy finish of the skin convinced Aiden this was less his mother and more an imitation. Friends of his father, military veterans, brought the closed casket up. Father Tom, like the church, was new. One by one, friends neither he nor Martin knew offered hands and hugs. The mass was long with prayer passages reminding the mournful of god's grand purpose. Aiden ignored them. He never paid attention during regular mass; the words felt equally hollow now. Aiden hoped the blue eyed and golden scaled dragon would rip off the roof and whisk him to a new life. The church's packed capacity marched to the casket, touching, praying, crying.

Aiden was relieved to see the afternoon light as he followed the pallbearers out of the church. Martin offered tears for each weeper and wailer walking by. Aiden nodded and hugged but remained dry save an occasional sniff. More words of divinity leapt from a priest's lips as the casket slipped through the open maw of the marble wall at the necropolis.

Aiden looked scornful at the cross at the entrance. He wondered if God was real as well. An omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient being, benevolent and divine? Then why was she dead? Did the dragon break the rules? No creature shaped like that could fly, yet it did. No animal could breathe fire, yet it did. They couldn't exist, but there they were.

Father Tom's words, though carefully chosen, were no more uplifting than the compassionate whispers of distant family members.

"Men pale in the wisdom of God," he said to Aiden. "Not even I can understand why things happen when they happen. There is a reason for everything, Aiden. God has placed you on a path; there is something to learn from this. Even the worst of times are intended, by his will, to guide us. Occasionally, his hand must be firm. In times like this, our faith in his plan must remain strong."

"She was killed by a dragon, father." Aiden emphasized dragon as much as killed. Father Tom didn't say much after that.

As they exited the mausoleum, Aiden glanced at the wall, the periphery of the city. The monstrosity stood twenty stories and topped with battlements. It enclosed all ten thousand square kilometers of the city. It was only the latest iteration, with monuments of previous walls counted like tree rings to mark age and expansion. The last one was the tallest, the longest to build, and the most resolute in keeping everything that wasn't in, out. Aiden heard people calling it the crown. Years ago, when Aiden asked Martin what was beyond the wall, his brother had said, "Nothing you should care about."

He'd lied.

Aiden wished he had asked his mother. He wished he had discovered the truth by her telling him, by closing the codex and whispering, "It's all real." He should have followed what Leach had suggested and just asked her. Aiden wished that if the cost was to be that great, he would've preferred ignorance a few more years. Wishes kept Aiden a child. Wishes separated Aiden from his brother. Wishes were magical and romantic and had a peculiar tendency of coming true. Aiden wished his mother would come back, but that could never happen.

• • •

After a week, Aiden was back in class. The students kept their distance, even William. Lara was the only one that attempted to console him, offering a hug and asking how he was. No one else bothered, keeping a wide berth as the orphan passed them. To acknowledge his loss would be to admit that it occurred, that something abnormal could happen in an ordinary world. Were all the victims that day as disregarded? If only it had been cancer like Aiden's father, something average, common, and predictable. Lara offered him a half sandwich at lunch.

Martin sat with Aiden on the UTR. Such a wonder was lost on Aiden. He wanted to open a book and read but was afraid of Martin's reaction. Aiden just leaned forward, feeling the breeze across his face. He didn't close his eyes and imagine a dragon. He thought of when his imagination was all that was required.

What about magic and Elisa the elvish princess?

Aiden pondered what other fictions could invade his life.

Martin reached over and began to coddle his brother's hair.

• • •

It was a week before Aiden could sneak out of his new house. He waited until everyone had settled. Their house was cast in an early night as the sun dropped behind the crown. Past 10:30 pm, Aiden saw the crack of light peeking under the bottom of the bedroom door go dark. He heard his relatives conclude their evening bathroom rituals. The opposite bed was empty; Martin was hanging with friends that weekend, drinking and forgetting his problems. Their guardians offered him a wide berth. He would have taken it either way. Aiden knew Martin was doubltful to return for several hours, if at all, until morning.

The UTR station was a two-block walk. The few coins in his pocket would get him to Genai. The navigation screens were easy. The ride was forty minutes in an empty car. Each time the train stopped, Aiden leaned out to see if anyone was boarding. He tapped his feet uneasily, waiting for the seconds to pass before the doors closed. Just as Aiden's imagination had turned the train into a serpent, it was now unwillingly generating various subway denizens, none of them terribly friendly. The doors closed and shuffled Aiden to the next station, where he had to change lines, forcing a five minute wait alone on the platform. His head twitched in the direction of every little snap or pop. Distant laughs from drunken teens faded as they diverted down another street.

The next train contained a single passenger, an elderly olive-skinned man that stared incessantly at Aiden. Aiden looked up occasionally, wondering who would break the silence. Neither did. Aiden disembarked twenty minutes later.

He finally stopped at the concrete barricade that sealed Genai from the rest of the city. Every road had a gate any card-carrying member of the city could cross. Pedestrian walk-

ways were seldom watched with turnstiles installed to monitor traffic. Aiden wondered if the gates were meant to keep out or in. He dodged under the ratchet bar as there was no guard on hand to prevent him.

Genai bore no resemblance to any other district in the city. Unlike the rest of the city, organized and methodically laid out, Genai was a model of chaos. Roads split into dead ends; walkways looped around onto themselves. Buildings were built with wood and concrete, topped with ceramic tiles or gardens. The temple, a pagoda atop a pyramid, stood at the center of the town, towering the buildings around it. Aiden only caught it from the corner of his eye as he tracked the passing street signs.

Aiden found the address. Huangxia Street was an alley branching from the towering monument. The lights barely reached into the dark chasm Aiden had to venture into. Bottom lip quivering, Aiden forced himself deeper down the alley, waiting for his eyes to adjust.

A hundred feet in, he found it. The store was three stories, probably an apartment complex at one point. A large set of unlocked wrought iron gates stood ajar and portentous, like a patient basking shark. Behind them, tattered wooden doors tapped in the breeze. Aiden rechecked the address. From the outside it looked like either the place had been robbed or abandoned years ago. The sign above rocking like a metronome was in the same Asian type Aiden had read inside the codex. At least the number 23C was understandable.

Aiden realized that he hadn't considered what he was going to do next. He was half-way across town, past most adults' bedtime, staring at a store that appeared to have been forsaken. Even if it wasn't, it would still have been closed. He knew he wasn't being rational. Part of him was wishing he had stumbled on an elderly Asian man with a crooked wooden cane, round glasses, and a white fu-manchu beard running a 24-hour corner store stocked with a witch's brew of spices, frozen food, and bottled soda with a curtained-off backroom hiding wands, magic powders, and tiny creatures that looked adorable but acted as monsters if you angered them.

Aiden considered returning home. However, since the door was open, there was no harm in taking a peek. He saw only glimpses in the darkness as he peaked past the threshold. A few shelves sat in silhouette. Cheap tables and bamboo chairs lined one-half of the store. A dim lantern with a faint glow hung over an oak desk sitting at the other end. A few books waited open for a reader. Aiden willed himself through the iron jaw and past the tapping doors.

He squeaked a "hello" to announce himself but only managed a whisper. He snuck across the room and approached the oak desk. The immense open tome before him had broken its spine at the gutter like it sat at this page for a hundred years. The cover had the finish of marble and as Aiden scrapped his finger across the tail, he realized it was. He removed his glasses from his coat and tried to read...

Aiden could make out most of the words though a few were hidden in the shadow of the gutter. He was apprehensive about touching anything but fought through it to turn the nozzle on the lantern. The light grew bright and Aiden shifted his attention back to the book.

Aiden didn't notice the light form the lamp was growing brighter. He was engrossed in the words, wondering what puggs were, what sins the writer was referring to. The light began to drift slightly over Aiden's head, illuminating the gutter nicely. Aiden continued to read.

Nature offered man renewable resources, friendly denizens, and land uncontested by evil. He abolished this unwritten rule to care for the world. He committed unforgivable sins against nature when he embraced the machine. Technology offered man growth beyond what he could accomplish by natural means. He turned his back on life.

Aiden finished and then realized that the light on the page had shifted from his right to his left. He twisted slowly to spot the flicking flame hovering in the air beside his head. It had opened the lantern door, drifted gently from its cage, and moved closer to offer better illumination.

Aiden screamed and spun around, pinning himself against the desk. The spark of flame jumped from its spot and fluttered around him. It was no dragon, but Aiden's growing anxiety of being so far from home made him jumpy. He also didn't like bugs, and this thing moved very bug-like.

It floated to the book and then tapped the page repeatedly. Aiden didn't know how to respond, or even if he should. It didn't have legs or a head; it was just a lantern flame that had floated from its lantern. Aiden bent his head and leaned forward. It tapped the page again.

"What?" Aiden asked.

Tap. Tap.

"You want me to read?"

Tap.

Aiden's heart started to temper. The light drifted up over the book. Aiden stepped back to the desk. "If…you…insist."

He was about to look back down, then it occurred to him that a flame with no fuel source was floating in the air in front of him. "You can't be real," Aiden whispered. It bobbed in the air, floating on an invisible ocean. Aiden didn't know if that was an answer. "You shouldn't…exist."

"Its life has no meaning unless it can light the way for others," spoke the tall figure approaching from the shadow. Aiden jumped upon hearing him. "If only all things had such simple ambitions."

The man wasn't a tall figure with almond eyes and shriveled skin. This stranger towered over Aiden by several feet. His eyes were a radiant blue, skin darker than the room. He had fuzzy grey hair with matching whiskers under his chin, thin with a granite physique.

CHAPTER TWO: CREATION

Earth remains a crowded place. Millions of humans survived the holocaust they may or may not have brought on themselves. Added to that is the flood of peoples only previously believed to exist in fiction, with their own cultures matching closely to those portrayed in human mythology. In those ancient tales, the interlopers went by many names. To this day, humans still often refer to them by these labels, sometimes thought of as endearing, other times taken as insult.

How these peoples respond to them is based strictly upon the individual. Some take it a compliment being likened to noble and whimsical creatures of legend. Others despise the comparison. None of them ever match the mold precisely. Some may look the part, but their personalities may differ radically. Some exhibit traits from a variety of different legends while others are wholly unique without a mirror in mythology. There are also creatures birthed from enchantment which are new to this era, possessing no history from the previous age.

The following races (or more properly, species) are broken up into three categories:

- **Fae:** These are naturally born from magic, with no original primordial form to track evolution back to. They began as the original fae, but have been continuously slaves to magic's whim. As time progresses, they continually "devolve" into more tribal, animalistic forms. It is believed the initial fae have long since vanished. Fae peoples include descendant species like damaskans, laudenians, and narros. Although some claim they no longer fit into the category, the tilen can also be found here. In truth, there are dozens of fae species and only a few of the oldest fae actually know them all. Other variations are dealt with later as monsters.
- **Evolved:** Humanity stands as the only example of an evolved race (at least on Earth) that has achieved intelligence without the assistance of magic.
- **Spawn:** Spawn are those that were once normal evolved creatures that have succumbed to magic's influence and have been altered and enhanced. For the purposes of this chapter, spawn races listed here are those that have been pushed by enchantment into a form that possess enough intelligence to form a community. All non-natural creatures on Earth which are not fae or human are spawn. In Canam, only the kodiaks have advanced to the point of developing a culture.

THE LINE OF FAE

No one is certain how the fae appeared. Some insist they birthed from trees while others claimed the sky. Others profess neither, pointing to the soil as the source. Only dragons knew for certain and they regard such things as trivial, not worthy of remembrance. Considering the oldest fae maintain a connection with nature, the exact specifics of their origin seemed inconsequential (though never state that to a laudenian or a chaparran). The word "fae" is another controversial debate. While the etymology points to a simple "touched by magic" description, it shares its root with "faerie."

Echalogical influence appears in numerous cultures, connecting threads from various human legends and myths to the time of Terros. The fae would later influence mythologies previously thought unconnected. Though damaskans, laudenians, and chaparrans would fall under a wide range of Germanic elf legends, other distant cousins

would appear in Greek or Egyptian lore, with no apparent connection between these influences. Even obscure concepts of Attricana found its way into Chinese and Japanese myths. Most fae are aware how they were represented in human literature. Oddly enough, the traditional prejudices of fantasy tend to match the new reality as well. The more dominant fae look down on their lesser brethren, thinking of them only as outcasts—uncivilized and primitive offshoots prone to violence. Few survived the exodus, but magic kept its persistence and they reappeared soon after in the modern age, as if their introduction could not be stopped.

As fae continued to grow and develop, a rising concern emerged as the newer species appeared less developed and intelligent then their ancestors. Though some claim a higher status, there is no denying the recent branch species exhibit a primitive mentality, preferring to pillage and devour rather than develop and civilize. Fae wonder if they are doomed to devolve into mindless animals while man continues to grow and expand. The fae take pride in their rich culture and a growing fear has taken root that it may all bleed away in time.

Then there are the pagus, appearing with the Ixindar migration when the black sun passed over the world and settled in its new home in the previous age. Pagus break most of the rules associated with fae. They are the oldest species without a deviation branch of their own. After Mengus created them, they never changed, as if Attricana stopped talking to them.

In the present, the descendants of the original fae continue their traditions and beliefs with hardly a hiccup from the old time. Tenenbri dig, laudenians fly, narros protect, and damaskans remember. Meanwhile, their new ape-evolved neighbors continue to expand.

- *Body weight is shockingly low for the apparent mass of the body…*
- *An attempted biopsy of marrow from the scapula found the bone hollow. Interesting. Almost like a flying mammal. Will attempt another location.*
- *Other cavities located within the sternum and ribs. I know why birds have hollow bones , but how does a humanoid survive with a fragile…oddly enough the bone structure itself feel very rigid, stronger than expected, though still flexible.*
- *Bone mineral density test inconclusive, as it does not match with other findings.*
- *Finger bones also hollow but ulna and radius are solid.*
- *Final results: This fae's skeleton accounts for 8-10% of its total body mass, this is in comparison to an average human, where it is closer to 20%. In conclusion, this means this chaparran's skeleton is built more like a bird's than a human's.*

<Audio recording>
Autopsy on unidentified chaparran (excerpt), Angel
July 15th, 227 A.E.

RELATIONS AND TRADITIONS

Despite some common ground, there exist major cultural differences between human and fae nations. When the first fae encountered humans, they assumed that by understanding one group of men, they could comprehend the entire species, as there is little if any cultural deviation between fae of the same type.

Disastrous initial encounters between fledging fae and human communities in southern Canam soured relations for decades. Early chaparran encounters with mankind were so dire, it curdled the entire race's opinion of the 'monkey-folk,' a conflict that largely persists to this day; as the details of the incident are lost to human history, it seems unlikely ever to be resolved. Laudenians also share a resentful opinion of man after an unfortunate incident with the miners of Selkirk, the only bastion without an intrinsically adversarial relationship to the fantasy world. Selkirk had already benefitted from a successful first encounter with the narros years earlier. Though the miners were not immoral or wicked in any way, and tried their best to impress the elder elves, the humans' brash and unkempt nature fell afoul of the decorous and conceited attitude of the laudenians. They judged the whole of the human race upon that single meeting as offensive and unpleasant, and isolated as they are, the majority has had little reason to change that opinion.

In Southam, where humans were a minority, their bitter opinions of the fae came from constant conflict. With the exception of the narros, most fae in Southam think of mankind as little different from an animal, to be hunted or domesticated like any other. Thankfully, other encounters in the north were not nearly as soiled. Damaskans and narros discovered kindness and loyalty among the humans in their first encounters. They also found to their initial shock that human traditions change with each nation and that time and distance encourage greater deviations. After only a few decades, two separate human societies populated with identical humans would create distinct traditions and even new languages. Unlike the chaparrans, laudenians, and tenenbri, inconsiderate and inflexible in their traditions and their acceptance of other customs, damaskans and gimfen grew to tolerate and even welcome cultural diversity.

Thankfully, echalogical influence preserved many of the social customs from the ancient past, allowing a certain common ground in basic relations even when there is no other common language. Though each nation has their own cultural standards, there has never been a major diplomatic incident between nations over traditional practices. Hand shaking is understood, though damaskans abhor unnecessary physical contact with strangers despite having no concept of personal space, and gimfen wipe sweat from their face before shaking hands. Waving one hand to another is a greeting to many human cultures, and in fae nations, though gimfen hate any hand gesture where the palm is

exposed to them. The many variations of saluting and bowing are understood and even practiced by several fae peoples. Narros salute by touching the first knuckle of a clenched fist to the middle of their brow. Since damaskans don't officially recognize royalty (regarding 'king' as a mere job description) or religion, the concept of bending knee or prostrating before a lord or faith is unknown to them, causing accusations of disrespect. Meanwhile, gimfen kowtow to virtually anybody, including their own tools (considering how close their heads are to the ground, this is hardly an impedance or strain on their backs). Chaparrans will kneel but never bow.

Standards of politeness and decorum are also very different from group to group. Tenenbri curse and swear loudly during the course of their daily affairs, while laudenians are encouraged to speak diplomatically even in private. While damaskans are very reserved and frown on direct contact in public even between intimates, chaparrans and tenenbri are generally very exuberant and openly affectionate: chaparrans tend to limit their expressions to hand kissing and the brushing of noses and cheeks, but tenenbri think nothing of open public snogging. The basic kiss, thankfully, rarely changes and is still a sign of affection with both human and fae nations.

Laudenians never wear undergarments and usually keep to single layers, especially at home, regardless of company entertained; narros like to flaunt their self-mastery by wearing silk in the bitterest cold and layers of wool in the fiercest heat.

These traditions, though many and varied, are not considered serious faux pas when violated: most human and fae cultures are aware that other cultures are varied and intricate and will not greatly begrudge another for not understanding every nuance of their own (except laudenians, who take politeness very seriously and consider that it is an outsider's responsibility to fit in, rather than theirs to make a guest feel welcome).

However, there are many more serious tripping hazards. Holding one's hands up, palms open, is considered a sign of submission or greeting in many human cultures, and is repeated with both damaskans and laudenians. However, the narros take it as an insult, insinuating that one is "raising a wall" in defiance to the other. Other misunderstandings include the use of connecting the forefinger and thumb to form an "O" or the crossing of the index and middle fingers, both considered sexual insults with chaparrans and laudenians, though each sign insinuates opposite slurs between their cultures. To the tenenbri, all silent hand signals are considered rude, akin to talking about someone behind their back; even the most basic manual communication is frowned upon unless joined by a verbal accompaniment. On the other hand, laudenians despise noise and relish silence, thus screaming in joy is considered unforgivably coarse, regardless of the situation. Applause is welcomed among the tenenbri, accompanied by roars and foot pounding, while the laudenians show praise with simple bowing. Gimfen find both methods an inadequate expression of appreciation, and instead throw money. Showing only the middle finger is a human insult with no equivalent in any fae culture: however, one of the most bizarre misunderstandings involving hand gestures is the corna, or "horn" sign. This involves extending the two outer fingers from an otherwise closed fist. Though initially considered an insult and a symbol of the devil in many human cultures, it is well known throughout most fae nations as a sign of greeting, often used by fae to display racial pride. It is welcomed from humans, interpreted to saying "I respect you and your species." However, the thumb must be kept closed for this salutation, as extending it out the side indicates a request for intercourse. Since this discovery, some humans have created a variation, where placing the gesture unknowingly behind a human's head insults him or her as a "fae lover," a slur in some communities.

These are a few examples of the many cultural confusions that have arisen when fae mingle with humans. In places with extensive contact between cultures, boundaries tend to erode, although the fae nature is such that usually humans adopt fae practices rather than the other way around, though extended contact will wear away even the most hidebound fae's resistance to change. In Limshau, for instance, damaskans have adopted the practice of slapping the raised hand of another in celebration despite their general taboo on physical contact; this tendency has been exhibited by no other fae as far as anyone knows.

Most humans find the honesty of fae alarming. Damaskans display the tendency most, but all fae find the concept of untruth somewhat baffling (even the gimfen, whose fast-and-loose attitude toward fact is explained as being 'poetically true'). Though they might not answer a question directly or volunteer a secret willingly, they rarely lie directly (not that they are incapable, but it requires conscious effort; the closest thing the fae have to the concept of a pathological liar is called *aeshomu*, or 'mockingbird' – one who uses half-truths to mislead). The sometimes brutal application of this belief has ruffled more than a few feathers, especially among the noble human houses. This, accompanied by the fae's tolerance for alternate lifestyles and practices among their own people has made them unpopular with fanatical human religious movements. Many fae have been declared corrupt and wicked by church leaders. Some fae are guilty of this as well, considering mankind barbaric and primitive, regardless if he uses magic or technology. Some fae have accused man of being inferior, both in breeding and in brains. Humans have countered with similar accusations, adding that fae are tools of the devil, an image personified in the zealous ramblings of King Darius of Baruch Malkut and his disciples.

And yet, many fae nations maintain a positive relationship with humans in spite of the massive casualties the fae suffered at the hands of humans in the first century and their capture and enslavement by raiders and evil nations, a practice as prevalent now as it

AGING EFFECTS

RACE	MIDDLE AGE [1]	OLD [2]	VENERABLE [3]	MAXIMUM AGE
Chaparran	400 years	800 years	3,000 years	+4d% years
Damaskan	300 years	500 years	1,000 years	+4d% years
Gimfen	100 years	300 years	400 years	+3d% years
Human	35 years	53 years	80 years	+2d20 years
Laudenian	500 years	1,000 years	5,000 years	None
Narros	250 years	400 years	900 years	+2d% years
Tenenbri	200 Years	300 years	500 years	+4d% years
Tilen	300 years	400 years	500 years	+3d% years

1 At middle age, –1 to Str, Dex, and Con; +1 to Int, Wis, and Cha.
2 At old age, –2 to Str, Dex, and Con; +1 to Int, Wis, and Cha.
3 At venerable age, –3 to Str, Dex, and Con; +1 to Int, Wis, and Cha.

was when it began 350 years ago. With the fae's long life and even longer history, the intricacies of their culture are so extensive that the rare humans who marry a fae can take the entirety of their extended lives learning the details and still be surprised at the end.

FAE DESCENDANTS

After dragons, the first species born on Earth were the fae. No one remembers what they originally looked like or how many there were, for the original fae vanished hundreds of thousands of years before the First Hammer struck (though they must have had pointed ears and sharp features, as these dominant features still survive in all their descendants). Their susceptibility to magic altered their original form and they broke off into dozens of smaller offshoots relatively quickly. These offshoots remain genetically compatible and physically similar in basic ways, for all that they are commonly considered separate species. They are usually bipeds with ten fingers and ten toes, stereoscopic vision and hearing, no unusual organs (though they lack certain vestigial ones, and those they have often work in unusual ways) and sexual reproduction. Human scientists, even after a few centuries of examination, have always failed to determine how fae resemble evolved apes to such an extent. Although it has been commonly agreed upon that alien life would evolve naturally along similar lines, the parallels between fae and man are too numerous to be considered a coincidence.

Those believing in a creation by a divine hand take the numerous similarities in enchanted species of fae and the evolved species of man prove the existence of God, a philosophy known as Corpus Continuity. The humanoid form, consisting of binocular vision, binaural hearing, base ten appendages, erect stature, and mammalian physiology match the fae species exactly, a species not evolved from primitive animals but formed from magic itself. With the exception of the pointed ears and the variations of fae species when they adapt to their environment, there still remain remarkable similarities scientists cannot explain. Because fae arose first, many believers in Corpus Continuity also subscribe to Echalogical Influence. Those of faith on both sides believe in the idea that God liked the humanoid form but tried different ways to succeed at it. Scientists refuse to acknowledge this and believe a genetic reason exists for the similarity. To them echalogical influence may be the reason itself--the previous age influencing evolutionary paths to make humans resemble their long dead progenitors.

Another popular theory claims it to be a coincidence; base ten appendages, binocular vision and stereoscopic hearing simply makes sense and that all intelligent life will eventually move towards that end. Others cling to the prevalent theory that the fantasy world doesn't exist at all, only emerging because of man's desire for it to exist: thus, man dictates the physique of fae, rather than the other way around.

Fae all share several common qualities. They are peaceful within their own species (i.e., laudenians never fight laudenians). They are also monogamous and loyal to their mates; divorce is virtually non-existent, and though remarriage upon the death of a spouse is not unheard of, neither is it common. When single, they are also known to be somewhat promiscuous. Even the laudenians, with their strict heritage and tradition, do not consider sex for pleasure either sinful or immoral between consenting non-bonded adults. Although they denounce the use of sex slaves by human masters, fae do not prohibit pre-bonded (pre-marital) sex. Prostitution is rare given their sexual freedom, but it has been known to occur. There are virtually no crimes dealing with vices in fae cultures: as they are immune to the ravages of addiction, most things humans would consider vices simply are not harmful to them either personally or culturally. Additionally, they do not consider homosexuality a sin and bonded same sex couples occur openly in all fae communities. Some observers claim fae are all pansexual, though this is not entirely the case: most exhibit distinct preferences, but often these preferences are based on previous exposure rather than biological imperative. Some human nations frown on these freedoms and expressions, especially within those nations that use religion as a device of fear

to keep the population in line (a tendency not exhibited in any fae nation).

These non-strictures apply when the fae cultures are allowed to govern themselves. In some locations, where fae are not in places of authority, they abide by the rules of the nation they inhabit, usually without complaint. As a rule, all fae abhor social conflict and will do anything they can to prevent it, though the extremes they will go to vary from type to type: laudenians and chaparrans will generally remove themselves (or the offender) from the equation, damaskans and narros will attempt to mediate, the boisterous tenenbri will turn the conflict into a formal debate with clear parameters for victory, and the accommodating gimfen will quite happily concede anything to an intractable enough opponent and find some way of making up lost ground later.

Studying sample 345B
Subject: Larena Senarius, Damaskan (Volunteer)

Analyzing sample discovered a standard long polymer of nucleotides in a double helix configuration. Initial investigation found the helix to be super coiled. Twenty-three pairs of chromosomes were identified. However, chemical imperfections have been located along several pairs. A few nucleotides are missing in key areas for life to sustain itself.

Defects have been detected on the adenine, thymine, and cytosine. Five copying errors have been located, leading evidence towards extensive somatic mutations of a severe variety. At least two chromosome inversions appear along the strand. Many of these mutations seem of a dominant phenotype. These anomalies cover the spectrum of patterned genetic diseases, some being autosomal dominant, while another is autosomal recessive, and yet another will be mitochondrial.

Thinking logically towards this, the patient should be affected by sickle cell anemia, hypophosphatemia, and leber's hereditary optic neuropathy. I also personally identified two other defects connecting to hemophilia and spinal muscular atrophy. This subject should be dead. I have confirmed that EDF had no part in corrupting this data.

I am in no way experienced with this level of genetic abnormality. By all accounts, the patient should not be able to walk, talk, or even breathe, let alone hunt and have a family. I will thank the volunteer for her services and forward my data to the Tilthe. Personally, I find this breakdown of scientific reasoning disturbing and hope that my data is flawed.

Walter Krause
Porto Medical Journal, smuggled to York
January 2, 495 A.E.

FAE RACIAL TRAITS

There are several features applying to all of the fae descendants:

UNIVERSAL FAE RACIAL TRAITS

Echan: All fae (except pagus) are tied to chaotic energies of the white gate of Attricana. You disrupt technology on you and around you. You have a saturation value of 20 which can never drop below this value unless your soul switches from Attricana to the negative energies of Ixindar (see **Corruption**).

Immunities: You are immune to all natural disease, and cannot be a carrier of such ailments. You are unaffected by all genetic diseases and disorders, but not mutated genes from radiation or enchanted viruses. Furthermore, you are unaffected by natural psychological or behavioral ailments such as addiction or schizophrenia, though concerted attacks on your sanity may still affect you. Enchanted diseases and conditions can still affect you, as can natural diseases that have been imbued with magic.

Light Sleeper: Unlike humans, fae require little sleep and they jostle awake with surprising ease. You can sleep comfortably in any position and maintain balance while doing so. You require only four hours of sleep every 24 hours, which may be non-consecutive. Like all living creatures, you require REM sleep, but this only requires four hours of consecutive, comfortable sleep every three days. If you are not allowed comfortable sleep in order to reach a REM state, sleep deprivation will eventually set in. You can sleep in heavy armor for three days before fatigue sets in. You gain a +5 racial bonus against sleep effects and can make Listen checks while asleep without penalty.

Fae Iron: A specific ratio of lead and iron is extremely toxic to all fae. It is a forbidden substance, outlawed in most civilized communities. You are vulnerable to fae iron (you take half again as much damage, rounding up, from attacks with weapons made from fae iron).

CHAPARRANS

RACIAL TRAITS
Average Height: 5'8" – 6'3"
Average Weight: 80-120 lbs.
Average Starting Age: 100 years
Estimated Life Expectancy: 3,000 years

Ability Scores: +2 Wisdom; +2 Constitution or +2 Strength; -2 Charisma
Size: Medium; as a Medium creature, you have no special bonuses or penalties due to your size.
Speed: 30 feet; also see *Brachiate.*
Vision: Low-Light Vision (you can see twice as far as a human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. You retain the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions).
Languages: Chaparra and one human language. If you have a high Intelligence score, you can choose any additional languages you want.
Racial Skill Bonuses: +2 Stealth, +2 Survival

Brachiate: You have a climb speed equal to your normal speed when climbing trees. You gain a +5 bonus to Acrobatics and Climb checks when moving

through difficult forest terrain. You can move through difficult forest terrain without a reduction in speed.

Chaparran Weapon Proficiency: You are proficient with the longbow, the shortbow, and one one-handed melee weapon of your choice.

Listen to the Wind: Your perceptions are so keen you could use an enemy's breathing in the dark to aim your shots. When wielding a shortbow or longbow, you may use Wisdom as your primary ability for all attack and damage rolls.

Long Shot: The ranges for any shortbow or longbow you wield are doubled.

Natural Habitat: You are one with the forest. While you are in a forest, you gain a +2 racial bonus to Perception checks and your Combat Maneuver Defense and you cannot be surprised. When outside of a forest, you suffer a -1 penalty to initiative.

Surprisingly Resilient: While you are not wearing heavy armor or carrying a shield, you gain a +1 dodge bonus to AC and Reflex saves.

Weald Walk (Su): You are able to vanish into the forest and reappear elsewhere to assault your opponent. If you are within 5 feet of a tree, you can use a swift action to teleport up to 50 feet to another tree within

range. You emerge within 5 feet of the targeted tree. The trees must be rooted in the ground. This movement does not provoke opportunity attacks. You can do this as many times a day as your Wisdom modifier.

The huntress sat perfectly still in the canopy above as the prey blundered carelessly along the forest path. Though they bore no signs of their allegiance, she recognized their bearing: slavers, almost certainly from the despoiler nation to the east, invading her forest in search of chattel. The more fools they. The huntress stood silently, balancing effortlessly on the thin branch, and fitted an arrow to her bow. The first human died with the arrow in his throat. His companions turned sharply at his last gurgling scream, and then looked up at the ominous shadow perched among the leaves. " Ambush!" the leader yelled, drawing a crossbow. "Get—" his words were cut off as he suddenly felt the pressure of a knife at his throat. He could have sworn the elf hadn't moved, and yet somehow she had fallen from the trees and crossed the clearing in the blink of an eye.

"Who's next?" whispered the chaparran as she melted back into the trees, leaving the slaver captain bleeding out onto the mossy ground.

Hiding in the deep woods across the world, the chaparran fae have evolved concealment to an art form. Where the laudenians are merely disdainful of those unlike themselves, chaparrans are downright xenophobic and hostile to outsiders. Their kind date back further than anyone can recall, including themselves, for they keep few records, and almost none of these written - where other fae take pride in their books and scrolls, chaparrans seldom write anything down. Chaparrans believe most other fae have forgotten their origins. They believe that the original fae were birthed from the forests and should always remain tied to them. The chaparrans live almost exclusively among the woods, growing towers, temples, and whole communities from the soil and roots. Their mere presence encourages vegetation, and the tallest, thickest trees in the world grow where chaparrans live.

Most communities are small. With such an obscure people, accurate numbers are impossible to come by. Estimates range from 80,000 to 800,000 chaparrans across the world (even the most optimistic guess falls just shy of a million), scattered among a thousand forests of varying size. Chaparrans mostly keep to themselves, refusing to become involved in the affairs of outsiders. One could walk through a chaparran forest without ever knowing of their presence. Unless threatening fae or tree, trespassers often cross without worry or encounter: more nefarious individuals vanish after entering. They defend the forests when necessary with their inestimable archery skills. Their bows and arrows grow naturally from wood, a result of their symbiosis with the trees around them.

Their outward emotional displays are reflected mostly in their music and dance. They pound beats into fallen logs with amazing speed and augment those sounds with kinetic syllables of phrases strung so fast as to make the words meaningless. Chaparrans' passion for dance knows no equal. A chaparran's heartbeat will increase to virtually that of a hummingbird in the grip of a dance. Bodies move almost violently, with fists pounding and legs striking, only their absolute discipline preventing injury to others. Watching a chaparran dance charges the soul and pumps the heart.

The actions of the past are simply covered up. Rings of wood grow over old wounds, protecting damage. As long as the wood grows, all is good. The trees spoke of terrible sins of man committed upon nature, the raping of the earth to construct false idols. But man refuses to hear the song of the wood, even now. Man ambles unaware. When they walk into the forest, they fear. They fear the unknown. They fear resentment and retaliation. They walk oblivious to the truth.

Nature forgave man.

Like a mother forgiving all the sins of the son, nature absolved man of his past transgressions. The Hammer was an act of God, not of nature. They seldom got along anyway. The mother created life. God gave them ambition. God punished them. Nature simply gave life another chance, forcing the planet to erase and try again. Man should consider himself blessed. If they embrace the ways of nature, following us into the wood, speaking the ageless tongue, we would – as would the tress – welcome them into open arms…and they shall never fear again.

Ambition. It should be a sin.

Sylvanakassus
356 A.E., from a speech

Every move denotes a meaning others seldom understand. To outsiders, the dance looks chaotic with thrashing appendages and whirling bodies without care for people or objects around. Those involved in the dance hardly open their eyes, confounding outsiders as to how the dancers don't crash into each other. All chaparrans know this dance and practice it daily. The art connects to a form of martial art called Manora Chaparra, believed to purge the darkness from their souls, allowing them to fight with clean spirits. This form developed after the First War. The majority of the pagus created on the night of migration came from chaparrans and the fae left behind swore an oath to eliminate their cursed brothers from the world. Their obsession continues to this day.

The chaparrans believe the fae are not devolving but becoming one with nature. Their descendant offshoots are not necessarily violent, but more xenophobic, becoming increasingly skittish of outsiders. They also grow more connected with nature, even to the point of exhibiting animal physical traits. Chaparrans respect their descendants and scold the laudenians for hanging onto what they call a "bankrupt obsession."

When chaparrans die, tradition decrees that the body must be dropped into a grave without a coffin. After prayers are finished and before dirt pushed over, a

single acorn is placed in the mouth. This seed always grows, despite surrounding competition and available water. These trees grow taller and wider that any grown from nature and many claim the great temples of Jibaro and Libanus emerged from fallen chaparran priests. This tradition extends to wandering chaparrans as well, and travelers across the world always know where one is buried by the massive tree dwarfing all those around. Such lone sentinels have appeared in deserts, atop great peaks, and even in caves, declaring to all those who see it that a chaparran rests there. They contend that their souls will move from wood to flesh every generation. Killing one simply moves their soul to a tree for its lifetime. After an era, the soul returns to flesh.

They assumed men all acted alike. Trees were just wood to us, construction and kindling, as worthless as dirt, trodden on with equal disdain. I remember and recounted a different view. I spoke of ancient lore, where the tree stood tall in its rightful place of worship. I brought up the Garden of Eden, the tree of life, and the tree of knowledge, though I do admit starting with that later anecdote probably wasn't wise. I moved onto the Kabbalah's Sefirot tree, depicting the map of creation. I mentioned the Ashwath Vriksha, the banyan tree that represented eternal life in the Hindu religion. I even remembered the Lote tree at the end of the seventh heaven. Of course, I refrained from mentioning Christmas trees as I imagine that may really upset them. When I spoke of the ash tree Yggdrasill from Norse and how it supported the heavens, I finally got the attention of the priests. I told how the tree connected the sky, the earth, and the underworld together, and how its existence was vital to the entire universe—referred in popular myth as the World Tree. I even added that the last humans would survive Ragnarök by hiding within its branches.

These are all legends and taste of the flamboyance my ancestors were known for. One of the priests scolded my scoff, declaring a similar concept in their faith. They claimed Berufu, the mother of all fae, planted a single tree to remind the fae where they came from and where they were destined to end. Berufu proclaimed any who climbed to its tallest branch would feel her breath and understand the world's true purpose and form.

This great tree cannot be found in this forest or any other on this side of the planet. It grows from another on the far side of the world. It is not a stout tree with a trunk of mighty girth. It resembles the trees seen here, though indigenous to that land. It towers through clouds, upon clouds, reaching a point where one could observe the curvature of the planet. This tree can neither be seen by flyers or from the ground at any distance. A tree growing to the stratosphere would be a grand climb indeed.

Sugi Gantilanna
The New Irminsul

Physical Description: Chaparrans are only slightly taller than damaskans, on par with the average human, but give the illusion of much greater size due to their increased muscle mass and physical stamina. Of all the fae descendants, the chaparrans have the greatest spectrum of skin tones, from light tan to ebony black. Their ears are short and flush with their heads, making them almost indistinguishable from humans at a distance. A chaparran's eyes usually are of green and bluish hues and they will often pierce their ears in several areas and color their bodies with tattoos, especially around the face, shoulders, and back. Fae in general remain youthful in appearance throughout their long lives, but this tendency is the least pronounced among the chaparrans due to their constant exposure to the elements. While chaparrans spend most of their lives with an apparent age ranging from a human young adult to a healthy adult in their late 30s, those past their second millennium more often resemble a human in their sixties. Most chaparrans have brown hair (dark brown is most common, but any brunette shade is possible), though a few have black or even red hair. This is curly more often than not, and generally worn short or in tight dreadlocks to avoid catching on branches. All their joints are capable of hypermobility, and a chaparran's big toes, while not fully opposable, are significantly more dexterous and strong than normal, enabling them to grasp branches equally well with feet and hands and giving them improved balance in the tree canopy; a chaparran archer hanging upside down from a branch to set up a shot is a truly fearsome sight. They often wear furs and pelts, adding to their girth, but exposing a great deal of skin to maintain agility. They hate adorning themselves with gems or shiny rocks and seldom wear metal of any kind.

Playing a Chaparran: Chaparrans are the best species to play because they are the most like the traditional elves of legend. They have the oldest history and the most exotic beliefs. They are proud and powerful and are the envy of many others. To play a chaparran is to wholly embrace the fantasy world and all of its possibilities.

Chaparrans seldom seek adventure outside their forests. Of all fae peoples, they and the tenenbri are the least encountered outside of their regions. Since only a laudenian-chaparran crossbreed can result in chaparran offspring, few outcasts can be identified as such. Only in extremely rare cases do chaparrans brave the outside world. Only the young and curious disobey their culture and heritage to embark on such a voyage.

A player creating a chaparran should be aware of their propensity of solitude. Though some will obviously forge and protect friendships with outsiders, they still prefer fae to humans and seldom invest time or emotion in relationships with the latter. Chaparrans rarely bond with non-chaparrans and less so with humans.

Chaparrans avoid heavy armor and favor wooden weapons over metal; if metal is unavoidable, the weapon will be crafted with a wooden grip. For most, the bow is the weapon of choice, followed by the spear, fighting knives, or even the scythe; while chaparrans will use swords, they prefer makana (a wooden club inset with sharp protrusions of stone or metal).

Many assume chaparrans are utterly wild in demeanor and decorum. In truth, they are quite civilized and maintain good grooming and health.

Unlike other fae, known for being austere, chaparrans wear their emotions on their sleeves…if they actually had sleeves. Everyone knows immediately when a chaparran is upset. Thankfully, this openness spreads to more upbeat emotions as well. Chaparrans enjoy the outdoors and need to see the sun to orientate themselves. Without this, they often grow confused about the time of day, sleeping at odd hours for random lengths. Chaparrans also have the dual disadvantage of being both agoraphobic and claustrophobic: they are intensely uncomfortable outside of a forest, edgy almost to the point of uselessness in a dungeon or town, but virtually unstoppable in their forest homes.

Chaparrans are also highly religious and commonly profess a faith in Berufu, the fae mother god who gave life to their ancestors. Nearly all chaparrans openly pray to the woods every morning, noon, and night, thanking her for their life.

A chaparran player character is one who wishes to see what lies beyond the trees of home. They may still be skittish of strangers but brave enough to take chances where others would run away. Chaparrans have a flight instinct and will bolt instead of standing ground unless allies or the innocent are threatened.

Names: Unlike other fae, often taking human-like names to better associate with the human world, chaparrans refuse to do so. Their names, like all fae, are personal and are only meant to be heard by pointed ears. A chaparran's family name merges with their given name: this full name is usually four or more syllables long and always features both hard consonants and hissing sibilants (multiple instances of K, G, or S when spelled in the English orthography) interspersed with elongated, rich vowels. Since they don't adopt human names and refuse to let humans address them by their given titles unless they are true intimates, most simply ask that outsiders refer to them as "Krysid" which means "Fae-Born" in their language (it was more than a century after mankind's initial contact with chaparrans before the humans figured out why they all had the same name). With proven comrades, the chaparran *may* permit a human to address them by an adopted title which describes their accomplishments or role in society. Under no circumstances will any human, even the closest of friends, be allowed to use a shortened form of their true name.

Example Truenames: Brassekonnas, Jassakerak, Killikassawar, Marakenassa, Taneggoras, Satthrassin

Example Titles: Darawren ("Earth-seer"), Hiinodorran ("Fire Dancer"), Kitarri ("Black Bow"), Merawrak ("Swift Birdcatcher"), Nathash ("Red-Bellied Salmon"), Shikkakarri ("Deer Stalker")

DAMASKANS

RACIAL TRAITS
Average Height: 4'8" – 5'7"
Average Weight: 70-100 lbs.
Average Starting Age: 100 years
Estimated Life Expectancy: 1,500 years

Ability Scores: +2 Dexterity; +2 Intelligence or +2 Wisdom; -2 Strength
Size: Medium. As a Medium creature, you have no special bonuses or penalties due to your size.
Speed: 35 feet
Vision: Normal
Languages: Damaskan, English. If you have a high Intelligence score, you can choose any additional languages you want.
Racial Skill Bonuses: +2 Acrobatics, +2 Knowledge (History)

Ambidexterity: The attack penalties for your off-hand are the same as your primary hand for the purposes of two weapon fighting or if forced to fight with your off-hand.

Encyclopedic Knowledge: You can take 10 on any trained Knowledge check in any situation. This takes no additional time.

Fearless: You gain a +2 racial bonus to all Will saves.

Gravity Focus (Ex): As a free action, you are able to enter a state of heightened awareness. You can do this as many times a day as the higher of your Dexterity or Intelligence bonuses. Until the start of your next turn, you gain the following benefits:

- Increase your speed by +10 feet.
- Gain a +5 bonus to Acrobatics and Climb checks.
- Gain a +2 bonus to AC and a +5 bonus to all Ref saves.
- Enemies gain no attack bonuses against you from flanking, if on higher ground, or if you are flat-footed, kneeling, sitting, or prone.

Polyglot: You gain a +4 bonus to Linguistics checks.

Tachygraphy: You can write any language you know in damaskan orthoglossy, which can be written five times faster than any other script (non-damaskans can learn to read and write orthoglossy by learning damaskan, but cannot learn to write it at full speed). You can write any other script (except Pleroma) at double speed.

Tactless: Damaskans are honest and speak often without thinking. You suffer a -2 penalty to all Diplomacy checks against non-damaskans.

Think Before Acting: Your intellectual pursuits, far from impeding your combative edge, have only honed it. You may use Intelligence as your primary ability for attack and damage rolls with all ranged attacks. You can also use Dexterity in place of Strength when determining your Combat Maneuver Defense

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I sidestepped the bravo easily and delivered a precise chop to the back of his neck. He went down without a sound. The remaining thugs regrouped, hefting their tetsubo nervously. One came for me, but I ducked and threw myself to the side, one finger catching ahold of the shelf on the wall beside me. Twisting in mid-air, I scuttled backwards up the shelf, noting as I did so that I had been remiss in dusting this section of the stacks and reminding myself to attend to it once I had dealt with these hooligans. Drawing two shuriken from an inside pocket of my leather coat, I removed two of the remaining combatants with accurate strikes to the hamstrings, then drew my blades and looked down at the last one. His downed companions were moaning most annoyingly. "Did you not read the notice?" I asked the band of ruffians. "It plainly says 'silence in the library.'"

The first Damaska, before the Hammer fell, was the oldest empire in history. After the gate re-opened, damaskans rebuilt their civilization, though split into two different empires on opposite sides of the planet. In the ruins of the laughably termed 'old world'of Lauropa, Damaska was restored to mimic its former glory. Conversely in Canam, the fae erected the empire of knowledge, Limshau. Because of the peculiar homogeneity of all fae, both nations looked initially identical. All damaskans favor stone or adobe for building, rather than wood. Most of their cities are built into tall mountains or next to cliffs and always facing a major river or body of water. Where they differ is that Damaska's cities expand with abandon across open fields stopped only by water and cliffs, whereas Limshau restricts its cities with stout walls. Damaska's cities scrape the sky with sharp spires—a landscape of porcupine quills—while Limshau's jigsaw of flat, interlocking, and tessellating buildings allow one to sit atop a roof and watch an unobstructed sunset. The Damaskan fae across the ocean in Lauropa wear looser clothes, wield different weapons, and are more open in public, whereas the Canam damaskans are more reticent, with clothing and weaponry largely influenced by the former Asiatic human cultures. Since fae never change unless branching into a new species, this deviation in Canam is solely due to their interactions with humanity, a species almost completely foreign to the Damaskan Empire in the East.

Damaskans are the most common, most often seen, and most widely circulated fae in the world. Though the people of both Damaska and Limshau are considered the same species, damaskans from Limshau often refer to themselves as 'Limshau fae' to emphasize their cultural distinctions. Damaskans are also one of the few fae species to permit the term 'elf' to be applied to them, often using it themselves. Of all fae, damaskans are the most numerous with the largest kingdoms. Because of their circulation over the globe, no one can be sure how many damaskans live on Earth, but it's probably between 2 and 3 million, although only about half reside in Canam. Narros hold rights to the largest armies, but damaskans claim all other records. They have the most artisans, the most diplomats, the most historians, and the most architects. Their wizards all employ the book as their totem, which makes them hard to distinguish from others since nearly all damaskans (at least in Limshau) carry books through their day-to-day activities.

Damaskans migrated across the globe very quickly. Even though Damaska remains the largest fae empire, dozens of others appeared in a matter of decades. The Damaskan and Limshau empires remain loyal to each other, though not often in contact.

Damaskans loathe pagus as well as the majority of the lesser fae due to their destructive tendencies, but if they encounter a free pagus with no overtly hostile intent they will not distrust him instinctively as another species might. They have a deep mutual respect for dragons. Limshau places its trust in their proven alliances with the gimfen, chaparrans, and humans – specifically with the kingdoms of Abidan and Kannos. They are generally indifferent to other species in general, preferring to judge individuals on a case-by-case basis. Limshau is currently in conflict with Baruch Malkut due to said nation's policy on fae salvery but war remains undeclared.

Each individual damaskan possesses an encyclopedic knowledge on a subject defined by their individual tastes. Where those from Damaska prefer internal recall for this information, citizens of Limshau insist on writing all of it down. Until the damaskans appeared, fae seldom recorded anything. Their history was marred with inaccuracies, legends claimed as fact, or facts discredited as myth. This was part of the reason why fae history from the time of Terros is so vague and sporadic. Alas, damaskans could bring nothing with them to the new world and had to reconstruct their past from memory – and although their memories are good, they are not eidetic. One distinction damaskans are clear to make is that they never volunteer their own opinion in their papers or journals, nor clog the books with judgment, sentiment, or meaningless diatribe. Where humans believe any individual can stand on a box and preach prose worthy of print, damaskans remain quiet, recording events objectively.

The damaskan written form is substantially different from other fae languages. Damaskans know both the classical cursive and a shorthand variation they invented called *sonna-cliano*, which has been translated into English as 'orthoglossy'. Every damaskan from both empires knows this writing style. Using orthoglossy allows a damaskan to write five times faster than any other scholar. With some effort, non-damaskans can be taught this writing style, but its intricacies require considerable study to master, and those without a damaskan brain simply cannot manage the mental gymnastics required to write it at full speed.

Damaskan musicians prefer quiet, more subdued music as a rule, and favor woodwind instruments. Their preferences in the physical arts tend naturally toward calligraphy, followed by the arts of illustration: drawing, illumination, woodcuts, lithographs, and the like. Lauropan damaskans maintain a certain interest in architecture; Canam damaskans have largely substituted this for an appreciation for the aesthetics of craft and engineering.

When they die, their bodies are burned and scattered to the wind.

The world evolves.

Magic and science are interchangeable. Interpreting one from the other depends on your vantage point. Elves, much like any other intelligent race aware of its own progress, observe life from a sword's edge, with the past and the future on either side. I fear elves never bother to walk this line, choosing to live in old ways. Humans arose and – given the chance – failed at greatness. Their weakness is mortality. Man's obsession with compressing time doomed their species. How I respect those humans that can sit for a week under a tree and pray, close one's eyes for a whole day without opening them. What courage that must take for a species so short lived. Most elves, including those reprehensible laudenians, don't appreciate the small victories in other species. The path remains the same.

Utilizing our patience, elves gain the opportunity to learn from Man's mistakes. We live enchanted. Magic flows through us but does not control us. Earth is a shared planet. Only by uniting and merging our knowledge with those of humans, narros, and gimfen, can we build a future.

Limshau Historical Entry 2534A
Ravenar Limshau IV

Physical Qualities: A damaskan's eyes are slightly slanted and have epicanthic folds similar to humans of Asian descent. Their ears taper straight out the sides of the skull to a very sharp point and have a tendency to flutter and vibrate slightly depending on mood. They generally have darker hair tones and seldom grow it beyond shoulder length. Their skin ranges from light tan to olive color with eyes of brown and grey. When reaching adulthood, damaskans still resemble human young adults barely out of puberty (17-19 in human years). Even at their most venerable age, damaskans don't often look a day past 30 and none look older than 40 when they finally shuffle on. Because of a peculiarity of the damaskan brain, they are able to employ both lobes simultaneously, and their analytical and creative centers are diffuse rather than localized. This makes

them functionally ambidextrous, as well as enabling them to work on one project while thinking about another. Damaskans frequently wear new clothes, or at least pressed and clean. They abhor getting dirty.

They also rarely pierce their skin or adorn their bodies with tattoos, although this has little to do with any philosophy other than just not seeing the point.

Playing a Damaskan: Damaskans are clearly the best species to play because they are built on the strengths of being a fae without the arrogance and xenophobia of other peoples like the laudenians and chaparrans. They are the easiest to get along with, are possessed of a wide range of talents suited for almost any class, and have a virtuous path ingrained in their soul—the pursuit of knowledge. What path could be more honorable? They are civilized, numerous, and are the least stigmatized of all the fae species.

A player creating a damaskan should be aware of their timid nature. Damaskans are often reserved, seldom speaking out of turn, but can be prone to sudden bursts of emotion when finally pushed. Some might call them shy, often staying quiet during conversations, but in reality they merely prefer to speak only when having something useful to say. Until then, they keep back and avoid making their presence intrusive. This makes them appear distant, detached, and even cold.

They are not actually emotionless, but prefer not to be demonstrative except in private or when not on duty. When dedicated to a task, they think of little else and speak only when necessary; however, get them started on raw knowledge or ask them to recite some nugget of information and they talk like uncorking a champagne bottle.

They believe in discipline and order and find disorganization of any kind unsettling, and deliberate falsehood sets their teeth on edge. Damaskans seldom understand fear and often engage in fights they know they cannot win to save the life of another. They also place an unnatural level of security on the written word, putting themselves in harm's way to protect a book; even

the less scholarly-inclined from Damaska find this urge nearly unavoidable.

Due to the shape of their ears, damaskans avoid wearing helmets whenever possible, and because of their slight builds favor lighter armor over heavy plate. Limshau fae prefer light, form-fitting leather armor with a generally Asian cut, and their preferred weapons are similarly of oriental styling; all damaskans favor polearms or light weapons that can be dual-wielded whenever possible.

Damaskans maintain a deep pride in whichever beliefs they profess and are known to defend their convictions to the death, but at the same time they do not consider it their place to criticize another person's beliefs. Due to their large numbers, damaskans follow several belief systems. The largest percentage worship the dragon god, Amethyst, believing his soul exists beyond the gate. Others worship the fae god Berufu, while others follow the earth god Oaken. A smaller number have even embraced a few human faiths. But regardless of their proclivities, a truly pious damaskan is a rarity: less than 10% of damaskans worldwide endorse any religious belief, and fewer still are inclined to proselytize what faith they do have.

For most, the pursuit of knowledge takes the place of other spiritual concerns. Damaskans welcome adventure for the sheer experience of it, and often engage on what has been sometimes termed a 'scholarly pilgrimage' to discover new learning. Some also embark on quests for their people. A common sight in open echa, damaskans are ever expanding and rely on the adventuring spirit of their people to establish a growing civilization. They react to threats to knowledge in much the same way that zealots react when their beliefs are challenged: threatening to put flame to parchment is the surest way to enrage such fae.

Limshau is repeating events of Earth's past and will fall under a hailstorm of fire and brimstone the like of which only god has seen before. Those with ears pointed and round commit the most grievous sins of hedonism. Its capital and all its cities both walled and open are cursed by god. It is too late for prayer, for they are all doomed.

This damnation spreads to all those within the white walls, especially the impenitent human sodomites who fall for the pleasures of the sinned, soiled flesh. Divine punishment shall come quick. When their flesh burns away, we will mock their calamity. It is not a sin to take pride in god's fury.

Shall we be the hands of god?

Father Prias
Selected Sermon
Faustis, Baruch Malkut

Names: Unfortunately, while phonetically pleasing to the ear, the damaskan language can somewhat difficult for those unfamiliar with it to get their tongues around. Damaskans often adopt a human-sounding name when in public: their contact with humans has been so extensive over the centuries that modern damaskan parents generally give this name alongside the traditional one at birth, even in all-fae communities. Some damaskan families, especially in Limshau, have adopted their chosen human name as their true name, nearly forgetting their heritage. Not just due to integration, many believe a new world requires a clean slate, and a new family name is a good place to start. Other fae frequently deplore this practice and a few damaskans without native names have been denied entry in fae-only communities on this basis.

Most damaskans keep their fae names if they have them, privately known only by loved ones and family. Even in situations where the damaskans use their family name, they still regularly select a human given name because the damaskan language contains many phonemes and tonal variances that sound similar to humans, and consequently their native names can be difficult to pronounce accurately. Their chosen human names are usually simple, with little cultural identification, and are often picked to reflect an attribute of the individual. Family names are very culturally specific and sometimes reflect an attribute of the family or important individuals within it. Damaskan names are not gender-specific. While both Limshau and Damaska place the given name before the family name, a damaskan will usually adopt the name order of whatever community they are currently in (so a damaskan visiting Fargon or Genai will give their family name first).

Examples: Ravenar Limshau III is his real name, but his sister's husband elected to adopt the human title "Strongbow" to replace their damaskan family name of Kaixiu'Ooria. Centuries later, few in that family ever use that title. Their fourth child, a daughter was given the damaskan name Reivune, which eventually turned into Raven, which she elected as her open name, as well.

Example Given Names: Demosin, Keeilian, Ourokess, Ravenar, Reivune, Zallamber

Example Family Names: Anaiquore, Ekka'Vraiul, Hastalleiki, Kaixiu'Ooria, Talassezri, Uotha'Vuesti

Example Open Names: Damon, Chandleer, Hope, Peregrin, Raven, Salla

GIMFEN

RACIAL TRAITS
Average Height: 3'3" – 4'3"
Average Weight: 40-60 lbs.
Average Starting Age: 30 years
Estimated Life Expectancy: 500 years

Ability Scores: +2 Dexterity; +2 Charisma or +2 Wisdom; -2 to Constitution
Size: Small. As a Small creature, you gain a +1 size bonus to Armor Class, a +1 size bonus on attack rolls, a -1 penalty to your Combat Maneuver Defense, and a +4 size bonus on Stealth checks.
Speed: 25 feet
Vision: Normal
Languages: Damaskan and one human language. If you have a high Intelligence score, you can choose any additional languages you want.
Racial Skill Bonuses: +2 Bluff; +2 Escape Artist

Builder: You gain a +4 bonus to Engineer or Sleight of Hand.

Disruption Reduction: You do not disrupt technology like other echans. You do not increase the penalties to disruption during combat.

Scurry: Your movement is not reduced if you crawl. You do not provoke an attack of opportunity by crawling or standing up from prone.

Tiny Frame: You suffer a -4 penalty when attempting a bull rush against targets bigger than you.

Jump Charge: The minimum distance you must move during a charge is reduced to 5 feet. If you only move 5 feet during the charge, this movement does not provoke attacks of opportunity from other creatures, even if you pass through their threatened area

Lithe and Irritable: Size is not an obstacle to you in a scrap. You may use Dexterity as your primary attribute for attack and damage rolls with all melee attacks. You can also use Dexterity in place of Strength when determining your Combat Maneuver Bonus.

He might have been small, but I've never seen anyone put away booze like Errrick. Yeah, that's how he spelled his name—he liked to roll it off his tongue, particularly around the ladies. And there were plenty of ladies crowding around him at the moment, at his table in the middle of the tavern, as he downed shot glass after shot glass of something pungently green. Across the table, his opponent, a big burly human, was starting to look a bit queasy as he placed another glass shakily upside-down on the table. The human burped, his eyes crossed, and he fell sideways off his chair.

"Well, demoiselles," said Errrick, "looks like I win. And with my winnings I'll buy a drink for any lass who wants a kiss—" he took a small tin out of his pocket – "after I freshen up, of course!" As he chewed the mint leaf, however, three of the human's friends, equally massive, got threateningly to their feet.

"Hold your horses, runt," one of them growled. "Your kind always cheats. I bet you got a bottle strapped to your leg or some other weird gizmo." The gimfen looked up, smiled, then reached down and pulled up his trouser leg. There was indeed a bottle strapped to his calf… full of a golden amber liquid, into which was set some sort of plastic straw leading up through his clothes and out his collar. He winked and took a swig from the straw. Then, as the giant blinked at him, he moved like a cannonball, bowling the man over and shoving the barrel of the plasma rifle which had, until that moment, rested against the table leg into his interlocutor's eye.

"'Tis not a manly thing to call a gentleman a cheater, dear fellow," he said evenly. "What say we all settle this outside?"

No one is sure how the gimfen broke off from the other fae, being only superficially similar in body and utterly distinct in mind. They possess at the same time a natural curiosity about the world and a near-total lack of imagination. They embraced many human customs when relationships blossomed between the two species, and are the second most common nonhuman species (after the damaskans) seen in echan human communities. They have a flare for fine food, good tobacco, and comfortable clothes. Gimfen love dance from every culture but have never developed one of their own.

The curiosity of gimfen eventually spread to technology. Most fae reach an impasse when encountering human technology: touching or even being in the same vicinity of any complex device inevitably causes it to eventually break down. However, the gimfen don't share this curse. This strange deviation, once thought to be a production of corruption from Ixindar, was later accepted by the other fae as another attribute of a late branch in the fae tree. The gimfen desire to pursue technology in an age where machinery didn't work reliably turned into a fixation. Many of them obsessed about discovering a way to allow machinery to operate in a realm of magic. The gimfen eventually turned out numerous masterful technicians, engineers, alchemists, and inventors, though nearly always refining existing accomplishments rather than pioneering new ones. Where laudenians pioneered totem magic and narros the forging of magical items, gimfen took pride in alchemy, stumbling into potion brewing soon after. What they lack are spell casters – not because they are incapable, but because for most the principles of magic simply aren't interesting (and get in the way of the study of mechanism). Gimfen are never content simply to observe the world, but believe it can always be improved. Even the most sedentary pursue constructive hobbies such as basic carpentry and metalwork, while others found a happy medium with minor gadgets and tools. Many a gimfen's home is adorned with never-used inventions.

After the return of magic, the first bastions were barely more than a few buildings. They grew slowly under constant attack from the outside. A few collapsed or turned to magic, abandoning the old ways of science.

Others remained stubborn and fought against the enchantment. Such was the case with the eastern Canam city of York, under barrage from dragons and pagus. The bastion turned to a nearby growing civilization of gimfen for assistance. The gimfen were welcomed into the libraries to learn everything they could about human technology, sciences of the body, machine, and atom. With the help of the resourceful and inventive gimfen, York was able to defend itself against predators, and their expansion became reinvigorated. Despite their invaluability, this agreement with an echan people was unofficial and kept secret: the gimfen were not allowed to live within the population or enter through the main gates. After their usefulness expired, the gimfen returned to their homes leaving only a few behind in the city for maintenance. Thankfully, they did not mind being ostracized, and got a more than fair exchange for their labors: they now held the secrets of magnetism, electricity, and internal combustion – advances they would not have discovered on their own. The neighboring gimfen town, Gnimfall, accepted back its pilgrims and the nation flourished.

Despite lacking the spark of genius necessary for true innovation, gimfen knew one thing mankind didn't: how to insulate technology from magic. Although not perfect by any means, this clumsy procedure could help certain machinery operate without the constant fear of disruption. The gimfen combined what they discovered with what they already knew and within a century the landscape of gimfen communities changed. Where once there were tiny shops and garages surrounded by farmlands, now the villages were dominated by grind towers—oddities of mutated technology. They hold few people, designed primarily for defense, sound baffling, and temperature maintenance for underground factories. Gnimfall, the

largest collection of towers, is not an open-air city, but hundreds of levels stretching more than a mile underground. The levels are a mixed lot of housing, factories, and processing plants so jumbled and seemingly disorganized that tourists often get lost without a guide. Grind towers now dot the globe, marking the presence of gimfen communities.

Not all have embraced the way of technology, preferring to keep a balance between nature and machine. Gimfen communities like Salvabrooke are laid back, agrarian places, possessing little technology beyond that known in the immediately pre-industrial era of humanity's lost history. Currently there are more than three million gimfen in various villages and colonies about the world. They get along with the narros and damaskans, but their relations with other fae have strained since the gimfen have so often turned away from their roots. Gimfen often welcome humans, especially ones with a new toy.

Most of gimfen worship "Mecha," which they believe allows them and only them to operate machinery in the presence of magic (the fact that other fae who turn to the worship of Mecha in the hopes of obtaining the same grace do not lose their toxic effect on machinery is explained as them 'not doing it right'). Mecha's symbol of faith lies in the gimfen's tools, which he prays to every morning. They hold that Mecha, the Machine God, is responsible for all the devices the gimfen make.

Physical Qualities: Gimfen are the shortest of the major fae. They feature thin, lightly slanted eyes of bright green and blue tones. Their hair is often vibrantly colored and their ears taper straight back, with the tips sometimes as much as an inch from the back of their head. Their skin is often lightly colored, and un-

like other fae, they are known to freckle. Because of their quickness to adopt other cultures, anything goes when it comes to their attire and whatever else they do to their bodies. Gimfen enjoy their sense of humor as well as a desire to possess shiny objects. Their connection with nature has largely fallen by the wayside in favor of the new knowledge from man and their obsessive fascination with human machinery.

Gimfen look like pubescent youths through the majority of their lives. This makes many humans uncomfortable when dealing with gimfen adults. They only break from this in their final years, when their age rushes upon them, growing wrinkles and spots, aging decades in days. Most gimfen have difficulty growing facial hair, but that doesn't stop them from trying: a flamboyant moustache or goatee may be the work of decades and is seen as a major accomplishment.

The smallest room is still the universe to whoever lives inside. Fae have preferred in the past to close all the doors around and sit, comfortable they understand the entire world— (Noise from the Grind Tower muffles the transmission).

They fear to open the door and discover that more waits across the threshold. That is what prevents us from moving forward, the refusal to expand beyond our universe. The laudenians, the tenenbri—yes, even the narros—all sit in a room bricked in by ignorance and held by fear. Like all fae, the gimfen emerged into a room not unlike them.

(Noise from the Grind Tower muffled the transmission).

It had the same bricks bound by mortar, the same door all others refused to open. One would assume we would follow the lead and pat ourselves for understanding the universe, as we perceived. Unlike our cousins, our cage was different. Someone put in windows. Faced with the truth, who would not open the door? Gimfen may be small. We may be ridiculed and insulted, but we see the truth. The room is shrinking. How ironic those with the most room to breathe are the ones so adamant about escaping. In conclusion, we must— (noise from the Grind Tower muffled the transmission).

Karlis Kronas
(Gnimfall Address, July 23, 999 A.E.)

Playing a Gimfen: Gimfen are the best people to play because they have no inhibitions. They are not bound by foolish honor or some obsolete drive to survive. They are neither arrogant nor afraid. They don't worry themselves about the petty issues that absorb so many others. They are the best because they are the only fae able to embrace a new world while remembering the old one. No other fae can enter a town tavern with laser rifle on his back. They are the life of the party and the center of attention.

A gimfen player character always follows one of two paths: nature or technology, with technology being by far the most common. Gimfen are the first to try anything. They are naturally inquisitive, but this often gets them into trouble. Despite being great liars, an attribute the other fae dislike, gimfen share with the other fae a propensity for naiveté. They believe everything is safe and everyone is honest unless proven otherwise. One prevalent route is the thief, as gimfen look naturally innocent and inconspicuous (and are known to let their enthusiasm for baubles get the better of legal constraints, usually without malice; when confronted, a gimfen kleptomaniac will usually express surprise at their thoughtlessness and promptly return the stolen goods with a smile), though dungeon delvers are equally as popular. An alternative approach is the techan enthusiast, walking around with a modified human firearm she can hold and fire safely. When brandishing such a trophy, a gimfen is no longer unassuming. There have even been gimfen spotted sporting a heavily insulated plasma rifles on their backs.

All gimfen leave their village at some point in their lives but seldom make roots. They leave for a variety of reasons including adventuring or the acquisition of treasure, fame, or technology (which for many *is* treasure). For them, adventuring is more of a career than an opportunity. Gimfen are curious, inquisitive, and extremely impulsive. They love to see the world and often feel other cultures should be gifted with the odd knowledge they alone possess. Gimfen come close to developing addictive personalities. They are happy to try new things, especially in regards to dance and food. Their unending curiosity makes them open to anything.

Names: Gimfen have no language of their own. In the old world, they spoke damaskan; in the new, they are just as likely to speak English as a first language. Like the damaskans, gimfen adopt a human first name either at birth or when leaving an all-fae community, but – unlike the damaskans – they intentionally spell these names idiosyncratically, and think nothing of gender-bending names or adopting a human surname as a given name and vice versa. They also change their names every century or so. Family lineage means nothing to them. Because of this constant variation, some outside critics grow concerned with potential gimfen inbreeding. Gimfen never seem to worry about it. Their names sometimes reflect the cultures they integrate in, adopting narros and or human titles. They also frequently, but not always, use alliterations.

Examples: Xris Jiggadaxion, Glynn Glengarrie, Kimma Kutaming, Malachi Boomfellow, Maris Nippentuck

LAUDENIANS

RACIAL TRAITS
Average Height: 5'10" – 6'7"
Average Weight: 40-55 lbs.
Average Starting Age: 150 years
Estimated Life Expectancy: Unknown (10,000 years?)

Ability Scores: +2 Wisdom; +2 Intelligence or +2 Dexterity; -2 Strength
Size: Medium. As a Medium creature, you have no special bonuses or penalties due to your size.
Speed: 35 feet
Vision: Normal
Languages: Laudenian, one human language, and one additional fae language. If you have a high Intelligence score, you can choose any additional languages you want.
Racial Skill Bonuses: +2 Acrobatics, +2 Spellcraft

Natural Resilience: You receive a +2 racial bonus to saving throws against enchantment spells and effects and against any blinding effects.

Emergence: You know where and when to be to strike the critical blow. When wielding a light melee weapon, you can use Wisdom in place of Strength as your primary melee attack/damage attribute. If you are wielding two weapons, both must be light weapons for this ability to apply.

Equilibrium: If you have 4 or more ranks in Acrobatics, you gain a +4 dodge bonus to AC when fighting defensively instead of +3, and a +7 dodge bonus to AC when taking total defense actions instead of +6.

Light Body: Reduce all fall distances by 10 feet (2 squares). If bull rushed, you are pushed back 10 feet; for every 5 by which the attack exceeds your CMD, you are pushed an additional 10 feet.

Slide Waltz (Ex): Your body can move like water, swaying around an opponent with ease. As many times a day as the higher of your Wisdom or Intelligence modifier, you can use a swift action to move to any location within 5 feet of one Medium-sized creature you are adjacent to. This movement does not provoke opportunity attacks.

No railing separated the platform from the clouds below, despite the thousands of feet to the ground. Only a narrow path, scarcely wide enough for one to put two feet together, connected it to the tower behind. Hassanan walked along it steadily, gliding from foot to foot so gracefully that he hardly seemed to take a single step. The clouds beneath him roiled in the mountain wind, yet not a flutter disturbed his flowing robes or a single strand of his long hair. He reached the platform and raised his long, spindly hand to the crystal staff that sat upon a plinth at its center. With his other hand, he made a gesture, and the pale, transparent image of a laudenian woman with a pinched face appeared in the air. "You are certain of this?" the illusion said. "Completely," said Hassanan. "This experiment will conclude my research."

The female wrinkled her nose. "But, such a noisome creature…"

The magos slowly shook his head. "Necessary, my friend. But fear not, I shall not let it touch me." From within his sleeve, he took a small transparent cube and tossed it across the plinth, where it hung in the air, turning gently. He made a gesture across the staff, and the cube seemed to fold itself inside out. From the distortion of space emerged a very large, confused and angry skegg, which had been minding its own business torturing a caravaneer when this weird silvery thing had come down and stuffed it into a tiny box. Now released, its eyes alighted on the laudenian, and it growled and went for his neck. Without seeming to move, the magos sidestepped the fuming beast, extended a finger, and spoke a single word. The skegg froze, eyes wide, and in an instant was transformed into a statue of pure crystal. "Hypothesis confirmed," the magos said, rubbing his cheek. "Ever to earth they do return."

Of all the fae, a laudenian would be the most pompous. Laudenians, like most of their cousins, believe they are the true descendants of the original fae. The difference is that they might actually be right. Some claim their embracing of the sky made them immune to the physical changes brought on by interacting with the Earth. Before the First Hammer, most laudenians lived in a floating city no one could locate unless the laudenians wished it to be found. After their return after the Second Hammer, the city reemerged, then promptly vanished once again. Everyone aware of its existence knows the city floats around the Nankani Mountains, but steers clear of the sparsely inhabited lowland passes in favor of the virtually impassible high rocks. The city often remains rooted next to a mountain for years, then seemingly at random it uproots and drifts elsewhere. Since returning to Earth, the laudenians have retaken the skies, rebuilding a vast network of floating keeps shrouded in the clouds.

Most people have never seen a laudenian and could not describe one if asked. Laudenians commonly prohibit outsiders from entering their keeps. Their land is rich in natural resources and they use these riches to trade with the few other nations they find agreeable, Fargon being the chief recipient of their largesse. Few non-fae ever see these floating keeps. Their single city appears on the surface to be one of technology, but underneath the shine of the walls flows pure magic. Laudenia is a dream to many that swore they saw it.

Laudenians commit to this life because of a fear of degradation. If they truly were the first branch from the original fae, then they have watched helplessly as their children turned into the chaparrans, narros and damaskans. This might not have alarmed them initially beyond the observation that the laudenians themselves were growing fewer. Then the chaparrans started to beget deviations, and then the narros. Damaskans followed shortly behind and with each branch, the emer-

gent race acted more feral, more uncivilized then their ancestors. Fearing a fate similar to the original fae, the laudenians fled to the sky, convinced the magical influence stemmed from the fae's interaction with the Earth. Their theory may have had some merit, for the dwindling of the laudenian population slowed…but did not stop completely.

Today, laudenians number less than 20,000, though some suspect this number is much lower, closer to 5,000. Despite near immortality, their population continues to fall. This is largely the product of the whispering influence of magic from which they cannot escape, resulting in children of lesser quality in their eyes. Laudenians reproduce extremely rarely and their eventual fate appears fixed, ultimately leaving a vast, sprawling empire of empty and forgotten castles in the air. Laudenians rarely mate with non-laudenians, and they strictly forbid bonding with humans under penalty of expulsion from the sky.

As part of their claim to be the most ancient fae, the laudenians believe that they pioneered the modern study of magic, the use of Pleroma to encode spells, and the construction of totems to hold those spells. Their approach to the practice of magic reflects this attitude. While earthbound mages favor individual style and regard the method of magic to be largely a matter of personal preference, laudenians are very formulaic. They treat magic the same way techans treat the principles of science, and for much the same reason: their entire culture is dependent on it, and most laudenians know at

least the basics of magic even if they do not practice it themselves. A laudenian sky-keep is almost indistinguishable on the surface from the more advanced bastions. The old adage that any sufficiently advanced magic is indistinguishable from technology is plainly at work in Laudenia, with magical constructs and enchanted barges taking the place of robots and vehicles, phantasm spells for communication and entertainment, and spell-coded items fulfilling day-to-day conveniences even for the non-magically adept; unfortunately, most of these devices do not work outside of the magical field of the aerial realm.

Laudenians enjoy the music of strings and their dance often involves slow, subtle movements. Their rituals, like everything involved in their culture, take several days to complete. One festival, the Kenaz Sky, occurs once every 500 years and lasts six months. The few laudenians that ever die are placed in a gargantuan mausoleum at the base of their city. All laudenians, even the ones that perish far away, always wish their bodies returned to their home. Their faith dictates that is the only way they may find peace.

The laudenians worship a god of the ancient fae, Berufu, whom they believe lives not beyond the gate, but in the shadow realm where the universe was formed. Attricana to them is a source of power but is neither a divine entity nor the gateway to their god's domain.

Physical Qualities: Laudenians tower over all other fae and even most humans. They have olive to dark skin and often long and flowing dark hair. Their ears are smaller than a chaparrans, tapering quickly to a point. Their eyes, usually dark brown and grey, always reflect a glint of light as if a candle always hangs suspended over their eyes. Braided hair is common but tattoos and piercings are not. Most wear long robes of white or green terminating just above the ankle. The more a fae species is connected to the earth, the more animalistic they become: chaparrans and narros are all on average stronger and sturdier, their later branches even more robust. Laudenians, by contrast, are almost impossibly slender and light-bodied, with subtly alien body proportions. Their senses are adapted in the opposite way from the common expectation of fae: while their hearing is acute (out of necessity, since sound carries far less well in thinner air), instead of superior vision in the dark, their eyes can see slightly into the ultraviolet spectrum. Additionally, thanks to a nictating membrane that both filters out harmful rays and guards against dust and dryness, laudenians need neither squint or shy away from a blinding glare, nor do they even need to blink, only closing their eyes to sleep. Their unyielding stares can be as disconcerting to outsiders as their strangely elongated frames.

There is a claim that no laudenian has ever died of old age. Some have been rumored to have lived for 15,000 years or more, though with a mere five centuries since the gate's reopening, it is impossible to verify this. They reach adulthood after 150 years and don't show any discernible growth for another 1,000. No laudenian has ever looked over 50.

Playing a Laudenian: Laudenians are the best species because they are the oldest fae and the most proud. The wisest of them have their names etched in books in every library of every other fae species. Laudenians forged the first magical items, pioneered the use of totems and the language of dragons, and built an empire in the sky to look upon others below. They are arrogant and belief themselves always to be right…but that's because they usually are.

It should be noted that a laudenian character would be a rarity. This laudenian would be the only one in a group and probably would not have seen another of his kind in years. There would most assuredly be a reason, even if they withhold it from their companions, why this laudenian has taken the risk of walking on the soil. Laudenians dislike nature. They have no problems wearing metal armor and wielding forged weapons, but they abhor the natural world and have lost their empathy for it. The only reason why they have been able to survive unchanged these thousands of years is by fleeing to the sky, since the magic of Attricana reflects off the Earth. They never walk around in bare feet and cannot stand being immersed in water. Since they never perspire, the concept of washing only becomes necessity when dirtied from earth-walking. Even essential natural resources are harvested for them by autonomous magic constructs, so a true laudenian never needs set foot on the corruptive ground. To meet a laudenian outside of the city is practically unheard of and few ever leave their home except under orders, on an extremely important quest that requires their undivided attention; only the rarest of the rare wish to see the world for themselves.

They almost never wear armor, and when they do it is usually light chainmail constructed out of magically-infused materials – they find heavier armor insufferably burdensome. The weapon of choice for nearly all laudenians is the longsword or rapier, and although they do not have the same martial traditions as the narros, laudenian philosophy holds the blade and the wielder to be one. Swords themselves do not run in families due to their wielders' long lives even compared to other fae, but each lineage has their own style which is never taught to outsiders.

Laudenians are known to be extremely arrogant. They are the longest-lived of echan kind outside of dragons and most of the elders date back to before the gate exodus. Their egotism refused to die when they lacked corporeal forms and only amplified when returned to the world. Laudenians consider themselves superior and often patronize those unlike them. Laudenians are often revered by other fae, a fact a laudenian is sure to bring up. They command respect and believe themselves correct in every assumption. Laudenians are known to have the most powerful spellcasters of all fae. A laudenian character could be more humble than her parents, whom most likely still live in the sky, but this would not mean the character isn't still arrogant.

Names: Laudenians refuse to adopt human names. Thankfully, their fae names are much easier to pro-

nounce than a chaparran's or damaskan's would be, being softly sibilant and roll quite easily with the slightest effort, like all the words in their language. Instead of having a family name, laudenians list a roll of their ancestors, every generation adding a name. Most laudenians only mention one or two generations, but fanatics to laudenian heritage will often insist on announcing themselves tracking back five or six generations. The greatest elders, of course, do not have even five or six generations to trace back: if a laudenian names three generations of ancestors and proclaims quietly 'That is all,' it would be best to take them very, very seriously. The one bizarre aspect with laudenian names is that every name in a given lineage has exactly the same number of syllables. Most despise foreigners shortening them, though quite easy to do so.

Examples: Brassana Halcyos, Massinan Lasseriss, Milanus Serani Lissero Renessan, Nazarini Kolbessito Thassatera Engiraini, Sirenus Fellerose, Sulei Kandoss Mentar

NARROS

RACIAL TRAITS
Average Height: 4' – 4'9"
Average Weight: 195-395 lbs.
Average Starting Age: 75 years
Estimated Life Expectancy: 1,000 years

Ability Scores: +2 Constitution; +2 Charisma or +2 Wisdom; -2 Dexterity
Size: Medium. As a Medium creature, you have no special bonuses or penalties due to your size.
Speed: 25 feet. Your speed is never modified by armor or encumbrance.
Vision: Darkvision. You can see in the dark up to 60 feet.
Languages: Narroni and one human language. If you have a high Intelligence score, you can choose any additional languages you want.
Racial Skill Bonuses: +2 Intimidate, +2 Survival

Big Boned: You suffer a -3 penalty to all Swim checks.

Iron Roots: You have a +4 racial bonus to your CMD against a bull rush or trip. You are treated as a Large creature when dealing with wind effects.

Militaristic: You are proficient in any two melee weapons of your choice.

Stone Blood: You gain a +2 racial bonus to Fortitude saves but suffer a -1 penalty to Reflex saves. You also gain a +2 racial bonus on saving throws against poison.

Final Word: If you are reduced to 0 or fewer hit points, you do not fall unconscious until the end of your next turn (regardless of damage taken). On your next turn, you can take only a single standard action. If you use that action to attack the enemy that reduced you to 0 hit points or lower, you automatically hit (you still roll to determine if the attack is a critical threat).

"Strike! Up! Hold! Strike! Low! Hold! Middle! Strike!" The drillmaster called the moves, and the students followed them, each warrior moving as one. Each stood balanced on one leg atop a small, sharp pyramid, and periodically the senior students would pass along the line, striking the examinees' shins with heavy wooden rods. Not one wavered, nor even flinched. But that was only to be expected. This was not a test of the students' dedication, or even of their technique. The ravnorra's eyes narrowed as she passed down the line. At last she came to one of the students, to the untrained eye seemingly no different from any other. "You!" she declared. "Step out of line!" The young narros obeyed without hesitation. "Are you left- or right-handed?" she demanded.

"Neither, Tomannik-mir," the student replied, "but I am accustomed to write with my left hand."

The instructor nodded to one of the seniors. "Bind his left hand behind his back." She reached out her own hand and another of the older students placed her longspear in it. "Defend yourself," she said simply, raising the spear to the ready.

Despite ignorant stereotyping claiming them to be squat, long-nosed dirty miners, narros don't really resemble the fantasy creature they're often compared to. While the majority live underground, they are not singular in their purpose of greedily digging for riches in the Earth. In fact, narros are among the most selfless of all fae, taking on the role as protectors for all their allies.

Even when outnumbered, narros often win in open combat. They are the greatest soldiers of the fae, with only the pagus threatening the claim. Almost every narros citizen knows how to use a weapon. Soldiers enforce a strict discipline in the art of war, a reflection of the culture as a whole. There is a martial skill attached to every facet of their lives. The same techniques and movements used in warfare are duplicated in the mines, planned and coordinated with precision.

Narros love the horn and drums and their battle marches move to the sound of heavy bass from trumpets and skins louder than the footfalls of a thousand feet. Narros don't dance – they don't lack for physical coordination, but the wild abandon of dancing runs contrary to their cultural precision and discipline.

The narros estimate more than five million of their kind walk the Earth. Narros live almost exclusively in Canam and Southam and rarely appear anywhere else. Their biggest concentration lies at Fargon in the uttermost north, with another collection in the western mountains of Southam, where the people often clash with the tenenbri over an ancient religious dispute; a smaller colony of about a hundred thousand resides in the Finer Fire Pits in Canam's midwestern region. By sacred law, narros caves never burrow beyond 1.25 miles below sea level. Their mines are like a labyrinth, covering hundreds of square miles. Part of their belief

system demands that they climb the highest mountain in their city (every narros city is built around and/or within a mountain) every year to reaffirm their confidence that the sun remains above.

The few narros holy men worship an idol-less god referred to as Oaken – the spirit of Earth. Oaken lives deep underground at the core of the planet. The narros dogma explains that Oaken, originally a fragment of a much larger being, drifted into the Solar System and the Earth formed around him. To them, the white gate created the fae, but Oaken provided them with a shape and a world. Narros believe their power comes from below, not above, which may explain why most narros hate to fly despite having no fear of high places. The root of their abhorrence for the tenenbri leads from a belief that their cousins dug too far and suffered Oaken's punishment. In the narros view, the tenenbri never got the message. Like man, most narros bury their dead, though usually in stone.

Physical Qualities: Narros do not possess the heavy trunk torso many would expect though they are still much stronger than other similar bipeds (this is simply not immediately obvious). They are slower and less agile then their cousins, but their every movement is

made with utmost precision. Where all other fae have hollow bones, the narros claim their skeletons' marrow is solid iron. The proof is in their unbreakable physiques and shockingly heavy frames. Narros hate the water and are all tremendously bad swimmers, due to their size-to-weight ratio. A narros will avoid any body of water where he cannot keep his feet on the bottom and still breathe.

Narros' silvery skin reflects a glitter in sunlight. Their skin tones range usually between peach and pale white. Their ears are long but remain flush to their heads. Their eyes, seemingly always squinting, can open extremely wide and their irises loom large in their sockets, though their colors, dull browns and matted grays, don't shine even in the brightest light. Narros eyes can adapt between light and dark vision in an instant, and their vision extends far into the infrared spectrum, allowing them to see almost perfectly even in total darkness.

Narros insist on a high degree of personal grooming. Males despise painting their bodies in any way but women often do: the same abhorrence does not apply to tattooing, but this is still a rare practice. Body piercing is unknown among them. Unlike their stereotyped equivalents, narros have a general aversion to body hair. Males sport tight trimmed beards, patterned sideburns or short braids when they grow them; the only moustaches considered fashionable are thin sidewhiskers. Their hair is often pulled back to a tail, loose strands tightly controlled. Some narros males shave themselves completely bald. Unlike the legends they inspired, female narros neither grow facial hair nor look overtly masculine. It is only when narros dress for war that males and females become indistinguishable. Narros age proportionately to humans at an approximately 12:1 ratio.

Foolish Humans. The best route is down, never up. I read their history—always building up. Up…why? What is up there? Clouds. Clouds made from water. I can dig and get that and it would cost far less. Now I am not saying that humans are stupid. They value gold and respect the steel we forge.

However, I don't know how they could have missed coruthil. Such a wondrous element, bestowed from Oaken himself. The almost mystical properties of it lead me to believe that coruthil, before the saturation of magic, looked ordinary, containing no special properties, useless. When enchanted energies passed through it, coruthil emerged from this dead rock. So much the better. The bastion humans sat on riches beyond what they can imagine for thousands of years. Millions of years of unmined riches. This is a great time to be a narros. The humans have no idea what they were missing.

Garach Glim
Finer Fire Pits
225 A.E.

Playing a Narros: Narros are well and beyond the best people as there is no subtlety behind them. They scoff adversity and seldom run from a fight. They are the strongest and take pride that the entire fae species would have been wiped out long ago if it weren't for them. They are soldiers from birth. In the end, why would anyone want to be anything but the greatest warriors of legend?

A narros character should not just be some loud fighter with an axe. They can be anything they choose and commit themselves 100% to that duty, often ignoring other concerns. They are fanatical about any crusade they are on. A narros would be the first to awake in the morning to tackle the day's goals. They will ignore fleeting pleasures like smoking and sex when committed to a quest. When sworn to a lord, friend, or party, a narros will risk everything including his own life to protect them. This focused spirit is admirable but can sometimes make a narros a real drag at parties – unless they have decreed that it is now time to enjoy themselves. The narros believe in hard work and hard play. It is common for a narros to work past the point of exhaustion during the day, party and drink until past midnight, sleep insufficient hours, and start everything again the following dawn, apparently none the worse for wear. They are extremely regimented in whatever direction they take in life. Mages own more books. Priests pray longer. Soldiers train much more fiercely. They are focused in their view – some human would-be wags claim that the name 'narros' is synonymous with their mentality.

Narros favor medium to heavy armor, if they wear armor at all. Those from Fargon prefer heavy steel lamellar and crested helmets superficially similar to those of the ancient Japanese samurai, but they tend to prefer heavier weapons as a rule; though every narros has a particular favorite, spiked maces, hooked halberds, and double swords are in overwhelming evidence in narros armies. Rare is the narros mage whose totem is not the weapon, and most of those few instead favor the shield.

Because of their polar opposite concepts of an appropriate attention span, the narros and gimfen don't always get along. They are otherwise at least tolerant of most other fae, and particularly of humans – indeed, the narros boast the only open trading agreement between a fae kingdom and a techan bastion. However, they overwhelmingly despise the tenenbri. The schism between the two is rarely mentioned – its roots stem from a religious dispute, a divergence of dogma that can be tracked back thousands of years in the pre-Hammer age. Some have accused the narros of holding grudges far longer than socially acceptable. Still, this discord is a poor rubbing of the hatred the narros feel for the pagus. Not even the ogres, a lower fae branch from the narros, can match the loathing felt to the corrupted fae of Ixindar. Being the primary military force for all good and honorable fae, the narros have clashed with pagus more often than other peoples. A narros need not require a reason to fight them and the opportunity to do so would be reason enough to join a quest.

Narros uphold their discipline when on their own or outside of their community. Personal and family honor

is very important to all narros, although their definition of it is a trifle unusual: a person's honor is defined by how thoroughly she dedicates herself to her task, and a family's honor is wrapped up in how thoroughly they have taught their scions to do this. A narros warrior's greatest shame is to lose his liege lord on the battlefield, for this means that he has failed to perform the duty that should have been utmost in his mind, and he will likely never be able to find another lord with such stained honor. Warriors shamed in this way traditionally foreswear their family names and depart from narros society on quests to redeem themselves, in order to prevent their dishonor from reflecting upon the clan. Those who lost their community or their lord often travel alone across the world as masterless ronin. All narros adventurers maintain an utter dedication to their chosen path, even without a crusade or cause in their hearts.

Names: Unlike gimfen and damaskans, placing little stock in their family names, narros cherish their family names more than their given ones. They place their family names first when writing them down and announcing themselves in public. Narros refer to each other by their given names only in private or when asked; using a person's given name without their permission is considered at best a breach of etiquette, at worst a deadly insult. Married couples call themselves by their given names in their homes. Friends and family members often refer to each other by the additional titles Kar (Father/Ruler), Mir (Mother/Mistress), Lan (Son, first born), Sen (Son, second born or later), Jes (Daughter) or the generic titles Nor (senior or social superior), Kin (male equal), Mon (female equal), and Dan (junior or social inferior), appended to the end of whichever name is used . The given names are usually shorter than their family titles, thus making their full names somewhat front-heavy.

Examples: Ballakoya Kasey, Kranerose Jibbs, Ragerrick Griff, Sollomas Karan, Sorannik Mogh, Ungnarona Mina

PAGUS

RACIAL TRAITS
Average Height: 6'3" – 6'7"
Average Weight: 200-250 lb.
Average Starting Age: 9 years.
Estimated Life Expectancy: 40 years

Ability Scores: +2 Dexterity; +2 to Strength or +2 Constitution; -2 Wisdom
Size: Medium. As a Medium creature, you have no special bonuses or penalties due to your size.
Speed: 30 feet
Vision: Darkvision. You can see in the dark up to 60 feet.
Languages: Paggin. If you have a high Intelligence score, you can choose any additional languages you want.
Racial Skill Bonuses: +2 Climb or +2 Acrobatics; +2 Intimidate

Earned Stigma: You suffer a -4 penalty to all Diplomacy checks against non-pagus.

Ixindar Keyword: You do not disrupt technology. You do not increase the penalties to disruption in during combat; however, you do not have access to any techan classes or feats. See **Saturation Exemption**, below.

Steadfast: Select either Reflex or Fortitude at 1st level. Whenever you make save against your selected type, roll twice and take the higher value.

Trained from Birth: You reduce armor check penalties by 4 (to a minimum of 0) when wearing any armor.

Focused Aggression: Whenever an enemy scores a critical hit on you, you gain an additional standard action on your next turn. You can only gain 1 additional standard action this way per round.

Saturation Exemption: Pagus do not generate an EDF due to their corruption by Ixindar. You have a saturation value of 0 and a corruption value of 10. This is before the selection of a class, which may make you an echan instantly (see **Saturation Point**).

Murok always sat by himself, away from the fire. We assumed it was because he wanted to spare the rest of us the sight of his ugly mug, but one day I plucked up the courage and went to ask him why, as he sat in the dark and the cold sharpening his notched blade.

"Because I don't want to look at your ugly mugs," he told me, and I went away satisfied.

The pagus emerged over a single night during the age of Terros—the era before man when fae and dragon reigned unopposed. When the black gate of Ixindar drifted over the sky on its arrival, the whisper of Mengus corrupted a million fae to its cause. They abandoned their families and friends. Most of these tainted creatures were chaparran, though no part of

faekind was left unspoiled. They vanished on an unspoken pilgrimage to the land where Ixindar finally settled.

Loved ones that followed who had not heard the whisper were killed by their own corrupted families or cursed themselves. When finally emerging in their initial raids against their ancestors centuries later, the fae no longer resembled the peoples they escaped from. They had grown in muscle. They had lost their hair. Their skin had grown pale. They looked nearly identical to each other and shared a single disposition, one single desire--to eliminate anything as commanded by their masters.

When the black gate was unearthed again at the beginning of the new age, the pagus were the first to emerge, even before the whisper of Mengus could have tainted the nearby humans as well. Five centuries later, the pagus number in the tens of millions with concentrations on every continent.

A little known fact about the pagus is that Ixindar's control is lessened the further one travels from Ixindar. Mengus strengthens its influence by channeling the gate's syncretic power through the will of its loyal disciples, the shemjaza. Separated from that influence, it falls under corrupted dragons to enforce the will of syntropy, despite not always following their avatar's will. Without the control of these authorities, pagus act independently, though still bound by a compulsion for violence and a brutal culture that reflects that propensity. This is not helped by the tendency of pagus to degenerate into madness as they grow old (if they survive that long). Only a noteworthy few maintain their sanity. These singular elders gain an enlightened view of the role pagus are forced fill in this world. Their wisdom and strength of personality is such that younger pagus around them will bind themselves without thinking to any action the elder commands. Unfortunately, this usually entails the same bloody conflict forced upon them from demons and dragons. Even more uncommon are the elder pagus that preach a rejection of the ideals imposed by their creator and controllers. These pagus attempt an unpretentious life filled with hunting, revelry, and reproduction. They avoid the wars demanded by others, Regrettably, these pagus are often still called into conflict as they must habitually defend their lands from outsiders, often their own kind.

Pagus have no concept of godhead. The pagus of Kakodomania fear and worship Mengus and the shemjaza as powerful beings much stronger than themselves, and the same with the hordes of Apocrypha for their death dragon masters, but there is no

apprehension of divinity in this adoration, merely the deference of a bully for an even greater bully. Even free pagus continue this tendency, holding warleaders and the few pagus elders (usually the two are synonymous) in almost fawning esteem. A few free pagus who fall in with more open-minded fae will turn half-heartedly to the worship of Berufu, but those few pagus who become truly devoted members of a religion tend to favor human religions – usually Islam (the tenet of absolute submission before God being a comforting familiarity for them), but there have been reports of at least a few pagus *Buddhists* who, by abandoning all worldly attachment, have managed to abandon the brutality and rage that is the pagus' birthright.

Most travelers upon encountering roaming pagus in Canam immediately assume an impending bloody encounter. This is a proper and entirely warranted assumption. The number of enlightened and peaceful pagus is miniscule, and they are seldom seen wandering on open roads. Every fae people has sworn to their

destruction and will not stop to consider whether the target of their ire be redeemed, although those who travel with companions of the 'civilized' fae are usually given the benefit of the doubt. While non-fae like humans and kodiaks don't always reflect this racial hatred, they all know to beware of the pagus. To see one is to assume combat; to see more is a portent to invasion.

In Canam, the vast majority of pagus currently live in the landlocked region of Apocrypha. As creatures of syntropy, they find the overwhelming chaos of nature distasteful and generally avoid mountains and large bodies of water. This has kept them sealed in this region for centuries. Pagus that are found outside this are often raiding bands free from the will of Ixindar. They may also be expeditions seeking a safe route from Apocrypha. The enemies of pagus seldom ask for details. It is unknown how many civilized pagus have lost their opportunity to develop because of this.

Physical Qualities: Pagus are taller than most men, looming over all other fae save laudenians. Pagus have pale, cracked skin marked with raised veins and bruises from rapid aging. The only recognizable feature from the old fae are their ears—still pointed, but short and flush to their heads. Although pagus don't appear "stretched" like laudenians, they still look thin given their height. They are muscular but not well built like the shorter narros. This is deceptive, as the pagus are among the strongest fae. The arms of a pagus dangle nearly to his knees.

Pagus are completely hairless, and there is no sexual dimorphism, with females as strong and as violent as the males.

Pagus have strong but animalistic senses of smell, hearing, and sight, but they do not process them separately as most creatures do; instead, all perceptions are fed directly into the centers of the pagus' brain that control their instincts. This strange synthaesia allows pagus to seem to be able to see in perfect darkness, detect even magically silenced enemies behind them, and track by scent creatures that normally leave no trail. It is not possible for them to relay this information to others, however, as they are incapable of processing it intellectually: all they can do is react to the stimulus.

Playing a Pagus: Pagus are the best species to play as they are committed and single-minded warmongers. There is no strategy when dealing with a pagus. You point him in a direction, let him go, and keep your distance.

A pagus joining a party has an uphill journey. Where the tilen are unjustly pigeonholed as predators, the pagus' reputation has been well earned. Creating a pagus character must begin with an origin. Where was this pagus born and how did he reach this point in life? If joining an evil party, no explanation is required. However, if the group is populated by noble warriors, an initial encounter should be established (if not fully played out). Kodiaks carry no inherent grudge with pagus nor do tilen or even most humans outside of Abidan, but all other fae are more inclined to decapitate first and ask questions later. This generally prevents pagus from being encountered alone in a tavern.

Once the pleasantries of introductions have passed, a pagus can be a fierce and effective (as well as loyal) contributor to a party.

Names: Pagus speak a guttural language assembled from other fae tongues. Paggin borrows heavily from narroni and chaparran into a patois mixed with the shemjaza tongue of ignotan. This language forms the basis of their names, despite that pagus are forbidden to speak pure paggin in any village controlled or influenced by Mengus. Pagus place their given names at the end and their clan names at the beginning, forming it into a single title broken by clicks and glottal stops. Outside of pagus villages, these additional names are dropped in favor of a more fearful title like Manik the Malign and Kallis the Monster.

Examples: Alik'asti-Kross, Bagga'kes-Naga, Ghraal-Shotek, Manik'kalik-Manik, Monko'Kallis, Zakka'shoon-Kagin

TENENBRI

RACIAL TRAITS
Average Height: 4'5"-5'3"
Average Weight: 50-75 lb.
Average Starting Age: 55 years.
Estimated Life Expectancy: 500 years

Ability Scores: +2 Charisma; +2 Wisdom or +2 Dexterity; -2 to Strength
Size: Medium. As a medium creature, you have no special bonuses or penalties due to your size.
Speed: 35 feet
Vision: Blindsight 100 feet
Languages: Tenenbra. If you have a high Intelligence score, you can choose any additional languages you want.
Racial Skill Bonuses: +2 Perception, +2 Sense Motive

Blindsight: You possess blindsight to 100 feet. You cannot read with blindsight, but you can read Pleroma--its glowing words illuminate even those who cannot see. You cannot be subjected to gaze or blinding attacks and you suffer no penalties from displacement or any other effect that produces a visual illusion. You can still be subjected to deafening attacks. Any of the following conditions reduce the blindsight range to 30 feet: being on a mount, being in the air or on a boat, or sleeping.

Zatou: Blindness might hinder swordsmen of another kind, but never you. You may use Wisdom in place of Strength for attack and damage rolls with any melee weapons. You may also use Wisdom in place of Strength when determining your Combat Maneuver Bonus and Defense.

Piezo Scream (Ex): A number of times a day as your Constitution, Strength, or Wisdom modifier (select one), you can use a swift action to emit a high-pitched scream to disorientate or damage your foes. All

creatures within 5 feet of you are deafened and staggered for 1 round (Fortitude save negates; DC 10 + ½ your level + your chosen ability modifier).

On the far side of the wall, Mustafarnis could feel the human construction machines shoring up the barrier. She had no doubt that she could climb it faster than the snipers atop the wall could react to her presence – they had not seen her come this far, after all, and they were accustomed to watch the forest line rather than the base of the wall – but such was not her intent. The men in Limshau had said there were secret entrances, and none could find a secret better than a tenenbri. Patiently, she traversed the wall, feeling the vibrations from the machines through her hand and training her brain to ignore them, focusing all her attention onto her feet.

There! A tiny opening, barely wider than a sewer grate, but no trouble for a slim fae to slip through. She made her way unerringly through the many branching tunnels until she emerged once more into the light, her sightless eyes unblinking. She lingered in the shadows until an unobservant peasant wearing a conical straw hat wandered near the alley where she lurked, and then emerged wearing his hat and tying a strip of silk torn from his sleeve across her eyes.

Taking care to deliberately stumble every few feet as she tapped along the street with her sword-cane, Mustafarnis waylaid a passing yoriki and spoke in perfect, unaccented Sinitic: "Excuse me, but can you tell me where to find David Chen's bookshop?"

Many human cultures have tales of wicked creatures that live beneath the Earth, but all of them differ drastically on the particulars. As with most elements of human mythology derived from the age of Terros, it bears only a passing resemblance to reality.

The tenenbri mark a point in fae history where the naiveté of free-thinking fae was stained with bloody civil conflict. The tenenbri live underground, but unlike the similarly subterranean narros, they seldom return to the surface: only one of many points on which they differ from their cousins. Although both share some common heritage and religious beliefs, the two peoples oppose each other on many fundamental values and had already been involved in smaller ethnic clashes by the time the pagus arrived. After the War of the Fallen—the conflict between the fae and pagus—had defused from immediate fear to daily concern, the clashes between the narros and tenenbri resumed.

The narros are a much older people than the tenenbri, having broken directly from the laudenians, while the tenenbri branched later from damaskans. Tenenbri are in many ways more fanatically religious than the narros and worship the same god, Oaken. However, tenenbri differ on interpretation and several fundamental beliefs, including the approach to daily rituals, the formation of culture and government, and their views of those not sharing their beliefs.

The focal-point of conflict in the previous age revolved around the ownership of the Well of Salvation—a holy monument to all that worship Oaken. The well, a smooth, naturally-formed circular pit 345 feet wide and 1.25 miles deep, was said to have been formed by Oaken to be his voice. He commanded the fae to emerge into existence from this very mouth. Naturally formed steps allowed a long and dangerous trek to the flat and featureless bottom. Only the most devout narros were allowed to make the pilgrimage to its base. The well carried a breath of cold, moist air that continuously spilled from its mouth, felt by believer and unbeliever alike that lined the perimeter. Suicide was an unfortunate common side-effect of the experience (history does not relate whether this was considered a theological problem or a sociological one).

The narros, long before the tenenbri had even been formed, forged the great surface city of Antok to serve as the haven for all religious fae that endorsed Oaken as their creator and savior. One of the basic commandments of Oaken passed by the Antok cardinals was that no fae was to dig deeper than the depth of the pit. It was this sin the tenenbri had committed, and had done so willingly and repeatedly. While the tenenbri claimed they had already embraced the darkness when this occurred, the narros contend the tenenbri lost their eyes and their desire for daylight the moment they affronted their god.

The smaller conflicts that broke out over minor religious disagreements continued until a tenenbri cardinal, Nihilochrysis, founded the Enos movement—a subset of tenenbri dogma that revolved around the guilt of being cast down by Oaken for the sin of digging too deep. This differed from standard doctrine that claimed the tenenbri were a master race and the only ones with the right to venture into God's sworn land. Thousands of followers of Enos, including Nihilochrysis, marched upon Antok on pilgrimage with the peaceful intent of praying alongside their narros cousins, but the guards of Antok, on orders from the religious hierarchy, prohibited the tenenbri's entrance.

The fall of the Hammer precludes an accurate account of history, but what is known is that this refusal sparked a crusade, despite the peaceful intent of the original pilgrims. When the battles had ceased, the tenenbri were in control of Antok, and some say that they survived the Hammer's fall not by passing through Attricana but by hiding within the Well. By some miracle, the Well also reemerged into the new era, and the tenenbri and narros of Southam are now locked in a bitter struggle over the possession of the holy city of Antok.

The dominant tenenbri faith holds that they are Oaken's chosen people, all other fae having been failed experiments suitable only to serve the tenenbri. Exactly how humans, coming after the fae as they do, fit into this worldview is a matter of some theological debate which most tenenbri resolve by simply categorizing humans as unusually articulate animals. The tenenbri are passionate about whatever beliefs

they hold and show their emotions visibly. Their faith, while self-aggrandizing and xenophobic, is neither evil nor overwhelmingly corrupt, but is also rarely seen outside of Southam. The Enos movement, though sparking a campaign that cost thousands of lives, never endorsed the use of violence in aggression, though its tenets do not preclude fighting to defend one's beliefs.

The few tenenbri that don't follow a specific belief system or are not fanatical about their faith are still notorious for being stubborn and close-minded about what they consider to be true. They are demonstrative with their preconceptions, and will often volunteer them freely even if not asked. Tenenbri honesty comes from their natural ability to detect deception and

hidden emotions in others. Like the narros, tenenbri bury their dead in stone.

Tenenbri are astoundingly selfish most of the time, thinking only of themselves or the group they travel with. While they often go to even suicidal extremes to protect their loved ones, the same individual might callously allow someone unknown to them to perish because it simply wasn't their business. In closed tenenbri communities like the kingdom of Vanaka, bonding and even consorting outside their species is strictly prohibited, although this runs entirely counter to most tenenbri's natural preferences.

Everything about their culture is a consequence of them losing their sight. The tenenbri are far and away the loudest fae one will ever encounter on any continent. Keeping one's voice low is considered impolite in their society, and whispering is downright rude; any sort of hand gesture, though not difficult for a tenenbri to perceive thanks to their ability to feel air currents, is seen as a deliberate snub. They stamp their feet when they walk (as long as they are not trying to sneak up on an enemy) and are constantly performing tiny non-vocal sounds, such as snapping fingers, clicking tongues, or whistling through their teeth even when not speaking; they also indicate that they are still listening through a variety of non-articulate vocalizations, sometimes overlapping with their interlocutor.

Additionally, tenenbri don't rate physically attractiveness the same as those with normal vision. Perfect bodies with perfect skin are boring to them. They find imperfections and physical flaws attractive, especially if they are natural or from accidental injury. Tattoos are worthless to them. Scars from combat or labor, missing digits, or simply hereditary features that are different from the norm are naturally attractive, an aspect the religious elite have been trying to train their people to reject. Since there are few humans in Southam and the majority of non-tenenbri peoples are in open war, it's an easy law to enforce. When the tenenbri escape from their land and venture north into Canam, this often changes. Outcast tenenbri have bonded with a variety of fae and non-fae, from humans and pagus, to oggraks and kodiaks. The rare cases when tenenbri marry outside their race are often described as avidly passionate. Other words to describe them in a relationship are hot-blooded, fiery, and lustful.

No one is sure how many tenenbri there are but estimations place them between three and six million, over ninety-eight percent of which live in the mountains of Southam.

Physical Qualities: In size, build, and general features, tenenbri are almost identical to damaskans, albeit slightly shorter. However, their entire race is blind. Their eyes are glossed over; irises are faded to near nothing, concealed under cataracts. The slightest light reflects a glint off the back of their corneas, shimmering with a white glow in direct illumination. Their deathly pale skin feels cool to the touch and tastes salty, a sign in humans of cystic fibrosis, a condition the tenenbri would all probably suffer from if magic did not suppress the gene in their body. Their long ears respond to vibrations in the air, detecting movement in total darkness, and like the damaskans, their ears are prone to twitch depending on their emotional state. Though their enhanced hearing greatly assists them, it is their connection to the ground that offers them the greatest awareness of their surroundings. Even though the tenenbri have no vision to speak of, they still maintain a surprisingly high level of personal grooming. Their clothing is rarely overtly ostentatious, as their aesthetic sense is attuned to texture rather than color: what to a tenenbri may seem like an outrageous costume is quite often puritanically plain to others.

Playing a Tenenbri: Tenenbri are the best species to play because they have a single feature that sets them apart from all others; they can see without seeing. They can feel the beating hearts of those around them. They can notice enemies while all others are helpless. They look through walls, through crowds, and through deceit. They are bizarre and graceful without the petty naiveté that so many other fae exhibit.

Tenenbri outside of Southam are often outcasts. Some communities are so fanatical that even talking to a non-tenenbri may exact banishment, and even among more moderate societies expulsion is the preferred punishment for most serious offenses (unorthodoxy being considered a serious offense by most). Virtually all tenenbri found in Canam are those who have been exiled from Southam, usually for rejecting the dominant belief that the tenenbri are a master race others should serve. Even though the tenenbri would be valuable in mines, most narros refuse to employ them, though gimfen have no such prejudices except insofar as a tenenbri in a gimfen community would have to be kept away from sensitive equipment that can't be shielded. Canamite tenenbri find surprising acceptance in echan human kingdoms, considering the treatment that humans are subjected to in Southam. Limshau finds the tenenbri braille books fascinating additions to their collection and will always allow a tenenbri to settle within their borders.

The narros, of course, still hold a grudge, with the majority of the narros judging the tenenbri as dishonorable and untrustworthy. Unsurprisingly, narros and tenenbri are almost polar opposites in their mentalities. Where the narros take pride in their discipline and military might, tenenbri play life loose, letting their emotions carry them; as warriors, they employ stealth and trickery more than a daunting shield wall. Tenenbri prefer talking their way out of fights or finding a way to trick two enemies into killing each other. Their extraordinary hearing and vibration sensitivity have allowed them an impeccable awareness of people's intents. Tenenbri are considered extremely exotic and many humans get tongue-tied when dealing with them, for while most fae are merely uncomfortably honest, tenenbri can casually identify when someone is

not telling the whole truth and are not shy about telling the world.

Tenenbri have little use for armor, preferring to strike from the shadows and then retreat before an enemy has the opportunity to target them. They favor light short blades, easily manipulated in tunnel fighting; tenenbri travelers, freed from the constraints of the underground, frequently adopt walking sticks with concealed blades, easily drawn and easily stowed. They do not care overmuch for ranged weapons, though some develop a taste for knife throwing or small, powerful spring-loaded crossbows.

Regardless of their natural proclivities, a tenenbri willingly sworn into a group of adventurers will seldom steal from them or betray their trust. However, a tenenbri may invite trouble with her very presence because of her exotic appearance and unnerving behavior. If not, she is likely to cause a stir the moment she starts talking: tenenbri are the most opinionated and demonstrative of all fae and have even less patience for tact and diplomacy than damaskans.

Names: Tenenbri have no use for family names; they have only one name, using phonemic similarity to denote relation. For example, two names like Sharajaclypse and Lamaclypse, the ending '-clypse' denotes their genetic similarity. The common syllable may occur at any point in the name: siblings usually have the same sound on the same syllable, but the rules for other relations are byzantine and only make sense to tenenbri. Most children are raised in communal crèches and some tenenbri children don't even know who their parents are (tenenbra has no generic terms for family members in any case, everyone being addressed by name). In larger cities, this is not always the case.

Examples: Sianodell, Mianodell, Farianoda (These would mark similar genetic markings based on the "iano" in their names. Sian and Mian may be sisters but Fari could be an uncle or cousin), Mazicalatte, Ranasorrei, Tepsidra.

TILEN

RACIAL TRAITS
Average Height: 5'8" – 6'4"
Average Weight: 45-70 lbs.
Average Starting Age: 30 years
Estimated Life Expectancy: 600 years

Ability Scores: +2 Wisdom; +2 Strength or +2 Dexterity; -2 Constitution
Size: Medium. As a medium creature, you have no special bonuses or penalties due to your size.
Speed: 30 feet
Vision: Darkvision. You can see in the dark up to 60 feet.
Languages: Two human languages. If you have a high Intelligence score, you can choose any additional languages you want.
Racial Skill Bonuses: +2 Sense Motive, +2 Acrobatics

Blessed Body: You receive a +2 racial bonus to saves against all Necromancy spells.

Blood Vengeance: You gain a +2 racial bonus to attack and damage rolls against all undead. This increases to +3 against ghulath.

Deceptive Strength: For all your gaunt appearance, you have power in you. You may use Dexterity in place of Strength all melee attack and damage rolls. You also gain a bonus to your Combat Maneuver Bonus equal to your Dexterity modifier.

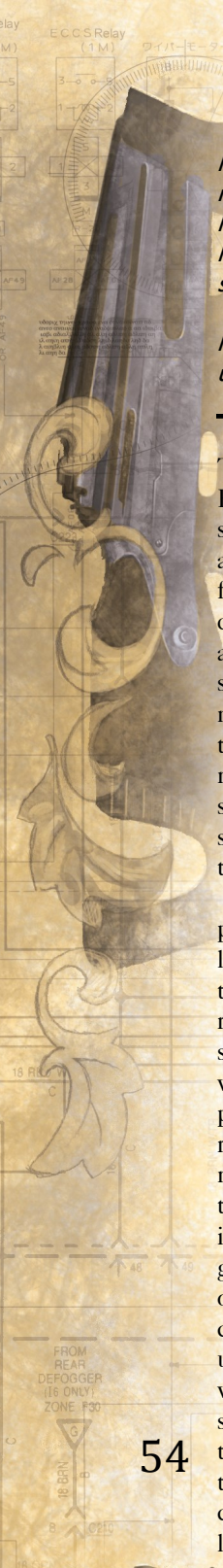
Reduced Healing: Natural healing and the effects of healing spells, scrolls, potions, and any other healing effects are halved. This does not apply to hit points recovered with *blood surge*.

Vampiric Remnants: Under direct sunlight, your vision is reduced to 10 squares (50 feet) and you lose all racial skill bonuses. Additionally, when you get emotional in any way (in combat, when angered, or in passion), old vampiric traits emerge. Your eyes glow and your incisors extend. When in this state, you gain a +2 bonus to Intimidate but a -4 penalty to Diplomacy.

Blood Surge (Su): Out of necessity, you possess the ability to drain the blood of a target to heal your wounds. As part of the same action as maintaining a grapple, one target you are grabbing takes 1d6 + your Strength or Dexterity modifier (choose one) + half your level. You recover hit points equal to the damage inflicted. If the target is awake and willing, you can choose the amount of damage you inflict and you regain double that amount. You can use *blood surge* as many times a day as your chosen ability modifier.

(These traits do not apply to the elder tilen, who are substantially more powerful and are not suitable as player characters)

Kinien had told her there was nothing to it: just stare at them with wide eyes, smile, laugh at their jokes, and they would be putty in her hands. But Kinien wasn't here, and Sallah was becoming increasingly nervous surrounded by the three drunken aristocrats. She flinched as one of them put his arm around her bare shoulders, his fingers questing for the neckline of her elaborate dress. She fended him off with a forced coquettish giggle, and shuddered inwardly as she smelled the jealousy rising in the others. At this rate, they would start fighting over her no matter who she chose to dance with. She didn't think she could handle that… the shouting, the acrid smell of sweat, the blood pounding in the brawlers' hearts, the sweet, delicious blood she just couldn't help but imagine how it tasted how it felt she wanted it NOW… the tips of her teeth pricked her tongue and she realized what she was doing, hurriedly chastising herself. She had always been more sensitive than her brother; why wasn't he here to keep her in line? As she sat there miserably, feigning smiles and wondering how to extricate herself from the trio of boors, a fourth man broke away from the crowd on the dance floor and came toward her. Sallah looked up at him as he held out his hand – one of her gallants



looked like he was going to object, then recognized the newcomer and decided against it. Her breath caught in her throat. This man smelled nice… very *nice. She found herself unconsciously glancing at his neck, and forced herself to look up into his limpid blue eyes.*

"May I have the pleasure of this dance, mademoiselle?" he asked. "Ah…" Sallah stammered, and then smiled genuinely. "Of course, milord."

The tilen are scions of an ancient evil dating back to the First War. They descend from the servants and consorts of the Lords of Death, *ghulath* in the tongue of the ancient fae, who discovered how to take Ixindar's power for themselves and used it to create unspeakable undead horrors that served only their own selfish whims, and not the whisper of Mengus. The ghulath and their spawn walked the nights of Terros and used their mesmeric powers and colossal strength to drain the blood of the living to sustain their wicked unlife. When Attricana reopened in the modern age, some of these unwilling slaves found their souls returned to them, and ever since they and their children have struggled to throw off the shackles of their dark legacy and return to the light.

The birth and history of the tilen is marred with pain, suffering, and mystery. How they came to cherish life from origins steeped in evil points to the tenacity of their spirit. The details of their curse and crusade for redemption are known only to a few, and they rarely speak of the past. Before the time of man, when the war with the dark forces of Ixindar was sweeping the planet, a group of corrupted rebels created a land that refused to follow either path. They embraced the negative energy of Ixindar but believed that death was the true gateway to everlasting power. Among these insurgents appeared the initial lords of decay, the ghulath (creatures of darkness that have gone by dozens of names throughout human history: draugr, vrykolakas, chupacabra, vampire). They created armies of mindless undead and forged a kingdom to call their own. They were despised by both sides. Requiring servants, allies, slaves, and lovers, these initial lords brought others into their fold. These disciples were horribly corrupted to the wicked will of their seducer. Ghulath may be creatures of the night, barred from the land of the living, but they never actually died. Like all the forces of Ixindar, the ghulath lords and their kin hid within the realm past the black gate, waiting for the opportunity to be brought to solid form again. Upon their return, they found a world very different from the last. They claimed their own patch of grass and soaked it with blood, starting the infection known as the Necrosea.

Their devotees followed their lords in their crusade to forge an army of death to even rival Kakodomania. They were expecting neither the white gate to burst open nor the effect of its flood across the world. When the white gate returned, a deluge swept over the Earth. Records are vague on specifics, but the wave changed everything, sending the armies of Ixindar back into their realm of Kakodomania and destroying the undead hordes where they stood. It forced the ghulath to rebuild, but they would do it alone. When the flow of Attricana hit their loyal spawn, those who were not destroyed were forced back into the light. Those minions taken from Kakodomania and the ghulath lords themselves were unaffected, being willingly bound to Ixindar, but a precious few of those taken against their will awoke from their feral existence and remembered their lives. Many died trying to escape the darklands. The remaining survivors vanished from the sight of man or fae, but their determination allowed them to endure. These individuals became known as the elder tilen. They were the most powerful and the most shamed over past sins. Their children would resemble them, but exhibited only a pale imitation of their power. Elder tilen never die, only able to leave this planet through an accident or through the brutality of a deliberate death by another's hands. They are psychologically incapable of taking their own lives. This curse of immortality is not shared by their descendants.

Tilen don't need blood to survive, but it is the only way they can heal major wounds since the natural regenerative rate of their own body is impeded by the necrotic power of their heritage. They are extremely sensitive and avoid violence when they can, both for moral reasons and because the numbers of their species are so few. Pairings between tilen are almost always childless, with a birth rate of only three percent. This rises nearly twelve percent when bonding with a non-tilen (there are no half-tilen: the child of a mixed union is always a pureblooded tilen). Their bonding ritual is a passionate and extended kiss that nearly suffocates the non-tilen partner.

Most tilen are nomadic, hiding from the light and judgmental outsiders. They spend most of their time fighting against their own untamed natures, believing themselves one step from regressing back to the undead. They carry that fear to this day, though throughout their history, only one has ever fallen back to darkness, and that only temporarily. Tilen both fear and despise undead and many of them have vowed to remove from the Earth all mindless mockeries of life. They consider necromancers, nihilimancers, and their old ghulath masters sworn enemies.

There are less than 10,000 tilen in the world but with their appealing nature and hospitality to outsiders, their numbers are beginning to grow.

Physical Qualities: Like their vampiric forebears, tilen have pale skin (though without the pallor of unlife), faintly prominent canines, and a sensitivity to light: they also cast no reflection and only weak shadows. They are generally thin, almost frail, but their strength is deceptive given their slender bodies. The elder tilen came from every fae species and retain their original basic forms, but all their descendants now have the same basic physique regardless of their lineage. This fact has brought accusations of corruption—believers claiming the tilen were intentionally released by the darkness to convert the planet to their form.

Tilen age at nearly the same rate as humans, reaching maturity in their twenties but then remaining in that state for nearly 200 years before slowly aging, though never appearing older than 50 human years. Their skin is cool to the touch but not cold, dry, or cracked. Their hair is usually bleached gold or white, often streaked with silver. Their ears taper long and straight up, though the edges tend to become jagged with age. Their eyes stand out from their monochromatic skin and attire, reflecting brilliant greens, blue, and even orange. Their eyes often expose a tilen's presence from across a crowded room, as their radiance bursts from the shadows where they frequently try to hide. Though passionate and kind creatures in general, tilen are incapable of crying. The majority of tilen are female and are on average taller than the males.

When tilen get profoundly excited, stressed or angered, their ghulath traits become more exposed. Their eyes glow bright red or yellow, their upper canine teeth sharpen and extend nearly to their lower gums, and their nails grow long, sharp and strong. They despise showing this side of themselves, especially to those they care about.

Tilen claim the uniformity of Ixindar resulted in a shape closer to the original fae. Many laudenians and chaparrans view this as an insult, since each claims their own form to be direct descendants of the original stock. The narros and tenenbri never made an official stand on the matter, but secretly disapprove of the tilen claim. Most humans don't understand why this matters to the fae: gimfen know why it matters, but simply don't care. The tilen don't assert arrogance or superiority with their contention—in their view, it is only common sense.

Consider this; the majority of tilen born are females, all tall, beautiful, without blemish or wrinkle, not an ounce of fat on them. Exotic and rare with both a chill and a warmth for every desire, you could scour every royal line and not find such fortune in gaining one's favor.

I will not repeat the misguided and insufferable opinions of those wishing their demise. I am simply asking the questions that sit on so many of our lips. Look at the facts:

A) Tilen produce offspring more successfully with non-tilen than themselves.

B) Their offspring are always tilen. Sure they may have the other's hair or cheeks but the resulting race is still the same.

C) In the centuries they have lived in this age, tilen show no signs of creating a descendant species like the other fae.

I can figure two possibilities out of this. The first is that tilen have been placed on the planet to save the fae from turning into monsters. If tilen truly look the closest to the original fae like some, including them, claim, then this is a path to saving the fae species in its entirety. Second, this is the nefarious plot by evil hands to wipe out the fae, and humanity as well, by seducing them all into producing a singular species of tilen with no others. With only tilen, their population growth would grind to a crawl and they would potential decline to extinction given enough time. As they were once creatures of darkness, this theory may have some weight, making the tilen one of the most gilded plagues in all of the history.

I want to make clear this does not make them all evil. I personally believe the tilen may be innocent in this conspiracy. It would not serve the forces of evil to make them all deceitful for the truth would eventually be revealed. Tilen would have no control over their desires. It's natural as it is in all of us, to find companionship, to seed a further generation with your offspring. How could they be blamed for wishing what we all wish? I truthfully believe that if this matter is ignored, the tilen could be the only civilized people left in the world.

Logan Markus
Public Address (before his forced retirement), Kannos

Playing a Tilen: Tilen are the best people to play because their colorful heritage will encourage role playing outside of combat. They are the best choice because they are the fewest on the planet. When a tilen enters a crowded room, they are the only ones of their kind in it, and heads will turn. They are a double-edged sword because of their dark past and kind nature. In the end, such a rich palette will create a more interesting character to play.

A tilen player character must accept that their species is stigmatized as much as the tenenbri – in some cases, even as much as the pagus. Tilen are executed on sight in some nations in the world (not just in Baruch Malkut, where all fae run this risk). They usually keep to themselves and seldom advertise their presence outside their own villages. Though almost entirely benign and peaceful, tilen suffer greatly at the hands of others. Most fae avoid the tilen and several human villages openly hunt them. Despite this, tilen numbers continue to rise, as their demure nature and statuesque good looks are distinctly appealing, especially to humans—which in turn often provokes others (mostly humans as well) to accuse them of being evil tempters and servants of darkness, planning a clandestine campaign to destroy all children of God by breeding them out. They regard the tilen as demon masters of seduction—modern day succubae and incubae—whose only purpose is to tempt men away from chaste and loyal human marriages, to produce an army of cambion half-breeds. More than 85% of all tilen are female, which does not help this growing stereotype. Nevertheless, tilen continue to live their lives, willingly offering the hand of friendship at the risk of having said hand removed.

Tilen have little culture of their own. Their desire for acceptance makes them quick to adopt the customs of whatever community is willing to welcome them. Contrary to the traditional view of vampires as beings of consummate style, tilen on their own will often adopt drab, unassuming clothing, preferably covering as much skin as possible to prevent sunburn, often adopting wide-brimmed hats, deep-hooded cloaks, or veils for good measure. Being deeply opposed to violence, they have no native martial traditions. If forced to fight, they prefer heavier armor and reach weaponry, or better still, crossbows or magic, the better to minimize the chance of injury.

Tilen are emotional and expressive but rarely lose control of their facilities. Even when they do, their fear of a relapse that will turn them back to darkness is strong enough to prevent them from doing anything truly heinous. They loathe exposing their ghulath traits: it unmasks them, and tilen fear that, if others were to see them in that state, it would cause a violent reaction and endanger them and those they care about. Living so close to the specter of death, they are not only driven to survive, but have a pathological abhorrence of causing an unnecessary death.

Among allies, friends, or family, tilen are open, honest, gentle, and fiercely loyal. Once they establish a bond in any form, they honor and relish such attachment, knowing perfectly well how rare they are when images of tilen can be seen on so many city walls proclaiming them to be demons from a wide range of legends and religious books.

As religion is usually used as an excuse for expelling them from a community, most tilen have a healthy distrust for any organized faith. This is more pronounced with human religions, as the fae faiths have no concept of 'hell' or 'demons' beyond the very real embodiments of Kakodomania, but even so, the tilen always harbor a suspicion that any gods they might pray to do not want them. Those who still yearn for the sacred tend to be drawn to religions that are more philosophy than faith; Buddhism in particular has a moderate following among tilen. Of course, those who integrate into another society will adopt the customs and religion of their adopted home—until such time as that religion is turned against them.

Names: The first tilen elders adopted new names when they were pulled back into the light, mostly human-inspired, to sever their connection with the past. Their descendants continue the trend, usually choosing a new name when they enter a new community (a useful practice, given their propensity for being driven out of town for perceived offenses). There is no consistent naming scheme among tilen, as they have no native language of their own, usually adopting that of the nearest community for their day-to-day business.

Examples: Azula Jaheer, Lhamah Cyrose, Mira Diemasko, Naga Sorenti, Saleena Kaeris, Zacheria Korvek

NON-FAE RACES

HUMANS

RACIAL TRAITS
Average Starting Age: 20 years
Estimated Life Expectancy: 80 years

Ability Scores: +2 to any ability score of your choice.
Size: Medium. As a medium creature, you have no special bonuses or penalties due to your size.
Speed: 30 feet.
Vision: Normal
Languages: English, Englo-Lingo, or Onespeak. If you have a high Intelligence score, you can choose any additional languages you want.
Bonus Feat: You gain one extra feat at 1st level.
Skills: You gain 1 additional skill rank at 1st level and one additional rank whenever you gain a level.
Saturation Value: You have a saturation value of 0. You do not generate an EDF and therefore can use any tech level weapons, armor, or devices without disruption. The equipment in question is still susceptible to outside sources or by magic equipment held by the character.

"I do not understand, Nejima-san," said the damaskan child, her lip curling in distaste. "What is the purpose of this exercise, if it is not combat training?"

Nejima sighed and adjusted the straps on his boxing gloves. "It's many things, Denka-chan," he explained. "I

find it serves me better than meditating for clearing the mind."

The little girl shook her head. "But, if you hurt someone—or if you get hurt—" Nejima smiled. "That's part of the fun," he said. "You have to focus on your opponent so you don't get hit, and if you do you have to condition yourself so you don't feel it, and you have to trust that he'll do the same. It's almost spiritual, when you think about it."

The elf still did not seem convinced. "But… but... Men… touching!" she stammered. "And in shiny underwear!"

Nejima looked at the child's red-faced visage for a moment, and then burst out laughing. "Yes, well," he said, when he had regained his composure, "Perhaps I should try to explain again when you're older."

Evolution is the adaptation of a natural animal to its environment. Further generations of a species may not necessarily be superior, but those that survive would be better suited to their surroundings with an advantage over the competition. This process eventually resulted in humanity – with no signs that evolution has ceased. The fae continue to adapt to their surroundings as well, but their development degrades their form, making them more animalistic and feral. Even the laudenians, the most magically endowed of all fae, fled to the skies to prevent degradation. Some humans, especially those of echa, firmly believe mankind's turn to magic will be the key to their final path to perfection, able to master the world of enchantment in all its forms while fae continue to be slaves to it. Since only humanity has arisen with any notable footprint as an evolved species, they are the only ones listed, however broken into two groups: echan humans and techan humans. Though humanity is still the most numerous intelligent species on the planet, less than 400 million humans live today, many of them outside of bastions.

Humans emerged millions of years after the last magical creatures escaped or fell to dust. Mankind grew from hairy apes to the form that walks with pride today. Since their peak in the age of technology, most of the human population has died off, leaving less than 3% to rebuild. The origins of this disappearance are not fully understood; some claim it was natural disasters resulting from the Second Hammer, others blame the encroachment of Kakodomania in the early days of the gate's reopening, and there are those who believe that mankind had already practically destroyed himself through war, pollution, and disease by the time magic changed the world. Some escaped into bastions while others embraced the ways of magic. Many more were killed in the first few decades. After five hundred years of living on their own, mostly xenophobic of outsiders, the citizens of bastions can sometimes be looked upon in a wholly different light than their magically saturated brethren. Techa-folk often fear magic, claiming it steals their souls or changes them irreparably. The use of magic *does* change a human: he stops being a creation purely of nature, and his mere existence begins to break down the laws of the known universe just as the fae do. Techa-folk claim this removes them from the human race. Echa-folk claim this is how man is supposed to be. They are both wrong, but that's beside the point. Until magic infuses a human, by embracing it as a mage or accepting its touch in weapon or armor, she has a choice whether or not to let the enchantment into her spirit. Once one does, she is borne along with the tide, and it is very difficult to come down from it.

Mankind emerged into the new dawn with nothing. The old cities were gone. No corporations or organizations, no clubs or allegiances, nothing that defined mankind as a species, or anchored them to their fidelity to god or country, endured. Fragments of the old age were scattered in the few ancient ruins that somehow endured. Survivors had to set aside their ignorance and stubbornness. Many refused and died praying for a deliverance that never arrived. Suicide took many in the first few years. Later – when the first fledging communities encountered the first non-humans – hostilities followed.

Many more humans fell under the blade in conflicts they often initiated. A pause in their fear and paranoia resulted in a stay of annihilation, preventing man's second near extinction. Eventually, these first communities grew enough to sustain themselves. Though nations changed, ethnic groups continued to grow. Racism died in the face of other, very real monsters. Bastions formed with wide spectrums of color and creed. Some cities (like Angel) did separate regions for specific groups, but this usually came at the request of the segregated group, wishing to preserve their ancient cultures against the melting pot. Outside of the bastion walls, any remaining propensities for racism were usually diverted onto other species.

Humans have short memories, and there is nobody alive today who remembers the ancient hatreds and conflicts in times before the second Hammer. Few nations advocate hatred of other humans, although techan humans often act superior to outsiders. Echan human nations respond well to each other with Baruch Malkut being a notable exception. With Darius Konig's doctrine of Sapien Superiority and their murder and enslavement of thousands of fae and humans who don't share their views, no other human echan kingdom will trade with them. Other nations like Kannos and Abidan maintain good relations with their surrounding fae neighbors. Specific diplomatic ties depend on which species are found in proximity to the settlement. Outside of the major human nations, dozens of villages and communities dotted across Canam and even the world practice bigotry against the fae ranging from shunning or enslavement to expulsion or eradication, but there are just as many communities who simply welcome them with open arms.

Humans have maintained most of their old religions, but virtually all religious zealotry disappeared when less than 200 million people survived to the new age. They quickly banded together, abandoning old bigotries and

conceits from the old world. The holy lands many fought, killed, and died for were gone, and with nearly all of the ancient sacred relics gone with them, most took this as a sign to live for the betterment of all mankind and not die over the buried remnants of forgotten conflicts. Sworn enemies put aside their pasts in favor of rebuilding. Many of them found new enemies, as well as new friends, with arriving echan peoples. In this new world, the big five religions survived: Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Chinese Folklore, and Buddhism. They remain the majority by an enormous margin. Smaller faiths – Judaism, Sikhism, Shinto, etc. – appear in certain regions. With 95% of humanity eliminated at the dawn of the new age, the survivors believed that Armageddon either had passed or was yet to come. The majority of man, even within the bastions, is still controlled by rulers professing a faith in an almighty power. With the exception of a scant few, most use this belief to lead the people in wisdom and kindness, not in fear and lunacy. Those embracing echa believe in the gate as a lens of their faith and not necessarily a symbol. Faiths including a heaven believe it sits beyond the gateway of Attricana. Those without a heaven (or even a god for that matter) believe the gate to be either a reflection of nature or a mirror of their own soul.

Before the gate opened, the world was divided on the origin of man, firmly separated between a scientific theory and a religious belief. This all changed when Attricana opened. With this new angle on the world, many humans faced new facts: the introduction of the fae and dragons, and a past world and history unknown to them. Some elected to believe their dogma accurate despite contradictory evidence, concocting extravagant theories claiming the previous age did not exist at all, and the new arrivals were demons meant to be repressed or destroyed. Others took these new peoples and their similarities as the final proof of divine creation, still placing man atop this ladder of progressive superiority. Many older religions did adapt and changed their scripture based on the new world. Some still attempted to use fear to suppress their believers while others took this as an opportunity to start over. The vast majority of humanity accepts natural selection as the origin of humanity, whether or not they have integrated it into another belief system.

Many human languages died within a few generations of the Hammer's fall. Others merged to create new variations. Now only a handful remain. Surviving vernacular soon divided into regional slangs and patois, becoming recognized languages themselves with distinct lexicons, syntaxes, and phonetic pronunciations. Of the major languages, the only ones that survived more or less intact are English, French, Spanish, and Mandarin Chinese, and most of these are relegated to purely academic use in favor of more modern amalgams of a variety of regional languages. English was the dominant language of the world before it changed and often the only one that two disparate groups of survivors would have in common, so most modern languages are hybridized with it. In Canam, the major dialects are Common English (English grammar with additional vocabulary drawn from Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, and a variety of indigenous tongues, most prevalent in western and northern Canam), Native English/Englo-Lingo (distinct dialects, but both mostly pure English with French and German influences, found in eastern Canam), and Onespeak (roughly equal parts Spanish and German with some English influences, the dominant language of southeast Canam). Common English is the lingua franca of the human race in Canam and the few ports outside the continent that maintain any regular contact, and is the language most non-humans pick up when wishing to communicate with mankind.

The majority of bastion-born believe mankind earned his right for total dominion of the globe and wait for the day when technology will recover the planet

again. A few believe in a shared future where technology can exist side by side with magic, though with mankind as the true proprietors of the world.

In echa, this belief is reversed. While some think the new races are intruding and should be eliminated or enslaved, many have embraced the new world, considering it the utopia and haven predicted in religious texts. Only when the dark hordes and their minions are eliminated and the hell gate closed will this world truly turn into Eden.

Physical Qualities: Humans continue to be more varied than any other civilized race on Earth. They possess virtually every possible skin color (including a few that were physically impossible in the old world), range in height from three feet to a towering seven, are thin and fat, and sport a variety of hair colors and styles. Since almost every religion and ethnic group is represented on Canam, a player can select any ethnicity of his choosing. It is suggested that upon choosing an ethnic group, the player takes the time to research the unique strengths of said group.

Playing a Human: With such a wide range of possibilities, humanity is the best people to play. They have the greatest variety of options. In this new world, they have the most to gain (and lose) with the coming events to follow. In the end, humanity will be the force that will decide the fate of the world.

A player creating a human should first determine his origin: from a bastion or from the outside world. The player character choosing a path of technology must have access to said technology on a regular basis. Without upgrading their technology, techan characters won't fare much better than low-level echans.

A techan character is a stranger in a strange land. It might be Earth but centuries under the glare of Attricana have changed the landscape. Techans leaving the walls are truly entering a fantasy world for which they have little to no preparation. Some may leave willingly while others are forced to because of obligations or because of an obsession that haunts them. Some may open their eyes, welcoming the wonder of this new world. Others watch with jealousy and resentment. Regardless, techans are loyal to their own kind and don't often welcome foreigners. While outside, they miss their refrigerators and computers. On the other hand, some techans have given up their central heating and televisions to pursue a path of magic, embracing the new world with a romantic naivete, unaware of the horrors awaiting them. Loyal techans strive for the day when the gates close, orphaning the fae to the ravages of the real world, a time where mankind could retake the planet as its true inheritors. The fae would be forced to escape back into the formless void of dreams and delusions. Those unable or unwilling to make such a journey would be subject to the harsh reality of natural laws and perish quickly. Techans fear the future of a world where magic reigns uncontested and humanity lives stagnant, in limbo, never changing, forever in a fantasy world without consequences.

Most echan humans have wholly accepted their path with no desire to settle within the walls of industry. They take on magic without worry of the consequences. They believe techans follow an obsolete conviction, frantically clinging to a dying mind-set. Echan humans insist this new world is as real as the one that came before and it deserves to exist as much as anything else. Those with a faith in the unseen believe it to be the ultimate solution to humanity's avarice. If man continued alone, he would have destroyed the world in his greed. With magic and disruption, it keeps mankind humble and in check—Nature finally striking back for sins committed on its soil. Even those without religion believe this new world is the proper one. At the very least, it's far more interesting. Some just don't care about the fate of humanity and have turned their back to selfishly embrace the romance and exotic nature of their new neighbors.

Then there are those on either side who simply have yet to make a choice. It must be stressed that though millions of humans would be considered 'echan' simply because they live in regions that accept the existence of magic as a reality of life, only those who actively use or expose themselves to magic are actually enchanted (and thus generate EDF). At the same time, there are plenty of so-called techans who hearken after either a simpler life or merely a less predictable one outside the bastion walls.

Humans often seek excitement for the sheer thrill of it. Some escape their bastions while others dedicate themselves to entering one. Humans follow whims and dreams more than any other species. They are caught up on causes while others let things pass. Their short lives force them to condense as much experience as possible in a brief span of time.

Names: Human names continue to evolve today. Now with the commingling of many ethnic groups, first and last names can (and usually do) represent several cultures. The degree of infusion of Asian blood and languages into the general Canamite population means that old Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Indian names are as common, if not more so, than those originally of European extraction.

Examples: Chiaki Jones, Kim Jansen, Kiba Hebrus, Delacroix Lin-Wei, Miranda Okama, Robert Naseen

Mixed Groups: Of course, one could mix both echan and techan players together into one group. Why they would choose to unite is left up the imaginations of the players or DM. One idea could be a shared past between several characters (both raised in Angel, one in Genai, the other in the main city), a techan out of place in the world or even characters romantically linked. Either way, they attempt to survive together, flying in the face of convention insisting the worlds live apart. In this situation, the techan must exercise caution and not wield or use magic though surrounded by it. The techan or techans also must be careful to keep their more sensitive gear away from the powerful magic items in the group or risk disruption. This problem escalates as levels progress and more powerful technology shorts

out more often and more severely, despite the shielding techniques some bastions developed. This struggle reflects in the rest of the world as well.

KODIAKS

RACIAL TRAITS
Average Height: 6'4" – 7'2"
Average Weight: 350 -450 lb.
Average Starting Age: 15 years.
Estimated Life Expectancy: 80 years

Ability Scores: +2 Strength; +2 Constitution or +2 Wisdom; -2 Intelligence
Size: Medium. As a medium creature, you have no special bonuses or penalties due to your size.
Speed: 30 feet
Vision: Low-Light Vision; you can see twice as far as a human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. You retain the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.
Languages: Argose. If you have a high Intelligence score, you can choose any additional languages you want.
Racial Skill Bonuses: +2 Survival, +2 Swim

Enchanted: You are an echan. You disrupt technology on you and around you. You have a saturation value of 20 which can never drop below this value unless your soul switches from Attricana to the negative energies of Ixindar (see **Corruption**).

Natural Runner: As long as you have nothing in your hands, you can run on all four limbs. If you do, you can move up to six times your speed (or four times if you are wearing heavy armor). If you choose to run at four times your speed (per normal rules), you can maintain that run for a number of hours equal to your Constitution modifier. When running, you ignore movement penalties from difficult terrain.

Imposing but Clumsy: You can wield weapons of one size larger than you as if they were your size. You also suffer a -1 penalty to attack rolls with weapons you wield in one hand. You are too large and clumsy to ride a mount.

Natural Weapons: You possess powerful claws and teeth, with which you are automatically proficient. (Primary) 2x Claws: 1d6; (Secondary) Bite: 1d3

In light above, I see fires by man and unman. I tell not apart. They better for sparking fires? I make fire here. No need to set them to sky. Here they cook and warm.

We thank wood for burning. We plant again to make grow more.

No wood in sky. Man pray fire. Seek fire. Wrong for this.

No pray fire, pray wood. Wood better.

Pray Wood.

In the north of Canam, influence from Attricana has forced the native bears upright. At first, these creatures remained lawless. They quarreled amongst themselves and raided neighboring communities for food. Even today, kodiaks still lack sufficient success at civilized society. Most cling to the quest for survival with such an obsession that they care for little else.

A band's disposition relies on its leader, dictating how the tribe will act and where they will travel. Will they hunt or forage? Will they attack or trade? A few tribes close to the narros in Fargon or migrating into the sparsely settled lands down the Dianaso pass, understanding that their future depended on pushing past their fear of others, attempted a dialogue. The kodiaks developed into trained hunters and farmers. As they brought in food, the civilized folk repaid their allies with knowledge, clothes, tools, and finally weapons. Better armed, these civilized kodiaks

overwhelmed their unfortunate rivals, whether they be boggs, skeggs, or other kodiaks.

Almost all kodiaks reside in Northern Canam with a few migrating through the rest of the continent. They are virtually unknown elsewhere. Their presence in any non-kodiak community is uncommon; the only place in Canam where kodiaks and non-kodiaks regularly mingle is in the confederacy of Seliquam, in and around the Dianaso Pass, and even there, most kodiak bands keep to themselves.

The kodiak belief system is essentially animist, with everything in nature having a spirit. Where they differ from other animist traditions is that kodiaks do not believe that the spirits should be importuned or even bothered unnecessarily. Where a human tribal hunter might give thanks to the spirit of the prey, kodiaks descend from predators higher on the food chain; if they are able to catch something, that is proof that they deserve to have caught it, and no thanks to any noncorporeal power are needed. Their beliefs are more a means of explaining natural and supernatural phenomena to a culture that has no traditions of either science or magic, and they find other species' notions of gods and afterlives to be eccentric at best and delusional at worst. A few kodiaks who deal extensively with the narros have converted to the worship of Oaken, but this is uncommon and usually scoffed at by their brethren.

Kodiaks speak in a series of grunts and whimpers known as Argose; they can manage other languages only with difficulty, and always heavily accented. Few non-kodiaks comprehend their language.

Physical Qualities: As their name suggests, most kodiaks are derived from northern grizzly bear stock, though there are a few bands whose ancestors must have interbred with polar bears or black bears from their size and coloring. Kodiaks are enormous, with many towering over seven feet. They are covered from head to toe in heavy fur with large eyes and articulate claws. Their snouts are shortened to fit a proper mouth that can articulate speech (albeit not terribly well). It is nearly impossible to tell a female from a male upon a cursory examination, or for that matter even distinguish one individual from another: kodiaks tell one another apart by smell more than sight. There are a branch of elder shamans revered by the kodiaks as living deities. These are not true kodiaks, being proportioned more like normal bears, with shorter limbs and larger torsos.

They also rarely wear clothes or wield weapons. Kodiaks only wear layers for protection. If they travel too far south, they stop wearing unnecessary clothes, except armor. While not dependent on magic to live, as fae are, kodiaks are still an inherently echan folk and disrupt technology just as the fae do. They are also immune to most, but not all, human ailments, although they can be carriers – but they also have their own unique disorders, which can be difficult for a non-kodiak physician to even diagnose let alone cure without the aid of magic. Kodiaks also retain some vestiges of their ancestral hibernation instinct, and although they can easily overcome it, they tend to be sluggish in the winter months: however, they also are able to survive on practically no food during that time, having stored up sufficient reserves during the summer and autumn.

Playing a Kodiak: Kodiaks are the best species; there can be no argument. A kodiak enters the room and all eyes turn. Every mouth gulps its drink. Respect is bestowed without knowing anything further. It's a gigantic, bipedal bear. Its roar can be heard from across the room. Seeing one in battle fills enemies with dread. They are the biggest and the strongest. Who cares about anything else?

Kodiaks are a rare addition to any adventuring party. They seldom leave their tribes and when they do find themselves thrown together with non-kodiaks, they are often taken advantage of. Kodiaks may be the strongest and most durable, but they are rarely the smartest. There has never been a kodiak wizard mentioned in any book, and even the darawren of Jibaro have only ever accepted four kodiak druids. They prefer loose-fitting armor to heavy plates. They avoid shields and relish two-handed weapons, especially heavy clubs and battleaxes. Kodiaks are brought into a party for their strength and not their colorful conversation. They say little, making others skittish around them. When they do associate with outsiders, it's often with other peoples bound to nature (chaparrans being the noteworthy example). Other semi-feral species often take a liking to kodiaks. There have even been a few rumors of kodiaks taking changelings or nariisa as mates.

No one dares cross a kodiak. They defend their friends with violent fervor, building themselves into a crazed frenzy like a mother bear with a cub. Kodiaks suffer from low intelligence but should not be considered stupid. They are simple and talk in basic phrases but only speak this way because of apathy towards conversation. Kodiaks can't stand small talk. They despise politeness and rarely return courtesy. Words like "please" and "thank you" have no mirror in their tongue. A kodiak character has likely left his tribe because of dishonor or less commonly because of a command or need to wander the world. He may even be the last of his family.

Names: Kodiaks can tell each other apart easily, differentiating sex, age, and family line. Because of this, they have no need for complicated names or family titles. They have single names of few syllables, which are easy to pronounce, and are not usually used within their own communities. One account claims the kodiaks only have thirty different actually names they continually recycle, but this has never been proven.

Examples: Donan, Goran, Hagga, Koa, Rogan, Warro.

Half Kodiak: Kodiaks rarely breed outside their species. Like humans they can mate with any fae (most commonly with nariisa), but their children will always

be a pureblood fae of the fae parent's species. Humans and kodiaks cannot produce children.

INTER-SPECIES ROMANCE

Each line of the fae is technically a separate species, and were it not for magic, they would not be genetically compatible with one another. Likewise they are genetically incompatible with humans. Magic, however, enables crossbreeding between fae lineages and even with evolved and spawn races, with varying degrees of success. The first issue in fae-human cross-breeding is time. Fae are generally long lived, imbued with an amazing degree of patience. Most fae gestations take more than fourteen months, and their fertility cycle ranges from one to two years, not monthly as with human females. Additionally, many fae refuse to take non-fae mates not out of bigotry but fear of loneliness. Nearly all fae mate for life and the idea of outliving the short lifespan of their mate by hundreds or thousands of years frightens them. However, a strange side effect does occur in those rare situations where fae bond for life with a shorter-lived species. Throughout all fae species, the process of pair bonding forces both sides to sacrifice part of their soul to the other. The ceremony, differing with each species, can take less than five minutes in a private encounter, to several hours or even days in a public venue. The consequences are eternal. Humans and fae cannot reproduce with each other without this ceremony. The bonded souls push past scientific barriers. Humans may not be born enchanted creatures, but they instantly become one when they bond with a fae. Although bonding is technically not necessary between fae, many frown on married couples not bonding (and it does increase the chances of conception). Though a few have tried, no one has ever successfully forced a bonding in order to extend one's life. Both parties must be willing or the procedure can never finalize.

Unfortunately, there exists one exception to this rule: the pagus. They somehow found a way to mate with anything successfully, bound or not, and they do it often. Pagus can bond for life like all fae, but this situation is extremely rare and reserved for those embracing the path of good (bonding is strictly forbidden in Kakodomania and in any villages ruled by evil dragons, resulting in immediate execution of both parties). The pagus ceremony looks strangely alluring and involves hours of synchronized chanting from the couple and friends. The chants blend into a moan that shakes the ground. Compared to the usual negative views many have of them, this remains one aspect of the pagus still beautiful.

The longest bonding ceremony (taking three days without sleep, exchanging thirty pages of vows) is with the laudenians, who rarely take human mates. Laudenians share magical spirit via a special chant cast by an arcane priest. The shortest ceremony, that of chaparrans, takes less than five minutes: a tree is planted and the blood of both sides drips into the roots.

The tenenbri have no ceremony; their bond occurs merely by both sides allowing it to do so. Gimfen ceremonies involve some poetry and vow exchanging, drinking from enchanted waters, and prayers to whatever god/s they worship (if any). Damaskans include vows but also exchange colored ribbons, sashes, or scarves (depending on family tradition), which the married couple wear for life. Limshau custodians exchange small blades, not much use in combat, ornately decorated with merging family symbols. Sometimes offering said ribbon or blade is akin to a marriage proposal. Fae never jump into marriage and few fae marriages have ever ended in divorce. Even when elders frown and forbid the pairing, once it occurs, nothing more is said on the matter.

In the decades after first contact, many suitors attempted to woo fae maidens, some for conquest and others for marriage. This seldom worked: initially, the fae were skittish of mankind, and most initial meetings ended in violence. Eventually, saner minds began to reach out, but the mingling of breeds would not occur for many more decades. In the first century, the entire planetary population of fae-human hybrids could be counted on a single hand.

There is no record about which species was the first to yield, but the balance of probability is that it was a damaskan. As is usually the case, it probably occurred from shared experiences. Not a single fae people or nation condones arranged marriages, not even within their royalty. Fae establish a connection that overcomes personal beliefs and interests. Most of the time, this remains mere friendship, though this comradeship can be as resolute as any marriage. Occasionally, it continues to form an intimate sharing of souls, and the two sides bond for life. This surmounts such pesky hurdles as age, sex, or race. As humans and faekind shared their lives, bonded couples began to emerge.

In nations like Laudenia and Dawnamoak, pairing fae with human is frowned upon or outright forbidden (due to simple prejudice in the case of the chaparrans and an ingrained fear of degradation among the laudenians). This fanatical view is most prevalent at the core of their societies: chaparrans (more than laudenians) are often more approachable outside of their nations, and the farther one travels from the labyrinth of Vanaka, the more likely one is to find a tenenbri who appreciates a non-tenenbri partner as anything more than a novelty. Narros' discipline and their preferred environment have made interracial couples relatively uncommon. The same goes for gimfen, but with them, it's their visible age that turns most away. This leaves the vast majority of interracial couples from damaskan blood. Since Limshau permits and encourages mingling races on every level, the kingdom became the hub of romantic voyages. In the end, most suitors encounter failure. Despite being quixotic, fae are skittish to bond, especially damaskans, known for their distant emotions in public. Fae often act alien compared to common human customs. They are all brutally honest and find deception rather repugnant. Coupled with their long lifespans and aged wisdom, most wooers are apprehensive to speak up. Fae do not fall in love in a day like humans. For them, it takes time and most pursuers don't have the necessary patience. Those doggedly determined to win the favor of a fae's attention can be rewarded with a prize greater than the trophy of the exotic catch or the years the bond offers.

Because fae are immune to all human disease and without a bond are not capable of producing offspring with humans, females became sought after for slaves. Sexual merchants bought and sold stock from the backs of carriages for centuries. Many governing bodies attempted to close these crime rings, but rumors point to a few still circulating. Baruch Malkut, for example, still employs thousands of slaves. Some believe those are urban legends meant to scare fae from leaving their homes.

Bonding Benefits

- **Locator:** Both mates know each other's exact position within 5 miles and general direction within 25 miles.
- **Life Sharing:** The side with the lesser life span lives longer. 20% of the difference between their maximum ages is added to the age of the lesser-lived species. All other age quantities are unchanged. This information is uncommon and few outside of the fae know it. The longer-lived side loses that same 20% quantity from his or her age. It's the trade-off both must be willing to accept. This also applies to different fae species with vastly different age limits: for calculation purposes, assume a lifespan of 5000 years for laudenians. (Example: A tilen female bonds with a human male. The human has the capacity to live to 184 years while the tilen drops to 496 years.)
- **Whisper:** Mates can both whisper messages and receive whispered replies from each other with little chance of being overheard. They must be within a mile of one another or be able to see each other by some means, directly or indirectly. Magical silence, one foot of stone, one inch of common metal (or a thin sheet of lead), or 3 feet of wood or dirt blocks the whisper. The effect transmits sound, not meaning. To speak a message, one must mouth the words and whisper, possibly allowing observers the opportunity to read lips.
- **Dreamspeak:** After two hours of sleep, both sides can carry on a conversation as if they were next to each other. The effect lasts for ten minutes and has no range limit.
- **Consequences:** If one side dies for any reason, not only do all these bonuses vanish (sometimes resulting in the surviving mate dropping dead instantly if their time is up),

but they also suffer a -1 to their Will and Fortitude saves for life. This cannot be removed by any means. Re-bonding to a new mate does not recover this penalty (although it does restore the other benefits) and another death compounds it. The shortened life of the longer-lived side stays shortened.

Note: A 1st-level character can only begin the game bonded with the GM's permission.

FAE MIXED BLOOD

Crossbreeding between fae species occurs relatively frequently, but the offspring of such a union, even though they may take equally after both parents in terms of appearance, are always the same species as the parent lower on the devolutionary ladder:

Laudenian > Chaparran > Narros > Damaskan > Tenenbri > Gimfen > Pagus > Lesser Fae (bogg, skegg, pugg, etc.)

A pagus mating with any other of the major fae can only produce a pagus child, for instance, whereas only a laudenian-laudenian pairing can produce a laudenian child. Tilen are an exception to this rule: any offspring of a tilen, even with a laudenian or a human, is a pureblood tilen.

Human-fae unions are unusual. Instead of being wholly of one species or the other, the children of such a pairing are true hybrids.

HALF-FAE (HUMAN/FAE)

RACIAL TRAITS

Average Height & Weight: Average of human and fae
Average Starting Age: 20 years
Estimated Life Expectancy: Average of human and fae
Ability Scores: You inherit the fae parent's attribute bonuses.
Size: Medium. As a medium creature, you have no special bonuses or penalties due to your size.
Speed: 30 feet
Vision: See **Fae Gift**, below.
Languages: Human parent's language or fae parent's language. If you have a high Intelligence score, you can choose any additional languages you want.
Racial Skill Bonuses: +2 to any two skills of your choice

Elven Blood: For all effects related to species (including meeting the prerequisites of feats), you are considered a fae of your parent's species.

Fae Gift: Depending on the fae parent, you receive the following additional abilities:

Chaparran: Brachiate and Natural Habitat, low-light vision

Damaskan: Ambidextrous and Polyglot, normal vision

Gimfen: Disruption Reduction and Scurry, normal vision

Laudenian: Equilibrium and Light Body, normal vision

Narros: Iron Roots and Stone Blood, low-light vision

Pagus: Focused Aggression and Steadfast, low-light vision.

Tenenbri: Darkvision (60 feet) and Piezo Scream.

Human Versatility: You gain an extra feat at 1st level.

Sleep: Half-fae sleep like normal humans and don't gain fae sleeping benefits. However, you only require 5 hours of sleep a night.

Sensitivity: Like fae, half-fae are vulnerable to Fae Iron.

Half Half-Fae: The child of a half-fae and another fae (full or half) is a half-fae of the species of the parent further down the ladder. Any child of a half-fae and a human is a human.

Occasionally it bothers me that I'll outlive my father by two centuries at least, and that my mother will never be able to see the colors I paint on this canvas. My sensei tells me not to worry about it. Focus on what they made when they made me, he says, and the gifts that both have given me to bring their worlds together. And so I search the world for new pigments to astound the eyes of the humans who see my art, and new textures to amaze the tenenbri who feel it: two worlds wrapped up in a single canvas. I've made many friends on my journey, many of whom will outlast me, some of whom I'll say goodbye to long before I'm ready to go, not a single one of them like me. But I can't say that I regret getting to know a single one of them, for any of that. We just keep on going one day at a time.

When humans first found their world invaded by these pointed-eared humanoids, speciesism quickly followed. Most human communities openly hated them: indeed, the oldest may have resulted from just such a xenophobic settlement. But nearly all such populations without sufficient infrastructure to support their technology either destroyed themselves or were destroyed by predators, lacking allies to defend them. Most human echan civilizations that flourished did so by declaring no ill will to their new neighbors. Laudenia and chaparrans still hold the humans in distrust and seldom communicate, and the Southam tenenbri avoid everyone equally. Only damaskans, narros, and gimfen embraced their new fellow inhabitants, occasionally in more than one sense.

Those born from the rarer species like tenenbri, chaparran, and laudenian often find their lives difficult, as their fae parent is almost always an exile from their native society (or becomes one shortly after the child's birth). Thankfully, this problem does not occur with damaskans, who embrace their children, regardless of who they are, and value individual differences more than most fae (this significantly increased the population of Limshau in its early days, as the lack of

stigma resulted in a migration of half-fae of other species to its cities). Nearly all half-fae in Canam reside in Limshau, but that still accounts for a very small portion of the kingdom's population (some say less than a thousand). Gimfen and narros half-breeds do not occur frequently, but when they do, they are treated no differently from their fae parents except insofar as allowances must be made for their height.

Half-fae have never developed nations or communities of their own. They either remain in their homelands, or venture to others if not accepted. Because a half-fae cannot be born except to a bonded couple (except half-pagus), if the child is expelled from their home culture, the entire family typically leaves as well. In human circles, feelings towards them depend on how the community responds to integration. Some fearing the fae ostracize the half-breeds as much as the laudenians do. The only bastion which tolerates the presence of half-fae is York, and even then, their movements are as tightly regulated as the infrequent fae visitors: half-fae generate just as much EDF as purebloods do, after all.

Physical Qualities: Half-fae share the most dominant characteristic of their fae parent. Their ear size is midway between the human size and the fae parent. They are also between their parent's heights. Their skin always favors the darker tone. Magic often forces submissive genes into dominance when humans and fae breed; blonde hair will sometimes surpass black, blue eyes over brown. Thankfully, the fae parent filters out genetic defects or inherited disease. Human physical features not seen in fae but considered appealing (like freckles or snaggleteeth) often pass on, but negatively viewed genetic traits such as a predisposition for baldness or obesity almost never do, for reasons which science is unable to explain. Half-fae may grow beards regardless of their fae parent.

Playing a Half-Fae: Many believe the half-fae are the future of the Earth, the eventual course for everyone. Together, as one mixed species, the planet's population can truly be in peace, to unite against the coming darkness. Half-fae often let the winds call them to the open country. Though longer lived, like their fae parent, they still desire to seek adventure like their

human progenitor. This makes them the best species to play because they have the versatility of humans with the exotic strengths of the fae.

Because a half-fae results only from bonded parents, raising one is a blessed affair, despite the feelings of the community. Half-fae rarely encounter abuse within the family and consequently seldom abandon their loyalties. Only acts of fate can result in a half-fae not having a normal childhood (this, of course, assumes both parents are good; evil parents can commit whatever atrocities they want against their children).

Half-fae, like humans, develop their personality more from how they are raised than what their racial stereotype denotes. Ones raised in open and welcoming cultures like Limshau will usually retain more of their cultural roots, but with a general cosmopolitan attitude; those raised in isolated or insular societies will mostly conform to those cultural norms. A half-fae player character will be shaped by their home culture more than their species; to that end, it is helpful to know which parent is the fae, and in which parent's culture the family resides. This will help create a believable back-story.

Despite a probable pleasant childhood, when a half-fae ventures into the world, she might encounter problems in traveling. Some nations accept those of mixed blood as no different as any other person while others revere or revile them as they would other fae. In locations hostile to fae, their unique heritage may be enough to prevent instant lynching (and, if nothing else, it is a lot easier for a half-fae to pass as a human), but the best they can hope for in such places is immediate ejection. Fae communities that deride mankind consider themselves too civilized for such harsh action, and merely shun an unwelcome interloper or politely ask them to conclude their business and leave swiftly. Half -fae, for the most part, tolerate this unpredictability.

Despite attempts to quash the use of the term "half-elf" as a racial slur, it still gets bandied about. Many half-fae try to use the term "minaan", which is damaskan shorthand for "gifted from two" or "mesinaan" which is similar, but comes from laudenian as "strengths with differences," though the laudenian term is not used in their language to that effect. Many half-damaskans actually do not object to being called "half-elf," many of them being familiar with human legends in which this was a term of respect. Unfortunately, in many communities, those of mixed human blood are labeled as half-castes or worse, half-breeds, a derogatory slur no "minaan" takes lightly.

Aiden backed away from the desk into the shelf behind him, jostling the heavy books resting upon it. The youth glanced back and noticed a hefty volume toppling over. It had a cover of obsidian, parading gold bosses of the gaping maws of dragons. Their front claws reached across the outer edge to the single oversized clasp keeping the book closed. Aiden righted it quickly—with considerable strain—and turned back to the man.

"I'm sorry," Aiden started, "I was just--"

"Quite all right, Camus-san," he answered. The spark orbited the two of them. "It likes you." His voice was deep and rough, with a heartening charisma in the way he addressed the child. Aiden couldn't place the accent but he had no problems understanding him. The man stopped opposite of the desk and looked down to the book. "The memoirs of Renar Alkanost, laudenian council leader, written 300 years ago." Aiden offered only a blink. "Though personally I think the fae is arrogant in his opinion. Most laudenians are like that."

"I just wanted to look..." Aiden trailed off. "You know my name--"

"I knew your mother. I sold her the books. She talked about you at length. Sorry about..." he paused to choose an appropriate word, "everything."

"Who are…" Aiden's voice faded and he mouthed the last word formed.

"I'm a collector. You may call me David…or Chen."

"You collect books, Davidorchen-san?"

"I avoid titles, young one. As for the books, I share them," Chen corrected. He opened his palm and the spark flew obediently to it. A whisper from his lips and it leapt from his hand. It bounced and fluttering across the room, igniting every candle and lamp.

Aiden's eyes followed the spark as it made its journey. Aiden's mouth fell open as he took sight of the forty rows of books that encircled the chamber, every wall, floor to ceiling. Each volume looked as old as the book on the desk, like the books Aiden owned. They were magnificent. The only break in the books came from a glass showcase of old weapons modern man never used. They were obsolete devices and implements from a time Aiden delighted to remember. They gleamed with polish as if forged and shaved into shape yesterday--broadswords, throwing axes, and a single longbow shaped from black wood. The flame finally returned to its home and closed the door behind it.

"How did you..." Aiden started.

"I asked it to."

"But it's not alive."

"First rule of Attricana: Anything you can think of...thinks for itself."

Aiden gathered his thoughts. "Attricana?"

Chen approached a window and opened the shutters to the moonlight. He pointed to the bright star brushing the crescent.

"By way that everything that can't happen, does."

"Can't happen…Dragons," Aiden said.

"Quite right. Hard to miss when they appear as they did."

"They aren't real," Aiden forced himself to say, "Can't."

"So says the normal world," Chen replied with a shadow of a smirk. Aiden was not smiling. Desperation had set in.

"I don't understand."

"Should you?"

"Was it Zmey?"

"Zmey?" Chen pondered the sudden question. Aiden could see the man rifling through old thoughts. "Zmey is a myth, based on several stories. What attacked you… was a death dragon."

"I couldn't find the other one in my book."

"Book?"

"Codex Dracontis--"

"Oh yes. I remember that one. There are better resources."

"That show the other dragon? The one with gold and blue scales, blue eyes, white whiskers and white talons. A long snake body. Four arms, four talons."

Chen circled around the desk, rolling his fingers across the spines on the shelf behind Aiden. "You know, they say spotting a Yok-ani is a good omen. Seeing two portends a blessed life." Chen found the book in question and pulled it out. It was almost as large as the one already on the desk, but with no cover art. There was only a single large Asian-sinitic letter and the English words underneath Myths of the Kuraukou-Puru.

"Yok-ani? Are they good?" Aiden asked.

"Some people certainly think so," Chen responded as he placed the book gently on the table. He respectfully slid the other to the side. "What do you think?" He unclasped the latches at either end of the new book.

"I think it was good."

"You sure it had four talons?"

"Yes."

"Good eye for detail, considering. They grow more as they age. Three to four to five." He opened the book. The heavy-stock pages were rough on the leaf, a hemp-pulp hybrid. The letters were pounded heavily into the stock. "This one talks of them. They are quiet, reserved, renowned for wisdom, and worshipped for the humility of their power. Under their guidance, lands see no war, famine, or grief. At least that's the claim. Reality, well…I guess they try their best." Aiden broke from the book to look at Chen. "Read it," Chen added. "Stay if you wish."

"My brother will kill me if he finds out."

"Yes, I imagine he will."

Aiden smiled and reassured himself. He thought of Martin's shoulder punches and whatever punishment his new guardians would inflict if he got caught. "I'll stay," he said.

"I'll make tea," said Chen as he walked to his kitchen.

"Uhh, Mister?" Aiden still wasn't ready to call him by name. "How much is true? Dragons? Elves?"

Chen looked back at the young boy. A quiver of a smile crept on his face. "All of it."

• • •

The other dragons grew to power and passed the Yok-ani in number. By the closing of the gates, only nine Yok-ani had been born (or perhaps created). None of them died by natural causes or fell by the hands of an enemy. Nine still remain today. In the five centuries since the reopening of the gate, the Yok-ani made no attempt to increase their numbers. Although few, they are the most powerful dragons in the world, rivaled only by the remaining dragon kings, of which Shaka, a Yok-ani, is counted as a member of.

The tea was no simple drop-bag of disheveled twigs and bark. Chen had brought a kettle of scolding water, a saucer and cup, and a smaller kettle. Inside the smaller kettle was a collection of dried herbs, flowers, leaves, and honey. Chen poured the hot water in the small kettle, and then emptied the small kettle into the cup. Aiden repeated that process and emptied the larger kettle before finally speaking to the man again.

"Do you have more?"

"Tea or dragons?" Chen replied.

"About everything outside."

Chen waved to the room. "They're all on that subject."

"I want to read them all."

"There will be time for that. It's getting late."

"Then I want to see it myself."

Chen raised a brow. "A zeal for adventure got you already?"

"It's just like the books. Just like the games I play." Aiden was getting excited. "I want to see it all, everything that they said wasn't real, castles, magic, fae."

"It may look the dream, child, but it'll carry the chill of reality. And what will it prove? Even if it feels like your fantasy, you're not the storyteller." Aiden didn't appear dissuaded. "How will you survive out there? Can you wield a sword, shoot an arrow?"

"Maybe," Aiden responded in reflex before realizing that the most strenuous physical activity he had ever done was avoid a soccer ball when playing goalie because he didn't want to get hit in the face. Chen saw through the boy's naivety.

"I don't mean to turn you away," he said, "just understand that many people claim that world as home, and you would not be any more special out there than in here. You may wish to be a character in your own fantasy, but this is no work of fiction. It's real. You're not chosen by fate. Your parents were ordinary. No gods kissed you upon your birth. What do you do well?"

Aiden scrunched his lips, shrugged, and sighed. "I read books. Don't suppose that means much." The sudden wash of insight over his face was unmistakable. "Magic. I could do that."

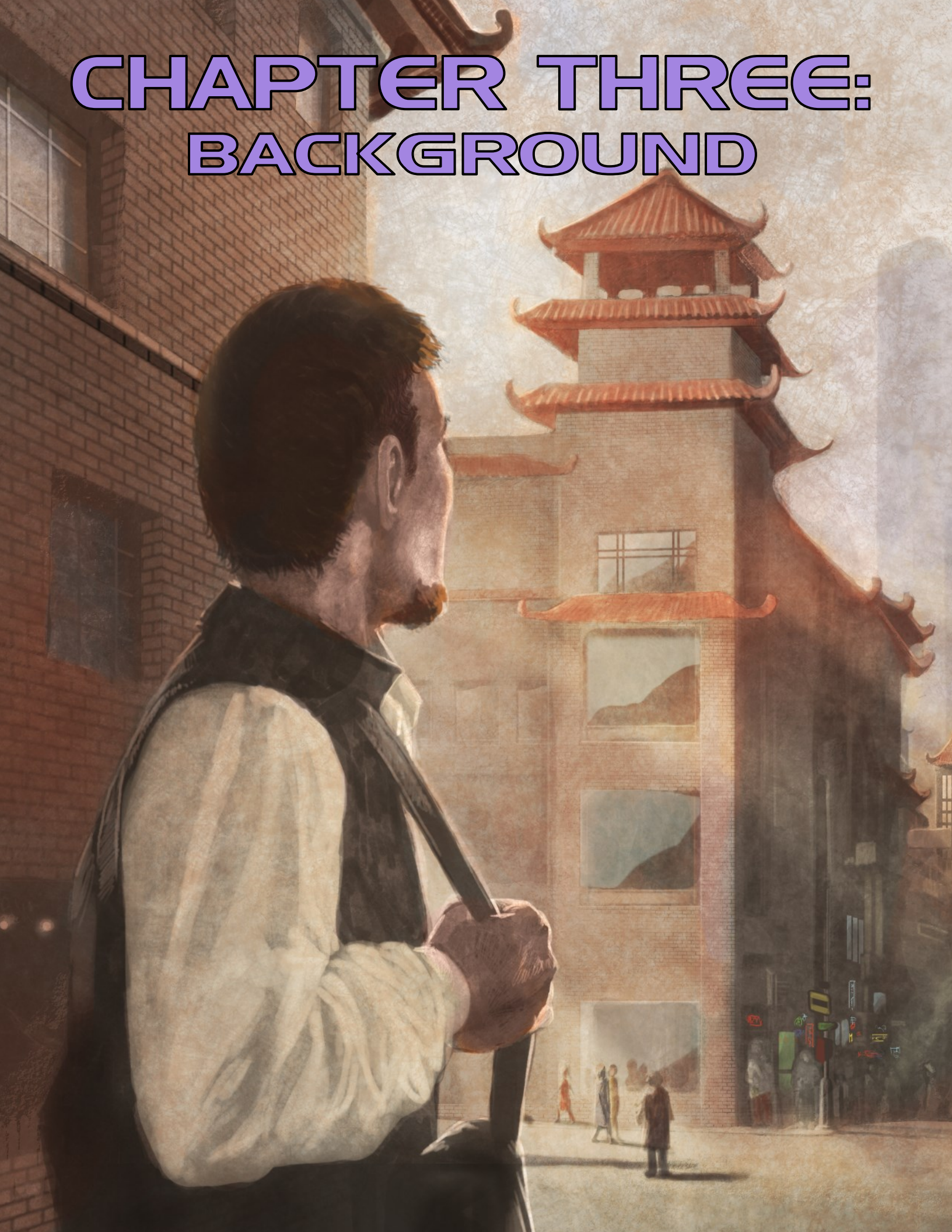
"How?" Chen motioned to the lamps. "You've just seen that. How could you know? Maybe it's something I do naturally no one else can."

"If it's all real then magic can come from books! I can learn!" he begged. "I can do that! Just give me the right books!" The wide-eyed appeal of the youth showed his commitment.

Chen reached out and grasped Aiden's wrist. He pulled the boy's sleeve to reveal the broken watch. Chen pointed to the timepiece.

"This world," he said, pointing to the east, "and that world do not mingle. What you have here doesn't work out there--no cars, no computers, no phones. Once you commit to that path, you can't come back."

CHAPTER THREE: BACKGROUND



ORGANIZATIONS

Rarely do characters meet in taverns or stumble upon each other on a dirt road. Many are not foolish to venture into the outside world alone and unprepared. Often, they've made friends and forged their alliances long before seeking adventure. Characters can be either part of a much larger organization or they can be independent, answering to no one but themselves.

Players should work together in forging a group that maximizes each other's abilities. They know their names, their strengths, and their weaknesses.

At character creation, a group of players may select one of the following affiliations. Being signed under an organization offers funds or equipment while independence offers the greatest gift of all, freedom. The GM may select an organization for the player group if the choice affects the campaign being designed. Not all members of a party need to select a single organization, though the party can only receive the benefit of one, regardless of the number of players in the party. To receive the benefits of an organization requires at least three members of party to share that affiliation. Players can only belong to one organization at a time. It is not impossible for players to switch their affiliation but this is not easy and requires the GM's complicity.

ABIDAN MISSIONARIES

Tasked with protecting the innocent and encouraging hope and virtue throughout the kingdom, Abidan missionaries are gathered by a mutual desire to help others in need. They need not all be followers of the same faith, neither are they required to promote said faith to those requiring their help. These missionaries care nothing for political or theological agendas. They only concern themselves with helping the needy and serving the cause to defeat evil whenever they encounter it. Generally, missionaries are multi-talented; they're not all just trained swords. Members are educators, leaders, and healers. As the threat of an encroaching darkness looms, these missions have been found more and more often outside of Abidan borders.

Requirement: All members of this organization must have a good alignment.

Benefit: All party members gain a +2 bonus to Knowledge (Religion) checks. All party members gain a +1 bonus to all damage rolls against targets with an evil alignment.

CRIMSON STARLIGHT

The CS is the military arm of Angel, often taking missions outside of the city walls in all-terrain vehicles, ETVs, or VERTOL flyers. The CS operates from four immense towers situated around the outer perimeter of the city. Response time to an outside attack is measured in seconds. Recently, attacks on the wall have subsided, with boggs and puggs shifting their attention to those passing to and from the city. This has forced the CS to leave the walls and take a more aggressive stance on outside threats. They clash not only with surrounding raiders but with the growing armies of puggs and skeggs in the region of Xixion to the north. Of all the bastion organizations, the CS receives the most combat experience. Squads are often sent to patrol the great outer forests of Cyon.

Another branch of CS handles internal problems dealing with Genai. Rumors tell of a smuggling route under the city leading past the walls to the outside, allowing free passage for those wishing to avoid the main gates. Then there is the matter of the temple, a giant

tower in the center of Genai and the great beast supposedly living underneath it.

Requirement: Techan characters from Angel only

Benefit: The player group signed to work for the Crimson Starlight receive a wheeled truck or a tracked APC for free. It is a loan and cannot be sold. They also benefit from a preferred enemy, gaining a +1 to attack rolls against puggs, boggs, and skeggs.

FREE-LANCE

Outcast or deserted from a lord or king, the free-lance travels from town to town seeking money or purpose. Often mistakenly dubbed mercenaries or sellswords, a free-lance began its life as military unit sworn to a specific flag. For reasons which may be good or bad, this lance found itself unbound from its original authority. Did they abandon their assignment? Did they violate doctrine, or challenge the word of a lord? Were they arrested, sent to prison by a military court for a crime they didn't commit, only later to escape? Whatever the reason, wanted by their nation or kingdom, they survive as soldiers of fortune. If there's a problem, if no one else can help, and if they can be found, a free-lance may be hired.

They may be on the run from their homelands, where they are definitely persona non grata, although good-aligned nations like Abidan and Limshau rarely put prices on the heads of such expatriates, and bastions usually wash their hands of offenders once they have been put out of the walls.

Benefit: Members of a free-lance must select a kingdom, free house, or bastion. Party members suffer a -2 penalty to all Diplomacy checks when associating with any resident of this nation. Because of shared training, if ALL members of the free-lance are in line of sight within one another, they each gain a +1 bonus to Will saves.

IRON SONS

The Iron Sons is the largest techan free company operating in the world. They command thousands of troops through a decentralized control network connected via a series of mobile command posts. They operate fixed offices in both York and Angel, though their operations are outlawed practically everywhere else. Although able to function independently, each command node can receive directives from a central voice, known as General Chauk. Instructions from this authority are seldom relayed but when issued, all units are compelled to act. Only a few people in the world know where Chauk is at any time, and his location shifts daily.

Although the Sons are classed as mercenaries, and are easy to hire out, they receive their primary income through York and Angel service contracts. This does not account for their entire budget, and it's believed the company receives significant investment from unknown third parties using the Sons as their proxy in Canam. The objective of these third parties is shared by most others that hire out the Sons—destroy the world of echa and return the planet back under control of man. While some cells are known to be lenient if not diplomatic in their relations with fantasy, most are ruthless.

Requirement: Techan characters

Benefit: A party signed under the Iron Sons receives a scrambler. It is a loan and cannot be sold. If the party breaks from the Iron Sons (or attempts to sell the scrambler), Iron Sons command will put out a contract for the party's elimination.

LOGOS LANCE

It is not uncommon to see Limshau custodians operating outside of city walls. Clad in black kawabari armor instead of the city-white of most custodians, members of this group are often sent out to either retrieve a previously lost tome of knowledge or authenticate an important event. Although occasionally they travel alone, most join up with a group of companions with similar goals. Circumstances have occurred where an entire party of Limshau citizens is gathered together to venture into the open world. Not all have to be custodians, though one of them usually is (or perhaps a librarian). The logos lance, as it is called, is tasked for a specific mission. It is often difficult, involving a journey encompassing months or even years. This lance is commissioned by a higher authority, up to and sometimes including the king himself.

Requirement: At least one member of a logos lance must have a trait connected to the kingdom of Limshau.

Benefit: All party members gain a +2 bonus to one Knowledge skill of their choice. The entire party is also supplied riding horses.

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

This group from Sierra Madre is more interested in subversion and intelligence gathering than anything else. Even though flaunting advances few other bastions even dream of, Sierra Madre still lacks many developments even bastions like York claim. This comes from the lack of outside threats and from a naïve, narrow-minded population. Groups sent out from the subterranean bastion often travel north to 'acquire' technology from others, especially York and Angel (Mann remains a hard target and most attempting entry are killed upon discovery, and Selkirk is just plain hard to get to). The Ministry also tracks all movement above the city, intercepting and dealing with forces marching over their soil.

Requirement: Techan characters from Sierra Madre

Benefit: All players working for the MFA receive the shielding modification to all pertinent equipment they purchase at 1st level and a 30% discount to purchasing said modifications later when purchasing the weapons from Sierra Madre.

NOMADS

Strictly speaking, to be among this group is to be classed as an itinerant rather than a nomad, but that doesn't trip off the tongue nearly as well. This group doesn't follow a herd; they don't migrate with the passing seasons. They wander the world because of a personal need to see it or because of a fear of discovery. They may have secrets or carry something of value others covet. Of course, this need not be so melodramatic. Techan nomads, those outcast or unable to enter bastions, migrate to keep within areas with a low ED value. Echan nomads may be outcast from their own society, bound to wander aimlessly without a home. Either type may possess a stigma preventing their settlement. Despite being labeled as an organization, this group is not affiliated with any establishment.

Benefit: Each character gains a +4 bonus to Survival checks and +1 bonus to all Fort saves.

OROBAS

The Selkirk defense authority, unlike many other interdiction forces from bastions, doesn't consider echans their enemy. Most Orobas missions entail escorting and protecting Fargon and Seliquam patrols through the Selkirk controlled section of the Dianaso pass. Orobas personnel are usually selected from the mining population and trained separately. Orobas personal are especially well trained in squad actions. Already used to working in groups, the operatives quickly learn to offset each other's weaknesses and operate as a cohesive unit. They seldom display internal personality conflicts and stay together, even when on vacation. Other missions include scouting and recon outside the Dianaso pass, as well as interfacing with the Train Guard to defend against encroachment from Xixion. A few groups are occasionally loaned to Angel for a short time.

Requirement: Techan human from Selkirk.

Benefit: Each member gains a +2 bonus to a skill they don't have as a class skill but is a class skill from any other character in the group.

RETINUE

Willing or unwilling, this company are the cohorts of a noble. The aristocrat may be a childhood friend or a stranger, arrogant and pretentious or kindly and down-to-earth. Regardless, you are assigned to this task, sworn to ensure the safety of the noble, even at the cost of your life. The reasons for this undertaking can be varied. It may be part of some undisclosed diplomatic mission to a foreign land or a quest the noble is insisting on performing personally. It may be the beginning or the unfortunate end of a crusade. Rarely, the noble may be an outcast, the last living heir to a throne claimed by a usurper, the noble's allies being all that stands in the way of a hangman's noose.

Requirement: One party member (a PC, companion character, or non-combatant NPC) who belongs to the nobility (i.e. Has the Free House Citizen or True Royal Blood trait, or equivalent).

Benefit: As long as the noble is active (not dead or unconscious) and in line of sight, all mundane equipment and service purchases made by members of the party, including drinks, room & board, and booking passage on vessels, are reduced by 50%; magic item purchases are reduced by 10%. The GM may require a Diplomacy check on the part of the noble to secure this.

SLAVER CARAVAN

Citizens of Baruch Malkut found outside of its borders are defectors, outcasts, or slavers, the last of which only leave the country when on the hunt for chattel. They present a cold demeanor, mated to a desire for profit at the expense of the freedom of creatures they consider inferior. Regardless of the campaign they find themselves in, slavers are seldom noble. They care about themselves and their next payoff. Trained swords are bound only by gold. Barring this, loyalty is earned through family blood, a common occurrence with slaver caravans. Fathers train their sons to carry the tradition of racial superiority and malice that make the family name what it is. The only path of redemption lies with those that escape the life, but for those who are part of an active caravan, their morality has long since died.

Requirement: Evil or neutral alignment.

Benefit: The group receives a slaver caravan, consisting of two sleeper carriages and one slaver carriage outfitted with fae iron bars (draught horses are included). Every party member receives a riding horse. The party receives a 5% XP bonus when defeating fae creatures; if the party contains any character with a good alignment or forswears their slaver lifestyle, this benefit is lost.

TECHAN MERCENARIES

Some people prefer working alone. Though they receive no benefits from governments or corporations, they set their own clocks and answer to no higher authority. They are on their own in the face of a wild landscape of wonders and monstrosities reserved usually for bedtime tales. Some mercenaries work out of bastions, though many actually travel between them. Some consider themselves wandering souls, looking for a noble fight to join. Others seek only profit. Regardless of their motives, they have thrown their lot in with technology over magic. Alas, these groups often fail early on, unable to replace their technology fast enough when it disrupts or simply falling victim to enemies they have underestimated. Mercenaries, heroic or selfish (or both), must keep constant vigilance on the acquisition of funds. Jewels, gold and rare items fetch a high price in bastions and mercenaries need to keep themselves funded and armed.

Requirement: Techan human.

Benefit: Players forming a mercenary group gain a 20% discount on all purchases at 1st level and 5%

discount on all subsequent purchases with further levels.

TRAIN GUARD

Impressive as the Redoubt at Last Hope is, it is a mere fence compared with Abidan's Bulwark or the city walls of Angel, and it cannot completely hold Xixion at bay – there are far too many tunnels and lesser passes through the mountains to block them all. The military order known as the Train Guard make regular patrols of the passes, exterminating any pugg bands and other predatory monsters that they come across. Though the order's training regimen was designed and perfected by the ravnorra lords of Fargon, only a fraction of the Guard is made up of narros (and then, often commanders) – in fact, the largest demographic are kodiaks, who make up fully thirty percent of the force. Joining the Train Guard is considered a highly prestigious career for all the people of Seliquam, but the high mortality rate of the membership keeps their numbers from growing too strong. Puggs may be no real threat in small groups, but they are hardly the only dangers in the region.

The Train Guard is the only truly cosmopolitan military force in Canam, consisting of the finest warriors contributed by the disparate nations of the Seliquam Confederation. When not wiping out pugg incursions, they often take exploratory and punitive expeditions into Xixion itself; occasionally, a unit will travel farther afield on orders from the Grand Council. Within the Train Guard, it is not uncommon to see humans and narros fighting side-by-side with kodiaks, damaskans, chaparrans, or even tenenbri – the Guard will take anyone, so long as their blades are keen or their magic potent. The constant infighting that plagues the rest of Seliquam is totally absent from the Train Guard, a comradeship forged in fire that is not hastily thrown aside for any national loyalty. As the Guard's actions directly benefit Selkirk, the bastion is only too happy to trade disruption-immune equipment with them at a substantial discount.

Requirement: At least one party member from Seliquam, Selkirk or Fargon.

Benefit: Guard members receive either a masterwork revolver or a masterwork bolt rifle at no cost at 1st level, and can purchase bastion exports at half cost.

WATCHERS

The city of Taskin-Kada is the home of a very unique society charged with counter-intelligence for the entire nation of Abidan. Operations involve scouting in the pagus-controlled land of Apocrypha as well as extensive surveillance of Baruch Malkut. Very often, a mixed band of trained operatives will be sent on a long-term mission vital to the security of the kingdom. Although Watchers may comprise the majority of this unit, this is not always exclusive. The team consists of intelligence agents, military men, and operatives specialized in various scientific and magical fields. They can be tasked with espionage or sabotage, but Abidan has never officially sent the Watchers on assassination. Watchers have a reputation for moving quickly without being noticed, escaping from any situation, and trudging on while others fall to exhaustion. They cannot rely on support from the home country if a crisis occurs. Should any member of the Watchers be caught or killed, Abidan will disavow any knowledge of their actions.

Requirement: From Abidan; at least one party member belongs to the Taskin-Kada Watchers.

Benefit: Any party member who has a limited-use feature where the number of uses is based on an ability score can use that feature an additional time per day.

YORK SELF DEFENSE FORCE (YSDF)

The largest techan standing army in Canam is the York Self Defense Force. They walk the streets and defend the outlining fields from impending invasion. They break up drunken tavern brawls and lead assaults against dragons. Some escort echans through the city and forcefully eject others for unnecessary magic use in violation of the strict limits the city places on its echan visitors. The most boring job is patrolling the defense installations between York and Mann, which have never sparked a conflict. On the other hand, the northern barracks often suffer attacks from dragons. The YSDF works alongside the robotic zeros, but the droids are never allowed to depart the fields of Halyc surrounding York.

Requirement: Techan human from York.

Benefit: Members of the YSDF receive 75% of the value for all techan equipment and weapons they trade or sell while in York.

TRAITS

The world is a vast and varied. Cultures and customs have developed with no outside influence for centuries. Huge kingdoms have formed and claimed land, occasionally absorbing smaller ones in the process.

With man, there were immeasurably different traditions despite being a single species. This is a unique aspect of man the fae do not share. Narros in Fargon are the same as the narros in the Finer Fire Pits, although human influence resulted in the damaskans of Limshau deviating from the traditional damaskans of Damaska across the ocean. Where on Earth a player chooses to nurture her character can radically alter the result, influencing her chosen class and even her destiny.

Amethyst Traits: The following traits follow the same rules regarding traits as established in the PATHFINDER role playing game. Although the default number of traits a character receives at 1st level is two, only one can be an Amethyst trait. Because many of the Amethyst traits are considered more powerful than others, several are indicated as counting

as two choices. The GM has final approval over all choices and can veto any inappropriate selections. If a game does not use traits, player should still be allowed to select one Amethyst trait, counting it as a lifepath.
PATHFINDER traits are broken up into the following categories, basic (further broken into combat, faith, magic, and social), campaign, race, regional, and religion. Because of the nature of the Amethyst setting, by default, faith and religion traits are prohibited unless the specific trait does not explicitly require an active deity. As per the rules regarding traits, a player cannot have traits from identical categories. In addition to the above categories, Amethyst offers supernatural traits.

Supernatural: There are only three ways to tap into magic: the words of Pleroma, the mixing of elements (alchemy), and the natural unexplained gifts of an exclusive few. You possess exceptional abilities that defy all reason. Some ascribe it to a divine gift while others view it as the next step in the evolution of the species. Others simply believe themselves especially sensitive to the saturation of Attricana. When choosing this trait, you are a distinct individual.

Only one character in a player group should be permitted to choose a supernatural trait. This gift is bestowed from birth and occupies the mind of the character so much so that they gain no benefits from choosing a region or discipline, despite where they were born or the choices they made. They can be born from anywhere on Earth, but receive nothing additional other than their gift. All supernatural traits are echan by default and as such you disrupt technology. You have a saturation value of 20 which can never drop below this value unless your soul switches from Attricana to the negative energies of Ixindar (see **Corruption**).

ANCIENT WUXIA

Trait: Combat, Regional

Prerequisites: Raised or trained in Genai, Fargon, or Limshau.

BENEFITS

Devout Belief: You gain Knowledge (Religion) or Acrobatics as class skills. If you select a class that already has the chosen skill as a class skill, you gain an additional +2 trait bonus to it.

Proficiencies: You gain proficiency in a one-handed melee weapon of your choice. This weapon counts as a monk weapon.

The narros love to take credit for influencing the ancient Asian martial arts, as well as their mythology

BARUCH THUGGEE

and culture. They place a great deal of pride in this and were happy to see the pillars of their disciplines replicated and honored across the millennia, remaining virtually unchanged on their return. Some humans don't appreciate the assumption, claiming the narros had no influence in the development of human martial arts. Damaskans certainly make no such claim and only admit to a mild cultural inspiration; those from Limshau absorbed so much human and particularly Asian culture into their nation, it's hard to determine what was fae-influenced and what was originally a human concept. Despite this disagreement, three similar styles of unarmed combat emerged in three different regions in Canam. It is thought those from Limshau gleaned theirs from their Genai neighbors when so many residents of Angel left to help build the empire of knowledge. The narros from Fargon were too remote to make this claim. Their discipline stems back to the old age, where they perfected their art over thousands of years; despite their pride, it irritates them profoundly to know that humanity was able to create more complicated systems with greater physical and mental conditions in a tenth the time.

One trained in this practice may prefer weapons endowed with magic, but a follower of wuxia is not helpless while unarmed. This path does not encourage

violence. Instead, it is designed for self-control and mental clarity. Many narros and humans teach this discipline alongside book studies and commit time to its practice as another might perform aerobics in the morning. Some practitioners refuse to apply their discipline in a violent fashion, believing to do so would be a failure of their philosophy. For others, to commit this practice to violence is a logical progression. Some take this to an extreme, using it only to benefit themselves. Others are considered heroes, fighting for noble causes and refusing to stand idle while the innocent suffer. These adventurers love sparring and often duel aggressively with allies to test their mettle and skill. Though not a requirement for friendship, it goes a long way to match a wuxia in combat. Even enemies matching their skills in a fair duel will garner respect.

BARUCH THUGGEE

Trait: Combat. This selection counts as two traits.
Prerequisites: Human, must be from Baruch Malkut.

BENEFITS

Throttle Lock: Against any opponent you are grappling, the damage dice of one-handed melee weapons you wield improve by one step (1d4 > 1d6 > 1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12 > 2d6 > 2d8 > 2d10).

Military Background: You are proficient with either shields or medium armor. You are also proficient with one 1-handed melee weapon of your choice. The check penalty for any armor you wear or shields you weave are reduced by 1.

Marshes and swamps cover most of the countryside in the kingdom of Baruch Malkut. A massive landscaping effort connects distant towns and cities by roadways. This has led the more nefarious segments of Malkut society to adapt their skills to the surrounding environment. Bandits and outlaws master subterfuge and stealth, utilizing the natural cover of the landscape. A few have found a calling within the military, working as spies or assassins. These individuals are known as Baruch thuggees.

Thuggees leaving the "Blessed Kingdom" for any reason find their title a burden or a curse. Declaring yourself a thuggee in Limshau or Gnimfall may likely net you jail time or expulsion. Openly wielding your title in a free house may get you executed. You must keep your identity secret, either because of a mission or to prevent a lynching. Most following this path by choice seldom have problems using their training to net themselves personal benefit, as their morals and values have already been stretched. The qualifying mission for the order is to sneak into a rival city and slay a figure of importance. A few rare cases found the final deed abhorrent to their nature and escaped, carrying their training with them into the outside world. Some try to find new lives pursuing a nobler course. These are declared traitors, with bounties are placed upon their heads.

BASTION-BORN — ANGEL

Trait: Regional
Prerequisites: Human, born and raised in Genai or Angel.

BENEFITS

Bonus language: Your historical connection to the builders of Angel combined with your mercantile relationship with the Genai grant you Sinitic as a bonus language.

Skill Bonuses: +1 trait bonus to Knowledge (regional history) -- Angel, Antikari, Crax, Torquil, and Xixion.

Naïve and Tactless: You have a -1 penalty to all Charisma-based skills against echans.

Proficiency: You prepared yourself before taking on the world. You can choose one of the following feats: Akimbo, Burst Fire, One-Handed Small Arms, or Ground Vehicle Proficiency.

Starting Bonus: You gain +50 uc in starting money.

Although Angel does not fear the outside world as much as Sierra Madre and Mann, they still insist on keeping that world as far away as possible, erecting a vast wall to keep the enchanted world out; despite their traditions and general acceptance of fantasy, even Genai residents are still techan. Despite their voluntarily isolation, those from Angel are far from ignorant of the world beyond the walls – they just wish it wasn't there. Angel characters are not exposed to the enchanted world for much of their youth. Television doesn't talk about it. Books don't discuss it. Even schools avoid the topic. Like tales of oversized mutant rabbits carrying baskets of eggs or jolly obese contortionists offering gifts to children, eventually the truth is revealed, not consciously, but because it becomes increasingly impossible to deny. With the semi-echan town of Genai within the walls, one would expect Angel residents to be tolerant to the ways outside, but the adverse is actually true. The purpose of the wall is not just to keep enchantment out, but to shield themselves from having to acknowledge the reality of what's around them. Very few leave. Those who do are either nomads hoping to find riches, part of a defense force who patrol the outside of the wall hunting down the raiders that plague the forests around the city, or followers of childish dreams inspired by excursions into the echan town hidden in the shadow of the southeastern wall.

BASTION-BORN — MANN

Trait: Regional
Prerequisites: Human, born and raised in Mann.

BENEFITS

Class Adept: You select any one class skill you have at least 1 rank in; gain a +1 trait bonus to that skill.

Skill Bonuses: +1 trait bonus to Knowledge (regional history) - Mann and York.

Naïve and Tactless: You have a -1 penalty to all Charisma-based checks against echans.

Techan Experience: You gain Knowledge (Science) as a class skill.

Mann characters face an uphill struggle. Outcast, they are prohibited to return to their bastion of birth. Mannites either take jobs in other bastions or they roam the outside world, selling what they find in echa to trade in techa. To gain the benefits from choosing this trait, a character must have lived in Mann for some time. Perhaps they committed a crime or took a liking to the outside world and were ostracized for it. Leaving might have been by choice, but the separation was not amicable, for Mann is jealous of its secrets and prefers to 'disappear' rather than banish subversive elements. The Mann character is most likely alone and clearly inexperienced with dealing with the outside world. Despite the circumstances of her escape, she may be the most fundamental in her beliefs. Mannites not only dislike magic, they despise it. Among other techans, the person from Mann is looked upon with respect and trepidation. Mann is the most advanced bastion in Canam, as well as the most mysterious. No one attempting to enter has ever survived and those that have escaped have a mark on their heads, for the knowledge locked in their minds is too dangerous a commodity to be allowed to roam outside the bastion.

BASTION-BORN — SELKIRK

Trait: Regional

Prerequisites: Techan human, born and raised in Selkirk.

BENEFITS

Miner's Eyes: You have lowlight vision, you can see twice as far as normal humans in conditions of dim light. However, your line of sight in daylight is limited to 100 feet.

Combat Implements: You are proficient with all hammers and picks.

Characters from Selkirk are born into a world of darkness and live most of their lives in the mines. Those that do depart are aware of the echan folk outside, particularly the narros, and trade and military patrols find their company acceptable. Selkirk's military seeks to make the Pass of Dianaso safe. Others trek south to find warmer climates and warmer beds. Those that end up taking root around Angel often sign up for military duty outside the walls.

There is a stereotype attributed to Selkirk, that the residents are all brutish and loud. This is unfortunately true. The chance that a character from Selkirk stems from the mines is high. They have been trained from birth to extend their body's endurance and survive in conditions that would kill most others. Since all must serve in the military at some point, they are also trained to live in the outside world. Rarely does a single Selkirk grunt lose a hand-to-hand fight against an equivalent rank from any other bastion. They are usually the most prepared in the open world and don't often experience the culture shock that plagues many other techans.

BASTION-BORN — SIERRA MADRE

Trait: Regional

Prerequisites: Human, born and raised in Sierra Madre.

BENEFITS

Skill Bonuses: +1 trait bonus to Knowledge (regional history) - Sierra Madre, the Gloam.

Naïve and Tactless: You have a -1 penalty to all Charisma-based skills against echans.

Fast Learner: You may choose one class skill and gain a +1 trait bonus to that skill.

Resistant Equipment: All TL0 gear you begin with--as well as any TL0 gear you purchase from Sierra Madre directly--gains a +2 trait bonus to saving throws against disruption.

Those who leave Sierra Madre are the most unprepared for the outside world. A techan from Sierra Madre is often considered the most naïve of any bastion resident (save perhaps for the youth of Angel). Being hidden underground, the population has had virtually no contact with the outside. Not even Selkirk can boast that level of isolation. Nevertheless, because the majority of Sierrans follow a faith of internal meditation and personal discovery, many citizens brave the landscape outside to fortify their souls and open their minds. Those that find the courage to leave often conceal their origins, analyzing what they find, and when possible returning it to their home for study. Even though they possess unique technology, they strive to adapt what they find to better their own society. Unlike Mann, swept up in xenophobic paranoia, characters from Sierra Madre are the most hopeful for a time when the two worlds can live together. Their technology is the most advanced on Canam in the field of disruption resistance but they remain locked tightly in their underground fortress. Of all the techans found in the open world, those from Sierra Madre are the fewest.

Being from Sierra Madre, characters take their strength more from their own skills than on the technology they flaunt. Despite being naïve and prone to cowardice in the face of enchantment, those from Sierra Madre are the quickest to adapt when forced to. This also means the majority of those from the underground bastion rarely return, taken in by the whispers of a fantasy world.

BASTION-BORN — YORK

Trait: Regional

Prerequisites: Human, born and raised in York.

BENEFITS

Skill Bonuses: +1 trait bonus Knowledge (regional history) - Gnimfall, Mann and York.

Saturation Penalty: Your saturation point at 1st level is preset to 5 and can never go below 5.

Prepared: You gain one basic TL0 firearm of your choosing.

Starting Bonus: You gain +50 uc in starting money.

With no imposing city walls to keep the outside where it belongs, the people of York welcome tourists and travelers. However, tolerance of magic does not equate to acceptance of it. Those taking advantage of their friendliness and flaunting such enchantment may find themselves victims of a mob, or at very least a polite warning from the YSDF to remove themselves from the bastion forthwith. Due to the prevalence of passing magic users in York, citizens neither fear nor loathe the echans: they just prefer living their lives with air conditioning, elevators, and parking meters. York citizens can leave and re-enter the bastion as they wish, and are some of the most commonly seen techans in all of Canam. York is also the most aggressive in patrolling their borders. Although York has a fenceline, it is a vastly inadequate barricade, leaving the city to depend on open fields patrolled by a large militia of soldiers and low-tech robots known as zeros to protect it. They must stand on constant guard from attacks. They also operate a counter-intelligence organization that monitors activity within the rival bastion of Mann.

Characters from York have known about magic from the day they were born. They see it passing through the city to the docks. The main highway is a common route of passage of all residents and is the only safe route for echans. York characters have gotten used to not voicing their opinions of the world outside. They privately bemoan the enchanted world and what it has sullied man into. Other bastions look at York with distrust, believing one false step could send a massive ED burst throughout the city, demolishing the brightly lit bastion and causing it to crumble into the madness of magic.

A character from York has had the most experience with echans despite their feelings towards them. They also probably know someone that has ventured into the outside world and returned to tell the tale. Of all the bastion-born, those from York are the most romantic and experience the largest number of emigrants of any techan city. Thankfully, they are the largest growing, so this small migration is not noticed.

BLOOD ROYAL

Trait: Social, Supernatural

Prerequisite: You must pick a royal line (Savarice, Limshau, or Alkanost). Your species must coincide with that line (human or half-fae, damaskan, or laudenian, respectively). You cannot be evil.

BENEFITS

Natural Instinct: You gain a +1 trait bonus to any two Charisma- or Wisdom-based skills of your choice.

Aura of Admiration: You gain Diplomacy as a class skill and gain a +1 trait bonus in it.

The history of royalty amongst mankind is marred with bloodshed. The bearers of crowns have always claimed themselves and their descendants as the chosen of God, but the path to reach such consecration was often paved with the bones of their competitors. Each conquering warlord claimed the mandate of heaven while their hands were still stained with the blood of the previous claimant, and earthly envoys professing to speak for the divine took their side, lest they fall under the same fate. This process continues today, despite the supposedly morally evolved view of modern man. As the old ways returned in the absence of true civility, new declarations of nobility emerged. Some of these first aristocrats and generals had no entitlement, but called themselves kings and queens regardless. Most of the first rulers of man either witnessed the collapse of their virgin kingdom, or were executed by those that deposed them. These included Saran Sana, Avraham Torquil, and Darius Konig; of these, only the last has maintained his lineage (and his life).

The fae ascribe a much more humble approach to royalty. The title is not claimed, but given to them from a higher power – not from a silent god but from the endorsement of a dragon. This has only taken place with four such individuals on this half of the world: Elrenar Alkanost of Laudenia, Sharajaclypse of Vakai, Ravenar Limshau, and Vincent Savarice of Abidan.

To receive this blessing, one must be in an esteemed position of authority and not be corrupted by the power it offers. One must show true humility and benevolence in the application of authority. Even then, such an exalted title is uncommon. If it does occur, the individual is approached in a brilliant fashion by a dragon of the Noble or Holy lines. That dragon announces that he or she has adopted that individual under the wing of protection. Said noble's name is now synonymous with the dragon's. It is even believed the first fae royals possessed dragon's blood from a pairing with a dragon taking elvish form. Their lineage carries through to today. Alkanost and Limshau are believed (albeit not by themselves) to possess such a pedigree, though Sharajaclypse and Savarice are most definitely not. As with all royalty, the mark continues through later generations, though with fae, this had only spread to a handful of offspring, though the dragon's blessing has occasionally been known to grace members of the

ruler's extended family. Sharajaclypse is unmated; Alkanost has only sired a half-dozen over 5,000 years; Limshau has only two children, each with one child of his own. Savarice's line has sired many, making the dragon-touched human royalty the largest in Canam.

Being of true royal blood, you are a descendant of one of these glorified family lines (Alkanost, Limshau, or Savarice). You currently don't have a claim to the throne; why that may be is entirely up to you, but these houses are highly respected, so betrayal and expulsion is unlikely. It's also unlikely that you would openly announce your title to those around, as to do so without the presence of armed men tends to attract unwelcome attention. Your voice resonates to those with open ears. You possess a natural charismatic gravity that followers are eager to orbit around.

BOTTLED BEAST

Trait: Race, Supernatural. This selection counts as two traits.

Prerequisites: Tilen

BENEFITS

Regression (Ex): When lose your temper, you have the tendency to regress into old ways. As a swift action, you can gain a ±1 trait bonus to Strength-based attack rolls and a +2 trait bonus to Strength-based damage rolls and temporary hit points equal to 5 + your Constitution modifier. This effect lasts five minutes. During this time, you cannot use any Charisma-, Wisdom-, or Intelligence-based skills. The number of daily uses of *regression* is based on your level (1st level—1, 5th level—2, 10th level—3, 15th level—4, 20th level—5)

Tilen loathe the idea of returning to their roots. The elders remember the old ways and detest their traits more so than their descendants. They preach the ways of redemption with an emphasis on the obligation to repair the damage caused by their hands and others in the name of syntropy. Although virtually every tilen follows this tenet, not all of them agree to ignore their inner strengths, despite the worry it may cause a regression to old habits. When their blood pumps too quickly or if adrenaline starts to flow, their previous characteristics surface, though only on a visible layer. They remain themselves in every way that is important. Some think greater power sits buried within, and proper meditation and self-control could tap this resource without risking degeneration. Many tilen consider it too much of a risk and elders prohibit its practice. This hasn't stopped some from trying, often with noble intentions. During this moment, the tilen gains a heightened sense of his surroundings. He hears the footfalls of enemies, the beating of their hearts, their lungs heaving with exhausted breath. The tilen's blood pumps faster. Muscles quiver and spasm. He moves with speed and agility unseen, weaving through enemies, delivering quick and deadly blows, like a four legged predator racing through a herd of prey.

There is no set discipline, no books to read, and no teachers to find to learn this talent. Each tilen must discover the necessary circumstances to bring this inner power to the surface. Because of this uncertainly, some consider it too risky and many tilen would be prepared to kill a loved one if she went too far down this path. The tilen are a fragile people, few and scattered, dedicated to repairing the harm they inflicted centuries ago in another life, and they will not risk further damage to their reputation.

CROSSROAD DRIFTER

Trait: Regional

Prerequisite: From the Continental Cross

BENEFITS

Survival Instinct: +1 trait bonus to Ride, Sleight of Hand, or Survival.

Unusual Childhood: You can replace one automatic language at character creation with another. It must be a human or fae-based language.

Echan

Always Ready: Gain any one martial weapon of your choice. You also gain proficiency with all bastion export melee weapons.

Techan (must be human)

Heirloom: You gain a free one-handed small arm with the immune property. The weapon is functional but practically worthless due to its age if sold.

Many individuals are raised in a stable environment, dependent on reliable income from parents that are always present. The Crossroad Drifter is not one of these lucky people. If he actually had a family, they were nomads or merchants. Nearly every wanderer, in packs or alone, eventually migrates to the Continental Cross—the singular highway that bisects Canam. There are thousands – if not tens of thousands – of miles of road that criss-cross the continent, but they are mostly unnamed and unmonitored. Only the Cross has regular patrols and has been cleared wide enough for three caravans to sit side by side. It is generally accepted that travelers will pass oncoming traffic at least once a day. It is the only safe route to Angel and the only direct road that connects the bastion, through Antikari, to Limshau and Gnimfall. Large tributary roads break off to several nearby free houses and the kingdoms of Kannos, Abidan, and the Finer Fire Pits.

Because of slow travel time and the long distances between locations, thousands are born with no real home to speak of. These drifters learn to walk early in life and never stop moving for the entirety of their lives. Despite loyalties to family present or past, they prefer to keep few ties. Their homes are temporary bed, wagon, and stable rentals. Crusades, causes, or jobs they take on are often considered peripheral, and they never believe them obligatory. They refuse to be tied down to rules or by the laws passed down by some egotistical government, despite the veneration of its rulers.

Even fae drifters cannot stand the idea of staying rooted in one place, and the company they keep should share that desire. They outlive their welcome early as they don't consider diplomacy a useful talent. If feathers are ruffled, these nomads simply pack up and move on.

CRYPHTARON

Trait: Race
Prerequisites: Pagus, over 20 years of age.

BENEFITS

Ritual Scarring: Gain 4 hit points.
Mark of Trust: Gain a +2 trait bonus to Diplomacy and Bluff checks against pagus.

In locations where pagus are allowed to develop their own culture and their actions are not compelled by others, they still often develop traditions based around the same levels of violence. One ritual coincides with a pagus reaching the Second Age of Krenkallakoss. A pagus at nine becomes an adult and is assumed to be a warrior. Upon reaching the age of twenty, a pagus is permitted the opportunity to reach a higher level of authority within the village, the equivalent to a lieutenant. The subject undergoes repeated punishment under sensory deprivation. The pagus is blindfolded and rendered deaf. He is lowered into water and repeatedly stabbed. Salt is packed into the wounds to induce permanent scars. These marks (assuming the pagus survives) denote the pagus as a cryphtaron—a trusted warrior all pagus can respect. If a pagus encounters a cryphtaron in passing, it is automatically assumed the elder warrior is a free pagus, for those who serve the shemjaza and death dragons rarely last long enough to be so honored. Even pagus loyally following their demonic masters have a profound adoration for the order. Cryphtaron are rarely taken alive in combat, but if rival pagus do manage to capture one, the cryphtaron is permitted to take his own life; afterwards, his body and belongings are returned unspoiled to the rival village. Sometimes a captured cryphtaron is permitted the opportunity to fight for his freedom. He is given impossible odds against the village's greatest heroes. If he succeeds, the cryphtaron is permitted to either challenge the chief for control of the village (which he usually does) or leave with additional scars to return home.

Outside of pagus circles, a cryphtaron looks even more revolting than his cousins. To a pagus, however, the cryphtaron is a walking angel.

CUSTODIAN

Trait: Combat
Prerequisites: Received training from Limshau.

BENEFITS

Proficiency: You are proficient in one Limshau-specific weapon. You are also proficient in Limshau kawabari armor.
Custodian training: You can substitute Dexterity for Strength on all your melee attacks with any weapons that weigh 8 lbs. Or less.

Behind the white walls of Limshau, elite guardians patrol the stacks, defending knowledge and people against anyone wishing to destroy such riches. Because of the tight confines of narrow city streets and alleys, this elite force eventually developed a discipline revolving around fast movement and quick, decisive strikes at critical enemy weaknesses.

After an attack from a large and somewhat organized bogg force 300 years ago left a section of the geology branch in ruins, Ravenar Limshau IV decreed that a specific echelon of elite librarians be trained exclusively in combat, relegating their librarian skills to lesser importance. Even before the custodians were formally commissioned, there was Stratos Stormguard, a master of all arms and trusted ally of Ravenar Limshau. He stayed behind to watch the flock when the leader went on crusade. Stratos developed the martial practice all custodians would soon follow. The martial art was known as *gorna sersannis*, though later masters would use the modern English term "Lotus Blade." Oddly enough, Stratos preferred the use of a halberd to the common twin swords employed by most custodians today. Stratos is one of the few to use both ends of his weapon without losing balance. He advanced his art to perfection before even attempting to train another. In the end, he required Ravenar to fill in the gaps in the defense Stratos could not satisfy. It would take 150 years before Stratos considered the discipline finished. The new discipline incorporated an agile battle stance, able to maximize maneuverability in a restricted field of movement. Heavy armor weighed down combatants and blocked the advance of reinforcements; shields also proved a hazard. Pure speed became the greatest ally, along with the insight to anticipate and counter a foe's every move and attack. Lighter weapons were preferred. In their natural habitat, the custodian finds no equal.

A custodian's priorities are on the freedoms of all. Free speech and the written word are both worthy causes for a custodian to die for. Some have abandoned those beliefs, turning away from their great city. These rogues seek adventure for their own satisfaction, but no evil soul survives the training process without being discovered, and it is seldom necessary to hunt deserters down.

A loyal custodian outside the walls stands ever vigilant to fight for the freedom and the retrieval of information. Being sent on fact-finding missions or quests to retrieve priceless tomes, a crusading custodian climbs the tallest mountains and digs into the deepest dungeons to seek their treasure. An independent soul still believes in the value of his training but seeks personal adventure more than the acquisition of knowledge.

DARAWREN

Trait: Combat, Regional
Prerequisites: Wisdom 16, from Jibaro

BENEFITS

The Ways of Wood: You may select druid as your

chosen class. The selected class becomes a free favored class, meaning you can still select another class as your favored class and gain the benefits to both. However, you cannot cast 8th or 9th level divine spells as a druid. You can still cast lower level spells in higher spell slots (either by enhancing a spell or simply having a lower spell occupy a higher slot). You cannot cast spells with the Dead or Evil descriptor. This is a variant arcane spellcaster, and like a wizard, you must select a totem (which operates the same as an *arcane bond*). See **Chapter Four: Classes**, for information on wizards and totems.

Many wizards across the world classify the Towers of Jibaro as the greatest collection of arcane magic, even compared to the repositories of Limshau and Laudenia. However, the knowledge locked inside Jibaro is accessible only to a select few, the elite spellcasters of Jibaro, the darawren. With only one wizard graduating each a year, Jibaro is considered one of the most prestigious and daunting learning experiences in arcane wizardry on the planet, more so than even Laudenia. Where Laudenia's limited enrollment stems from its prohibition of non-laudenians, Jibaro's is due to a lengthy and unorthodox teaching model. Although still employing totems, the mandatory standard of all wizardry, Jibaro teaches an altered viewpoint of their purpose, being only a repository of words, and not the focus of magic. Jibaro instructs its students that magic rises from the Earth, not falls from the gate. The gate may be the ultimate source of magic in the world, but the chaparrans cite one observable fact—there's no magic in space. All creatures rise from the soil, and it follows logically that magic, too, derives from Earth; magic would not exist without it. The wizards of Jibaro are taught to channel Pleroma—the language of magic—through material components brought up from the Earth. This can be as extravagant as jewels but often enough it only a handful of dirt or sand. A darawren often carries a pouch of soil when entering a dungeon or building.

The tests of admittance to enter the order of darawren are extremely taxing, and despite not forbidding non-chaparrans to enter, such exceptions have been rare. No laudenian, damaskan, or tenenbri has endured the opening trials. Several narros have claimed the honor, as have a few kodiaks. There have been stories of one or two humans managing to accept the title of darawren but no one has been able to confirm their names.

DAWNAMOAK KITARRI

Trait: Combat, Race

Prerequisites: Chaparran, Strength 16, from Dawnamoak

BENEFITS

From Birth: You are proficient with the kitarri black bow.

Great Pull: If you select the Point-Blank Shot feat, the damage bonuses increases to +2.

Power Arrow: If you select the Power Attack feat, you can apply its effects to ranged weapons as well as melee weapons.

Many of the tales about chaparrans describe them as phenomenal archers, able to send arrows clear over the horizon to strike a bull's-eye. They carry bows of inflexible wood only they can coax to bend. When a chaparran fires his bow, the arrow flies with enough strength to pass through trees or skulls. When images of these archers come to mind, people are thinking of the Dawnamoak kitarri. Technically the order did not originate from Dawnamoak, having derived from a much older chaparran forest-nation from the previous age. With the immigration of echa, all the grand masters of *kitarri-kansi* (the chaparran name for their martial discipline) were gathered by Sylvanakassus to her three tower-trees of Jibaro and allowed to perfect their art. It was thought originally this effort was meant to compete with the emerging *gorna sersannis* style, but Sylvan insisted this was not the case. Regardless, chaparrans from all over the world converged to the towers to accept training. They returned to their people in hopes of passing their skills on to others, but in every situation, the second generation kitarri was a pale imitation of the original student. Eventually, potentials were sent straight to Dawnamoak to complete their training under the grand masters, all of whom are alive today. They are Korrissessoro, Marrisikorna, and Skylenaskanna, the latter being the only one to have left the towers. Skylen took her knowledge to other forests to train their chieftains and splinter-hounds (the leaders of a splinter-pack). The other two grand masters have forbidden her to teach non-chaparrans the art, a directive she doesn't necessarily agree.

With the exception of the rare kitarri trained under Skylenaskanna, all adepts of the discipline must embark to Dawnamoak (unless already living there) to receive the black-bow of the order. Most kitarri live in the nation pierced by the three tower trees but most chaparran villages across Canam can claim at least one member of the order. No chaparran would even think of wielding a black longbow fraudulently and a non-chaparran carrying a black kitarri bow is considered to have taken it from the original wielder's body, and is dealt with accordingly.

DEATH HUNTER

Trait: Combat, Regional

Prerequisite: From or trained in Jairus.

BENEFITS

Corrupted Resistance: You receive DR2/- against hits from creatures with the Ixindar or Undead keywords.

The Stains of the Profession: You suffer a -1 penalty to all Bluff and Diplomacy checks.

Jairus was a poor mining village with a small but promising lumber industry. Centuries ago, word came from the lips of dying refugees from the south of the collapse of a great kingdom of men. The bravest and best of Jairus took it upon themselves to see the extent of the calamity. They expected to see razed buildings and scorched soil. They were not prepared for the Black Marsh of Sana. A curse had taken the entire land, spreading into the soil, flora, and the sky. Thick, black oil – unable to burn – seeped from the ground. The few plants that did grow had no color or leaves. The Jairus militia found only empty huts and keeps, no bodies. Then they saw the shadows move. Silver

claws lashed from the darkness and only a handful of the group escaped to tell the tale.

The first legends of the marsh were born and generations later, brave warriors take it upon themselves to venture into the marsh in hopes of destroying the source of the corruption. The Jairus death hunters believe that if the shapeless wild of the Marsh are destroyed, the marsh would weaken. The true key to its elimination is the discovery and destruction of King Sana's old castle, Kardia-Gothas. To prepare themselves for the trauma of the marsh, recruits are taught to control their fears by undergoing a battery of ordeals to tax their mental stability. Outsiders claim this leaves emotional scars so cavernous that incoming terrors simply fall into the depths. They assert that death hunters are no longer stable and would be prone to sudden, unpredictable acts of extreme violence if they didn't temper that need with excursions into the Marsh. The hunters may possess some demented addiction to such horrors; if Kardia-Gothas were to be found and destroyed, and the Marsh was to fade away, the death hunters of Jairus may turn on their own people in some manic dependence on sadism.

Outside of their duties, death hunters are detached and unfriendly. They are not necessarily mean-spirited, but care nothing for manners or etiquette. They speak bluntly of their personal demons, ranging from simple addictions to the perverse pleasures of dominance and masochistic activities. They are neither welcomed at parties nor do they make a point to socialize with groups. Even those with a shred of charity left don't reveal those emotions and their rare acts kindness often come to the surprise of others.

Jairus death hunters skirt the line between nobility and wickedness and many admit – even to themselves – that they have crossed the line, believing only their oath to eliminate the corruption of Sana and other infections like Tranquiss, Ixindar, and the Necrosea keeps them from turning on those they swore to protect.

DOPPELSHIDO

Trait: Combat, Race. This selection counts as two traits.

Prerequisites: Narros, Strength 16

BENEFITS

Double-Form: Select one one-handed melee weapon without the double or reach property with which you are proficient. If you wield your selected weapon with two hands, the weapon gains the double property. Both the primary and off-hand attacks inflict the same damage.

Normal narros circulate through many careers in their early life, only settling on their final calling after experiencing many others. Families support this for their youth and adult narros can often claim many feathers in their caps. A few find their calling early and desire no other. They take to weapons as quickly as their eating implements, learning early skills by swinging at shadows and driving their blunt wasters into benches and walls. When their talents are allowed to develop, they crave no other path. In a few cases, these narros are granted an audition to tutor under (and possibly become) one of the ravnorra lords. They undergo brutal training including walking and running for hours laden with heavy weights, as well as being beaten with sticks over their legs and arms until they no longer stumble or wince. They do not choose their own weapons: the master chooses the weapon best suited to each student. They learn every balance point, every edge with the capacity to kill, every inch of the weapon in the art of war.

By the time they reach adulthood, they can perch upon their hilt, edge in the soil, and stand there for days without falling. They can twirl their swords behind their back, juggle them between their arms, and strike on the upswing as well as well as the downward cleave. These proud knights take positions as telokkrim—the honored guards of kings and favored guests. They climb the ladders of prestige and set themselves apart as the most devout disciples of combat.

Their path to perfection, however, is not yet over. The final test still waits—becoming a ravnorra lord, the greatest and most legendary line of narros in history. These fae equivalents of ancient samurai are considered the greatest soldiers of all the fae and the envy of every doppelshido student from the moment they pick up their first blade. The majority of narros that join multi-cultural adventuring parties begin their lives as doppelshido. Whether or not they intend to pursue the final tests is dependent on their individual personality. Some find the final grueling tests too taxing and escape with only basic skills and little honor. Some may be masterless ronin, their sworn lord or father felled by a coward's weapon. The lost student must now follow an unfocused path in search for vengeance, which might never be fulfilled.

EXPERTEERING ENGINEER

Trait: Race. This selection counts as two traits.

Prerequisite: Gimfen

BENEFITS

Techan Adept: You gain Engineer as a class skill.

Widget Bag: You keep pieces handy for on-site repairs. You have enough parts on hand for 200 uc worth of repairs. These parts cannot be sold or traded. They are useless to others. The bag weighs 5 lbs. It cannot be disrupted and the parts work with any device you attempt to repair. You can increase the size of this widget bag later by investing in more widgets. Every 500 uc adds another 1 lb. When you reach 7th level, the bag's weight drops by half and every additional 1,000 uc adds another 1 lb. When you reach 14th level, the bag's weight drops by half again and every 100,000 uc adds another 1 lb. Once invested, you do not get

EXPERTEERING ENGINEER

this value back. When you scavenge technology, the GM may award a certain value in uc of additional widgets. You can only use widgets to build, repair and modify items.

Adaptation: You learn how to reverse engineer technology you acquire and gain the ability to rebuild it with increased insulation and redundant electronics and gears for it to operate in ED fields without disruption. First, you must find or purchase a piece of technology with a rated tech level of TL0 and TL1 (later feats can improve this). You dismantle the item and reassemble it. The new item replicates the old in every way except it grows in size and weight. As a result, many large items cannot be converted. You must have ranks in the Engineer skill to adapt anything. The time to accomplish the adaptation is one day (8 hours of hard work) per tech level of item. You must also invest uc = 25% the original cost of the item (round up). You may use your widget bag for this cost. The weight of the item increases by 100% if it weighs less than 10 lbs, +50% if it weighs between 10 lbs and 50 lbs, and +20% if it weights over 50 lbs.

Weapons: One-handed small arms become two-handed small arms. Two-handed small arms become heavy weapons. Heavy weapons become Super Heavy Weapons. Grenades cannot be adapted. Weapons

requiring tripods when adapted automatically come with one during the procedure.

Exo-Armor: Because the increased weight and the need to adapt it to gimfen appendages, exo-armor's check penalty incurs a further -2 penalty.

Equipment: Medical gear and professional equipment cannot be adapted. Neither can battery cells as they benefit from the shielding of the adaptation while inside the weapon (disruption checks are only for batteries when outside of equipment). You should purchase a disruption muffler bag.

The original item being adapted is not retained as it is taken apart and incorporated into the new shape. This new shape is no longer sleek or beautiful. It is ugly, clumsy, and heavy. It spits, whines, and creaks with every movement, seemingly on the verge of blowing apart at any second, though never doing so. The technology looks clumsy, with exposed tubes and cables running to backpack mounted insulated power packs. Goggles become massive helmet assemblies. Armor hobbles around quickly, shifting its weight left and right like a drunken narros. Worse, the style of adaptation is unique to you. Only you know exactly how you adapted the item and attempts to teach others the technique results in utter confusion for anyone other than a gimfen with equal Engineer ranks. Even if explained, the exact supplies would be required, including the original item. Further, the adapted item is so fragile and requires so much fine-tuning that, if given to another to use, the item would break after a round. Not even another gimfen could figure out the eccentricities of the device before it fails. As a result, you can neither lend nor sell your monstrosities to anyone and they are only useful to you.

You are proficient with using your adapted technology even if you didn't have the proficiency with it previously. If you have a laser gun, you are proficient with that specific adapted laser gun, but not the original or others you find along the way.

Results: Adapted technology does not disrupt from ambient disruption. It can still disrupt from active attacks (EMP weapons) or if an attempt is made to enchant the weapon.

For reasons that are not well understood, gimfen do not short out technology by their mere existence. This permitted them to slowly build a technological industry. They were one of the very last species to break off from the first fae branches, and like to claim that their race's capacity to hold technology without disruption proves them to be the final form of the fae – the end result, the ones meant to escape the cradle of Earth.

The inherent problem with this theory is the fae's natural imperceptiveness of technology. The various fae peoples have developed languages, cultures, and even expanding empires. They have forged swords, laid down paths, and erected communities. After a certain point, however, they simply stop; even if their presence was not toxic to machines, the mere concept of industry and mechanization simply would not occur to a fae if they had not been exposed to it from outside. Some claim that because they did not evolve, they lack the instinct to better themselves that drove humanity to its technological peak. Despite their wisdom and creative brilliance with poetry and song, fae lack the drive to push and dominate their world, a natural byproduct of a short-lived evolved species. The gimfen, although not subject to their cousins' technical antipathy, still lack the drive to develop their own, especially in comparison to the fast pace of mankind. For thousands of years they languished with the few advances they stumbled upon through mere luck. All of that changed when they returned and discovered humanity. The short-lived hairless apes found industry and technology second nature.

Gimfen cannot innovate, but they can replicate and improve. After gleaning every nugget of information they could acquire, they started to adapt what they learned to operate outside the walls of bastions. The experteering engineer is the result of this growth. Instead of hiding inside or underneath the grind towers of Gnimfall or the dozens of other communities around Canam, experteering engineers embark into the outside world in search of even more knowledge. They travel the world finding technology they can either use outright, or return home to their people. Their greatest ability is their knack to reverse-engineer human technology they encounter and modify it to operate without disruption in the lands of magic. Most employ this ability in the field of high tech weapons, but some utilize it with standard gear as well. They are limited in what they can adapt, as the result is usually clumsier and substantially larger than the original. Experteering engineers are an unusual sight in Canam but their presence proves that technology's eventual dominance over magic is inevitable.

(EX) TRAFFIC HUNTER

Trait: Race, Regional
Prerequisites: Human, from Baruch Malkut

BENEFITS

Symbol of Hate: You are given a fae-iron dagger and are proficient with it. Whether or not you use it is up to you.

Know Their Tricks: You gain a +2 trait bonus to all saving throws against charm, fear, illusion, psychic, or sleep attacks made by fae.

There is a small but vocal portion of the human race that firmly believes that they are the true inheritors of the planet. The invading fantasy creatures either had their chance and failed or are the result of a breach in the laws of reality and don't truly exist at all. As such they are not afforded any dignity or rights. Any commandments or tenets that pertain to humans do not apply to fae; these creatures can be dismissed or categorized as demons, fiends, or any other evil force mentioned in religious and mythological texts. They must

be more than just disregarded; they must be suppressed, dominated, or destroyed. After a few decades, this belief extended to enslavement, as the massive economic possibilities of an indentured population could not be ignored. King Darius founded Baruch Malkut on the elimination of the fae races, but relented in the face of the opportunities offered by the businessmen and landowners of the new properties he had conquered.

Either you came into this career naturally or were bequeathed it from a family's legacy. You were trained on how to track and capture every type of fae. For reasons that are unquestionably complicated, you have moved away from this profession. More than likely, when faced with this birthright, you rebuffed the responsibility, appalled by the actions of your ancestry. Unfortunately, one cannot simply walk away from his or her duty. The kingdom knows everyone under its law. It never forgets, and it seldom forgives. Rejecting the traditions of your heritage, you have escaped the kingdom, obsessed with making amends for actions you might never have committed.

FARGON DISCIPLINED

Trait: Race, Regional
Prerequisite: Narros from Fargon.

BENEFITS

Specialty: Choose one non-class skill: it becomes a class skill for you. You gain a +1 trait bonus to that skill.

Master Class: Select one of the following:

- At character creation, choose one class skill you have ranks in. Once a day, you can re-roll one unfavorable roll for that skill.
- You gain proficiency with the narros krollish.

As is their way, most narros dedicate the entirety of their energy in the application of the task at hand. They reserve nothing for the possibility of failure. They consider one plan, one option, one course for their life. There is no casual hobby. When a narros enters the military (which most are required to do for at least ten years in their youth), they think of nothing else. Waking at sunrise, they train until the fall of night. Others turn to spellcraft. Some embrace medicine. Many take to the mines. When they finally choose their preferred career, there is very little that will change their minds. And in turn, they throw everything of themselves into that path, rejecting hobbies or passing fads. Despite this being a common stereotype of nearly all narros, those of Fargon take this course to near fanaticism. Each city has a skew towards a certain path, but it hasn't changed a broad range of dedicated warriors and wizards coming from the sprawling kingdom in the North.

FREE HOUSE CITIZEN

Trait: Regional
Prerequisites: Born from any Free House in Canam

BENEFITS

Local Knowledge: Receive a +2 trait bonus to all Knowledge (regional history) checks when dealing with your free house of choice. You also gain a +1 trait bonus in one of the following skills: Knowledge (geography), Knowledge (nature), Knowledge (nobility), Knowledge (religion), Stealth, or Sleight of Hand.

Expanded Language: Free Houses are often multicultural. You gain one language from the following list: Argose, Damaskan, English, Englo-Lingo, Indic, Narroni, Onespeak, Romanic, Semitic, Sinitic, or Slavic.

A very small segment of the echan population in Canam considers themselves free from obligations. They have no debts and answer to no one but themselves. With growing concerns of raiding bogg and pugg swarms, the number of truly free people dwindles daily. Many congregate around the huge nations of Canam like Limshau, Kannos, or Baruch Malkut. Others try desperately to win favor with a bastion. Many others simply settle for one of the many free houses across the land. The free houses are sovereign states squeezed between and around larger kingdoms. They are relatively self-sufficient and, despite their pride, spend most of their diplomatic capital towards earning favor with larger kingdoms. They do this either through trade goods or noble marriage, though the latter is unsuccessful with the fae houses.

Those raised in free houses must contend with a chaotic upbringing. Free houses are notorious for being unable to supply the needs of their people. There is not enough food, not enough shelter, not enough clean water, and not enough law enforcement. Those adept in the skills required for adventuring often acquired these skills from nefarious sources – robbing or pilfering their necessities on the streets. Before finding their calling, many of these travelers lived a sordid past with sins they would prefer not bring up.

On the converse, those seeking adventure with roots in a free house may have come from a rich bourgeois household, adorned in the rare and costly purple-dyed tunics that set them apart from the serfs. It's possible they were related to royalty or to a family with ties to the inner circle of the aristocracy. Why these individuals would choose to leave such a station could be obvious or rooted in issues best suited for privacy. If their path keeps them around their homeland, they will obviously have needed expertise when dealing with the local customs and practices. If outcast, they may wish to remain as far away from their home as possible.

FINER MINER

Trait: Race, Regional. This selection counts as two traits.

Prerequisite: Narros from the Finer Fire Pits

BENEFITS

Like it Hot: You take half damage from all fire attacks.

Look for the Shiny: You gain a +2 trait bonus to unopposed Perception checks.

The Pits: You gain a +2 trait bonus to Knowledge (regional history) to the Finer Fire Pits, Kannos, and Quinox.

The narros from Finer fit the stereotype of their fictional parallel. The city's founder, Garach Glim, desired an underground kingdom to rival anything found in Fargon. When he stumbled upon an astounding treasure of unmined minerals in the Finer Vallis, he knew his search was over. Three centuries later, Glim can still be found in any one of the thousands of miles of tunnels that branch off the colossal Finer Cavern, a single chamber large enough to fit the entire city of Limshau. From there, huge smelters constantly burn, laying heavy deposits of grime and heat over everything inside.

Being from this region, you probably served more time in the mine than in the military. The greatest by-product of this life is a natural resistance to heat and a canny eye to notice what others don't. Narros from Finer take after the gimfen of Gnimfall—uncaring for personal grooming and fascinated by whatever glitters. But where gimfen take interest in machinery, narros look for the sparkles in stones. Narros from Finer consider those from Fargon too militant. A discipline that focuses on punching shadows and meditating on balance beams is pointless in contrast to a hard day's work where the sweat and physical exertion is reflection enough. In the end, something gets accomplished. To a Finer narros, that's all that matters—*be useful*, a feeling shared by damaskans. Damaskans, however, believe it applies to the pursuit of mental growth while the narros prefer physical perfection.

FRINGE FANATIC

Trait: Race

Prerequisite: Pagus between the ages of 35 and 40.

BENEFITS

If your Wisdom is 12 or lower…

Unhinged Aggression: On the same turn you gain a standard action from *focused aggression*, you also gain a +1 trait bonus to attack and +2 trait bonus damage rolls for all attacks until the end of that round. *Focused aggression* also lasts until the end of your next turn (whether you want it to or not). If there are no enemy targets in range at the start of either of your turns, you attack the nearest target, regardless of its affiliation.

If your Wisdom is 13 or higher…

Stalwart Conviction: All allies within ten feet (one square) gain a +1 trait bonus to all saving throws (except death saving throws).

As an elder pagus, one of two futures is fated to happen. There is no avoiding this destiny. You will either grow wise and steadfast in your cultivated ethics, or you will go insane. With the latter, your rage possesses you more and more. Few pagus are able to manage their emotions. Pagus under the thrall of demon or dragon are killed in the unlikely event that they make it past 35, as their madness makes them more of a threat to their own kind than to enemies. If wise, they soon become respected leaders and spiritual guides, an equal if not greater threat. All free pagus tribes are led by elder pagus. Unlike other races that drift into frailty, pagus continue to grow in size. A pagus has never died of old age and few ever maintain their sanity into their senility. They are often put out of their misery before becoming a threat to others. Only a handful of pagus have managed to keep their minds together, showing potential to lead their kind into an enlightened future.

GNEOLISTIC

Trait: Supernatural

Prerequisite: None

BENEFITS

Indeterminate Consecration: You may select cleric (or another divine class) as your chosen class. You neither have to select a deity nor are you required to specify your divine power source. You do not have to join a church, and you cannot become an ex-cleric. You can waive the deity requirement for any ability, spell, or feat. The cleric becomes as free favored class, meaning you can still select another class as your favored class and gain the benefits to both. However, you cannot cast 8th or 9th level divine spells. You can still cast lower level spells in higher spell slots (either by enhancing a spell or simply having a lower spell occupy a higher slot). You cannot cast spells with the Dead or Evil descriptor

Touched by Heaven: By default, you are tied to the white gate of Attricana. Your saturation value is 20 which can never drop below this value unless your soul switches from Attricana to the negative energies of Ixindar (see **Corruption**). As an option, you can choose to be tied to the black gate of Ixindar. If so, your corruption value becomes 20, your saturation point becomes 0, and you must have the Lawful Evil alignment. In this state, you do not disrupt technology. If bound to Ixindar, you cannot cast spells with the Good descriptor, but you can now cast spells with the Dead or Evil descriptor.

From the moment of your birth, those around you knew of your blessing. You possess a natural affinity with the power of Attricana. You can alter the very order of nature and the universe around you. You are an apotheosis of the might of chaos. You can create life, heal inju-

ries, and even recall souls from the afterlife. You channel the spirit of Attricana in everything you do. Some have claimed this power is bestowed solely from a divine source. Others say faith has nothing to do with it. If all souls are siphoned from Attricana then a gneolistic is simply a channeler of life-force.

A gneolistic is an exceptionally rare soul to encounter in worldly travels. Very often, a gneolistic is taken in (or captured) by a religious sect and convinced or conditioned to believe his power comes solely from the gift of God or gods. In these cases, their path is cleansed and rewritten by the place of worship, erasing pesky personal stains like social standing and ethnicity. They parade the gneolistic as proof of piety, convincing others to join the congregation. Even if a holy order does not locate a gneolistic early, very often the child's own family will assume such responsibilities and a village idol is born. This would often still draw the attention of said holy order, forcing the idol to convert. A church has also been known to alter its doctrine to retroactively accommodate the village's traditions in order to win over a resident gneolistic.

On a few rare exceptions, enlightened individuals have located and raised these prodigies under the umbrella of secular tutelage.

A gneolistic is not a proof of divinity but another example of how Attricana's influence knows no limits. A study from Limshau revealed that the ratio of gneolistics to vivicators is almost exactly one in ten thousand, with a similar ratio between vivicators and normal individuals. These ratios slightly improve among laudenians and chaparrans, but a larger population leaves humans with the highest number of gneolistics.

HALFMASTER

Trait: Combat, Regional
Prerequisite: Born or trained in Kannos.

BENEFITS

Proficiencies: You gain proficiency with all reach weapons.

Habaukeedo: As a move action, any reach weapon in your hand can shift from being a reach weapon to a non-reach weapon with the double property. It retains all other abilities. The off-hand attack is treated as a club (1d6 damage, x2 crit, B). If the weapon is enchanted, then both ends are. If you used the weapon as a reach weapon already this round, you gain no benefits from two-weapon feats or abilities until the start of your next turn. You cannot change your stance again until the beginning of your next turn. You cannot use *habaukeedo* if you are wearing heavy armor, but you can while mounted.

Not everyone in Kannos is privileged enough to be trained on a horse since learning to walk. As Kannos lacks fruitful mines, their only other major donation to warfare is their renowned spearmen. There are dozens of different schools in Kannos, each teaching a different approach to spear and lance use. Some soldiers are trained how to use massive spears that root in the ground while others learn how to tuck a lance under the shoulder and brace for a solid hit. Some launch them against distant enemies while others prefer their use as thrusting weapons in close combat.

The most exclusive and taxing discipline is the art of *habaukeedo*, which involves using every inch of a polearm. This brings the weapon closer, holding it more like a quarterstaff. Like all soldiers in Kannos, halfmasters are usually forced to take to the field with inadequate armor; the need to deflect incoming attacks as best they could resulted in the evolution of the halfmaster's art.

A halfmaster can brace the weapon at its full length for a decisive kill before the opponent's weapon can sneak in, but then they may switch to a tight formation when surrounded. It is thought the art of *habaukeedo* derived from either the narros doppelshido technique or from masters of the ancient naginata skills who brought their art to Canam via Genai. Unlike a slow and disciplined spear wall, halfmasters often break ranks, running after enemy squads after the cavalry has broken them. They seldom form lines with other halfmasters, preferring to allow room for their wide range of attacks.

HERBALIST

Trait: Discipline
Prerequisite: Wisdom 14 or higher

BENEFITS

Ethnobotany: You gain Heal and Knowledge (Nature) as class skills and gain a +1 trait bonus in each.

Wildcrafting: You gain a medicine pouch (wildcrafting bag). You can spend 1 minute on one target in a healing attempt, then make a Heal check. The target recovers hit points equal to your Heal check result, but not more than the amount of hit points in your wildcrafting bag. Hit points pulled from the bag are lost and must be recovered. At 1st level, you have 20 hit points in your wildcrafting bag. Through standard adventuring, your bag recovers 5 hit points a day. The GM may also award additional hit points to the bag dependant on certain conditions, such as skillful Knowledge (nature) or Perception checks. You may also purchase ingredients at a rate of 1gp/1 hit point in certain shops. You cannot have more hit points in your wildcrafting bag than 20 + your class level x2 (so, you could have 22 at 1st level).

Passed from master to disciple, this old knowledge reappeared when the advanced technologies of MRIs and CAT scans fell apart in the world of magic. By using whatever is found or on hand, an herbalist can perform basic medical aid. An herbalist can create analgesics, sedatives, or even stimulants. They can sterilize wounds or simply determine which nearby plants are edible or poisonous. It is not uncommon for an herbalist or wildcrafter, as they are also known, to

pick leaves, berries, or stones from the ground as they walk and this talent has earned some of them positions of authority in smaller or less developed communities. They are even revered in a few locations where they are given the title medicine man or shaman. A lesser accepted (and more derogatory) term is witch doctor. This is neither a magical art nor a pseudo-science like homeopathy. The techniques the herbalist uses are tested and proven knowledge passed down through centuries of trial and error. In this new age, more items of benefit can be found on the roadside, with more impactful effects, but the basic wisdom hasn't changed.

INCARNATE

Trait: Supernatural
Prerequisite: None

BENEFITS

Descent from Harmony: Choose an incarnate element from the list below:

Air: As many times a day as your Intelligence or Wisdom modifier, as an immediate action, you can pass through 1 square as though it were normal terrain and unoccupied. You do not provoke opportunity attacks during this move. You cannot pass through a wall.

Earth: You ignore difficult terrain resulting from rubble, uneven stone, or earth.

Fire: Once per day, as an immediate action, instead of taking fire damage you gain an equal number of temporary hit points.

Water: You have a +5 trait bonus to Swim. You can always take 10 for a Swim check, regardless of the situation. Also, once a day, you can breathe water for one hour.

Echan Origin: You are tied to chaotic energies of the white gate of Attricana. You disrupt technology on you and around you. You have a saturation value of 20 which can never drop below this value unless your soul switches from Attricana to the negative energies of Ixindar (see **Corruption**). If you switch to Ixindar, you lose all Incarnate abilities until you switch back to Attricana.

Many of the fae claim an intrinsic connection with the primal elements. Impossibly graceful laudenian children, and narros youth with an intuitive understanding of stone and earth are two examples of Attricana's whimsical influence. The incarnate are those rare individuals with the ability to harness these forces and direct them. Each incarnate generally reflects their bonded element in both personality and appearance. Chaparran fire incarnates can be very quick-tempered and rash, even for a chaparran, whereas earth-bonded narros would be even more stoic and reserved than the rest of their taciturn race. An air incarnate is generally flighty, imaginative, and difficult to pin down in conversation. The water incarnate is subtle and usually adapts to any society he or she is living within. It can be difficult to discern an incarnate from birth, but the telltale signs begin emerging in early childhood. Earth-bonded children's voices are coarse, their skin easily calloused. Air incarnate are very light-skinned, where the fire-bonded are dark, almost bronzed. Of all the incarnate, only water is easily discovered, as not many children can swim underwater for hours at a time without surfacing.

JUGGERNAUT

Trait: Combat
Prerequisites: Constitution 14 and Strength 14

BENEFITS

Expecting Trouble: You can never be caught flat-footed.

Armored Sympathy: Select one of the following:

- The check penalty for any armor you wear is reduced by 2 (min 0).
- If you are a monk, any light armor worn does not force you to lose your fast movement or flurry of blows abilities. You lose your ability to add your Wisdom bonus to AC but you still gain the AC and CMD bonuses starting at 4th level.

The juggernaut cares nothing about nature or the will of gods. They may not believe in warmongering but do know the benefits of wielding such weapons in the modern age. Juggernauts simply wish to maximize their potential in combat. One must wield a blade to survive. You sleep with one eye open and seldom get a full night's rest. In the open field, you guard the casters and protect the fire. You are always close to your armor. You practice daily to hone abilities, maximizing your capacity in combat. You know when at the peak of your skill, you will never be out of work. A juggernaut is ready for combat at a moment's notice. You prepare your armor before sleeping, able to don it in less time than a rogue takes to put on his shoes.

Juggernauts are not ones for speeches or promotion. You are the heavy brute brought forward to scare the front lines of the opposition, the one beside kings to demonstrate the might of an army. When seen in a tavern as a possible hire, you never have to worry about being passed over. Even if your intelligence can't net you glory or gold, a few rounds in an arena will do the task nicely.

KAVALIER

Trait: Regional. This selection counts as two traits.
Prerequisite: Trained in Kannos.

BENEFITS

Equestrian Talent: You gain Handle Animal and Ride as class skills and gain a +1 trait bonus in each.

Grace and Litheness: You count as having a saddle on your mount even when you don't have one. If you

do have a saddle, you gain a +1 trait bonus to Ride checks.

Like Rabbits Up There: You are given a light horse (combat trained) for free. Said horse gains a +2 trait bonus to Intelligence. The animal automatically is trained for one general purpose and as many tricks as its capacity.

There are horsemen and cavalry across the world. Some are honored and have a long lineage. It takes an especially brilliant soul to be among the chosen of the Kannos cavalry, the elite kavaliers. What distinguishes a Kannos kavalier from other mounted military is the lack of heavy armor. Kannos is rich in fertile land; huge livestock populations result in the largest number of horses in Canam. Kannos is weak, however, in mineral resources and must trade with the narros and their human allies in Abidan. Since most farms have to survive on their own, every farmhand, stable boy, and wrangler learns to ride and control a steed the moment they could balance on two legs. By puberty, reins are an afterthought and the saddle an indulgence rarely taken. Armor – especially barding – was an extravagance few could afford in the early days of the kingdom. The front lines of a Kannos army are populated with such seemingly simple cavalry, offering the illusion of an inept and under-equipped host until it charges.

Kannos kavaliers ride light in armor and nimble in their saddle (when they use one). Their horses are lifetime partners and often share sleeping quarters. Some traditions match a young fighter to a steed early in life. The squire and mount live their lives responsible for the other, loyal to the end. They form an unspoken bond and never leave each other's side if it can be avoided. More often than not, kavaliers prefer the company of their animals to people and often sleep in stables, as horses make great alarms.

Kannos kavaliers are quick on both two feet and four. They leap upon their mounts without a stir and drive even the most skittish animals into combat without a stutter. There is no greater waste in warfare than a trained warhorse with an incompetent rider and there is very little more dangerous than a Kannos kavalier and his mount.

KINETASSANA

Trait: Racial. This selection counts as two traits.
Prerequisite: Tenenbri, Wisdom 14, Dexterity 14

BENEFITS

Snap-Draw: If you select the Quick-Draw feat, you also gain a +1 trait bonus to initiative. You can also sheathe/stow your weapon as a free action, which does not provoke an attack of opportunity.

Propriocepting Posture: If you ready a standard action to be triggered by an enemy's move within 5-feet of you (in an adjacent square), you gain a +3 trait bonus to attack rolls until the end of that action.

The dominant religious movement sweeping the tenenbri nation of Vanaka endorses a xenophobic stance, decrying other species save their own, and prohibiting any contact with foreigners. This is despite the natural tendency of tenenbri to be interested in companions that differ from the image of perfection their priests claim tenenbri to be. The faction in power has convinced the masses to ostracize anyone not like them, even members of their own species that are slightly against the norm. This belief is encouraged more in cities than smaller villages and many traditional tenenbri denounce the practice. Even so, there is a small segment of underground fae that have no home to speak of, with some venturing into the light to start anew. Tenenbri that are forced out or leave willingly because of a desire for isolation often spend years in the darkness of Vanaka, learning to hone their abilities to see without seeing.

Most tenenbri encountered north of Southam are nomadic. Some are drifters that have gathered in a family caravan to escape their land or explore the world. A few are hermits, keeping to themselves and staying out of harm's way. When encountering such a recluse, passers are advised to leave them alone, for they may be a member of an exclusive order of wandering warriors, the kinetassana.

Kinetassana may be wise, even friendly to outsiders, able and willing to lend their skills to the innocent. But compared with other tenenbri they are quiet and unsociable, seldom traveling shoulder-to-shoulder with others. Even when enticed or forced to accompany a party, the kinetassana trails behind and volunteers little.

On the surface, a kinetassana appears nonchalant, almost unaware of her surroundings. She rarely brandishes weapons openly, preferring light varieties kept hidden, exposing them only the instant they are ready to swing and sheathing the instant the stroke concludes.

Kinetassana are nearly impossible to catch off-guard and rarely charge into combat, preferring to let enemies approach and attack. They don't play with targets during a fight. They don't dance, jump around, or tumble. They kill quickly and efficiently and do so with hardly a sound.

KNIGHT OF THE WALL

Trait: Combat, Regional
Prerequisite: From Abidan.

BENEFITS

Proficiency: You are proficient with all shields.

Arm Extension: Your armor check penalty with any shield is reduced by 1.

Shield Lock: If you and at least two allies (but no more than four) link shields and form a wall, each member of the line receives an additional +1 trait bonus to AC and a +2 trait bonus to CMD against charges and bull rush attacks. If the wall is broken (by individual members being pushed, moved or killed), forcing the wall to number less than three, the bonuses are lost.

On the bridge Tethuss, the holy warriors of Janoah live their lives in defense of a single cause—to hold the wall against the pagus hordes threatening to sweep down the continent. Bound in by mountains on one side and gulping waters on the other side, all but the bravest pagus see the isthmus as the easiest route to the unprotected south despite its towering fortress rampart.

The knights on the wall, standing atop the buttresses and manning the bridge, are rarely taken from their footing. Their defensive stance turns into an offensive one and opponents find themselves facing a stronghold of shields covered in spikes and blades.

This knight looks to his shield as his primary ally. By combining their efforts, many knights can link to form an impenetrable barrier against attack. This practice began with the first assault across the bridge, with thousands of pagus battering the walls. The front line facing the hordes were ill equipped and the wall behind had yet to be completed. The phalanx held fast, with the front warriors standing guard with light shields on each arm while forces behind held onto long spears. The pagus could neither push nor break the wall and the battle was quickly won.

To date, few have ever bested a Janoahn knight in shield and sword combat. They are proud to stand on Tethuss and few ever leave the fortress. And yet some do, venturing either across the bridge, or south from the city. The reasons may be their own, but their shields represent their honor, so are never separated from them. They avoid mounted combat and prefer to be charged rather than the ones charging. An entire industry has stemmed from this art form. Janoahn shields are a highly prized commodity throughout Canam. Even some pagus have been seen using them, though only the knights on the bridge wield them properly.

KOANA STUDENT

Trait: Magic, Regional

Prerequisite: From Limshau. If you're a wizard, you cannot select the Illusion or Necromancy school as a specialty.

BENEFITS

Arcane Comprehension: A spell carries a spark of life within it. Once a day, as a free action, you can force a target to re-roll a successful Reflex save against a spell you have cast.

Dedicated Researcher: You gain a +1 trait bonus to Knowledge (arcane).

It is said that Limshau's rise to prominence as one of the world most respected and admired nations didn't hit its stride until it absorbed nearly 5,000 humans from Angel, thanks to Ravenar Limshau III's "Crusade of Knowledge." Until then, all damaskans were the same across the world. It was at that point the obsessive drive to record history reached a fevered state. Damaskans have always been social creatures with a preference for learning and acquiring knowledge, but bookbinding was a complicated procedure few of them had mastered in the Terros age, and the printing press was just beyond their capacity to imagine. The influx of mankind changed that, which explains why, after only 500 years, damaskans in Canam look and act slightly askew from those across the Ocean. The addition of movable type catapulted their society in a direction unheard of before. As no books or scrolls came with them when the gate opened, the damaskans only had their memories to work from, and even then, few remembered the details of their history. It was assumed they were similar to the damaskans of Damaska – towering spires filled floor to ceiling with color-coded scrolls with little else to differentiate them. It is thought the prevalence of the book totem didn't become fashionable until the damaskans began to have extensive contact with humans. Circulation of books in the ancient age was reserved almost exclusively for the early damaskan wizards. Today, Limshau sports the greatest number of wizard academies in Canam, though not the largest nor most respected actual schools. Larenoak and Jibaro in Dawnamoak, the Logos Academy in Abidan, and the Elsis Tower in Laudenia are all much larger and more prestigious, though all pale in comparison to Kirjath-Sepher on the other side of the world.

No particular school stands out from the crowd in Limshau. All of them are respected in different ways. Nearly three hundred years ago, they allied to found the Koana District—a geographically unbound organization of all the schools in the Limshau kingdom. They set a standard of quality control maintained by every school. Despite different learning techniques and totem endorsement (though every damaskan student chooses the book), every Koana academy must follow strict guiding principles which includes heavy arcane study, daily lectures, and rigorous repetitive exams and workshops. Unlike other fae schools, which try to apply a theological approach to magic, supporting a "gut intuition" and encouraging natural talent, Koana schools maintain that true wizard mastery only comes with heavy research and exercise. A Koana student is expected to remain at the school for at least twelve years (although 'field study' is part of most curricula), though they are encouraged to remain longer if they wish.

LAUDENIAN MAGOS

Trait: Mage, Race

Prerequisites: Intelligence 14, Laudenian.

BENEFITS

Totem Synergy: If you employ a staff as your totem, you gain a +2 trait bonus to Will saves.

Trained Since Birth: You gain a +1 trait bonus to Knowledge (arcane) and Spellcraft.

The arcane arts might have originated with the dragons, as all the words of power derive from their language, but it is the laudenians that created the modern concept

of the wizard. They found a way to tap into the holy language of the oldest magical race and transplant the capacity of their written form into totems that wizards can use in the application of their art. Until then, all fae were in awe of the power of dragons and forever slaves to the whims of Attricana. Laudenians, frightened by the concept of being slaves to anything, even magic, tried to discover a way to control it. This path began because of a dire need to prevent the degradation of their species. They hoped the words would uncover a way to control the chaotic power of the gate.

They failed in this endeavor but did discover a way to harness some of the gate's power through the use of the dragon language. They believed that by learning how the dragons direct their power by focusing on a single word in all its meanings, a wizard could replicate the same effect. The laudenians, ever disdainful of change, found the staff the most reliable totem and never supported another option. Eventually, the chaparrans would adopt the same when several of them stole the knowledge from acquiescent laudenians. It would not be until the damaskans arrived that alternative totems emerged. They embraced the book and soon after, the narros also developed a similar practice utilizing shields and weapons.

In the modern age, nearly every race uses every form of totem available except for laudenians, who still stubbornly use the staff. They have used this single implement for their totem since the dawn of their species. Unlike any other casters, the laudenians are known to be the most numerous in proportion to their population and the most powerful on average. They know this and make a point of reminding those who know, don't know, or don't care.

LIBRARIAN

Trait: Regional. This selection counts as two traits.
Prerequisite: From Limshau

BENEFITS

Branch Expertise: All Knowledge skills are class skills for you. Select one Knowledge skill and gain a +3 trait bonus in it. Select one different Knowledge skill and gain a +1 trait bonus in it.

From the Books: Select either one Limshau weapon or Limshau kawabari armor.

- The Limshau weapon becomes a monk weapon
- If you are a monk, you do not lose your fast movement or flurry of blows features when wearing kawabari armor. You still lose your Wisdom bonus to AC but you do gain the AC and CMD bonuses starting at 4th level.

Local Knowledge: You also gain a +1 trait bonus to Knowledge (regional history – Limshau).

Initially, the servants of Limshau, those responsible for the organization and defense of knowledge, referred to themselves simply as librarians, a title still in use today. The emergence of the custodian order freed them of part of their responsibility for defending the pages they index, and the librarians were delegated to the uninspiring but necessary duty of maintaining the treasures of the cities the custodians protect. Their combat prowess dipped significantly in the waning centuries.

Modern librarians have an encyclopedic recall of every book they are exposed to in the wing they call home. Some librarians remain in a certain wing of the city for their entire lives, but like the custodians, the librarians are often found outside of the walls of the cities, having taken on a duty to retrieve some precious bit of knowledge. Perhaps a single volume among the thousands under their care has gone missing. Perhaps the final critical tome of a series has finally been located, a retrieval too important to be tasked to apprentice or mercenary. As always, simple curiosity may also possess them to leave, but most librarians are settled in their daily tasks, taking enjoyment in their duties behind a desk.

Even more so than the custodians, the librarians treasure the written word and will most certainly carry several books wherever they go. They are also prone to chronicling every moment of their excursions beyond the walls. Though they may certainly possess some combat prowess, they normally lack the extreme physical disciplines required of custodians. Often, the librarian has left because of a singular need. They are frequently not as prepared for the outside world, despite having intimate knowledge of its inner workings.

MALKUT OUTCAST

Trait: Regional
Prerequisites: Human from Baruch Malkut.

BENEFITS

A Little Nervous: You suffer a -1 penalty to all Charisma-based checks against any fae.

Know Their Tricks: You gain a +2 trait bonus to Will saves against charm and charm-like effects.

On Edge: You gain a +1 trait bonus to Initiative.

Privileged Youth: You gain a +2 trait bonus to Knowledge (arcane), Knowledge (nature), Knowledge (religion) (pick one).

Unfortunate Origin: You gain a +2 trait bonus to Knowledge (regional history) - Baruch Malkut.

You are profoundly ashamed of your origin. You were raised in a world where humans have declared themselves superior, children of the true god, and as such are masters of all creatures of the Earth. You were raised under the leadership of a king blessed with immortality. He accuses others outside his realm of being heathens and heretics or worse, patsies for demons parading around in pleasant clothes and alluring skin. As judgment, these demons deserve extermination, but if they can be indentured to aid the

kingdom's exaltation, so much the better. You had no option and no cause to think otherwise. You believed this was true, for it came from the lips of your elders. Your teachers explained the history of the world and the slow extermination of the human race through a gradual process of corruption by whispers rather than swords.

You might have lived on a farm alongside these loathsome chattel, whip in your hand and revulsion in your heart. Then one day, or maybe over many, something changed. It is possible you always had issues with the practice. You couldn't understand how such evil could be attached to such innocence. Regardless of the shape of their ears, who were the demons that enslaved others? As a slaver, you might have been born into the career, or took to it easily in a culture that supported it, but that doesn't mean you believed in its practice. You might never have approved of the system but went along silently because of pressures from your government or family.

When you reached an age where rebellion was the norm, you might have recoiled from the business and escaped the hated reputation. Despite talents learned, you want nothing to do with your past and actively try to destroy the machine you operated within. Likewise, you might have rebelled against the system because of events that occurred late in life, when you are forced to face the sins you have committed. Perhaps you saw the eyes of an innocent fae and realized the truth of the evils you were perpetrating. But there is no room in the kingdom for those who do not absolutely support their king in his plan for the world. You are either with King Darius and his crusade against the infidels or you side with those fated for the gallows or a cross. You must swear absolute fidelity to Baruch Malkut or be counted among the enemy. Therefore, you left, abandoning your family, your holdings, and any claim to any land. Sometimes, you appear overtly friendly to fae, trying desperately to offset any accusation that that you remain loyal to that old belief. You keep your origin secret, but you know it will surface eventually. You also believe it is fate you will eventually return to face your sins and family directly, and this time you won't flee.

MYSTIC

Trait: Supernatural. This selection counts as two traits.

Prerequisite: None

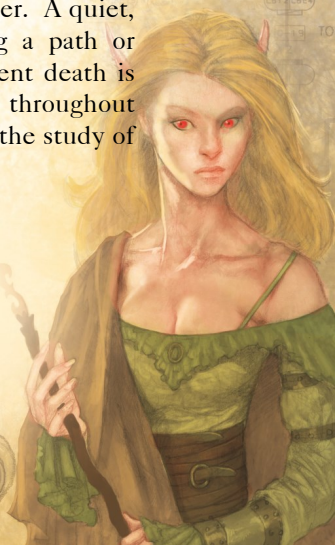
BENEFITS

Echan Origin: You are tied to chaotic energies of the white gate of Attricana. You disrupt technology on you and around you. You have a saturation value of 20 which can never drop below this value unless your soul switches from Attricana to the negative energies of Ixindar (see **Corruption**).

Lost Traditions: You gain access to the cleric's Knowledge Domain (even if you are not a cleric). See the PATHFINDER RPG for information on the Knowledge Domain. You gain both the granted powers and the domain spell for 1st level as if you were a cleric of equal level (additional spells from the domain require feats). You are not required to pick a deity. You must also choose a focus for your craft. This may include bones, rocks, leaves, entrails, a book, dice, or even a deck of cards. All your spells require a material component and require your focus in order to function.

In the history of every culture, there have been practitioners and disciples of ancient rituals who call upon unseen forces to offer guidance when hope is fleeting or altogether lost. These conduits of wisdom employ ancient customs passed down from their ancestors, tracing back an unbroken line of hundreds or thousands of years. As a mystic continuing the old ways, you utilize implements ranging from as basic as a scattering of bones to as complicated as a library of books. Every evening, you recall the teachings of your master, hoping to earn the illumination of the spirit that may grant salvation in the life beyond.

Mystic traditions have hundreds of different names. Although this may certainly be called a religion, it may also be based in the ethnic traditions of a culture. Some mystics claim their insight derives from an awareness of the world and is not handed to them from a divine power. It is their own soul, the untapped potential of their spirit, which inevitably guides them. Your choice is your own but many races and cultures have their preferences. Chaparrans credit spirits for their guidance, studying fallen leaves off trees and the arrangements of their veins. Damaskans use bibliomancy and numerology and gain understanding through the books they read. They gain wisdom through raw knowledge but also from the patterns of words and sentences, finding further enlightenment where others find nothing. Gimfen roll dice, but the type of dice and the images on their facings are unique to each sage. Laudenians have the longest and most complicated form, using both incense and drops of water in stagnant pools as their channel. Narros shatter stones and study the fallen fragments to hear advice straight from the lips of Oaken. Tenenbri, the most subtle, use their fingers to touch and feel every flaw and perfection in something to learn from it, such as reading palms or marks upon a skull. When pagus are allowed to develop their own culture, their mystics employ animal entrails. The way the creature was killed changes the outcome of the answer. A quiet, peaceful death is required when choosing a path or seeking answers to a question while a violent death is needed in matters of war. As for humans, throughout their history, they have tried them all, from the study of flying birds to the analysis of rat feces.



REDCAP

Trait: Race

Prerequisite: Gimfen. This selection counts as two traits.

BENEFITS

Choose one of the following abilities:

Bleeding Wound (Ex): You have the capacity to inflict a crippling wound on an enemy. As a free action, one living creature you damage with a melee attack suffers 2 bleed damage. If you (and only you) score a critical hit on a target suffering from *bleeding wound*, increase the damage loss by 1 (this is cumulative). You can use *bleeding wound* as many times a day as your Dexterity or Intelligent modifier (select one).

Hip Shot: You do not provoke opportunity attacks from adjacent squares when making a ranged attack with a crossbow or shortbow.

Before gimfen were renowned for their capacity for suppressing the disruption of technology, they were desperate to claim their own niche. They were a young race broken from the damaskans late after the emergence of the pagus, at a time when all the fae were coming to terms with the possibility of extinction at either the hands of their corrupted cousins, or from their own degraded forms. As the chaparrans were vanishing in the forest as nymphs and faeries, and the narros into the depths of the earth as ogres and trolls, gimfen emerged as a bright, bubbly light of playfulness. They fought for many years to find an area where they could excel. Because of their diminutive forms, several of them took to being fast, quick-strike hunters. They would squirm and wriggle through battle lines, striking targets as they passed through legs. They eventually chose the shortbow as their preferred weapon because of its versatility and compatibility to their size. It even adorns the Salvabrooke flag.

These gimfen love getting close for the strike, and whether wielding a bow or blade, don't find it a satisfying kill unless blood stains their clothes. This gave them a disturbing nickname taken from human mythology, which most gimfen don't respond well to. Some hate the term on pedantic grounds because they don't wear hats. Others simply think it sullies a reputable profession as a close-combat warrior which commands as much respect as any chaparran ranger or damaskan fighter.

Regardless, the name stuck and some of the more renowned assassins and war heroes in gimfen history have been labeled as such. Gimfen that choose an honorable path prefer the term, "siddosamma", which they claim means "Warfueled" in the ancient gimfen tongue (the astute will note that there *is* no ancient gimfen tongue). The more wicked ones embrace the redcap legend even to the extent of donning a hat.

REKII

Trait: Race

Prerequisites: Chaparran

BENEFITS

Coordinated Spotter: Whenever you hit with a ranged attack, select one ally in line of sight of you to gain a +1 trait bonus to attack that same creature until the start of your next turn.

Hand Signs: As a standard action, you can give one ally in light of sight a +3 trait bonus to attack rolls until the start of your next turn against one creature you have line of sight on.

Chaparrans are nearly as xenophobic as laudenians, but where the laudenians abhor all other species for fear of being 'tainted', chaparrans simply prefer solitude. When they do form bonds, they swear oaths that transcend generations. A chaparran that has joined an adventuring party has learned to work within a group and has shared the key signs of her gestural language. All chaparrans possess the innate ability to communicate silently and once others pick up the important signs, a chaparran is able to pass her impressive eyesight onto others.

The rekii spots targets from a hidden position. She then passes critical information to an ally (via hand signs, animal calls, and whispers) in order to improve their accuracy or position. It's a unique gift few other chaparrans possess.

It only takes a few days of exposure among new friends for them to take full advantage of his gift. It also allows the chaparrans to maintain their oath of loyalty while also remaining away from the social circle. Chaparrans cannot stand the need of other races (especially gimfen and humans) to fill silence with the noise of conversation, and even those rekii that have elected to join with such raucous noise polluters still prefer to be on their own. Often enough, the rekii remains away from the fire and discourse; while ringing in the occasional comment, a rekii for the most part stays hidden and watchful.

SALVABROOKE SEEKER

Trait: Race, Regional

Prerequisites: Gimfen from Salvabrooke; cannot be Lawful Good

BENEFITS

Petite Larceny: You gain a +1 trait bonus to Acrobatics and Sleight of Hand.

Quick Recovery: Choose one of the following skills: Acrobatics, Climb, or Sleight of Hand. Once a day, if you fail a roll with this skill by 5 or more, you can re-roll.

Gimfen are overeager to try anything once. They live their lives as the mirror opposite of narros. Where the narros eventually decide the path they would take for

the entirety of their lives and never deviate, gimfen rarely settle. Many that grew up near machinery have embraced engineering as their chosen profession, but their shops are often littered with half-completed projects and ideas only partially realized.

In Salvabrooke, most citizens are shopkeepers, shop workers, or members of the small but ferocious military. Others take to thievery or careers where similar talents can be exploited. Regardless of their path, they always add a zest to their performance. Messengers run over roofs, flipping and sliding in their sprint. Tricksters are theatric and take minutes setting up their scam, entertaining their marks, and making the ruse almost welcoming in the end. These unguided individuals love the chase – the pursuit of anything, either as the target or as the arrow. If you point them, they will run. Some apply this in a respectable craft while many employ more nefarious ones. Occasionally, they steal just for the thrill of taunting a chase, abandoning their pilfered possession around the block or even returning it and thanking the pursuer for a good run. Some sell it back to the owner for a mild fee, claiming they are enriching the lives of those around by disturbing the order of their lives.

In the eyes of many gimfen, governments and rules are part of the corruption of the other side. As Attricana encourages its chaotic drive for life in all forms, said lives prefer the anarchy of an unpredictable existence. They strive to introduce some chaos in the world around to remind everyone else that laws are part of a method of control and thus, part of the problem. To them, life is designed to rebel against conformities and laws need not be a requirement for civility.

These gimfen don't like being called anarchists, preferring the term "seeker", as they are always searching for something they hope they never find, because the pursuit is the true purpose in life. For many of them, the chase ends when they die, hopefully a long ways away from where they started.

SKY-BORN

Trait: Regional
Prerequisite: None

BENEFITS

Network Knowledge: You gain a +1 trait bonus to Knowledge (regional history) - Laudenian Sky Network.

No Fear of Falling: You gain a +4 trait bonus to Acrobatics when rolling against a DC, not an enemy's CMD.

You don't claim the Earth as your home. You fell from the womb and were not afraid. You clung onto ropes before learning to walk. You walked on the planks of a ship before you ever touched loose soil. You can dance on the railing of a skyship thousands of feet up.

Like any other nomad, you have no real roots, but unlike those on the ground, you do have a home; it's just mobile. You may have a family and might have owned your own ship at one point. Some catalyst has brought you on the ground. Perhaps you crashed. You could have been outcast for a crime. If you're a laudenian, you are most likely banished or have some need to see the world. Very often, that requires walking upon it.

SPIRIT BOND

Trait: Supernatural. This selection counts as two traits.
Prerequisites: None

BENEFITS

Echan Origin: You are tied to chaotic energies of the white gate of Attricana. You disrupt technology on you and around you. You have a saturation value of 20 which can never drop below this value unless your soul switches from Attricana to the negative energies of Ixindar (see **Corruption**). If you switch to Ixindar, you lose your spirit animal. Whether you regain it if you switch back is up to the animal.

Spirit Animal: You gain an animal companion utilizing the Druid's Nature Bond ability.

The animal that joins its spirit to another is not a normal creature. It materializes beside its compatriot, never venturing far, never getting lost, and always appearing in places it could never be. It finds its way into bedrooms, out of jail cells, and can find its bonded ally from anywhere on the planet.

At first, the animal is dream-like, only appearing to the mortal. With time and meditation can one pull the animal into the real world. The bonded animal is thought to be either a physical manifestation of the person's soul or a spirit from the magical realm, the dream-like expanse that flows from Attricana and covers the globe.
This spirit guide has its own personality and is not a slave. It will depart forever if abused. Often enough, the spirit tags along as a loyal pet, unassuming and innocent. It appears well trained and docile unless it feels the fear of its bondmate. Although the two cannot communicate through speech, they are able to detect each other's moods and emotions. Neither spirit nor bondmate would ever abandon the other unless their partner ordered them to.

SQUIRE OF ABRAHAM

Trait: Regional
Prerequisites: Choose any religion, from Abidan

BENEFITS

Devout: You gain Knowledge (religion) as a class skill and gain a +1 trait bonus in it.

Skill Bonuses: You gain a +2 trait bonus to Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate.

Started Young: Select one one-handed martial weapon and one suit of armor. You are proficient in

both. You can EITHER increase the max Dex bonus of the armor by 1 OR reduce the arcane spell failure chance by 20%.

Abidan is the religious nexus of Canam, a nation where its constitution demands freedom of religion for all. Unlike the nation of Trinitas on the other side of the planet, Abidan's government is committed to a rejection of theocracy even as it embraces faith as a core value. Nevertheless, it does maintain a dedicated order of holy knights, an order known across the land for humility and valor. This is the Line of Abraham, the envy of every apprentice in the kingdom. A knight fights only when necessary. They carry a strict faith in themselves or in the religion they are associated with and swear absolute loyalty to that devotion and its tenets. They believe the shields of truth and virtue protect better than any armor forged by man. A potential squire is selected young and trained alongside a great knight for many years, well into adulthood. Some of the most respected soldiers in the Janoahn army are still awaiting approval into the line. Eventually, one is asked to take a personal crusade—to find a personal truth and to discover one's soul in the exploration of the outside world. Only when students feel the path directs them home do they finally do so, in hopes of being accepted in the order. To be of this group is not to be some church bound priest or a zealot screaming from a soapbox. This devout disciple has taken it upon herself to preach the word of god to the unbeliever while also defending the tenets of faith against the heathen and infidel. This champion could be a crusader to inspire the masses, marching along the front line of an army, motivating troops and rousing faith in the cause. A crusader loves preaching the power of faith, usually reserving such displays for when potential combat occurs. Crusaders often lead charges, standing proud, commanding holy warriors into battle, and further solidifying their status among the others. Crusaders hope for the day when they control armies of their own. This champion could also be a fanatic. Fanatics think of nothing other than upholding their faith against the heathens of the world. They may even subscribe that redemption falls only to the worthy. A truly noble fanatic wishes to help the needy but believes destroying one's enemy is the best way to accomplish that.

Finally, the champion could be a missionary. These followers of the faith don't consider themselves extremists. They seldom enlist others for the glory of combat and rarely join an army bent for war. Surprisingly though, missionaries handle themselves almost or equally well in situations where they must protect themselves or those who need defending. Their calling forces them from the church to venture as nomads – with or without the assistance of other missionaries – into the wilderness of the outside world. There, they would not seek the believers but the doubtful. One would appear not as the prancing paladin marching proud and tall, but as a simple follower, wise beyond their years.

Missionaries frequently approach areas of need and depart without ever expressing a belief or preaching a cause. In their eyes, being loyal by the doctrine of their faith and helping those less fortunate, even to the point of raising weapons against evil, comes before attempting to preach to the potentials. They neither require conversion as a prerequisite for offering wisdom or assistance nor agreement with their beliefs as a condition for friendship and loyalty. They help first. Almost all settlements welcome the missionary. Of course, fanatics and paladins may enter claiming the same title. The missionary is well educated and survives alone in the dangers of the wild when others run screaming or die in the cold.

Regardless of the result, some squires never return, finding a calling far more important—a calling only a god could bestow. A few do return, shaped by the world into an either a broken soul bent for drunken tavern tales of better times or a noble knight of the Line of Abraham.

SWORN HAND OF VENGEANCE

Trait: Discipline
Prerequisites: None

BENEFITS

Sworn Enemy: Choose one of the following creatures: evil dragons, boggs, humans, kodiaks, pagus, puggs, shemjaza, skeggs. Against creatures of this type, you gain a +2 trait bonus to attack rolls until the first time you hit one at the start of combat. The first target hit takes 1d6 extra damage.

Childhood can often be a wondrous time. For an unfortunate few, like yourself, it is the source of unrelenting trauma. This nightmare could have occurred while still clinging onto your mother's hand, or the mental and physical scars could have been set later. Something no one should ever have to experience recurs every evening when you close your eyes. A hand came down and destroyed everything you had. They wiped out every family member, maybe friends, or perhaps an entire village. This could have been a surgical raid or a random act of passing bloodshed. Maybe you were on hand to witness the carnage, pushed under a bed or dropped in a basket. Perhaps you arrived too late, ready for a fight, only to be tasked to digging graves. As the lone survivor, you think of nothing else but revenge to placate the nightly terrors.

This rage is not intended for a specific nation, king, or thug. Retaliation is unfocused, intended for an entire species. This world is populated by tremendous evil, minions of a gauntlet of shadow that stretch slowly over the land. When violent opposition presents itself, you will act without thinking and not stop until your enemies lie dead, in hopes the nightmares will cease.

TASKIN-KADA WATCHER

Trait: Regional

Prerequisite: From Taskin-Kada

BENEFITS

Double Take: Once a day, you can re-roll a Perception, Sense Motive, and Sleight of Hand roll if you don't like your first result. You must take the second result.

Patterns in Chaos: You gain a +1 trait bonus to Perception, Sense Motive, and Sleight of Hand.

Taskin-Kada, a respected city in Abidan, developed a counter-intelligence group for the express purpose of maintaining surveillance on potential enemies, and occasionally, potential allies. This gave rise to the watchers, an echelon of individuals trained in the art of stealth to rival even the assassins from Baruch Malkut. The watchers are not spies but observers. They never steal anything other than the unaltered history revealed before their eyes. With a reputation for honesty and accuracy, the word of a watcher carries weight in an Abidan court. Among other accomplishments, that reputation allowed the organization to expose corruption within a trading guild in Sclavia and recover Savarice's pilfered holy blade when stolen by thieves under blessing of Darius Konig. When the watchers are not observing within the kingdom, the majority are committed to external actions, dealing with neighbors both friendly and hostile. Dozens patrol lands north of the Tethuss Bridge, a necessary task though it costs the most lives. The majority of them travel south, to watch the nation of Baruch Malkut. Despite the impressive distance between the two nations, and the fact that several other kingdoms lie in between, Savarice never forgot his experiences near that land and considers the rival nation the greatest threat to Canam, more so than the pagus to the north. Taskin-Kada took an especially vested interest in Baruch Malkut. Home to the largest single Jewish population in Canam, Taskin-Kada despises the use of Hebrew words as a name for one of the most malevolent nations on Earth.

As a member, you can either be tasked by a secret mission or be one that has left the order for personal reasons. Your specialty deals with espionage in other nations and you are not cut for dungeons, though you would not be frightened by the concept.

VIVICATOR

Trait: Supernatural. This selection counts as two traits.

Prerequisite: None

BENEFITS

Skill Synergy: You gain a +1 trait bonus to Heal.

Hand of the Unspoken: You gain access to the cleric's Healing Domain (even if you are not a cleric). See the PATHFINDER RPG for information on the Healing Domain. You gain both the granted powers and the domain spell for 1st level as if you were a cleric of equal level (additional spells from the domain require feats). You are not required to pick a deity. All your spells require somatic component to function.

Touched by Light: By default, you are tied to the white gate of Attricana. Your saturation value is 20 which can never drop below this value unless your soul switches from Attricana to the negative energies of Ixindar (see **Corruption**). If you switch to Ixindar, you lose all vivicator abilities until you switch back to Attricana. As an option, you can choose to be tied to the black gate of Ixindar. If so, your corruption value becomes 20, your saturation point becomes 0, and you must have the Lawful Evil alignment. In this state, you do not disrupt technology. If bound to Ixindar, you gain access to the cleric's Death Domain instead of Healing. You gain both the granted powers and the domain spell for 1st level as if you were a cleric of equal level (additional spells from the domain require feats).

Regardless of magic, despite position or lineage, death is still certain. Almost everyone believes that souls continue past their mortal prison. While some believe the spirit rises to an afterlife, others affirm that the soul recycles from animal to animal, only occasionally being blessed into one of higher intelligence. Some religions forbid the interrupting of this process for any reason. Forcing a spirit back to its original body interrupts the fate written for that soul when God blessed that baby emerging from the womb. This never stops the obsessed and the mournful from attempting any course of action to bring someone back from the dead.

Those that claim to be blessed with magic from their deity cannot prove their gift came from any divine power. In the end, most are con men or take shortcuts to a god via some proven magic from an ungodly source. Stories began circulating in the past centuries of aberrations of magic, more so than the already numerous oddities covering the globe. These are creatures of higher intelligence gifted with a powerful magic with apparently no source or explanation. Several monsters already flaunt powerful magic, but these are limited to less potent spells. No magical beast can spontaneously bring the dead back to life. How is it then that a few humans and fae have been rumored to be able to generate great magic with no source? Some of these gifted individuals stumbled upon this talent in childhood. Most lose control of their power, killing themselves and, unfortunately, others in the process. Some are murdered by a fearful public, declaring the youths servants of darkness. A modicum hid their powers, turning to clerical and arcane studies to master and mask their ability with the accepted arts. No one would question how one spell is cast differently than others. This leaves a minute group that live their lives possessing a single immense power: the ability to manipulate the very essence of life, to heal or to harm. Casting it always comes with a heavy internal price,

resulting in the eventual death of the user if the ability is abused.

A few have taken to being regular healers with no sworn deity with an uncanny ability to lift those from near death. All keep this power from the public eye, offering it in private to a select few with desperate causes or deep pockets. Most aware of the legends refuse to acknowledge these aberrations exist, for a hermit with life's dedication to his god could commit as great a power as the head priest of a temple. But what of the story of the child with a gift which could only be from a god? Echalogians believe this gift is the result of magical saturation. Since more humans are emerging with this power than fae, some echalogians speculate that mankind is undergoing a similar change as the fae, but in much more positive ways. The knowledge of these beings is kept silent and the majority of the world is unaware of their existence.

Though some claim to be gifted by a god or gods, there are others that boast the same abilities with no such faith.

Aiden was about to say I understand, but he didn't. Why was it that way? Why were there walls around the city? Why did the mere presence of dragon make his watch stop? Aiden remembered books about the kid that discovered he was a demigod, or an heir to a kingdom, or a member of a secret order, or a wonder child with a wand. That's what he wanted; those characters never had to give anything up. He wanted his fantasy. "I don't like this place. I prefer the world I read about."

"Why?" Chen answered.

"Because…I don't know…because it's different, because it's amazing. Because…" Aiden felt a drop run out of his nose. He sniffed it up quickly and swallowed. "Because my mother made it sound so wonderful." Aiden held back a tear. "And I want my dreams to be real."

Chen placed his hand gently on Aiden's shoulder and a tear finally broke free from his eye. "If you run from a life, running will be your life. A fulfilling existence is defined by moving towards something, not away from it. You can read about that world for as long as you like, but I can't let you make that decision."

"Isn't it mine to make?"

Chen nodded. "But you need to know why you make it...and now's not that time."

Aiden's shoulders slumped and he tried to hold back in his emotions. He threw Chen's arm away and bolted for the door. He didn't look back. Aiden wanted to abandon his normal life, the one filled boring classes, imposing bullies, overbearing brothers, and callous gods, a life commonplace in the real world. He wanted to be like the characters he read about, like the computer avatar he controlled, someone of consequence, with a life ending in a happily ever after, not a number on a marble cover wedged alongside hundreds of others in a mausoleum.

Aiden slammed the gate open, and it ricocheted off the concrete wall. He was too angry and confused to be frightened of switching stations or running down streets with inadequate lighting. He darted across intersections without alerting the crosswalks and ducked into darkened paths between buildings to shortcut his return home. All the while he thought of what could be out there. He imagined the dragons, the fae, the princesses, and the possibilities that, until now, had only existed in fiction. Out there was everything he could not be in here.

• • •

Aiden returned only minutes before sunrise. The door to the apartment didn't creak. He snuck into his room and navigated around the unpacked boxes. The moon was about to fall under the crown. Aiden slipped under the sheets and closed his eyes. Despite being tired, he opened them moments later and rolled back to see Martin's still empty bed. Aiden moved his attention to the window, to the setting moon and its companion, to that one bright star floating near the lunar horn.

Attricana.

It wasn't a star but a hole in the cosmos, a door to another place. From it flowed the chaos that shaped a new world while destroying the old one.

Aiden closed his eyes and dreamt, though not of dragons and elves, of knights and wizards. He dreamt of his mother.

• • •

Aiden looked at the passing businessmen, politicians, policemen, and teachers. They all knew. Maybe not of magic and monsters, but they'd known enough and hadn't told him. They didn't care. They didn't want to know, to be reminded about what wasn't normal. Children played the games. They dreamt. The avatars they took on in the digital world offered them the role they could never fulfill in life. Aiden looked over his classmates and wondered how many of their dreams had been denied.

"Computer programmer!" William shouted. Aiden realized that the books given to him were old and worn for a reason. No one wrote these stories anymore. No one wanted to be reminded about what they had lost.

"Nice, Jeffery. Lara?" Sensei asked. Aiden wondered why his mother had made the exception. Why did she tell him those stories, search for that rare freeware?

"An architect," Lara answered.

"Good, that's productive, Aiden?"

Weeks before, Aiden had been daydreaming of riding dragons and rescuing princess, engrossed in forgetting the world around him. Now he wanted to know everything, every why and every how. Leach didn't repeat himself; he leaned in to force Aiden's attention.

"Hmm?" Aiden responded, oblivious to the subject. The class never taught him what he really wanted to know. He learned it because society expected him to, because he was adept at it, because eventually childhood must end. But fantasies were now fact, and Aiden could learn of that without the mockery of embracing a dream.

Leach was about to scold him again, but stopped. "What do you want to do when you're older?"

"What I want?" Aiden almost mumbled.

"Yes...I mean we have an architect, programmer, doctor." He pointed to another child. "A janitor for some reason. What do you want to be?"

Aiden thought it over. He didn't care how the class would react. "I want...to be a wizard."

The students looked to him. A few chuckled. William gritted his teeth. He had been warned to keep quiet. "A...wha…Aiden." the teacher stuttered. Leach could piece together in an instant what thoughts had been circling like a maelstrom in Aiden's mind.

"Yes," Aiden answered.

"Why?"

Aiden tried to think of a better answer but his mind had been fixated on the how, not the why, so no better answer slipped out. "Because I can," he said.

• • •

Martin was leaning on a railing outside of Aiden's school as his little brother ran out.

"All good?" Martin asked. Aiden nodded. Martin led his brother away. He took the responsibility seriously, checking traffic and passersby.

"Aiden!" Lara shouted from a playground. The brothers noticed and stopped. "We're playing at the grounds, wanna come?"

Aiden looked back to Martin with his doe eyes on cue. "Yeah...it's ok?" Martin answered. Aiden smiled and hobbled with his heavy bag to the girl. "Be home by 4:00," he added. "Go nowhere else!"

Aiden finally turned back and waved. "Thanks, Marty!" he shouted. Martin watched them approach the swings with other children. Aiden placed his bag on the sand. When Martin was satisfied that Aiden wasn't walking into a bully trap, he continued walking. When he was out of sight, Aiden immediately turned to Lara.

"Thanks Lara," Aiden said, picking his bag back up and strapping it to his back for the long haul.

"You are invited," she answered.

"Thanks...I know." Aiden made for a nearby path that bisected two houses and led back to a main road.

"Where are you going?" she asked.

Aiden stopped and turned back. "Better you don't know."

"You're weird, Aiden."

"Thanks." He smiled. He stepped away to the path but kept looking at her. "Lara? Do you know about what's beyond the city?"

"Past the wall?" she asked. Aiden nodded. "It's wild and dangerous. Why?"

"No reason," Aiden replied, turned and upgraded his walk to a run as he reached the path.

• • •

David Chen held a paper bag of various fruits, purchased from Genai farms, grown under sunlight with rain fallen from clouds. They weren't genetically modified replicas designed to be cultivated in foreign environments. They weren't grown in atmospheric controlled multi-leveled greenhouses. The shop was still open, being tended by Chen's single employee, a fifteen-year-old Asian girl with trimmed straight black hair, oversized glasses, a long neck and a chest as flat as Ganymede--moon or myth. As Chen approached the open gate with his groceries, he heard Aiden's shout behind him.

"I don't want to be what they tell me!"

Aiden had gotten his attention. Chen turned around.

"Pardon?" Chen asked.

"I don't want to be like them, like my brother!"

"There are many things you can do to be different, Aiden."

"I want to be what I want!" Every sentence got louder. "Why do I have to settle for what they say I can be? I don't have to now! I don't want to be part of this! How can I go back, knowing what I know? I want magic! I want dragons! I want everything they said I couldn't have!"

Chen stepped forward. Aiden had also gotten the attention of Chen's employee, leaning in from her duties to see the commotion. "It will take a long time," Chen answered. "Not all the books were right. It'll be years before you're ready, and it doesn't always take."

"The sooner I start..."

"Even knowing what you'll have to give up. Cars?"

"Don't drive."

"Television?"

"Nothing good on."

"Computers?"

"I play games with magic." Aiden had an answer for everything, he though ahead.

"Refrigerators?" Except that one. "Central heating?" Chen paused and emphasized the next one. "Electricity?"

"Can't I make my own?"

Chen smiled with nod. "Yes, you may actually." He nudged his chin in the direction of the door. "Enter then."

Aiden approached the entrance and noticed the girl staring at him.

"Aiden," Chen said, "this is Min Xia Wen, my employee." The girl waved and Aiden, suddenly revolted by his school clothes, responded bashfully with a nod. Chen motioned Aiden to a desk. "Have a seat."

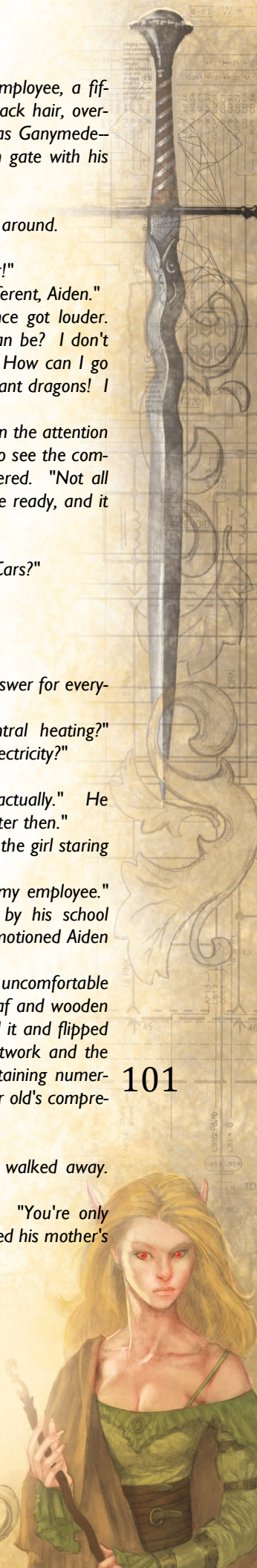
Aiden followed, dangling his legs over the uncomfortable stool. A fifty pound book weighted with gold leaf and wooden toggles slammed onto the desk. Chen unlocked it and flipped a few of the metallic pages. There was no artwork and the phrases were complicated and convoluted, containing numerous syllables with meanings beyond a twelve-year old's comprehension.

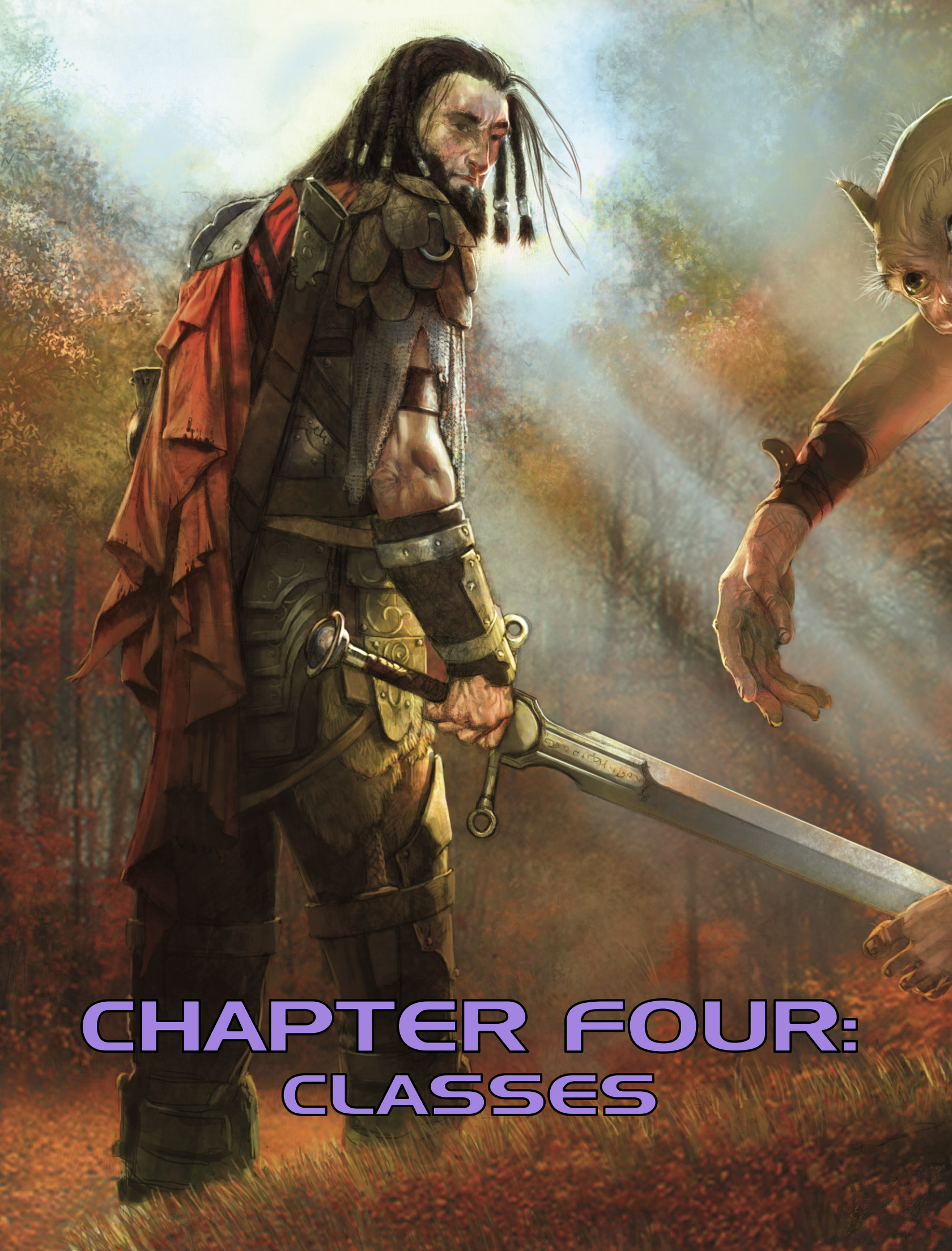
"What's this?" Aiden asked.

"The first of many," Chen answered as he walked away. Aiden shared a look at Min, who shrugged back.

Aiden examined the intimidating hardback. "You're only trapped if you can't find the door," Aiden repeated his mother's passing comment.

Aiden leaned in and began to read.





CHAPTER FOUR: CLASSES

In the fantasy world of *Amethyst*, there are real people and there are heroes, but mostly there are real people. The tales about great warriors are often fictionalized or heavily exaggerated, but often the most unbelievable ones are those that are true. This story is not about the ordinary but the exceptional. The same is true for the world of science. Player characters are those few extraordinary examples of heroism, regardless if they wield a sword or a firearm.

FANTASY CLASSES

The following classes are available from the PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK in a canon *Amethyst* campaign. Some classes have restrictions for selection, also if playing within canon.

Classes Not Considered Canon: Bard, paladin, ranger, sorcerer. Paladins and rangers do exist, but as prestige classes.

Classes Not Listed In The Core Rulebook: With additional books in the PATHFINDER line, certain classes can be considered canon. Any class considered wild or untamed should be limited to chaparran, kodiak, or pagus. Psionics are not allowed in canon *Amethyst*: neither are spellcasters other than the exceptions listed below, unless they function as a variant wizard and are subject to the same restrictions as wizards.

BARBARIAN

(See the PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK)

Requirement: Chaparran, kodiak, or pagus.

CLERIC

(See the PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK)

Requirement: Gneolistic trait.

Spellcasting: All cleric spells require a somatic component and do not require a verbal component. Cleric spells are considered arcane spells rather than divine.

DRUID

(See the PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK)

Requirement: Darawren trait.

Spellcasting: All druid spells require a vocal component and a material component. If the material component is not listed, then it's simple natural components like grass, bark, or soil (materials a druid always has on hand). Druid spells do not require a somatic component. 8th and 9th level spells are not available except as foundation spells (see **Foundation Spells**).

Totem: The druid is actually a spellcaster similar to the wizard, and casts arcane rather than divine spells. Like an arcane wizard, you must select an *arcane bond*, which acts as your totem. You cannot bond to a creature, only to an object. This object is required in hand for all spells. The *arcane bond* and totem are the same thing and the rules regarding the bond also apply to the totem. In *Amethyst*, the totem is limited to a book, orb, staff, weapon, or shield. It cannot be an amulet, ring, or wand (See **Wizard**, below).

FIGHTER

(See the PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK)

MONK

(See the PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK)

ROGUE

(See the PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK)

WIZARD

(See the PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK)

The term 'wizard' covers a wide spectrum of spellcasters and magic users across the world. They may wish to protect good, or destroy everything around. They still, however, follow one common belief: The gates contain unlimited power and sit waiting to be harnessed. Wizards discovered long ago that certain shortcuts exist to channel energies from the gates. It is an almost scientific study of the ways of magic.

Non-human mages revealed that certain words in vocal and written form channel immense power from the gates. This power lay with the dragons for thousands of years before the fae pursued this path. These words, found in the ancient tongue of the first language ever spoken, Pleroma, have been described as the base code of the universe: the word is the thing, and the thing is the word. A wizard must first understand how the word works in all ways by contemplating it in every dimension (quite literally – both written and spoken Pleroma extend into four dimensions), absorbing its meaning into his or her soul. Wizards all share a common desire to study the behavior of these ancient words and discover new ways to utilize their potential. The books of a spell caster reflect this wish. The bigger the library, the greater the understanding the wizard possesses of the arcane arts.

A mage need not be completely fluent in Pleroma to use this power, of course, since it defies human and even fae psychology to truly master it: instead, each mage is bound to a totem, a metaphysical cheat sheet that helps them visualize the multi-dimensional script that makes up a spell formula. The final key to the spell is the power word. The mage inscribes the word on his totem and memorizes it. When the mage speaks that word, the energy channels through the totem and the spell is cast. Each spell resembles a different symbol or sets of symbols, depending on the complexity or power from the spell – to those without understanding, they are meaningless squiggles, but to the arcane adept they leap from the totem's surface, glittering in three dimensions and extending backward and forward in time. The most common focus totem is the spellbook; however, different cultures favor different totems. Nevertheless, each totem is unique to the caster – what precise form it takes and how mundane or extravagant it looks depends on the staidness or flamboyance of the wizard.

Certain high-level spells are so rare they can only be found inscribed on unique items spread around the world. Sometimes, wizards must quest for them as others would quest for magic weapons. A wizard's honor insists these items either remain in their location or be taken to Kirjath-Sepher, Limshau, or some other protected vault for storage.

Magic stems from one of two sources. One choice comes from Attricana, the other from Ixindar. Where Attricana is chaotic and whimsical, Ixindar is never-changing and uniform. There is little flash with Ixindar magic. It is also a corrupting force, whispering new thoughts and ideas into its caster. It's not a healthy option for heroic characters, but it does offer a variety of different abilities and powers, not the least of which is the replication of magic without disruption.

ALTERATIONS

Wizards in *Amethyst* do undergo a few changes. These include expanded armor and weapon use as well as the inclusion of totem magic.

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: Along with all the proficiencies listed, Wizards also gain proficiency with all light armor. Since no wizard spells require somatic components, you can cast spells in armor without worrying about arcane spell failure. Wizards are also proficient with any weapon they use as their totem (if their totem is a weapon).

Arcane Bond / Totem Magic: Wizards in *Amethyst* do not bond to a creature (familiars); they can only bond to an object. This object is their totem, which they must have in hand in order to cast spells. The *arcane bond* and totem are the same thing and the rules regarding the bond also apply to the totem. In *Amethyst*, the totem is limited to a book, orb, staff, weapon, or shield. It cannot be an amulet, ring, or wand.

An *Amethyst* wizard cannot cast spells without his totem, but he does gain a +4 bonus to his combat maneuver defense against being disarmed or sundered. Replacing a destroyed totem takes longer than a traditional *arcane bond*, as all the activation words have to be etched on it again.

Book: The most common totem on Earth is the book. It is the most powerful totem and the easiest to master. Schools dot the planet dedicated to this belief. More wizards use book totems than any other. Limshau employs them almost exclusively: all damaskan mages trained in a Koana academy use the book, and as most human mages learn their craft from Limshau, the tendency has carried over. They believe that power from Attricana and Ixindar has its own rules and is not random, which means it can be eventually understood. All mages carry books, but the final Pleroma power words rest inscribed in the book wizard's totem. When you cast a spell, it emanates from your hands, not your book. A few cautious wizards have even strapped their books to their belt to grab at a moment's notice while keeping their hands otherwise free.

Because book wizards study the science of magic more intently than any other wizard, you gain a +1 bonus to Knowledge (arcane).

Orb: The orb is an uncommon choice for most fae and is often found with wizards practicing the darker side of magic, the energy tied to the polar power of Ixindar. Orbs are also strongly associated with illusion

and mind control magics, which most Limshau wizards consider, if not taboo, at least bad taste. Occasionally, a few tenenbri have been seen using an orb, but this choice is seen predominantly with negative casters or with humans that come about their training from a less than respectable source.

Shield: Although wizards cannot use armor as a totem, they can choose a shield. The symbols usually start on the inside, but as the wizard learns more spells, they must eventually cover the front as well. The narros are regarded as the instigators of this totem, and only they and the occasional human mage use it.

If you choose a shield, you gain proficiency with it but only with this specific shield (if you choose a light shield, it's only this light shield and no other light shields you find along the way). The shield must be a light or heavy shield, and can only be constructed of light steel, wood, magnarros, coruthil, or angelite. Like all arcane bonds, the shield may be enchanted.

Staff: Outside of the book, the staff is one of the most common totems used, being the oldest known application of the craft. Many less civilized communities capable of competent wizardry often use it. A staff also remains popular with the traveling wizard, as it's less clumsy and can easily be disguised as a walking stick. Staff totem mages continue to stay fashionable with many fae races, especially chaparrans and laudenians, the latter admitting the efficacy of no other totem except for the rare laudenian sword mage.

Weapon: Although choosing a weapon seemingly appears without penalty, the benefits are double-edged. First, weapons have the smallest available surface area of any totem, limiting the number of spell triggers that can be encoded on it. Additionally, wizards with weapon totems often have a need to wield them in combat despite never being able to match a fighter on even ground. This does not stop a large number of wizards from using weapons, chiefly those for whom magic is a tool rather than an art. Of course, Narros and tenenbri argue about who developed it first. Narros began with the shield but claim the transition to weapon was an obvious one while the tenenbri maintain they hold the sole claim on the weapon totem. Complicating the matter further is a small tradition of laudenian sword mages who argue that *they* originated the practice. Many human cultures embrace the weapon totem as well.

If you choose a weapon, you gain proficiency with the weapon but only with this specific weapon (if you choose a longsword, it's only this specific longsword and no other longswords you find along the way). The weapon can only be one of the following: Gauntlet, longsword, rapier, scimitar, quarterstaff, warhammer, greataxe, greatsword, lance, longbow, or scythe. The weapon must be composed mostly of wood and/or steel (or magnarros, coruthil, or angelite). The item may be enchanted later.

Arcane School: Certain schools are more popular than others across the world, while one is not available at all. In Limshau, for example, most of the schools are dedicated to abjuration, evocation, transmutation, or universal. In Salvabrooke, illusion is virtually exclusive. However, there are no schools bound to Attricana in Canam that teach spells from the Necromancy school (see **Ixindar Spells**).

Spells: All arcane/wizard spells require a verbal component and do not use somatic components, though they may still require a material component (indicated by the spell entry). As such, wizard spells provoke no arcane spell failure when wearing armor.

Most wizards are bound to Attricana for their spells and as such, there are limitations about what they can cast. Wizards cannot cast any 8th or 9th level spells without first acquiring the appropriate foundation anchor: all 8th and 9th level arcane spells in *Amethyst* are fused to these artifacts, which must be acquired and bonded to before being able to cast the spell, regardless of the wizard's spell level (see **Foundation Spells**).

TECHAN CLASSES

Techan classes are cut from a different cloth from traditional fantasy roles. Where one group stumbles into each other after a round of mead in a dingy tavern, techan parties have usually trained together as a cohesive unit long before attempting a voyage in the wastelands. A techan party must operate as cohesive unit, remaining in contact and providing support. They can't act selfishly or abandon their comrades in need. In the middle of battle, their loyalty is not for their government or for the coins in their purse, but for the brothers and sisters alongside them in the thick of combat. Techans have no healing magic, no elemental control over water or air, no symbiosis or sympathy from the surrounding environment. When in open echa, they are foreigners at best, unwelcome invaders at worst. In order to survive, they must form groups, loyal bonds that remain stalwart even in the face of overwhelming horrors.

Of course, many bastion-born take jaunts into echa without fear of reprisal, but tourists stick to the main road and sleep in large caravans escorted by guns and swords, spending most of their time in large cities, safe from the dreadful fiends of fairy tales. Such travelers are naïve, their adventures sanitized, pre-chewed for their consumption to be swallowed easily. A techan party has no such luxuries. They venture in the deep forest, into the darkest dungeons, taking on the worst of horrors. They rescue lost vacationers, scavenge technology, and defend their cities from invading forces on all sides. Techans don't take on these jobs for glory, but out of duty for the bastion where they were born, out of loyalty to another, or for the acquisition of power and wealth.

In this new time in this new world, techans care nothing for gender, race, age, or religion. They don't judge their comrades based on beliefs, preferences, or vices. In the end, they are all human … techan humans, and as members of the true human race, they must work together to push back the wave of

GROUNDER

FRONT GROUNDER

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+2	+2	+0	Fire Support, Recoil Absorption
2	+2	+3	+3	+0	Bonus Feat, Front Line Deployment
3	+3	+3	+3	+1	Brotherhood
4	+4	+4	+4	+1	Fire Support
5	+5	+4	+4	+1	Bonus Feat
6	+6/+1	+5	+5	+2	Brotherhood
7	+7/+2	+5	+5	+2	Fire Support
8	+8/+3	+6	+6	+2	Bonus Feat
9	+9/+4	+6	+6	+3	Brotherhood
10	+10/+5	+7	+7	+3	Fire Support
11	+11/+6/+1	+7	+7	+3	Bonus Feat
12	+12/+7/+2	+8	+8	+4	Brotherhood
13	+13/+8/+3	+8	+8	+4	Fire Support
14	+14/+9/+4	+9	+9	+4	Bonus Feat
15	+15/+10/+5	+9	+9	+5	Brotherhood
16	+16/+11/+6/+1	+10	+10	+5	Fire Support
17	+17/+12/+7/+2	+10	+10	+5	Bonus Feat
18	+18/+13/+8/+3	+11	+11	+6	Brotherhood
19	+19/+14/+9/+4	+11	+11	+6	Fire Support
20	+20/+15/+10/+5	+12	+12	+6	Bonus Feat

enchantment which threatens to drive out mankind's footprint forever.

NON-TECHANS AND TECHAN CLASSES

The military skills of the techan classes are not exclusive to the bastions, although the technology that supports them is. With the GM's permission, an echan human or even a non-human might take a techan class (although only gimfen can fully benefit from such a selection). It should be stressed, however, that such a choice would be highly unusual, and should only occur under exceptional circumstances.

GROUNDER

Grounders in the military are often soldiers, occasionally referred to as grunts. They occupy the largest ratio of the armed forces of any bastion. You stand out from the others. You have exhibited a natural talent that could have paved the way for officer training, but for a variety of reasons, you declined. You prefer to be a member of a team rather than the leader of an army. If you are part of a mercenary company, you could have become disenfranchised, tempted by the offers of wealth, or took on a personal mission that forced you to leave the service.

Although demonstrating some natural leadership skills, your range of authority is usually limited to those brothers-in-arms you can see around you. When the firing starts, you rely on training and inherent reflexes to save yourself and your team. You have embraced this path with a profound gusto. You can handle any weapon and any armor, up to the largest powered suits. You are a grounder, and like the medieval knights of ancient legend (and those that have taken their place today) you are the first and last line of defense. Your rifle is your sword and your faith absolute—faith that the group you have joined operates as a well-oiled machine. And unlike technology, this is not a machine that can be broken by magic.

CREATING A GROUNDER

Grounders fill a variety of roles. You can be the leader or the heavy support. You can target enemies from a distance or get up close. You are only as good as the men and women next to you. The majority of your abilities require the help of others to succeed. Your power is the weapon in your hand and the strength you offer your allies as backup. On your own, you are doomed to fail. Let others deal with objectives while you do the shooting. There are two classes related to the grounder—the front grounder and the heavy grounder.

FRONT GROUNDER

Even if you answer to another authority, when the bullets fly, you act on instinct as part of a unit. You keep your weapons light so you can move without stumbling. You will seldom employ heavy auto weapons and prefer maneuvers to frontal assaults. The majority of your abilities should be ones that assist the group as a whole rather than deliver the maximum damage to a target.

Alignment: Any
Hit Die: d10

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Demolitions (Wis), Engineer (Int), Knowledge (history), Intimidate (Cha), Perception (Wis), Survival (Wis), Vehicle Operation (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all techan armor, all simple melee weapons, all small arms, all heavy weapons, all super heavy weapons, and any two specialty weapons with a tech level equal to or lower than your bastion of origin.

Fire Support (Ex): At 1st level, 4th level, and every three levels after, you can select a Fire Support discipline. There are two to choose from: *assault* or *precision*. By pursuing assault, you favor automatic weapons that fire multiple rounds, increasing damage at the risk of accuracy. By selecting precision, you keep your weapon firing single rounds, ensuring a hit without wasting ammunition. To select a later level discipline, you must possess all the previous levels in that discipline (see **Fire Support Paths**, below).

Recoil Absorption (Ex): At 1st level, when wielding two-handed small arms, heavy weapons, or super heavy weapons, you can use Strength in place of Dexterity for all attack and damage rolls. You can also use Strength in place of Dexterity for determining prerequisites of combat feats.

Bonus Feats: At 2nd level, 5th level, 7th level, 13th level, and 17th level, you gain a bonus feat in addition to those gained from normal advancement. These feats must either be combat/fighter bonus feats or firearm feats. You are counted as a fighter of equal level when selecting fighter bonus feats.

Front Line Deployment (Ex): At 2nd level, you can select one ally in line of sight as a swift action. Until you select another ally or until the target moves out of sight, the targeted ally gains a +1 grounder bonus to AC and Ref saves.

Brotherhood (Ex): At level 3rd level, 6th level, and every four levels after, you can select one of the following brotherhood abilities. These abilities complement the group you are in, rewarding teamwork over selfish ambitions.

Combat Ineffective: If an ally in line of sight is reduced to 0 hit points or fewer, you gain a +2 brotherhood bonus to AC and attack rolls against the creature that hit the ally until the creature is destroyed.

Comrades in Arms: If an ally within 10 feet of you is hit by an attack, you gain a +1 brotherhood bonus to attack rolls against the creature that made that attack until the end of your next turn.

Covering Fire: As a standard action (which provokes opportunity attacks), you can designate one creature within your attack range; all allies in line of sight gain a +2 brotherhood bonus to AC and all saving throws against attacks from the target until the beginning of your next turn.

For the Common Honor: If an ally within 5 feet of you suffers a critical hit, as an immediate action you can swap locations with the ally and suffer the hit and all effects instead.

Jump in Front: If you and at least one ally are struck by an area attack no bigger than 30 feet in radius, as an immediate action you can be targeted by a number of attacks equal to the effect's radius divided by 10 (round up) and your ally/allies are pushed out of the target area.

Man Down: If you are in the same square as a dead, prone, or unconscious ally, the ally cannot be targeted by any ranged or melee attack and automatically passes all Reflex saving throws. The effect ends if the target stands, if you leave the target's square, or if the target makes an attack.

Slow is Smooth: When you use a move action to move, you can reduce your speed by 10 ft and pull one ally within 5 feet with you. You cannot run or perform a special attack that includes movement with this ability.

Snap Out of It: Once a day, you can use a standard action to remove one of the following conditions an ally suffers from: confused, cowering, dazed, exhausted, fascinated, frightened, panicked, shaken, or staggered. You cannot suffer from the same effect if you wish to use this ability.

Toss Clip: You can spend a move action to reload any ally's weapon. The ally must be within 10 feet and you must have the proper ammunition or cell.

FIRE SUPPORT PATHS

ASSAULT

1st Level: Whenever you make a ranged attack with a firearm with the auto/heavy property, you may employ that property to increase your weapon's effect. A weapon with the auto property uses 5 rounds of ammunition per attack roll and a weapon with the heavy auto property uses 10. You inflict additional damage depending on the weapon property.

Auto: +1 class bonus to damage rolls.
Heavy Auto: +2 class bonus to damage rolls.

7th Level: Your bonus to damage improves.
Auto: +2 class bonus to damage rolls.
Heavy Auto: +3 class bonus to damage rolls.

10th Level: Your bonus to damage improves.
Auto: +3 class bonus to damage rolls.
Heavy Auto: +4 class bonus to damage rolls.

13th Level: Your bonus to damage when applying the Auto property improves.

Auto: +4 class bonus to damage rolls.

Heavy Auto: +6 class bonus to damage rolls.

16th Level: Your bonus to damage when applying the Auto property improves.

Auto: +5 class bonus to damage rolls.

Heavy Auto: +8 class bonus to damage rolls.

PRECISION

1st Level: When wielding a two-handed small arm, you do not suffer the -2 penalty to firing while moving.

4th Level: You can take a swift action to gain a +1 insight bonus to all ranged attack rolls with attacks where you don't apply the auto/heavy auto property.

7th Level: If you don't apply the auto/heavy auto property to your ranged attacks and score a critical hit, increase the critical multiplier by 1 (x2 > x3 > x4 > x5).

13th Level: If you don't apply the auto/heavy auto property to your ranged attacks and you score a critical hit, your base damage die increases by two steps (1d4 > 1d6 > 1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12 > 2d6 > 2d8 > 2d10).

16th Level: You gain a +4 insight bonus to your attack roll when attempting to confirm a critical hit.

HEAVY GROUNDER

Your job is not to talk but to deliver maximum stopping power. You wield the heaviest weapons and the heaviest armor. You are also often the slowest. You take orders rather than give them in hopes those orders include the release of hundreds of rounds of ammunition. You will have the most powerful weapons in the entire team and you use them to keep enemies at bay, pinning them and bringing down the largest opponents in the encounter.

Alignment: Any

Hit Die: d10

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Demolitions (Wis), Engineer (Int), Knowledge (history), Intimidate (Cha), Perception (Wis), Survival (Wis), Vehicle Operation (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all techan armor, all simple melee weapons, all small arms, all heavy weapons, all super heavy weapons, and any two specialty weapons with a tech level equal to or lower than your bastion of origin.

Overwatch (Ex): At 1st level, you are able to target large areas in the battlefield and impede enemy advancement. Select a 20 ft radius spread within your weapon's range as a move action. Until the beginning of your next turn, the area is considered difficult terrain to any enemy targets attempting to move through it. If an enemy enters the area, you can make single ranged attack at your highest attack bonus as an immediate action. Employing *overwatch* requires an auto/heavy auto weapon (not set to single-shot) using ammunition equal to a single ranged attack (5 rounds for auto, 10 for heavy auto).

4th Level: The radius increases to 25 ft.

8th Level: The radius increases to 30 ft.

13th Level: The radius increases to 35 ft.

Recoil Absorption (Ex): At 1st level, when wielding two-handed small arms, heavy weapons, or super heavy weapons, you can use Strength in place of Dexterity for all attack and damage rolls. You can also use Strength in place of Dexterity for determining prerequisites of combat feats.

Sure-Footed (Ex): At 1st level, you can select one of the following abilities.

Lumbering—You treat heavy weapons as two-handed small arms for the purposes of attack penalties while moving. This does not apply to super heavy weapons.

Imposing—If you don't move on your turn, you provide cover for all adjacent allies until the beginning of your next turn.

Burst Fire (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, you can make a burst fire attack. As a full-attack action, you can apply the auto/heavy auto property to a weapon you are wielding (which has it) and target all creatures in a 10 ft radius spread within weapon range. All attack rolls suffer a -2 penalty.

6th level: The radius increases to 15 ft.

11th level: The radius increases to 20 ft.

16th level: The radius increases to 25 ft.

Fire Control (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, you can either conserve ammunition or waste it. Select one of the following abilities.

Conserve—When making an attack using the auto/heavy auto property, you only use 3 rounds of ammunition per attack roll instead of 5. Heavy auto weapons always fire 8 (instead of 10).

Expend—When making an attack using the auto/heavy auto property, you use +5 rounds of ammunition per attack roll and gain a +2 class bonus to damage rolls.

Attack of Necessity (Ex): Starting at 3rd level, as a full-attack action, you can apply the auto/heavy auto property to a weapon you are wielding (which has it) and target all creatures in a 15 ft cone centered on you.

7th level: The cone increases to 20 ft.

12th level: The cone increases to 25 ft.

17th level: The cone increases to 30 ft.

Gaming Avatar (Ex): At 5th level, you can select one of the following abilities.

Weapon Slap—If your ranged attack provokes a successful opportunity attack, you can make a melee attack, using your weapon as a club, as an immediate action.

Offload—When making an attack using the auto/heavy auto property, you use +5 rounds of ammunition per attack roll and gain a +2 circumstance bonus to damage rolls.

Shrapnel (Ex): Starting at 9th level, when you hit with a ranged attack using the auto property, one creature adjacent to the target takes damage equal to your Constitution or Intelligence modifier.

HEAVY GROUNDER

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+2	+2	+0	Overwatch, Recoil Absorption, Sure Footed
2	+2	+3	+3	+0	Burst Fire (10 ft), Fire Control
3	+3	+3	+3	+1	Attack of Necessity (15 ft)
4	+4	+4	+4	+1	Overwatch
5	+5	+4	+4	+1	Gaming Avatar
6	+6/+1	+5	+5	+2	Burst Fire (15 ft)
7	+7/+2	+5	+5	+2	Attack of Necessity (20 ft)
8	+8/+3	+6	+6	+2	Overwatch
9	+9/+4	+6	+6	+3	Shrapnel
10	+10/+5	+7	+7	+3	East Target
11	+11/+6/+1	+7	+7	+3	Burst Fire (20 ft)
12	+12/+7/+2	+8	+8	+4	Attack of Necessity (25 ft)
13	+13/+8/+3	+8	+8	+4	Overwatch
14	+14/+9/+4	+9	+9	+4	Easy Target
15	+15/+10/+5	+9	+9	+5	Wildfire Overwatch
16	+16/+11/+6/+1	+10	+10	+5	Burst Fire (25 ft)
17	+17/+12/+7/+2	+10	+10	+5	Attack of Necessity (30 ft)
18	+18/+13/+8/+3	+11	+11	+6	Creeping Overwatch
19	+19/+14/+9/+4	+11	+11	+6	Solid Stance
20	+20/+15/+10/+5	+12	+12	+6	Suppressing Fire

Easy Target (Ex): At 10th level, when targeting a Large or larger creature with a weapon using the auto/heavy auto property, you gain a +1 bonus to damage rolls against the target for every size above Medium the creature is (Large +1, Huge +2, Gargantuan +3, Colossal +4). At 14th level, this damage bonus improves to +2 (Large +2, Huge +4, Gargantuan +6, Colossal +8).

Wildfire Overwatch (Ex): Starting at 15th level, you can use a standard action instead of a move action with *overwatch* and double its area of effect.

Creeping Overwatch (Ex): Starting at 18th level, if you used *overwatch* on your previous turn, you can use a swift action to sustain it without having to use another move action. You can move the area of effect up to 10 feet from its previous location. If you use *creeping overwatch* with *wildfire overwatch*, you can use a move action to sustain it without having to use another standard action.

Solid Stance (Ex): Starting at 19th level, if you are wielding a heavy or super heavy weapon, and as long as you don't move during your turn, you gain a +4 bonus to your combat maneuver defense against bull rush attempts and a +1 insight bonus to AC until the start of your next turn. If you move at all before the start of your next turn, this benefit is lost.

Suppressing Fire (Ex): Starting at 20th level, when you hit a target with a ranged attack using a weapon using the auto/heavy auto property, the target is shaken until the start of your next turn.

MARSHAL

You possess either a natural talent for leadership or have undergone extensive training to deal with stressful situations. You know the dangers that lurk in the open world and can anticipate the actions of your enemies. You went through basic like everyone else but were separated early in life, groomed and greased into an elite commander of war. Whether your troops follow you because of earned respect or because their contracts demand it, you have a duty to do your best for them: poor leadership in the field results in a short lifespan for all involved.

Out of combat, you are often the first and last to speak. You can talk your way out of a situation or be the one to instigate a fight. In the end, the marshal points the way.

CREATING A MARSHAL

As a marshal, you often began your career training to be grounder but moved into a command position either by accident in the field when your commanding officer fell to enemy attack, or by taking classes on how to be someone responsible for a team. Perhaps you have a

MARSHAL

MARSHAL

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+0	+0	+2	+2	Command Presence, For the Good of the Team, Big Picture
2	+1	+0	+3	+3	Command Presence
3	+2	+1	+3	+3	Team Priority
4	+3	+1	+4	+4	Command Presence (+5 feet)
5	+4	+1	+4	+4	Team Priority
6	+5	+2	+5	+5	Command Presence
7	+6/+1	+2	+5	+5	Team Priority
8	+7/+2	+2	+6	+6	Believing Your Own Words
9	+8/+3	+3	+6	+6	Team Priority
10	+9/+10	+3	+7	+7	Command Presence
11	+10/+5	+3	+7	+7	Team Priority
12	+11/+6/+1	+4	+8	+8	Command Presence (+5 feet)
13	+12/+7/+2	+4	+8	+8	Team Priority
14	+13/+8/+3	+4	+9	+9	Command Presence
15	+14/+9/+4	+5	+9	+9	Team Priority
16	+15/+10/+5	+5	+10	+10	Big Picture, No One Hits the Chief
17	+16/+11/+6/+1	+5	+10	+10	Team Priority
18	+17/+12/+7/+2	+6	+11	+11	Command Presence
19	+18/+13/+8/+3	+6	+11	+11	Team Priority
20	+19/+14/+9/+4	+6	+12	+12	Manifestation of Greatness

natural talent for leadership despite being a soldier like the rest. Alternately, you might have been funding the team, so leadership is assumed. Thankfully, you are no rank amateur and have experience dealing with the expected issues of the outside world. You have to be intelligent and adaptive.

Alignment: Any

Hit Die: d8

CLASS SKILLS

Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Heal (Wis), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (history), Linguistics (Int), Perception (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Vehicle Operation (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 6 + Int modifier

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all light and medium techan armor except exo-armor. You also gain proficiency with simple melee weapons, one-handed small arms, and two-handed small arms.

Command Presence (Ex): At 1st level, you can use words and actions to inspire those around you. These come in the form of auras (see **Command Presence Auras**, below). At 1st level, 2nd level, and every four levels after, you may select one of the following auras: *by example*, *field advice*, *intimidating mug*, *mask of authority*, *stand as one*, or *strategic precision*. All auras have a 10 ft radius, increasing to 15 ft at 4th level and 20 ft at 12th level.

You can activate an aura as a swift action, which lasts until you end it as a swift action or until you fall unconscious. In addition, each aura can also be temporarily boosted. You may have multiple auras in effect.

For the Good of the Team (Ex): At 1st level, you can sacrifice your standard action on your turn to give another ally in line of sight a standard action either as an immediate action on your turn or as an additional standard action on his turn. Likewise, you can also sacrifice your move action to give another ally a move action either as an immediate action on your turn or as an additional move action on his turn. Additionally, once per day, you can swap your initiative order with another ally.

Big Picture (Ex): At 1st level, you can use a standard action to boost an ally's effectiveness. One ally in line of sight inflicts extra damage equal to your Wisdom modifier + ½ your level on his next hit. Starting at 16th level, *big picture* is reduced to a move from a standard action.

Team Presence (Ex): Starting at 3rd level and every second level after, you can select one Team Presence

trait.

Boar's Head: If you take a 5-foot step, all adjacent allies can move with you.

Control the Battle Theatre: If you are not flat-footed, any adjacent allies are not as well.

Bring Me Everyone: You can use a standard action to pull all allies in line of sight 20 feet towards you.

Face Slap: Once a day, you can use a move action to wake up one adjacent unconscious ally. If the target was unconscious from being reduced to fewer than 0 hit points, she is healed to 1 hit point.

Focus Target: All allies gain a +1 class bonus to damage rolls against the last opponent you hit.

Mark of the Puppeteer: Any time you or an ally hits with an attack, you can slide that opponent 5 feet, as long as the opponent is not moved into hazardous terrain (like fire or a pit).

Plan of Attack: If an ally in line of sight scores a critical threat, you can give up your next turn to automatically confirm that critical. You cannot use this ability if you have been denied your action in any way or suffer from any condition (like dazed, staggered, or stunned).

Quick Patch: As many times a day as your Wisdom modifier, you can use a full-round action to administer aid to an ally, curing them of 2d8 damage. You can select this trait multiple times, increasing the damage cured by 1d8 each time (max 6d8).

Reading Body Language: You gain a +4 class bonus to Bluff, Diplomacy, Perception, or Sense Motive. You can select this trait multiple times, selecting a different skill each time.

Set An Example: You and all allies in line of sight gain a +3 class bonus to Survival to stay alive in any harsh environment.

Take it up a Notch: Use a move action to increase any *command presence* auras in effect by 10 feet until the start of your next turn. You can only use this ability once per round.

Warrior's Creed: Allies within 5 feet of you gain a +1 class bonus to AC and Will Saves.

Believing Your Own Words (Ex): Starting at 8th level, all your Command Presence auras that affect allies affect you as well.

No One Hits the Chief (Ex): Starting at 16th level, all allies in your line of sight gain a +2 class bonus to attack any creature that hits you with an attack that does not target at least one other ally.

Manifestation of Greatness (Ex): Starting at 20th level, all allies within 5 feet of you can reroll all natural 1s on attack rolls.

COMMAND PRESENCE AURAS

By Example: You don't keep back and order from a distance; you stand shoulder to shoulder with those you lead.

Effect: Allies in range gain a +2 morale bonus to Fort saves and Will saves.

Exemplary Example: Once a day, select one opponent in line of sight as a swift action. Until that opponent is destroyed (or five minutes), all allies in range gain a +1 morale bonus to AC.

Stage 2: You can select this aura a second time. If you do, the Fort and Will bonuses increase to +3 and the bonus to AC increases to +2.

Field Advice: Using only your words, you call your comrades back from the most harmful of afflictions.

Effect: Allies in range cannot suffer from being shaken or staggered.

Profound Advice: Once a day, select one ally and one opponent in range as a swift action. Until the opponent is destroyed (or five minutes), the targeted ally is immune to one of the following conditions: fatigued, shaken, sickened, dazed, staggered, exhausted, frightened, blinded, deafened, paralyzed or stunned.

Stage 2: You can select this aura a second time. If you do, allies are also immune to being dazed as well, and you can select two allies with *profound advice* instead of one.

Intimidating Mug: Opponents take one look at you and begin to rethink their approach.

Effect: All enemies treat the area as difficult terrain.

Menacing Mug: Once a day, select one opponent in line of sight as a swift action. Until that opponent is destroyed (or five minutes), all command presence auras you have in effect (not just *intimidating mug*) increase their range by 10 ft.

Stage 2: You can select this aura a second time. If you do, you increase the range to 20 ft, and you can use *menacing mug* twice a day.

Mask of Authority: Your friends believe themselves better knowing you are around.

Effect: All allies in range gain a +2 morale bonus to damage rolls.

Personification of Authority: Once a day, select one opponent in line of sight as a swift action. Until that opponent is destroyed (or five minutes), if an ally in range misses with an attack roll against the target, he gains a +1 bonus on his next damage roll. This is cumulative up to +4 and is lost after he hits with an attack.

Stage 2: You can select this aura a second time. If you do, you increase the damage bonus to +3.

Stand as One: As long as you stand, no one falls.

Effect: All allies in range gain DR1/-

Brotherhood: Once a day, select one opponent in line of sight as a swift action. Until that opponent is destroyed (or five minutes), increase the DR by 2.

Stage 2: You can select this aura a second time. If you do, you increase the base DR to DR2/-

Strategic Precision: You lead the attack, drawing allied fire to your target.

Effect: All allies in range gain a +1 morale bonus to attack rolls against the last target you hit.

Strategic Superiority: Once a day, select one opponent in line of sight as a swift action. Until that opponent is destroyed (or five minutes), all allies in range can take a 5 ft step as a swift action as long as the movement ends within range of the aura.

Stage 2: You can select this aura a second time. If you do, you increase the attack bonus to +2.

OPERATOR

The jack-of-all-trades – the techan group will be hard pressed to survive without their operator. The operator is a vital member, especially as a group ventures deeper and deeper in the world of fantasy. You find the outside world fascinating, but are not one to forget the damage it has done to your species and their legacy. The progress of man has faltered and you strive to get it back.

But to destroy a thing, you must understand a thing. You refuse to turn a blind eye to that world, for naiveté is a sure path to death. Just shooting stuff that doesn't conform is a sign of archaic military monsters. True survival deals with mankind's unique ability to adapt, to understand the ways and flaws of a system. As an expert in this world, you know how to survive in it, but more importantly, you know how to survive in it without magic.

You don't specialize in one talent but many. You are the linguist, the mechanic, the medic, and the professor rolled into one. You understand the relationship between magic and technology and can repair the results when they clash. You have seen the types of injuries sustained on human flesh by the claws and spells of monsters and the conditions other doctors would scratch their heads over. You know more about the regions and monsters of the world than any other. Of all the members of a techan group, you are probably the only one that could survive on your own—not that you would want to.

CREATING AN OPERATOR

The operator is the foremost authority on the outside world and its effects on man and machinery. You have studied echa and know it as well as anyone that has spent their entire life out there. Unlike others, you may not have the fevered hatred of the world of fantasy. You have been accused of being a sympathizer, but one must know an enemy in order to defeat it. You address this with two possible approaches. One is to support the group as a doctor and the other is to maintain the technological supremacy of the team as a whole. There are two classes related to the operator—the mechanic and the medic.

MECHANIC

As a mechanic, you made your choice. You prefer air conditioning, the internet, and machines that automatically wash dishes. You wish to keep the technology of man from breaking down in the unreality of the fantasy world. You have learned enough of the chaos of outside life to know a few tricks to keep technology from going on the fritz the moment it leaves the walls of a bastion. You can keep machinery working and clear up jams when they occur.

Alignment: Any

Hit Die: d8

CLASS SKILLS

Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disable Device (Dex), Demolitions (Int), Engineer (Int), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (history) (Int), Knowledge (sciences) (Int), Linguistics (Int), Perception (Wis), Profession (Wis), Sciences (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Vehicle Operation (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 7 + Int modifier

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all light and medium techan armor except exo-armor. You are also proficient with all small arms (one-handed & two-handed) and all simple melee weapons.

Flash of Genius (Ex): At 1st level, while you are wielding a small arm, you can use Intelligence in place of Dexterity for all attack and damage rolls. You can also use Intelligence in place of Dexterity for determining prerequisites of combat feats.

Shiny Red Button (Ex): At 1st level, you put a button on your firearm. You can press the button as a free action. You only need eight hours of work to put the button on a new firearm but only you can press it without breaking the weapon.

- If you press the button before the attack roll, do not roll: you automatically hit.
- If you press it after you hit, the target takes additional damage equal to ½ your level + your Intelligence modifier.
- If you press it after a critical threat, you automatically confirm the critical hit.
- You can press the button four times a day at 1st level. You gain additional uses at later levels. You can only press the button once per round.

3rd Level: You can press the *shiny red button* six times per day but only once per turn.

7th Level: You can press the *shiny red button* eight times per day but only once per turn.

11th Level: You can press the *shiny red button* ten times per day but only once per turn.

15th Level: You can press the *shiny red button* twelve times per day.

19th Level: You can press the *shiny red button* fourteen times per day.

Tech Savant (Ex): At 1st level you gain the ability to permanently modify the weapon and armor under your control. Choose two of the following traits. You can only have one in effect at a time, and they can be activated or deactivated with a swift action. At 9th level at 14th level, you gain one additional trait. At 17th level, you can use two traits simultaneously (though each must be activated separately).

Charge Shot: Each time you hit a Medium or smaller target with a ranged weapon, you push it 5 feet. If the target cannot be pushed, it is staggered until the start of your next turn. You can only push a target 5 feet per turn at 1st level, 10 feet per turn at 10th level, and 15 feet per turn at 20th level.

OPERATOR

Constant Adjustment: Your gear gains a +3 insight bonus to disruption saves, and you can make disruption saves at the start of your turn as well as at the end. Each ally in line of sight gains a +1 insight bonus to disruption saves. At 10th level, you gain a +5 insight bonus to disruption saves, and your allies gain a +2 insight bonus to disruption saves.

Economical Plating: You gain a +1 class bonus to AC and Ref saves. You do not grant flanking bonuses to opponents

Improved Precision: You gain a +1 class bonus to ranged attack rolls and a +2 class bonus to ranged attack rolls against all creatures within 20 ft.

Modified Caliber/Output: All your ranged attacks gain a +2 class bonus to damage rolls against targets within your weapon's first range increment. At 7th level, this increases to +3 and at 14th level, it increases to +4.

Widget Bag (Ex): At 1st level, you can use widgets to

MECHANIC

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+0	+0	+2	+2	Flash of Genius, Overdrive, Shiny Red Button, Tech Savant, Widget Bag
2	+1	+0	+3	+3	Improved Repertoire, Midas Touch
3	+2	+1	+3	+3	Shiny Red Button
4	+3	+1	+4	+4	Midas Touch
5	+4	+1	+4	+4	Strained Effort
6	+5	+2	+5	+5	Disruption Suppression
7	+6/+1	+2	+5	+5	Shiny Red Button
8	+7/+2	+2	+6	+6	Boosted Clip
9	+8/+3	+3	+6	+6	Tech Savant
10	+9/+10	+3	+7	+7	Diligent Repairs
11	+10/+5	+3	+7	+7	Shiny Red Button
12	+11/+6/+1	+4	+8	+8	Midas Touch
13	+12/+7/+2	+4	+8	+8	The Button Beckons You
14	+13/+8/+3	+4	+9	+9	Tech Savant
15	+14/+9/+4	+5	+9	+9	Shiny Red Button
16	+15/+10/+5	+5	+10	+10	The Gum Trick
17	+16/+11/+6/+1	+5	+10	+10	Tech Savant
18	+17/+12/+7/+2	+6	+11	+11	Midas Touch
19	+18/+13/+8/+3	+6	+11	+11	Shiny Red Button
20	+19/+14/+9/+4	+6	+12	+12	Succumb to the Maddening Urge

repair, modify, and create items. You keep pieces handy for on-site repairs. You have enough parts on hand for 200 uc worth of repairs. These parts cannot be sold or traded. They are useless to others. The bag weighs 5 lbs. It cannot be disrupted and the parts work with any device you attempt to repair. You can increase the size of this widget bag later by investing in more widgets. Every 500 uc adds another 1 lb. When you reach 7th level, the bag's weight drops by half and every additional 1,000 uc adds another 1 lb. When you reach 14th level, the bag's weight drops by half again and every 100,000 uc adds another 1 lb. Once invested, you do not get this value back. When you scavenge technology, the GM may award a certain value in uc of additional widgets (see **Engineer**). Widgets count against the total treasure awarded.

Overdrive (Ex): At 1st level, once a day, you can use a standard action to attempt to temporarily overdrive a weapon or device, offering it a quick boost at the sacrifice of its operational lifespan. Select one piece of equipment, make an Engineer check, and consult the following table; you can apply any one modification for which you meet or exceed the DC. The modification lasts for 5 minutes. After the time has expired, you must make another Engineer check against the same DC or the modified item breaks, requiring repairs. If you are unable to make the Engineer check, the item immediately breaks.

BONUS	ENGINEER DC
Ranged weapons	
+1 to damage	20
+2 to damage	27
+3 to damage	37
+15 to long range	20
+30 to long range	27
+50 to long range	37
Electronic Devices	
+1 skill bonus	20
+2 skill bonus	27
+3 skill bonus	37
Vehicles	
+1 to initiative & maneuver	20
+1 to maneuver & speed	25
+2 to maneuver & speed	30
Exo-Armor	
+1 to attack and damage with Melee weapons	25
+2 to attack and damage with Melee weapons	30
+3 to attack and damage with Melee weapons	37

Midas Touch (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, while you are wielding a firearm, its damage die increases by one step (1d4 > 1d6 > 1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12 > 2d6 > 2d8 > 2d10). This stacks with any other effect that increases damage die size.

4th Level: Your damage die bonus improves by one step.

12th Level: Your damage die bonus improves by one step.

18th Level: Your damage die bonus improves by one step.

Improved Repertoire (Ex): At 2nd level, you gain 1 additional class skill.

Strained Effort (Ex): Starting at 5th level, if you fail a skill check, you gain a +5 class bonus to any saving throw until the start of your next turn.

Disruption Suppression (Ex): Starting at 6th level, select one piece of gear in your possession. As long as it remains in your possession, the item cannot be disrupted or broken.

Boosted Clip (Ex): Starting at 8th level, you can modify one clip or cell of a weapon's ammunition (yours or an ally's). This takes 5 minutes and you can only modify one cell/clip a day. The weapon's damage die increases by one step (1d4 > 1d6 > 1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12 > 2d6 > 2d8 > 2d10) when that clip is used.

I Wish to Press It (Ex): Starting at 13th level, you can press the *shiny red button* twice per turn.

Diligent Repairs (Ex): At 10th level, you can administer quick repairs to bring a disrupted piece of technology bank from the brink. As a standard action, target one piece of disrupted equipment within reach. Make an Engineer check at DC15+2/tech level of the target. The target gains a bonus to its disruption save equal the amount by which you beat the DC. This bonus remains until the target recovers. This action provokes opportunity attacks.

The Gum Trick (Ex): Starting at 16th level, once per day as a move action you can grant one piece of equipment one of the following effects:

- A broken item is repaired and cannot be disrupted for 1 hour.
- An unbroken weapon gains a +4 bonus to damage rolls for 1 hour.
- Unbroken powered armor gains a +2 bonus to AC for 1 hour.

Not Sure What Will Happen If I Do (Ex): Starting at 20th level, you gain 1d4 additional uses of the *shiny red button* at the start of each day. These extra uses are gone at the end of the day.

MEDIC

You may be forced into violence, but you are primarily a medic. You know the human body inside and out, and even though they don't make any kind of sense, you've had a fair bit of experience with the insides of fae bodies as well. You consider the lives of your team members more important than any others and will always choose your allies over other injuries on the battlefield. You have no apprehension of firing upon others that threaten your team.

Alignment: Any

Hit Die: d8

CLASS SKILLS

Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disable Device (Dex), Demolitions (Int), Engineer (Int), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (history) (Int), Knowledge (sciences) (Int), Linguistics (Int), Perception (Wis), Profession (Wis), Sciences (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Vehicle Operation (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 7 + Int modifier

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all techan armor except exo-armor. You are also proficient with all small arms (one-handed & two-handed) and all simple melee weapons.

Flash of Genius (Ex): At 1st level, while you are wielding a small arm, you can use Intelligence in place of Dexterity for all attack and damage rolls. You can also use Intelligence in place of Dexterity for determining prerequisites of combat feats.

Medical Expertise (Ex): At 1st level, you are able to aid allies in pinpointing weak spots in enemies based on your own medical knowledge. As an immediate action, you can add your Intelligence or Wisdom modifier as extra damage to a successful attack made by an ally up to 20 ft + 10 ft / level away.

Medical Exploits (Ex): A medic gains exploits he can use each day. Mechanically, these are identical to cleric spells. Exploits require both the use of your hands and appropriate materials to perform. Unlike spells, medical exploits require neither contemplation nor studying each morning; you regain the use of them each day. You can use any exploit on the exploit list, provided that you can use the exploit of that level. You do not need to choose which exploits to prepare each morning. Like spellcasters, you receive bonus exploits per day if you have a high Intelligence score. When the medic table indicates that you get 0 exploits per day of a given spell level, you gain only the bonus exploits you would be entitled to based on your Intelligence score for that exploit level.

Improved Repertoire (Ex): At 2nd level, you gain 1 additional class skill.

Intelligent Resistance (Ex): Starting at 3rd level, you gain a +1 bonus to all saving throws.

Primary Target (Ex): Starting at 4th level, if you make no attacks that can inflict damage on your turn, you gain a +2 class bonus to AC and Ref saves until the start of your next turn.

Risk an Aneurysm (Ex): Starting at 6th level, you can use a move action and suffer 2 points of Constitution damage in order to recover one medical exploit of any level you can use. You must employ that exploit within 1 minute or it is lost.

MEDIC

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL	EXPLOITS PER DAY 1st	2nd	3rd	4th
1	+0	+0	+2	+2	Flash of Genius, Medical Expertise, Medical Exploits	1	—	—	—
2	+1	+0	+3	+3	Improved Repertoire	1	—	—	—
3	+2	+1	+3	+3	Intelligent Resistance	1	0	—	—
4	+3	+1	+4	+4	Primary Target	1	1	—	—
5	+4	+1	+4	+4		2	1	—	—
6	+5	+2	+5	+5	Risk an Aneurysm	2	1	0	—
7	+6/+1	+2	+5	+5		2	1	1	—
8	+7/+2	+2	+6	+6	Do Science To It	2	2	1	—
9	+8/+3	+3	+6	+6	Modern Master	3	2	1	0
10	+9/+10	+3	+7	+7	Evasive Overdrive	3	2	1	1
11	+10/+5	+3	+7	+7		3	2	2	1
12	+11/+6/+1	+4	+8	+8	Weak Spot	3	3	2	1
13	+12/+7/+2	+4	+8	+8	Defilade	4	3	2	1
14	+13/+8/+3	+4	+9	+9		4	3	2	2
15	+14/+9/+4	+5	+9	+9	Outthink & Outwit	4	3	3	2
16	+15/+10/+5	+5	+10	+10	Foolish Endeavor	4	4	3	3
17	+16/+11/+6/+1	+5	+10	+10		4	4	4	3
18	+17/+12/+7/+2	+6	+11	+11	Modern Master	4	4	4	4
19	+18/+13/+8/+3	+6	+11	+11		4	4	4	4
20	+19/+14/+9/+4	+6	+12	+12	Good Thing You Have Friends	4	4	4	4

Do Science To It (Ex): Starting at 8th level, you gain a +1 class bonus to all Intelligence- and Wisdom-based class skills. In addition, you gain 1 additional class skill.

Modern Master (Ex): At 9th and 18th level, you can select one level 1 medical exploit and gain 1 free use of that exploit a day, in addition to any other exploits you use. At 18th level, you can select the same exploit from 9th level and gain a second free use of that exploit a day.

Evasive Overdrive (Ex): Starting at 10th level, you are able to do everything in your power to avoid getting hit. As a move action, you gain a +2 bonus to AC and Ref saves against one creature up to 20 ft + 10 ft/level away and don't provoke opportunity attacks from the target until the beginning of your next turn. You may also move up to half your speed as part of this action.

Weak Spot (Ex): Starting at 12th level, if you fail to confirm a critical hit on an opponent, you still inflict 2 points of bleed damage.

Defilade (Ex): Starting at 13th level, if an opponent fails to confirm a critical threat against you, each ally in line of sight to the opponent gains a +1 class bonus to attack it until the start of your next turn.

Outthink & Outwit (Ex): Starting at 15th level, you are able to quickly ascertain your enemy's eye movements and body language and determine the best course of action. As a full-round action, one creature up to 50 ft + 10 ft/level away is flat-footed until the start of your next turn.

Foolish Endeavor (Ex): Starting at 16th level, whenever you miss with a ranged attack, you can take a 5-foot step as a free action. This does not count as a 5-foot step on your turn.

Good Thing You Have Friends (Ex): Starting at 20th level, you gain the ability to use allies for cover. For each adjacent ally, you gain a +1 bonus to AC and Ref saves (Max +2). If you are still hit with an attack, you can transfer all damage to any single adjacent ally regardless if the original attack roll can hit the ally or not. If the attack targets you and the ally, the ally takes both damage values, taking your damage second. If the ally is dropped below 0 hit points with the first hit, he cannot suffer your hit as well. The ally does not have to be willing.

1st LEVEL EXPLOITS

ANATOMY EXPERT

Level: Medic 1
Time: 1 swift action
Range: Personal
Target: One creature you hit with a ranged weapon and score a critical threat.
Duration: Instantaneous

Effect: The hit becomes a confirmed critical hit.

CLAMP THE ARTERY
Level: Medic 1
Time: 1 move action
Range: Touch
Target: One living creature.
Duration: Instantaneous
Effect: The target is healed of any damage incurred by the last hit it received since the start of your last turn.
Advanced: At 10th level, this exploit is reduced to a swift action.

CORTICAL REINFORCEMENT INJECTION
Level: Medic 1
Time: 1 full-round action
Range: Touch
Target: One living creature.
Duration: 1 day
Effect: The target is immune to being blinded.
Advanced: At 10th level, you can target two creatures, though each one requires a full-round action: you can sacrifice your next turn in order to administer both injections this turn.

DIAGNOSE AND CURE
Level medic 1
Casting Time: 1 minute
Range: touch
Target: one living creature suffering from disease or poison
Duration: Instantaneous
Effect: The target gains a +4 enhancement bonus to his next save to recover from the disease or poison. He also gains a +2 enhancement bonus against identical disease or poison attacks for the rest of the day.

EMERGENCY PATCH
Level: Medic 1
Time: 1 full-round action
Range: Touch
Target: One living creature.
Duration: Instantaneous
Effect: The target regains hit points equal to your total Heal skill modifier (ranks + bonuses + attribute modifier) + 2d4.
Advanced: At 10th level, you can either increase the additional gain to + 3d8 or you can target two creatures instead of one.

STANOZOLOL INJECTION
Level: Medic 1
Time: 1 full-round action
Range: Touch
Target: One living creature.
Duration: 1 hour
Effect: The target gains a +2 enhancement bonus to Dexterity (affecting attack bonuses, Reflex saves, Dexterity checks, etc). The target also receives a +10 ft bonus to speed.
Advancement: At 10th level, you can target up to 2 creatures, but each requires a full-round action: you can sacrifice your next turn in order to administer both injections this turn.

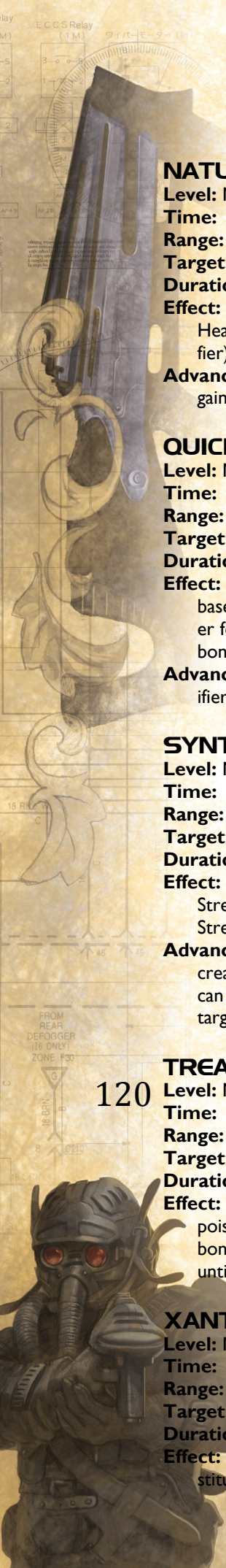
2nd LEVEL EXPLOITS

ADRENALINE INJECTION
Level: Medic 2
Time: 1 move action
Range: Touch
Target: One living creature.
Duration: Instantaneous
Effect: The target gains one additional standard action on his next turn and on his following turn.
Advancement: At 15th level, you can target up to 2 creatures, but each requires a move action.

ADVANTAGEOUS SCLERODERMA INJECTION
Level: Medic 2
Time: 1 standard action
Range: Touch
Target: You or one living creature.
Duration: Instantaneous
Effect: The target gains a +2 circumstance bonus to AC. This bonus increases to +4 at 8th level and +6 at 14th level.
Advancement: At 15th level, you can target up to 2 creatures, but each requires a standard action: you can sacrifice your standard action on your next turn in order to administer both injections this turn.

ANGEL OF DEATH
Level: Medic 2
Time: 1 standard action
Range: Touch
Target: One living creature with 1 hit point or less.
Duration: Instantaneous
Effect: The creature is killed and you gain 10 temporary hit points.
Advancement: At 15th level, you gain 15 temporary hit points.

MEDICAL MASTER
Level: Medic 2
Time: 1 full-round action
Range: Touch
Target: You and one living creature OR two living creatures.
Duration: Instantaneous
Effect: The target regains hit points equal to your total Heal skill modifier (ranks + bonuses + attribute modifier) + 2d8. The target also gains a +3 inherent bonus to Fort saves for five minutes.
Advancement: At 15th level, you can target up to 4 creatures, but every two targets require a full-round action: you can sacrifice your next turn in order to affect all targets this turn.



NATURAL HEALER
Level: Medic 2
Time: 1 standard action
Range: Touch
Target: You or one living creature.
Duration: Instantaneous
Effect: The target regains hit points equal to your total Heal skill modifier (ranks + bonuses + attribute modifier) +3d4.
Advancement: At 15th level, you increase the additional gain to +5d4.

QUICK RECOVERY
Level: Medic 2
Time: 1 full-round action
Range: Personal
Target: Yourself
Duration: Instantaneous
Effect: When you make an Intelligence- or Wisdom-based skill check, you may double your ability modifier for the check. If the check still fails, you gain a +10 bonus to all saves until the end of your next turn.
Advancement: At 15th level, you triple your ability modifier for the check.

SYNTHETIC STEROID
Level: Medic 2
Time: 1 full-round action
Range: Touch
Target: One living creature.
Duration: 1 hour
Effect: The target gains a +4 enhancement bonus to Strength (affecting attack bonuses, damage rolls, Strength checks, etc).
Advancement: At 10th level, you can target up to 2 creatures, but each requires a full-round action: you can sacrifice your next turn in order to affect both targets this turn.

TREAT PATIENT
Level: Medic 2
Time: 1 minute
Range: Touch
Target: One creature suffering from a disease or poison.
Duration: 1 day
Effect: The target suffers no effects from any disease or poison currently affecting it. The target gains a +2 bonus saves to recover from the disease or poison until the end of the day.

XANTHINE INJECTION
Level: Medic 2
Time: 1 full-round action
Range: Touch
Target: One living creature.
Duration: 1 hour
Effect: The target gains a +4 enhancement bonus to Constitution (affecting hit points, Fortitude saves, Constitution checks, etc). Hit points gained this way are not temporary hit points. They go away when the target's Constitution drops back to normal.
Advancement: At 10th level, you can target up to 2 creatures, but each requires a full-round action: you can sacrifice your next turn in order to administer both injections this turn.

3rd LEVEL EXPLOITS

ANALEPTIC INJECTION
Level: Medic 3
Time: 1 full-round action
Range: Touch
Target: One unconscious living creature.
Duration: Instantaneous / 1 day
Effect: The target wakes up. If at 0 hit points or below, the target is brought to 0 hit points and wakes up. If the target is above 0 hit points, it is immune to sleep effects for the rest of the day.
Advancement: At 10th level, you can target up to 2 creatures, but each requires a full-round action: you can sacrifice your next turn in order to administer both injections this turn.

AVERSION THERAPY
Level: Medic 3
Time: 1 swift action
Range: N/A
Target: One creature you hit with a ranged weapon.
Duration: 1 round / Intelligence modifier
Effect: The target suffers a -2 penalty to AC and is staggered.

EPHEDRINE PSYCHOTROPIC INJECTION
Level: Medic 3
Time: 1 full-round action
Range: Touch
Target: One living creature.
Duration: 5 minutes
Effect: The target recovers from any effect requiring a Will save and is immune to Will-based attacks. The target also gains DR5/-.

DELAY CONDITION
Level: Medic 3
Time: 1 standard action
Range: Touch
Target: One living creature.
Duration: Instantaneous
Effect: The target recovers from one condition it suffers from and gains a +4 bonus to saves against that condition for 5 minutes.

MINOR MEDICAL MIRACLE
Level: Medic 3 **Time:** 1 minute
Range: Touch **Target:** one creature that has been reduced to below 0 hit points or fewer or killed in the past five minutes.

Duration: Instantaneous
Effect: The target regains hit points equal to your total Heal skill modifier (ranks + bonuses + attribute modifier) + 2d8 and is dazed for 1d4 minutes.

POUND THE CHEST
Level: Medic 3
Time: 1 full-round action
Range: Touch
Target: one creature that has been reduced to below 0 hit points or fewer or killed in the previous round.
Duration: Instantaneous
Effect: The target regains hit points equal to your total Heal skill modifier (ranks + bonuses + attribute modifier). The target is dazed for 1d4 rounds.

UNHEALTHY PSYCHOSTIMULANT INJECTION
Level: Medic 3
Time: 1 full-round action
Range: Touch
Target: One living creature.
Duration: 5 minutes
Effect: When making a full attack action, the target may make one extra attack with any weapon it is holding. The attack is made using the target's full base attack bonus, plus any modifiers appropriate to the situation. The target also gains +1 injection bonus on attack rolls and a +1 dodge bonus to AC and Reflex saves. Any condition that makes the target lose its Dexterity bonus to Armor Class (if any) also makes it lose dodge bonuses. All of the target's modes of movement increase by 30 feet, to a maximum of twice the target's normal speed. This increase counts as an enhancement bonus, and it affects the target's jumping distance as normal for increased speed. After the effect expires, the target is staggered for 1 hour.
Advancement: At 15th level, you can target up to 2 creatures, but each requires a full-round action: you can sacrifice your next turn in order to administer both injections this turn.

4th LEVEL EXPLOITS
EXOTIC CONCOCTION
Level: Medic 4
Time: 5 minutes
Range: Touch
Target: Up to 6 creatures.
Duration: 1 hour
Effect: The target gains temporary hit points equal your total Heal skill modifier (ranks + bonuses + attribute modifier).
Advancement: At 20th level, target gains +3d4 additional temporary hit points.

FIELD EXPERIENCE
Level: Medic 4
Time: 1 standard action
Range: 20 ft
Target: Up to 6 creatures.
Duration: 5 minutes
Effect: The target's critical threat range increases by 1.
Advancement: At 20th level, the target's critical threat range increases by 2.

I CAN HEAR BELLS RINGING
Level: Medic 4
Time: 1 immediate action
Range: Personal
Target: Yourself
Duration: Instantaneous
Effect: If you are targeted by an area effect, you are moved to the nearest unoccupied space outside the area. You also gain a +5 bonus to AC and Reflex saves until the end of your next turn.

MAJOR MEDICAL MIRACLE
Level: Medic 4
Time: 1 minute
Range: Touch
Target: One living creature.
Duration: Instantaneous
Effect: The target recovers any and all of the following adverse conditions affecting the target: ability damage, blinded, confused, dazed, dazzled, deafened, diseased, exhausted, fatigued, feebleminded, insanity, nauseated, poisoned, sickened, and stunned. The target also recovers hit points equal to your total Heal skill modifier (ranks + bonuses + attribute modifier). This does not remove negative levels or restore permanently drained ability score points.

PLAYING GOD
Level: Medic 4
Time: 5 minutes
Range: Touch
Target: One ally killed in the past 30 minutes.
Duration: Instantaneous
Effect: The target returns to life with 20 hit points, and they awaken.

STALKER
Never too close, never too far. Such is the motto of the stalker. You are as important as any member of the group, but you don't spend your travel time walking in step. You scout ahead, away from the distractions of the others, ever vigilant against any interlopers. You slither under bushes, stalking your prey. You strike close with the blade or pistol or at distance through the scope. Stalkers are still members of the team and can contribute to the effectiveness of the group by creating chaos in enemy lines. Nothing is more frightening than a sniper no one can see or an enemy in their midst that no one can target.

As a distant set of eyes, you can communicate, via whispers and movements, necessary information on approaching enemies. When engagements get messy, you will still join the thick of it, never abandoning others despite the ambiguity of your location. You do not fear your enemies closing in. Blades are clumsy and

heavy and the pistol is deadlier at point blank than from afar.

In the anarchy of the outside world, you can compensate for every situation. If an enemy presents you with a target from over a hill, so be it, but you are equally skilled if you can see their eyes and feel their breath. You don't wish to see a magical monstrosity unless it is behind the targeting reticle of your scope or dead on the ground after you claimed it as a kill.

CREATING A STALKER

Your direction with stalker depends entirely on your range. Would you prefer to be up close and personal or take out your targets at a distance? There are two classes related to the stalker—the gunslinger and the sniper.

GUNSLINGER

The gunslinger is all about being up close. You use stealth and trickery to get close to an enemy or sneak behind enemy lines and attack where they least expect. You employ light weapons in this practice, slipping by fallen enemies and dancing through battle lines to find your target.

Alignment: Any
Hit Die: d10

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Escape Artist (Dex), Knowledge (history), Perception (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Stealth (Dex), Survival (Wis), Vehicle Operation (Dex),

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all light and medium techan armor except exo-armor. You are also proficient with all small arms (one-handed & two-handed) and all simple melee weapons.

Act on Instinct (Ex): You may use Wisdom in place of Dexterity for all ranged attack and damage rolls. You can also use Wisdom in place of Dexterity for determining prerequisites of combat feats.

Bullet Ballet (Ex): At 1st level, as a full-attack action you can make one additional attack with any one-handed small arm as if you had the Two-Weapon Fighting feat (even if you do not meet the prerequisites for the feat). At 8th level, you can make two additional attacks as if you had the Improved Two-Weapon Fighting feat (even if you do not meet the prerequisites for the feat). You can only use *bullet ballet* with one-handed small arms.

Combat Theatrics (Ex): At 1st level, you can select one trait from the Combat Theatrics list below. You can select 1 additional trait at 6th level, 12th level, and 18th level.

Combat Virtuoso: You can take a 5-foot step as a swift action. This does not count as a 5-foot step that turn.

Cowboy Action: If you only wield one one-handed small arm, you gain a +1 class bonus to all attack rolls. You can also draw and holster one-handed small arms as a free action and change a clip for a one-handed small arm as a swift action.

Dual Wielding: If you are wielding two one-handed small arms, you gain a +2 class bonus to damage rolls within the first range increment. You also deny flanking bonuses to opponents when wielding two one-handed small arms. This damage bonus increases to +3 at 7th level, and +4 at 14th level.

Gunplay: You can take a move action to gain a +2 class bonus to AC until the start of your next turn.

Rapid Kill: You can choose to make a ranged attack as a swift action instead of a standard action. If you hit, you inflict only 1 point of damage and cannot cause a critical hit. You can still apply damage bonuses from class abilities, feats and enhanced weapons.

Total Disregard: If you are wielding two one-handed small arms, you can use *bullet ballet* as a full-attack action and still make another single attack at your highest attack bonus. You suffer a -4 penalty to AC and all saves until the start of your next turn.

Kata (Ex): Starting at 1st level, you discover that the geometric distribution of antagonists in any gun battle is a statistically predictable element – or at least, that's what the instructors back home in your so-called utopian technocracy tell you, although it sounds a bit iffy to you and you prefer to think that your abilities come from the sheer power of awesome. Either way, you are a master of this talent—an adversary not to be taken lightly. As many times a day as your Wisdom modifier, you can take a swift action to make a single attack at your highest attack bonus. If the first attack misses, you may make a second attack (using extra ammunition as normal). You gain additional uses of *kata* at 3rd level and every 2 levels after. Starting at 15th level, *kata* is reduced to a free action, though you cannot use it more than twice a round.

High Noon (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, you gain a +2 class bonus to attack rolls and a +4 class bonus to damage rolls until the end of your first turn in an encounter or until you hit, whichever comes last.

Reflex Shot (Ex): Starting at 3rd level, you may make opportunity attacks with one-handed small arms.

Pure Cinema (Ex): Starting at 4th level, as a standard action, you can make a single attack at your highest bonus against every target in a 5-foot radius centered on you. At 12th level, this radius increases to 10 feet, and at 20th level, it increases to 15 feet.

Gun-Fu (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, you gain a class bonus to Acrobatics checks. The bonus starts at +1, increasing to +2 at 5th level, +3 at 8th level, +4 at 11th level, +5 at 14th level, and +6 at 17th level.

Lightning Reload (Ex): Starting at 10th level, you can reload a single one-handed small arm as a swift action, or as a free action if also using *cowboy action*.

Quickdraw (Ex): Starting at 16th level, if you are hit with a ranged attack, you can use *kata* as an immediate

GUNSLINGER

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	BULLET BALLET	SPECIAL
1	+1	+0	+2	+0	+0/+0	Act on Instinct, Bullet Ballet, Combat Theatrics, Kata,
2	+2	+0	+3	+0	+1/+1	Gun-Fu +1, High Noon
3	+3	+1	+3	+1	+2/+2	Kata, Reflex Shot
4	+4	+1	+4	+1	+3/+3	Pure Cinema
5	+5	+1	+4	+1	+4/+4	Gun-Fu +2, Kata
6	+6/+1	+2	+5	+2	+5/+5/+0	Combat theatrics
7	+7/+2	+2	+5	+2	+6/+6/+1	Kata
8	+8/+3	+2	+6	+2	+7/+7/+2/+2	Pure Cinema
9	+9/+4	+3	+6	+3	+8/+8/+3/+3	Gun-Fu +3, Kata
10	+10/+5	+3	+7	+3	+9/+9/+4/+4	Lightning Reload
11	+11/+6/+1	+3	+7	+3	+10/+10/+5/+5/+0	Gun-Fu +4, Kata
12	+12/+7/+2	+4	+8	+4	+11/+11/+6/+6/+1	Combat theatrics, Pure Cinema (10 ft)
13	+13/+8/+3	+4	+8	+4	+12/+12/+7/+7/+2	Kata
14	+14/+9/+4	+4	+9	+4	+13/+13/+8/+8/+3	Gun-Fu +4
15	+15/+10/+5	+5	+9	+5	+14/+14/+9/+9/+4/+4	Kata
16	+16/+11/+6/+1	+5	+10	+5	+15/+15/+10/+10/+5/+5/+0	Quickdraw
17	+17/+12/+7/+2	+5	+10	+5	+16/+16/+11/+11/+6/+6/+1	Gun-Fu +4, Kata
18	+18/+13/+8/+3	+6	+11	+6	+17/+17/+12/+12/+7/+7/+2	Combat Theatrics
19	+19/+14/+9/+4	+6	+11	+6	+18/+18/+13/+13/+8/+8/+3	Kata
20	+20/+15/+10/+5	+6	+12	+6	+19/+19/+14/+14/+9/+9/+4	Heroic Bloodshed, Pure Cinema (15 ft)

action instead of a free action.

Heroic Bloodshed (Ex): Starting at 20th level, any time you drop an enemy to 0 hit points or fewer, you gain an additional use of Kata which you must use before the end of this turn. You can only gain one use of Kata per round in this way.

SNIPER

You are a master of long-range fire. You take out targets well beyond the range of any of their weapons. By using gut instincts and field experience you can compensate for wind, gravity, and even the curvature of the planet. Your goal is to never be in direct combat and to prevent your allies from coming to harm.

Alignment: Any

Hit Die: d10

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Escape Artist (Dex), Knowledge (history), Perception (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Stealth (Dex), Survival (Wis), Vehicle Operation (Dex),

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all light and medium techan armor except exo-armor. You are also proficient with all small arms (one-handed & two-handed) and all simple melee weapons.

Act on Instinct: You may use Wisdom in place of Dexterity for all ranged attack and damage rolls. You can also use Wisdom in place of Dexterity for determining prerequisites of combat feats.

Marksman's Talent: At 1st level, you can use a full-round action to make a single ranged attack with a sniper weapon against a target 25 feet away or further. If you hit, you can spend a marksman point to employ one or more of the talents on the following list. The number of marksman points available to you each day is equal to ½ your sniper level + your Wisdom modifier.

1st Level: You can spend 1 point per full-round action.

6th Level: You can spend up to 2 points per full-round action.

11th Level: You can spend up to 3 points per full-round action.

16th Level: You can spend up to 4 points per full-round action.

Academic Kill (1 point): Inflict +2d6 additional dam-

SNIPER

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+0	+2	+0	Act on Instinct, Marksman's Talent
2	+2	+0	+3	+0	Battle Condition
3	+3	+1	+3	+1	Fake Echo, Sweep Terrain +1
4	+4	+1	+4	+1	Zero Your Weapon
5	+5	+1	+4	+1	Procedural Memory
6	+6/+1	+2	+5	+2	Marksman's Talent
7	+7/+2	+2	+5	+2	Battle Condition
8	+8/+3	+2	+6	+2	Sweep Terrain +2
9	+9/+4	+3	+6	+3	Boom! Head Shot
10	+10/+5	+3	+7	+3	Failure Is Not an Option
11	+11/+6/+1	+3	+7	+3	Marksman's Talent
12	+12/+7/+2	+4	+8	+4	Sweep Terrain +3
13	+13/+8/+3	+4	+8	+4	Battle Condition
14	+14/+9/+4	+4	+9	+4	Penetrable Shot
15	+15/+10/+5	+5	+9	+5	Sweep Terrain +4
16	+16/+11/+6/+1	+5	+10	+5	Marksman's Talent
17	+17/+12/+7/+2	+5	+10	+5	Magic Bullet
18	+18/+13/+8/+3	+6	+11	+6	Sweep Terrain +5
19	+19/+14/+9/+4	+6	+11	+6	Battle Condition
20	+20/+15/+10/+5	+6	+12	+6	Sweep Terrain +6

age with a hit. This damage increases to 4d6 at 7th level and 6d6 at 14th level.

Assassin Psychology (1 point): The hit becomes a critical threat.

Dum-Dum (1 point): The target is knocked prone

Hydrostatic Shock (1 point): If you score a critical threat, that threat is confirmed without having to re-roll.

Pinpoint Accuracy (3 points): The target is stunned until the beginning of your next turn.

Sharpshooter (1 point): Use before making an attack roll. Do not roll to attack; you automatically hit.

Systemic Inflammation (2 points): The target is dazed until the beginning of your next turn.

Weak Spot (1 point): The target is staggered until the beginning of your next turn.

Battle Condition: There are many disciplines when pursuing the path of a sniper. Starting at 2nd level, you gain one of the following special traits. All *battle conditions* require a move action to use. You may select another *battle condition* at 7th level, 13th level, and 19th level.

Army Crawl: While prone, you can use a move action to move at half your speed. This provokes attacks of opportunity as normal.

Ballistics Expertise: Increase the critical threat range of your next attack roll within 10 rounds by 1. This effect is cumulative.

Covert Operation: Use a move action to move at full speed without inflicting penalties to Stealth checks.

Dug In Like a Bug: Use a move action to gain cover if you are prone. This is in addition to other benefits from being prone. This effect is lost if you move.

Lead the Target: You slow your breathing and hold the weapon steady. You have all the time in the world to make the perfect shot. Use a move action to target a creature in line of sight. That creature becomes your focus. You can only have one focus at a time. Your next attack roll against your focus gains a +2 bonus. Until you target another creature, move, or make an attack roll, you can continue to use *lead the target* and stack the attack bonuses (max +8). After you make the attack roll, the bonus is lost. If you accumulate at least a +6 bonus, you can reroll all natural 1s on the attack roll.

Perfect Camouflage: Use a move action to gain a +5 bonus to your next Stealth check.

Perfect Tracker: You are quick to aim under any circumstances. Use a move action and move half your speed. After you move, you either enable or maintain your proficiency bonus with weapons with the sniper property.

Fake Echo (Ex): Starting at 3rd level, if using Stealth and making a ranged attack with a sniper weapon, the penalty to Stealth checks to maintain your obscured location is reduced by 10 (-10 instead of -20).

Sweep Terrain (Ex): Starting at 3rd level, you gain a +1 class bonus to Perception. This bonus increases +2 at 8th level, +3 at 12th level, +4 at 15th level, +5 at 18th level, and +6 at 20th level.

Zero Your Weapon (Ex): Starting at 4th level, the range increments of all two-handed small arms you wield are increased by 20 ft.

Procedural Memory (Ex): Starting at 5th level, you can use a full-round action in order to use *marksman talent* with a ready action.

Boom! Head Shot (Ex): Starting at 9th level, once per round, if you drop an enemy more than 5 squares away to 0 hit points or fewer using a sniper weapon, all opponents in a 10 foot radius around the target are staggered until the start of your next turn. Targets staggered by this effect cannot be staggered again by this ability.

Failure Is Not An Option (Ex): Starting 10th level, if you roll a natural 1 on an attack roll with *marksman's*

talent, you can re-roll.

Penetrable Shot (Ex): Starting at 14th level, once a round when making a ranged attack with a sniper weapon, you can ignore one square of blocking terrain for the purposes of line of effect and cover penalties.

Magic Bullet: Starting at 17th level, if you drop an enemy more than 25 feet away to 0 hit points or fewer using a sniper weapon, you can make a single ranged attack against one creature within 20 feet of the original target. You use no additional ammunition. You can repeat this process until you fail to drop an enemy to 0 hit points or fewer, you run out of enemies in range, or you hit three enemies.

VANGUARD

You are specialized in the application of a craft that some people consider primitive. Despite any ranged combat skills you may have, you prefer to make things personal. You have practiced day and night in the perfection of the craft. There may be countless reasons why you prefer close combat over firearms, but the primary one is usually self-empowerment. Your strengths rely on your lethality in every situation. You require no augmentation, no steel or explosives to articulate your skill. Your weapons cannot be removed. There is no scanner or sensor to identify you as a threat. You often lead a group through the door. You can suppress opponents without causing harm; remove a threat without making a sound. Firearms are a final, violent solution and most times a restrained hand is needed.

As a warrior, you've been trained from an early age by choice or by inheritance to take the role of a combatant. Your natural gifts were discovered and focused into a lifelong dedication. This is not to assume you're a warmonger, as such training comes early with the responsibility to know restraint. For many, having the skills is a means for self-discovery. This can apply in the application of hand-to-hand combat, the use of melee weapons, or in the proficiency of small-arms. You might have devoted your life to the implement of one craft or the broad use of many.

CREATING A VANGUARD

The vanguard can fill a vital role in a techan party. Being a close combat defender means the vanguard may be the only opposition from monsters wishing to close the distance to your ranged allies. Even if opponents attempt to move, you can keep with them and prevent your allies from coming to harm. You can be a direct fist and kick fighter or a wrestler. You can specialize in flips, locks, or direct blunt force trauma.

Alignment: Any

Hit Die: d10

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Escape Artist (Dex), Knowledge (history), Perception (Wis), Ride (Dex), Stealth (Dex), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str), Vehicle Operation (Dex),

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all light and medium techan armor (except exo-armor) and two techan heavy armors of your choice (including exo-armor) as well as light and medium fantasy armor. You are also proficient with one-handed simple and martial melee weapons, techan melee weapons and bastion exports, one-handed small arms and two-handed small arms, and improvised weapons.

Catch as Catch (Ex): At 1st level, if an adjacent opponent your size or smaller attempts to move away from you (regardless of the type of movement, except for teleportation and disengage actions), the target's speed is reduced by half and you are pulled along with the target. Starting at 10th level, you can target opponent's one size category larger than you.

Unarmed but Deadly: At 1st level, you gain the feats Improved Unarmed Strike and Striker as well as one additional feat from the following: Balance and Direction, Evolution of Pankration, Game of Sticks, Striker, Swords of Grace, The Ritual of Dance and Damage, Unarmed Expanded Profile, Way of the Turn.

Martial Discipline (Ex): At 1st level, choose one of the following options:

Mobile Discipline: As a swift action, you can take a 5-foot step as long as the step brings you closer to an opponent. This does not count as the normal 5-foot step during a round and can be made in addition to any other movement. As long as you are wearing light armor, you gain a +1 bonus to attack rolls against adjacent opponents. You use Dexterity in place of Strength for attack and damage rolls with melee attacks and combat maneuvers, and for determining prerequisites of combat feats. You can also replace Strength with Dexterity for your Combat Maneuver Defense.

Protective Discipline: As long as you are wearing medium or heavy armor, you gain a +1 bonus to AC against adjacent targets. You also gain a +3 bonus to your Combat Maneuver Bonus.

Mixed Martial Trait (Ex): At 2nd level, and every two levels after, you may select a mixed martial trait. You can only select a trait once and some traits have minimum level requirements.

Back Control: If you have an opponent in a grapple, your opponent grants you cover. Additionally, any melee attack or ranged attack that misses you by 5 or less hits your opponent instead (on attacks that don't target you both). Your opponent also suffers a -2 penalty to attack you.

Bone Breaker: You can inflict additional damage to opponents you have in a grapple equal to your Dexterity or Strength modifier.

Bulldozer: You receive no penalty to your combat maneuver bonus when performing a bull rush into multiple targets in a single round.

Devastating Body Attack (6th Level): As a standard

action, make a single melee attack at your highest attack bonus. If you hit, the target is pushed 5 feet. If the target cannot be pushed because of an obstruction, the attack becomes a critical threat. When rolling damage, reroll all 1s until they come up as something other than a 1.

Fake Out (6th Level): Each time you hit an opponent your size or smaller with a melee attack, you can swap positions.

False Strike (6th Level): If you miss with your first attack roll as part of a full attack, take a 5-foot step, remaining adjacent to the target, and re-roll.

Full Mount (6th Level): If you are grappling a prone opponent, the target suffers a -3 penalty to attack rolls and its combat maneuver bonus.

Ground & Pound: You gain a bonus to damage against prone opponents equal to your Dexterity or Strength modifier. As a standard action, make a single melee attack at your highest attack bonus. If you hit, the target is knocked prone.

Hip Throw: Hip Throw is an alternate action along with move, damage, and pin when you have an opponent in a grapple. You move any target your size or smaller as many feet as ½ your Strength modifier x 5. Like moving the target with you, if you attempt to throw a target into a hazardous location, the target receives a free attempt to break your grapple with a +4 bonus.

I'm the Juggernaut: If you make a bull rush, you can ignore difficult terrain. Non-creature obstructions you attempt to pass through take damage equal to 5 × your Strength modifier: if this destroys the obstruction, you can pass through the obstruction.

Impossible Lock: You gain a +3 bonus to your CMD when an opponent attempts to break from a grapple.

Improved Knockout Power: The damage die of your unarmed attacks increases by one step (1d4 > 1d6 > 1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12 > 2d6 > 2d8 > 2d10).

Insult to Injury: As a swift action while you are not prone, you can deal damage equal to your Dexterity modifier or Strength modifier + ½ your level to an adjacent prone opponent.

Joint Lock: Once per grapple, you can sustain a grapple as a free action (if you release the grapple and then re-grapple—even if the same opponent—it counts as a new grapple).

Last Second Recovery (6th Level): Once a day, when an enemy scores a critical hit on you, you can turn that damage into temporary hit points you gain.

Pulling Guard: If you are prone, you suffer no attack

VANGUARD

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+2	+2	+0	Catch as Catch, Martial Discipline, Unarmed but Deadly
2	+2	+3	+3	+0	Mixed Martial Trait, Pound for Pound
3	+3	+3	+3	+1	Heroic Intervention
4	+4	+4	+4	+1	Mixed Martial Trait
5	+5	+4	+4	+1	C-C-Combo Breaker
6	+6/+1	+5	+5	+2	Mixed Martial Trait
7	+7/+2	+5	+5	+2	Overreach Lunge
8	+8/+3	+6	+6	+2	Mixed Martial Trait
9	+9/+4	+6	+6	+3	Knockout Power
10	+10/+5	+7	+7	+3	Mixed Martial Trait
11	+11/+6/+1	+7	+7	+3	Good Cardio DR1/-
12	+12/+7/+2	+8	+8	+4	Mixed Martial Trait
13	+13/+8/+3	+8	+8	+4	
14	+14/+9/+4	+9	+9	+4	Mixed Martial Trait
15	+15/+10/+5	+9	+9	+5	Good Cardio DR2/-
16	+16/+11/+6/+1	+10	+10	+5	Mixed Martial Trait
17	+17/+12/+7/+2	+10	+10	+5	Flawless Victory
18	+18/+13/+8/+3	+11	+11	+6	Mixed Martial Trait
19	+19/+14/+9/+4	+11	+11	+6	Good Cardio DR3/-
20	+20/+15/+10/+5	+12	+12	+6	Mixed Martial Trait, Permanent Injury

penalties to melee attacks with 1-handed weapons, unarmed attacks, or combat maneuvers.

Redirection of Energy: Anytime an opponent confirms a critical hit on you with a melee attack, you gain a +2 bonus to melee attacks and automatically confirm any critical threats against that same opponent until the end of your next turn.

Sack the Mark: You can move at your full speed while grappling an opponent.

Solid Clinch: You gain the Improved Grapple combat feat, regardless of the feat's prerequisites. You can ignore the Improved Unarmed Strike prerequisite if you select the Greater Grapple feat later.

String-Combo (6th Level): If you hit the same opponent twice in a single round, you gain a third attack at your highest attack modifier. You can only do this once per round.

Rapid Strike: As a swift action, make a single melee attack at your highest attack bonus. If you hit, you inflict half damage and cannot inflict a critical hit.

Twist Out: You gain a +4 bonus to your combat maneuver bonus when attempting to break out or reverse a grapple.

Takedown Flip: Takedown Flip is an alternate action along with move, damage, and pin when you have an opponent in a grapple. Any target your size or smaller is rendered prone. You can continue the grapple regardless if you are prone as well or not. Your opponent must break from the grapple in order to stand up.

Technical Superiority: If an opponent misses you on an attack roll, you gain a +1 insight bonus to attack that target until the end of your next turn.

Ultimate Joint Lock: Any opponent you have in a grapple is staggered until they break from the grapple.

Vicious Hook (6th Level): The critical threat range of your unarmed attacks increase by 1.

Pound for Pound (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, once per round, if you hit an opponent with a one-handed melee weapon or an unarmed attack, you gain a damage bonus equal to ½ your level.

Heroic Intervention (Ex): Starting at 3rd level, if an adjacent opponent makes an attack which does not include you, you gain a +2 bonus to attack that opponent until the end of your next turn.

C-C-Combo Breaker (Ex): Starting at 5th level, if you are hit two times or more by the same opponent in a single round, you can perform a single melee attack against that opponent as an immediate action. If you hit, the opponent's turn ends.

Overreach Lunge (Ex): Starting at 7th level, you can increase your reach by 5 feet during your turn but suffer a -2 penalty to AC and all saves until the end of your next turn.

Knockout Power (Ex): Starting at 9th level, the dam-

age die of your unarmed attacks increases by one step (1d4 > 1d6 > 1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12 > 2d6 > 2d8 > 2d10).

Good Cardio (Ex): Starting at 11th level, you gain DR1/- . This damage resistance increases to DR2/- at 15th level and DR3/- at 19th level.

Flawless Victory (Ex): Starting at 17th level, if you score a critical hit and the target is reduced to 30 hit points or less with the hit, it is killed.

Permanent Injury (Ex): Starting at 20th level, you can inflict a permanent injury once per day on a target you score a critical hit on. The target takes 10 bleed damage every round until healed or killed.

The outer gates of the southern wall groaned open for morning travelers. The rising spring sun brushed a graceful wave of heat across Aiden's face. He looked back at Angel's wall, perforated with sniper holes and artillery placements. He wasn't rethinking his decision, only taking in how unambiguous the boundary between the two worlds was.

Aiden had hardly spent a day away from Chen's biblio. Reading about dragons were only the beginning. Anything science denied as true, Aiden desired to learn. He remembered the story his mother had told him, of the singular focus of Willum Raenis. The character's aspirations were above his station, no higher than a princess, a target that could never be struck. All Aiden needed to do was sacrifice his central heating, internet, and cable TV. Martin thought it was selfish, and that Aiden's decision was like a virus that would spread to others, somehow disavowing thousands of years of progress, rejecting what mankind was most proud of--the very automation of his society.

As Aiden walked further past the gate, the level and planed pavement began to show cracks from shifting soil and snaking roots. At the edge, it had turned to rubble. The dirt felt the same as those in parks and planters in the city. The sun looked no different. Ahead was the forest. Against the barricade and under cover of shade sat hundreds of shacks and shanties populated by thousands that took pilgrimage to Angel in hopes of being blessed with admittance. If born inside, your citizenship could not be refuted. Trapped between the forest of Cyon and the city of Angel, refugees scavenged the city's garbage along with fragments leftover by more successful travelers. Some eked out a simple existence selling horses or trinkets from either side of the crown. There were no fae here, not this close to a magical dead zone. The village of Genai was ignored because of a long forgotten arrangement made centuries ago with the city's original builders.

Aiden's destination was hundreds of miles away. Deep in an area his brother called a wasteland was a city populated by millions of fae, humans, and books. It had been described more as a library than a city. Aiden could further his reading, having spent Chen's biblio nearly dry of words. He couldn't deny his ulterior motive, a city of fae and humans. Every pointed eared female a princess in his eyes.

Aiden had imagined her with unblemished naked skin riding a unicorn through an unspoiled landscape. He, the noble knight or wizard watches through the bushes, smitten. He jumps out to save the virtue of the virgin against a mob of hungry orcs, or boggs, whatever the story endorsed. She beds him against a tree in her gratitude. He follows her into the woods, taken by the fae into their flock to live for an eternity in enchanted bliss.

Despite aspirations of fancy, Aiden had proven himself an academic with enough saved and invested for the best universities. Out of high school, he could have been scooped up quickly and molded into an efficient, grounded, and functional member of society. He would do Martin, and his vision of their parents' ideals, proud. Now Aiden was nineteen and a hundred feet from all he had ever seen. Ahead lay everything he had read about. Some books were fiction, written by authors hundreds of years dead. They spoke of faeries and demons, dragons and kings. Following that, Aiden would find a book claiming to be fact which told similar tales.

Dragons and unicorns had adorned crests and flags for centuries before being discovered as truth. It could not be coincidence.

Aiden hated the prospect of booking passage on an Echan Terrain Vehicle, but there was little hope of him making it through the forest on his own, not with boggs on the rise. On occasion, an armed caravan would arrive at the wall and pick up passengers for a price bordering extortion. The passengers would be escorted to one of the safe primitive human havens on the other side, most of which were controlled by the free house of Antikari.

This was one of those occasions, and Aiden was unwilling to wait for a medieval wagon. He planned his departure weeks ahead; only those in the biblio knew of it. A note on a countertop was all he afforded Martin.

Martin

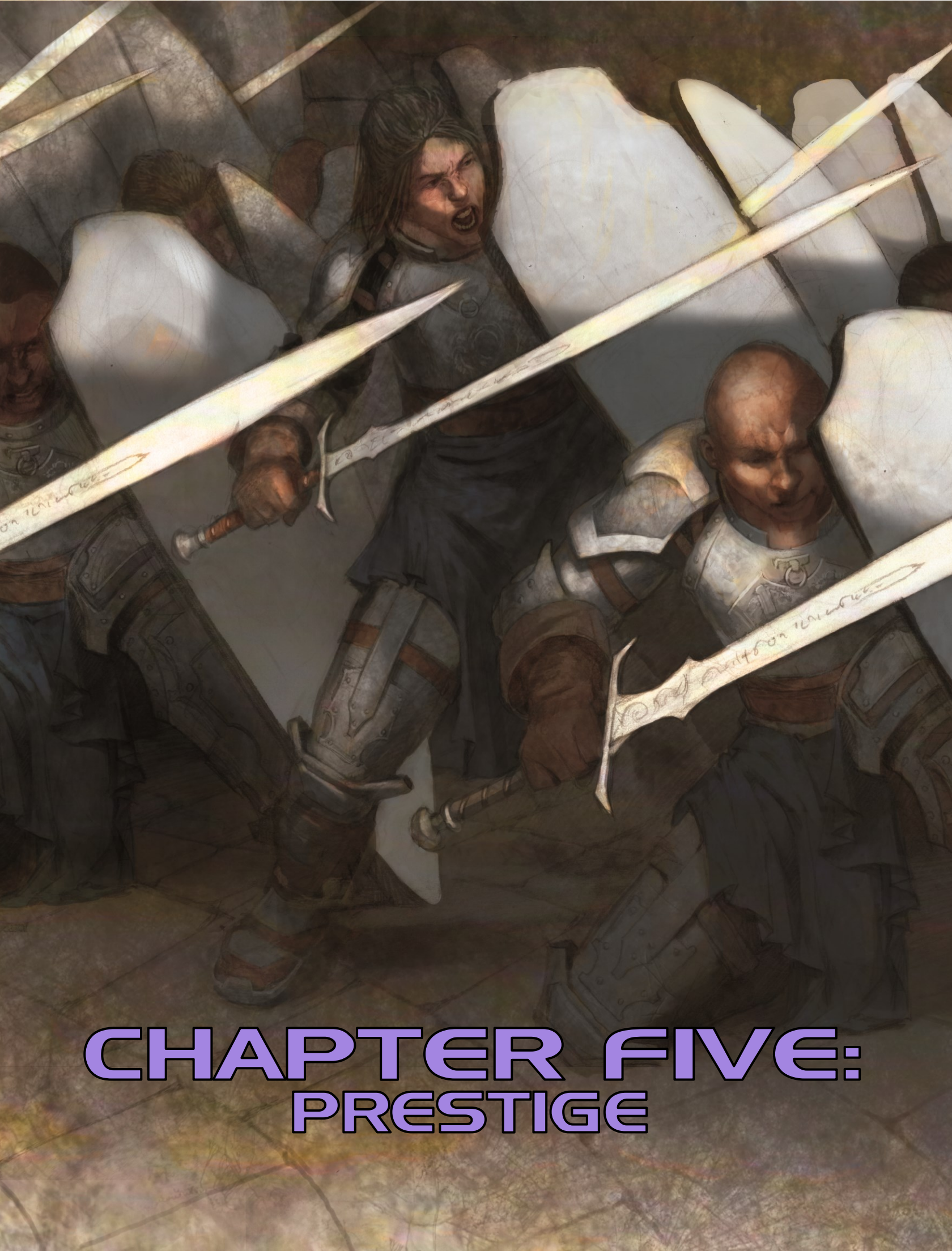
I'm not going to waste time explaining. I got my passcard and I'm leaving. I'm going to Limshau. I don't know how long I'm going to be, or where I might go from there. I know you don't understand which is why I won't bother explaining.

Aiden

The ETV was due to arrive in a few hours, assuming it survived the trip through Cyon. It wasn't just the boggs but the radiant magic permeating the forest that people feared. Aiden leaned against the warm concrete wall of the bastion crown, overhearing pilgrims making cases in hopes of admittance. They tried to barter their passage by claiming possession of some vital knowledge to better mankind.

Aiden was reading a book, as he often did. This one was fiction; he had checked. A sharp page corner nicked a small divot of skin from the base of his index finger, not enough to bleed. He caressed the redness, his finger skimming over the old scar on his palm from when he grabbed the broken window during Zmey's attack. Aiden still thought of the creature as Zmey, though its real name was Goetion is Lifeless. Dragon names were like that, part name, part phrase. Aiden's finger followed the scar as it bisected every line in his palm, from life to mercury. His left had fared better with only a leathery patch at the wrist to mark the event.

Aiden's black button shirt and grey trousers were from Angel but a gifted Asian girl in Genai with no technology to assist her handcrafted the brown wool sweater. His longcoat was also purchased off the benches of the Genai market. Aiden hadn't changed his style of glasses since acquiring his first set. Technology had fashioned his thermal underwear and orthopedic hiking shoes, extravagances he allowed himself. The only visible mark connecting him to Angel was the broken watch still wrapped around his wrist.



CHAPTER FIVE:
PRESTIGE

Any non-setting-specific prestige class that the GM allows is permissible in canon *Amethyst*. Unlike core classes, many prestige classes here are region- or species-specific.

ECHAN PRESTIGE CLASSES

Weapon & Armor Proficiencies: Unless otherwise stated, echan prestige classes never gain proficiency with techan equipment.

ACADEMY OF LOGOS

Very few wizards are actually religious. Since the study is based around a discipline that many have claimed as scientific, they usually prefer to explain the methods of magic through what they see and understand rather than depend on the unexplained. To wizards, the universe is still knowable, even if it appears to make no sense.

During the reign of Vincent Savarice, an order of priests in Abidan, with the support of their paladin king, began investigating the position of the magical Pleroma language in various fae faiths. They wanted to determine if Pleroma and its abilities might have any spiritual connection with the Abrahamic religions still widespread across the world. Some priests, clerics, and rabbis denounced the practice as heresy, but as one noteworthy and respected cleric supporting the practice put it, "God could wink out the sun and stop the Earth from moving – throwing a lightning bolt from a wand pales in comparison." A similarly modest Jesuit complimented the remark by adding, "Wizards are merely priests in denial."

Eventually, this small community of faith-bound wizards determined that the Pleroma language was most likely written by God and then given to the dragons. While some fundamentalist zealots have classified dragons as the advocates of hell, many in Abidan, and especially those in the order, believe them to be generals of God's army, nothing short of angels that the mortals were taught to respect and fear. If so, then Pleroma is the divine language in which the words 'let there be light' were spoken. They called it the power of logos—the ability of God to create something by speaking it, given to His servants as a reward for piety and from thence bestowed upon man and fae for some unknowable purpose.

Within a decade of the Abidan investigation, the Academy of Logos was formed—an elite order of Abrahamic holy men that study Pleroma not as a path to controlling the universe but as a path to becoming closer to God. They exhibit unique powers known only to them, variations on common spells with abilities the casters have professed as divine. Other wizards, especially Koana students, consider them too highly specialized to attain true enlightenment: Logians claim that other academies cannot be properly enlightened because they do not know what lofty peak they seek to reach. There is still respect between the two sides, and conflicts don't break out when they share a room. Like most organizations born in Abidan, the Academy of Logos is one of the most humble, benevolent religious sects in Canam, with fingers in humanitarian needs and missionary duties.

Hit Die: d6

REQUIREMENTS

Alignment: Any good
Faith: Any religion
Region: From Abidan
Skills: Knowledge (religion) 4 ranks, Spellcraft 4 ranks
Spells: Able to cast 3rd level arcane spells.

ACADEMY OF LOGOS

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL	SPELL PER DAY
1	+0	+0	+0	+1	Inspiring Presence	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class/ +1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
2	+1	+1	+1	+1	Act of God?	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class/ +1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
3	+1	+1	+1	+2		+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class/ +1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
4	+2	+1	+1	+2	Guidance	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class/ +1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
5	+2	+2	+2	+3	Grace of God?	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class/ +1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
6	+3	+2	+2	+3		+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class/ +1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
7	+3	+2	+2	+4	Illusion of Divinity	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class/ +1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
8	+4	+3	+3	+4		+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class/ +1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
9	+4	+3	+3	+5		+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class/ +1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
10	+5	+3	+3	+5	Finger of God?	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class/ +1 level of existing divine spellcasting class

CLASS SKILLS

Appraise (Int), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (arcane) (Int), Knowledge (history) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Linguistics (Int), Profession (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), and Spellcraft (Int)

Skill Ranks per Level: 2 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: You gain no proficiency with any weapon or armor.

Spells per Day: When a new Academy of Logos level is gained, you gain new spells per day as if you had also gained a level in wizard or cleric. You do not, however, gain other benefits a character of either class would have gained. If you do not have levels in cleric, you gain a divine caster level equal to your class level (but no additional access to divine spells). Divine spells you cast use vocal components only, not somatic, and are considered arcane spells when cast by you. If you had more than one arcane spellcasting class or more than one divine spellcasting class before becoming a member of the Academy of Logos, you must decide which class you add each level of Academy of Logos for the purpose of determining spells per day. You still cannot cast 8th or 9th level divine spells, and 8th or 9th level arcane spells require the acquisition of a foundation anchor.

Inspiring Presence (Su): You gain the *inspiring presence* aura at 1st level. All allies within 25 feet of you gain a +1 bonus to initiative, a +1 bonus with all damage rolls, and a +1 bonus to all saving throws.

Act of God? (Su): At 2nd level, when you cast a damaging area of effect spell (like *fireball*), any allies caught in the area take no damage and recover hit points equal to the damage roll. You can use *act of God?* as many times a day as your Wisdom modifier.

Guidance (Su): Starting at 4th level, you can use a swift action and expand *inspiring presence* to 50 feet until the end of your next turn. In addition, you increase the damage bonus until the end of your next turn to +4. You can employ *guidance* as many times a day as your Wisdom modifier.

Grace of God? (Su): At 5th level, you are able to use a move action and select one adjacent ally with 0 hit points or higher. The ally either gains a +4 inherent bonus to AC until the end of your next turn or is healed of as many hit points as your Wisdom modifier.

Illusion of Divinity (Su): At 7th level, *inspiring presence* improves. Allies gain a +2 bonus to initiative, a +2 bonus with all damage rolls, a +2 bonus to all saving throws, and recover 2 hit points every round. If you use *guidance,* you increase the damage bonus until the end of your next turn to +5.

Finger of God? (Su): Once a day, you can increase your caster level for one arcane spell by your divine caster level. This affects all variables including saving throws and damage values.

CRIMSON LEAF

Not much is known about the Salvabrooke assassin's guild, the Crimson Leaf. What marks them apart from other such guilds is that, despite being labeled a radical order against the greater good by the nation's ruling government, there is no bounty placed on their capture. One Salvabrooke state official labeled them in private statement as being "a humorous irritation." Despite calls for their apprehension from Limshau, Kannos, and Abidan, Salvabrooke has made no effort to rein them in, publicly or privately. Part of this may be because of Salvabrooke's laissez-faire view of law enforcement: gimfen don't consider something a crime unless it does

CRIMSON LEAF

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+0	+0	+1	+0	Nemesis
2	+1	+1	+1	+1	Nothing Else Matters (1d6)
3	+2	+1	+2	+1	Leaping Frenzy
4	+3	+1	+2	+1	Nothing Else Matters (3d6)
5	+3	+2	+3	+2	Slippery Little Bugger
6	+4	+2	+3	+2	Nothing Else Matters (5d6)
7	+5	+2	+4	+2	Purposeful and Committed
8	+6	+3	+4	+3	Nothing Else Matters (7d6)
9	+6	+3	+5	+3	Victory or Death, Hopefully Victory
10	+7	+3	+5	+3	Nothing Else Matters (9d6)

serious harm to someone, and the worst the largest communities complain about are pickpockets and the occasional confidence scam, though both are practically an infestation across the land. The fact that a criminal organization has been tolerated for so long baffles those who don't know the full details.

The Crimson Leaf actually considers itself the final word of law in Salvabrooke. They are a ruthless vigilante force of trained gimfen whose sole purpose is to protect the innocent of the land from the greater evils that aim to exploit them. Every Malkut slaver that attempts to invade gimfen territory becomes their target and few of their caravans have survived the journey.

The Crimson Leaf claims a membership between 100 to 250 which travel throughout Salvabrooke and beyond, acting nonchalant and going about their lives until given a mission. This usually takes the form of a short, specific list of crimes, unique to each member, which the assassin is expected to punish immediately upon becoming aware of them. A farmer may be minding his crops and observes a crime detailed on his or her response list. He would leap into action and return to his duties before anyone knew he was gone. A Crimson Leaf may interfere to prevent in a crime not on his list if he actually witnesses it, but otherwise is expected to leave it to another of the brethren to avoid compromising the order's secrecy.

As a member of this group, you possess your own list of crimes to respond to. There is no jury, just an executioner. These crimes are not petty or trivial, but severe transgressions: slavery, rape, robbery with violence, and theft of sentimental treasures are common entries. Despite what other purposes you have in life, regardless of the mission you may be on or the job you have accepted, your duties as a Crimson Leaf always take precedence. Nothing else matters, even if it leads to the failure of your job and the abandonment of your friends.
As a Leaf, you are not foolish. You employ all your skills, whether direct or stealthy, to accomplish your goals. You are also patient, willing to hold until the target's fate is certain, but when the course is set, nothing else matters.

Hit Die: d6

REQUIREMENTS

Base Attack Bonus: +6
Origin: Gimfen from Salvabrooke
Skills: Acrobatics 6 ranks

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Disguise (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Perception (Wis), Perform (Cha), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Stealth (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: You are proficient with all simple and martial weapons and with light armor.

Nemesis (Ex): Starting at 1st level, after you roll initiative, you can select one target in line of sight as your nemesis. If you don't select one, then the first target you hit becomes your nemesis. The critical threat ranges of all your weapons increase by 2 against this opponent until you confirm a critical hit against it.

Nothing Else Matters (Ex): At 2nd level, you can ignore everything else but the enemy you have decided to kill. The first time you hit your nemesis during combat, you can decide to add additional damage to the hit. If you do so, you suffer a -3 penalty to AC and all saves until the end of your next turn. This additional damage is not increased with a critical hit.

2nd level: +1d6 + your character level
4th level: +3d6 + your character level
6th level: +5d6 + your character level
8th level: +7d6 + your character level
10th level: +9d6 + your character level

Leaping Frenzy (Ex): At 3rd level, when you charge your nemesis, you can pass through enemy occupied squares for the charge (but not through obstructions).

Slippery Little Bugger (Ex): At 5th level, you can use a move action on the same turn as a full round action. You can use *slippery little bugger* as many times a day as your Dexterity modifier.

Purposeful and Committed (Ex): At 7th level, as long as you move more than 5 feet (1 square) on your turn

and end your movement at least 5 feet (1 square) closer to your nemesis, you gain a +2 bonus to AC. Once you are adjacent to your nemesis, the +2 bonus applies only against your nemesis.

Victory or Death, Hopefully Victory (Ex): At 9th level, if you would normally recover hit points from any effect, you can forego the recovery and instead gain half the hit points you would regain as a damage bonus to your next successful attack against your nemesis. Multiple such bonuses stack. Your nemesis gains a +2 circumstance bonus to attack rolls against you until this damage has been dealt.

JANOAHN WALL CAPTAIN

As captain of the Janoahn wall, you have served selflessly for the protection of nothing short of the world. The Tethuss Bridge is the only route pagus take when attempting to cross from their lands into the south. They hate water and despise the treacheries of mountain travel. All that remains is the bridge and, as a wall captain, you direct your phalanx to maintain their shields in firm lock against whatever evil attempts to crash against it. You effortlessly guide your line to repel armies ten times the size. As a team, your group could withstand the onslaught of dragons, giants, or a pagus invasion.

You don't need religion to have a crusade and your belief is secure in the church of the shield wall. Your devotion to this faith is unwavering and your piety in this conviction ensures its walls will never crack against any assault to its tenets. As shields are locked and weapons are brandished, you preach to your choir to defend the house of blades and plates against the heathens desperate to break your line. But the walls of this church are held by the wills of men, not gods, and as long as they have conviction in themselves and their captain, the house will never crumble. You are the pastor of a devout order, your followers hanging on your words – the sage of this church of war.

Hit Die: d10

REQUIREMENTS

Base Attack Bonus: +6
Feat: Shield Proficiency
Trait: Knight of the Wall

CLASS SKILLS

Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (dungeoneering) (Int), Knowledge (engineering) (Int), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Survival (Wis), and Swim (Str)

Skill Ranks per Level: 2 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: You gain proficiency with all simple and martial weapons and with all armor and shields.

Team Assist (Ex): Starting at 1st level, as a free action, you can grant the benefits of the Knight of the Wall's *shield lock* feature to a single ally within 50 feet who doesn't have it. This ally must be wielding a shield they are proficient with. The ally retains the feature until the shield wall breaks or until you grant it to someone else.

Maintain the Line (Ex): At 3rd level, if your shield wall breaks for any reason, you can use an immediate action to relock the wall. As part of the action, you can move members of the wall up to 15 feet (3 squares) back into position.

Phalanx Attack (Ex): At 2nd level, while in a shield lock, when you make a full round attack, another ally in a shield lock with you can also make a single attack as an immediate action. This increases to two allies at 6th level and three allies at 10th level.

United Defense (Ex): At 4th level, if three or more allies are united with you in a shield wall, the entire wall gains a +1 bonus to AC. At 7th level, this bonus increases to +2 and at 9th level, it increases to +3.

Stalwart Fortification (Ex): At 5th level, once per day as a free action, all allies in the shield wall can set their initiative to the highest value in the wall. Unless the wall is broken, members in the wall cannot be subjected to bull rush or trample attacks, or be knocked prone. Creatures with reach cannot reach over the wall to attack any targets behind it. These effects stop once the wall is broken.

JANOAHN WALL CAPTAIN

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+1	+0	+0	Team Assist
2	+2	+1	+0	+0	Phalanx Attack (1)
3	+3	+2	+1	+1	Maintain the Line
4	+4	+2	+1	+1	United Defense (+1)
5	+5	+3	+1	+1	Stalwart Fortification
6	+6	+3	+2	+2	Phalanx Attack (2)
7	+7	+4	+2	+2	United Defense (+2)
8	+8	+4	+2	+2	Lockdown
9	+9	+5	+3	+3	United Defense (+3)
10	+10	+5	+3	+3	Phalanx Attack (3)

Lockdown: At 8th level, while in a shield lock, you may wield a two-handed weapon with one hand.

KINSHOA MASTER

"It will come to all of us. In time… Chaparrans will become plants and animals, narros will become rocks, damaskans will become memories, laudenians--clouds, gimfen--dreams…and us…we'll become the darkness."

Sharajaclypse

Most tenenbri are social creatures, but only among themselves. Tenenbri understand well the distaste other races have for them, and to a certain extent, a deep current of repressed self-loathing extends throughout the entire species. It appears a natural instinct for tenenbri to seek contemplative isolation at some point during their lives.

The tenenbri that pursue this path of isolation eventually discover their attuned senses pick up far more than the normal world presents. The tenenbri's widespread faith in Oaken claims that the only way to truly experience their god's grace is to remove all other physical senses. Temples in Vanaka have prayer chambers with stagnant pools that can be sealed from external stimuli. Many followers have reported encountering visions that have either reaffirmed their faith or disillusioned them. After this period of isolation, the disciple is then encouraged to leave his home to contemplate on the experience, waiting for a moment of clarity. Those that depart often return to question the morals and motives of their empire. On a few rare occasions, they do not return, and either take to the open road, become hermits, or turn into kythix.

As a Kinshoa master, you realized that enlightenment comes from the discipline to control one's body and mind. You can perceive what cannot be seen. You can taste emotions on your lips and smell the impulses of your enemies. With such perceptions of the world, nothing comes as a surprise, and you never know fear. It is said you are aware of your own death moments before your final breath. You despise deception and have left your people because the corrupted values of its government made you ill.

Hit Die: d10

REQUIREMENTS

Base Attack Bonus: +6
Race: Tenenbri
Proficiency: Any sword

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Escape Artist (Dex), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (dungeoneering) (Int), Perception (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Stealth (Dex), Survival (Wis)

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int Modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: You gain proficiency in all simple and martial weapons and with all light armor.

Wisdom Like an Ocean (Ex): You gain a +2 bonus to initiative at 1st level, increasing to +3 at 4th level, +4 at 7th level, and +5 at 10th level.

Bringer of Justice (Ex): At 2nd level, if you beat the initiative of all enemies and are not surprised yourself, you gain a surprise round. If you gain a surprise round by any means, you can take a full round action instead of a single standard or move action.

Precognitive Outcome (Ex): At 3rd level, as many times as day as your Wisdom modifier, if you are hit with a melee attack which is not a critical threat, you can use an immediate action to turn that hit into a miss and make a single attack against the enemy.

Iaodona (Ex): At 5th level, you gain the following bonuses against all flat-footed targets: +2 to attack rolls; +4 to damage rolls, and the critical threat range of all your weapons increases by 2. At 9th level this increases to a +3 bonus to attack rolls; +6 to damage rolls, and the critical threat range of all your weapons increases by 3.

Awakening of Enlightenment (Ex): At 6th level, once a day, if an adjacent enemy scores a critical hit on you, you nullify your enemy's attack as an immediate action and make an attack against the enemy: if you hit, this attack is an automatic critical hit.

Perfection of Form (Ex): At 8th level, once a day, you can enter a meditative state. After one minute has passed, you can remove one of the following conditions: Confused, dazed, deafened, shaken, staggered, or stunned.

KINSHOA MASTER

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+1	+0	+1	Wisdom Like an Ocean (+2)
2	+2	+1	+0	+1	Bringer of Justice
3	+3	+2	+1	+2	Precognitive Outcome
4	+4	+2	+1	+2	Wisdom Like an Ocean (+3)
5	+5	+3	+1	+3	Iaodona
6	+6	+3	+2	+3	Awakening of Enlightenment
7	+7	+4	+2	+4	Wisdom Like an Ocean (+4)
8	+8	+4	+2	+4	Perfection of Form
9	+9	+5	+3	+5	Iaodona
10	+10	+5	+3	+5	Wisdom Like an Ocean (+5)

136 KNIGHT OF ABRAHAM

A member of the order of Abraham stands as the iconic knight of legend, the quintessential guardian in shining armor known previously only in story and myth. Across many barriers of language and culture such valiant defenders reveal themselves through determined purpose, ironclad beliefs, and unwavering integrity. You maintain your moral fiber, especially when those morals are the most inconvenient. You respect the laws of your faith, not necessarily the laws of where you reside. You believe in chivalry and honor, mercy and valor. You will never take the life of one who cannot defend himself. You will always prefer to protect the innocent, the poor, or the weak over the defeat of your enemies.

Courage is important, but you must temper that courage with common sense – to know when to fight and when not to. You must maintain your faith in the integrity and kindness of civilized people and/or to your God. Since a good and merciful God never asks a follower to die needlessly, you are not required to die for your faith, your lord, or even for your own honor. You only willingly die to protect others or to defeat evil in whatever forms it takes. You give to charity but will not give away your last sovereign if it means you are unable to be charitable on the morrow. You are courteous to others, will forgive the sins of anyone if asked in sincerity, and act in humility of your own strengths and abilities. As a member of the order, you must follow these simple edicts: benevolence, faith, humility, integrity, loyalty, mercy, and patience. You must adhere to these and keep the standards you wish to uphold. Breaking any of these ideals brings upon you a personal shame even if no others witness the act. You never look for an excuse to bypass your morals. You must never slay an enemy unarmed or helpless, never turn against an ally

KNIGHT OF ABRAHAM

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+1	+0	+0	Of Legend, Strike Down the Wicked
2	+2	+1	+0	+0	Excess Stamina (+2)
3	+3	+2	+1	+1	Line in the Sand
4	+4	+2	+1	+1	Excess Stamina (+3)
5	+5	+3	+1	+1	Faithful Protector
6	+6	+3	+2	+2	Excess Stamina (+4)
7	+7	+4	+2	+2	Devout Aura of Courage
8	+8	+4	+2	+2	Excess Stamina (+5)
9	+9	+5	+3	+3	Ironclad Persona
10	+10	+5	+3	+3	Last Stand

for selfish motives, and never ignore those in need.

Hit Die: d10

REQUIREMENTS

Base Attack Bonus: +6
Feat: Rousing Speech
Trait: Squire of Abraham
Special: You must return to Janoah to be knighted.

CLASS SKILLS

Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis)

Skill Ranks per Level: 2 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: You gain proficiency with all simple and martial weapons and with all armor and shields.

Of Legend (Ex): Starting at 1st level, after you and your allies roll for initiative, every ally within 25 feet of you gains a +2 bonus to attack rolls until they hit.

Strike Down the Wicked (Ex): Starting at 1st level, you bring forth all remaining might, saving nothing for your victory march. As many times a day as your class level, you can use a swift action and gain your Wisdom bonus to melee damage rolls until the end of your next turn.

Excess Stamina (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, you gain a +2 bonus to Fortitude saves. This bonus increases to +3 at 4th level, +4 at 6th level, and +5 at 8th level.

Line in the Sand (Ex): At 3rd level, you declare your intentions with words or a firm stance of defiance against approaching evil. Whenever you hit with an opportunity attack, the target is also pinned until the start of your next turn.

Faithful Protector (Ex): At 5th level, once per day, you can use a swift action to select one creature within 10 feet as your ward. All attacks against your ward target you instead. Your ward cannot make attacks while this power is in effect. If the target ends its turn out of range or attacks an enemy, it is no longer your ward. If you move willingly (not through a push or a slide), you can pull your ward with you.

Devout Aura of Courage (Ex): At 7th level, you gain a +4 bonus to Will saves against fear-based attacks.

Ironclad Persona (Ex): At 9th level, you are immune to being shaken and staggered.

Last Stand (Ex): Starting at 10th level, when you are reduced to 0 or fewer hit points, you do not fall unconscious. You can take only a single standard or move action per turn while under the effects of *last stand*, and when you move you can only take a 5-foot step.

KOANA ACADEMIC

Upon finally graduating, the Koana apprentice is believed to have a greater comprehension of the arcane arts than equivalent graduates do from other schools, endowed with the understanding that all power from Attricana attempts to encourage life in every possible form, from the beautiful to the revolting. Koana teachings encourage this ideal, which is why their spells have an unusual slant for being slightly whimsical. Instead of mere balls of fire or lightning leaping from fingers, Koana wizards create living, semi-intelligent beings that act apparently on their own in service of their master for the brief time they exist. They live for their creator and willingly die for them, happy that they were able to fulfill such a noble life in such a short time. The Koana professors, or academics, play with their spells with an especially creative whimsy. The spells run, dance, or fly around while normal spells accomplish their task and vanish. In the scope of the brilliance that is Attricana magic, Koana wizards know how to add gusto to their spellcraft.

Hit Die: d6

REQUIREMENT

Attribute: Intelligence 16
Trait: Koana Student (or honorary Koana graduate, at the GM's discretion)
Skills: Knowledge (arcana) 4 ranks
Spells: Able to cast 3rd level spells; Evocation specialist.

KOANA ACADEMIC

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL	SPELL PER DAY
1	+0	+0	+0	+0	Thinks for Itself	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
2	+1	+1	+1	+1	Living Energy (1/day)	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
3	+1	+1	+1	+1	Sense of Existence (1/day)	
4	+2	+1	+2	+2		+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
5	+2	+2	+2	+2	Living Energy (2/day)	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
6	+3	+2	+3	+3	Sense of Existence (2/day)	
7	+3	+2	+3	+3		+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
8	+4	+3	+4	+4	Living Energy (3/day)	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
9	+4	+3	+4	+4	Sense of Existence (3/day)	
10	+5	+3	+5	+5	Loyal Embodiment	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class

CLASS SKILLS

Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Knowledge (dungeoneering) (Int), Knowledge (engineering) (Int), Knowledge (geography) (Int), Knowledge (history) (Int), Knowledge (local) (Int), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Knowledge (nobility) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Spellcraft (Int)

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: You gain no proficiency with any weapon or armor.

Thinks for Itself (Sp): Starting at 1st level, you can move the area of effect of any area spell you cast with a duration of more than one round by 5 feet at the beginning of your turn, until the spell expires.

Living Energy (Sp): Once a day at 2nd level, one evocation spell you cast recasts itself at the start of your turn after it expires. If the spell targeted a creature, you can target a different creature: if it had an area of effect, you can move the area up to 50 feet. You can use *living energy* twice at 5th level and three times at 8th level.

Sense of Existence (Sp): At 3rd level, your capacity to understand Attricana allows you to instill life in a normal spell. Once a day, as a free action, if a target fails a Reflex save against an evocation spell you cast, at the beginning of your next turn you can force the same target to make an identical save or suffer the effects of the same spell, even if the target leaves the target area or moves out of range. You cannot use *sense of existence* on the same spell as *living energy*. You can use *sense of existence* twice at 6th level and three times at 9th level.

Loyal Embodiment (Su): At 10th level, you can use the abilities *sense of existence* and *living energy* with the same spell.

KRYSALLIS

Chaparrans accept chaos in all its forms. Their communities are often small. They act on instinct and allow emotion and personal morality to maintain the fundamental civility of their culture over the peskiness of actual laws. They also embrace the idea of the overall fate of the fae to succumb to eventual anarchy. They believe nirvana and true heaven in the Eden promised by Berufu awaits when the fae unreservedly accept their fate—to merge with the world around, to vanish from reality altogether. Each further branch takes them one step closer to understanding the purpose of existence and the chaparrans hold a devout faith that their descendant races like the nariisa and sylphids are one step closer to paradise.

Many chaparrans pursue this devotion through their children, hoping they are gifted as one of these cousin races. They think of their species as a whole and don't preoccupy themselves with the lack of their own enlightenment. A few radicals have gone to burying themselves in fertile soil for years at a time, never jostling save for the donations of food from family and passers-by. Others refuse to leave their named-tree for their entire lives and make its survival and development the only priority. Others decide to reach unity with nature by the absolute discipline of their craft. This can come in the form of adept magic use or the perfection of melee and ranged combat, of which the latter is the most common. As one of these rare chaparrans, you begin to exhibit strange properties, mostly physical. Your hair is the color of grass, leaves grow from the strands, and when you curl your fingers around your totem or weapon, you become one. Whether a weapon or a totem, your hand vanishes into the wood and you feel every bend and twist of the item as if it was a complete appendage. You may separate as easily but this is only the first step … eventually, you may be able to push yourself further, to take the next step in fae evolution.

Hit Die: d8

REQUIREMENT

Spells: Ability to cast 3rd level arcane spells.
Origin: Chaparran or Darawren
Totem: Longbow

KRYSALLIS

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL	SPELL PER DAY
1	+1	+0	+0	+1	Totem Synergy	
2	+2	+1	+1	+1	Inner Light (1/day)	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
3	+3	+1	+1	+2		+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
4	+4	+1	+1	+2	Inner Light (2/day)	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
5	+5	+2	+2	+3	From Wood to Soul	
6	+6	+2	+2	+3	Inner Light (3/day)	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
7	+7	+2	+2	+4	Drawing from Paradise	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
8	+8	+3	+3	+4	Inner Light (4/day)	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
9	+9	+3	+3	+5		+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
10	+10	+3	+3	+5	Highest Plane of the Soul	

CLASS SKILLS

Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (geography) (Int), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Perception (Wis), Ride (Dex), Spellcraft (Int), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str)

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: You gain no proficiency with any weapon or armor.

Totem Synergy: Starting at 1st level, you develop a spiritual connection with your totem. You gain a bonus to your spell DC sequel to the enhancement bonus of your longbow.

Spells per Day: When a new krysallis level is gained, you gain new spells per day as if you had also gained a level in wizard or druid. You do not, however, gain other benefits a character of either class would have gained. If you had more than one spellcasting class before becoming a krysallis, you must decide to which class you add each level of krysallis for the purpose of determining spells per day.

Inner Light (Su): At 2nd level, you are able to draw an inner strength only reserved for enlightened creatures. Your awareness of your own soul allows you to push yourself harder. You can infuse a spell into an arrow fired from your totem. The spell only affects the target you hit, regardless of its normal range or area. The target can no longer make a saving throw against the effect. You can only infuse a spell with the casting time of a full-round action or shorter. You can use *inner light* once at 2nd level, twice at 4th level, three times at 6th level and four times at 8th level. Once a day at 6th level, if you miss with *inner light*, you regain the use of that spell at the beginning of your next turn.

From Wood to Soul (Su): At 5th level, you are able to travel to where your arrow lands. Once a day, use a standard action to fire an arrow anywhere within range (this can be part of an attack). Immediately after impact, you teleport to that location. If you strike a tree, wall, or even a creature, you appear adjacent to the arrow. If you miss your intended target, you can either teleport to a location 15 ft from the target or you can elect to not use this feature.

Drawing from Paradise (Su): At 7th level, the ranges of any close- or medium-ranged spells are increased to the range of your longbow.

Highest Plane of the Soul (Su): At 10th level, you are closing in on the final plane and very little separates you from what you possess. Your very will pulls unseen power from an unknown source. Once a day, for one round, all your ranged spells requiring a standard action to cast can be made as part of a full round attack as if they were ranged attacks.

MUTAHARRIK CAPTAIN

Leading the Kannos Kavaliers are the Mutaharrik Captains. You've probably spent more hours on your horse than others have on their own feet. Regardless if you raised your steed from birth or bought it from a stable, as an elite from Kannos, you can prepare any animal for combat within a week. You do not afford yourself any luxuries over the men under your command. You wear the same light armor, ride a horse with no barding, and charge alongside the line rather than behind it.

You and your animal are now one combined spirit and you no longer need to whistle for its attention or whip it to speed, requiring only a few words or a nudge. It may even act on its own if needed. The elite officers of Kannos forego all other pleasantries in favor of their bond. You don't bother with wives or children. It has even been said a Captain's steed lives for the entire life of its master, dying the second its Captain does.

Hit Die: d10

REQUIREMENTS

Feat: Mounted Combat

Trait: Kavalier or Halfmaster

Skills: Acrobatics 5 ranks, Handle Animal 5 ranks, Ride 5 ranks

Special: You must return to Kannos for promotion. You must own a Large natural beast as a mount.

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Escape Artist (Dex), Handle Animal (Cha), Knowledge (nature (Int), Ride (Dex), Survival (Wis)

Skill Ranks per Level: 2 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: You gain proficiency with all simple and martial weapons and with all light armor and shields.

Whisperer (Ex): Starting at 1st level, you automatically pass any Ride checks of DC20 or less.

High Ground (Ex): At 2nd level, when attacking adjacent targets smaller than your mount, you gain an additional +1 bonus to melee attack rolls (in addition to the +1 you already gain from higher ground). In addition, you no longer provoke opportunity attacks if you fire ranged weapons against adjacent targets smaller than your mount while mounted.

Plow Through the Lines (Ex): At 3rd level, you can assault an enemy's flank, slashing down at those that move away from your steed's onslaught. When you charge while mounted, you can make one additional attack against any enemy in range at any point during the move other than the target of your charge: this increases to two additional attacks at 6th level and three at 9th level. You cannot attack the same target multiple times.

Equestrian Charge (Ex): At 4th level, you are able to leap from your horse after a charge. You count your mount's speed as your speed for the purposes of the jump and you do not provoke opportunity attacks passing through squares occupied by targets smaller than your mount. You count your movement beginning at the end of the charge.

Master Warmount (Ex): At 5th level, your mount can move up to half its speed, counting as a 5-foot step, without taking up any of your actions.

Impeccable Balance (Ex): At 7th level, you cannot involuntarily fall from your horse unless your horse falls as well, even if you are knocked prone or unconscious.

Mounted Specialty (Ex): At 8th level, select one of the following abilities

Ranged: The penalty you take when using a ranged weapon while mounted is reduced by 2. This stacks with the Mounted Archery feat.

Melee: You gain a +2 damage bonus against adjacent targets the same size or smaller than your mount while you are mounted.

Unbridled Loyalty: At 10th level, the speed of your mount increases by 5 feet. If you are not mounted, your mount can pass through your square, allowing you to mount it as a free action.

ORDER OF THE CLOTH

You are a member of Baruch Malkut's inner circle—an elite order that traces their line back to the loyal guards of the king, when he traveled from Southam to stake his domain. The crusade consisted of him and a loyal retinue of oath-brothers that were referred to only as "cut from the cloth," forsaking even their individual names. As he claimed his kingdom, Darius Konig kept his guards close, and they wished for nothing else, neither land nor titles.

Since these humble beginnings, the order has grown in number, but their reputation has never faltered. Newer members are not so enigmatic. Keeping their names and accepting claims of property and treasure, they are still as devout in the faith as their founders. They are brought in from various military channels and trained separately in isolation to be the greatest line of assassins the land has ever known.

You are not one to play fair. To be of the order is to know every cheat, every dirty play you can exploit to eliminate your target. You might have been once a bandit or a slaver or a paid assassin. Now a loyal member of the cloth, you follow the edicts of their holy cause, to eliminate all who disagree with the commandments of King Darius. Any who fail to understand his wisdom will meet the fate of all heathens, regardless if their ears are pointed or not.

If you venture from your homeland, you do so on a mission for the betterment of the king's power. Your loyalty is to the king and the king only. Even other citizens of Baruch Malkut are not immune to your wrath if they don't show total piety to the true authority.

Hit Die: d6

MUTAHARRIK CAPTAIN

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+1	+1	+0	Whisperer
2	+2	+1	+1	+0	High Ground
3	+3	+2	+2	+1	Plow Through the Lines (+1 attack)
4	+4	+2	+2	+1	Equestrian Charge
5	+5	+3	+3	+1	Master Warmount
6	+6	+3	+3	+2	Plow Through the Lines (+2 attacks)
7	+7	+4	+4	+2	Impeccable Balance
8	+8	+4	+4	+2	Mounted Specialty
9	+9	+5	+5	+3	Plow Through the Lines (+3 attacks)
10	+10	+5	+5	+3	Unbridled Loyalty

REQUIREMENTS

Alignment: Any non-good
Skills: Stealth 5 ranks, Survival 5 ranks
Special: From Baruch Malkut

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Disable Device (Int), Disguise (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Perception (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Stealth (Dex), Swim (Str)

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: You gain proficiency with all simple weapons and with all light armor.

Death Grip (Ex): Starting at 1st level, while having an enemy in a grapple, you gain a bonus to damage rolls against that enemy equal to your Intelligence modifier.

Sneak Attack: This is exactly like the rogue ability of the same name. The extra damage dealt increases by +1d6 every other level (2nd, 4th, 6th, 8th, and 10th). If a member of the order of the cloth gets a sneak attack bonus from another source, the bonuses on damage stack.

Pull to the Ground (Ex): At 2nd level, once a day, if you sustain a grapple for three turns, at the start of the fourth, the target is helpless until the end of your turn. If you a grappling a helpless target, delivering a coup de grace can be made as part of sustaining the grapple. If the target is not killed, you must start *pull to the ground* from the beginning again.

No Negotiation (Ex): At 4th level, if you are not surprised, you gain an action before initiative is rolled.

Into the Shadows (Ex): At 6th level, if you kill an adjacent creature, you can move up to your speed as a free action.

Cheat (Ex): At 8th level, once a day, if you roll a natural 1 on an attack roll, that attack roll becomes a natural 20.

Sand in the Eye (Ex): You don't play fair. There are no rules in war. Those who think otherwise lose. At 10th level, you can use a move action to stagger an adjacent target your size or smaller until the start of your next turn.

PALADIN

A paladin fights only when necessary. You carry a strict faith in yourself or in the religion you follow and swear absolute loyalty to that devotion and its tenets. You believe the shields of truth and virtue protect better than any armor forged by man. You need not be tied to a lord, house, or kingdom: you may wander the world, dispatching evil when encountered. Despite the stereotype that paladins are unreasonable, egotistical and vain, the majority are far from this cliché. You remain humble, giving of yourself when needed, regardless of the strain on body and soul.

Pride is a sin not often seen in the modern paladin. When one sees arrogance and condescension in a lowly warrior or even a fully knighted lord claiming membership in a paladin order, this declaration of virtue spills from a liar's lips. You possess neither a specific creed nor a code. You maintain your moral fiber, especially when those morals are the most inconvenient. You respect the laws of your faith, not necessarily the laws of where you reside. If they are in conflict, then your morals take precedence. You may not need to pray every single hour; neither does your faith require you to pray a specific way in a specific tongue. You might even follow no gods at all. You can claim you require neither the promise of eternal reward nor the threat of everlasting damnation to behave in a manner that is selfless or even "holy." Whatever power taps the shoulder of a potential paladin, it is capable of seeing into the heart and finding the goodness that resides within.

If an enemy asks for forgiveness, you must accept it unless the request is not genuine. You may appear in the most unlikely of circumstances, rising seemingly spontaneously to confront the darkness. You may emerge unexpectedly in the midst of grief and loss as an avenger and guardian, or you may wander for years or decades, drawn towards your destiny before finally manifesting your abilities. This, combined with their relative rarity, propensity to wander, and short life

ORDER OF THE CLOTH

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+0	+0	+1	+0	Death Grip, Sneak Attack (+1d6)
2	+1	+1	+1	+1	Pull to the Ground
3	+2	+1	+2	+1	Sneak Attack (+2d6)
4	+3	+1	+2	+1	No Negotiation
5	+3	+2	+3	+2	Sneak Attack (+3d6)
6	+4	+2	+3	+2	Into the Shadows
7	+5	+2	+4	+2	Sneak Attack (+4d6)
8	+6	+3	+4	+3	Cheat
9	+6	+3	+5	+3	Sneak Attack (+5d6)
10	+7	+3	+5	+3	Sand in the Eye

PALADIN

expectancy, has made the source of paladin abilities almost impossible to study.

Though many of them may claim divine power and declare their actions were bequeathed from a higher order, few are true paladins. If one acts commonly against his ethics on a whim or professes his honor justifies acts others claim criminal, chances are he is a paladin in title only.

Hit Die: d10

REQUIREMENTS

Alignment: Lawful good or neutral good

Base Attack Bonus: +5

Skills: Perform 5 ranks, Knowledge (Religion) 5 ranks.

Feat: Weapon Focus (any martial or exotic weapon) OR Improved Unarmed Strike.

CLASS SKILLS

Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (nobility) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), and Sense Motive (Wis).

Skill Points per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: You gain proficiency with all simple and martial weapons and with all armor and shields.

Virtuous Arsenal (Su): At 1st level, any weapon you wield becomes both lawful and good aligned for the purposes of overcoming damage reduction for as long as you wield it.

Aura of Courage (Su): At 1st level, you are immune to fear (magical or otherwise). Each ally within 10 feet you gains a +4 morale bonus on saving throws against fear effects. This ability functions while you are conscious but not if you are unconscious or dead.

Divine Perception (Su): At 1st level, you gain a sacred bonus to Sense Motive checks equal to your Charisma modifier.

PALADIN

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+1	+0	+0	Virtuous Arsenal, Aura of Courage, Divine Perception
2	+2	+1	+0	+0	+1 level Divine Spell Progression of existing class OR Exalted Path
3	+3	+2	+1	+1	Pure body
4	+4	+2	+1	+1	+1 level Divine Spell Progression of existing class OR Exalted Path
5	+5	+3	+1	+1	Inspire Greatness
6	+6	+3	+2	+2	+1 level Divine Spell Progression of existing class OR Exalted Path
7	+7	+4	+2	+2	
8	+8	+4	+2	+2	+1 level Divine Spell Progression of existing class OR Exalted Path
9	+9	+5	+3	+3	Inspire Heroics
10	+10	+5	+3	+3	+1 level Divine Spell Progression of existing class OR Exalted Path, Sanctified

Spells per Day/Spells Known: When a new paladin level is gained, you gain new divine spells per day (and spells known, if applicable) if you had also gained a level in the divine spellcasting class you belonged to before adding the prestige class. You do not, however, gain any other benefits a character of that class would have gained. You do not gain the ability to cast divine spells unless previously able to do so. You have the option to forego this increase at any given level and take an *exalted path* (below) and may alternate level to level.

Exalted Path (Su): If you cannot or wish not to progress in spell casting, you may instead gain one of the exalted paths listed below. Activating a path is a free action, and the path lasts for as many rounds as your Wisdom modifier. Paths may be chosen in any order though several require other paths as prerequisites. You may only use each selection once per day, although you can choose the same path multiple times in order to get more than one use. Each time you use an exalted path, you generate a powerful lawful good aura that cannot be concealed or hidden in any way. This white radiance acts as a light spell for the duration of the ability and 1d4 rounds afterward.

Paladin Level 2: You can use one exalted path at a time. You may prematurely end one to begin another, though the terminated ability still counts as a use per day.

Paladin level 6: You can use two exalted paths at a time. Both must be activated on the same turn. You may prematurely end both to begin others, though the terminated abilities still count as uses per day.

Paladin Level 10: You can use four exalted paths at a time. All four must be activated on the same turn. You may prematurely end all four to begin others, though the terminated abilities still count as uses per day.

Aftereffects: After an exalted path ends (naturally or prematurely), you must make a Fortitude save or suffer the following effects. Single path—DC15 or suffer fatigue until rested. Two paths—DC20 or suffer exhaustion until rested. Four paths—DC25 or you drop to 0 hit points instantly and fall unconscious regardless of any effects that normally prevent unconsciousness. You cannot by roused from his slumbering state for 2d6 minutes.

The available exalted paths are:

Supreme Tolerance: You gain unseen fortitude when facing certain death square in its eyes. You gain temporary hit points equal to your character level x3.

Armor of Glory: You shrug off all but the greatest blows. You gain DR 5/Evil, which increases to DR 10/ Evil at 10th level. *Prerequisite:* Supreme Tolerance.

Wrath of Will: You wield your weapon with remarkable skill and force never before encountered. Any weapon you wield that strikes an evil opponent automatically confirms critical threats without having to re-roll. This effect does not apply to any weapon already enchanted with a magical effect related to critical hits.

Line in the Sand: Any enemy up to one size larger than you that is struck by your opportunity attack ends its movement within the threatened square and is knocked prone.

Divine Strength: Channeling an inner light, you bring forth all remaining might of mind and muscle, saving nothing for recovery and victory march later. You add your Wisdom modifier to your melee damage rolls against evil opponents. *Prerequisite:* Wrath of Will.

Faithful Bodyguard: You swear loyalty to and protection of a specific person. Your fidelity is so absolute, you will gladly lay down your life for the other. Select one living ally within 10 feet: all attacks against that ally target you instead as long as you are within 10 feet of them. You cannot change your ally for the duration of the path, and the effect ends if the ally is out of range at end of your turn.

Last Stand: You cannot fall unconscious, begin dying, or die while this path is in effect, although you can still be targeted by death-related effects. If you are below 0 hit points or under a death effect when this path expires, the deferred effects take hold instantly.

Prerequisite: Armor of Glory.

Pure Body (Ex): At 3rd level, you are immune to all diseases, including supernatural and magical diseases.

Inspire Greatness (Su): At 5th level, as a full-round action, your beaming charisma and rousing words inspires greatness in one living, non-evil ally within 30 feet per 3 character levels, granting him extra fighting capability. The ally/allies must see you and hear the stirring words of the speech. The effect lasts for as long as the ally hears you and for 5 rounds thereafter. A creature so inspired gains a +2 competence bonus to attack rolls, and a +1 morale bonus to Fortitude saves. You can *inspire greatness* once per day per 3 character levels.

Inspire Heroics (Su): At 9th level, you can inspire tremendous heroism in in one living, non-evil ally within 30 feet per 3 character levels. The ally/allies must see you and hear the stirring words of the speech. The effect lasts for as long as the ally hears you and for 5 rounds thereafter. A creature so inspired gains a +4 morale bonus on all saving throws and a +4 dodge bonus to AC. The effect lasts for as long as the ally hears you and for 5 rounds thereafter. You can *inspire heroics* once per day per 3 character levels.

Sanctified (Su): At 10th level, because of your consecrated body, you are blessed with a permanent *gentle repose* effect (as the spell). You cannot be turned into any undead, regardless of your state (even if hacked into pieces). No part of your body may be used in any corrupt/necromancy spell or spell-like effect.

EX-PALADINS

If you wander from your moral code in a moment of weakness or due to a tragic conflict of circumstances, you do *not* lose any of your paladin abilities – however, in keeping with your alignment, you must find some way of atoning to assuage your conscience for your lapse. Repeated failure to do so may be grounds for changing the good-evil axis of your alignment, in consultation with the GM. If you become neutral, none of your abilities related to good or evil work until you once more adhere to one extreme or the other. If you become evil, all abilities related to good now relate to evil and vice versa. Either way, you can no longer advance as a paladin until you atone and become good again. Note that the *atonement* spell will not work for this purpose – you must atone through deeds, and only regain your self-imposed grace when you and the GM agree that you have done so.

RANGER

Rangers are a broad classification of several types of adventurers. They are nomads, drifters, bandits, horsemen, scouts, and sentinels. Rangers connect themselves with their surroundings, whatever those might be. They travel light, fast, and by stealth. They survive in environments where others suffer. They know the ways of wilderness and often call home the realms avoided by other travelers. Rangers excel with the arrow. What they accomplish with the bow is nothing short of extraordinary. No one beats the ranger at ranged combat. Despite the cliché, rangers can be found everywhere on Earth, even in the largest echan cities. They find uses everywhere. However, most still wander the lands, searching for a path or party or simply, an adversary.

Hit Die: d10.

REQUIREMENTS

Skills: Knowledge (nature) 6 ranks, Survival 6 ranks, Handle Animal 6 ranks.

Feats: Weapon Focus (any bow)

Proficiency: Any bow

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (dungeoneering) (Int), Knowledge (geography) (Int), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Perception (Wis), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis), Stealth (Dex), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str)

Skill Points per Level: 6 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: You gain proficiency with all simple and martial weapons and with all armor and shields.

Favored Terrain (Ex): At 2nd level, you may select a type of terrain from the list below. You gain a +2 bonus to initiative and Knowledge (geography), Perception, Stealth, and Survival checks when in this terrain. If you are traveling through your favored terrain, you normally leave no trail and cannot be tracked (though you may leave a trail if you choose).

Favored Terrains: Cold (ice, glaciers, snow, and tundra), desert (sand and wastelands), forest (coniferous and deciduous), jungle, mountain (including hills), plains, swamp, underground (caves and dungeons), urban (buildings, streets, and sewers), or water (above and below the surface)

Track (Ex): You add your class level to any Survival checks made to follow or identify tracks.

Wild Empathy (Ex): You can improve the initial attitude of an animal. This ability functions just like a Diplomacy check to improve the attitude of a person. You roll 1d20 and add your ranger level and your Charisma bonus to determine the wild empathy check result. The typical domestic animal has a starting attitude of indifferent, while wild animals are usually unfriendly.

To use wild empathy, you and the animal must be within 30 feet of one another under normal visibility conditions. Generally, influencing an animal in this way takes 1 minute, but, as with influencing people, it might take more or less time. You can also use this ability to influence a magical beast with an Intelligence score of 1 or 2, but you take a –4 penalty on the check.

Improved Bow Combat (Ex): At 1st, 4th, 7th, and 10th level, you may choose one of the following feats (you must meet all the prerequisites of the feat):

Deadly Aim, Far Shot, Improved Critical (longbow or shortbow), Improved Precise Shot, Manyshot, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Shot on the Run. When you have five of any of these feats from any source, you may opt to choose one of the following special abilities instead. Unless otherwise specified, you can only choose each ability once. You must be wearing light armor or no armor to gain the benefits.

Greater Improved Critical: The critical range of your bow increases by +1. *Prerequisite:* Improved Critical feat.

Channel Strength: You gain a +2 damage bonus with all attacks from a shortbow or longbow. You may select this ability a second time; the damage result is cumulative.

Damage Penetration: Choose silver, fae iron, angelite, good, or evil. All your arrows, regardless of their type, always count as this type in addition when penetrating damage resistance. You may select this ability a second time to select a second type.

Power Arrow: You can choose to take a -1 penalty on all ranged attack rolls with a bow to gain a +2 bonus on to ranged damage rolls. When your base attack bonus reaches +4, and every 4 points thereafter, you can take an additional -1 penalty for an additional +2 bonus. You

RANGER

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+1	+1	+0	Track, Wild empathy, Improved Bow Combat
2	+2	+1	+1	+1	Favored Terrain, Long Arc
3	+3	+2	+2	+1	Dead eye (1/day)
4	+4	+2	+2	+1	Improved Bow Combat
5	+5	+3	+3	+2	Improvisational Arrow
6	+6	+3	+3	+2	Swift tracker, Dead Eye (2/day)
7	+7	+4	+4	+2	Improved Bow Combat
8	+8	+4	+4	+3	Camouflage
9	+9	+5	+5	+3	Dead Eye (3/day)
10	+10	+5	+5	+3	Hide in Plain Sight, Improved Bow Combat

must choose to use this ability before making an attack roll, and its effects last until your next turn.

Pass Through: Once per turn, if you kill a target with an arrow shot, you are able to strike another target in a straight line behind it within the weapon's normal range. You take a -4 penalty to the second attack.

Long Arc (Ex): Once a day, starting at 2nd level, you can fire a long range arrow shot as a full-round attack. Select one creature at least three times your weapon's range increment away and make a single ranged attack with your longbow. You gain a +10 circumstance bonus to the attack roll. If you score a critical threat, you automatically confirm the critical hit.

Dead Eye (Ex): While wearing only light armor or no armor, you can declare a critical threat you make with a bow to be an automatic critical hit. You may do this once a day at 3rd level, twice a day at 6th level, and three times a day at 9th level.

Improvisational Arrow (Ex): At 5th level, once per turn if an enemy makes an opportunity attack against you triggered by your ranged attack with a bow, you can make a melee attack against them using the arrow as a free action: you are considered proficient for this attack despite the arrow being an improvised weapon. If your bow has a magical enhancement bonus, it applies to the arrow attack. A hit inflicts 1d6 damage: if you kill the enemy with this attack, you do not suffer the opportunity attack. Your ranged attack roll that triggered the opportunity attack suffers a -2 penalty.

Swift Tracker (Ex): At 6th level, you can move at your normal speed while following tracks without taking the normal -5 penalty. You take only a -10 penalty (instead of the normal -20) when moving at up to twice normal speed while tracking.

Camouflage (Ex): At 8th level, you can use the Stealth skill to hide in your favored terrains, even if the terrain doesn't grant cover or concealment.

Hide in Plain Sight (Ex): At 10th level, while in your favored terrain, you can use the Stealth skill even while being observed.

RAVNORRA

Narros take pride in their vocation and seldom break their disciplined lives for merriment or debauchery, lest they bring dishonor to their names. Though many narros devote themselves to mining and the acquisition and creation of goods, some dedicate themselves to the noble path of defending their house and the innocent. Narros soldiers all follow a strict code of honor, but a few take their discipline to an amazing degree.

All your life, you have lived alongside your blade. The crest on your shield is father and mother. Your house is an ideal you will defend to the end. You wake to don your armor and seldom remove it save for sleep or death. You will know neither mate nor child: your defense of the house and realm take precedence over all other desires. To break these oaths not only brings dishonor to you, but to the house and family as well. If such a code is broken, or if the house and/or lord is destroyed, you become an outcast, a 'vorronar' or ronin, set adrift on the waves of fate to find a cause or to live by the sword. You may continue your code, or do your best just to stay alive.

Many humans have remarked upon the similarity between the narros noble warrior and the ancient samurai, and most ravnorra, ronin or not, adopt the term when dealing with humans: to them, it is the proper translation.

Hit Die: d10

REQUIREMENTS

Base Attack Bonus: +4
Feat: Improved Double Form
Trait: Doppelshido

CLASS SKILLS

Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str)

Skill Ranks per Level: 2 + Int modifier

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: You gain proficiency with all simple and martial weapons and with all armor and shields.

Hatamoto (Ex): At 1st level, 3rd level, and 5th level, choose one of the following benefits (you must have the

RAVNORRA

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+1	+0	+0	Hatamoto
2	+2	+1	+1	+1	Inner Spirit
3	+3	+2	+1	+1	Hatamoto
4	+4	+2	+1	+1	Deceptive Posture
5	+5	+3	+2	+2	Hatamoto
6	+6	+3	+2	+2	Slice Arrows
7	+7	+4	+2	+2	Weapon Master (1/day)
8	+8	+4	+3	+3	Improved Total Defense
9	+9	+5	+3	+3	Weapon Master (2/day)
10	+10	+5	+3	+3	Path of the Warrior

feat in question):

Cleave: You no longer suffer the penalty to AC if you use this feat.

Great Cleave: You no longer suffer the penalty to AC if you use this feat.

Weapon Focus: You gain a +2 inherent bonus to damage with your chosen weapons.

Power Attack: Your penalty to attack is reduced to by 1.

Two Weapon Defense: You gain an additional +1 bonus to AC.

Inner Spirit (Ex): At 2nd level, whenever you use the total defense action, you gain +2 to all attack rolls on your following turn.

Deceptive Posture (Ex): At 4th level, you are able to feign weakness, offering the illusion of cowardice, enticing an enemy to act foolishly. If you are hit with a melee attack while using the total defense action, you can make a single attack as an immediate action against the enemy that hit you. If you make the attack, total defense ends. If you score a critical threat, you automatically confirm the critical hit.

Slice Arrows (Ex): At 6th level, as an immediate action, if an enemy hits you with a ranged weapon attack, you can make a single melee attack roll. If you beat the enemy's attack roll, the enemy's attack misses.

Weapon Master (Ex): At 7th level, once a day, if you score a critical hit on an enemy with a melee attack, the critical multiplier is increased by 2 (to a maximum of x5). At 9th level, you can use *weapon master* twice a

SCHOLAR WARDEN

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+0	+1	+0	Instant Reflexes, Lightning Strike (1/day)
2	+2	+1	+1	+1	Flow or Crash (1/day)
3	+3	+1	+2	+1	Lightning Strike (2/day)
4	+4	+1	+2	+1	Flow or Crash (2/day), Reject All Restrictions
5	+5	+2	+3	+2	Lightning Strike (3/day)
6	+6	+2	+3	+2	Flow or Crash (3/day)
7	+7	+2	+4	+2	Balance of Power, Lightning Strike (4/day)
8	+8	+3	+4	+3	Flow or Crash (4/day)
9	+9	+3	+5	+3	Lightning Strike (5/day)
10	+10	+3	+5	+3	Awareness has no Frontier, Flow or Crash (5/day)

day.

Improved Total Defense (Ex): At 9th level, when making the total defense action, you also gain a +4 bonus to all saves. You can also make opportunity attacks while in total defense.

Path of the Warrior (Ex): At 10th level, you are able to make your initial strike with such skill, it reveals a vulnerability in an enemy you instantly exploit for a killing blow. If you score a critical hit on a target and deal damage equal to or greater than half the target's hit points, the target dies.

SCHOLAR WARDEN

The Guild of Ilm, formed in 365 A.E. By Fisher Calibannis, took on the duties to administer and coordinate the external operations of custodians on the periphery of Limshau and beyond. They operated from the Limshau capital until Calibannis's death at the ripe human age of 205, where he left his power and assets to his bonded companion, Lannis Aerialiss. Lannis was responsible for the aggressive push of custodians outside of the borders of Limshau. Before, the custodians would defend the cities and the farms but never actively seek out knowledge beyond their borders. Librarians would commit to such crusades all the time, though their quests usually took them to private collections and other libraries to seek their prizes. The Guild of Ilm was an elite order tasked with retrieving knowledge from riskier locations, dungeons, and abandoned (or not so abandoned) castles. The guild carries considerable respect in this field and has never been seriously challenged on the accuracy of their accounts. Librarians take the lackluster assignments: the Guild of Ilm sends their custodians only where a librarian's life would be in danger or if the situation itself requires a more aggressive hand. Of all the custodians in Limshau, those of Ilm are truly warrior scholars, earning the nickname, "Scholar Warden."

You are an elite member of the guild. You returned to the Guild's office in Warraqeen and have taken on the oath of the order. To be a member of the guild is to be nearly fanatical in the perseverance of knowledge and free thinking. Unlike other custodians, you are expected to record your adventures and missions for planned documentation and publication later. You do not quest for your own greed. You do not travel the land seeking gold or glory. You are selfless in your path to free the world from those that would suppress the truth. Words are gold; books are the real treasure, and heaven is a world without fear.

Hit Die: d8

REQUIREMENTS

Trait: Custodian
Feats: Dodge, Mobility
Skills: Acrobatics 8 ranks

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Perception (Wis), Perform (Cha), Ride (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis), Stealth (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: You gain proficiency with all simple and martial weapons and with all light armor.

Instant Reflexes (Ex): Starting at 1st level, when you ready an action, you can ready a full round action.

Lightning Strike (Ex): Once a day, starting at 1st level, you can take a standard action as an immediate action. Each time you reach an odd level past 1st (3rd, 5th, 7th, and 9th), you gain an additional use of *lightning strike* per day.

Flow or Crash (Ex): Become what you need to survive. Adapt, flow, slide, and prove yourself. Once a day, starting at 2nd level, you can take a move action as a swift action. Each time you reach an even level past 2nd (4th, 6th, 8th, and 10th), you gain an additional use of *flow or crash* per day.

Reject all Restrictions (Ex): Be unbound in how you apply your skills. Take action while others slumber. Your enemy is not across the field but in your inability to break rules. At 4th level, you gain reach with all melee weapons that don't have it when making opportunity attacks.

Balance of Power (Ex): At 7th level, you can take a 5-foot step as a swift action. This does not count as a 5-foot step.

Awareness Has No Frontier (Ex): Reject all styles, rules, and limitations. At 10th level, you can take two immediate actions per round and two opportunity attacks per target per round. The two immediate actions still count as a single swift action on your turn.

URMAGE

The question of who first acquired the arcane arts from dragons may never be resolved, any more than the debate over whose physical form most resembles the ancient fae. Despite this uncertainty, laudenians have the most credible claim and are still known as some of the most powerful mages on the planet. Their upper echelons of wizards are the urmages, the first masters of arcane power. Their home tower of Elsius stands higher in the sky than any other constructed object (though not actually the tallest building). They do have proof of design for nearly two dozen spells, and a full quarter of the magic items that scatter the landscape are theirs.

Your position as an urmage represents the elite, the envy of all wizards in Canam. Though not possessing the absolute book knowledge and history of every spell like Koana mages, you possess a mastery of the Pleroma language that nearly equals the dragons themselves.

URMAGE

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL	SPELL PER DAY
1	+0	+1	+0	+1	Alter Power Type	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
2	+1	+1	+1	+1	Element Synergy (5)	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
3	+2	+2	+1	+2	Magic Prescience (1/day)	
4	+3	+2	+1	+2		+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
5	+3	+3	+2	+3	Attack Reflection (1/day)	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
6	+4	+3	+2	+3	Magic Prescience (2/day)	
7	+5	+4	+2	+4	Superiority	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
8	+6	+4	+3	+4		+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
9	+6	+5	+3	+5	Magic Prescience (3/day)	
10	+7	+5	+3	+5	Attack Reflection (2/day), Element Synergy (10)	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class

You can play with magic, dance it around with your whim, and even create new variations of spells no one has seen before. You can even resist the magical might of your enemies. True, Limshau mages know more about the history of arcane, the who and the when, but you know the why and the how, and with that power you can control the very fabric of the universe. The only faith you need is in your totem. You strive to reach that moment when you are fully adept in Pleroma, as fluent as any finite god. At this point, you may be able to understand the cosmos itself and control your fate. With the onslaught of Attricana, laudenians' days are few, with every fifth child born as one of the lesser fae species. As once the ancient fae vanished to obscurity, so your people may one day soon. But the elder race never fully understood the influence of Attricana. Perhaps, with enough power, you can finally comprehend the ways of magic. Perhaps, you will stop being a slave to it and finally be its master.

Hit Die: d6

REQUIREMENT

Race: Laudenian

Skills: Knowledge (arcane) 6 ranks, Spellcraft (6 ranks)

Spells: Able to cast 4th level arcane spells

CLASS SKILLS

Appraise (Int), Knowledge (arcane), Knowledge (religion), Perception (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Spellcraft (Int), Use Magic Device (Cha)

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: You gain no proficiency with any weapon or armor.

Alter Power Type (Su): At each urmage level, you can freely exchange the normal energy keyword of any of your spells to any of the following: cold, fire, lightning, or sonic. The spell retains the new keyword until you change it again.

Element Synergy (Su): At 2nd level, choose one of the following energy types: cold, fire, lightning, or sonic. You gain resistance 5 to that energy. At each subsequent urmage level, you can change this resistance to a different type. At 10th level, it increases to resistance 10.

Magic Prescience (Su): At 3rd level, your connection to magic allows you a certain foresight about the results of your spells. Once per day (twice at 6th level, three times at 9th level), if all targets of a spell you cast are missed or make their saves, you can decide retroactively not to cast the spell: no effects occur, the spell is not expended, and the action you used to cast it is not taken (although you cannot cast the same spell again this turn).

Attack Reflection (Su): At 5th level, you are able sense the flow of Attricana like a river through the battle. You see where the influence changes the world around and how it affects certain creatures. You speak a word and control the wave of energy around you, directing it where you wish. Once a day (twice at 10th level) if you fail a saving throw for a spell or spell-like effect that inflicts cold, fire, lightning, or sonic damage, as an immediate action, you take no damage and reflect whatever damage you would normally take back the creature that attacked you. This reflection acts as a spell of the highest level you can cast but does not occupy a slot. The target can make a Reflex save for half damage.

Superiority (Su): At 7th level, your talents allow you to control the influence of magic, altering rules on a whim, turning the fatal to the helpful. Once a day, if you are hit with a spell or spell-like effect that deals cold, fire, lightning, or sonic damage, as an immediate action, you take no damage, and instead gain temporary hit points equal to the damage dealt.

TECHAN PRESTIGE CLASSES

All techan prestige classes have the requirement of '**Origin:** Techan human' in addition to any other requirements.

ANGEL SNIPER

The Angel outer wall is one of the greatest works of construction in the known world. A monstrous barricade surrounds the city, accented by defense towers able to see as far off as Antikari. Along with gatehouses, flanking towers prevent even the largest armies from an easy assault. The wall is not solid, being filled with an intricate network of battlements and sniper holes. Most of the bogg raiders migrating towards the wall never see their enemies. The Angel snipers take them out while still deep in the forest. As an Angel soldier, you are trained not only to deliver long range fire, but to do so to several targets. When boggs or puggs emerge to attack, they do so in overwhelming numbers. There is no time for aiming. You must take out as many of those little bastards as you can before they get too close to your city.

Angel snipers surpass all others on Earth, even those from the xenophobic city of Mann, another bastion boasting a defensive wall. Most Angel snipers carry out their tours inside or on the walls of the bastion, but almost every single mission outside the walls—whether in a shuttle or in a scrambler—carries at least one sniper with them. Rival bastions have copied their discipline and training, but the results have never been exactly duplicated.

Hit Die: d8

REQUIREMENTS

Base Attack Bonus: +6

Origin: From Angel.

Proficiency: Small arms (one-handed & two-handed)

ANGEL SNIPER

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Escape Artist (Dex), Knowledge (history), Perception (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Stealth (Dex), Survival (Wis), Vehicle Operation (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all techan armor except exo-armor. You are also proficient with all small arms (one-handed & two-handed) and all simple melee weapons.

Automatic Reflexes (Ex): Starting at 1st level, if you hit with a sniper weapon on your turn, you can make a single ranged attack with a sniper weapon as a swift action against any target in range. You can do this twice at 1st level, gaining an additional use every 2 levels after (3rd, 5th, 7th, and 9th level).

Waste of Skill (Ex): At 2nd level, if you score a critical threat, you may choose to do normal damage and instead make single ranged attack with a sniper weapon

ANGEL SNIPER

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+0	+1	+1	Automatic Reflexes (2/day)
2	+2	+1	+1	+1	Waste of Skill
3	+3	+1	+2	+2	Automatic Reflexes (3/day)
4	+4	+1	+2	+2	The Second Shooter
5	+5	+2	+3	+3	Automatic Reflexes (4/day)
6	+6	+2	+3	+3	Splintering Shrapnel
7	+7	+2	+4	+4	Automatic Reflexes (5/day)
8	+8	+3	+4	+4	Reduce Enemy Capacity
9	+9	+3	+5	+5	Automatic Reflexes (6/day)
10	+10	+3	+5	+5	Perfect Shot Placement

BANNER HEAD

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+1	+1	+0	Fleeting Adversary
2	+2	+1	+1	+1	The War Pose
3	+3	+2	+2	+1	Adversarial Rage (+2)
4	+4	+2	+2	+1	Remember Me?
5	+5	+3	+3	+2	Come and Get Some
6	+6	+3	+3	+2	Adversarial Rage (+4)
7	+7	+4	+4	+2	Unexpected Response
8	+8	+4	+4	+3	
9	+9	+5	+5	+3	Adversarial Rage (+6)
10	+10	+5	+5	+3	Adversarial Rage (Critical)

against any target in range as a free action. You can only use this ability once per turn.

The Second Shooter (Ex): At 4th level, you are able to fire a second bullet so quickly after the first, your foes are convinced there are two snipers. Once per round, if you hit a single target two or more times with a sniper weapon in the same turn, you can use a swift action to make another ranged attack against any target in range with your sniper weapon at your highest base attack bonus. This attack deals half damage and cannot inflict a critical hit.

Splintering Shrapnel (Ex): Once a day, at 6th level, if you drop an enemy to 0 hit points or less using a ranged attack with a sniper weapon, each creature within 10 feet of the target takes damage equal to a normal non-critical hit with the same weapon.

Reduce Enemy Capacity (Ex): At 8th level, if you miss an enemy two consecutive times using a sniper weapon without attacking a different target, the enemy is staggered until the start of your next turn.

Perfect Shot Placement (Ex): At 10th level, you are able to make multiple shots without a significant reduction in accuracy. If you drop an enemy to 0 hit points or less using a sniper weapon, you can make another single ranged attack with your sniper weapon as a free action. You can only use this ability once per round.

BANNER HEAD

You may not be the leader, but everyone across the battlefield thinks you are. You stand taller and bolder than the rest. Your stare can lock upon an enemy from across a field. Your foes know well and truly if you have them in your crosshairs. You have no concept of subtlety and are known to do foolish acts in the cause of intimidation. Your allies may object but often times, these attempts work. You can make even the most fearless monsters flinch from your stare.

You are not a pretty individual. You are not one for arts and crafts. You have no hobbies. You have one job. You shoot people twice in the chest and once in the head. You do it for no other reason than the objective you have been asked to carry out. Your loyalty runs only to the men and women next to you. To them, you're the champion hero. To your foes, you are the one target they need to take down. You want them to think that. What good is war if there is no one to shoot at?

Hit Die: d10

REQUIREMENTS

Base Attack Bonus: +6

Proficiency: Small arms (one-handed & two-handed)

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Demolitions (Wis), Engineer (Int), Knowledge (history), Intimidate (Cha), Perception (Wis), Survival (Wis), Vehicle Operation (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all techan armor, all simple melee weapons, all small arms, all heavy weapons, all super heavy weapons, and any two specialty weapons with a tech level equal to or lower than your bastion of origin.

Fleeting Adversary (Ex): As many times a day as your Wisdom modifier, as a free action, select one enemy within 50 feet and line of sight to you. The target is your fleeting adversary. You gain a +1 bonus to attack your fleeting adversary, and your fleeting adversary suffers a -2 to any attack that does not include you. This effect ends if you drop below 0 hit points, the creature drops below 0 hit points, or line of sight is broken between you and your target. You can only have one fleeting adversary at any time.

The War Pose (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, you can take a -1 penalty to attack rolls for each weapon to wield two-handed small-arms as if they were one-handed small arms. They still count as two-handed small arms for purposes of provoking opportunity attacks and for movement penalties but count as one-handed small arms for purposes of abilities and feats.

Adversarial Rage (Ex): Starting at 3rd level, once per day, you deal +2 damage (+4 at 6th level, +6 at 9th level)

BROTHER OF BLOOD

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+1	+1	+0	Allied Support (2/day), More Like Family
2	+2	+1	+1	+1	Army of Two
3	+3	+2	+2	+1	Allied Support (3/day)
4	+4	+2	+2	+1	Better Reflexes (1/day)
5	+5	+3	+3	+2	Allied Support (4/day)
6	+6	+3	+3	+2	Team Effort
7	+7	+4	+4	+2	Allied Support (5/day)
8	+8	+4	+4	+3	Better Reflexes (2/day)
9	+9	+5	+5	+3	Allied Support (6/day)
10	+10	+5	+5	+3	Team Effort

against your fleeting adversary: this bonus ends if you or your adversary drop below 0 hit points, if you can no longer see your adversary at the end of your turn, or the encounter ends. At 10th level, once per day you can also automatically confirm one critical hit against your fleeting adversary.

Remember Me? (Ex): A few well-placed shots bring an enemy's attention back around to you. Starting at 4th level, if your fleeting adversary attacks an ally, you can make a single ranged attack against it as an immediate action.

Come and Get Some (Ex): Once a day, at 5th level, you can let out an impressive battle taunt. As a move action, target each enemy within 25 feet. You gain 3d6 + your character level in temporary hit points and all targets suffer a -2 penalty to attacks that do not include you until they hit you.

Unexpected Response (Ex): Once per day, at 7th level, until your fleeting adversary is reduced to 0 hit points or less, each time they hit you, you gain a +1 bonus to attack rolls against it. This bonus is cumulative up to +5 but is lost if you attack any creature other than your fleeting adversary.

Onslaught (Ex): Your feet are planted and you wait until the enemy forces are close enough to see your eyes. They expect you to run. You don't. They realize too late your unshakable will. At 9th level, once a day, you can use a move action and target each enemy within 25 feet. Each target becomes your fleeting adversary until they are reduced to below 0 hit points or the encounter ends.

BROTHER OF BLOOD

On the battlefield, every ally is a brother. You are a member of a team and you've all worked together long enough to understand each other's patterns. You know when one is hurt, regardless of where on the battlefield. You would never take risks that will endanger another brother's life. You would never step out of formation; never leave a brother's side. They must depend on you as you depend on them. If one of your own falls, nothing short of god's finger on the battlefield will stop you from carrying your injured out of combat.

Those in the fantasy world think nothing of teamwork. They've their own little places staked out in the combat theatre. Good for them. They probably met in a tavern yesterday. As for you and your team, you are perfectly tuned machine that is far greater than the sum of its parts.

Hit Die: d10

Note: Most of this class's abilities are useless unless at least one other party member has taken the same class. Be sure to discuss with your group before selecting this prestige class.

REQUIREMENTS

Base Attack Bonus: +6

Proficiency: Small arms (one-handed & two-handed)

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Demolitions (Wis), Engineer (Int), Knowledge (history), Intimidate (Cha), Perception (Wis), Survival (Wis), Vehicle Operation (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all techan armor, all simple melee weapons, all small arms, all heavy weapons, all super heavy weapons, and any two specialty weapons with a tech level equal to or lower than your bastion of origin.

More Like Family (Ex): Starting at 1st level, if an opponent confirms a critical hit on an allied brother of blood, you can make a single ranged attack against the attacker as an immediate action.

Allied Support (Ex): Starting at 1st level, you can use a swift action and target one allied brother of blood in line of sight. The targeted brother of blood gains a full-round action that must be used before the end of your turn. Each brother of blood can benefit from *allied support* only once per round. You can use allied support twice a day at 1st level, three times a day at 3rd level, four times a day at 5th level, five times a day at 7th level

ECHAN GENERALIST

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+0	+1	+0	+1	Direct Experience (+2 damage)
2	+1	+1	+1	+1	Book Smart
3	+2	+2	+1	+2	Expert Trivia
4	+3	+2	+1	+2	Direct Experience (+3 damage)
5	+4	+3	+2	+3	Muscle Memory
6	+5	+3	+2	+3	General Practitioner
7	+6	+4	+2	+4	Direct Experience (+4 damage)
8	+7	+4	+3	+4	Book Smart
9	+8	+5	+3	+5	Weakness Recognition
10	+9	+5	+3	+5	Direct Experience (+5 damage)

and six times a day at 9th level.

Army of Two (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, you grant a +2 bonus to damage rolls to each adjacent brother of blood (cumulative up to +6).

Better Reflexes (Ex): Starting at 4th level, if an allied brother of blood within 25 feet and line of sight is hit by an attack, you can use an immediate action to swap places with the target; the attack hits you instead. You can do this once a day at 4th level and twice a day at 8th level.

All as One (Ex): Starting at 6th level, all class skills for each allied brother of blood are class skills for all other allied brothers of blood.

Team Effort (Ex): All members of the team synchronize their actions to operate as one organism. Starting at 10th level, after rolling for initiative, you act (in the order rolled) on the highest initiative count of all allied brothers of blood.

ECHAN GENERALIST

This whole concept of specializing is not wise when dealing with such a vast and varied landscape outside of bastions. You prefer to be an expert in many fields. You know weapons to defend yourself, foreign tongues to communicate, and the experience with unfamiliar cultures to avoid violence. Of all the techans, you're clearly the most prepared for the outside world. You studied every nation, their histories and heroes. Such a commodity is valuable and you are wealthy in such stocks. Others may be skittish around you, the way you talk about the outside world. You may be a "blinder"—a lover of echa. However, your allies know your knowledge has gotten them out of situations that normally would have ended poorly.

Hit Die: d8

REQUIREMENTS

Proficiency: Small arms (one-handed & two-handed)

Skills: Engineer 6 ranks, Sciences 6 ranks, Vehicle Operation 6 ranks.

CLASS SKILLS

Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disable Device (Dex), Demolitions (Int), Engineer (Int), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (history) (Int), Knowledge (sciences) (Int), Linguistics (Int), Perception (Wis), Profession (Wis), Sciences (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Vehicle Operation (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 6 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all light techan armor and all one-handed small arms.

Direct Experience (Ex): Starting at 1st level, select one creature in line of sight after rolling initiative to be your focus until you roll for initiative again. You gain a +2 bonus to damage rolls against that creature until it is killed. You can only have on focus at a time. This bonus increases to +3 at 4th level, +4 at 7th level, and +5 at 10th level.

Book Smart (Ex): At 2nd level, select three class skills and gain 2 additional ranks in them. At 8th level, select three more class skills and gain 2 additional ranks with them. They cannot be the same skills as you chose at 2nd level.

Expert Trivia (Ex): Starting at 3rd level, you are able to remember some vital piece of information about your target and share that information amongst your allies. You and all allies gain a +1 class bonus to attack your focus.

Muscle Memory (Ex): Starting at 5th level, as many times a day as your Intelligence modifier, you can use a move action and gain a +5 bonus to your next Charisma-, Intelligence-, or Wisdom-based skill check.

General Practitioner (Ex): At 6th level, you gain 1 rank in every Charisma-, Intelligence-, or Wisdom-based skill (even if you have no ranks in them).

Weakness Recognition (Ex): At 9th level, you are able to find a soft spot in the enemy. The first time you score a critical hit against your focus, the critical damage multiplier increases by 1, to a maximum of x5.

FIELD MACHINIST

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+0	+0	+1	+1	Artisans of Gears (+1)
2	+1	+1	+1	+1	False Reading
3	+2	+1	+2	+2	Artisans of Gears (+2)
4	+3	+1	+2	+2	Insurance Round
5	+4	+2	+3	+3	Artisans of Gears (+3)
6	+5	+2	+3	+3	Frantic Repair
7	+6	+2	+4	+4	Artisans of Gears (+4)
8	+7	+3	+4	+4	Covered in Grease
9	+8	+3	+5	+5	Artisans of Gears (+5)
10	+9	+3	+5	+5	Works For Me

FIELD MACHINIST

You have a niche. Without you, the others don't amount to much more than a bunch of poorly equipped primitives with clubs. As a specialist in the field, you are the most experienced in echa when dealing with disruption. You are a devout follower of the technological supremacy of man and are probably the most hardline defender of the old ways.

Hit Die: d8

REQUIREMENTS

Proficiency: Small arms (one-handed & two-handed)
Skills: Engineer 8 ranks

CLASS SKILLS

Craft (Int), Disable Device (Dex), Demolitions (Int), Engineer (Int), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (history) (Int), Knowledge (sciences) (Int), Linguistics (Int), Perception (Wis), Profession (Wis), Sciences (Int), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Vehicle Operation (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 6 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all light techan armor and all one-handed small arms.

Artisan of Gears (Ex): Starting at 1st level, you gain a +1 class bonus to Engineer rolls. At 3rd level, and for every two levels after, this bonus increases by 1.

False Reading (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, as many times a day as your Intelligence modifier, you can instantly recover a disruption effect on a piece of equipment in your possession OR you can gain a +2 bonus to your next Engineer roll.

Insurance Round (Ex): Starting at 4th level, as a swift action, you can scale down the damage of your weapon by one step (1d4 < 1d6 < 1d8 < 1d10 < 1d12 < 2d6 < 2d8 < 2d10). This lasts until you take a swift action to switch it back. While this is in effect, if the weapon is disrupted, it automatically recovers at the start of your next turn. In addition, you gain a +1 bonus to attack rolls with the scaled-down weapon. You can't gain this benefit with a weapon that is already disrupted.

Frantic Repair (Ex): At 6th level, once a day, you can use a move action and gain one of the following effects:

- You use 1% of the value of a broken item in widgets and the item is fixed.
- Reduce the time required to build or repair an item by 1 day. Cost of the item is unaffected. You can only reduce the construction time by a maximum of half.

Covered in Grease (Ex): At 8th level, all technology you build costs 10% in widgets.

Works for Me (Ex): At 10th level, you can use a swift action to increase the damage of the ranged weapon of an adjacent ally by one category (1d4 > 1d6 > 1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12 > 2d6 > 2d8 > 2d10) until the start of your next turn.

FIELD MEDIC

You specialize in the treatment of the injured during combat situations. You know when to keep your head low, but more importantly, when to rise in defiance to protect those under your care. You might have been a doctor back home and found a calling out in the wilderness. If so, your allies probably wonder why you've chosen this path.

Hit Die: d8

REQUIREMENTS

Proficiency: Small arms (one-handed & two-handed)
Skills: Heal 8 ranks

CLASS SKILLS

Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disable Device (Dex), Demolitions (Int), Engineer (Int), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (history) (Int), Knowledge (sciences) (Int), Linguistics (Int), Perception (Wis), Profession (Wis), Sciences (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Vehicle Operation (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 6 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all light techan armor and all one-handed small arms.

A True Healer (Ex): Starting at 1st level, you gain a +1 class bonus to Heal rolls. At 3rd level, and for every two levels after, this bonus increases by 1.

Medical Exploits (Ex): Starting at 1st level, and for every two levels after, when a new field medic level is gained, you gain new exploits per day as if you had also gained a level in medic operator. You do not, however, gain other benefits a character would have gained.

Physician Heal Thyself (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, once per encounter you can use a move action to recover hit points equal to twice your Wisdom modifier.

Race to the Fallen (Ex): Starting at 4th level, you can move up to your speed as a move action, provoking no opportunity attacks, as long as you move towards an ally hit during the last round.

Impromptu Surgery (Ex): At 6th level, once a day, you can take 1 minute and immediately end any and all of the following adverse conditions affecting one target: ability damage, blinded, confused, dazed, dazzled, deafened, diseased, exhausted, fatigued, feebleminded, insanity, nauseated, poisoned, sickened, and stunned. This does not remove negative levels or restore permanently drained ability score points.

Profound Medical Advice (Ex): Starting at 8th level, once a day, when you use a medical exploit, you can increase your Heal skill by 10 for that exploit.

No Longer Civilized (Ex): If an ally succumbs to his or her injuries, you can no longer be a healer. You must be a protector. Starting at 10th level, if an ally in line of sight is reduced to 0 or less hit points, you gain your Heal skill bonus as a bonus to damage with your next hit.

INFANTRY SUPPORT SPECIALIST

You are not placed on this world to lead. You support those that have earned your loyalty. You are an infantry support specialist. You carry the largest weapons and know how to employ them effectively without endangering the lives of your allies.

Your only weakness is your speed. Being the heaviest hitter has also often made you the slowest. Your abilities are based upon lying down heavy fire and to prevent the approach of invading forces.

Hit Die: d12

REQUIREMENTS

Base Attack Bonus: +6

Proficiency: Heavy weapons and small arms (one-handed & two-handed)

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Demolitions (Wis), Engineer (Int), Knowledge (history), Intimidate (Cha), Perception (Wis), Survival (Wis), Vehicle Operation (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all techan armor, all simple melee weapons, all small arms, all heavy weapons, all super heavy weapons, and any two specialty weapons with a tech level equal to or lower than your bastion of origin.

Weapons Platform (Ex): Starting at 1st level, you can use a move action to gain a +1 class bonus to attack rolls with heavy auto weapons until the start of your next turn.

Lawnmower Barrage (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, when you take a 5-foot step, you are still considered to have not moved, avoiding attack penalties with two-handed small arms and heavy weapons (but not super heavy weapons). At 5th level, you can plant a super heavy weapon as a swift action.

Box Barrage (Ex): At 3rd level, you are able to divide your fire among several targets, maximizing your dam-

FIELD MEDIC

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL	EXPLOITS
1	+0	+0	+1	+1	A True Healer (+1)	+1 level for medic exploits
2	+1	+1	+1	+1	Physician Heal Thyself	
3	+1	+1	+2	+2	A True Healer (+2)	+1 level for medic exploits
4	+2	+1	+2	+2	Race to the Fallen	
5	+2	+2	+3	+3	A True Healer (+3)	+1 level for medic exploits
6	+3	+2	+3	+3	Impromptu Surgery	
7	+3	+2	+4	+4	A True Healer (+4)	+1 level for medic exploits
8	+4	+3	+4	+4	Profound Medical Advice	
9	+4	+3	+5	+5	A True Healer (+5)	+1 level for medic exploits
10	+5	+3	+5	+5		+1 level for medic exploits

MAN-AT-ARMS

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+1	+1	+0	This Is My Rifle
2	+2	+1	+1	+1	My Rifle Is My Best Friend
3	+3	+2	+2	+1	As a Brother (1/day)
4	+4	+2	+2	+1	Fire My Rifle True (2/day)
5	+5	+3	+3	+2	As a Brother (2/day)
6	+6	+3	+3	+2	We Are Masters Of Our Enemy
7	+7	+4	+4	+2	As a Brother (3/day)
8	+8	+4	+4	+3	Fire My Rifle True (4/day)
9	+9	+5	+5	+3	As a Brother (4/day)
10	+10	+5	+5	+3	Inseparable Appendage

age potential. As a full-round action, select 3 non-overlapping 5-foot radius areas in weapon range. Make a ranged attack with an auto or heavy auto weapon against each creature in the target areas. On your next turn, as another full-round action, you can move the areas up to ten feet and attack again. You can use *box barrage* once per day at 3rd level, twice at 7th level, and three times at 10th level.

The Mean One (Ex): Starting at 6th level, all opponents in a 30-foot radius to you suffer a -2 penalty to any attack that does not include you, and you gain a +2 circumstance bonus to damage rolls against them.

Selective Fire (Ex): Starting at 4th level, when you target areas instead of single targets with ranged weapons, you can choose which targets within those areas are affected.

Full Blitz (Ex): Once a day, starting at 8th level, you can use a full-round action to make a single ranged attack against each enemy in range you can see. If no targets are killed by this action, you regain the use of *full blitz*.

Full Focus (Ex): Starting at 10th level, if you make a full attack and target the same opponent with every attack, you gain 1 additional attack at your highest attack bonus against the same opponent.

MAN-AT-ARMS

You are a professional soldier. You've been so since the moment you picked up a weapon. The only thing you can depend on is your firearm. By the end of the day, it is the most reliable friend you have. Having ventured into this wasteland these outsiders call home, you dedicate most of your time to ensuring your weapon does not break or jam. War is all you know, and you're good at it. You track your line to the honored knights of a previous age, when they used swords and shield crests to display their honor: now you have chevrons of rank and a properly oiled firearm. Outside the bastion border, the old ways have returned. You can also almost respect those embracing the old code. You could even see yourself riding a horse as a knight—a trusted and proven sword in your hand. But that wasn't your path. You were born in a bastion, so your sword is your gun, and those with blades are your enemy. Such is the way of war.

Hit Die: d10

REQUIREMENTS

Base Attack Bonus: +6

Proficiency: Small arms (one-handed & two-handed)

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Demolitions (Wis), Engineer (Int), Knowledge (history), Intimidate (Cha), Per-

INFANTRY SUPPORT SPECIALIST

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+1	+1	+0	Weapons Platform
2	+2	+1	+1	+1	Lawnmower Barrage
3	+3	+2	+2	+1	Box Barrage (1/day)
4	+4	+2	+2	+1	Selective Fire
5	+5	+3	+3	+2	Lawnmower Barrage
6	+6	+3	+3	+2	The Mean One
7	+7	+4	+4	+2	Box Barrage (2/day)
8	+8	+4	+4	+3	Full Blitz
9	+9	+5	+5	+3	
10	+10	+5	+5	+3	Box Barrage (3/day)

ception (Wis), Survival (Wis), Vehicle Operation (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all techan armor, all simple melee weapons, all small arms, all heavy weapons, all super heavy weapons, and any two specialty weapons with a tech level equal to or lower than your bastion of origin.

This Is My Rifle (Ex): Starting at 1st level, select one specific two-handed small arm: you gain a +1 bonus to attack rolls with that weapon. This is your chosen weapon for all man-at-arms abilities. When reaching a new level, you can select a different weapon.

My Rifle Is My Best Friend (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, the first time in an encounter you change a clip or a cell on your chosen weapon requires only a free action.

As a Brother (Ex): Starting at 3rd level, you're able to perfectly balance your weapon and fire it without strain. As a swift action, you can move up to your speed, suffering no attack penalties with any firearms as a result of this movement. You can do this once a day at 3rd level, twice at 5th level, three times at 7th level, and four times at 9th level.

Fire My Rifle True (Ex): At 4th level, you're able to compensate for recoil with your chosen weapon. Twice a day at 4th level and four times a day at 8th level, you can re-roll one missed attack roll with your chosen weapon. You use additional ammunition with the re-roll.

We Are Masters of Our Enemy (Ex): Starting at 6th level, if you drop an enemy to 0 hit points or fewer using an auto weapon, you can make a single ranged attack (in single-shot mode) as a free action. You can only gain one attack this way per round.

Inseparable Appendage: At 10th level, your chosen weapon becomes as much a part of you as an arm. Your chosen weapon cannot be sundered and you cannot be disarmed. You can also stow your chosen weapon and draw a one-handed small arm as a free action.

OVERSEER

You are not as combat effective as the others. The most efficient application of your skill is to remain back and coordinate the actions of your team members. You relay, through radio and the volume of your voice, instructions to your partners. From your vantage, you have a unique perspective on the battle and can maximize the arrangement of your allies for optimum firing potential. Although sometimes present alongside allies, your talents often place you in the safety of vehicles or behind fortifications, which presents the greatest advantage for managing the team's assets. Some may accuse you of being a coward, but oftentimes the team cannot work without you.

Hit Die: d8

REQUIREMENTS

Proficiency: Small arms (one-handed & two-handed)

Skills: Bluff 6 ranks. Diplomacy 6 ranks, Sense Motive 6 ranks

CLASS SKILLS

Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disable Device (Dex), Demolitions (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (history) (Int), Knowledge (sciences) (Int), Linguistics (Int), Perception (Wis), Profession (Wis), Sciences (Int), Sense Motive (Wis)

Skill Ranks per Level: 6 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all light and medium techan armor, and all small arms.

Battle Sweep (Ex): Starting at 1st level, if an ally rolls a natural 1 on an attack roll, you or one ally in line of sight can make a ranged attack against the ally's target as an immediate action.

Eyes All Around (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, you can relay enemy weaknesses to your allies, giving them opportunities to fire. If you or an ally scores a critical hit

OVERSEER

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+0	+0	+1	+1	Battle Sweep
2	+1	+1	+1	+1	Take the Opportunity (1/day)
3	+2	+1	+2	+2	Eyes All Around
4	+3	+1	+2	+2	Take the Opportunity (2/day)
5	+4	+2	+3	+3	Reevaluate Strategy
6	+5	+2	+3	+3	Take the Opportunity (3/day)
7	+6	+2	+4	+4	Outmaneuver
8	+7	+3	+4	+4	Take the Opportunity (4/day)
9	+8	+3	+5	+5	Superior Strategic Endeavor
10	+9	+3	+5	+5	Take the Opportunity (5/day)

RECON SNIPER

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+0	+1	+0	Flawless Reputation (1/day)
2	+2	+1	+1	+1	Yowie Specialization
3	+3	+1	+2	+1	Flawless Reputation (2/day)
4	+4	+1	+2	+1	Specter (1/day)
5	+5	+2	+3	+2	Flawless Reputation (3/day)
6	+6	+2	+3	+2	Psychological Warfare
7	+7	+2	+4	+2	Flawless Reputation (4/day)
8	+8	+3	+4	+3	Specter (2/day)
9	+9	+3	+5	+3	Flawless Reputation (5/day)
10	+10	+3	+5	+3	System Shock

on an enemy, one ally in line of sight can make a ranged attack against that enemy as an immediate action.

Take the Opportunity (Ex): At 2nd level, you are able to make quick adjustments to a strategy, without giving the impression you are improvising. As a swift action, two allies in line of sight can take an immediate full-round action. You can do this once a day for every two class levels.

Reevaluate Strategy (Ex): Starting at 4th level, you can make a quick alteration in the plan to adjust to enemy maneuvers. As many times a day as your Wisdom modifier, as a move action, each ally within 20 feet can move up to 20 feet. This does not provoke an opportunity attack.

Outmaneuver (Ex): Starting at 7th level, if an enemy is flanked by two or more allies, you can use a standard action to make that enemy flat-footed.

Superior Strategic Endeavor (Ex): At 9th level, you're able to shout out a particularly complicated plan that will work flawlessly if everyone does what they're supposed to do. Use a full-round action to grant all allies a +2 bonus to attack rolls until the start of your next turn.

RECON SNIPER

You dig yourself in and become one with the terrain. You ignore wind, rain, or even wandering monsters. Nothing distracts you. An entire army could pass without noticing. Even your attack is as silent as a mosquito bite, though far deadlier.

You approach your target and wait for the perfect moment. You adjust for every possible condition, from gravity to wind. When finally squeezing the trigger, only God could stop that round from finding its target. You never miss, as your purpose is to never give a foe the benefit of a reload. When you take out your target, your single goal, you slither away to your next objective. Your foes can dissect the terrain looking for you, but you were never where they thought. As they hunt you down, you aim for your next victim.

REQUIREMENTS

Base Attack Bonus: +6

Proficiency: Small arms (one-handed & two-handed)
Skills: Stealth 6 ranks

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Demolitions (Wis), Engineer (Int), Knowledge (history), Intimidate (Cha), Perception (Wis), Stealth (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Survival (Wis), Vehicle Operation (Dex)
Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all light techan armor, all small arms, and all sniper weapons.
Flawless Reputation (Ex): Once per day, starting at 1st level, if you miss on an attack roll with a sniper weapon (including a roll to confirm a critical hit), you can turn that result into hit. You gain an additional use per day at every odd level in this class.
Yowie Specialization (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, if you use a gillie/yowie suit in its proper environment, use a move action to become invisible until you move.
Psychological Warfare (Ex): Starting at 6th level, if you drop an enemy more than 5 squares away to 0 hit points or fewer using a sniper weapon, select one enemy in line of sight to the dropped enemy. It is staggered until the start of your next turn.
Specter (Ex): Once a day (twice at 8th level), starting at 4th level, you can ignore one square of terrain that blocks line of sight or provides concealment or cover.
System Shock (Ex): Once a day, starting at 10th level, if you score a critical hit on an opponent while using a sniper weapon, the target takes half that damage again at the start of your next turn.

RING FIGHTER

You have the belt. You've claimed the trophy. Few others boast the record you have. You fought hard and trained hard for the respect and it is well earned. In the realm of physical training, there is no better.

Hit Die: d10

RING FIGHTER

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+1	+1	+0	Guard Control
2	+2	+1	+1	+0	Grapple Discipline
3	+3	+2	+2	+1	Change Guard
4	+4	+2	+2	+1	Tolerance Threshold
5	+5	+3	+3	+1	Grapple Discipline
6	+6	+3	+3	+2	Pressure Point
7	+7	+4	+4	+2	Choke / Lock
8	+8	+4	+4	+2	Grapple Discipline
9	+9	+5	+5	+3	Side Control
10	+10	+5	+5	+3	Mounted Attack

REQUIREMENTS

Base Attack Bonus: +4
Feat: Improved Unarmed Strike, Striker

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Demolitions (Wis), Engineer (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Perception (Wis), Ride (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis), Survival (Wis), Vehicle Operation (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all techan armor, and all simple melee weapons.

Guard Control (Ex): Starting at 1st level, you gain a +2 bonus to all saves against being blinded, confused, dazed, pinned, shaken, staggered or stunned.

Grapple Discipline (Ex): At 2nd level, you are able to gain the upper hand in almost any close combat situation. You can either gain a +1 bonus to your combat maneuver bonus or a +1 bonus to your combat maneuver defense. You gain an additional +1 at 5th level and 8th level (which do not have to be applied to the same one).

Change Guard (Ex): Starting at 3rd level, while grappling an opponent at the beginning of your turn, you can impose up to a -4 penalty to your combat maneuver defense and gain an equivalent bonus to you combat maneuver bonus (or vice-versa).

Tolerance Threshold (Ex): Starting at 4th level, you cannot be shaken or staggered.

Pressure Point (Ex): Starting at 6th level, while grappling a creature, you can stagger your opponent as part of sustaining the grapple until the start of your next turn.

Choke / Lock (Ex): Starting at 7th level, each turn you sustain a grapple, you inflict damage equal to your Strength or Dexterity modifier on the target. This does not count as an action as part of the grapple.

Side Control (Ex): Starting at 9th level, when you grapple an opponent, it is automatically pinned.

Mounted Attack (Ex): At 10th level, you gain complete control over every opponent. While grappling an opponent, it cannot attempt to break free on its first turn. You also automatically pass the first sustain attempt.

SAPPER

Combat engineers have a long and respected history. You can be a bridge builder and a bridge destroyer. You approach bombs while others turn and run. With seconds on the clock, others give up while you take it as incentive.

Hit Die: d8

SAPPER

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+0	+0	+1	+1	The Long Walk
2	+1	+1	+1	+1	Render Safe Procedures
3	+2	+1	+2	+2	Enhanced I.E.D.
4	+3	+1	+2	+2	The Long Walk
5	+4	+2	+3	+3	Slight Chemical Improvement
6	+5	+2	+3	+3	Proper Application
7	+6	+2	+4	+4	The Long Walk
8	+7	+3	+4	+4	Rapid Evolution
9	+8	+3	+5	+5	Controlled Demolition
10	+9	+3	+5	+5	Scorched Earth, The Long Walk

SELKIRK BRAWLER

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+1	+1	+0	Born in the Mines
2	+2	+1	+1	+1	Head-Butt (+3d6)
3	+3	+2	+2	+1	Tightened Grip
4	+4	+2	+2	+1	Head-Butt (+5d6)
5	+5	+3	+3	+2	Head Slam
6	+6	+3	+3	+2	Head-Butt (+7d6)
7	+7	+4	+4	+2	Surprising Extension
8	+8	+4	+4	+3	Head-Butt (+9d6)
9	+9	+5	+5	+3	Bear Hug
10	+10	+5	+5	+3	Head-Butt (+11d6), Neck Snap

REQUIREMENTS

Proficiency: Small arms (one-handed)
Skills: Demolitions 8 ranks

CLASS SKILLS

Craft (Int), Demolitions (Int), Disable Device (Dex), Engineer (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (sciences) (Int), Perception (Wis), Profession (Wis), Sciences (Int), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Vehicle Operation (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier

CLASS FEATURES

Weapon and Armor Proficiencies: You are proficient with all techan armor, and all one-handed small arms.

The Long Walk (Ex): Starting at 1st level, you gain a +1 bonus to Engineer and Demolitions checks. At 4th level, 7th level, and 10th level, you gain an additional +1 bonus to either Engineer OR Demolitions (not necessarily the same each time).

Render Safe Procedures (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, if you are within the area of an effect that allows a Reflex save, you can take a 5-foot step.

Enhanced I.E.D. (Ex): At 3rd level, you begin putting in that little extra effort your enemy will appreciate. If you pass at the Demolitions check when planting explosives, you treat the result as if it were 5 points higher.

Slight Chemical Improvement (Ex): Starting at 5th level, when you detonate explosives you have set with a blast radius of 10 feet or more, you increase the blast radius by another 5 feet.

Proper Application (Ex): Starting at 6th level, when determining the Reflex DC for explosives you set, double the tech level of your detonator.

Rapid Evolution (Ex): At 8th level, you are able to judge a catastrophe a moment before it occurs. As many times a day as your Dexterity modifier, as an immediate action you gain a +5 bonus to all your Reflex saves until the end of your next turn.

Controlled Demolition (Ex): Starting at 9th level, when you beat a Demolitions DC by 10 or more, you inflict +5 damage with the explosive instead of +2. If you beat the DC by 15 or more, you deal an additional +6 damage instead of +3.

Scorched Earth (Ex): At 10th level, your explosives have a tendency to set off chain reactions. After you detonate an explosive, a lingering fire breaks out until the start of your next turn, dealing your Intelligence modifier in fire damage to any targets entering or starting their turn in the affected area.

SELKIRK BRAWLER

Isolated for hundreds of years, the miners of Selkirk have learned to make the most of what they have around, the greatest asset being their brute strength and unfaltering will. Nowhere was this reflected more than in their national sport: rugby. Every union in the bastion operates a team and the seasons never technically end. There is no downtime and seldom a moment's rest. Everyone plays; everyone wins; everyone loses; everyone gets plastered afterwards. The only time a Selkirk citizen is not on a team is when they are 'traded' to the military. Fairly quickly, the same approach warriors took on the game field was adapted to the battlefield.

Considering that the bastion is located in the middle of one of the highest concentrations of magic in Canam, little of the Selkirk technology could operate outside of their mountain. This forced them to adopt melee techniques as a standard military practice, a tendency strengthened by their association with the narros. Although many from Selkirk still insist on carrying heavy weapons and heavier armor, a few prefer to translate their game skills to combat. When the Selkirk miners first arrived in Fargon, the narros were impressed with the great skill of the miners in unarmed fighting, despite the apparent lack of discipline in the technique – a deceptive lack, for the brawler's style in application is as focused and precise as the wushu-like practices the narros have always held dear. The Selkirks brought over another pastime—wrestling—that the narros quickly

SELKIRK BRAWLER

embraced, to the point that there is now an annual tournament in Thos Thalagos in which echans and techans show off their skills on equitable terms. The Selkirk brawler has become a common sight on all caravans from the bastion and every citizen knows how to behave in a scrum.

Hit Die: d10

REQUIREMENTS

Ability: Strength 16
Base Attack Bonus: +4
Feat: Improved Unarmed Strike, Striker
Origin: From Selkirk.

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Demolitions (Wis), Engineer (Int), Escape Artist (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Perception (Wis), Ride (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis), Survival (Wis), Vehicle Operation (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Born in the Mines (Ex): At 1st level, you gain one combat feat. In addition, you gain a +2 circumstance bonus to grapple attempts.

Tightened Grip (Ex): Starting at 3rd level, as many times a day as your Strength modifier, you can sustain a grapple without requiring a sustain roll.

Head-Butt (Ex): At 2nd level, you are able to deliver an attack directly, noggin to noggin. As many times a day as your Constitution modifier, if you sustain a grapple and inflict damage, you can inflict an additional 3d6 damage on the target you are grabbing. This damage increases to 5d6 at 4th level, 7d6 at 6th level, 9d6 at 8th level, and 11d6 at 10th level. You can only use *head-butt* once per target and only on targets your size or smaller.

Head Slam (Ex): Starting at 5th level, if you have one grappled creature in each hand, you can use a move action to inflict 2d6 damage on each target. You can only use *head slam* once per round.

Surprising Extension (Ex): At 7th level, you are able

SIERRA MADRE PISTOLERO

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+0	+1	+0	Improved Reaction Time, Realistic Aiming
2	+2	+1	+1	+1	Impossible Climb
3	+3	+1	+2	+1	Drive'n Slide
4	+4	+1	+2	+1	Parkour
5	+5	+2	+3	+2	Weaver Stance
6	+6	+2	+3	+2	Freerunner
7	+7	+2	+4	+2	Gun Maga
8	+8	+3	+4	+3	In Your Base
9	+9	+3	+5	+3	Kinetic Shot
10	+10	+3	+5	+3	Only Need One

to grab enemies that thought they were out of reach. As many times a day as your Strength modifier, you can increase the reach of any grapple attempt by 5 ft (1 square) until the end of your next turn.

Bear Hug (Ex): Starting at 9th level, you can maintain a grapple on a single target with two hands. You can move the grabbed target without needing to sustain the grapple. If using both hands on a grapple and attempting to inflict damage, you may double your Strength modifier.

Neck Snap (Ex): Starting at 10th level, if you are sustaining a grapple for the intent of inflicting damage and you score a critical threat, you automatically confirm the critical hit.

SIERRA MADRE PISTOLERO

From the flamboyant culture of Sierra Madre comes the natural successor to the ancient gunslingers of legend. You believe your abilities to be naturally canny skills developed over years of hard training and discipline. You possess the capacity to be in the right place at the right time in close combat to place a perfect shot.

You prefer to present yourself in close quarters, preventing enemies from striking from a distance. You maneuver to get close, maximizing your firing potential while reducing the capacity to be hit in return. It is not unheard to jump in the midst of an enemy squad, take every one down at point blank range, and walk away without a scratch. To do that, you must get close, study your targets, and make every shot count. You study a scene in seconds and know exactly where to stand and in what position to offer the greatest level of defense while making your weapons lethal with a single shot.

Hit Die: d10

REQUIREMENTS

Ability: Dexterity 16
Base Attack Bonus: +6
Origin: From Sierra Madre.
Proficiency: Small arms (one-handed & two-handed)

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Disable Device (Dex), Escape Artist(Dex), Knowledge (history), Intimidate (Cha), Perception (Wis), Ride (Dex), Survival (Wis), Vehicle Operation (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Improved Reaction Time (Ex): Starting at 1st level, you gain a +2 class bonus to initiative.

Realistic Aiming (Ex): Starting at 1st level, if you hit with your first ranged attack in a full-attack action, you can forego one or more subsequent attacks to deal additional damage with the first equal to the weapon's normal damage for each unused attack. This additional damage does not require additional ammunition. You cannot roll for additional attacks and then choose not to use them, and the attacks sacrificed must be sequential, but you are not required to give up all your remaining attacks if you choose to convert earlier ones. If your initial attack is a critical hit, the additional damage is not increased as well. You cannot combine *realistic aiming* with *two weapon fighting* or *bullet ballet*.

Impossible Climb (Ex): Starting at 2nd level, if you perform a run towards a wall and move at least 2 squares (10 ft.), you can move along the wall as if you had a natural climb speed. If you have not cleared the wall by the end of the run, you may be required to make a Climb check to avoid falling.

Dive'n Slide (Ex): Starting at 3rd level, if you move or run, the last half of your movement does not provoke opportunity attacks.

Parkour (Ex): Starting at 4th level, your speed is not reduced by difficult terrain when you run, and your speed is not reduced when balancing.

Weaver Stance (Ex): Starting at 5th level, you can wield a single one-handed small arm with two hands. If so, you suffer a -5 ft (1 square) penalty to movement speed but gain a +1 bonus to attack rolls.

Freerunner (Ex): Starting at 6th level, you can run twice as long before making Constitution checks. Additionally, if you run as a full-round action, you gain +5 to Acrobatics checks on that turn and the following turn.

Gun Maga (Ex): At 7th level, you are able to bolt

SIERRA MADRE PISTOLERO

YORK GUN DANCER

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT SAVE	REF SAVE	WILL SAVE	SPECIAL
1	+1	+0	+1	+0	
2	+2	+1	+1	+1	Faster Than Eyes Can See (1/day)
3	+3	+1	+2	+1	Spastic Shot
4	+4	+1	+2	+1	Faster Than Eyes Can See (2/day)
5	+5	+2	+3	+2	Cowboy Kembo
6	+6	+2	+3	+2	Faster Than Eyes Can See (3/day)
7	+7	+2	+4	+2	Earning the Nickname, Elegant Reload
8	+8	+3	+4	+3	Faster Than Eyes Can See (5/day)
9	+9	+3	+5	+3	Mayhem Sonata
10	+10	+3	+5	+3	Faster Than Eyes Can See (6/day), Gun Waltz

across the battlefield, hardly taking a moment to aim. Once per round, you can move 5 feet (1 square) as a free action as long as this movement would not provoke an opportunity attack (this does not count as a 5-foot step).

In Your Base (Ex): At 8th level, you are able to duck under blades and between legs to leap up behind enemy lines. Once a day, until you stop running, you do not provoke opportunity attacks and can pass through enemy occupied squares.

Kinetic Shot (Ex): Starting at 9th level, when you score a critical hit on a target, the target is pushed 5 feet (1 square) and knocked prone.

Only Need One (Ex): If you score a critical threat when using *realistic aim*, you can either increase your weapon's critical multiplier by 1 (to a maximum of 5x) or automatically confirm the critical hit.

YORK GUN DANCER

Residents of York cope with echan encroachment daily. The natives watch, warily or willingly, as travelers walk along the main avenue from the west gates to the docks. While the income from the docks and immigrants force even the least open-minded citizens to tolerate this traffic, York continuously deals with racial violence between the techan population and outsiders, be it directed inward or outward. The military and police are taught early on that most of their weapons will break down or be ineffective against most forces attacking their city. With training from those skilled in echan lore, the York military developed a system of analyzing enemies and determining the most sensitive place to strike with the most damage.

'Gun dancer' is a slang term attached to those individuals exhibiting remarkable skill in this martial art. There is no formal academy or dojo where one acquires the title: it is acquired through the school of hard knocks, its warriors emerging with a prowess exceeding the others – a natural grasp of the skills, as if never needing to be taught.

You have been given such a moniker. You are able to examine a target in an eyeblink and determine the perfect point at which to inflict the greatest harm. In addition, you have developed a harmony with the area around you, always analyzing your surroundings for the best cover and field of fire. This allows you to avoid hits while still maintaining your concentration on the target. You rarely remain still in combat, constantly moving from cover to cover, always with a vital enemy weakness firmly locked in your crosshairs.

Hit Die: d10

REQUIREMENTS

Ability: Dexterity 16
Base Attack Bonus: +6
Origin: From York.
Proficiency: Small arms (one-handed & two-handed)

CLASS SKILLS

Acrobatics (Dex), Climb (Str), Disable Device (Dex), Escape Artist(Dex), Knowledge (history), Intimidate (Cha), Perception (Wis), Ride (Dex), Survival (Wis), Vehicle Operation (Dex)

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

Faster Than Eyes Can See (Ex): Starting at first lvel, you can reload a single one-handed small arm, taking no action to do so. You gain additional uses of *faster than eyes can see* at 2nd and every two levels thereafter.

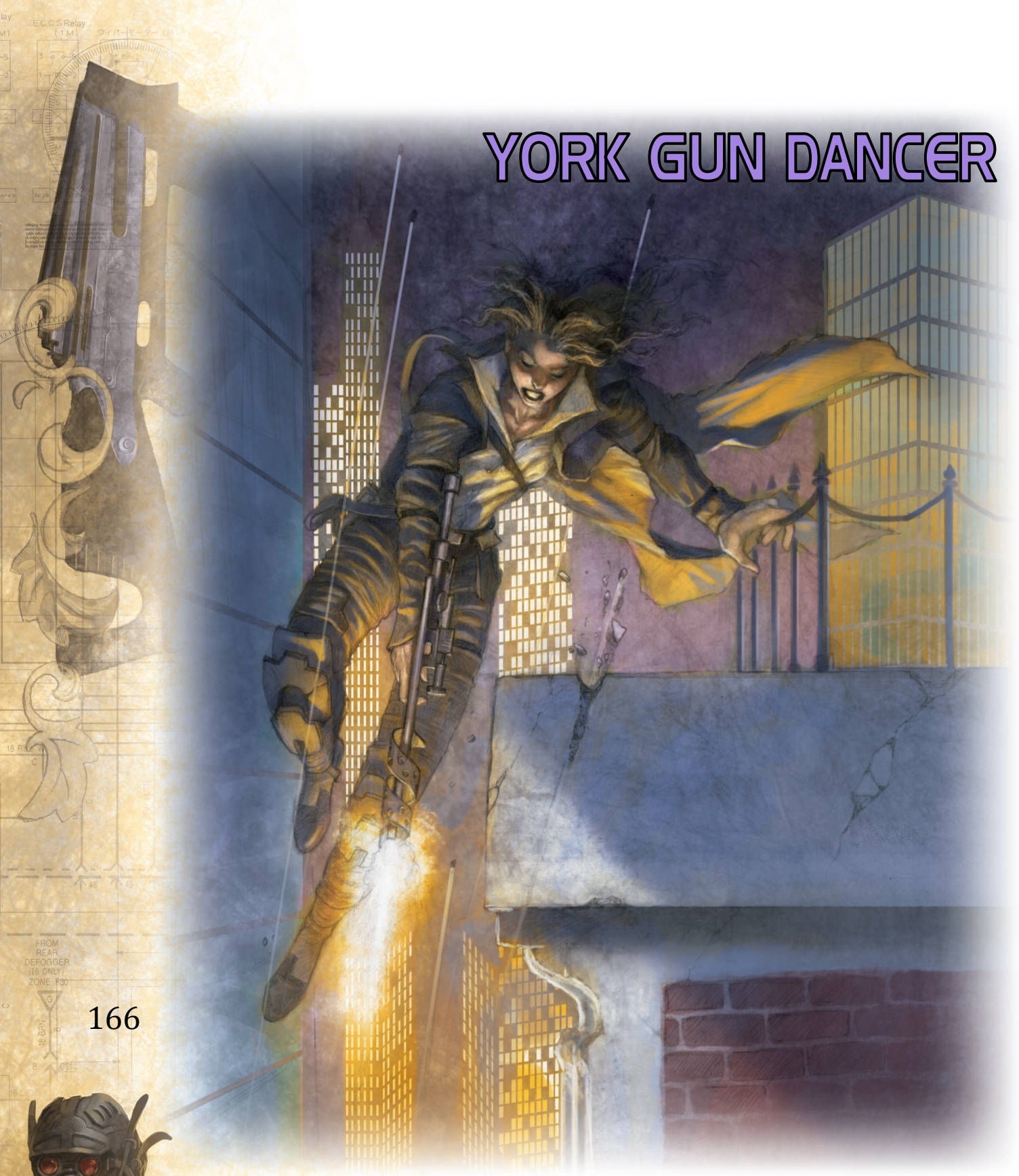
Spastic Shot (Ex): At 3rd level, you are able to fire a second shot in the same time it takes any other person to fire one. Whenever you make a ranged attack as part of a standard or full-round action with a one-handed small arm, you can make one additional ranged attack with the same weapon at your highest attack bonus at a -4 penalty.

Cowboy Kembo (Ex): Starting at 5th level, once per round, if you are wielding two one-handed small arms and score a critical hit, you can make a single ranged attack with your second weapon against another target.

Earning the Nickname (Ex): Starting at 7th level, each time you make a ranged attack against an adjacent target using a one-handed small arm as part of a full-attack action, you can make one additional attack at the same attack bonus against one additional adjacent target.

Elegant Reload (Ex): Starting at 7th level, while

YORK GUN DANCER



wielding two one-handed small arms, you can reload both as a single action.

Mayhem Sonata (Ex): At 9th level, you are able to perform a ballet of destruction. Once a round, while wielding two one-handed small arms, you can double your ammunition usage to double your ability bonus to damage. You can choose to apply *mayhem sonata* after you hit. You must have enough ammunition.

Gun Waltz (Ex): At 10th level, you are able to sashay and sidestep, firing at opponents and avoiding every counterattack. Any time you score a critical hit on an adjacent enemy or drop an adjacent enemy to 0 hit points or fewer, you can move to any unoccupied adjacent square to the enemy as a free action. This does not provoke an opportunity attack.

A child asked him, "Going out or entering?" She was maybe twelve, tall for her age but narrow enough to fall through a rabbit hole. She looked surprisingly fashionable, no doubt in an attempt by her family to prove they weren't indigent. Aiden was unsure why she singled him out. She spoke his English, not one of the various patois Aiden had been warned to expect.

"Going out," Aiden answered.

"Why?" she asked.

"Why not?" Aiden closed the book. "What about you?"

"Going in." She nudged to her mother, the woman layered in linen with a talc-covered face discussing credentials with the outer guard. "Mom grows spiky fruit. Apparently that's hard."

Aiden nodded. "I'm sure she'll get in then."

"Why are you leaving?" she asked. She wanted to know; it wasn't idle banter. She had never been inside a bastion in her life. She was looking forward to frozen dinners.

"Because there are things you can't do in there."

"Like what?"

Aiden placed the novel between his legs and removed a larger book from his pack. This one was crafted by amateur hands with a badly sewn cover wrapped in leather. The pages were rough and frayed and had a dappled texture. The words were written with the flaws and imperfections of a clumsy human hand. Aiden held the book up edge on. He brought his lips to the spine and whistled.

A glowing ball of catkin lifted from the center of the book. A tail of glitter, its only appendage, dangled behind it as it danced around the tome, happy and delighted at having been called, for its life was meaningless if it had nothing to shine upon.

The child was taken back. She recoiled from Aiden, her bottom lip quivering. "Y-You're magic?"

Aiden shrugged. "Not really. It's a gift from my teacher." This did not alleviate the child. She stepped back, turned, and fled to her mother. The catkin fluttered beside Aiden, as confused as he was. If a parent wanted to train her child to seek life in a bastion, it began early and fear was an easy implement to wield. "I guess that's necessary," Aiden whispered. He held up the open book to the spark. It blinked and hid between the pages. Aiden slipped his spellbook back into his satchel. It was a convenient term for it, spellbook. Wizards referred to them as totems, requiring to always be in contact when attempting magic. It didn't matter what Aiden called it; he had yet to cast any spells. He wasn't, what some people called, a radiant. Yet. All fae were born that way. For humans, it was a choice, one which Aiden was required to make if he wanted to cast any spells. He very much wanted it, but for some reason it had yet to take.

The laudenian totems were of ivory, bone, or steel. Chaparrans were always wood. Narros took to using weapons, swords and axes mostly, a few shields. The idea of wands came mostly from the whims of writers. Few casters ever needed them. They were the training wheels of sorcerers. Children used them in areas where magic was taught young. Aiden was never given such a crutch to depend on. No competent caster ever employed a wand. Hands were needed open to fiddle the fingers properly in controlling the spells cast. With one hand taken by the totem, putting a wand in the other was a colossal waste of digits.

All that was important were the words, to say the right one, the right way, and to understand its meaning. To speak the name and create it from nothing. There were other ways to harness magic, but Pleroma—the language of magic—was the most powerful and the path chosen by wizards. The spark that Chen had given Aiden was a living light drawn from nowhere, created with intelligence, and aware its life only lasted until dismissed. It knew this and didn't care, lovingly loyal to its creator or controller until discharged.

No matter how many laws of the universe the white gate modified, none of them were altered in ways that destroyed life. They allowed greater variations without voiding existing ones. Aiden remembered what Chen had said, that anything Aiden could think of thought for itself.

Humans not employing magic created dead zones where the disruption of technology was moderated, but never fully suppressed. The city of Angel was one of the few bastions left.

• • •

Aiden needed to change his money. Bastion currency was worthless plastic and paper. The bank was a wooden hut with a steel door guarded by three men wielding dull broadswords, archaic revolvers, and crater-ridden faces. The man inside sat on a plush chair and looked thin enough to pass through the iron bars separating him from Aiden. A safe behind him had sunken into the dirt.

"How much?" the cashier barked.

Aiden passed his bills through the bars. "Five hundred."

"Looks like four--"

"It's five," Aiden snapped. There was no way to exchange money in the bastion. Angel would accept echan currency because of the raw materials involved, gold and silver, but they would never trade it back. The cashier counted the bills twice.

"Exchange rate isn't good this time of year."

"Exchange? There's no trade, how could there be--"

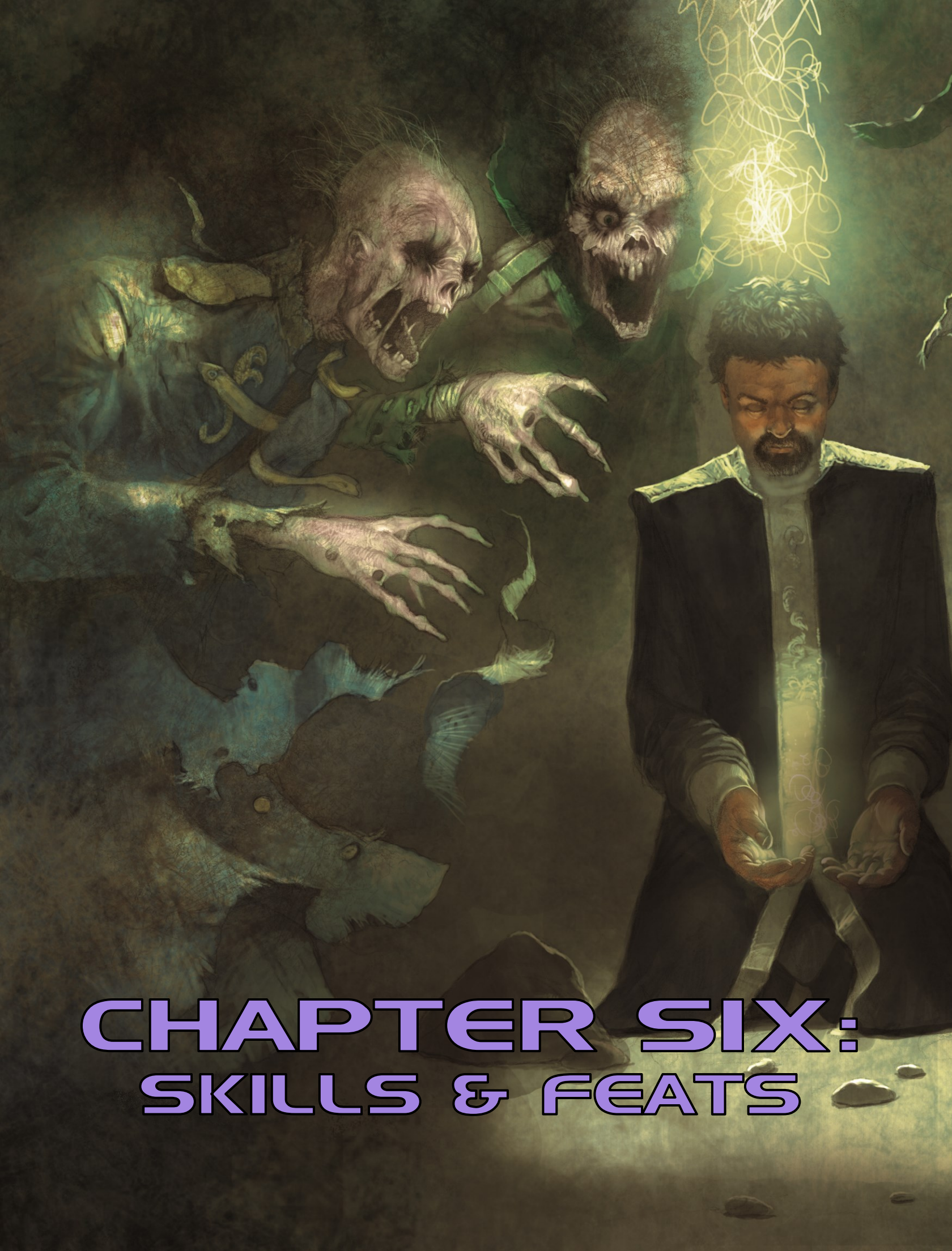
"It's not good this time of year," he interrupted. The cashier opened the safe and rattled a few bags. "What do ya want?" he continued. "Kroenan? Carmots? Sterling? Torquil tence does quite well. A lot of places take it."

"Limshau currency please, carmots, chrysos--actually. Yes, tence would be good. I don't know...fifty?" Aiden had no idea.

"Want gold?"

"Yes, lovely."

The man chuckled and tendered the coins in a bag. Aiden knew it was short but had no angle to argue.



CHAPTER SIX: SKILLS & FEATS

NEW SKILLS

There are no new echan (fantasy) skills, but there are three new techan skills: Demolition, Engineer, and Vehicle Operation. Characters that generate EDF *can* have ranks in these skills, but any device they attempt to use them on is instantly disrupted (see **Echan Disruption Field**). There is also a new Knowledge skill (sciences) and a subset of the Knowledge (history) skill: Regional History.

DEMOLITIONS (Intelligence; Trained Only)

You can set and disarm explosives. This includes all manners of mechanical and electronic detonators.

Check: A successful check lets you place explosives to best effect and set or disarm detonators. The DC of the check is determined by the type of detonator and the amount of explosive used (see below).

Action: Each Demolitions skill roll requires standard action which grants opportunity attacks.

Try Again: Failure means that the explosive fails to go off as planned. The explosives are not lost, but you must make a Demolitions roll to disarm the explosive as if it had been set by someone else to remove the detonator. Failure by 10 or more means the explosive goes off as the detonator is being installed. You cannot accidentally detonate explosives when wiring them together, only when implanting the detonator. A failure with wiring explosives together means the extra wired explosives will not go off with the primary.

Saving Throw: A saving throw against an explosive you set has a DC of 10 + your ranks in Demolitions + your Intelligence modifier + the Tech Level of the detonator.

Timed Detonator (DC10+2/tech level of detonator): Timed explosives detonate at a set time and cannot be prematurely detonated. You select how many rounds or minutes (or longer) you wish for the timer to be and it explodes at the beginning or the end of your turn (your choice) as a free action.

Remote Detonator (DC15+2/tech level of detonator): You may detonate an explosive with a remote detonator (either wired or wireless) by using a swift action. You may also detonate it as a readied action.

Triggered Explosives (DC15+2/tech level of detonator): These detonate on their own when their triggering condition is met and don't require an action. They go off when a target either crosses over it, or before it moves out of its burst area (see **Grenades & Explosives** for the variety of detonators and their conditions).

Wiring Explosives Together: The DC increases by 5 for every additional explosive wired up. Additional explosives increase damage and burst (see **Grenades & Explosives**). Only one detonator is required per pack of wired explosives but the explosives must be all in one spot (the same square). You can string up several explosives at several locations to be triggered at the same time but each location must have one detonator.

Example: Kathryn Lindune wants to set off two blocks of explosives each at ten different locations, all at once. She makes them remote detonated. One remote detonator must be placed at every location but the two blocks at each location only require one detonator. Kathryn can trigger any number of detonators with a single action but each detonator triggers two blocks of explosives. She can, if she wishes, trigger all ten with a single action because they are all the same type of detonator (though they are all separate activations).

Proper Placement: You can carefully set the explosive in such a way as to do extra damage. If you beat the DC roll by 10 or more, you

gain a +2 skill bonus to damage from the explosive. If you beat the DC roll by 15 or more, you gain a +3 skill bonus to damage from the explosive. Your final Demolitions skill roll is also the DC someone other than you needs to beat to disarm your explosive.

Expert Demolitionist: You gain a bonus to all damage rolls with planted explosives you set equal to half your ranks in Demolitions.

Disarm Explosive Device (DC Variable): The DC to disarm is equal to the Demolition skill roll made when the explosive was set (the GM can just set an appropriate DC if the explosive was set by an NPC). If you fail the check, you don't disarm the explosive. If you fail by 10 or more, the explosive goes off.

Creating Detonators and Explosives (DC Variable): If you are trained in both Demolitions and Sciences, you can attempt to create explosives with acquired chemicals. The GM should set a DC dependant on the available ingredients and on the explosives being attempted. Compounds for explosives are not generally easy to find.

If you are trained in both Demolitions and Engineer, you can build various detonators on the fly and accomplish the task much faster than if you were only trained in Engineer. If trained in both skills, the construction time is equal to the detonator's level in hours instead of days.

Special: You can take 10 or 20 when creating and setting explosives as long as you have plenty of time and are not distracted. You cannot take 20 to disarm explosives.

ENGINEER
(Intelligence; Trained skill only)

This is the broad skill dealing with all applications of technology, allowing you to craft and repair devices. These include electronics, general machines, exo-armor, techan armor, techan weapons, and vehicles.

Action: Variable, depending on the task involved (see below).

Recovering Object Hit Points (DC Variable): An Engineer check may be used to recover the hit points of damaged items. The number of hit points recovered is equal to the result of your Engineer roll -15. The repair time is 10 minutes and the cost is 5 uc/tech level for every hit point recovered. You can take 10 or 20 on the check if you have plenty of time and are not distracted. If the roll fails, you waste supplies equal to 10% of your maximum check result, but can try again immediately.

Repairing Breaks (DC20 + 2/tech level): Most repair checks are made to fix complex electronic or mechanical devices if they break either from an attack or from disruption. Broken items are reduced to 0 hit points if they have listed hit points; repairing them raises them to 1 hit point and may require additional work to recover lost hit points, as above. The repair time is 10 minutes and the cost is 5% of the item's original value + 1%/tech level. You can take 10 or 20 on the check if you have plenty of time and are not distracted. If the roll fails, all supplies are wasted but you may try again immediately, though in some specific cases, the GM may decide that a failed repair check has negative ramifications that prevent repeated checks.

Building Technology (DC 15 + 2/tech level): If you have the time and the parts, but are nowhere near a bastion or a market that sells technology, you may try to build the item from scratch. You can only build items with a rated tech level (0-6). You must have widgets or parts equal to the item's cost on hand. The time required to build the item is a number of days (with at least 6 hours of work per day) equal to the item's tech level +2. You cannot speed up this process. At the end of each day, you must make an Engineer roll to beat the build DC. If you beat the DC, you count the day in question towards the time required to build the item. You can take 10 on this roll if you took at least 8 hours of work for the day, and take 20 if you took at least 12 hours. If you fail, the work time for that day is wasted, but the parts are not.

- Creating grenades and ammunition takes half the time
- Vehicles take twice as long and require a facility.
- You cannot build demolitions, medical, or repair kits. You cannot build boosters or medical injections.
- Ammunition's tech level is equal to the weapon it is made for.

Reverse Engineer (DC 15 + 2/tech level): You can use the Engineer skill to convert found technology into widgets to be used in the creation of other technology. When you recover a piece of techan equipment, roll against the DC to acquire widgets from the technology's disassembly. Each attempt to reverse engineer an item takes one hour. You may take three hours instead of one hour to take 10, or take six hours instead of one to take 20. Reverse engineering destroys the item being selected. If you succeed, you acquire one-fifth of the item's value in widgets. If you fail, you only acquire one-tenth of the item's value.

Sabotage (DC Variable): You can use the Engineer skill to sabotage devices and vehicles. With this technique, you can inflict effects instantly or when certain conditions occur.

Proximity: You need to occupy the same square or a square adjacent (5-feet) to a device or vehicle.

Logical Target: You can only attempt sabotage against a target which you can disrupt or incapacitate logically. The GM can refuse a sabotage attempt if you have no way of accessing vital components in the target. The GM may also require you to spend time gaining access to said components.

Sabotage Attempt: Sabotage is a standard action that provokes opportunity attacks.

DC: The base DC is 15 with modifiers depending on which effect you are attempting.

Unique Effects: There are hundreds of different effects you can accomplish with sabotage. When attempting something not on the above table, increase the DC by +5 for every estimated 25% of the target's

EFFECT	MODIFIER
Keep a security door closed	0
Reduce vehicle speed by 25% (round down)[1]	0
Reduce vehicle speed by 50% (round down)[1]	+5
Reduce vehicle speed by 75% (round down)[1]	+10
Reduce vehicle speed to 0 (round down)*	+15
Force a vehicle control roll	+5
Stagger a Target	+10
Blind a Target	+10
Dazed a target	+10
Immobilize a target	+15
Stun a target	+20
[1] This effect does not stack.	

operational effectiveness (round up) that the sabotage reduces.

Duration: Effects last until the effect is repaired unless stated otherwise. Effects can be repaired by an Engineer check or with specific solutions to each problem (breaking open a door instead of fixing the sabotage).

Activation: The effects of the sabotage occur instantly. You can increase the DC by 3 to set a triggering condition.

Detection and Removal: An Engineer check is required to spot and remove sabotage. The DC is the same as the DC to instigate the sabotage.

Special: You can take 10 on this check outside of combat.

Try Again: Assuming alarms are not triggered, you may try again, provided you have time.

Special—Foreign Tech Levels: The DC for all Engineer rolls are increased by +2 for every tech level beyond that of your bastion of origin (TL0 if not from a bastion).

KNOWLEDGE (SCIENCES) (Intelligence)

This is the general study of the applications of the unaltered rules that govern the real world. It deals with broad studies like Biology, Astronomy, and Geography and into further specific fields of expertise like Biochemistry and Astrophysics. Given enough dedication, you could earn grants and degrees, specializing in a field of study to better your species and the natural world. Being a top mind of the profession could enable you to unravel a genome or to design and build your own superconducting supercollider. This skill also allows the study of the differentiation between the ironclad laws of science and the malleable rules of magic.

You do not have to specify a field of expertise. This skill refers to a general knowledge of science. You use this skill for general scientific observations and to discern if an effect could be natural or magical. This is not a techan skill, but certain applications of it may only be available to techans.

Special: Knowledge (sciences) can be used to replace Knowledge (nature) at a -3 penalty if you have no ranks in Knowledge (nature).

REGIONAL HISTORY (Intelligence)

Regional History is a subset of the Knowledge (history) skill. Ranks in Regional History are added to your Knowledge (history) bonus when making checks in context of specific areas of the world: when dealing with immediately neighboring regions (or those with which your home region has extensive dealings), you add half your Regional History ranks. You only gain Regional History ranks through traits or feats. In Canam, the various regions are as follows:

- Abidan, Apocrypha, and Ažhi Dahaka
- Alpinas, Dagron, Seliquam, Quinox and Selkirk
- Angel, Crax, Dawnamoak, Torquil, and Xixion
- Baruch Malkut, Laurama, and Tranquiss
- Fargon
- Gnimfall, Mann, and York
- Kannos, the Finer Fire Pits, and Salvabrooke
- Laudenia
- Limshau, Orchis, Plicato, and Skyrose
- Sierra Madre, the Gloam

VEHICLE OPERATION (Dexterity)

You know how to drive or pilot both ground vehicles and aircraft. You can eventually learn how to control anything regardless of the complexity of the controls. Routine tasks such as ordinary driving don't require a skill check. You only make a check when experiencing unusual circumstance (such as stormy weather or a slippery surface), performing a stunt, driving at high speeds, or if trying to operate a vehicle while being attacked or attacking.

Action: Operating a vehicle can be part of a move or standard action. You can only perform one action involving a vehicle per round but you can employ several stunts during that action. This includes the same stunt multiple times (unless the stunt is not usable multiple times) or different stunts. You roll for each stunt separately. If your vehicle has carryover speed from the previous turn, you must use at least a move action this turn (you can coast at the current speed and perform no stunts). If you don't/can't take a move action, then the vehicle immediately goes into a crash.

If you perform a stunt that requires a standard action, all stunts you perform this turn are part of that standard action, and you can perform any number of standard or move action stunts as part of that action as you are able.

The vehicle operates only on your turn, and you cannot perform a vehicle move action outside of your turn. Even if you're forced to make a control roll outside of your turn, the effects of that roll do not go into effect until the start of your next turn (other effects inflicted on the vehicle can occur immediately). Even if

GENERIC STUNT	VEHICLE OPERATION DC	ACTION
Easy Stunt	15	Depends on stunt
Hard stunt	20	Depends on stunt
Crazy stunt	25	Depends on stunt
Insane stunt	30	Depends on stunt

STUNT OR CONDITION	CONSEQUENCES	DC	ACTION
Acceleration			
Normal	None	—	Move
Aggressive	None	10	Move
Floor it	None	20	Move
Driver's attack	Control Roll	15	Depends on action
Deceleration			
Normal	None	—	Move
Aggressive	Slide	10	Move
Hard Braking	Slide	15	Move
Evasive driving			
+1 to AC & Reflex saves	Control Roll	15	Standard
+2 to AC & Reflex saves	Control Roll	20	Standard
+3 to AC & Reflex saves	Control Roll	25	Standard
+4 to AC & Reflex saves	Control Roll	30	Standard
+5 to AC & Reflex saves	Control Roll	35	Standard
Flight conditions			
Strong wind		+5	—
Raging storm		+10	—
Tornado / Hurricane		+15	—
Jump	Crash	Special	Standard
Lane change			
Normal	None	—	Move
Weaving	Control Roll	20	Move
Road conditions			
Gravel		+5	—
Rain / Snow		+10	—
Slide			
Speed < 10	Control Roll	10	Move[1]
Speed 10 – 20	Control Roll	15	Move[1]
Speed 21 – 30	Control Roll	20	Move[1]
Speed 31 – 40	Control Roll	25	Move[1]
Speed 41 – 50	Control Roll	30	Move[1]
Speed 51 – up	Control Roll	35	Move[1]
Tight Fit			
< / = Vehicle's speed rating	Crash	20	Move
> Vehicle's speed rating	Crash	25	Move
> x2 Vehicle's speed rating	Crash	30	Move
Turning			
Any degree (normal speed)	None	—	Move
45 Degree turn (up to x2)	None	—	Move
90 Degree turn (up to x2)	Slide	10	Move
45 Degree turn (more than x2)	Slide	10	Move
90 Degree turn (more than x2)	Slide	15	Move
Handbrake	Control Roll	20	Move
Drift	+10	—	
Velocity			
Fast	Control Roll	10/+2	—
Stupidly fast (+1 AC/Reflex saves)	Control Roll	15/+5	—
Absurdly fast (+2 AC/Reflex saves)	Control Roll	20/+8	—

[1] If you are controlling the slide.

crashing, the vehicle only slides or stops on your turn.

Try Again—Control Roll, Sliding, or Crashing: If you fail the stunt, you must suffer the consequences. This can be a control roll (a second chance to recover), a slide, or a crash. Some stunts are easy, and they neither require a skill check nor have consequences. If you're still crashing, sliding, or are otherwise out of control at the start of your turn, you still must use a move action to continue any carryover movement (unless you want to abandon all hope of regaining control).

Control Roll: A control roll occurs when you fail a Vehicle Operation check. You gain a chance to recover by rolling the same DC again. If you succeed, you do not crash and you may attempt the stunt again (if you can—some stunts can only attempted once per turn). If you fail the control roll, you go into a crash. Control rolls can also occur for a variety of other actions not listed here. Control rolls take no action and occur as a reaction of another action (an attack from an opponent, a failed skilled roll, etc).

Crash: If you are crashing, you lose control of your vehicle and cannot perform any stunts involving your vehicle until the crash is resolved. In most crashes, you continue your remaining movement in the direction you were previously pointed. In others (like catastrophic jumps), you immediately stop your movement.

At the start of your turn, you decelerate at your speed rating and continue to do so every turn until your movement is 0 or until you hit an obstruction or difficult terrain. When your speed reaches 0, you can regain control and use your vehicle again (if functional). If you have movement remaining when you hit an obstruction or difficult terrain, your vehicle (and you) takes damage (see **Rules Involving Vehicles**).

If you fail a control roll by 5 or more, the vehicle swerves 45 degrees in a random direction before the crash commences. If you fail a control roll by 10 or more, the vehicle rolls as it crashes, taking 2d6 damage at the start of every turn it spends rolling.

Aircraft that fail their control roll lose altitude equal to x2 their speed. Aircraft never fall under the effects of a crash unless they impact on something. As long as the aircraft is functional, you can attempt to regain control of it. If failing a control roll, an aircraft loses altitude (as stated) and slides. You can attempt another control roll check at the start of your next turn. Unlike vehicles, aircraft do not decelerate during a slide. The vehicle and all occupants are considered helpless if the craft impacts on the ground (the occupants suffer the effects of a coup de grace).

Slide: Sliding can be either a consequence or a stunt. If you fail certain stunts, you go into a slide. In an uncontrolled slide, you move your remaining speed in the direction you were moving before you attempted the stunt. You can attempt no other stunts until you regain control of the vehicle. At the start of your next turn, you must make a control roll (DC dependent on your sliding movement) or continue the slide. If you hit an obstruction or difficult terrain before being able to recover, the slide becomes a crash.

Note: Certain vehicles are large enough to ignore terrain conditions and/or the effects of a crash (see **Rules Involving Vehicles**).

How to Handle Speed Change: It can be somewhat confusing dealing with a speed rating rather than a fixed speed value. Here are some important rules to remember:

- If you decelerate your speed to 0, the vehicle is considered stopped.
- Your speed at the end of your turn is your carryover speed for next turn.
- The vehicle's current speed is affected by what point in an action you perform the acceleration or deceleration maneuvers. If you change speed at the beginning of the action, the new value is your speed for this turn. If you change speed at the end of the action, your current speed is considered unchanged, but your carryover speed is set to the new value. If you change speed partway through an action, both your current speed and carryover speed are set to the new value: if you have already moved more squares on your turn than your new speed, you cannot move any further this turn.
- You cannot decelerate below 0. To move backwards, you must stop and then accelerate in reverse.

Acceleration: You increase your speed this turn.

Normal: You increase your vehicle's speed up to your vehicle's speed rating. This action is safe and does not involve a skill check.

Aggressive: You gain a +1 bonus to your speed rating and add this value to your speed.

Floor It: You gain a bonus to your speed rating equal to half your speed rating (round down). You add this value to your speed.

Action: Part of a move action, once per turn. Failure results in no acceleration this turn. You can accelerate at the end of your action to increase your carryover speed while not affecting your movement this turn.

Deceleration: You reduce your speed or attempt to stop altogether.

Normal: You decrease your vehicle's speed up to twice your vehicle's speed rating. This action is safe and does not involve a skill check.

Aggressive: You decrease your vehicle's speed up to three times your vehicle's speed rating. *Hard Braking:* You decrease your vehicle's speed up to four times your vehicle's speed rating. *Action:* Part of a move action, once per turn. Failure results in no deceleration this turn and may require a control roll (GM's discretion). You can decelerate at the end of your action to reduce your carryover speed while not affecting your movement this turn.

Driver's Attack: If you want to make a non-vehicle-based attack (like shooting from the window or fighting someone in the car) while controlling a vehicle, you must make a Vehicle Operation check. Regardless if you succeed or not, you can still make the attack,

though you may lose control afterwards. There are still penalties while making certain attacks. Attempting melee or ranged attacks while driving suffer a -4 penalty to attack rolls. If you are controlling a weapon on a turret remotely, that penalty reduces to -2 (feats can decrease this further).

Action: Via normal rules for making an attack. This is not a vehicle action, so no other stunts can be combined with it. You must have one hand on the steering wheel or you automatically fail the skill check associated with the attack (even when using feats).

Evasive Driving: You can swerve and weave to avoid enemy fire. By performing this stunt successfully, you gain a bonus to both AC and Reflex defense. You must move at least 3 squares (15 feet) this turn in order to gain any bonus. When using evasive driving, choose the amount of the bonus you wish to gain: this sets the DC of both the Vehicle Operation check to perform the stunt and the control roll if the check fails. If you succeed at the control roll, you recover but you cannot attempt evasive driving for the remainder of this turn. You gain the bonus to AC and Reflex saves until the end of your next turn.

Action: Part of a standard action. You can only make one evasive driving during this action. You cannot use evasive driving in the same action while initiating a jump.

Flight Conditions: Weather effects modify the DC of Vehicle Operation checks. All ground vehicles reduce this modifier by 5. Huge vehicles (ground or air) reduce this modifier by 5 while Gargantuan vehicles and larger (ground or air) reduce this modifier by 10 (instead of 5). Add these modifiers for all stunt DCs in these conditions.

Jump: A normal jump (DC 20) distance is the vehicle's modified speed before the jump divided by 10. A difficult jump (DC25) distance is the vehicle's modified speed before the jump divided by 5. An insane jump (DC 30) distance is the vehicle's modified speed before the jump divided by 2. After landing (successful or not), your speed is reduced by half.

Action: This is part of a standard action (all your stunts and movement for this turn which involve your vehicle must be part of a standard action instead of a move action).

Failure: If you fail by 5 or less, you make the jump, but lose control and are in a slide. If you fail by 5 or more, your vehicle rolls and crashes. If you fail by 10 or more, you drive into the ground or fall short as part of a crash, suffering damage.

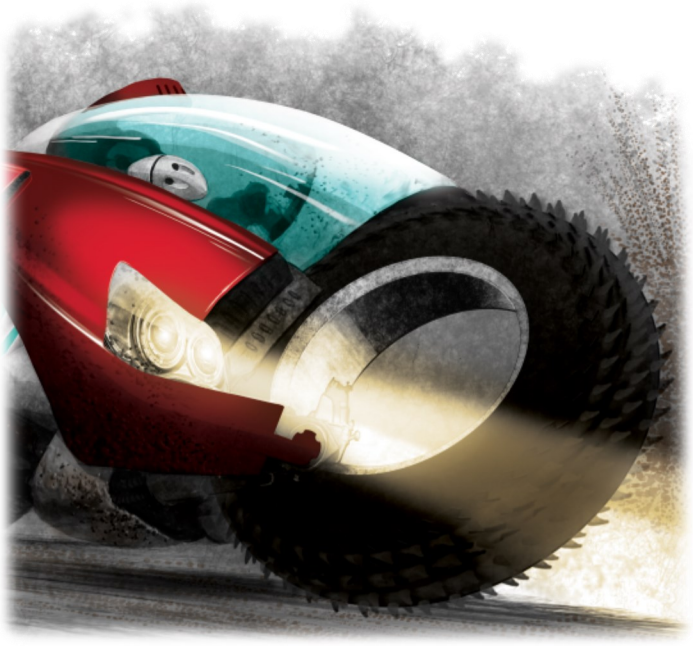
Lane Change: You can attempt to slide two squares (10 feet) left or right as part of your action without having to change direction. This is a fast maneuver requiring your vehicle to have a speed of at least 5.

Normal: Initiating a lane change while moving up to twice your speed rating does not require a skill check.

Weaving: If travelling faster than three times your speed rating, a control roll is required.

Action: Part of a move action.

Road Conditions: Terrain modifies the DC of Vehicle Operation checks. Flying vehicles ignore this modifier. Huge ground vehicles reduce this modifier by 5 while Gargantuan ground vehicles and larger reduce this modifier by 10 (instead of 5). Add these modifiers for all stunt DCs in these conditions. This is not difficult terrain—terrain designated as difficult is too hazardous for most vehicles and usually results in a crash (Gargantuan vehicles can ignore difficult terrain).



Slide: If you intentionally create a slide and succeed, you have full control over the slide, can adjust the angle of the vehicle, and regain control at any time. If you are still sliding at the start of your next turn, then you must roll the control roll again to maintain control. If you fail the control roll, you continue the slide but now it becomes uncontrolled. Even though you are pointed in a different direction, you do not move in that direction unless you attempt a turn.

Action: Part of a move action if you are controlling a slide.

Tight Fit: Vehicles cannot squeeze, but there may be situations where the GM judges that there is only a small margin of error when maneuvering, such as when moving over a narrow bridge or dense forest. The DCs listed are if you are attempting the maneuver while moving up to your speed rating, faster than your speed rating, or if attempting the maneuver faster than double your speed rating. Increase the DC accordingly as the vehicle travels faster.

Action: Part of a move action.

Turning: The faster you go when you turn, the higher the DC. After you make a turn, you must move at least ¼ your current speed before turning again. Otherwise, it instantly turns into a slide. This is regardless if you turn 45 degree or a full 90.

Normal Speed: If moving your speed rating or slower, you can turn at any angle without requiring a roll.

45 Degree Turn: Your speed can be up to twice your speed rating and still not require a skill check when initiating a turn up to 45 degrees. If you attempt a turn

any faster, you have to make a skill check. If you perform a 45 degree turn while your speed is equal to or greater than twice your speed rating, you lose 1 square off your current speed after the turn (1 off your carryover speed and 1 off any remaining movement you have this turn).

90 Degree Turn: If you attempt a turn while moving faster than your normal speed, you have to make a skill check. If you perform a 90 degree turn while the vehicle's speed is greater than its speed rating, you lose half your current speed after the turn (half your carryover speed and half any remaining movement you have this turn). For example, if your speed was 10 and you performed a turn 5 squares into your movement, your remaining movement is 2 and your carryover speed is 5.

Faster/Tighter: Adjust the DC depending on the speed and the sharpness of the turn, adding +5 for sharper turns and/or +5 for speeds in excess of the ones listed. Trying to turn at a right angle while your speed rating is five times your vehicle's rating should be difficult.

Hand Brake: Pulling the handbrake can allow you to spin the vehicle around, turning to any direction you wish, without losing too much speed. You can only attempt a hand brake turn if your speed is between 4 and 20. Any slower and you cannot make the turn. Any faster and you automatically fail the skill check. If successful, you face the new direction but your speed is reduced by half.

You can also use the handbrake to spin around 180 degrees and move in the original direction. If you succeed, your vehicle reverses its facing. You must decelerate and then accelerate in order to move in the opposite direction. Your speed is still reduced by half (half your carryover speed and half off any remaining movement you have this turn).

Drift: You can perform a drift when making up to a 90 degree turn. Your speed rating must be at least 5 to perform a drift. Drifting imposes a +10 on the DC (determined by your turn and speed). If you succeed, you do not lose any speed from the turn. You can combine a drift with a hand brake stunt. If you do, your speed is reduced by ¼ instead of ½ (see hand brake) for turns greater than 90 degrees. Drifting also raises the top speed for performing a hand brake turn to 30.

Action: Part of a move action

Velocity: Even though vehicles are listed as not being able to go faster than four times their speed rating, in actually this is only the safe upper limit. They are capable of much faster speeds if one is daring enough. If your speed this turn places it in one of the following categories, you must make a control roll at the start of each move action involving your vehicle. In addition, all stunts you make at this speed also incur a penalty to their DC (the first value is the velocity DC, the second value is the modifier to all other stunts you make at this speed). You don't add the modifier to the velocity DC, only to other stunts.

Fast: Going fast means to push your vehicle past its x4 speed rating limit but not faster than x5 its speed rating. You suffer a +2 modifier to all other stunt DCs as well as make a DC 10 skill check (before modifiers for flight/ground conditions) at the start of every move action involving a vehicle.

Stupidly Fast: If your speed score is over x5 your speed rating but not more than x7 your speed rating, you obviously think you're some kind of race car driver. You suffer a +5 modifier to all other stunt DCs as well as make a DC 15 skill check (before modifiers for flight/ground conditions) at the start of every move action. If you are going stupid fast by the end of your turn, your vehicle gains a +1 bonus to AC and Reflex saves until the end of your next turn.

Absurdly Fast: If your speed is over x7 your speed rating but not more than x10 your speed rating, you obviously need to slow down. You suffer a +8 modifier to all other stunt DCs as well as make a DC 20 skill check (before modifiers for flight/ground conditions) at the start of every move action. If you are going absurdly fast by the end of your turn, your vehicle gains a +2 bonus to AC and Reflex saves until the end of your next turn.

Working with Stunts: Many stunts require several rolls in sequence to be accomplished. There are many ways to navigate around the driving rules to accomplish what you want. Despite not having a limit on the number of stunts you can perform with an action, you still must check for each stunt in the order you designate (they don't all happen at once). Utilizing this logic, you can accomplish several combinations of maneuvers with a single action.

- Make a jump and accelerate after landing in order to maintain your speed.
- Decrease your speed after turning in order to reduce the minimum distance you have to take before turning again.
- Using tight fit, accelerating, and jumping from a narrow platform.
- Intentionally create a slide and turn that slide into drift for an extra dash of theatrics.
- Use a handbrake to spin the vehicle 180 degrees, accelerate in the original direction to maintain your original speed, and use a driver's attack.

Simplified Vehicle Operation: If the in-depth vehicle rules slow down the game too much, you can use the Generic Stunt DCs on the table above as a guideline based on what you are attempting to accomplish with the action. As long as the vehicle is not at rest, you must take at least one move action each round to drive, but you can instead take a standard action to drive *and* perform some basic maneuver. In-depth maneuvers may require both a standard and a move action (at the GM's discretion).

Special: You can use the Fly skill in place of Vehicle Operation when flying any aircraft that is primarily maneuvered through body movements rather than controls (such as a hang glider).

TABLE: FEATS

FEATS	PREREQUISITES	BENEFITS
RACIAL FEATS		
Chaparran		
Chaparran Automatism	Chaparran	Swap Wisdom for Dexterity with AC
Weald Walk, Improved	Chaparran	Extend Weald Walk to 50 ft.
Weald Walk, Fortified	Chaparran, Improved Weald Walk	Travel through any wooden object
Weald Walk, Greater	Chaparran, Improved Weald Walk, Fortified Weald Walk	Jump through an intermediate tree with Weald Walk
Damaskan		
Cat Balance	Damaskan	+2 bonus to Acrobatics and gain additional abilities
Induced Acceleration	Damaskan	Do not provoke opportunity attacks while running
Neutral Monism	Damaskan, Improved Gravity Focus	+2 additional *gravity focus*
Gravity Focus, Greater	Damaskan, Improved Gravity Focus, Neutral Monism	Walk on ceilings; +1 gravity focus
Gravity Focus, Improved	Damaskan	All values with gravity focus improve
Gimfen		
Pounce Charge	Gimfen	Improved charge
Spider Dash	Gimfen	Crawl without provoking opportunity attacks
Kodiak		
Hardened Armor Use	Kodiak	Reduce armor check penalty with heavy armor by 3
Hardened Shield Use	Kodiak	Reduce armor check penalty with heavy shields by 1
Razor Sharp Claws	Kodiak	Bite and claw damage improves
Keen Claws	Kodiak, Razor Sharp Claws, 21st level	19-20 critical threat range with natural weapons
Laudenian		
Cloud Body	Laudenian	Reduce fall distance; double jump distances
Slide Waltz, Improved	Laudenian	+2 uses of slide waltz
Weightless Body	Laudenian, Cloud Body	Gain reduced weight; walk on water
Narros		
Angry Regardless	Narros	+1 melee attack rolls or +2 bonus melee damage rolls.
Death Dichotomy	Narros, Penultimate Sacrifice	You are raised to 1 HP if killed
Final Scream	Narros	Gain a full round action instead of standard when dying
Iron to the Core	Narros, BAB +10	Gain 15 hit points
Vigorous Surge	Narros, BAB +8	Use a move action to recover hit points
Penultimate Sacrifice	Narros, Final Scream	Remain standing and conscious for up to 3 rounds
Pagus		
Ancient Pagus	Pagus, 15th level, 40 years of age or older, Antediluvian	You cannot be rendered unconscious
Antediluvian	Pagus, 40 or older, Long in Tooth	Further race bonuses dependant on your Wisdom
Limited Options	Pagus	Swap Dexterity for Strength with melee attacks
Long in Tooth	Pagus, 40 or older	Gain bonuses dependant on your Wisdom
Significant Reach Advantage	Pagus	Non-reach weapon can gain reach
Steadfast, Improved	Pagus, 10th level	You cannot be shaken or staggered

FEATS	PREREQUISITES	BENEFITS
Unyielding Presence	Pagus	Gain DR1/-
Tenenbri		
Blindsight, Improved	Tenenbri	Blindsight is extended to 160 ft.
Depth of Consciousness	Tenenbri, Improved Blindsight	Ignore all forms of cover and concealment
Enhanced Sonar	Tenenbri	Blindsight limitations are reduced
Micro Changes in Air Density	Tenenbri	Cannot be caught flat-footed
Piezo Scream, Improved	Tenenbri	*Piezo scream* is increased to 10 ft.
Piezo Scream, Greater	Tenenbri, Improved Piezo Scream	*Piezo scream* now dazes targets instead of staggering
Tilen		
Blood Surge, Addiction	Improved Blood Surge	Blood surge offers temporary hit points
Blood Surge, Archetype	Improved Blood Surge, 10th level	*Blood surge* increases to +4d6
Blood Surge, Improved	Tilen	*Blood surge* increases to +2d6
Ghulath Traits	5th level or lower, tilen	Gain vampiric traits
Sacrificial Heal, Improved	Sacrificial Heal	The damage inflicted on yourself is halved
Crusade of Redemption	Tilen, 10th level	Gain combat bonuses against undead
Sacrificial Heal	Tilen	Heal instead of inflict damage with *blood surge*
TRAIT FEATS		
Ancient Wuxia		
Iron Body	Ancient Wuxia, BAB +10	Gain DR2/-
Point and Challenge	Ancient Wuxia	Pick out one target that must attack you
Ukemi	Ancient Wuxia	Make an Acrobatics check to stand without a move action
Blood Royal		
Aura of Fortitude	Blood Royal	Gain a 25 ft. aura which boosts Survival
Commanding Charisma	Blood Royal, Aura of Fortitude	Improved aura if you score a critical hit
Natural Motivation	Blood Royal, Aura of Fortitude, Commanding Charisma	Aura of Fortitude also heals
Bottled Beast		
Monster Uncaged	Bottled Beast	Regression improves (+3 Str, +10 hp, +10 speed)
Over the Line	Bottled Beast, Monster Uncaged, BAB +10	Regression improves (+6 Str, +15 hp, +10 speed)
Crossroad Drifter		
Broad Talents	Crossroad Drifter	You are proficient with all weapons
Instinct for Danger	Crossroad Drifter, Broad Talents	You cannot be caught flat-footed
Custodian		
Canonical Texts on Fighting	Custodian	Gain a Limshau monk weapon or a bonus to attack
Double Response	Custodian	One additional immediate action per round
Flow as Water	Custodian	Run through difficult terrain
Flurry Trap	Custodian	1/day, take two move actions when gaining surprise
Front Flip	Custodian	Treat 1 square of difficult terrain as normal terrain
Front Flip, Improved	Custodian, Front Flip, BAB +10	Treat all difficult terrain as if it was normal terrain

FEATS	PREREQUISITES	BENEFITS
Limshau Weapon Mastery	Custodian, Dexterity 21	Increase 1 Limshau weapon's critical threat rating by 1
Niten-Ichi	Custodian, Two Weapon Fighting, Two Weapon Defense	Shield bonus increases to +2, +3 with total defense
Reflex Path	Custodian, BAB +10	Make a melee attack and a move action with opportunity attacks
Speed Vault	Custodian	Gain climb speed if you run towards a wall
Split Slide	Custodian	Crawl or squeeze without reduced speed
Finer Miner		
Never Quit	Finer Miner	Regain additional hit points if cured
Nothing of Concern	Finer Miner, 4 ranks in Endurance	+4 Endurance checks; take 10 on all Endurance checks
Dawnamoak Kitarri		
Channel Strength	Dawnamoak Kitarri, Strength 16	+1 damage to ranged fire bows in the first range increment
Expanded Black Bow Use	Dawnamoak Kitarri, Strength 18, BAB +2	Increase the Strength modifier of a Kitarra black bow
Unstoppable Shot	Dawnamoak Kitarri, Power Attack	Attack an additional target if you kill one with an arrow
Death Hunter		
Purpose of Being	Death Hunter	Kill an undead creature, gain 5 temporary hit points
Willful Strike	Death Hunter, Purpose of Being	Critical threat increases against creatures vulnerable to good aligned weapons
Doppelshido		
Improved Double-Form		Reduce all penalties to two-weapon attacks by 1
Experteering Engineer		
Adaptation, Improved	Experteering Engineer, 3rd level	Use Adaptation towards TL2 technology
Adaptation, Greater	Experteering Engineer, 7th level, Improved Adaptation	Use Adaptation towards TL3 technology
Adaptation, Master	Experteering Engineer, 11th level, Greater Adaptation	Use Adaptation towards TL4 technology
Adaptation, Quintessential	Experteering Engineer, 16th level, Master Adaptation	Use Adaptation towards TL5 technology
Fargon Disciplined		
Cornerstone Ability	Fargon Disciplined, 10th level	Re-roll your first attack or force an opponent to re-roll a save
Life's Focus	Fargon Disciplined	Gain an additional bonus spell or +2 to melee damage rolls
Free House Citizen		
Around Others	Free House Citizen	+2 to any racial skill bonuses; +1 language
Halfmaster		
Blunt Hit	Halfmaster	Push targets 5 ft. with the staff end of a pole arm
Hand Change	Halfmaster, Blunt Hit, BAB +8	Switch your Habaukeedo posture as a swift action
Transcendence Reach	Halfmaster	All reach weapons become monk weapons
Reach of Choice	Halfmaster	+1 to attack with one pole arm weapons

FEATS	PREREQUISITES	BENEFITS
Herbalist		
Ayurveda	Herbalist	Heal an adjacent ally equal to a quarter of his hit points
Incarnate		
Apotheosis	Incarnate, Elemental Tuner, Embodiment of Flesh, 8th level	Gain additional abilities based on your Incarnate element
Elemental Tuner	Incarnate	Gain abilities based on your Incarnate element
Embodiment of Flesh	Incarnate, Elemental Tuner	Gain additional abilities based on your Incarnate element
Juggernaut		
Unshakeable	Juggernaut	+3 to saves against dazed, stunned, or weakened
Unstoppable	Juggernaut	+1 shield bonus to AC
Kannos Kavalier		
Spare the Horse	Kannos Kavalier, Mounted Combat	When cured, your mount is healed half that amount
Saddle Use, Improved	Kannos Kavalier, Mounted Combat, Superfluous Reins	+2 Reflex saves, +2 Acrobatic checks while mounted
Speed and Elegance	Kannos Kavalier	Mount/dismount a steed as a swift action; no Ride checks when controlling your mount in combat
Superfluous Reins	Kannos Kavalier, Mounted Combat, BAB +10	Moving half your speed is not counted as having moved
Kinetassana		
Propriocepting Strike	Kinetassana	Gain +4 initiative if an opponent is 25 ft. or closer
Propriocepting Talent	Kinetassana, Propriocepting Strike	The first hit inflicts x2 Wisdom modifier damage
Quintessence	Kinetassana, Propriocepting Talent	+1d8 damage with an attack using a ready action
Knight of the Wall		
Phalanx	Knight of the Wall	Gain an attack if an opponent misses with a charge or bull rush
Shield Master	Knight of the Wall	Ignore check penalty for all shields; ignore BAB requirements for other shield-based feats
Koana Student		
Honor Roll	Koana Student, 4 ranks Knowledge (Arcana)	+2 Knowledge (arcane) and Spellcraft; 1/day re-roll a failed Knowledge (arcane) or Spellcraft skill check
Laudenian Magos		
One Word	Laudenian Magos	One spell level 3 or lower only requires a swift action
Librarian		
Advanced Curriculum	Librarian	Select *From the Books* again
Bookworm	Librarian	Gain skill bonuses against a number of monsters
Lore Specialist	Limshau Librarian, bookworm	+1 attack and a +2 damage against one creature
Malkut Outcast		
Regrettable Heritage	Malkut Outcast	+4 skill bonuses against fae
Mystic		
Avatar of the Self	Mystic, 9th level	Cast *find the path* 1/day.

FEATS	PREREQUISITES	BENEFITS
Infallible Authority	Mystic, 3rd level	Cast *detect thoughts* 1/day
Of the Ancients	Mystic, 7th level	Cast *divination* 1/day
True Oracle	Mystic, 5th level	Cast *speak with dead* 1/day
Redcap		
Jump the Corpse	Redcap, Level 6	Take a 5-ft step in an adjacent square if you kill a target
Sky-Born		
Native Pilot	Sky-Born	+2 Acrobatics, Climb checks; +5 Acrobatics and Climb when on an airship
Wind Step	Sky-Born, Native Pilot	Do not provoke opportunity attacks for moving while balancing, jumping, or climbing
Squire of Abraham		
Rousing Speech	Squire of Abraham	One adjacent ally shares your AC
Sworn Hand of Vengeance		
Furious Retribution	Sworn Hand of Vengeance, Furious Strike, BAB +10	+3 attack rolls and +2d6 bonus to damage with the first hit against a sworn enemy
Furious Strike	Sworn Hand of Vengeance	+1d6 damage on your sworn enemy on the first hit
Taskin-Kada Watcher		
Distracting Feint	Taskin-Kada Watcher	If prone, you gain concealment
Obscure Movements	Taskin-Kada Watcher, Distraction	Use a standard action to gain total concealment
Vivicator		
Unspoken Might	Vivicator, 3rd level	Cast *cure light wounds* 1/day
Inner Light	Vivicator, Unspoken Might, 5th level	Cast *cure moderate wounds* 1/day
Inner Light, Greater	Vivicator, Improved Inner Light, 9th level	Cast *touch of life* 1/day
Inner Light, Improved	Vivicator, Inner Light, 7th level	Cast *cure serious wounds* 1/day
Touch of Life	Vivicator, Greater Inner Light, 11th level	Can *heal* 1/day
GENERAL FEATS		
Expanded Widget Use	Must have a widget bag	Use widgets to replace thieves' tools or gain a bonus to Heal
Great Throw		+1 bonus for all non-magical thrown weapons
Improved Book Casting	Book totem	You don't have to hold your totem book in your hand
Totem Memory	Any totem, caster level 4	You may store one spell in your totem
TECHAN FEATS		
Ammunition Efficiency	Strength 14, BAB +8	+1 damage with heavy auto weapons
Armor Proficiency (Exo-Armor)		Gain training with all types of techan exo-armor
Armor Proficiency (Techan-Heavy)		Gain training with all heavy techan armor
Armor Proficiency (Techan-Light)		Gain training with all light techan armor
Armor Proficiency (Techan-Medium)		Gain training with all medium techan armor
Bayonet Reach		Gain reach with your bayonet
Better than 20/20		+40 ft. to your range with any small arm or heavy weapon
Burst Fire		Auto or heavy auto property gain a +1 bonus to damage rolls

FEATS	PREREQUISITES	BENEFITS
Crossfire		Flank 10 feet (2 squares) away from an enemy
Crossfire, Improved	Crossfire, BAB +7	Flank 15 feet (3 squares) away from an enemy
Crossfire, Master	Crossfire, Improved Crossfire, BAB +15	Flank 20 feet (4 squares) away from an enemy
Curb Stomp	BAB +6	Inflict Strength modifier damage to a prone adjacent target
Deflecting Shot		Reduce the penalty for firing against an enemy in cover by 1
Discharge Burn	BAB +9	+1 damage with 1-handed firearms against adjacent targets
Duct Tape		Never run out of duct tape
Fidgety Fingers	At least 6 ranks in Engineer	Building technology takes half as long
Firearm Expertise		+1 feat bonus to damage rolls
Full Automatic Adept	BAB +10	Fire ½ ammunition each time you attack
Ground Vehicle Operation		+3 Vehicle Operation when making a control roll
Gun-Something-Something		1-handed small arms are melee weapons in adjacent squares
Heavy Weapon Proficiency	BAB +1	You gain training with one heavy weapon of your choice
High Precision		Reroll one damage die that results in a 1 with auto weapons
Improvised Adaptation	At least 4 ranks in Engineer	¼ the value of the item in widgets instead of one-fifth
Learned the Hard Way	4 ranks in Demolitions	No detonation with failed Demolitions checks
Like a Widget Bag		You gain a widget bag
Meat Shield		Adjacent fallen opponents provide cover
Meat Shield, Improved	Meat Shield, 5th level	Use *Meat Shield* with grappled opponents
Naturally Echan Defiant		+1 to disruption saves for all equipment
Natural Hunter		Wisdom in place of Dexterity for Stealth checks
Offensive Injection		+2 attack and -1 saving throws with air dart rifles
Overdrive, Improved	Mechanic operator	Roll twice and take the higher result
Proper Firing Position	Small arms (two-handed), heavy weapons, or super heavy weapons	-2 penalty to attack; +2 damage
Proximity Target	Sniper	Reduce the minimum range to 15 ft.
Rapid Reload		1/day replace a clip or cell as a free action
Rapid Reload, Improved	Rapid Reload, BAB +15	Replace a clip as a swift action instead of a move action
Recoil Absorption		Move without the penalty of firing two-handed small arms
Small Arms, One Handed	BAB +1	Gain training with all one-handed firearms
Small Arms, Two-Handed	BAB +1	Gain training with all two-handed firearms
Sniper Eyes	BAB +5	Range increments of your sniper weapons are doubled

FEATS	PREREQUISITES	BENEFITS
Specialty Weapon Proficiency	BAB +1	Gain training with one specialty weapon of your choice
Super Heavy Weapons	BAB +1	Gain training with one super heavy weapon of your choice
EXPLOSIVE FEATS		
A Real Tosser		Medium or smaller targets are pushed out of the area
Between the Knees		1/day, increase damage of planted explosives
Blast Vector		1/day, +20 to your next Demotions check
Explosives Attack	4 ranks in Demolitions	Targets hit suffer additional damage equal to half your level
Improved Explosives Attack	Explosives Attack, 4 ranks in Demolitions	1/day, one target suffers double damage
That Was Close	6 ranks in Demolitions	1/day, repeat a Demolitions check with a +10 bonus
Wilhelm Scream	Explosives Attack, 4 ranks in Demolitions	1/day, increase the area of effect by 5 feet. Push targets back
Explosives Specialty		Range increment with all thrown explosives increase to 15
MARTIAL TRAINING FEATS		
Balance and Direction	Improved Unarmed Strike	+1 AC against melee attacks
Best on the Mat	Evolution of Pankration	+1 to your CMB while grappling
Bouncing Combo	Improved Unarmed Strike, BAB +15	Drop an enemy to 0 hp, take a move action
Earned the Belt	Evolution of Pankration, Improved Grapple, BAB +7	Move a grabbed target without a grapple check
Evolution of Pankration	Improved Unarmed Strike	If grappling and prone, you are not grappled
Game of Sticks	Improved Unarmed Strike	Quarterstaff gains the reach property
Ham Hands	Improved Unarmed Strike, BAB +8	Spend a move action to entangle a target your size
Jumping Knee	Unarmed Expanded Profile	Target suffers a bull rush as well the damage from a charge
Kayfabe Maneuver	Superior Position	Sustain a grapple and pin with a swift action
Mano-a-Mano		Unarmed attack improves by one step against one opponent
Non-Lethal Intent		Inflict no damage, stun or knock a target unconscious
Superior Position		A target escaping from your grapple suffers 1d8 damage
Tag Team	Improved Unarmed Strike, BAB +6	Deal damage to an ally's adjacent enemy
The Ritual of Dance and Damage	Improved Unarmed Strike, Unarmed Expanded Profile	While unarmed, take a 10 ft. step instead of a 5
Think Big	BAB +6	Apply critical threat effects to larger targets
True Enlightenment of the Art	Improved Unarmed Strike	Gain DR5/- for 1 round
Striker		Unarmed damage improves
Unarmed Expanded Profile	Improved Unarmed Strike	Your legs become part of your unarmed attack profile

FEATS	PREREQUISITES	BENEFITS
Way of the Turn	Improved Unarmed Strike	Inflict ½ damage and knock your opponent prone
VEHICLE FEATS		
Aircraft Specialization	At least 4 ranks in Vehicle Operation	+3 Vehicle Operation with aircraft
Drift King	Racing Record	Ignore the DC modification for performing a drift
Drop the Hammer	4 ranks in Vehicle Operation	+15 ft. to a vehicle's speed with an acceleration stunt
Flat Out	Aircraft Specialization or Ground Vehicle Specialization	+5 speed to one specific vehicle
Ground Vehicle Specialization	Vehicle Operation	+3 Vehicle Operation with a ground vehicle
Hit the Apex	4 ranks in Vehicle Operation	1/day, +5 to Vehicle Operation when turning
Hole Shot	8 ranks in Vehicle Operation	+6 initiative if controlling a vehicle
Holding Traffic	4 ranks in Vehicle Operation	Your vehicle can occupy two additional squares
Hull-Down	Vehicle Operation	1/day, your vehicle gains cover from ranged attacks
In the Fence	4 ranks in Vehicle Operation	1/day, inflict additional damage to another vehicle
Jagged Edge	Racing Record	Reduce all DCs for stunt rolls by 5
Jump Start	6 ranks in Vehicle Operation	1/day, a vehicle recovers from disruption
Jump the Crash	4 ranks in Vehicle Operation	Jump from a crashing vehicle
Pushing and Shoving	4 ranks in Vehicle Operation	Inflict damage on a vehicle and force a control roll
Racing Record	Aircraft Specialization or Ground Vehicle Specialization	Don't make skill checks with certain stunts
Speed Demon	8 ranks in Vehicle Operation	1/day, +10 bonus to Vehicle Operation
Steering Balance	Ground Vehicle Operation	Minimum distance after finishing a turn is 1/6 your speed
Thread the Needle	4 ranks in Vehicle Operation	1/day, +5 bonus to AC
Traffic Offense	Ground Vehicle Operation	Increase opponent's Vehicle Operation DC by 5
Vehicle Combat	4 ranks in Vehicle Operation	No penalty when firing a weapon from a moving vehicle
Vehicle Combat, Improved	10 ranks in Vehicle Operation, Vehicle Combat	No control roll if performing an attack from a vehicle
Vortex Draft	4 ranks in Vehicle Operation	1/day, force an enemy vehicle to make a control roll

FEATS

All feats from the PATHFINDER RPG are allowed as long as the character meets the prerequisites.

Item Creation Feats: You do not have to be a spellcaster to select these feats, but you must still meet the level requirement.

RACIAL FEATS

CHAPARRAN

CHAPARRAN AUTOMATISM

Prerequisite: Chaparran

Benefit: You can use Wisdom in place of Dexterity when determining your ability bonus to AC.

WEALD WALK, FORTIFIED

Prerequisite: Chaparran, Improved Weald Walk

Benefit: You can travel through any wooden object connected to the ground when using *weald walk*.

WEALD WALK, GREATER

Prerequisites: Chaparran, Weald Walk Improved, Fortified Weald Walk

Benefit: You can extend *weald walk*'s range by jumping through an intermediate tree within 50 feet (10 squares) of the start point. The total distance covered cannot be more than 75 feet (15 squares) and no trees can be greater than 50 feet (10 squares) apart.

WEALD WALK, IMPROVED

Prerequisite: Chaparran

Benefit: Weald walk's range is extended to 50 feet (10 squares).

DAMASKAN

CAT BALANCE

Prerequisite: Damaskan

Benefit: You gain a +2 inherent bonus to Acrobatics. You do not lose your Dexterity bonus to AC when performing any actions that require and Acrobatics or Climb check.

INDUCED ACCELERATION

Prerequisite: Damaskan

Benefit: You do not provoke opportunity attacks while running.

NEUTRAL MONISM

Prerequisite: Improved Gravity Focus

Benefit: Whenever you charge or run, you gain a 5-foot bonus to speed. Additionally, you gain two additional uses of *gravity focus* per day.

GRAVITY FOCUS, GREATER

Prerequisites: Damaskan, Improved Gravity Focus, Neutral Monism

Benefit: In addition to the abilities featured in Improved Gravity Focus, you can now walk on ceilings. You do not provoke opportunity attacks and can move through enemy occupied squares as long as there is a ceiling within jumping distance. While *gravity focus* is in effect you have a climb speed equal to your base speed and are not required to use any hands while climbing. You gain one additional use of *gravity focus* per day.

GRAVITY FOCUS, IMPROVED

Prerequisite: Damaskan

Benefit: During *gravity focus*, your base speed increases by +15 feet and you gain a +6 bonus to all Acrobatics checks. Your bonus to Reflex saves is +5. You can now walk on walls, allowing you to move across a wall, ignoring opportunity attacks and enemy occupied squares along that wall during the movement. You gain a +10 bonus to Climb checks while on the wall and you are not required to use any hands while climbing while *gravity focus* is in effect.

GIMFEN

POUNCE CHARGE

Prerequisite: Gimfen

Benefit: When you charge, the bonus to attack increases to +3 and you gain a bonus to damage for the attack equal to your Dexterity modifier.

SPIDER DASH

Prerequisite: Gimfen

Benefit: While prone, you can move up to 15 feet (3 squares) as a move action without provoking an opportunity attack.

KODIAK

HARDENED ARMOR USE

Prerequisites: Kodiak

Benefit: You reduce your armor check penalty with heavy armor by 3.

HARDENED SHIELD USE

Prerequisites: Kodiak

Benefit: You reduce your check penalty with a heavy shield by 1.

KEEN CLAWS

Prerequisite: Kodiak, Razor Sharp Claws, 21st level

Benefit: Your claws' can score a critical hit on natural roll of 19 or 20.

RAZOR SHARP CLAWS

Prerequisite: Kodiak

Benefit: The damage from your bite and claws improve by one step (1d4 > 1d6 > 1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12 > 2d6 > 2d8 > 2d10).

Special: You may select this feat up to three times.

LAUDENIAN

SLIDE WALTZ, IMPROVED

Prerequisite: Laudenian

Benefit: *Slide waltz* requires a free action instead of a swift action. You gain two additional uses of *slide waltz* per day.

UNITED IDENTITY

Prerequisite: Laudenian

Benefit: Any of your class features or feats which refer to Charisma can instead use Intelligence or Wisdom.

CLOUD BODY

Prerequisites: Laudenian

Benefit: You reduce all fall distances by 20 feet. If you make an Acrobatics check to reduce falling damage, you roll against a DC15 to ignore the first 20 feet fallen. When you make a high jump, your maximum jump distances are doubled.

WEIGHTLESS BODY

Prerequisites: Laudenian, Cloud Body

Benefit: You reduce all fall distances by 50 feet. Your weight reduces by half. If running, you can run on any liquid or solid. You cannot walk on air or gas. You do not trigger any pressure sensitive traps while running.

NARROS

ANGRY REGARDLESS

Prerequisite: Narros

Benefit: You gain a +1 racial bonus to all melee attack rolls. If you are reduced to below half hit points you lose this bonus to attack but gain a +2 racial bonus to all melee damage rolls.

DEATH DICHOTOMY

Prerequisite: Narros, Penultimate Sacrifice

Benefit: Once a day, if you die after using *final word*, you are healed to hit points equal to 1 + three times your Constitution bonus at the start of your next turn. Until you are restored to full hit points, you cannot use any skills, abilities, or attacks that employ Charisma, Intelligence, or Wisdom, and you suffer a -4 penalty to all Will saves. You also cannot cast spells.

IRON TO THE CORE

Prerequisite: Narros, base attack bonus +10

Benefit: You gain +15 hit points.

VIGOROUS SURGE

Prerequisite: Narros, base attack bonus +8

Benefit: If you have any adjacent opponents, you can use a move action to gain temporary hit points equal to your Constitution modifier.

FINAL SCREAM

Prerequisite: Narros

Benefit: If you use your *final word*, you gain a full round action instead of a standard action.

PENULTIMATE SACRIFICE

Prerequisites: Narros, Final Scream

Benefit: After using your *final word*, you remain standing and conscious. For three rounds or until dead, you operate as normal except you can only take a 5-foot step. You may still take a free action to say a few final words before the end.

PAGUS

ANCIENT PAGUS

Prerequisite: Pagus, 15th level, 40 years of age or older, Antediluvian

Benefit: You cannot be rendered unconscious, even if reduced to zero hit points. If your Wisdom is 12 or lower, you suffer a -4 permanent drop in Wisdom (min 1). If your Wisdom ever drops below 3 permanently, you gain an additional 15 hit points. If your Wisdom is 13 or higher, you gain a +1 bonus with all Charisma-, Intelligence-, and Wisdom-based checks. You also gain a +2 bonus to all Will saves.

ANTEDILUVIAN

Prerequisite: Pagus, 40 years of age or older, Long in Tooth

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus to all melee attack rolls and double the distance of any bull rush you succeed at. If your Wisdom is 12 or lower, you suffer a -3 permanent drop in Wisdom (min 1). If your Wisdom ever drops below 3 permanently, you gain DR1/-; if you gain DR from any other source, increase that DR by 1. If your Wisdom is higher than 12, you gain a +1 bonus to all saves and a +1 bonus to Initiative.

LIMITED OPTIONS

Prerequisite: Pagus

Benefit: You can use Strength in place of Dexterity or Dexterity in place of Strength for all melee attack and damage rolls.

LONG IN TOOTH

Prerequisite: Pagus, 40 years of age or older

Benefit: If your Wisdom is 12 or lower, you suffer a -2 permanent drop in Wisdom (min 1). You also gain a +1 bonus to all melee damage rolls and a +1 bonus to AC and Reflex saves. If your Wisdom is higher than 12, you gain a +1 bonus to Will and Fort saves and a +3 bonus to Intimidate checks.

SIGNIFICANT REACH ADVANTAGE

Prerequisite: Pagus

Benefit: Any non-reach two-handed melee weapon you are wielding can gain reach.

STEADFAST, IMPROVED

Prerequisite: Pagus, 10th level

Benefit: You cannot be shaken or staggered.

UNYIELDING PRESENCE

Prerequisite: Pagus

Benefit: You gain DR1/-; if you gain DR from any other source, increase that DR by 1.

TENENBRI

BLINDSIGHT, IMPROVED

Prerequisites: Tenenbri

Benefit: Your blindsight is extended to 160 feet. If you have the Enhanced Sonar feat, when your blindsight would normally be reduced to 50, it is instead reduced to 60.

DEPTH OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Prerequisites: Tenenbri, Improved Blindsight

Benefit: You ignore all forms of cover and concealment against opponents. You must still have line of effect on a target.

ENHANCED SONAR

Prerequisites: Tenenbri

Benefit: When your blindsight would normally be reduced to 30 feet, it is only reduced to 50.

MICRO CHANGES IN AIR DENSITY

Prerequisites: Tenenbri

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus to initiative and you cannot be caught flat-footed.

PIEZO SCREAM, IMPROVED

Prerequisites: Tenenbri

Benefit: The range of *piezo scream* is increased to 10 feet. On a hit, it deals +1d6 damage.

PIEZO SCREAM, GREATER

Prerequisites: Tenenbri, Improved Piezo Scream

Benefit: *Piezo scream* now dazes targets instead of staggering them. Thunder damage increases to 2d6 + selected attribute modifier.

TILEN

BLOOD SURGE ADDICTION

Prerequisites: Tilen, Improved Blood Surge

Benefit: Instead of healing damage, hit points you gain through *blood surge* can be temporary hit points. You choose which when you use the ability. You cannot have more temporary hit points than your Constitution score.

BLOOD SURGE, ARCHETYPE

Prerequisites: Tilen, 10th level, Improved Blood Surge

Benefit: The initial damage with *blood surge* in-

creases to +4d6.

BLOOD SURGE, IMPROVED

Prerequisites: Tilen

Benefit: The initial damage with *blood surge* increases to +2d6.

GHULATH TRAITS

Prerequisites: Tilen, 5th level or lower

Benefit: You gain one of the following racial features.

Unnatural Strength—You gain a +1 bonus to all Strength-based damage rolls and skill checks. This increases to +2 at 5th level and +3 at 10th level.

Uncanny Agility—You gain a +1 bonus to all Dexterity-based damage rolls and skill checks. This increases to +2 at 5th level and +3 at 10th level.

Supernatural Speed—You no longer provoke opportunity attacks when leaving threatened squares.

Aberrant Attraction—You gain a climb speed of 10 ft.

Unbound—You can jump 15 feet horizontally or vertically without having to make an Acrobatics check.

Special: You may select this feat twice as long as the first selection occurs before 5th level.

SACRIFICIAL HEAL, IMPROVED

Prerequisites: Tilen, Sacrificial Heal

Benefit: When using Sacrificial Heal, the damage inflicted on yourself is halved.

CRUSADE OF REDEMPTION

Prerequisites: Tilen, 10th level

Benefit: When you roll initiative, you can target any one undead creature in line of sight. You receive a +1 bonus to attack and a +2 bonus to damage rolls against that creature until it is reduced to 0 hit points or lower (or five minutes). The target suffers a -2 penalty to attack rolls for any attack that doesn't include you as a target. If the target is a ghulath (vampire), once per round, you may inflict an additional +1d6 damage against it with a successful ranged or melee attack.

SACRIFICIAL HEAL

Prerequisite: Tilen

Benefit: While using Blood Surge, you can reverse the effect, inflicting damage upon yourself to heal a target. You can control the damage inflicted. The damage to heal rate is 1 to 1.

TRAIT FEATS

ANCIENT WUXIA

IRON BODY

Prerequisites: Ancient Wuxia, base attack bonus +10

Benefit: You gain DR2/-.

POINT AND CHALLENGE

Prerequisite: Ancient Wuxia

Benefit: Once a day, you can point to a target in line of sight as a move action. Until you or the target is killed, or 1 hour passes, the target suffers a -4 penalty to attack rolls which don't include you as a target. You also gain a +1 feat bonus to attack rolls against the target.

UKEMI

Prerequisite: Ancient Wuxia

Benefit: If you fall prone but don't suffer any other effects, you can make a DC25 Acrobatics check as an immediate reaction to avoid the effects and stand back up instantly.

BLOOD ROYAL

AURA OF FORTITUDE

Prerequisites: Blood Royal

Benefit: You gain an *aura of fortitude* which has a 25 -foot radius centered on you: Each ally gains a +10 ft. Bonus to their speed for the purposes of hourly or daily travel. You and each ally gain a +2 feat bonus to all Survival checks to resist extreme weather, thirst, or hunger. This is an extraordinary ability.

COMMANDING CHARISMA

Prerequisites: Blood Royal, Aura of Fortitude

Benefit: IIf you score a critical hit, each ally within your *aura of fortitude* gains a +1 bonus to attack rolls against that enemy until the start of your next turn.

NATURAL MOTIVATION

Prerequisites: Aura of Fortitude, Blood Royal, Commanding Charisma

Benefit: All allies within your *aura of fortitude* regain 2 hit points per round as long they are over 0 hit points and are within 20 ft of an opponent.

BOTTLED BEAST

MONSTER UNCAGED

Prerequisite: Bottled Beast

Benefit: *Regression* improves to +3 to Strength-based damage rolls and +10 hit points. Your speed is also increased by +10 ft. For the duration.

OVER THE LINE

Prerequisites: Bottled Beast, Monster Uncaged, base attack bonus +10

Benefit: *Regression* improves to +6 to Strength based damage rolls and +15 hit points. You regain 2 hit points every round. You also inflict double damage when using *blood surge* on anyone during *regression*.

CROSSROAD DRIFTER

BROAD TALENTS

Prerequisite: Crossroad Drifter

Benefit: You are proficient with all weapons, including improvised weapons.

INSTINCT FOR DANGER

Prerequisites: Crossroad Drifter, Broad Talents

Benefit: You cannot be caught flat-footed.

CUSTODIAN

CANONICAL TEXTS ON FIGHTING

Prerequisite: Custodian

Benefit: Select one of the following:

- Any Limshau weapon you are proficient in becomes a monk weapon. Kawabari armor does not force you to lose a monk's fast movement or flurry of blows abilities. You still lose your ability to add your Wisdom bonus to AC but you still gain the AC and CMD bonuses starting at 4th level.
- Any Limshau weapon you are proficient in gains a +1 circumstance bonus to attack rolls.

Special: You can only select this feat once.

DOUBLE RESPONSE

Prerequisite: Custodian

Benefit: You may take one additional immediate action per round. Both are still counted as a single swift action on your turn.

FLOW AS WATER

Prerequisite: Custodian

Benefit: You can run through difficult terrain. You don't have to run in a straight line. Once a day, you can run as a move action. You cannot move again that same round.

FLURRY TRAP

Prerequisite: Custodian

Benefit: Once per day, if you gain surprise on an enemy, you can make two move actions along with a standard action.

FRONT FLIP

Prerequisite: Custodian

Benefit: With every move action, you can treat 1 square of difficult terrain as if it was normal terrain.

FRONT FLIP, IMPROVED

Prerequisite: Custodian, Front Flip, base attack bonus +10

Benefit: You can treat all difficult terrain as if it was normal terrain.

LIMSHAU WEAPON MASTERY

Prerequisites: Custodian, Dexterity 21

Benefit: Choose one specific Limshau weapon. You increase its critical threat rating by 1. You can only select this feat once.

NITEN-ICHI

Prerequisites: Custodian, Two Weapon Fighting, Two Weapon Defense

Benefit: While holding a melee weapon in each hand, your shield bonus to AC increases to +2, +3 when using the total defense action.

REFLEX PATH

Prerequisite: Custodian, base attack bonus +10

Benefit: When you are granted an opportunity attack, you can make a melee attack and take a move action (you can take the move action either before or after the melee attack).

SPEED VAULT

Prerequisite: Custodian

Benefit: If you perform a run towards a wall and move at least 2 squares (10 ft.) towards the wall, you can move along the wall as if you had a natural climb speed. If you have not cleared the wall by the end of the run, you may be required to make a Climb check to avoid falling.

SPLIT SLIDE

Prerequisite: Custodian

Benefit: If you move at least 2 squares (10 ft.) before initiating a crawl or squeeze, all remaining movement with this action is not reduced. You fall prone as a free action before a crawl and stand up as a free action if you are able to at the end of the move.

FINER MINER

NEVER QUIT

Prerequisites: Finer Miner

Benefit: Whenever you are cured of any damage (via natural healing or magical effects), you regain additional hit points equal to twice your Constitution modifier.

NOTHING OF CONCERN

Prerequisites: Finer Miner, 4 ranks in Endurance

Benefit: You gain a +4 feat bonus to Endurance checks and may take 10 on all Endurance checks, regardless of the situation or time allotted.

DAWNAMOAK KITARRI

CHANNEL STRENGTH

Prerequisites: Dawnamoak Kitarri, Strength 16

Benefit: If your target is within your bow's first range increment, you gain a +1 bonus to damage with that weapon.

EXPANDED BLACK BOW USE

Prerequisites: Dawnamoak Kitarri, Strength 18, base attack bonus +2

Benefit: Increase the Strength modifier of your black bow as follows (you receive each upgrade when you reach the listed base attack bonus):

BASE ATTACK BONUS	STRENGTH MODIFIER INCREASE
+2	+2
+6	+3
+10	+4
+14	+5
+18	+6

This increase is in addition to any increases a black bow already receives with enchantment.

UNSTOPPABLE SHOT

Prerequisites: Dawnamoak Kitarri, Power Attack

Benefit: If you drop a target with an arrow shot, you may make a single ranged attack against another target behind the first with the same arrow. The second target must be in range and be in a direct line through the first target from you. You roll to strike again, taking into account the new range and suffering a -2 penalty to attack and damage. This can continue until you run out of targets or you weapon runs out of range.

DEATH HUNTER

PURPOSE OF BEING

Prerequisite: Death Hunter

Benefit: Each time you kill an undead creature, you gain 5 temporary hit points. You cannot have more than 10 + your level temporary hit points gained this way at a time.

WILLFUL STRIKE

Prerequisites: Death Hunter, Purpose of Being

Benefit: When attacking creatures whose damage reduction is bypassed by good-aligned weapons, your critical threat range increases by 2.

DOPPELSHIDO

IMPROVED DOUBLE-FORM

Prerequisite: Doppelshido

Benefit: Reduce all penalties to two-weapon attacks by 1.

EXPERTEERING ENGINEER

ADAPTATION, IMPROVED

Prerequisites: Experteering Engineer, 3rd level

Benefit: You can now use *adaptation* with TL2 technology.

ADAPTATION, GREATER

Prerequisites: Experteering Engineer, Improved Adaptation, 7th level

Benefit: You can now use *adaptation* with TL3 technology.

ADAPTATION, MASTER

Prerequisites: Experteering Engineer, Greater Adaptation, 11th level

Benefit: You can now use *adaptation* with TL4 technology.

ADAPTATION, QUINTESSENTIAL

Prerequisites: Experteering Engineer, Master Adaptation, 16th level

Benefit: You can now use *adaptation* with TL5 technology.

FARGON DISCIPLINED

CORNERSTONE ABILITY

Prerequisites: Fargon Disciplined, 10th level

Benefit: Select one of the following:

- If you miss with your first attack of a full-round attack, you may re-roll. You must keep the second result.
- You can force one target of any spell you cast which targets more than two opponents to re-roll its save.

LIFE'S FOCUS

Prerequisite: Fargon Disciplined

Benefit: Select one of the following:

- You count as having a +2 bonus to your relevant attribute when determining bonus spells.
- You gain a +2 bonus to melee or ranged damage rolls.

FREE HOUSE CITIZEN

AROUND OTHERS

Prerequisite: Free House Citizen

Benefit: You gain an additional +2 bonus to any racial skill bonuses. You may also choose an additional language.

HALFMASTER

BLUNT HIT

Prerequisite: Halfmaster

Benefit: If you score a hit with the staff end of a pole arm, you push the target back 5 feet (1 square).

HAND CHANGE

Prerequisites: Halfmaster, Blunt Hit, base attack bonus +8

Benefit: You can switch your *habaukeedo* posture as a swift action.

TRANSCENDENT REACH

Prerequisite: Halfmaster

Benefit: Prerequisite: Halfmaster

Benefit: All reach weapons become monk weapons.

REACH OF CHOICE

Prerequisite: Halfmaster

Benefit: Choose a specific pole arm weapon (glaive, halberd, longspear, etc.). You gain a +1 bonus to attack with that weapon.

HERBALIST

AYURVEDA

Prerequisite: Herbalist

Benefit: You chew some herbs, stir in some fluids you would rather not disclose, and pack the results in the wound for some surprising results. As many times a day as your Wisdom modifier, you can use a standard action to restore one adjacent ally a quarter of its hit points.

INCARNATE

APOTHEOSIS

Prerequisites: Incarnate, Elemental Tuner, Embodiment of Flesh, 8th level

Benefit: You gain the following additional abilities depending upon your Incarnate element:

Air: You can use the *feather fall* spell as a supernatural ability once a day.

Earth: If you don't move on your round, you cannot be moved by anyone else unless you allow it. This includes any forced movement and teleport.

Fire: Once per day, you can imbue fire in your melee weapon, inflicting 2 fire damage with each hit. The effect lasts five minutes.

Water: For up to one hour every day, you can move on water as if it was solid ground. Rapids or choppy water are considered difficult terrain.

ELEMENTAL TUNER

Prerequisite: Incarnate

Benefit: You gain additional abilities, depending upon your Incarnate element.

Water: Once per day, you gain a +10 bonus to any skill check.

Fire: You gain a +2 feat bonus to all Intimidate and Diplomacy checks. In addition, you gain a +3 feat bonus against Charm effects.

Earth: You gain a +2 feat bonus to all Climb, Survival, and Sense Motive checks. In addition, whenever you recover hit points from a source other than natural healing, you regain +2 hit points.

Air: You gain a +2 feat bonus to all Bluff and Acrobatics checks, or a +5 feat bonus to Acrobatics when making a jump.

EMBODIMENT OF FLESH

Prerequisites: Incarnate, Elemental Tuner

Benefit: You gain the following additional abilities depending upYou gain the following additional abilities depending upon your Incarnate Element:

Air: As many times a day as your highest attribute modifier, as a swift action, you can toss up dust and particles to grant concealment to your or an adjacent square until the end of your next turn.

Earth: If prone in terrain that is rubble, uneven stone, or earth, you gain cover and do not grant flanking bonuses.

Fire: You gain a +5 bonus to any saves against fire attacks and effects.

Water: You gain a swim speed equal to your base speed.

JUGGERNAUT

UNSHAKEABLE

Prerequisites: Juggernaut

Benefit: You gain a +3 bonus to all saving throws against being dazed, stunned, or weakened.

UNSTOPPABLE

Prerequisites: Juggernaut

Benefit: You gain a +1 shield bonus to AC.

KANNOS KAVALIER

SPARE THE HORSE

Prerequisites: Kannos Kavalier, Mounted Combat

Benefit: Any time you recover hit points, your mount recovers half that amount (or vice-versa).

SADDLE USE, IMPROVED

Prerequisites: Kannos Kavalier, Mounted Combat, Superfluous Reins, a mount with a saddle

Benefit: If you have a saddle, you can stand on it, hang down one side, or ride underneath the animal if you so wish. You gain a +2 to Reflex saves while mounted and gain a +2 bonus to all Acrobatic checks while mounted. When using total defense, your dodge bonus to AC increases to +5 instead of +4.

SPEED AND ELEGANCE

Prerequisite: Kannos Kavalier

Benefit: You are able to mount and dismount your steed as a swift action without making a Ride check. You don't have to make a Ride check to control your mount during combat.

SUPERFLUOUS REINS

Prerequisites: Kannos Kavalier, Mounted Combat, base attack bonus +10

Benefit: You've trained your mount to act without direction. If your mount moves up to half its speed and does not perform any combat maneuver, you are not counted as having moved.

KINETASSANA

PROPRIOCEPTING STRIKE

Prerequisites: Kinetassana

Benefit: Before you roll initiative, if there is an opponent within 25 feet, you gain a +4 bonus to initiative. You are always considered to have a higher initiative bonus in the event of a tie with any opponent within 25 feet.

PROPRIOCEPTING TALENT

Prerequisites: Propriocepting Strike

Benefit: Your first melee hit in an encounter gains a damage bonus equal to twice your Wisdom modifier.

QUINTESSENCE

Prerequisites: Propriocepting Talent

Benefit: When you ready an action to make an attack and hit with that attack, you deal +1d8 damage.

KNIGHT OF THE WALL

PHALANX

Prerequisites: Knight of the Wall

Benefit: If an opponent that initiates a charge or bull rush attack against you while in a *shield lock* misses, you can make a melee attack against them as an opportunity attack.

SHIELD MASTER

Prerequisite: Knight of the Wall

Benefit: You ignore the check penalty for all shields. You ignore base attack bonus requirements for other shield-based feats.

KOANA STUDENT

HONOR ROLL

Prerequisites: Koana Student, 4 ranks in Knowledge (Arcana)

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus to Knowledge (arcane) and Spellcraft skill rolls. Once a day, you may also reroll a failed Knowledge (arcane) or Spellcraft skill check.

LAUDENIAN MAGOS

ONE WORD

Prerequisites: Laudenian Magos

Benefit: You have perfected your favorite spell. Choose one spell of 3rd level or lower; that spell now only requires a swift action to cast.

Special: You can select this feat multiple times: each time, choose a different spell.

LIBRARIAN

ADVANCED CURRICULUM

Prerequisite: Librarian

Benefit: You also gain the *from the books* option you did not choose at character creation.

BOOKWORM

Prerequisite: Librarian

Benefit: Choose a number of monsters equal to your Intelligence modifier. You are now an expert on these creatures and pass all Knowledge checks regarding them. You also gain a +2 bonus to Perception, Intimidate, and Sense Motive checks involving those creatures.

LORE SPECIALIST

Prerequisite: Limshau Librarian, Bookworm

Benefit: Choose one specific creature from your Bookworm feat. You are now a master on the subject. You receive a +1 bonus to attack and a +2 bonus to damage against the selected creature.

MALKUT OUTCAST

REGRETTABLE HERITAGE

Prerequisite: Malkut Outcast

Benefit: You gain a +4 bonus to Perception when searching for fae, a +4 bonus to Sense Motive checks against fae and a +4 bonus to Survival to track fae.

MYSTIC

AVATAR OF THE SELF

Prerequisites: Mystic, 9th level

Benefit: You can cast *find the path* once a day. You can swap this (at the time of casting) with an additional use of any spell granted by another mystic feat.

INFALLIBLE AUTHORITY

Prerequisites: Mystic, 3rd level

Benefit: You can cast *detect thoughts* once a day. You can swap this (at the time of casting) with an additional use of any spell granted by another mystic feat.

OF THE ANCIENTS

Prerequisites: Mystic, 7th level

Benefit: You can cast *divination* once a day. You can swap this (at the time of casting) with an additional use of any spell granted by another mystic feat.

TRUE ORACLE

Prerequisites: Mystic, 5th level

Benefit: You can cast *speak with dead* once a day. You can swap this (at the time of casting) with an additional use of any spell granted by another mystic feat.

REDCAP

JUMP THE CORPSE

Prerequisites: Redcap, 6th level

Benefit: If you kill an adjacent target with a melee weapon, you can immediately take a 5-foot step into the fallen enemy's square.

REDCAP REPUTATION

Prerequisites: Redcap, Jump the Corpse

Benefit: If you kill an adjacent enemy, you gain a cumulative +4 bonus (maximum +12) to damage rolls against all other opponents until you end your turn without having killed an adjacent enemy.

REKII

FOCUSED SPOTTER

Prerequisite: Rekii

Benefit: When using *coordinated spotter*, the ally's ranged attack may ignore the target's concealment.

THROUGH THE WALL, AROUND THE CORNER

Prerequisites: Focused Spotter, Rekii

Benefit: When using *coordinated spotter,* the ally's ranged attack may ignore 1 square that blocks line of sight.

SALVABROOKE SEEKER

LITHE LEGWORK

Prerequisite: Salvabrooke Seeker

Benefit: You gain a +3 bonus to AC against opportunity attacks provoked by movement.

SKY-BORN

NATIVE PILOT

Prerequisites: Sky-Born

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus to all Acrobatics and Climb checks and a +5 bonus to all Acrobatics and Climb checks when on any airship. You can move your full speed when balancing.

WIND STEP

Prerequisites: Sky-Born, Native Pilot

Benefit: You do not provoke opportunity attacks for moving while balancing, jumping, or climbing.

SQUIRE OF ABRAHAM

ROUSING SPEECH

Prerequisite: Squire of Abraham

Benefit: You scream a compelling sermon on faith, courage, and fidelity during combat. Select one ally as a swift action. As long as the target is adjacent or until you use this feat again, the ally shares your AC as long as the ally's AC is within 5 points of yours.

SWORN HAND OF VENGEANCE

FURIOUS RETRIBUTION

Prerequisites: Sworn Hand of Vengeance, Furious Strike, base attack bonus +10

Benefit: Your bonuses to your sworn enemy improve; you gain a +3 bonus to attack rolls and a +2d6 bonus to damage with the first hit.

FURIOUS STRIKE

Prerequisites: Sworn Hand of Vengeance

Benefit: You gain a +1d6 damage bonus on your sworn enemy on your first hit (in addition to normal extra damage).

TASKIN-KADA WATCHER

DISTRACTING FEINT

Prerequisite: Taskin-Kada Watcher

Benefit: If you are prone, you gain concealment. This lasts until you move or stand.

OBSCURE MOVEMENTS

Prerequisites: Taskin-Kada Watcher, Distraction

Benefit: You can use a standard action to gain total concealment. This lasts until you move or make an attack.

VIVICATOR

UNSPOKEN MIGHT

Prerequisite: Vivicator, 3rd level

Benefit: You can cast the spell, *cure light wounds* once a day.

INNER LIGHT

Prerequisite: Vivicator, Unspoken Might, 5th level

Benefit: You can cast the spell, *cure moderate wounds* once a day.

INNER LIGHT, GREATER

Prerequisites: Vivicator, Improved Inner Light, 9th level

Benefit: You can cast the spell, *touch of life* once a day.

INNER LIGHT, IMPROVED

Prerequisites: Vivicator, Inner Light, 7th level

Benefit: You can cast the spell, *cure serious wounds* once a day.

TOUCH OF LIFE

Prerequisite: Vivicator, Greater Inner Light, 11th level.

Benefit: You can cast the spell, *heal* once a day.

GENERAL FEATS

The following feats are available to all characters who meet the prerequisites.

EXPANDED WIDGET USE

Prerequisite: *Widget bag* feature

Benefit: You can use up 10 gp/uc of widgets from your widget bag to replace thieves' tools in gaining a +2 bonus to open a lock or disable a trap. This does not stack with a normal use of thieves' tools. You use 10gp/uc per attempt. If you use 50 gp/uc in one attempt, you gain a +3 bonus to open a lock of disable a trap. You

may also use 50 gp/uc of widgets to gain a +2 enhancement bonus to a Heal check or Science check.

GREAT THROW

Benefit: You gain a +1 enhancement bonus for all non-magical thrown weapons (like grenades).

Special: You may select this feat again, each time increasing the enhancement bonus by 1.

IMPROVED BOOK CASTING

Prerequisite: Book totem

Benefit: You don't have to hold your totem book in your hand. It still must be on your person in some manner (strapped to your back or around your leg). Both hands are now free while casting.

TOTEM MEMORY

Prerequisites: Any totem, caster level 4

Benefit: When you prepare spells, you may store one spell in your totem. This does not count as a use of the spell when it is cast.

TECHAN FEATS

Non-techans *can* choose the following feats if they meet the prerequisites: however, if you generate EDF and attempt to use a feat with a non-immune technological item, that item is immediately disrupted.

AMMUNITION EFFICIENCY

Prerequisite: Strength 14, base attack bonus +8

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus to damage rolls with heavy auto weapons with which you are proficient when using the heavy auto property.

ARMOR PROFICIENCY (Techan-Exo)

Benefit: You gain training with all exo-armor of any armor weight class you are already proficient with. When you wear a type of armor with which you are proficient, the armor check penalty for that armor applies only to Dexterity- and Strength-based checks.

Normal: A character who is wearing armor with which he is not proficient applies its armor check penalty to attack rolls and to all skill checks that involve moving.

ARMOR PROFICIENCY (Techan-Heavy)

Benefit: You gain training with all heavy techan armor (except exo-armor). When you wear a type of armor with which you are proficient, the armor check penalty for that armor applies only to Dexterity- and Strength-based checks.

Normal: A character who is wearing armor with which he is not proficient applies its armor check penalty to attack rolls and to all skill checks that involve moving.

ARMOR PROFICIENCY (Techan-Light)

Benefit: You gain training with all light techan armor (except exo-armor). When you wear a type of armor with which you are proficient, the armor check penalty for that armor applies only to Dexterity- and Strength-based checks.

Normal: A character who is wearing armor with which he is not proficient applies its armor check penalty to attack rolls and to all skill checks that involve moving.

ARMOR PROFICIENCY (Techan-Medium)

Benefit: You gain training with all medium techan armor (except exo-armor). When you wear a type of armor with which you are proficient, the armor check penalty for that armor applies only to Dexterity- and Strength-based checks.

Normal: A character who is wearing armor with which he is not proficient applies its armor check penalty to attack rolls and to all skill checks that involve moving.

BAYONET REACH

Benefit: You gain reach when you make a melee attack with a bayonet.

BETTER THAN 20/20

Benefit: Add +40 feet to your range with any small arm or heavy weapon.

Special: You can select this feat multiple times. Its effects stack.

BURST FIRE

Benefit: When using a weapon with the auto (not set to single-shot fire) or heavy auto property, you gain a +1 bonus to damage rolls.

CROSSFIRE

Benefit: You can flank 10 feet (2 squares) away from an enemy as long as you and an ally are in a straight line through the target. You must be wielding a one- or two-handed small arm or a heavy weapon to use this feat.

CROSSFIRE, IMPROVED

Prerequisites: Crossfire, base attack bonus +7

Benefit: You can flank 15 feet (3 squares) away from an enemy as long as you and an ally are in a straight line through the target. You must be wielding a one- or two-handed small arm or a heavy weapon to use this feat.

CROSSFIRE, MASTER

Prerequisites: Crossfire, Improved Crossfire, base attack bonus +15

Benefit: You can flank 20 feet (4 squares) away from an enemy as long as you and an ally are in a straight line through the target. You must be wielding a one- or two-handed small arm or a heavy weapon to use this feat.

CURB STOMP

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +6

Benefit: As a move action, you can deal damage to a prone target in an adjacent square equal to your Strength bonus.

DEFLECTING SHOT

Benefit: You reduce the penalty for firing any small arm, heavy weapon, or super heavy weapon against an enemy in cover by 1.

DISCHARGE BURN

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +9

Benefit: When firing a one-handed small arm at a target in an adjacent square, you inflict +1 damage on a hit.

DUCT TAPE

Benefit: As many times a day as your Intelligence or Wisdom modifier, you can use *duct tape* as a standard action. This is an extraordinary ability, and you always have access to *duct tape* even when you have been separated from all other equipment. You can apply one the following effects, or any other effect that duct tape could be used for with the GM's permission *(duct tape* cannot be used to repair ducting or for any use that involves prolonged exposure to heat).

- Grant a +1 feat bonus to disruption saves to one piece of gear in range.
- Grant a +1 feat bonus to your next Engineer or Heal check.
- Affix a small item (such as a flashlight or a tracker) to a weapon.
- Create one foot of rope (up to thirty feet).
- Mark up to three feet on the ground or on an object.
- Handcuffs (target is restrained, DC25 to escape).
- Prevent a restrained creature from speaking.

FEATHER TRIGGER

Benefit: Any non-auto/heavy-auto weapon you wield gains the auto keyword.

FIDGETY FINGERS

Prerequisites: At least 6 ranks in Engineer

Benefit: Building technology takes half as long (minimum of one day).

FIREARM EXPERTISE

Benefit: Choose a specific weapon group and a specific weapon property (e.g., two-handed plasma, one-handed laser, heavy gauss). You gain a +1 feat bonus to damage rolls with this weapon.

Special: You can select this feat multiple times. Each time, choose a different weapon group and property.

FULLY AUTOMATIC ADEPT

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +10

Benefit: You now fire half as much ammunition each time you attack (round up). Damage is unaffected.

GROUND VEHICLE OPERATION

Benefit: You gain a +3 bonus to all Vehicle Operation checks when making a control roll.

GUN-SOMETHING-SOMETHING

Benefit: You treat one-handed small arms as melee weapons when firing into adjacent squares.

HEAVY WEAPON PROFICIENCY

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: You gain training with one heavy weapon of your choice. You make attack rolls with the weapon normally.

Normal: A character who uses a weapon with which he is not proficient takes a –4 penalty on attack rolls.

Special: You can select this feat multiple times. Each time, it applies to a new type of heavy weapon.

HIGH PRECISION

Benefit: If you hit with a ranged attack with any firearm without the auto property, you can reroll one damage die that results in a 1, but you must use the second result.

IMPROVISED ADAPTATION

Prerequisites: At least 4 ranks in Engineer

Benefit: When gaining widgets from reverse engineering technology, you acquire one-quarter the value of the item in widgets instead of one-fifth on a successful roll. You also gain a +5 bonus to Engineer when attempting reverse engineering.

LEARNED THE HARD WAY

Prerequisite: 4 ranks in Demolitions.

Benefit: When you fail a Demolitions roll by 10 or more, you don't cause a detonation.

LIKE A WIDGET BAG

Benefit: You gain the mechanic's *widget bag* feature.

MEAT SHIELD

Benefit: If you drop a creature and you are adjacent to it by the end of the same turn it is dropped, it provides you (and only you) cover. You cannot move the target.

Special: If using a two-handed small-arm, you suffer a -1 penalty to attack rolls while holding the shield. You cannot use a heavy or super heavy weapon with Meat Shield.

MEAT SHIELD, IMPROVED

Requirements: Meat Shield, 5th level

Benefits: While grappling an enemy of your size, you may spend a swift action to gain the benefit of Meat Shield.

NATURALLY ECHAN DEFIANT

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus to disruption saves for all equipment in your possession.

NATURAL HUNTER

Benefit: You can use Wisdom in place of Dexterity when making Stealth checks. You can also substitute Wisdom for Dexterity when determining your bonus to Reflex saves.

OFFENSIVE INJECTION

Benefit: If you are wielding an air dart rifle, you gain a +2 bonus to attack rolls and the target suffers a -1 penalty to any saves against the injection's effects.

OVERDRIVE, IMPROVED

Prerequisites: Mechanic operator

Benefit: When you use *overdrive*, you can roll twice and take the higher result. At the end of combat, you gain a +5 feat bonus to your Engineer check to avoid the target gear breaking.

PROPER FIRING POSITION

Prerequisites: Proficiency with Small arms (two-handed), heavy weapons, or super heavy weapons.

Benefit: When making a ranged attack, you can take a -2 penalty to the attack roll. If the attack hits, you gain a +2 bonus to damage.

PROXIMITY TARGET

Prerequisite: Sniper

Benefit: Reduce the minimum range for attacks with *marksman's talent* to 15 feet.

RAPID RELOAD

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +4

Benefit: Once a day, you can replace a clip or cell as a free action.

RAPID RELOAD, IMPROVED

Prerequisite: Rapid Reload, base attack bonus +15

Benefit: Replace a clip as a swift action.

RECOIL ABSORPTION

Benefit: When wielding a two-handed small-arm, you can take any type of move action without suffering the -2 penalty of firing two-handed small arms while moving.

Special: This feat cannot be combined with the Front Grounder's *precision* feature.

SMALL ARMS (ONE-HANDED) PROFICIENCY

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: You gain training with all one-handed firearms (revolvers, pistols, etc.) except specialty weapons. You make attack rolls with the weapon normally.

Normal: A character who uses a weapon with which he is not proficient takes a –4 penalty on attack rolls.

SMALL ARMS (TWO-HANDED) PROFICIENCY

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: You gain training with all two-handed firearms (rifles, machine guns) except specialty weapons. You make attack rolls with the weapon normally.

Normal: A character who uses a weapon with which he is not proficient takes a –4 penalty on attack rolls.

SNIPER EYES

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +5.

Benefit: Whenever you gain a proficiency bonus from aiming with a sniper weapon, the ranges increment of your sniper weapon is doubled after applying all other range extensions (from feats and class features).

SPECIALTY WEAPON PROFICIENCY

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: You gain training with one specialty weapon of your choice. You make attack rolls with the weapon normally.

Normal: A character who uses a weapon with which he is not proficient takes a –4 penalty on attack rolls.

Special: You can select this feat multiple times. Each time, it applies to a new type of specialty weapon.

SUPER HEAVY WEAPON PROFICIENCY

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: You gain training with one super heavy weapon of your choice. You make attack rolls with the weapon normally.

Normal: A character who uses a weapon with which he is not proficient takes a –4 penalty on attack rolls.

Special: You can select this feat multiple times. Each time, it applies to a new type of super heavy weapon.

EXPLOSIVE FEATS

A REAL TOSSER

Benefit: Once a day, when you detonate explosives, all Medium or smaller targets in the affected area that are not knocked prone are pushed outside of the area of effect. If a target hits an obstruction, it takes additional damage as if it failed the save. This affects all targets in the area of effect, regardless if you hit or not.

BETWEEN THE KNEES

Benefit: Once a day, when you detonate explosives, increase the damage as if there was one additional explosive wired into the detonator. One target in the same square as the explosive takes damage as if there were two additional explosive wired into the detonator instead of one.

BLAST VECTOR

Benefit: Once a day, you gain a +20 inherent bonus to your next Demotions check when planting explosives.

EXPLOSIVES ATTACK

Prerequisite: At least 4 ranks in Demolitions

Benefit: When you detonate explosives, any targets hit suffer additional damage equal to half your level.

IMPROVED EXPLOSIVES ATTACK

Prerequisite: Explosives Attack, at least 4 ranks in Demolitions

Benefit: Once day, you can select one target in the area of effect of an explosive you plant to suffer double damage.

MASTERFUL EXPLOSIVES ATTACK

Prerequisite: Improved Explosives Attack, Explosives Attack, at least 6 ranks in Demolitions

Benefit: All DCs to avoid explosives you plant increase by 2.

Special: You can select this feat up to 3 times. The effects stack.

THAT WAS CLOSE

Prerequisite: At least 6 ranks in Demolitions

Benefit: Once a day, if you fail a demolitions roll by 10 or more, repeat the skill check with a +10 bonus to the roll.

WILHELM SCREAM

Prerequisite: Explosives Attack, at least 4 ranks in Demolitions

Benefit: Once a day, when you detonate explosives, increase the explosive radius by 5 feet. After rolling damage, all creatures within the blast are pushed 1d6 x 5 feet beyond the area of effect and are prone. If a target hits an obstruction, it is stunned until the start of your next turn.

EXPLOSIVES SPECIALTY

Benefit: The range increment with all thrown explosives increases to 15 feet and you gain a +1 feat bonus to attack with all thrown weapons.

EXPLOSIVES SPECIALTY

Benefit: The range increment with all thrown explosives increase to 15 feet and you gain a +1 feat bonus to attack with all thrown weapons.

MARTIAL TRAINING FEATS

These feats represent expanded possibilities for unarmed combat. Anyone can take these feats as long as they meet the prerequisites.

Critical Threat Effects: These take effect if you score a critical threat (even if the critical hit is not confirmed). You can only use one critical threat effect or critical feat per hit: if you have more than one applicable effect, you choose which one you use. You cannot use critical threat effects on vehicles or targets larger than you.

BALANCE AND DIRECTION

Prerequisite: Improved Unarmed Strike

Benefit: You are trained in the advanced hand-to-hand skills of karate, muay thai, taekwondo, or any other martial art focused on pure foot and fist fighting. If you are unarmed or wielding only natural weapons, you gain a +1 bonus to AC against melee attacks.

Critical Threat: If you score a critical threat with an unarmed attack, the target is flat footed until the end of your next turn.

BEST ON THE MAT

Prerequisite: Evolution of Pankration

Benefit: You gain a +1 feat bonus to your CMB while prone. You also gain a +2 feat bonus to damage against grappled opponents while you are prone.

BOUNCING COMBO

Prerequisite: Improved Unarmed Strike, base attack bonus +15

Benefit: If you drop an enemy to 0 hit points or fewer, you gain a move action that must be used before the end of your turn. You can only gain one move action this way per round.

EARNED THE BELT

Prerequisite: Evolution of Pankration, Improved Grapple, base attack bonus +7

Benefit: You can move a grappled target without making a grapple check. You must still use a standard action to move the target.

EVOLUTION OF PANKRATION

Prerequisite: Improved Unarmed Strike

Benefit: You are trained in the contact martial art of hapkido, jujutsu, sambo, or any other martial art involving pinning or submission. If you grapple a prone opponent, he is pinned instead of grappled and the target cannot stand until he escapes. If you grapple an opponent and both of you are prone, you are not considered grappled.

Critical Threat: If you score a critical threat while sustaining a grapple against a prone opponent and inflict damage, the target is dazed for one round.

GAME OF STICKS

Prerequisite: Improved Unarmed Strike

Benefit: You are trained in kali, jogo do pau, silambam, or any other stick based martial art. When you wield a quarterstaff, it gains the reach property.

Critical Threat: If you score a critical threat with a quarterstaff, the target drops one held weapon.

HAM HANDS

Prerequisite: Improved Unarmed Strike, base attack bonus +8

Benefit: If you hit a target one size larger than you or smaller with a melee attack, you can spend a move action to entangle that target until the start of your next turn. This takes up a hand.

JUMPING KNEE

Prerequisite: Unarmed Expanded Profile

Benefit: When you hit with an unarmed attack as part of a charge, the target also suffers the effects of a bull rush as well the damage from the charge. If the target cannot be pushed because of an obstruction, it takes an additional +2 damage.

KAYFABE MANEUVER

Prerequisite: Superior Position

Benefit: You can sustain a grapple with a swift action but can only pin a target with the action.

MANO-A-MANO

Benefit: Once a day, you can select one opponent in line of sight. The base damage of your unarmed attack improves by one step (1d4 > 1d6 > 1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12 > 2d6 > 2d10) against that opponent until it drops to 0 hit points or lower (or for 5 minutes).

NON-LETHAL INTENT

Benefit: If you inflict damage equal to a quarter of the target's hit points in a single turn, you can elect to inflict no damage for that entire turn and instead stun the target until the start of your next turn. If you inflict damage equal to half of the target's hit points in a single turn, you can elect to inflict no damage for that entire turn and instead render the target unconscious for five minutes. Any further damage wakes the target up.

SWORDS OF GRACE

Prerequisite: Improved Unarmed Strike

Benefit: You are trained in gatka, kendo, or various other defensive weapon-based martial arts. When wielding a light slashing weapon, you do not grant opponents flanking bonuses.

Critical Threat: Once per round, if you score a critical threat with a light slashing weapon, you can immediately make a melee attack against the same target. This additional attack cannot score a critical threat.

SUPERIOR POSITION

Benefit: When an enemy attempts to escape from a grapple you are sustaining, it takes 1d8 damage.

TAG TEAM

Prerequisite: Improved Unarmed Strike, base attack bonus +6

Benefit: If an ally hits an enemy adjacent to you with a melee attack, you can deal damage to that enemy equal to your Strength or Dexterity modifier as an immediate action.

THE RITUAL OF DANCE AND DAMAGE

Prerequisite: Improved Unarmed Strike, Unarmed Expanded Profile

Benefit: Like many martial arts like capoeira and wushu, your combat style has become flamboyant and entertaining when not directly involved in inflicting harm. While you are unarmed or wielding only natural weapons and are in reach of an enemy, you can take a 10-foot step instead of a 5-foot step (acting like a 5-foot step in all other aspects) as long as you remain in reach of an enemy.

Critical Threat: If you score a critical threat with an unarmed attack, you can take a 10-foot step as free action following the hit and gain a +2 bonus to your next attack roll against any adjacent enemy.

THINK BIG

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +6

Benefit: You can apply critical threat effects to targets one size larger than you.

TRUE ENLIGHTENMENT OF THE ART

Prerequisite: Improved Unarmed Strike

Benefit: This path is part of the core belief system of many martial arts, though wushu is the most obvious. As many times per day as your Wisdom modifier, as a swift action, you can gain DR5/- until the end of your next turn.

Critical Threat: If you score a critical threat while you have DR5/- or greater, you gain 5 + ½ your level as a bonus to your damage roll. This damage is not increased if you score a critical hit.

STRIKER

Benefit: The base damage of your unarmed attack improves by one step (1d4 > 1d6 > 1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12 > 2d6 > 2d10).

Special: You can select this feat multiple times, each time your base damage improves by one step. You can select this feat once at 1st level, twice by 5th level, three times by 9th level, four times by 13th level, and five times by 17th level.

UNARMED EXPANDED PROFILE

Prerequisite: Improved Unarmed Strike

Benefit: Your legs become part of your unarmed attack profile. If you don't move on your turn (not even to take a 5-foot step), you gain a +2 bonus to all damage rolls until you the start of your next turn or until you move.

WAY OF THE TURN

Prerequisite: Improved Unarmed Strike

Benefit: You specialize in aikido, judo, shuai jiao, or any other martial art specializing in redirecting an opponents' momentum or throwing them to the ground. When you make a melee attack, you can choose to inflict half damage and knock your opponent prone.

Critical Threat: If you score a critical threat, the target is dazed until the start of your next turn.

VEHICLE FEATS

AIRCRAFT SPECIALIZATION

Prerequisite: At least 4 ranks in Vehicle Operation

Benefit: You gain a +3 bonus to all Vehicle Operation checks with an aircraft.

DRIFT KING

Prerequisite: Racing Record

Benefit: Ignore the DC modification for performing a drift with ground vehicles.

DROP THE HAMMER

Prerequisite: At least 4 ranks in Vehicle Operation

Benefit: Once a day, if you start an acceleration stunt, you gain a +15 ft (+3 square) bonus to your vehicle's speed until the end of your next turn. This bonus persists each turn as long as you accelerate with your vehicle action. You cannot decelerate.

FLAT OUT

Prerequisite: Aircraft Specialization or Ground Vehicle Specialization.

Benefit: Select ground vehicle or aircraft. All vehicles of this type that you control gain a +5 ft. Bonus to their speed.

GROUND VEHICLE SPECIALIZATION

Prerequisite: Vehicle Operation

Benefit: You gain a +3 bonus to all Vehicle Operation checks with a ground vehicle.

HIT THE APEX

Prerequisite: At least 4 ranks in Vehicle Operation

Benefit: Once a day, you can gain a +5 bonus to your next Vehicle Operation check when attempting a turn. Speed decreases after concluding the turn are reduced as follows—no loss for 45 degree turns, ¼ reduction for 90 degree turns or greater.

HOLE SHOT

Prerequisite: At least 8 ranks in Vehicle Operation

Benefit: If you are controlling a vehicle when you roll initiative, you gain a +6 feat bonus to initiative.

HOLDING TRAFFIC

Prerequisite: At least 4 ranks in Vehicle Operation

Benefit: As a stunt (which requires no action and does not modify DC), your vehicle can occupy two additional squares in width in relation to other vehicles, but you cannot accelerate as part of the same action you do this.

HULL-DOWN

Prerequisite: Vehicle Operation

Benefit: Once a day, if you finish a vehicle move and stop the vehicle this round, the vehicle gains cover from ranged attacks and area effects until it moves again.

IN THE FENCE

Prerequisite: At least 4 ranks in Vehicle Operation

Benefit: Once a day, as a standard vehicle action, you can attack another vehicle. If you hit, you inflict 4d6 + your Dexterity modifier damage + your vehicle's hardness value, and the target must make a control roll (DC 10 + your Dexterity Modifier + your ranks in Vehicle Operation) or go into a slide.

Special: You regain the use of this feat if you fail to hit the target vehicle.

JAGGED EDGE

Prerequisite: Racing Record

Benefit: Select ground vehicles or aircraft. You reduce all DCs for stunt rolls by 5 with the chosen vehicle type.

JUMP START

Prerequisite: At least 6 ranks in Vehicle Operation

Benefit: Once a day, one vehicle you control that suffers from disruption automatically makes its next disruption save.

JUMP THE CRASH

Prerequisite: At least 4 ranks in Vehicle Operation

Benefit: Once a day, if you are in a vehicle that crashes, you are ejected from the vehicle and land up to 20 feet from point of impact, taking no damage. You may pass through enemy occupied squares. You can also make a single ranged attack at any point during the jump.

PUSHING AND SHOVING

Prerequisite: At least 4 ranks in Vehicle Operation

Benefit: As many times a day as your Dexterity modifier, you can attempt a pushing and shoving maneuver. If you are moving at least your vehicle's speed rating, as a standard vehicle action, you can perform a vehicle attack. If you hit, you inflict 1d6 + Dexterity modifier damage + your vehicle's hardness value. Your vehicle takes half damage (employ your hardness value). An enemy vehicle reduced to half its hit points with this hit must make a vehicle control roll (DC 10 + your Dexterity Modifier + your ranks in Vehicle Operation) or enter a slide. If you hit a target vehicle with this action, you can repeat it on your next action and not have it count towards you total uses of Pushing and Shoving that day.

RACING RECORD

Prerequisite: Aircraft Specialization or Ground Vehicle Specialization.

Benefit: Select ground vehicles or aircraft. You don't have to make stunt rolls for the following stunts with the vehicle type of your choice: Normal acceleration, aggressive acceleration, normal deceleration, aggressive deceleration, 90 degree turns (up to x2 speed), 45 degree turn (more than x2 speed), and fast velocity.

SPEED DEMON

Prerequisite: At least 8 ranks in Vehicle Operation

Benefit: Once a day, you can gain a +10 bonus to your next Vehicle Operation skill roll.

STEERING BALANCE

Prerequisite: Ground Vehicle Operation

Benefit: When controlling a ground vehicle, the minimum distance you have to move after finishing a turn is 1/6 your speed (instead of ¼).

THREAD THE NEEDLE

Prerequisite: At least 4 ranks in Vehicle Operation

Benefit: Once a day, if a vehicle you are controlling is struck by an attack, you can gain a +5 bonus to the vehicle's AC. If you are still hit, the vehicle's hardness increases by 10 against the attack. You also gain a +5 bonus for any control rolls you are forced to make until the end of your next turn.

TRAFFIC OFFENSE

Prerequisite: Ground Vehicle Operation

Benefit: When you impose a control roll on an enemy vehicle, increase the opponent's DC by 5. In addition, when you perform evasive maneuvers, you gain an additional +1 to AC and Reflex saves.

VEHICLE COMBAT

Prerequisite: At least 4 ranks in Vehicle Operation

Benefit: You receive no penalty when firing a weapon from a vehicle when it is in motion.

VEHICLE COMBAT, IMPROVED

Prerequisite: At least 10 ranks in Vehicle Operation, Vehicle Combat

Benefit: You do not need to make a control roll when performing an attack while operating a vehicle.

When operating a Huge or smaller vehicle with a carryover speed of 2 or more, you add your Dexterity or Intelligence modifier to the vehicle's AC (see **Vehicle Rules**).

VORTEX DRAFT

Prerequisite: At least 4 ranks in Vehicle Operation

Benefit: Once a day, you can force an opponent's vehicle behind you into making a control roll or go into a slide. The DC is 10 + your Dexterity Modifier + your ranks in Vehicle Operation. This is part of a vehicle action. If the target fails its control roll, you gain a +15 ft (3 squares) bonus to your unmodified speed until the end of your next turn.

The Echan Terrain Vehicle wasn't a simple pantherbike but scrambler, all thirty feet and forty tons of it. It rolled on six thick-treaded, steel-sidewall run-flat tires, each ten-feet across. Twenty high-intensity discharge bulbs breathed a swath of light across the clearing. The vehicle had a center pivot separating the engine cluster from the cabin, allowing it to navigate around tight spaces and keep its drive train insulated from magical disruption. Despite the layers of padding, the vehicle still needed servicing every thousand miles; magic always found a crack to work itself through. This specific scrambler had a battery of photovoltaic cells glued to the roof for additional range.

Aiden followed the other passengers to the entrance, the last to climb the steps, and the only one to notice the black wooden arrow shaft embedded in the side of the vehicle. It had caved a crater in the panel twice the size of Aiden's head. Aiden motioned to the scrambler captain, a thin man with neither a nametag nor hair. "Uh...excuse me?" Aiden called out.

Hairless looked up and followed Aiden's eyes to the arrow rooted in the plate. At first, Hairless was unsure what had drawn Aiden's attention. The arrow was obviously an annoyance that had paid him no mind when it occurred. He stepped up to Aiden's level and reached out to grab the exposed shaft.

"Oh don't worry about that," Hairless said as he strained against the arrow. "Picked it up on another run."

Aiden nodded and placed a foot inside the cabin. He immediately noticed the still sharp and polished bodkin sticking an inch into the compartment. That made him uneasy. Aiden leaned out again. "Aren't these hulls armored?"

"Six inches."

"Who?" Aiden started. He glanced inside, following the shaft through the foot-thick sandwich of kevlar, steel, carbon, titanium and plastic. The arrowhead had kept its point unbroken through the armor. "I mean. That's clean through."

Hairless moved in closer as he pulled hard against the wood. "Look..." He pulled hard and the shaft finally broke free. "Don't worry yourself, and don't scare the others. We're not going anywhere near them on this run. We'll be a minute covering this up. Gotta keep the chaos out." Aiden nodded timidly and entered the cabin.

The seats were of little comfort but a world apart from a horse's back. The crew sat on the deck above and seldom came down. Aiden didn't introduce himself to the other passengers, offering them only a nod and indirect eye-contact.

The older couple and their prepubescent child, all dressed in tatters, must have been stranded outside the wall for years before affording the tickets to return to a world they tried to escape. The two adult men opposite of the cabin were obviously brothers; one lost in music from headphones, the other reading a tablet computer. Both looked naïve with polyester pants and rayon jackets, probably fated for Salvabrooke, the vehicle's penultimate destination.

Salvabrooke was an adulterated sampling of the outside world, watered down and sanitized for ignorant outsiders, a secluded enclave with few predators and legal brothels, all run by welcoming fae.

The scrambler produced a canine-like yap, followed by further woofs as the engine's various electric motors activated. The growling increased to a whine and the vehicle launched with surge that tossed loose bags about the cabin. The vehicle moved at the pace that technology found comfortable.

It was a cumbersome machine, flattening unscarred terrain, marking its path with uprooted vegetation. The trees fell out of focus at this speed. Aiden couldn't hear anything; the vibrations in the suspension transmitted its noise through the frame of the vehicle.

The grey wall of Angel faded behind, and Aiden felt an unexpected level of anxiety wash over him. Would the dragon save his life again if he were in need? Its name was Genai, a title the city within the city took in tribute. Every time Aiden approached the pagoda atop the pyramid where Genai was rumored to reside, he was shooed away by the sentinel monks.

"If you walk from this city, from these walls, you will always be a child. You will always live in your fantasy." Martin's words came back to him as Aiden closed his eyes and imagined what and whom he would find. No dream would do it justice. No fantasy could be too extreme. Anything he could think of was real. Why would anyone want anything else? Was the library city of Limshau encircled by a pristine white wall? Was there a marsh that marked the corruption of a fallen human kingdom? Were there faerie shapechangers that would marry a man if he stole their scarf?

At first Aiden thought the quick thuds outside came from loose stones on the road or tree branches scraping across the scrambler. Aiden looked out the window and made out a squatty humanoid shape with a fat head losing ground in its pursuit of the vehicle. Aiden couldn't make out much more than that given the vehicle's speed. The creature hobbled clumsily, a bundle of rock-tipped spears under its arm. Another creature appeared ahead, poking up from behind a bush, launching similar projectiles ineffectually against the reinforced hull of the vehicle. Unlike the refined arrow Aiden had seen embedded in the scrambler previously, these had no possibility of penetrating the ETV. Not even the run-flat tires could be pierced by these weapons. Nevertheless, to quell passenger concern and possibly just for the thrill, Aiden heard the high-pitched oscillating mechanical buzz of the techans' retaliatory response.

A second later, a torrent of chemically propelled projectiles sheared a path across the horizon, cutting down the fae and

any other wildlife unfortunate enough to get caught in the crossfire. A half-dozen more shapes emerged from cover, unafraid of the gatling gun's onslaught. The fae deflected their ineffective spears off the tires and windows. The vehicle shuddered a moment and the passengers all jumped from their seats as the scrambler flattened an obstruction.

"Holy shit!" The driver's voice resonated from the top level. "Did you see that? Head came off from the jaw!" The other passengers were terrified. Aiden was still glued to the window. There were two more collisions as the fae were torn apart under the tires. One leapt up and pounded its head across the door. Aiden jolted back from the window as a bloodied hand thumped across it. Aiden still couldn't catch the details though he was pretty certain the creature had a smile that ran ear to ear.

The attack ended as quickly as it began.

"Don't worry, folks," Hairless voiced over the intercom. "Nothing we haven't dealt with a dozen times before." The scrambler continued without incident through the remainder of Cyon.

• • •

Several hours later, just outside the forest, Aiden heard the whining of a failed bearing. The vehicle surged then decelerated, bucking the passengers inside. A small pop echoed from the cockpit above. Clear English curses followed and the vehicle stopped. Hairless jumped down from the upper hatch and opened the lower door from the outside.

"What's the problem?" Aiden asked. Hairless snapped open a hand-sized plastic container and pulled out a disc-shaped piece of plastic. It was red around the edge and white in the center. He placed the disc close to one of the passengers, but nothing changed, then to another with the same result. When the innocuous plastic approached Aiden, the red expanded to fill the disc. Hairless brought the sensor down and seized Aiden's collar roughly.

After being tossed to the dirt, Aiden shouted, "What's the matter with you?!"

"Son of a bitch," Hairless snapped. He grabbed Aiden's bag and dropped it abruptly on the dry crimson soil. "You book my ride and don't bother telling me you're magic?"

"I'm not!" Aiden glanced at the other passengers. They stared back at him, confused, angry, and scared.

"That ident card even yours?" Hairless snapped as he took a step to the fallen boy.

"You can't forge those!"

"Where is it then? What you got on ya?" Aiden sat there, unable or unwilling to answer. Hairless kicked Aiden's shin. "Where is it?" Aiden fumbled in his pack and drew out his spellbook. He might have yet to turn, but the words and Chen's spark hidden inside were still enchanted. "You got to be kidding. You want to be a wizard?"

"Yes," Aiden muttered almost to a whisper.

"From a bastion?"

"Yes," Aiden answered more resolute as he got back to his feet. "What's wrong with that?"

"The hell's your problem?"

"I'm not a radiant. I haven't turned."

"Regardless, you're walking now. Back or forward, your choice. Forward's safer."

Aiden looked to a barren gravel field, the bushes and the scattering of short trees. "This isn't Antikari."

"We're at the border. Safe out of Cyon."

Aiden's eyes wandered around at the expanse. It was nearly a desert. Echa had a tendency to glorify extremes. Woods to wasteland, plains to peaks, with hardly a bush or hill to mark the transition. Aiden could see a dark patch of forest at the edge of the horizon. "There's nobody here."

"Don't care," Hairless replied as he closed the lower door and began scaling up the ladder to the upper hatch. "Soil my machine with what you got. Should've taken a wagon."

"I didn't think it would break down. Honestly. I thought these were insulated?"

"Only from the outside. You could blow the whole works with a spell if you were stupid enough." Hairless opened the hatch and sat in the copilot's chair. He stuck his head out. "No need to be too scared. Boggs rarely migrate this far from cover. Just keep your eyes open for puggs."

"Puggs?" Rodents of the fae tree, a wingless locust swarm, a growing infestation that plagued the land. If found alone or in small numbers, puggs were no better than rabid dogs, dogs with fingers to hold any weapons they found. Aiden had read stories.

"Oh, don't worry," Hairless replies. "A swift kick usually kills one. You've a gun or a blade?"

"Blade," Aiden answered. It wasn't much. Minx made him carry one. It wasn't more than a dagger; it was off balance, not very sharp, and not worth enough to be stolen. Aiden had desired one of the untarnished swords from Chen's collection. Brandishing it confidently against an opponent was effective if it was held right. He never really held it right.

"Know how to use it?"

"Not really," Aiden mumbled.

"Well…neither do they." Hairless went to close the door.

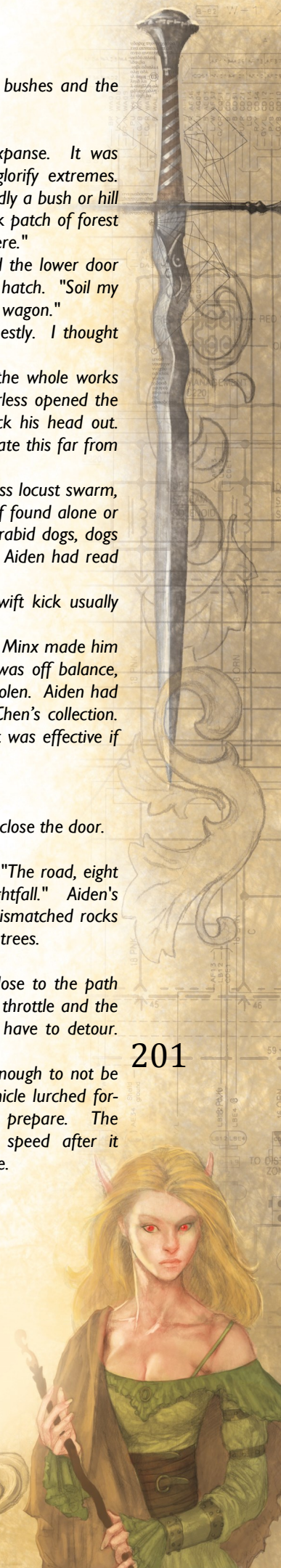
"Which way!" Aiden shouted.

Hairless poked his head out and pointed. "The road, eight hours. Make good progress, you'll beat nightfall." Aiden's head followed the man's point to a river of mismatched rocks that wound under a skeletal canopy of leafless trees.

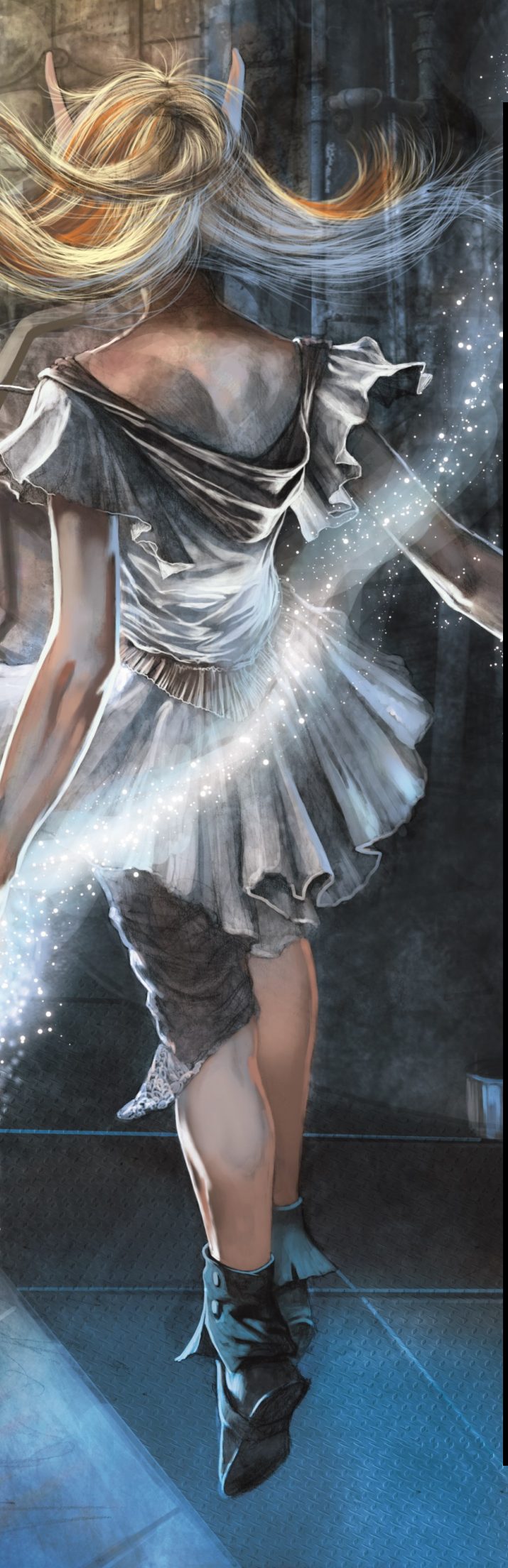
"That's a road?"

"You expecting golden bricks? Just stick close to the path and pray it doesn't end." Hairless tapped his throttle and the engine belched. "At least this way, we don't have to detour. You were the only one going to Antikari."

"Glad I could help," Aiden muttered low enough to not be heard. Hairless closed the hatch and the vehicle lurched forward without giving its passengers time to prepare. The scrambler swiveled past Aiden, picking up speed after it passed, leaving a small cloud of dust in its wake.



CHAPTER SEVEN: EQUIPMENT



Although Earth now resembles the ancient landscapes of fantasy, medieval it is not. The push for survival did not retard progress, and those building the first cities after gate-fall, even if outside the first fledging bastions, still possessed enough talent to build insulated housing and double-paned glass. Most basic technology still works the majority of the time, despite the occasional hiccup. Most of all, the knowledge from thousands of years of trial and error remained. The armor of today is lighter, stronger, and more maneuverable than the armor of legend. Swords are sharper and more balanced. Purely mechanical devices below a certain complexity, especially agricultural machinery, are retooled to accept animal or human power. Additionally, the functional limits of technology vary from place to place according to the density of the EDF. Prevented from developing complicated machines, many survivors delved into new areas, pioneers in alternative paths of development previously considered obsolete given the onset of the industrial revolution.

Simultaneously, bastions have employed their advanced expertise to weaving better clothes and forging better armor. Originally intended only for their own populations, some have learned the value of these goods outside their walls. Though their high tech weapons and devices are useless on the outside, bastions could still sell mass-produced, durable creature comforts, and even advanced versions of low-tech technologies, replacing tempered steel with carbon nanotubes, wood with advanced plastics, wool and cotton with synthetic fibers. This resulted in a torrent of new exports, boosting the economy of growing nations. The process to create these items in bulk necessitates the use of bastion knowledge and machinery, methods only replicated where the EDF is low or virtually nonexistent; thus markets usually sell these items for outrageous markups. Bastions like Angel and especially York turned this into a substantial windfall as the money turned in (gold, silver, and platinum) could be converted into raw materials. Disruption-immune bastion exports have found their way across the echan countryside, employed by almost every manner of individual, though often only held by human hands. Many of the more old-fashioned fae, especially laudenians and chaparrans, despise these items.

It is clear, therefore, that the chief obstacle faced in open echa to a lifestyle not entirely unlike that of, say, the mid-20th century pre-Hammer is not lack of knowledge and development, but the lack of the dedicated infrastructure required to take advantage of it. The rare echans granted a peek inside the bastions (and allowed to come out again) often wax rhapsodical about two things: electric lighting and flush toilets. In fact, indoor plumbing is far from an impossibility in echan communities, powered as it is entirely by simple mechanical processes – what most of echa lacks is the extensive sewage and water table management facilities necessary to maintain such conveniences (even so, many present-day castles are equipped with running water and modern lavatorial facilities). Electricity is more problematic; though the processes for generating it work normally, even simple batteries lose their charge two to ten times faster than in techan communities, and even the most conductive wiring is incapable of carrying a current more than a few hundred feet. Thus, electric power is an extreme rarity in echa.

The greatest distinction between technology and magic is progress. Technology improves as a civilization endeavors to better itself. The desire to advance from a primitive design encourages the development of better materials, better processes, and better machines. There has never been a point where a society was content

with what it had achieved. Based in the most basic evolutionary drive, a species must expand both in knowledge and in scope in order to remain competitive against rivals. These rivals include other nations as well as other species. This compulsory habit in humans is almost totally absent in non-evolved species like the fae, and even magically uplifted species like the kodiaks are slow to embrace this biological obligation to subsume or subjugate underdeveloped people, building upon a ruined foundation of past accomplishments.

Magic does not improve; when it changes, it does so on its own, and in random and unpredictable ways. Creatures of magic are the same the world over, except when they devolve, and even then the mutation usually takes the same form whenever it occurs from the same stock. The spells of yesteryear are the same cast today. Arcane knowledge and the ways of Pleroma passed down from the dragons in the previous age are finite. Though occasionally new spells are uncovered, they have not improved the knowledge of the language or how it is able to alter the world when uttered. No matter how powerful magic is, it does have limits, and only the most powerful dragons seem capable of transcending those limits. Additionally, the only creatures gifted with such enlightenment about Pleroma are creatures without the biological compulsion to better their species. Therefore there has never been an attempt by the fae to improve upon it, and a human lifetime is too severely limited to understand all the chaotic variables associated with magic.

With this impediment, many echalogians on both sides of the magical/technological axis have predicted that eventually, science will inevitably discover how to overcome their sensitivity to magical effects; theories of quantum mechanics already posit machines capable of making minute adjustments to their own inner workings to compensate for the vagaries of the EDF. Additionally, bastions like Porto and Mann have put forward proposals for creating a field that simulates a negative energy signature not unlike the energy from Ixindar. This would result in an "anti-magic field" that would render all magic within it inert. If successful, the retaking of the Earth by men and machines would be inevitable.

RESOURCES

Before man fell from his seat of power, he managed to strip Earth of almost all non-renewable resources. He extinguished nearly all fossil fuels, forcing bastions to develop alternate sources. Oil and gasoline are scarce after the Hammer, and with a lack of industrial-scale cultivation, vegetable-based fuels are not easily manufactured on the scale required by a techan population. The biggest hurdle for any formed authority was location. Many centers of techa positioned themselves on the coast for obvious reasons. Some utilize the sinful energy of the atom while others embraced cleaner resources like geothermal, tidal, or solar power. However, while coastal locations are generally rich in these kinds of energy resources, the only mineral wealth they can usually claim is plentiful quantities of silicon. Only Selkirk sits on or near a mine. This left most available resources in the hands of echan cultures. The narros, of course, are the best miners and control the most valuable pits, but human settlements frequently grew around the narros mines to aid in exporting the excess mineral wealth.

The remaining resources are the common elements most took for granted years ago: copper, silver, gold, platinum, iron, coal, etc. In the new age, new riches like angelite and coruthil have also emerged. The bastions need such resources badly and some have secretly established trade agreements with outside sources.

CURRENCY

Without an extensive system of banking and trade exchanges, each kingdom issues its own currency. Since the concept of paper money in any great quantity relies on a trust that market economies are simply unable to match, nearly all of these currencies are issued in coin. Thankfully, the fae nations, long before man's arrival, already decided that – despite what stamp was cast into the coin – the best way to ensure fair commerce was to make the value of the coin equal to that of the metal it is made from. It is not unheard of for travelers to pay their way in coins of equal value, but from a dozen different kingdoms. Because magic has difficulty forging valuable metals without the aid of a philosopher's stone (the holy grail of alchemy and still only legend), the fae restricted their coins to a small branch of metals, namely gold, silver, and copper. This was standardized amongst the gimfen, damaskans, and narros (the latter being believed to have pioneered the practice); chaparrans and laudenians preferred barter to money in their own communities (and still do). Narros eventually added two more to the range, a dull silver coin made from palladium and platinum, and an ultra-rare angelite mint. In the modern world, the fae continued this practice and have endorsed a set of rules when dealing with currency.

Rather than deal with the complexities of money-changing in a culture where trade is sporadic at best, most human nations have simply adopted the fae tradition wholesale. Coins trade at the fair market value of their constituent metals. They are all properly stamped for authenticity and are distributed in near identical weight to other coins of equal value. Though each nation issues its own currency with its own unique signature, a coin from Abidan and a coin from Torquil are of more or less equal purity and value. As the most prolific mines in Canam are operated by the narros and nearly all nations must deal with them for the raw metals necessary to make the coins in the first place, they alone have the economic clout to ensure the system remains equitable across the continent.

Baruch Malkut is the only nation that still employs a standardized banknote system for higher

denominations, issuing paper with no face value to represent stored riches. Baruch shopkeepers, though encouraged to report those passing unfamiliar money, often take foreign gold, as the coins can be melted and re-stamped. Despite a continued push to eliminate the exchange of this money within their borders, it still occurs. The Malkut slavers, for example, freely accept foreign coins.

ECHAN CURRENCY

For simplicity, all echan coins trade equally with each other. Many kingdoms take foreign gold, melt it, and re-stamp it with their mark. Because of this practice, the Limshau chryso is the most widely circulated currency in Canam, followed distantly by the narros golden foot. Here are some examples of Canam currency:

Copper/Brass/Bronze Coins (=1 cp)
Abidan/Limshau/Gimfen penny (plural: pennies)
Baruch Malkut copper
Kannos kuedo
Narros copper tooth
Orchis casten
Torquil penny (plural: pence)

Silver Coins (=1 sp)
Abidan dagot
Kannos kroenan
Baruch Malkut silver
Gimfen pebble
Limshau carmot
Orchis noman
Narros silver finger
Torquil sterling

Gold Coins (=1 gp)
Abidan sovereign
Kannos kannon
Baruch Malkut dollar
Gimfen gold stone
Limshau chryso
Narros golden foot
Torquil crown

Platinum/Palladium Coins (=1 pp)
Limshau tollar
Narros pallis spirit

Unique Currency (Various)
Narros angelite opus (=500 gp)
Laudenian enchanted mark (=10,000 gp)
Gimfen pearl (=50 gp)
Quinox crystal (=5 gp)

Houses Antikari, Ogium, Plicato, and Solum all use various other nations' currencies. When Torquil was in its prime, it instigated a massive run of its coins, which was the dominant tender for nearly a century until the kingdom's collapse. Even after, it continued circulation for many decades and is still found today, though overwhelmed by the distribution of Limshau coins. Unique currency is often not accepted outside of the region of issue, except by collectors. The gimfen pearl is an actual pearl but with nearly pin-thin etch-work all over it, making its aesthetic worth far higher than the pearl's value itself. It is often used when flamboyant purchases are made, especially in front of prospective mates. It is commonly considered a sign of arrogance if used for mediocre acquisitions. The laudenian mark, usually used only for rare dealings with other cultures, is merely a glossy disk of brass but is enchanted with a permanent magical endowment, making it completely weightless. It cannot be broken or bent nor can it be picked from its owner's purse: the coins reappear in the owner's possession until willingly handed to another. Though the magic can be pulled off it and used in a constructive way, only the laudenian elder casters know how to accomplish this. The narros opus does not have enough angelite to forge an item but enough coins gathered could be employed in such a way; however, the coins are worth more in their issue than they are in their content and the cost of extracting the usable angelite from the coin would increase the cost of forging the item by upwards of 10%.

Quinox has a unique currency used in the high court and in prestigious markets. It is a small monocrystal three inches across. The unbroken crystal is completely pure with no grain boundaries—a perfect crystal lattice. The ingot boules issued by the state are identical with no markings for their authenticity. None is required, as no single person within and without the House of Quinox knows how the treasury creates such perfection. Chaparrans and laudenians prefer a barter system, but when forced to use money they employ their neighbors' (in this case, Limshau).

Games need not employ this system of currency; just assume the gold they acquire is universal. As an optional rule, GM's are welcomed to include the currency titles above purely as flavor to a scene, or they may impose a rule system upon them, forcing players to track what kinds of money they have and its local value. If so, a few guidelines should be followed:

- Unique currency is only accepted by the race in question and they are often unwilling to trade it over to more acceptable legal tender.
- No one outside of Baruch Malkut accepts their money and no legitimate vendor in the "blessed kingdom" converts their coins or bills to foreign money.
- Banknotes are legal tender, but are usually issued in the form of custom letters of credit and have an accepted range from their bank. Usually, this range is within 100 miles. Outside of this, the notes are refused. Several shops in large cities refuse to deal with large monies (over 500 gp) and will only accept banknotes from local banks. Banknotes are seldom exchanged back to coins unless given as loose change in a purchase.

- Gems and jewelry are not legal tender and must be traded for currency or banknotes.

UNIVERSAL CREDITS (UC)

It would be great to think that one could pass into the walls of a city of industry with a bag of gold and buy a laser gun. Alas, it is not that simple. Because of bastions' desperate need for resources, currency is printed on the cheapest of materials. They all commonly feature a half-plastic/half paper medium impossible to copy with more than 300 counterfeit measures including holographic imagery and computer encoding. Each has special imprinting from its home bastion. No bastion currency can be exchanged with any other bastion currency. For the sake of clarity, these moneys are given the term Universal Credits (uc), for they represent the legal tender of all bastion currency.

Various Bastion Currencies: Angel dollar, Mann credit, Sierra Madre bar, Selkirk shilling, and York dollar.

Although you cannot trade one bastion currency for another bastion currency, they are all considered equal in value in regards to echan currency. Bastions are always happy to convert echan currency into their own denominations, because echan currency is worth the value of its metal, and bastions are always in the need for echan currency. Converting money the other way generally involves finding a black-marketeer, who will exchange uc for gold at a ruinous markup; most people leaving a bastion find it easier and more economical to convert their money into exportable trade goods and sell them at the first large market town outside.

Every bastion except Mann will accept echan currency regardless of its national stamp. For this purpose 1 uc = 1 gp. There are no fractions or change and exchange banks will not accept lower value currencies unless they add up to a single uc. Banks will also not give out or return echan currency as they are smelted and put to applicable use; gold in particular is essential, as most modern electrical wiring is made from it due to its near total impermeability to most magic. No bastions accept unique echan currency.

The Treasure Conundrum: Alas, unlike echans, techan characters will seldom (if ever) find their technology in the lair of a dragon (or any other creature for that matter). This means techans must return to a bastion or techan merchant to re-arm and upgrade their technology or depend on a trained engineer to build arms or armor over a long period of time. Nothing they find in field will be applicable to them (except as widgets).

If characters gain a level in a dungeon, they won't conveniently find a higher level weapon after they slay the next big monster. In long, protracted adventures, this may create problems. Vehicles are a wise base of operations as they may hold many times over the ammunition capacity of a single techan character. This may solve the problematic issue of ammunition but not about the eventual need to upgrade technology. Alas, the echan wilderness is not called a wasteland by the techans for nothing. The GM has options to offset this. In the end, very little is more satisfying than returning to a bastion with your holds overflowing with gold.

TECH LEVELS

Tech levels indicate the differences between the bastions. Some of these city-states reached pinnacles of advancement before others. Some struggled to survive while others flourished. With the EDF making long-range communication impossible, the bastions grew and developed separately from their brethren. After 500 years, they are not about to start sharing. Bastions would not only fight for technology but for the people possessing the knowledge to build it. Tech levels indicate the possible origin of a weapon as well as its damage potential. Anyone finding and using high tech gear is skittish about flaunting it in a lower-TL bastion for fear it will be confiscated, dismantled, and reverse engineered.

Six tech levels exist. These are broad categorizations reflecting both how advanced a device is and how easily disrupted it is by EDF. There are often exceptions when a bastion develops a device higher than their stated tech level. Higher tech level bastions gain access to all levels below them. 'Tech Level' is not a term that is used in-universe, but most bastions are broadly aware of the tiers of distinction between one another and have their own methods of classifying those differences.

Tech Level 0: This level covers all technological development from the early industrial level to the start of the microchip revolution. Most, but not all TL0 technology is relatively safe from disruption, although this depends on the strength of the local EDF, and as always, the less advanced the machine, the safer.

Vehicles: Aircraft utilize aero-forms with jet engines or propellers. Vehicles roll on wheels but possess traction control and anti-lock brakes. Military craft flaunt armor and tank treads. Fly by wire.

Weapons: Bolt action and flechette rounds fire from most guns. Electronically stacked projectiles and caseless ammunition. Basic energy weapons are limited to short range electric shocks.

Medical: Natural healing mostly, assisted by EKGs and X-Ray machines. Surgery can cure most wounds, but recovery can last a while.

Tech Level 1: At this level, almost every form of technology has integrated electronics and advanced computer control.

Vehicles: Ground vehicles now sport computer navigation, climate control, and electronic stability. Aircraft can now fly themselves if need be. Advanced aerospace has given way to vectored thrust and vertical-take-off aircraft.

Weapons: Computer tracking and targeting. Infrared and thermal imaging is available, but not standard. Firearms haven't changed but have grown

more complicated with advanced reloading and higher firing rates. Advances in construction make them lighter with larger calibers.

Medical: Computer diagnostic beds, MRIs, and robotic assisted surgery.

Tech Level 2: This is a liminal stage. Old technologies are simultaneously being advanced and refined at the same time as their inevitable (but still somewhat primitive) replacements are entering circulation. This is the last tech level that an observer from the 21st century pre-Hammer might still find familiar.

Vehicles: Vertical take-off fan craft and wingless jets keep aircraft aloft, are much more stable, and can fly rings around more primitive craft. Aircraft designs are no longer dominated by their massive aero-forms. Ground vehicles still use wheels but now mass transit magnetic vehicles appear as an alternative.

Weapons: Bolt weapons remain the choice for most but the way they fire improves. Railcannons and self-propelled projectiles exist, but are not common.

Medical: Rapid healing injections, designer drugs, gene therapy, and beneficial viruses. Healing time cut in half with medical attention.

Tech Level 3: Refinements in the manipulation of magnetic fields and energy levels characterize this stage.

Vehicles: Magnetic vehicles reduce in size and now replace wheels in common transport. Fanjets shrink and become more efficient.

Weapons: The beginning of basic laser weaponry. Advanced magnetics. Prototype exo-armor appears.

Medical: Most known diseases are curable. Healing time cut to one-third with medical attention. Nanotech healing is in its infancy.

Tech Level 4: At this level, energy is almost as freely manipulable as matter and nanotechnology is ubiquitous.

Vehicles: Robots appear beyond the role of "dumb tool." Exo-armor is mass produced. Wheeled traffic virtually nonexistent or, if it exists, can traverse any terrain. Ramjets shrink and provide massive thrust in small packages, revolutionizing transportation outside the magnetic-traffic.

Weapons: Laser weapons "tunable." Plasma weaponry. Bolt weapons are outdated.

Medical: Nanotechnology can heal any wounds and even regenerate limbs.

Tech Level 5: Any sufficiently advanced technology would be indistinguishable from magic, if magic didn't break sufficiently advanced technology.

Vehicles: Antigravity replaces all previous transportation.

Weapons: Disruptors, vapor rifles, disintegrator weaponry.

Medical: Complete body reconstruction.

APPLICATION OF TECH LEVELS

An item's listed tech level is used an enhancement bonus to its relevant application. A tech level 3 item, for example, offers a +3 bonus to its designed use. Applicable bonuses are as follows:

EQUIPMENT TL	ENHANCEMENT APPLIES TO
Weapons	Attack and Damage Rolls
Armor	AC
Gear	Relevant Skill Bonus (see description)

This bonus is in addition to any equipment bonuses that the device may grant (see description).

The tech level also determines how easily the item is affected by disruption rolls (see below) and affects the difficulty and cost of repairs and modifications to the item.

ECHAN DISRUPTION FIELD (E.D.F.)

Magic retards the progression of technology. It breaks down lubrications. It jams gears and shorts out electronics. It overloads batteries. Everything more complicated than basic clockwork is vulnerable, given enough exposure, but the more advanced the technology, the more susceptible it is; in most places, anything up to a simple combustion engine can manage with minimal difficulty, but even something as basic as a bicycle will break down if caught in the backblast from a dragon's breath (of course, at that point, you have bigger things to worry about). Because magic grows as more people use it, bastions are relatively safe within the confines of their walls or city limits. The moment they leave their borders and brave the outlands, their machinery and electronics begins to degrade. As technology comes into contact with higher concentrations of enchantment, it becomes prone to interference. This leads some machines to become less efficient, cease working altogether, or – in some rare cases – violently destroy themselves. Whenever technology is outside of a bastion, there is little anyone can do to impede this disruption. At best, they can slow or delay the effects for a short time.

Magical energies and creatures generate what is called an Echan Disruption Field (or Enchanted Disruption Field), or EDF. Some bastions even rate an ED-I, or ED Index, which charts the hot spots in the world which users of technology need to avoid. The low level EDF saturating the entire world interrupts radio waves and abrogates the ability of anything other than gold wires to channel electricity, preventing communication between the bastions and limiting the lifespan of batteries.

DISRUPTION EVENTS

Disruption is a constant threat, but the rules applying to it usually only occur when they are the most inconvenient. Disruption events can occur under the following circumstances:

- The first time in an encounter that someone attempts to use the device;
- Whenever a creature that generates EDF touches the device (echans attempting to *use* the device always results in disruption of TL1 and higher devices, no roll required);
- Any time the device or its wielder is directly affected by magic (any spell or supernatural effect; enchanting the weapon always disrupts it, no roll required);
- Whenever the device or its wielder suffers a critical hit from a magical creature;
- If the device or its wielder is hit by an attack from a pincher weapon;
- At the end of the initiative order each round;
- Any time outside of an encounter that the GM judges appropriate (using technology in a highly magical area, etc).

Modified Disruption D20 Roll	Result
0 or lower[1]	Tech Levels 0 and up affected
1	Tech Levels 1 and up affected
2	Tech Levels 2 and up affected
3	Tech Levels 3 and up affected
4	Tech Levels 4 and up affected
5	Tech Levels 5 affected
6-20	No disruption effects
Natural 20	Critical Collapse

[1]Tech Level 0 items are only affected if the roll is modified. The result indicates the highest tech level items which are affected that round, if at all.

At this point, the GM makes a single d20 roll to check if an item is disrupted and which tech level is affected. Targeted disruption effects reduce the roll result by 2. Note that disruption rolls are not mandatory: the GM may elect not to make a roll if doing so would not make the scene more interesting.

The result of the disruption roll determines the minimum tech level that can be affected by a disruption event, with the highest TL items not currently suffering disruption being affected first.

A targeted disruption always affects the item or character targeted. Any number of targeted disruptions can occur in a round. General disruption events usually only affect one device at a time. Outside of a combat encounter, treat disruption events as targeted disruptions or choose the affected character randomly. If a general disruption event occurs in combat, the character with the lowest initiative is affected by the first event, the next lowest by the second event, and so on. If the character has no devices of the affected level, no disruption event occurs. Once all players have been rolled for, return to the bottom of the initiative order. Monsters using technology have their own rules and are not affected by a disruption roll.

If the player has multiple items at the same tech level, equipment disrupts in the following order: Weapon currently in hand, gear in use, armor being worn, and any vehicle occupied. If the character does not have a device of the given type, move on to the next in sequence. Equipment not actively in use disrupts in the same order, if there are no active devices. If there are multiple items of the same type, only one is affected (chosen either randomly or by what would be most immediately inconvenient for the character).

A player cannot be subject to another disruption event until every player has been subject to one this sequence. Additionally, an item cannot be disrupted twice (even after it recovers) before every disruptable item the character is carrying has been disrupted once this sequence.

Natural 20, Critical Collapse: If the disruption roll is a natural 20, something sinister occurs. A cataclysmic pulse courses through the unfortunate subjects of the disruption, causing more than a simple inconvenience. *Every* party member carrying technology suffers a disruption event affecting the highest TL undisrupted item they have.

Example: Kathryn Lindune wears TL5 exo-armor and wields a TL4 rail pistol and a TL5 plasma pistol. She also has operating infrared goggles (TL3). The GM makes a disruption roll and the result is 4. The lowest tech item on Kate that can be affected is her rail pistol. Her infrared goggles (TL3) are safe. Because the armor is higher tech level, it goes first. To break down the goggles, the GM would have had to roll a 3 or less on the disruption roll after already breaking down the armor and both weapons.

(If her armor and pistols have already suffered a disruption event and the disruption roll results in a 3, then the goggles would be affected next. If the roll was a 4, then the armor would be hit again).

EFFECTS OF DISRUPTION

A disrupted item no longer grants its tech level as a bonus to relevant abilities or skills. Any special abilities or properties the item has cannot be used. Ballistic weapons jam and energy weapons lose their charge. Most exo-armor stops moving, rendering the user either immobile or restrained. The effect remains until the character makes a disruption saving throw (an unmodified d20 roll against DC10). A character with ranks in Engineer can replace the disruption save with the following Engineer check: DC15 + (2 x Tech Level of item). The character makes one save or Engineer check per round per affected item at the end of their turn. If the roll succeeds, the device is immediately restored to normal functioning. If the roll fails, it suffers one of the following additional effects

(determined by how many consecutive failed rolls have been made for the device).

1st Failure: If the first saving throw fails, the item remains disrupted. If the item uses a battery, it loses 1d4 charges. If the item uses a battery but does not have a quantity of charges, the battery is unaffected.

2nd Failure: If the second saving throw fails, the item remains disrupted. If the item uses a battery, the battery is neutralized and useless. You must replace that battery.

3rd Failure: A third and final failed saving throw renders the item broken. It is non-functional. It must now be fixed.

Catastrophic Failure: If any player rolls a natural 1 on their saving throw for an item with a battery cell, it is a catastrophic failure, resulting in detonation. The item is broken and the wielder (and sometimes others) suffers damage.

Cell	Area	Damage	Ref Save (Half Damage)
B	Target square only	2d6	15
M	5 feet radius	3d6	15
H	10 feet radius	4d6	20

SCALING DISRUPTION

The basic rules above assume a low impact of disruption on your game. This is not entirely reflective of the setting but does keep the dangers of disruption low to streamline game flow and to reduce the necessity of the operator mechanic build in smaller game groups. Disruption events can be made more severe by using blanket modifiers to disruption rolls: all other rolls dealing with disruption (like saves and DCs) are unaffected. A GM should set the modifier when a campaign begins and maintain that for the length of the game.

Realistic Disruption: -2 to disruption rolls

Dangerous Levels: -4 to disruption rolls

Extreme Hazardous Level: -4 to disruption roll and critical collapse on a 19-20

Optional Rule – Erratic Disruption: By default, disruption events make technological items stop working entirely. Optionally, disrupted items can continue to work, but at reduced efficiency and in unpredictable ways. A disrupted item no longer adds its TL to rolls and cannot benefit from special properties or powers, but otherwise works normally, with the following caveats:

- Any roll of 1-5 using the item is an automatic failure, and is treated the same as a failed disruption save (you still make another save at the end of your turn);
- Any roll of 6-10 that succeeds does so at some sort of cost: a weapon deals half damage, a skill check only grants the minimum possible benefit, etc;

- Any roll of 19-20 succeeds *more* than normal (an attack is an automatic critical hit, a skill check is treated as being five points higher, etc) but the item breaks instantly at the conclusion of the action.

ECHA-SAFE TECHNOLOGY

Various technological items are more resistant to disruption: either the technology is so basic that there is nothing for magic to latch onto, or it is so heavily shielded that the EDF cannot affect it.

The following cannot be affected by a routine disruption event:

- Items with the immune property;
- Any item created by the experteering engineer's *adaptation* feature;
- Any armor not requiring a battery cell for operation;
- Boosters and medical injections;
- All TL0 gear except TL0 weapons;

This does not mean that the item can never be disrupted, but doing so requires a targeted disruption event. Magic can get at anything that depends on moving parts or variable energy states, even something as simple as a windmill or waterwheel, so it's best not to invite it in.

SHIELDING

Unlike gimfen shielding, which makes the weapon, armor, or item clumsier, bulkier, and far uglier, techan shielding keeps the overall shape of the original object and does not add significant weight to the final design. Any techan item can be shielded. The cost of shielding depends on the original cost of the item. You cannot

ECHAN WEAPONS

WEAPON	COST	DMG (S)	DMG (M)	CRIT.	RNG.	WT.	TYPE	SPECIAL
MELEE WEAPONS								
Martial Light								
Brass Knuckles	5	—	+1	x2	—	½ lbs.	B	Augment
Exotic Light								
Limshau tanto	10gp	1d3	1d4	19-20/x2	10ft.	1 lbs.	P	—
Limshau wakazashi	50gp	1d4	1d6	19-20/x2	—	2 lbs.	S	—
Exotic One Handed								
Bastion longsword	315uc	—	1d8	18-20/x2	—	3 lbs.	S	—
Bastion short sword	310uc	—	1d6	18-20/x2	—	1 lbs.	P	—
Limshau katana	100gp	1d8	1d10	19-20/x2	—	3 lbs.	S	—
Exotic Two-Handed								
Bastion greatsword	250uc	—	2d6	18-20/x2	—	5 lbs.	S	—
Limshau nagamaki	70gp	1d8	1d10	x3	—	8 lbs.	S	reach
Limshau odachi	80gp	1d10	2d6	19-20/x2	—	8 lbs.	S	reach
Limshau yari	25gp	1d6	1d8	x3	—	8 lbs.	P	brace, reach
Narros krollish	150gp	1d8	1d10	19-20/x3	—	12 lbs.	S/B	reach
RANGED WEAPONS								
Exotic One-Handed								
Limshau crossbow	300gp	1d8	1d10	19-20/x2	80ft.	5 lbs.	P	—
Exotic Two-Handed								
Compound longbow	350uc	—	1d8	x3	110ft.	5 lbs.	P	—
Carbon Crossbow	500uc	1d8	1d10	19-20/x2	120ft.	6 lbs.	P	—
Kitarri Black Bow	500gp	1d8	1d10	x3	110ft.	5 lbs.	P	—

shield batteries or TL0 gear (though you can shield TL0 weapons). Some items are shielded by default: these cannot have shielding added to them.

Price: 10% of the price of the original item

Weight: + 5% in weight (round up).

Benefit: Once a day, if the item is disrupted, it immediately comes back online.

ECHAN WEAPONS

Most fae races remain steadfast in their traditions and techniques. A laudenian bow looks the same now as it always did. Only the damaskans continue to evolve with knowledge collected from their human allies, and weapons from Limshau revel in a newfound understanding of the forge and hammer.

All basic PATHFINDER weapons are available in *Amethyst*. Weapons from non-core and third-party supplements are allowed with the GM's consent.

BASTION EXPORTS

Some manufacturers in bastions employ advanced technology to create melee weapons of amazing quality. The materials melt at exacting points and are chemically combined to a perfect ratio, their edges shaved to almost an atom's sharpness. Bows are no longer strung animal hides around bent wood but cables wound around a **mechanism** of levers. All bastion export weapons are finely calibrated, lighter and sturdier than their echan equivalents. However, bastion exports look plain and somewhat ordinary; maker symbols offer some style, usually engraved in the steel itself, but are rarely ostentatious. Often enough, they are built for effectiveness, not glory, so seldom do they strike fear in opponents when raised in anger. They won't rouse the masses when pulled from their scabbard. Because of the niche market for such items, echan weapons made and exported from techa fetch steep prices and rarely can buyers justify the expense. A prospective buyer can usually spot one of these rare weapons by their extravagant cost. They are still counted as echan weapons and are not affected by disruption. Most fae (except gimfen and damaskans) disdain bastion exports, but anyone else who can get them wields them as proudly as if pulled from a narros fire pit, a result of technological know-how, not magical aptitude.

Brass Knuckles: A no fuss weapon, brass knuckles add +1 damage to unarmed melee hits (per the augment property, see later).

Carbon Crossbow: This super light crossbow was exported from York originally, but replicas have been found across Canam. The weapon is a sleek, smooth, multi-piece item of black and silver, constructed not of steel, but of plastics and carbon fiber. This makes the weapon less clumsy than ancient designs.

Property: The carbon crossbow comes with a range finding scope, nullifying the penalty of firing into the second range increment.

Compound Longbow: Compound bows are fashioned of steel or aluminum – a few rare models are constructed from magnarros or angelite. They are bolted and adjusted by computer. Their power comes from a series of pulleys, cams, and levers. They do not warp and can be adjusted for a variety of conditions.

Property: A compound longbow is an exotic weapon requiring the proficiency to use properly. Other than that, it operates exactly as a composite longbow, except that its Strength rating can be adjusted between +0 and +6. It takes a full minute to adjust the compound longbow to a specific Strength rating and only someone proficient with it can do so.

LIMSHAU WEAPONS

Modern Limshau weapons were adapted from knowledge acquired from refugees leaving Angel when Ravenar visited the walls hundreds of years ago, and the designs and names of these weapons were taken from the traditions of old Asia from which most of these displaced peoples descended. All Limshau weapons look plain and featureless, sporting neither jewels in their pommels nor intricate weavings on their handles, but the swords are extremely sharp and feature holes along the blade to lighten the weapon without sacrificing tensile strength by a significant margin. Additionally, modern Limshau weapons benefit from advanced forging techniques and significantly better quality steel than their original namesakes, making them much less brittle and given them significantly more longevity than an equivalent from the old world.

Limshau Repeating Crossbow: This unique weapon has found popularity recently with custodians in the outer cities, and has since spread into wider circulation. This single-hand crossbow carries a strap around the user's arm, allowing the weapon to be reloaded with a single hand, making it the only full-size crossbow that can be loaded and fired repeatedly with a single hand.

Property: After six shots, you must take a move action to reload the clip.

OTHER ECHAN WEAPONS

Narros Krollish: The narros krollish was considered the standard weapon of choice for most narros serving in the military. This practice has waned in the centuries since the narros' return, only keeping the tradition within Fargon. Narros born or raised elsewhere run the risk of never picking up one. The krollish is a multi-function weapon featuring no less than three different ways to inflict damage on a target. Its business end sports both an axe and a hammer, formed from a single block of steel. That head is topped on a long staff towering over most narros wielding it.

Properties: The krollish can inflict bludgeoning or slashing damage at-will. Switching takes no action, but slashing is assumed unless you declare the switch.

Kitarri Black Bow: Legend claims that the wood inside of a kitarri black bow is partly infused with the spirit of dead chaparran. It is commonly known that when a chaparran dies, it is placed without coffin in the dirt along with a single acorn. The tree which grows requires neither light nor water. Chaparrans are able to command wood to naturally grow objects for them to use, including weapons. It was at some point where these two traditions merged, and these trees enchanted with the spirit of passed fae were used/asked to create great structures and items for the elite of chaparran society. The temples of Jibaro are thought to be such examples. Kitarri black bows are believed to be another, capable of adapting themselves to any chaparran (or other worthy spirit) wielding them. Black bows do not bond permanently to a user but they have been known to "play favorites". Being a non-chaparran and gaining the benefits of a black bow is rare, but has been known to happen.

Property: The black bow works exactly like a composite bow, starting life as +2 Strength modifier limit longbow. When it is enchanted, its Strength modifier limit increases at the same rate as its enchantment (e.g.: +2 enchantment increases its Strength modifier by 2 to +4) to a max of +7. Kitarri feats can increase this limit but someone without this feat is stuck with only the basic property.

TECHAN WEAPONS

Techan weapons are listed by broad examples: if every variation from every bastion were to be detailed, the list would take up half the book. However, some unique weapons are included.

BATTERY CELLS

Many of the objects in the following sections require batteries. Batteries are not included in the item's purchase price. You cannot replace one type of battery for another type under ANY circumstances.

Battery Classes: The three different types of battery cells are as follows:

Basic (B): These cells are for smaller items and cost 5 uc each. Ten cells weigh 1 lb.

Medium (M): These cells power many weapons, smaller vehicles, and larger equipment. They cost 50 uc each. One cell weighs 0.25 lb.

High (H): These cells are large, powerful, and usually reserved for huge weapons and massive energy equipment. They cost 150 uc each. One cell weighs 2 lbs.

Optional Battery Rule: Outside of a bastion, all exposed batteries will lose their charge in a day unless protected (via muffler bags or crates, or mounted in weapons or devices).

A COMPROMISE IN THE SETTING

Although realistically, batteries and devices that use them are unique to each bastion, certain rules are in place to make a techan game actually fun.

- Bastion batteries are compatible with other bastion batteries.
- Buying a lower TL item from a higher TL bastion still counts as the lower TL item. Further, the item is exactly the same in mechanics (though not necessarily in looks) as if the item was purchased from a lower TL bastion (a TL2 weapon from Selkirk works and

is built exactly the same way as a TL2 weapon from Mann). This applies to disruption rules, repairs, and when applying the Engineer skill to the item.

WEAPON RULES

The following rules apply to all weapons included here:

Reloading Weapons: All weapons are manual or clip-loading. Though these clips may be energy cells, they all necessitate the same time to reload. Reloading one techan weapon of any type requires a move action. Certain powers and feats may alter this rule.

Basic Autofire (Ex): Anyone proficient in a weapon with the auto or heavy auto property can attempt an autofire attack. Doing so requires a full-round attack. The weapon being used must have the auto or heavy auto property. When initiating an autofire attack, select a 10-foot square within weapon range, then make a ranged attack against each target in the area at a -2 penalty.

NEW WEAPON GROUPS

The weapons covered here are grouped into the following categories based on their general utility. They do not fall into the normal categories of simple, military, or exotic weapons.

Heavy Weapons: These are large weapon systems that require a tripod, a base, a platform, or any other stable point from which to fire.

Properties: Heavy weapons use the same general rules as ranged weapons, except as follows:

- Because of their cumbersome nature, if you move or are moved any distance you suffer a -4 penalty to attack rolls with heavy weapons until the beginning of your next turn (meaning you can shoot first and then move to avoid the penalty unless you are somehow able to make a ranged attack before your next turn).
- Unless mounted, heavy weapons require at least Strength 13 to use.
- You add your relevant attribute modifier to both attack AND damage rolls.

Special: These weapons may be purchased for a Large user (e.g.: exo-armor). If so, heavy weapons become two-handed weapons. They are no longer able to be used by Medium-sized users.

Small Arms, One-Handed: These are single-handed firearms which are renowned for their ease of use and compact style, making them an easy choice for those preferring stealth.

Properties: One-handed small arms use the same general rules as ranged weapons, except as follows:

- One-handed small arms do not grant opportunity attacks if fired.
- One-handed small arms cannot be wielded by Large or larger creatures (e.g., exo-armor).
- You can fire one-handed small arms while prone.
- All one-handed small arms are considered light weapons.
- You add your relevant attribute modifier to both attack AND damage rolls.

Small Arms, Two-Handed: These are larger, slightly clumsier weapons usually preferred for longer ranges and high stopping power. With the development of technology, the latter became less a factor, but two-handed arms have the capacity for larger clip capacities, greater accuracy, and the option of fast automatic fire.

Properties: Two-handed small arms use the same general rules as ranged weapons, except as follows:

- Because of their cumbersome nature, if you move or are moved more than 5 feet (1 square) you suffer a –2 penalty to attack rolls with two-handed small arms until the beginning of your next turn (meaning you can shoot first and then move to avoid the penalty unless you are somehow able to make a ranged attack before your next turn).
- You can fire two-handed small arms while prone.
- You add your relevant attribute modifier to both attack AND damage rolls.

Special: These weapons may be purchased for a Large user (e.g.: exo-armor). If so, these become one-handed small arms. They are no longer able to be used by Medium users.

Specialty Weapons: These are weapons with a unique function and application that requires them to be trained specifically in said item. High tech levels feature more weapons that require explicit training. These include sonic weapons, pincher weaponry, and vapor rifles.

Properties: Specialty weapons also count as one- or two-handed small arms, heavy weapons or super heavy weapons for all purposes except proficiency. Specialty weapons can only be used with a single standard action and not a full-round action.

Super Heavy Weapons: These are weapons with the potential of incredible damage but balance that with a cumbersome design. These large weapon systems require a tripod, a base, a platform, or any other stable point from which to fire.

Properties: Super heavy weapons use the same general rules as ranged weapons, except as follows:

- Super heavy weapons come equipped with a tripod.
- You must use a move action to plant a super heavy weapon in the ground. Once planted it cannot be moved unless you use a move action to uproot it. If you fire a non-planted super heavy weapon, you suffer a -2 penalty to attack rolls with the weapon and, immediately after the attack is resolved, you are pushed 5 feet (1 square) and knocked prone. If you cannot be pushed, you are stunned until the start of your next turn.

- You add your relevant attribute modifier to both attack AND damage rolls.

Techan Melee Weapons: Close combat training is hardly obsolete since the development of chemical propulsion and large-clip firearms, but it is not the focus of the modern high-tech military. Though a knife will always be standard equipment, it is more often used as a utility item rather than a weapon, at least until the pistol ran out of bullets. As expected, the concepts of laser swords and mono-molecular whips are constructs of pure science fiction, and are considered neither possible nor practical for a modern military.

While a gun will almost always be the best choice for taking down a ravening monster, free companies and other technological-based organizations actively engaged with outside forces have often found themselves squaring off against foes able to reduce the effectiveness of ranged weapons, including invisibility, supernatural speed, or being able to ambush opponents from a concealed and inaccessible location. Add to that the cramped quarters of most dungeons along with the capacity of monsters to sustain significant punishment before dying, and the necessity of creating advanced melee weapons became an urgency.

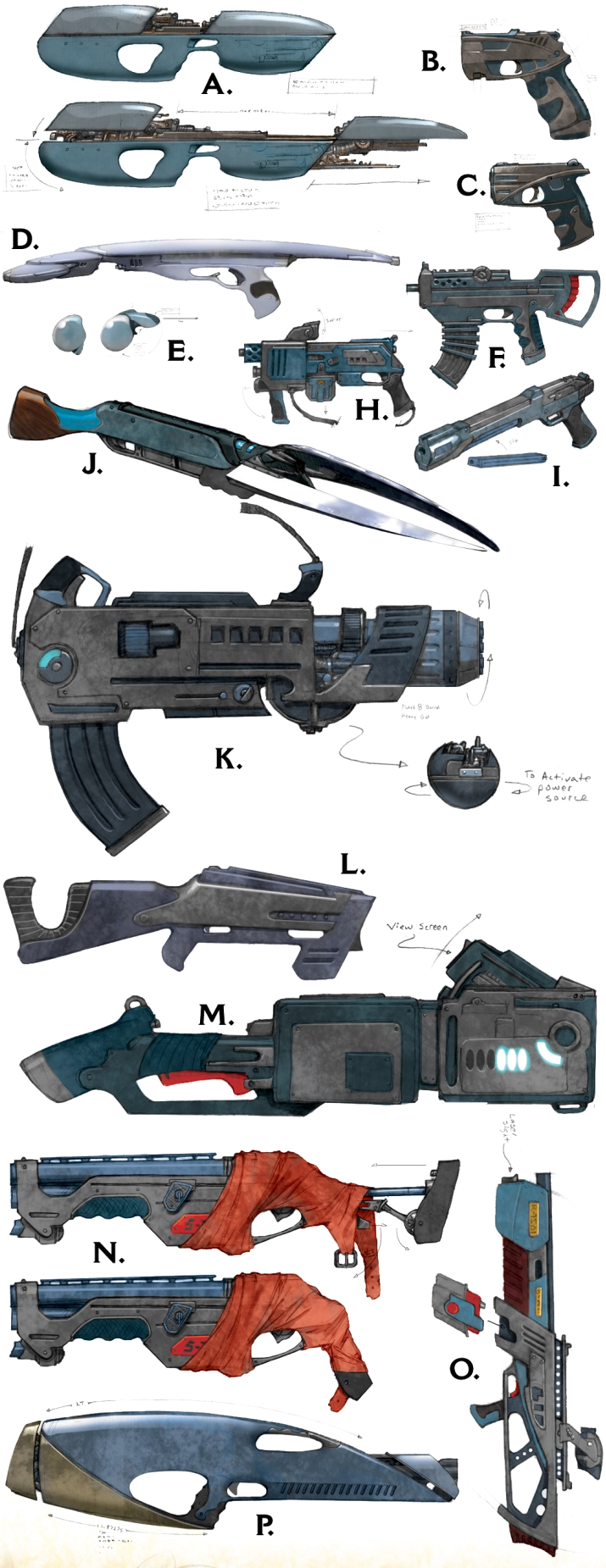
The issue with employing active technology with close-combat weapons in a fantasy world is that, by their very nature, the weapon has to physically touch a creature that generates a disruption field in order to do any damage. As a result, these melee weapons have to be especially insulated against magical influence; hence the absence of the aforementioned energy swords, even in the bastions whose technology is only limited by the human imagination.

Disruption: Techan melee weapons are affected as normal by disruption events (losing enhancement bonus and special properties and powers), but can continue to be used as the base melee weapon with the same damage die and type. However, if the base weapon type has a different weapon proficiency than the undisrupted weapon and the user is not proficient in the base type, they suffer the normal non-proficiency penalty.

Size: Like firearms, techan melee weapons can be enlarged for Large users (exo-armor). If purchased this way, they no longer can be used by Medium users. If used by exo-armor, use the TL of the melee weapon when determining enhancement bonuses to attacks and damage.

Power: Like firearms, you only use a charge when you make an attack with a techan melee weapon which has an energy cell. Using the weapon for intimidation does not expend energy.

A. Plasma Rifle (Collapsed/Deployed)
B. Caseless Pistol
C. Pocket Pistol
D. Pulse Carbine
E. Plasma Grenade
F. Submachine Gun
G. SPP Rifle
H. Rail Pistol
I. Ion Rifle
J. Rotary Cannon
K. Thumper Laser Cannon
L. Vapor Rifle
M. Gauss Repeater (Medium & Large User Configuration)
N. Caseless Rifle
O. Pulse Capacitor Rifle



READING THE WEAPON TABLE

Clip/Cell: The capacity of a loaded clip or cell (check ammunition for prices). If the weapon requires an energy cell, its type is listed here. A clip or cell is always assumed to be at full capacity when it is bought or loaded. Parentheses indicate a cell's capacity (if it has one).

Price: All costs are listed in uc.

Type: Along with B for bludgeoning, P for piercing, and S for slashing, techan weapons are also offered as E for Energy for laser, nuclear, and plasma weapons. Flamethrowers specifically are listed as F for being a fire-based attack.

Tech Level (TL): The tech level where the item can be found. This affects its availability, its sensitivity to disruption, and oftentimes its final price. It is also applied to damage rolls and attack rolls as an enhancement bonus.

No Entry: A weapon entry of "--" indicates this entry does not apply or has unique rules. If the damage, crit, or type entry is empty, this could mean that the weapon requires unique ammunition (like a grenade) or at has unique rules. See the weapon description for more information.

WEAPON PROPERTIES

Augment: An augment weapon uses your unarmed attack to determine its damage dice. The weapon grants its tech level as an enhancement bonus to your unarmed attack and damage rolls. An unarmed attack can only benefit from one augment weapon at a time.

Auto: When you attack with an auto weapon, you can choose whether to fire in single-shot mode (a normal attack) or auto mode. Autofire has no special effect on its own, but can be used in concert with other class features or feats. A weapon in auto mode uses five shots per attack roll (modified by certain feats and features).

Basic Chemical Projectiles (BCP): The earliest firearms used chemical explosives to propel its deadly shell toward its victim. Although the chemicals evolved as knowledge did, the result remained the same. Requiring no energy cell, standard ballistic firearms seldom broke down. As time continued, the chemicals became easier to locate. Even in the largest, most advanced bastions, chemical firearms are still

popular among those leaving the safety of their walls. Assault rifles, autoloaders, bolt sniper rifles, all caseless weapons, light machine guns, machine pistols, all shotguns, pocket pistols, sniper cannons, and submachine guns utilize chemical projectiles. Though the majority are TL0 and feature no advancement, several can be purchased at higher tech levels (except for those that have the immune property). There are also two subsets of BCP weaponry:

Caseless Ammunition: Caseless weapons use unique clipless, caseless ammunition. A square-shaped round is the entire firing mechanism. The shell is encased inside a solid propellant coffin, connected to others, and fed as a clip. Each bullet, when fired, incinerates its case, ejecting the remnants with the bullet. Caseless weapons possess massive clip capacities.

Electronic Stacked Projectiles (ESP): No longer are bullets loaded from an external clip and launched via a firing pin. Now they are loaded directly into the barrel, separated only by the propellant. The concept dates back to traditional fireworks except the stacked projectile weapon does not need to fire its entire payload when ignited. Electrical pulses launch the bullets in the proper order. Misfires are pushed out by the next round, preventing backfire. This removes the need for a clip, a firing pin, or for that matter, any moving parts at all. The greatest advantage of this technology is a phenomenal firing rate, capable of discharging rounds literally as a stream of bullets.

ESP Property: ESP weapons have both an auto and a heavy auto setting, allowing you to switch between the two properties. You can switch the setting as a swift action.

Exp: Explosives have an area of effect at the point of impact of 5 feet or more. Additionally, if an explosive's area of effect is impeded by indestructible terrain (like in a dungeon corridor), the explosion carries over to unaffected squares. If one line of squares (at least 3 squares) is occupied by indestructible terrain, the entire affected area shifts over to occupy the same number of free squares. If both sides of an explosion are occupied by indestructible terrain (like a narrow corridor), the blast carries up and down the corridor one square for every line of the original area obstructed. This rule doesn't go into effect if the obstructing terrain can be damaged by the explosion. The number listed next the "Exp" entry indicates the size of the radius in feet.

Example: If an explosive detonates against a stone wall, a 5-feet radius blast shifts its area 1 square, still occupying 9 total squares. If the explosive detonates in a 1 square wide hallway, the explosion would be 1 square wide and 5 squares long (with the explosive in the middle square).

Attacking with Explosives: When using any weapon with an area of effect, you don't make a ranged attack but rather establish a Reflex DC which affected targets must beat (see **Grenades & Explosives** below). These weapons cannot inflict critical hits.

Capacitor: Capacitor weapons resulted from plasma bottle research, combining elements from both plasma and laser technologies. With a capacitor weapon, the shooter can dial up the strength of the energy burst. The weapon charges up by siphoning energy from its cell. Capacitors have four settings. Using two charges per shot scales up the weapon's damage die by one size (1d6 > 1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12 > 2d8 > 2d10), using four charges scales damage up by two die sizes, and eight charges scales damage up by three die sizes. This may be combined with features that increase weapon damage as well.

Example: Wielding an auto capacitor weapon that does 1d8, you can fire one shot, using one charge and doing 1d8 each. If you make a burst with that weapon, you use five shots and five charges. If you crank up the capacitor to eight charges, each shot uses eight charges, doing 2d8 each. With the burst, you use 40 charges.
Special: Capacitor weapons also have the plasma property.

Conceal: These weapons are so small, they offer a +2 bonus to Sleight of Hand checks to conceal them.

Coil/Rail: These weapons are the most popular weapon for techan soldiers in the echan wilderness after the standard firearm, given the rare tendency of chemical ammunition to explode when directly exposed to magic. Magnetic fields are not affected by disruption, a welcome blessing to those living under Earth's blanket of protection. The specific process of accelerating metal shells using magnetism is complicated, and coil-based and rail-based technology fire their shells using different means. All magnetic accelerated weapons feature long ranges and high critical ratings. They also require changing both a clip and a cell. These weapons deliver astounding kinetic potential.

Property: Coil and rail weapons reduce AC bonuses via cover by 2.

Rail Property: If a rail shell kills a target with a critical hit, the shell continues on a straight path from the weapon, making a single free attack on one target in direct line of effect within the weapon's range. This may only occur once per shot.

Grenade: Grenades use their own form of attack that depends on the specific grenade (see **Grenades**, below).

Guided: These weapons assist in aiming after being fired and can even make a secondary attack if the first one misses.

Property: As many times a day as the weapon's TL +2, you can either gain a +4 bonus to attack before making an attack roll, or reroll a missed attack and take the second result.

Heavy Auto: These weapons function the same as auto weapons, but have no single shot option. They always fire ten shots per attack roll (some features and feats may reduce this).

Property: Heavy auto weapons inflict additional damage as the firer becomes more experienced using them. A heavy auto weapon inflicts a +1 bonus to damage with every hit. At 11th level, this increases to +2 damage. This is in addition to extra damage from

ONE-HANDED SMALL WEAPONS

WEAPON	COST	DMG	CRIT.	RNG.	WT.	TYPE	CLIP/CELL	TL	SPECIAL
STARTING WEAPONS									
Autoloader	25	1d6	x2	50 ft.	2 lbs.	P	8	0	BCP
Break-action shot pistol	30	1d8	x3	25 ft.	3 lbs.	P	2	0	BCP, immune, shotgun
Dragoon	15	1d6	x2	40 ft.	3 lbs	P	2	0	BCP, immune
Machine pistol	40	1d6	x2	50 ft.	3 lbs.	P	20	0	auto, BCP
Pocket Pistol	20	1d4	x2	40 ft.	1 lbs.	P	3	0	BCP, conceal, immune
Revolver	15	1d4	x2	50 ft.	2 lbs.	P	6	0	BCP, immune
ADVANCED WEAPONS									
Autoloader	2,000	1d6	x2	60 ft.	2 lbs.	P	8	1	BCP
	8,000	1d6	x2	70 ft.	2 lbs.	P	8	2	BCP
Machine pistol	2,000	1d6	x2	60 ft.	3 lbs.	P	20	1	auto, BCP
	8,000	1d6	x2	70 ft.	3 lbs.	P	20	2	auto, BCP
Caseless pistol	2,250	1d6	x2	50 ft.	2 lbs.	P	25	1	BCP
	8,500	1d6	x2	50 ft.	2 lbs.	P	30	2	BCP
	18,750	1d6	x2	50 ft.	2 lbs.	P	35	3	BCP
Light machine gun	2,350	1d4	x2	50 ft.	4 lbs.	P	40	1	auto, BCP
	8,700	1d4	x2	50 ft.	4 lbs.	P	45	2	auto, BCP
	19,050	1d4	x2	50 ft.	4 lbs.	P	50	3	auto, BCP
ESP pistol	8,800	1d6	x2	50 ft.	3 lbs.	P	40	2	auto/heavy auto, BCP
	19,600	1d6	x2	55 ft.	3 lbs.	P	40	3	auto/heavy auto, BCP
	34,000	1d6	x2	60 ft.	3 lbs.	P	40	4	auto/heavy auto, BCP
SPP pistol	8,800	1d6	x2	80 ft.	3 lbs.	P	10	2	SPP
	32,000	1d6	x2	85 ft.	3 lbs.	P	12	3	SPP
	50,000	1d6	x2	90 ft.	3 lbs.	P	15	4	SPP
Coil pistol	34,000	1d6	19-20/x2	100 ft.	4 lbs.	P	10 / M	3	coil
	58,000	1d6	19-20/x2	100 ft.	4 lbs.	P	10 / M	4	coil
Nuclear Pellet Pistol	36,000	1d6	18-20/x2	80 ft.	3 lbs.	E	M (15)	3	nuclear
	59,000	1d6	18-20/x2	80 ft.	3 lbs.	E	M (20)	4	nuclear
	88,000	1d6	18-20/x2	80 ft.	3 lbs.	E	M (25)	5	nuclear
Solid laser pistol	58,000	1d6	x3	100 ft.	3lbs.	E	M (20)	4	laser
	80,000	1d6	x3	110 ft.	3lbs.	E	M (25)	5	laser
Rail pistol	60,000	1d6	19-20/x2	100 ft.	4 lbs.	P	10 / M	4	rail
	90,000	1d6	19-20/x2	120 ft.	4 lbs.	P	10 / M	5	rail
Plasma pistol	98,000	1d6	19-20/x3	100 ft.	3 lbs.	E	M (15)	5	plasma
Thumper laser pistol	98,000	1d6	x3	100 ft.	3 lbs.	E	M (30)	5	auto, laser
Capacitor plasma pistol	128,000	1d6	19-20/x3	100 ft.	3 lbs.	E	M (30)	5	auto, capacitor, plasma

feats and class features. You must be proficient with the weapon to gain this damage bonus.

Immune: These weapons, and they are few, cannot be disrupted because of their archaic construction. They will still suffer disruption if enchanted or subjected to direct magical attack.

Laser: Any condensed, well-defined beam of light can be considered a laser. In history, the initial weapons concentrated radiation to a focal point, burning the target with intense heat: such beams were usually invisible, which is useful for stealth but less so for accuracy. Later developments increased the size, damage potential, and visibility of these beams. Often, lasers are confused with pulse plasma weapons. The largest difference is that lasers cut while plasma splashes. Laser weapons give away their firer's position but deliver devastating damage few can resist. They can also track targets easier with subsequent damage. There are laser pistols, rifles, and thumper cannons. Although the laser's destructive output is heat, it is not considered fire damage.

Thumpers: Pulses of concentrated energy run through a solid light tunnel, striking in blasts of intense radiation, making this laser variant resemble a string of beads. Thumper technology offers increased damage to basic lasers.

Property: If you strike successfully with a laser, you gain a +1 inherent bonus to your next attack roll against the same target. This is lost if you don't fire at the same target or if you miss. Once a day, if you score a critical hit, the target is blinded.

Nuclear: These are directed energy weapons similar to plasma and laser guns. Where a laser inflicts condensed radiation and plasma inflicts severe heat, weapons with the nuclear property inflict damage via a high-energy beam of atoms. Upon impact, they disrupt the molecular structure of the target. Tissue damage from radiation is an often side effect. This technology

TWO-HANDED SMALL WEAPONS

WEAPON	COST	DMG	CRIT.	RNG.	WT.	TYPE	CLIP/CELL	TL	SPECIAL
STARTING WEAPONS									
Assault rifle	50	1d8	x2	80 ft.	7 lbs.	P	50	0	auto, BCP
Basic sniper rifle	50	1d8	x2	100 ft.	8 lbs.	P	5	0	BCP, sniper (+1)
Bolt rifle	45	1d8	x2	100 ft.	8 lbs.	P	5	0	BCP, immune
Shotgun	50	1d10	x3	30 ft.	10 lbs.	P	6	0	BCP, shotgun
Submachine gun	65	1d6	x2	80 ft.	6 lbs.	P	80	0	auto, BCP
ADVANCED WEAPONS									
Assault rifle	2,000	1d8	x2	100 ft.	6 lbs.	P	50	1	auto, BCP
	8,000	1d8	x2	120 ft.	6 lbs.	P	50	2	auto, BCP
Shotgun	2,000	1d10	x3	30 ft.	9 lbs.	P	6	1	BCP, shotgun
	8,000	1d10	x3	30 ft.	8 lbs.	P	6	2	BCP, shotgun
Basic sniper rifle	2,000	1d8	x2	120 ft.	8 lbs.	P	5	1	BCP, sniper (+1)
	8,000	1d8	x2	120 ft.	8 lbs.	P	5	2	BCP, sniper (+1)
Machine shotgun	2,500	1d10	x3	30 ft.	15 lbs.	P	20	1	auto, shotgun
	9,000	1d10	x3	30 ft.	15 lbs.	P	25	2	auto, shotgun
	20,000	1d10	x3	30 ft.	15 lbs.	P	30	3	auto, shotgun
Submachine gun	3,000	1d6	x2	80 ft.	6 lbs.	P	80	1	auto, BCP
	10,000	1d6	x2	85 ft.	6 lbs.	P	80	2	auto, BCP
	25,000	1d6	x2	90 ft.	6 lbs.	P	80	3	auto, BCP
Sniper cannon	4,000	1d10	x3	150 ft.	15 lbs.	P	6	1	BCP, sniper (+1)
	15,000	1d10	x3	150 ft.	14 lbs.	P	7	2	BCP, sniper (+1)
	28,000	1d10	x3	150 ft.	13 lbs.	P	8	3	BCP, sniper (+1)
Caseless rifle	4,000	1d8	x2	100 ft.	10 lbs.	P	100	1	auto, BCP
	15,000	1d8	x2	100 ft.	10 lbs.	P	120	2	auto, BCP
	28,000	1d8	x2	100 ft.	10 lbs.	P	140	3	auto, BCP
ESP rifle	5,000	1d8	x2	80 ft.	10 lbs.	P	80	1	auto/heavy auto, BCP
	16,000	1d8	x2	80 ft.	10 lbs.	P	90	2	auto/heavy auto, BCP
	29,000	1d8	x2	80 ft.	10 lbs.	P	100	3	auto/heavy auto, BCP
SPP rifle	18,000	1d8	x2	150 ft.	14 lbs.	P	20	2	SPP
	32,000	1d8	x2	175 ft.	14 lbs.	P	20	3	SPP
	50,000	1d8	x2	200 ft.	14 lbs.	P	20	4	SPP
Light Coilgun	34,000	1d8	19-20/x2	150 ft.	15 lbs.	P	16 / M	3	coil
	58,000	1d8	19-20/x2	150 ft.	13 lbs.	P	16 / M	4	coil
Kinetic Flash Rifle	36,000	1d8	19-20/x2	150 ft.	20 lbs.	P	50 / M	3	auto, coil
	40,000	1d8	19-20/x2	150 ft.	20 lbs.	P	60 / M	3	auto, coil
Cyclotron Rifle	38,000	1d8	18-20/x2	100 ft.	15 lbs.	E	M (20)	3	nuclear
	62,000	1d8	18-20/x2	100 ft.	15 lbs.	E	M (20)	4	nuclear
	90,000	1d8	18-20/x2	100 ft.	15 lbs.	E	M (30)	5	nuclear
Nuclear Pulse Rifle	42,000	1d8	18-20/x2	100 ft.	20 lbs.	E	H (80)	3	auto, nuclear
	65,000	1d8	18-20/x2	100 ft.	20 lbs.	E	H (90)	4	auto, nuclear
	94,000	1d8	18-20/x2	100 ft.	20 lbs.	E	H (100)	5	auto, nuclear
SPP sensor gun	34,000	1d8	x3	100 ft.	16 lbs.	P	10 / M	3	sniper (+2), SPP
	54,000	1d8	x3	130 ft.	14 lbs.	P	10 / M	4	sniper (+2), SPP
SPP Vortex	35,000	1d8	x3	100 ft.	14 lbs.	P	70	3	auto, SPP
	55,000	1d8	x3	100 ft.	12 lbs.	P	70	3	auto, SPP
Ion rifle	25,000	1d8	x2	50 ft.	16 lbs.	E	M (20)	3	pincher
	40,000	1d8	x2	75 ft.	16 lbs.	E	M (25)	4	pincher
Sonic focus rifle	22,000	1d8	x2	50 ft.	17 lbs.	E	M (20)	3	sonic
Solid laser rifle	72,000	1d8	x3	150 ft.	15 lbs.	E	M (20)	4	laser
	98,000	1d8	x3	150 ft.	13 lbs.	E	M (30)	5	laser
Railgun	72,000	1d8	19-20/x2	150 ft.	15 lbs.	P	16 / M	4	rail
	98,000	1d8	19-20/x2	200 ft.	13 lbs.	P	16 / M	5	rail
Ultimate sniper rifle	80,000	1d10	19-20/x3	250 ft.	18 lbs.	P	10 / H	4	rail, sniper (+2)
	105,000	1d10	19-20/x3	300 ft.	17 lbs.	P	10 / H	5	rail, sniper (+2)
Gauss repeater	85,000	1d8	19-20/x2	150 ft.	16 lbs.	P	60 / H	4	auto, rail
	110,000	1d8	19-20/x2	150 ft.	16 lbs.	P	80 / H	5	auto, rail
Plasma rifle	128,000	1d8	19-20/x3	150 ft.	17 lbs.	E	M (15)	5	plasma
Thumper laser rifle	135,000	1d8	x3	150 ft.	17 lbs.	E	H (60)	5	auto, laser
Pulse capacitor rifle	145,000	1d8	19-20/x3	150 ft.	17 lbs.	E	H (80)	5	auto, capacitor, plasma

HEAVY WEAPONS

WEAPON	COST	DMG	CRIT.	RNG.	WT.	TYPE	CLIP/CELL	TL	SPECIAL
STARTING WEAPONS									
Machine light cannon	65	1d10	x2	100 ft.	30 lbs.	P	120	0	BCP, heavy auto
Rotary cannon	80	1d8	x2	100 ft.	65 lbs.	P	250	0	BCP, heavy auto, immune
ADVANCED WEAPONS									
Machine light cannon	2,000	1d10	x2	110 ft.	28 lbs.	P	120	1	BCP, heavy auto
	8,000	1d10	x2	120 ft.	25 lbs.	P	120	2	BCP, heavy auto
Rotary cannon	2,300	1d8	x2	150 ft.	55 lbs.	P	300 / M	1	BCP, heavy auto
	8,600	1d8	x2	150 ft.	50 lbs.	P	350 / M	2	BCP, heavy auto
ESP maelstrom	10,000	1d8	x2	200 ft.	55 lbs.	P	400 / M	2	auto/heavy auto, BCP
	23,000	1d8	x2	200 ft.	55 lbs.	P	400 / M	3	auto/heavy auto, BCP
God's Eye sniper gun	14,000	2d8	x3	300 ft.	40 lbs.	P	10	2	BCP, sniper (+3)
	24,000	2d8	x3	300 ft.	40 lbs.	P	10	3	BCP, sniper (+3)
Ion cannon	22,000	2d6	x2	200 ft.	50 lbs.	P	H (40)	3	pincher
Coil light gun	42,000	2d6	19-20/x2	300 ft.	65 lbs.	P	40 / H	3	coil, heavy auto
	62,000	2d6	19-20/x2	300 ft.	65 lbs.	P	40 / H	4	coil, heavy auto
Nuclear Particle Lance	43,000	2d6	18-20/x2	250 ft.	35 lbs.	E	M (30)	3	nuclear
	63,000	2d6	18-20/x2	250 ft.	35 lbs.	E	M (30)	4	nuclear
	90,000	2d6	18-20/x2	250 ft.	35 lbs.	E	M (30)	5	nuclear
Linear Collider	45,000	2d6	18-20/x2	200 ft.	40 lbs.	E	M (60)	3	heavy auto, nuclear
	65,000	2d6	18-20/x2	200 ft.	38 lbs.	E	M (70)	3	heavy auto, nuclear
	94,000	2d6	18-20/x2	200 ft.	35 lbs.	E	M (80)	4	heavy auto, nuclear
Sonic devastator	28,000	2d6	x2	70 ft.	50 lbs.	E	H (40)	5	sonic
Railcannon	75,000	2d6	19-20/x2	300 ft.	75 lbs.	P	120 / H	4	heavy auto, rail
	102,000	2d6	19-20/x2	300 ft.	70 lbs.	P	120 / H	5	heavy auto, rail
Solid laser cannon	80,000	2d6	x3	250 ft.	65 lbs.	E	H (30)	4	laser
	100,000	2d6	x3	250 ft.	55 lbs.	E	H (35)	5	laser
Thumper laser cannon	134,000	2d6	x3	250 ft.	60 lbs.	E	H (200)	5	heavy auto, laser
Pulse mini-gun	144,000	2d6	19-20/x3	250 ft.	100 lbs.	E	H (200)	5	heavy auto, plasma
Capacitor apocalypse	162,000	2d6	19-20/x3	250 ft.	110 lbs.	E	H (200)	5	capacitor, heavy auto, plasma

SUPER HEAVY WEAPONS

WEAPON	COST	DMG	CRIT.	RNG.	WT.	TYPE	CLIP/CELL	TL	SPECIAL
Mortar	500	—	—	50 ft.[2]	50 lbs.	—	1	1	grenade
	3,000	—	—	60 ft.[2]	40 lbs.	—	1	2	grenade
	9,000	—	—	70 ft.[2]	30 lbs.	—	1	3	grenade
Autocannon	100	1d8+8	x2	300 ft.	200 lbs.	P	200	0	auto, BCP
	2,500	1d8+8	x2	300 ft.	175 lbs.	P	200	1	auto, BCP
	12,000	1d8+8	x2	300 ft.	150 lbs.	P	200	2	auto, BCP
Volley Gun ESP	13,000	1d6+6	x2	250 ft.	350 lbs.	P	500 / H	2	BCP, heavy auto
	27,000	1d6+6	x2	300 ft.	300 lbs.	P	600 / H	3	BCP, heavy auto
Super-Kill Sniper	80,000	1d10+10	19-20/x3	400 ft.	150 lbs.	P	5 / H	4	rail, sniper (+2)
	112,000	1d10+10	19-20/x3	500 ft.	150 lbs.	P	5 / H	5	rail, sniper (+2)
Mass Driver	120,000	1d10+10	19-20/x3	300 ft.	500 lbs.	P	10 / H	5	rail
Particle Beam Gun	50,000	2d6+6	18-20/x2	300 ft.	350 lbs.	E	H (20)	3	nuclear
	98,000	2d6+6	18-20/x2	300 ft.	300 lbs.	E	H (25)	4	nuclear
	162,000	2d6+6	18-20/x2	300 ft.	300 lbs.	E	H (30)	5	nuclear
Dense Plasma Focus Cannon	170,000	1d12+12	19-20/x3	300 ft.	350 lbs.	E	H (200)	5	heavy auto, plasma

[1] Grenades gain +1 to their area burst when fired from a mortar.
[2] Mortars cannot be fired on targets less than 50 feet away.

SPECIALTY WEAPONS (Can only be used with a standard action)

WEAPON	COST	DMG	CRIT.	RNG.	WT.	TYPE	CLIP/CELL	TL	SPECIAL
Air Dart Pistol	35	—	x2	20 ft.	4 lbs.	P	1	0	
	500	—	x2	40 ft.	4 lbs.	P	4	1	
	1,000	—	x2	60 ft.	4 lbs.	P	6	2	
	9,000	—	x2	80 ft.	4 lbs.	P	8	3	
	17,000	—	x2	100 ft.	4 lbs.	P	10	4	
	27,000	—	x2	120 ft.	4 lbs.	P	12	5	
Capsicum spray	20	—	x2	10 ft.	2 lbs.	—	3	0	
1-handed grenade launcher	60	—	x2[1]	50 ft.	8 lbs.	—	1	0	grenade
	2,000	—	x2[1]	60 ft.	7 lbs.	—	1	1	grenade
	18,000	—	x2[1]	70 ft.	6 lbs.	—	1	2	grenade
Grenade light weapon	300	—	x2[1]	50 ft.	10 lbs.	—	6	0	grenade, 2-handed
	2,600	—	x2[1]	60 ft.	10 lbs.	—	8	1	grenade, 2-handed
	19,200	—	x2[1]	70 ft.	10 lbs.	—	9	2	grenade, 2-handed
Electroshock gun	2,000	—	—	10 ft.	3 lbs.	—	B (2)	1	1-handed
Flamethrower	2,500	1d6	18-20/x3	—	20 lbs.	F	10 / M	1	heavy weapon
	9,000	1d6	18-20/x3	—	20 lbs.	F	15 / M	2	heavy weapon
	20,000	1d6	18-20/x3	—	20 lbs.	F	20 / M	3	heavy weapon
	34,000	1d6	18-20/x3	—	20 lbs.	F	25 / M	4	heavy weapon
	55,500	1d6	18-20/x3	—	20 lbs.	E	H (30)	5	heavy weapon
Net gun	1,500	—	—	25 ft.	10 lbs.	—	1	1	2-handed
Rocket launcher	500	2d6+6	x2[1]	150 ft.	20 lbs.	—	1	1	exp 5, heavy weapon
	1500	2d6+6	x2[1]	200 ft.	20 lbs.	—	1	2	exp 5, guided, heavy weapon
	3500	2d6+6	x2[1]	250 ft.	20 lbs.	—	1	3	exp 10, guided, heavy weapon
	5500	2d6+6	x2[1]	300 ft.	20 lbs.	—	1	4	exp 15, guided, heavy weapon
Ground heavy gun	10,000	3d6	x2[1]	400 ft.	185 lbs.	P	1	2	BCP, exp 5/10, super heavy
Sonic stunner	18,000	—	—	50 ft.	5 lbs.	—	M (10)	3	2-handed
Disruptor	50,000	1d8	x2	50 ft.	10 lbs.	—	H (20)	4	1-handed
Restrainment field	50,000	—	—	50 ft.	10 lbs.	—	H (5)	4	1-handed
Plasma artillery	98,000	3d10	x2[1]	250 ft.	110 lbs.	E	H (4)	5	exp 10/20, plasma, super heavy
Wave stunner	162,000	—	—	50 ft.	12 lbs.	E	H (5)	4	2-handed
Vapor rifle	200,000	2d6	x3	100 ft.	12 lbs.	E	H (6)	5	2-handed

[1] This weapon can only score a critical if firing directly at a target (see Grenades and Explosives).

has been dubbed a "dirty solution", as it emerges frequently before the advancement of high-powered lasers and plasma weapons.

Property: If you hit with a nuclear weapon, every subsequent hit on the same target gains a +1 bonus to damage. This is cumulative up to +3 and is lost if you don't hit that same target before the end of your next turn. Once a day, if you score a critical hit, the target is shaken.

Pincher: These weapons deliver an electromagnetic pulse that disrupts any item that requires a battery or an electric current to operate. Damage inflicted by this weapon is electricity.

Property: All battery-powered technology on the target suffers a disruption roll at -2. Once a day, you can render a target stunned until the beginning of your next turn.

Plasma: Any weapon employing ionized gas is considered a plasma weapon. This involves either using the magnetically conductive matter as a delivery device or as a weapon itself. Magnetism is one of the few scientific constants not broken by the EDF: a plasma weapon fires a toroid of superheated gas inside a magnetohydrodynamic bubble that is then accelerated from the barrel in the same way a railgun fires its iron-core shell. The bubble remains solid for a significant time, or until it strikes its target, at which point the bubble is dispersed and delivers its energetic payload as a cloud of intense heat (which is nevertheless not considered fire damage). There are plasma pistols, rifles, and capacitor cannons.

Property: On a successful strike, you may deal the weapon's tech level in additional damage to one target of your choice up to 5 feet from the initial target. Once a day, you can inflict double the TL in damage to all targets up to 5 feet away.

Shotgun: Shotguns impact with tremendous force at close range, but this stopping power diminishes rapidly

TECHAN MELEE WEAPONS

WEAPON	COST	DMG	CRIT.	WT.	TYPE	CELL	TL	SPECIAL
LIGHT MELEE								
Collapsible Baton	25	1d4	x2	1 lbs.	B	--	0	immune
Harmonic Blade	18,000	1d4	18-20/x3	1.5 lbs.	S	M (20)	2	1-handed
	32,000	1d4	18-20/x3	1.5 lbs.	S	M (20)	3	1-handed
	50,000	1d4	18-20/x3	1.5 lbs.	S	M (20)	4	1-handed
Piton-Gauntlet	2,500	--	--	4 lbs.	P	M (20)	1	augment
	8,800	--	--	5 lbs.	P	M (25)	2	augment
	18,500	--	--	5 lbs.	P	M (25)	3	augment
Punch Gun	45	1d4	--	2 lbs.	P	--	0	augment, BCP, clip 4
	1,850	1d4	--	2 lbs.	P	--	1	augment, BCP, clip 4
	7,000	1d4	--	2.5 lbs.	P	--	2	augment, BCP, clip 5
	17,000	1d4	--	3 lbs.	P	--	3	augment, BCP, clip 6
	32,000	1d4	--	2 lbs.	E	M (10)	4	augment, laser
	50,000	1d4	--	2 lbs.	E	M (15)	5	augment, plasma
ONE-HANDED MELEE								
Buzz Baton	32,000	1d6	x2	1 lbs.	B	H (20)	3	pincher
	50,000	1d6	x2	1 lbs.	B	H (20)	4	pincher
Power-Hooks	31,000	--	--	6 lbs.	B	H (20)	3	augment
	48,000	--	--	6 lbs.	B	H (20)	4	augment
	70,000	--	--	6 lbs.	B	H (20)	5	augment
Tesla Glove	25,000	--	--	3 lbs.	B/E	H (15)	2	augment, pincher
	41,000	--	--	3 lbs.	B/E	H (20)	3	augment, pincher
	62,000	--	--	3 lbs.	B/E	H (25)	4	augment, pincher
	85,000	--	--	3 lbs.	B/E	H (30)	5	augment, pincher
TWO-HANDED MELEE								
Chainsaw	1500	1d6	18-20/x3	15 lbs.	S	M (20)	1	
	7,500	1d6	18-20/x3	12 lbs.	S	M (25)	2	

further out. They are fairly distinct and few models are on the market.

Critical: If you score a critical hit, the target is knocked prone.

Special: Shotguns do +3 damage if fired at targets 10 feet or closer. Beyond their first range increment, they only deliver half damage.

Sniper: These weapons contain advanced targeting systems for long-range fire. They are available in chemical, laser, and magnetic variations.

Special: Sniper weapons list a proficiency bonus. If you are proficient with the weapon and use a move action to aim, you gain this proficiency bonus on your following ranged attack with that weapon. The full proficiency bonus ends if you move or are moved. The effect doesn't expire otherwise (so you don't have to use a move action on every turn if you don't move or are moved). Aiming does not provoke an opportunity attack.

Sonic: The first sonic weapon was no more than a simple high-powered oscillating pain siren generating 175 decibel (dB) acoustic waves in all directions. Newer sonic weapons utilize high frequency ultrasound to carry the painful audio waves in a straight, focused path. This technology offers increased range with no adverse side effects for the firer. In practical uses, the sonic weapon may be downgraded to transmit a normal voice across 10x its range increment to any other target without fear of anyone else overhearing unless they are inline.

Property: Once a day, if you score a critical hit on a target, it is deafened.

Self-Propelled Projectile (SPP): SPP weapons started emerging from Angel R&D and eventually found use across the world due to parallel development or stolen designs. They are small rockets fired from pistols or rifles that continue to accelerate after an initial air compression push fires them from the shell. Although more expensive than traditional firearms, SPPs proved useful for engagements when range mattered. The ammunition for SPP weapons are sabot rounds, as the shell ejected breaks apart, and the contained self-propelled projectile ignites, breaking from its seal. All SPP weapons can fire underwater, though their range is halved. They are not common but have definitive advantages, such as explosive warheads and guidance systems.

Property: As many times a day as the weapon's TL +2, you can either gain a +4 bonus to attack, or reroll a missed attack and take the second result.

WEAPON DESCRIPTIONS

Air Dart Gun: The air-dart gun resembles a standard pistol except it fires a small needle via an air compressor. The needle inflicts no damage but can deliver any number of medical injections. You choose which injection to employ from your inventory before making the attack.

Brass Knuckles: A no fuss weapon, brass knuckles add 1 damage to unarmed melee hits.

Buzz Baton: The buzz baton is a non-collapsible truncheon with a point capable of emanating a powerful electric shock.

Capsicum Spray: This item employs a chemical irritant like capsaicin (common in some fruits, plants, and most chilies), also known as a lachrymatory agent. When a target is struck, a sticky, waxy, colorless and odorless liquid adheres to the skin. The spray contains almost pure capsaicin, with a Scoville rating of more than 10,000,000 – double the intensity of ancient pepper spray, the better to inflict pain on the new magical beasts roaming the world. The exact formula changes with each bastion. Most are built with a compressed canister while others eject a breakable projectile.

Effect: If struck, the target must make a DC 15 Fort save or be sickened and staggered for 2d4 rounds. If you score a critical hit, the target fails this save. Larger targets gain a bonus to the save as follows (+2 Large, +4 Huge, +6 Gargantuan; Colossal targets are immune).

Disruptor: This gun first emerged from a Porto beluga carrier from across the ocean. Since then, few people have been able to successfully reverse engineering them. Porto's Tilthe Intelligica discovered that certain high-powered focused sonic waves inflict severe pain on certain targets. Prototypes issued to test units proved effective as an alternative to beam or shell weapons. The almost inaudible wave-rifle discharge inflicts massive damage on physical targets and on enemy combat units. However, in one incident, a test group encountered undead opponents and reported a much-elevated damage potential.

Undead: The disruptor inflicts 1d12 damage against undead instead of 1d8. The critical ranged also increases to 18-20/x3.

Special Ability: Once a day, if you score a critical hit, you can render a target staggered.

Electroshock Gun: This wand-shaped device fires air-compressed barbed darts attached to coils towards a target. Upon impact, the coils conduct a massive electrical current, disrupting superficial muscle functions. The darts can penetrate enough to attach to anything, and are also magnetic. The electrical pulse does not need to penetrate skin to be effective.

Firing Rate: Tension springs recoil the darts back to the gun as a free action, making it available to fire again. However, it cannot fire again for 10 rounds as its capacitor needs to charge.

Range: Because of the length of coil, you cannot strike targets further than 30 feet.

Effect: Upon impact, the target must make a DC15 Fort save or be paralyzed for 2d4 rounds. If you score a critical hit, the target automatically fails this save. Larger targets gain a bonus to the save as follows (+2 Large, +4 Huge, +6 Gargantuan; Colossal targets are immune).

Flamethrower: This weapon has shrunk in size over the years. Though still two-handed, it no longer requires an unsafe nozzle to an even more hazardous backpack. Modern flamethrowers keep their tank mounted under the weapon stock. The tank is comprised of a relatively safe solid fuel. When combined with air, it reacts into expanding foam. A small battery compresses air in a separate chamber. The foam enters the final chamber and, when allowed to decompress, sprays out in liquid form. A magnesium igniter at its barrel sends the superheated stream of flame to its target. Advanced versions discharge superheated plasma. Despite rumors and urban legends, neither older nor modern flamethrower tanks explode easily if ruptured or if a spark flicks nearby. If the weapon tank is ruptured, the foam would break and spray but not automatically ignite. Even older models would only burst like aerosol cans and not violently explode.

Property: All damage from the flamethrower is fire damage.

Attack: When you attack with the flamethrower, you target a 30 foot cone. A TL5 weapon targets a 40 foot cone.

Special: Any target hit by a flamethrower suffers half the initial damage at the beginning of your next turn.

Grenade Launcher/Weapon: All grenade launchers and weapons can load grenades only 0.5 lbs or less.

Ground Heavy Gun: This light artillery weapon is designed to act both as a field gun for direct fire or a howitzer for long parabolic, indirect air bursts. It has an incredible range and is able to eliminate most soft targets with a single shot.

Property: Before firing, select either direct or indirect fire. Direct Fire—exp 5 and double damage; Indirect Fire—exp 10. See **Grenades & Explosives** below for setting the reflex DC.

Harmonic Blade: Beginning its life as a surgical scalpel, this device quickly evolved to accomplish the ethically opposite goal. The blade vibrates in excess of 75,000 Hz, enabling it to slice or penetrate virtually any substance. More advanced designs translate little of this pulsation to the user's hand, though it does still occur. As a result, using a harmonic blade for more than a few minutes generates significant muscle fatigue. Because a larger blade translates more of its energy to the wielder, there has not been a practical harmonic blade longer than a few inches.

Property: If you have at least 5 ranks in Heal, you gain a +2 bonus to damage with this weapon. This weapon's damage increases to 1d6 if your target is denied its Dexterity bonus to AC (whether the target has a Dexterity bonus or not) or you flank a target. The harmonic blade counts as a dagger.

Critical: If you score a critical hit, you critical threat range increases by 2 for your next attack on the same target. This is not cumulative and is lost if your next attack on the target misses.

Net Gun: If this weapon strikes a target, it is pinned. The victim needs to make a DC20 Escape Artist check to escape.

Piton-Gauntlet: These devices are not strictly speaking gauntlets, as your fingers are free to hold other objects. The gauntlet mounts to your forearm. This

weapon is effectively a captive bolt pistol. When activated, it propels a titanium rod three inches from your fist (or as much as a foot for larger models). Spring action recoil returns the rod to its housing an instant later. The ejection system utilizes compressed air containing enough pressure for five minutes, and refilling the air tank requires one minute. The TL2 gauntlet uses a battery to maintain pressure in the system.

Property: The piton-gauntlet increases the critical threat range of your unarmed attacks by 1.

Plasma Artillery: Built on the same baseline as the ground heavy gun, plasma artillery operates at significantly reduced range due to its incapacity for parabolic indirect firing (instead, its indirect fire mode relies on the plasma splash effect). It more than makes up for the decreased range with its damage potential.

Property: Before firing, select either direct or indirect fire. Direct Fire—exp 10 and double damage; Indirect Fire—exp 20. See **Grenades & Explosives** below for setting the reflex DC.

Power-Hooks: These impressive devices are oversized augmented manipulators attached to synthetic muscles and hydraulic pumps. The entire assembly wraps around the arm and most of the shoulder. Purchasing two links the two assemblies around the back.

Property: Power-hooks increase the damage dice of unarmed attacks by one step (1d4 > 1d6 > 1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12 > 2d6 > 2d8 > 2d10). You also gain a +2 inherent bonus to Strength ability checks. A power-hook takes up a hand.

Punch-Gun: Effectively an impact-triggered firearm, the punch-gun only discharges when a short relay is trigged an inch from your unarmed attack.

Property: Built into the mechanism is a firearm. This weapon only discharges when you hit with an unarmed attack. When you do so, you also automatically hit with the firearm. The extra damage is counted part of the original hit and if you score a critical hit with your unarmed attack, this damage is also counted as well. Earlier versions of the weapon use basic chemical projectiles: at TL4, this is usually replaced with a laser, and at TL5 with a plasma weapon (such variations usually combine with an armored gauntlet to protect the wielder against backblast).

Restrainment Field: This pistol-shaped weapon from Mann launches a balloon-like force field, capturing a target by warping its containment matrix around its victim and then compressing the field to restrain the target from moving.

Effect: If struck, the target must make a DC20 Reflex save or be restrained. Only Large targets or smaller can be targeted. Each shot and every round holding the target uses one charge.

Sonic Stunner: Very similar to a normal sonic weapon, the sonic stunner is designed only to be non-lethal. Some variations of other sonic weapons incorporate this configuration as an adjustable switch (though they are commensurately more expensive).

Property: If the target is hit, it is shaken and exhausted for one round. On a critical hit, the target is also dazed for one round.

Tesla-Glove: This unique item is equipped with more than a half-dozen resonant transformers that conduct severe electrical shocks to a target when you impact with a physical hit.

Property: If you don't hit any target during a round, at the start of your next turn, increase the damage of your next hit with this weapon by +2. This is cumulative up to +6 damage. After you hit any target, the bonus is reduced back to 0. At the start of combat, unless you are surprised, the glove is assumed to be primed to +6 damage.

Vapor Rifle: No one is entirely sure who created this weapon: an import first appeared in Angel several years ago, and examples still pop up occasionally, but all bastions but Mann have banned it. Porto refused to accept responsibility of the design, claiming a rival bastion known as Motego developed it in reprisal to Porto and to strike fear into a subservient population currently under their control. It fires a plasma bottle similar to other pulse weapons, but the gas inside is of a particular volatile mix. When struck, the victim is literally torn apart by the massive heat and chemical reaction some compare only to fluoroantimonic acid, as molecules are torn apart upon contact. The pulse appears to simply vaporize a section of the victim, sometimes the entire body itself, leaving nothing but vapor and a clean cauterized cavity.

Property: Each time you hit with this weapon, it is a critical threat.

Wave Stunner: The most advanced stunner designed features a lethal and non-lethal setting. The non-lethal mode employs millimeter wave electromagnetic radiation that penetrates 1/64th of an inch under the skin. This causes the water molecules under the skin to vibrate, activating pain sensors, giving the subject the impression they are on fire. The lethal setting increases the potency to microwave radiation, causing the skin to actually boil, resulting in severe burns. The wielder may change its setting as a free action.

Property: Stun—No damage, and target is staggered until the beginning of your next turn and knocked prone. Targets larger than you are immune. Kill—1d8 damage.

Critical—The critical threat range is 18-20; and if confirmed, the target is stunned until the beginning of your next turn. Targets larger than you are immune.

Kill—The critical threat range is 18-20/x3.

Special: The stunner does not work on undead, incorporeal creatures, elementals, or any creatures with fire resistance.

AMMUNITION

AMMUNITION TYPE	QUANTITY	DAMAGE APPLICATION	COST
ENERGY			
Battery cell – B	1	Various	5
Battery cell – M	1	Various	50
Battery cell – H	1	Various	150
KINETIC			
Capsicum cartridge	3	—	4
Caseless round	20	Any	4
ESP bullet	20	Any	4
Flame tank	1 tank	Any	50
Gauss flechette (coil/rail)	10	1d6	10
Gauss flechette (coil/rail)	10	1d8	15
Gauss flechette (coil/rail)	10	1d10/2d6	20
Gauss flechette (coil/rail)	10	1d10+10	30
Net cartridge	1	—	5
Rocket (TL1)	1	2d6+6	400
Rocket (TL2)	1	2d6+6	1,000
Rocket (TL3)	1	2d6+6	3,000
Rocket (TL4)	1	2d6+6	5,000
Sabot SPP	20	1d6/1d8	5
Shotgun slug	10	1d8/1d10	5
Traditional bullet/BCP	20	1d4/1d6	2
Traditional bullet/BCP	20	1d8/1d10	3
Traditional bullet/BCP	20	2d6/2d8/1d8+8	5
Traditional bullet/BCP	10	3d6	20
Heavy shell	1	3d6	20
INJECTIONS			
Detonator	1	--	50
Echan Suppressor	1	--	250
Fear	1	--	500
Narcosynthesis	1	--	50
Open Mind	1	--	1,000
Overdose	1	--	100
Paralysis	1	--	250
Pain	1	--	1,000
Sleep	1	--	1,000
Slow	1	--	25
Viral	1	--	150
ALTERNATE			
Angelite	--	--	x4
Armor Piercing	--	--	x2
Fae Iron	--	--	x2
High Explosive	--	--	x5
Tracer	--	--	x4
Rubber	--	--	x2
Hollow Point	--	--	x2
Silver	--	--	x4

AMMUNITION

Supplies for adventurers are often extremely limited, and are a major factor in the elevation of magic over gunpowder. This is reflected in the cost of ammunition. Unlike arrows or bolts, bullets that miss cannot be recovered and used again (although the casings and points can sometimes be scavenged and recycled, but all but the most basic chemical projectiles require a factory to do this). Prices listed are for the quantities indicated next to the entry. Each quantity listed weighs 0.25 lb. Except for flame tanks (5 lb.) and rockets (2 lb.).

Note: All characters gain 2 full clips of ammunition (or cells) for all weapons when they purchase them. The only exceptions are air dart rifles and grenade launchers (which are sold without ammunition).

A NOTE ON CLIPS

It would be frustrating to micromanage one's clip usage. When purchasing ammunition, you are assumed to purchasing clips as well for the capacities you need. You are not strolling into combat with boxes of loose ammunition. You are expected to be prepared.

ALTERNATE AMMUNITION

Certain weapons can have their standard ammunition altered with a more advanced substitute. Some variants deliver more damage while others fill a specific purpose against an enemy. Some ammunition can only be used with specific ammo types.

Rules on Alternate Ammunition: You cannot mix alternate ammunition types in the same clip: thus, you can only use one type of alternate ammunition property per turn unless you attack with multiple weapons.

Angelite rounds: *Benefit:* Angelite rounds count as adamantine for the purposes of damage reduction; *Drawback:* none; *Use:* Any non-energy round.

Armor Piercing: *Benefit:* +1 damage on each damage die, ignore 5 of a target's hardness or resistance; *Drawback:* You cannot score a critical hit; *Use:* Caseless rounds, ESP bullets, gauss iron flechettes, sabot SPPs, traditional bullets, heavy shells.

Fae Iron rounds: Rare, but some bastions made limited runs of fae-iron rounds, especially more xenophobic bastions like Mann. Bastions with positive echan relations like York and Selkirk prohibit their manufacture and sale. *Benefit:* The hit counts as being both fae iron and cold iron; *Drawback:* none, though fae are not pleased with its use; *Use:* Caseless rounds, ESP bullets, gauss iron flechettes, sabot SPPs, traditional bullets, heavy shells.

High-Explosive: *Benefit:* +5 ft. Area; *Drawback:* None; *Use:* Any weapon with an exp value.

Hollow Point: *Gain:* Increase critical threat range by 1; *Drawback:* -1 to attack roll; *Use:* Caseless rounds, ESP bullets, sabot SPPs, traditional bullets.

Rubber: *Benefit:* Medium and smaller targets are staggered until the start of your next turn. A critical hit causes the target to be dazed instead of staggered until the start of your next turn. *Drawback:* A hit inflicts no

damage. *Use:* Caseless rounds, ESP bullets, sabot SPPs, shotgun shells, traditional bullets; *Requirement:* Non-auto or non-heavy auto.

Silver: *Benefit:* The hit counts as being silver; *Drawback:* None

Tracer: *Benefit:* +1 bonus to attack rolls past the first range increment; *Drawback:* -2 damage on each damage die; *Use:* Caseless rounds, ESP bullets, gauss iron flechettes, sabot SPPs, traditional bullets; *Requirement:* Auto or heavy auto weapons only.

INJECTIONS

Injections are an affliction and act similar to poison, only with injections, the target cannot avoid the initial effect. Injections can be delivered manually with a melee attack or via an air dart gun. Instead of inflicting damage, you impose the injection's effect. Large or larger creatures cannot be affected by injections. If you hit the same target again with the same injection before the effect wears off, the target automatically fails its next save against the effect. Injections do not work on undead or incorporeal creatures. A missed attack with an injector does not destroy the injection.

DETONATOR

A vile injection, this introduces nanites into a subject which are exceptionally susceptible to EDF and detonate when disrupted.

Type: injection/poison; **Save:** Fortitude DC 15
Frequency: 1/round
Effect: The first time during its turn, when the target makes an attack, it takes 2d6 damage. **Cure:** 2 consecutive saves

ECHAN SUPPRESSOR

This fae-only injection, traced to Mann, uses the altered rules of science in echa against the subject. The injection is a toxoid vaccine against epidemic parotitis (the mumps); disruption (which occurs instantly when injected into fae) activates the suppressed toxin, eating the creature from the inside – and because the fae's magical immune system does not recognize the toxic bacteria as a threat, it makes no attempt to fight them off even after the initial toxemia wears off.

Type: injection/poison; **Save:** Fortitude DC 18
Frequency: 1/round
Requirement: This injection only works against living fae without the Ixindar keyword.
Effect: The target is sickened and staggered; **Cure:** 2 consecutive saves; **Aftereffect:** After 2 consecutive saves, the target takes 2d4 damage.

FEAR

This batch of pyschotropics will make the victim think everyone around him is a demon…unless the victim itself is a demon, in which case, it may see angels.

Type: injection/poison; **Save:** Fortitude DC 20
Frequency: 1/round
Effect: The target is panicked; **Cure:** 2 consecutive saves

NARCOSYNTHESIS

Truth serum, multiplied by fifty.

Type: injection/poison; **Save:** Fortitude DC 20

Frequency: 1/minute

Effect: The target suffers a -10 penalty to Bluff checks; **Cure:** 2 consecutive saves

OPEN MIND

This injection is a concoction of barbiturates, amphetamines, and LSD. When injected, the target becomes extremely susceptible to suggestion.

Type: injection/poison; **Save:** Fortitude DC 20

Frequency: 1/round

Effect: The target suffers the effects of a Charm Person spell; **Cure:** 2 consecutive saves

OVERDOSE

Just about anything can be a poison if you use enough of it. At the very least, this concoction of random chemicals will make the target muddle-headed.

Type: injection/poison; **Save:** Fortitude DC 15

Frequency: 1/round

Effect: The target is confused; **Cure:** 2 consecutive saves

PAIN

This injection does not inflict pain, but rather hypersensitizes their dermal nerve network, making them feel all sensations with uncomfortable intensity.

Type: injection/poison; **Save:** Fortitude DC 20

Frequency: 1/round

Effect: Each time the target takes damage, the target suffers an additional 1d6 damage. This is not affected by a critical hit; **Cure:** 2 consecutive saves

PARALYSIS

This broad-spectrum mélange of neuromuscular-blocking drugs is able to inflict nearly instant paralysis in a target.

Type: injection/poison; **Save:** Fortitude DC 18

Frequency: 1/round

Effect: The target is paralyzed; **Cure:** 2 consecutive saves

SLEEP

This heavy dose of diazepam and various opioids *might* actually kill a horse.

Type: injection/poison; **Save:** Fortitude DC 20

Frequency: 1 minute

Effect: The target is unconscious. If the target takes any damage, it immediately wakes up; **Cure:** 2 consecutive saves

SLOW

This strange medley of drugs causes muscle relaxation by depressing the central nervous system.

Type: injection/poison; **Save:** Fortitude DC 13

Frequency: 1/round

Effect: The target moves at half speed, cannot charge or run and takes a -6 penalty to Dexterity and Strength; **Cure:** 2 consecutive saves

VIRAL

It is common for doctors to inject a near-dead virus to improve a subject's immunity. This is just like that, but the opposite. Because of their natural immunity to all mundane diseases, this injection does not affect fae.

Type: injection/poison; **Save:** Fortitude DC 15

Frequency: 1/minute

Effect: The target is sickened. **Cure:** 2 consecutive saves

GRENADES & EXPLOSIVES

Grenades: These explosives come equipped with either an impact detonator or a 1-round timer detonator (exploding at the beginning or end of your next turn—your choice), chosen when you use the grenade. They can be thrown or fired from a launcher without requiring a Demolitions check (see **Using Grenades**, below). A grenade can still be used with another detonator, but this requires a separate detonator and the use of the Demolitions skill to plant it. Some modified grenades can still be thrown but most cannot.

Explosives: Explosives all require a separate detonator. Some explosives are not designed to be used as an explosive and may be overly sensitive as well as cumbersome. Explosives can be triggered without a Demolitions check, but one is required to plant a detonator.

Physical: Grenades and explosives with the physical damage type knock Medium or smaller targets prone that don't save against the Reflex DC.

Range: All grenades and explosives 2 lbs. Or less can be thrown a can be thrown a maximum of 60 feet. Explosives heavier than 2 lbs. Can be thrown a maximum of 30 feet. You cannot effectively throw any explosives larger than 5 lbs. A GM can alter these values if the thrower has a high Strength.

READING THE TABLE

Exp: All explosives have the Exp property (see Weapons). This entry indicates the area size. All targets within the radius are attacked.

Detonator: This indicates the type of detonator required to trigger the explosive: *Ignition*—requires an ignition source (a flame or another explosive); *Explosive*—requires another explosive (it will not detonate with an ignition); *Detonator*—requires an actual detonator (it will not detonate otherwise). N*ote:* Grenades are equipped automatically with an impact detonator or 1-round timer detonator (choose when employing the grenade).

Symp (Sympathetic): A "yes" indicates it can be detonated if caught in the radius of another explosion (50% chance). A "no" indicates it cannot, but it may still

GRENADES & EXPLOSIVES

WEAPON	DMG	TYPE	EXP	WT.	COST	TL	SYMP	DETONATOR
GRENADES								
Concussion	1d4	Physical	5 ft.	½ lbs.	10	1	No	Detonator
EMP	None	None	15 ft.[1]	½ lbs.	200	3	No	Detonator
Flashbang	Special	Special	10 ft.	½ lbs.	50	1	No	Detonator
Fragmentation	1d8	Physical	10 ft.	½ lbs.	50	1	No	Detonator
	1d10	Physical	10 ft.	½ lbs.	200	2	No	Detonator
	2d6	Physical	10 ft.	½ lbs.	600	3	No	Detonator
High-Yield (HMX)	2d6	Physical	5 ft.	½ lbs.	75	1	No	Detonator
Nerve Toxin	2d8	Poison	5/10/15 ft.	½ lbs.	500	4	No	Detonator
Plasma	2d8	Fire	15 ft.	½ lbs.	2,000	5	No	Detonator
Riot	None	Poison	5/10/15 ft.	½ lbs.	75	1	No	Detonator
Smoke-Signal	None	None	0	½ lbs.	5	0	No	Detonator
Smoke-Screening	None	None	10/15/20 ft.	½ lbs.	10	0	No	Detonator
White Phosphorus	1d8	Fire	5/10/15 ft.	½ lbs.	250	1	No	Detonator
EXPLOSIVES								
Auto Fuel	1d6	Fire	5 ft.[1]	1g. / 8lbs.	5	0	Yes	Ignition
Exposed gunpowder	1d6	Physical	5 ft.	1 lbs.	10	0	Yes	Ignition
Fertilizer / ANFO	1d6	Physical	5 ft.	1 lbs.	10	0	No	Explosive
Jet Fuel	1d8	Fire	5 ft.[1]	1g. / 8lbs.	10	0	Yes	Explosive
Composition L1	1d10	Physical	5 ft.[2]	1 lbs.	50	2	No	Detonator
Composition L2	1d10	Physical	5 ft.[2]	1 lbs.	300	3	No	Detonator
Composition L3	1d10	Physical	5 ft.[2]	1 lbs.	900	4	No	Detonator
Composition L4	1d10	Physical	5 ft.[2]	1 lbs.	4,000	5	No	Detonator
Nitroglycerin	1d12	Physical	5 ft.	1 lbs.	50	0	Yes	Explosive
TNT	1d8	Physical	5 ft.	1 lbs.	20	0	Yes	Explosive

[1]This explosive only has a normal area burst effect and doesn't carry the Exp property (the area of effect cannot be moved or altered).
[2]The area of effect can be modified.

be detonated by another method initiated by another explosion as long as it has an appropriate detonator. A sympathetic explosion is treated as part of the same explosion only if it is located in the same square as the primary – otherwise, make a separate explosives attack.

TL: For all explosives, the tech level is applied to damage but not attack rolls.

COMBAT WITH GRENADES AND EXPLOSIVES

Most explosives listed can be either a grenade or a planted explosive. Grenades can be thrown or loaded into a grenade launcher and they detonate upon impact or on your next turn (beginning or ending), chosen when using the grenade. Planted explosives require a detonator and a Demolitions check.

USING GRENADES

When making a grenade attack (or an attack where you throw an explosive), you pick a square in the launcher's range (6 squares for a thrown grenade). All targets in the blast radius must beat the Reflex DC or take full damage. Targets that make the save take half damage.

Impact Square: Any creature in the same square as the explosion takes +1 die of damage from a grenade attack (a 1d6 concussion grenade will inflict 2d6 to any creature occupying the same square as the grenade when it detonates).

Direct Attack: Grenade launchers, rocket launchers, ground heavy guns, plasma artillery systems, and any other firearm with an "exp" value can target an opponent directly. Make a ranged attack against the target: if successful, the enemy is automatically ground zero of the explosive attack, and has the potential to suffer a critical hit: otherwise, proceed with the explosive attack as normal, with the enemy's square as the intended target.

Scatter (Optional): If the grenade does not explode on impact, roll 1d10: on a roll of 1 or 10, the grenade goes off in the intended square. On any other roll, the explosion occurs in an adjacent square (starting at your upper left on a 2 and proceeding clockwise). If the square rolled contains an obstruction, proceed to the next available one.

Reflex DC: The Reflex DC for half damage is determined by the following formula:

10 + your Dexterity or Strength modifier + ½ your level + the Tech Level of the explosive

Some grenades like EMP and Nerve don't require Reflex saves.

USING DEMOLITIONS

For rules on planting and arming explosives, see **Demolitions**. When detonating an explosive, all targets in the blast radius must beat the Reflex DC or take full damage. Targets that make the save take half damage.

Ground Zero: Any creature in the same square as the explosion takes +1 die of damage per explosive (a 1d6 barrel of auto fuel will inflict 2d6 to any creature occupying the same square as fuel when it detonates: two barrels will inflict 4d6).

Reflex DC: The Reflex DC for half damage is determined by the following formula:

10 + your skill ranks in Demolitions + your Intelligence modifier + the Tech Level of the detonator

Damaging Structures, Inanimate Objects, and Helpless Creatures: Anything in range that does not have a Dexterity score and is not moving takes maximum damage from the blast. Animate targets that are helpless against the blast (for instance, if the explosive is attached to them) cannot make Reflex saves and also take maximum damage.

Proxy Detonation: Explosives always go off when their detonation conditions are met, regardless of whether the attacker is able to act in the encounter. The Reflex DC of the explosive is set by the person making the Demolitions check, not the person who triggers the explosion. If the explosive is thrown, then choose the higher Reflex DC between the creator and the thrower.

After-effects: After an explosive or grenade is detonated, the affected squares provide cover for 1 round.

EXPLOSIVE AND GRENADE TYPES

Composition Explosive: This soft, malleable explosive is also commonly referred to as 'plastic explosive,' and is the standard explosive for breaching demolitions because of its ability to be formed into shaped charges. It can be cut, formed, wrapped, and combined with others of its type. Composition explosive is more expensive than standard explosive but effective in its capacity. It is also extremely stable.

Special: With a successful Demolitions skill check, you can change the blast zone of the explosive from a 5-foot radius to a 10-foot cone. You must determine which area is being affected by the explosive when you set it and once set and your Demolition skill rolled, you cannot alter the explosive pattern without starting over. You cannot increase the area of a cone beyond 30 feet with additional explosives.

Concussion: This light explosive uses air pressure as well as shrapnel to disrupt enemy lines. They are often employed as mines and in air bursts to break up dense collections of personnel.

Special: Targets with 1 hit die or less that fail the Reflex save are killed.

EMP: EMPs don't inflict any damage, but instead discharge an electromagnetic burst that disrupts electronics.

Special: When detonated, all TL1 and greater technology that employs a cell suffers disruption. Vehicles suffer a -5 penalty to all Vehicle Operation checks for five minutes. The vehicle brakes every turn until it saves.

Flashbang: Also simply referred to as a stun grenade, a flash bang reduces the combat effectiveness of opponents by confusing and disorientating them with a sudden blinding magnesium flash and a deafening blast. The grenade body doesn't actually fragment so no shrapnel is dispersed.

Special: Targets hit are blinded, deafened, and staggered until the end of your next turn. They remain staggered for 1d4 turns after.

Save: The save to ignore the effects of this explosive is Fortitude instead of Reflex.

Fragmentation: Frags are designed purely as an antipersonnel explosive by discharging dozens of plastic or steel flechettes blowing out along with fragments of the explosive's own shell. This deadly shrapnel shreds anything it touches.

Fuel, Auto/Jet: Despite what movies will have you believe, it's not easy to set jet fuel ablaze. Standard automotive fuel doesn't burn in liquid form, but fumes do, and the heat of a flame is more than enough to start the surface of a liquid slick evaporating.

Special: The blast radius is also on fire for 3d6 minutes. Any target moving into an affected square on its turn or any target beginning its turn in an affected square suffer the basic damage of the fuel (1d6 or 1d8).

Nerve Toxin: A deadly and illegal weapon, this grenade expels a potent gaseous mixture blending a batrachotoxin and taipoxin and several other agents produces a deadly gas that causes complete paralysis of all muscles by stopping the release of acetylcholine. By blocking nerve pulses to the muscles, the subject dies from asphyxiation or heart failure.

Property: Nerve toxin grenades are a gas effect that only affects living creatures. After detonation, the area continues to affect any creatures entering it for 1d4 minutes. After detonation, the nerve toxin grenade fills a 5-foot radius, area expanding an additional 5 feet each turn until reaching 15 feet.

NERVE TOXIN

Type: poison; **Save:** Fortitude DC 20

Frequency: 1/round

Effect: 1 Con damage, 2d6 damage, and the target is sickened; **Cure:** 2 consecutive saves; **Special:** If the target fails two consecutive times, the sickened condition is upgraded to nauseated. A target attempting to roll to save while inside the affected area suffers -4 to his roll.

Nitroglycerine: One of the oldest explosives, nitro is no longer actively used due to its instability.

Special: Nitroglycerine will always detonate if caught in the blast radius of another explosive, if dropped from a height of more than 5 feet, or if ignited.

Riot Grenade: Riot grenades are used usually to disperse crowds and disorientate attackers. The grenade doesn't explode but rather opens valves, releasing compressed tear gas. In addition to creating an obscuring field of smoke, the gas causes skin and eye irritation on contact, throat and nose irritation if inhaled.

Special: Riot grenades are a gas effect that only affects living creatures. After detonation, the area continues to affect any creatures entering it for 1d4 minutes. After detonation, the riot grenade fills a 5-foot radius, area expanding an additional 5 feet each turn until reaching 15 feet.

RIOT GRENADE

Type: poison; **Save:** Fortitude DC 15

Frequency: 1/round

Effect: The target is sickened and staggered; **Cure:** 1 save; **Special:** If the target fails two consecutive times, the sickened condition is upgraded to nauseated. If the target fails three consecutive times, it is also blinded. A target attempting to roll to save while inside the affected area suffers -4 to his roll.

Smoke Grenade: There are three types of smoke grenades: screening grenades, signal grenades, and white phosphorous grenades. Most smoke grenades are employed as signaling devices, though they can also be used to screen unit movements, conceal advancement and hinder enemy fire. Signal smoke grenades cannot be used for screening, though screening grenades can be used as a signal grenade. Screening grenades either expel a hexachloroethane/zinc (HC) mixture that is also an irritant or a terephthalic acid mixture (TA), which is harmless. Signal grenades use potassium chlorate, lactose, and a colored dye to work. Signal grenades are available in several colors, including white, red, yellow, green, and purple. The white phosphorus grenade is a smoke grenade with an explosive burst. Rather than burning to make smoke, the phosphorus ignites in the air after spreading. The brilliant yellow flame produces phosphorus pentoxide, the smoke, as a by-product. The intense heat allows the grenade to double as an antipersonnel weapon. The heat is devastating in close quarters.

Screening Special Rule: After detonation, the smoke grenade fills a 10-foot radius, area expanding an additional 5 feet each turn until reaching 20 feet. The smoke obscures all sight, including dark/night vision. Everyone inside or on opposite sides of the smoke from an attack are granted total concealment. Smoke grenades last for 1d4 minutes. Wind can disperse the smoke as well.

White Phosphorus Special Rules: This grenade has the same effect as the screening grenade except it also delivers damage to targets inside. Targets entering or passing throw the affected area automatically suffer damage without a Reflex save (Reflex saves are only for the initial impact). White Phosphorus damage cannot not be increased by direct fire, ground zero, impact square, or a critical hit.

TNT (Trinitrotoluene): TNT is the standard explosive to which all others are compared. Although not employed in modern industry or military applications, it is still common in black market circles and in civilian use (e.g.: mining). Unlike moldable explosive, TNT can accidentally detonate if caught in the blast of another explosion.

ARMOR

READING THE ARMOR TABLE

Tech Level (TL): The tech level of the item is applied as an enhancement bonus to AC. Only armor with power can be disrupted. Some armor is available at higher tech levels.

Hit Points: Exo-armors are machines with their own hit point value. These are the hit points of the suit.

Threshold: The maximum number of hit points you can transfer from an attack to a powered armor's hit points. Remaining damage is shunted to the character.

Cell: The power usage of the armor. Some armor operates without power but only grants its standard armor bonus when doing so. Exo-armor cannot operate without a power cell. All armor that utilizes a cell uses one charge every hour.

EXO-ARMOR RULES

Powered armor, or exo-armor, is a powered mechanized unit controlled by a pilot inside. While several are not much bigger than their controllers, others weigh several tons and can tower over fifteen feet. Even though these are machines rather than creatures, Large suits can still squeeze like any other creature.

Hit Points & Threshold: Despite having hit points, exo-armor also possesses a threshold, which is the maximum value of damage you can remove with each hit from the suit's hit points. If exo-armor is reduced to 0 hit points, it can no longer absorb damage, but is still functional.

Power: All exo-armor uses power cells, requiring one charge per hour of use. Unlike weapons, changing a battery cell on an armor requires a full round action.

Weight: Exo-armor can support its own weight, and does not encumber the user. Its movement value is also fixed, despite any other gear the user may be carrying.

ARMOR DESCRIPTIONS

Advanced Wasteland Armor: An evolved form of the full combat warrior, the wasteland suit was designed to combat more severe threats to techa, based off of old designs used in space travel. Cooling systems maintain

LIGHT ARMOR

ARMOR	COST (UC)	ARM. BON.	MAX DEX BON.	ARM. CHK. PEN.	ARC. CHK. PEN.	SPD 30 ft.	SPD 20 ft.	WT.	HP	THRES.	CELL	TL
BASIC ARMOR												
Limshau Kawabari	50gp	+2	+7	0	10%	30ft.	20ft.	15 lbs.	—	—	—	—
Synthetic Weave	25	+2	+6	0	5%	30ft.	20ft.	7 lbs.	—	—	—	0
Ballistics Armor	40	+3	+5	-1	15%	30ft.	20ft.	20 lbs.	—	—	—	0
ADVANCED ARMOR												
Synthetic Weave	1,000	+2	+7	0	4%	30ft.	20ft.	6 lbs.	—	—	—	1
	4,000	+2	+7	0	3%	30ft.	20ft.	5 lbs.	—	—	—	2
	9,000	+2	+8	0	2%	30ft.	20ft	4 lbs.	—	—	—	3
	16,000	+2	+8	0	1%	30ft.	20ft.	3 lbs.	—	—	—	4
	25,000	+2	+9	0	0%	30ft.	20ft.	3 lbs.	—	—	—	5
Ballistics Armor	1,000	+3	+5	-1	14%	30ft.	20ft.	20 lbs.	—	—	—	1
	4,000	+3	+6	-1	15%	30ft.	20ft.	20 lbs.	—	—	—	2
	9,000	+3	+6	-1	15%	30ft.	20ft.	20 lbs.	—	—	—	3
	16,000	+3	+6	0	15%	30ft.	20ft.	20 lbs.	—	—	—	4
	25,000	+3	+6	0	15%	30ft.	20ft.	20 lbs.	—	—	—	5
Spider-Silk Suit	25,000	+3	+6	0	20%	30ft.	20ft.	20 lbs.	—	—	—	4
	38,000	+3	+6	0	20%	30ft.	20ft.	20 lbs.	—	—	—	5
EXO-ARMOR												
Skinplate	78,000	+3	+8	-1	15%	30ft.	30ft.	265 lbs.	25	2	10/H	4
	90,000	+3	+8	-1	15%	30ft.	30ft.	265 lbs.	25	2	15/H	5
Covenant	95,000	+3	+8	0	20%	35ft.	35ft.	450 lbs.	30	3	15/H	5

internal temperature in the harshest environments. A sealed helmet processes external gases.

Defense Bonus: You gain the tech level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Fortitude saves.

Mask: You are immune to inhaled poisons.

Resistances: You gain resist cold 5 and fire 5.

Targeting: You gain a +1 inherent bonus to damage rolls with ranged weapons when firing past the first range increment.

Special: Only the targeting system works off the battery and is the only system rendered ineffective if the suit is neutralized by disruption.

Amarok: Angel developed its first powered armor after recovering a disabled Mann design some years ago. By a miracle of engineering skill, the Angel scientists successfully circumvented Mann's failsafes: before the armor destroyed itself, a basic understanding of compact robotic design had been gleaned. The amarok is the direct descendant of that knowledge. Angel being far less insular than any other bastion other than York, the amarok has since become the most common exo design seen outside bastion walls.

Large Size: You are considered a Large creature while wearing the armor. This does not affect your reach or damage dice.

Weapon Limbs: You have neither limbs nor manipulators to hold onto external weapons. You have no threatening reach and cannot make opportunity attacks. You are equipped with three heavy weapon mounts. Because the amarok is Large, you can install super heavy weapons as heavy weapons. Likewise you can install heavy weapons or two-handed small arms in these mounts as two-handed small arms and one-handed small arms, respectively. You suffer a -3 penalty to attack rolls against Medium or smaller adjacent targets.

Auto-Reload: You have a mechanism to reload your weapons (since you have no arms). You can reload three clips/cells before needing external loading (you either have to exit the suit to reload or have an ally do it for you). Reloading takes a swift action using this system. External reloading takes a full-round action.

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if your armor is disrupted, it comes back online.

Maneuverability: You gain your Tech Level as an enhancement bonus to Reflex saves and Fortitude saves.

Nightvision: You gain darkvision.

Mask: You are immune to inhaled poisons.

Mecha: You ignore penalties for difficult terrain.

Resistances: You gain resist cold 5 and fire 5.

Special: The amarok requires a power cell to operate and none of its functions work without it. If it disrupts, you are pinned.

Apostle Motor Slave: The main front line defender of Mann, this intimidating armor requires its user to slip into a form-fitting suit that mounts tightly in the control area. The pilot's head fits only partially into the machine's helmet with most of the user sitting in the trunk of the armor. The pilot's arms extend to the elbows and the legs only to the knees. The apostle is banned technology outside of Mann: the secretive bastion has threatened dire retribution on any foreign government caught using them and considers their use outside of Mann's walls blasphemy, claiming the knowledge was bestowed upon them from God.

MEDIUM ARMOR

ARMOR	COST (UC)	ARM. BON.	MAX DEX BON.	ARM. CHK. PEN.	ARC. CHK. PEN.	SPD 30 ft.	SPD 20 ft.	WT.	HP	THRES.	CELL	TL
BASIC ARMOR												
Force Body Vest	50	+4	+4	-3	20%	30ft.	20ft.	20 lbs.	—	—	—	0
Aramid Combat Suit	150	+5	+3	-4	25%	30ft.	20ft.	25 lbs.	—	—	—	0
ADVANCED ARMOR												
Force Body Vest	1,000	+4	+4	-3	20%	30ft.	20ft.	20 lbs.	—	—	—	1
	4,000	+4	+4	-3	15%	30ft.	20ft.	20 lbs.	—	—	—	2
	9,000	+4	+4	-3	15%	30ft.	20ft.	15 lbs.	—	—	—	3
	16,000	+4	+4	-3	10%	30ft.	20ft.	15 lbs.	—	—	—	4
	25,000	+4	+4	-3	10%	30ft.	20ft.	15 lbs.	—	—	—	5
Aramid Combat Suit	8,000	+5	+3	-4	25%	30ft.	20ft.	25 lbs.	—	—	—	1
	13,000	+5	+3	-4	25%	30ft.	20ft.	25 lbs.	—	—	—	2
	20,000	+5	+3	-4	25%	30ft.	20ft.	25 lbs.	—	—	—	3
	29,000	+5	+3	-4	25%	30ft.	20ft.	25 lbs.	—	—	—	4
	41,000	+5	+3	-4	25%	30ft.	20ft.	25 lbs.	—	—	—	5
Aramid Survival Suit	17,000	+6	+3	-4	25%	20ft.	15ft.	25 lbs.	—	—	—	2
	25,000	+6	+3	-4	25%	20ft.	15ft.	25 lbs.	—	—	—	3
	34,000	+6	+3	-4	25%	20ft.	15ft.	22 lbs.	—	—	—	4
	44,000	+6	+3	-4	25%	20ft.	20ft.	22 lbs.	—	—	—	5
Blinder-Mail	31,000	+4	+4	-3	25%	30ft.	20ft.	25 lbs.	—	—	30/H	4
	43,000	+4	+5	-3	25%	30ft.	30ft.	22 lbs.	—	—	40/H	5
Nanotech Armor	53,000	+4	+5	-3	40%	30ft.	30ft.	25 lbs.	—	—	5/H	4
	72,000	+4	+5	-3	45%	30ft.	30ft.	25 lbs.	—	—	8/H	5
EXO-ARMOR												
Gladiator	48,000	+6	+3	-3	40%	30ft.	30ft.	650 lbs.	30	5	15/H	3
	76,000	+6	+3	-3	40%	30ft.	30ft.	650 lbs.	35	5	20/H	4
Vulture System	52,000	+5	+3	-4	45%	30ft.	30ft.	350 lbs.	20	5	20/H	4
	65,000	+5	+3	-4	45%	30ft.	30ft.	350 lbs.	25	5	25/H	5
Combat Exoskeleton	96,500	+6	+3	-5	50%	30ft.	30ft.	1,950 lbs.	35	5	10/H	4
	133,500	+6	+3	-4	50%	30ft.	30ft.	1,950 lbs.	45	5	12/H	5

Although this prevents their deployment in other bastions, mercenary units have no such loyalties to the fanatical city. The security systems of earlier models are also less advanced than later Mann developments, as nearly all powered armor technology in Canam is reverse-engineered from this design.

Large Size: You are considered a Large creature while wearing the armor. You gain reach.

Amplified Strength: You gain the tech level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Strength-based ability and skill checks.

Defense Bonus: You gain the tech level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Reflex saves and Fortitude saves.

Gauntlets: Unarmed attacks with the armor do 1d6 damage. If you already inflict 1d6 or more damage with unarmed attacks, increase the damage dice by one step (1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12 > 2d6 > 2d8 > 2d10). Add the tech level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to attack and damage rolls.

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if your armor is disrupted, it comes back online.

Mask: You are immune to inhaled poisons.

Resistances: You gain resist fire 10, acid 10, and cold 10.

Regeneration: The apostle recovers 1 hit point per round while the machine is active.

Sensor Net: You gain a +2 enhancement bonus to Perception checks.

Weapon Mount: The apostle has a shoulder or arm mounted assembly, which frees up a hand. This mount acts as a hand or a brace for holding or mounting weapons.

Special: The apostle requires a power cell to operate and none of its functions work without it. If it disrupts, you are pinned.

Aramid Combat Suit: Over the regular survival suit, the combat suit employs and blends harder materials, rigid plates and flexible aramids. Additional layers of nylon separate staggered sheets of thin polymer plastic.

Defense Bonus: You gain the tech level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Fortitude saves.

Resistance: You gain resist fire 5.

Aramid Survival Suit: This suit initially appeared in York. It employs a combination of flexible aramid fabrics and rigid ceramic and metal plates. The suit

covers the wearer completely, sealing her from the outside environment.

Defense Bonus: You gain the tech level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Fortitude saves.

Resistances: You gain resist fire 5 and cold 5.

Ballistics Armor: This is a light, but still somewhat clumsy, collection of ceramic and polymer plates placed strategically to withstand impacts without hampering maneuverability significantly.

Blinder-Mail: This resembles a lightened version of the heavier titanium carbide armor. What it offers in addition is a holographic camouflage net that can alter the physical properties of the suit to resemble nearly any terrain it is using.

Defense Bonus: You gain the tech level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Fortitude saves.

Stealth: You gain a +5 enhancement bonus to Stealth. Additionally, if you don't move on your turn, you gain total concealment until the beginning of your next turn. This feature uses one battery charge per round.

Carbide Armor: Super-strong plates of tungsten carbide are strapped inside a flexible nylon suit to offer remarkable stopping power. However, these plates are heavy and significantly reduce the user's flexibility.

Combat Exoskeleton: The combat exoskeleton initially appeared in Selkirk, reverse engineered from stolen Mann technology. The suit resembles an oversized piece of medieval plate, reinforced by limbs of titanium and amplified by synthetic muscle fibers running through the entire assembly. Though not very pretty, the Com-Exo has proved its usefulness in combat.

Large Size: You are considered a Large creature while wearing the armor. You gain reach.

Defense Bonus: You gain the tech level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Fortitude saves and a +2 enhancement bonus to Reflex saves.

Amplified Strength: You gain the tech level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Strength-based ability and skill checks.

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if your armor is disrupted, it comes back online.

Gauntlets: Unarmed attacks with the armor do base 1d6 damage. If you already inflict 1d6 or more damage with unarmed attacks, increase the damage dice by one step (1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12 > 2d6 > 2d8 > 2d10). Add the tech level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to unarmed attack and damage rolls.

Resistances: You gain resist cold 5 and fire 5.

Special: The combat exoskeleton requires a power cell to operate and none of its functions work without it. If it disrupts, you are pinned.

Covenant: The most advanced armor currently available in open echa, the covenant tracks its origins to a secret caste of the same name within Mann society. This organization is charged with recovering and/or eliminating dissident factions from their own civilization. They are one of the few permitted to leave Mann

COMBAT EXOSKELETON

HEAVY ARMOR

ARMOR	COST (UC)	ARM. BON.	MAX DEX BON.	ARM. CHK. PEN.	ARC. CHK. PEN.	SPD 30 ft.	SPD 20 ft.	WT.	HP	THRES.	CELL	TL
BASIC ARMOR												
Flak Longcoat	200	+7	+1	-6	35%	20ft.	15ft.	35 lbs.	—	—	—	0
Carbide Armor	1,000	+8	+1	-5	35%	20ft.	15ft.	35 lbs.	—	—	—	0
Yowie Suit	750	+7	+0	-7	40%	20ft.	15ft.	35 lbs.				0
ADVANCED ARMOR									—	—	—	
Flak Longcoat	1,000	+7	+1	-6	35%	20ft.	15ft.	35 lbs.	—	—	—	1
	4,000	+7	+1	-6	35%	20ft.	15ft.	32 lbs.	—	—	—	2
	9,000	+7	+1	-6	35%	20ft.	15ft.	30 lbs.	—	—	—	3
	16,000	+7	+1	-5	35%	20ft.	15ft.	29 lbs.	—	—	—	4
	25,000	+7	+1	-5	35%	20ft.	15ft.	27 lbs.	—	—	—	5
Carbide Armor	2,000	+8	+1	-5	35%	20ft.	15ft.	35 lbs.	—	—	—	1
	5,000	+8	+1	-5	35%	20ft.	15ft.	34 lbs.	—	—	—	2
	10,000	+8	+1	-5	35%	20ft.	15ft.	33 lbs.	—	—	—	3
	17,000	+8	+1	-5	35%	20ft.	15ft.	32 lbs.	—	—	—	4
	26,000	+8	+1	-5	35%	20ft.	15ft.	31 lbs.	—	—	—	5
Yowie Suit	2,750	+7	+0	-7	40%	20ft.	15ft.	35 lbs.	—	—	—	1
	6,750	+7	+0	-7	40%	20ft.	15ft.	33 lbs.	—	—	—	2
	12,750	+7	+0	-6	40%	20ft.	15ft.	32 lbs.	—	—	—	3
	21,750	+7	+1	-6	40%	20ft.	15ft.	31 lbs.	—	—	20/H	4
	32,750	+7	+1	-6	40%	20ft.	15ft.	30 lbs.	—	—	30/H	5
Tactical Body Armor	9,750	+7	+1	-6	40%	20ft.	15ft.	30 lbs.			—	1
	14,750	+7	+1	-6	40%	20ft.	15ft.	30 lbs.	—	—	—	2
	22,750	+7	+1	-6	40%	20ft.	15ft.	29 lbs.	—	—	—	3
	31,750	+7	+2	-5	40%	20ft.	15ft.	29 lbs.	—	—	—	4
	41,750	+7	+2	-5	40%	20ft.	15ft.	28 lbs.	—	—	—	5
Advanced Wasteland	24,600	+8	+0	-6	45%	20ft.	15ft.	40 lbs.	—	—	—	2
	31,600	+8	+0	-6	45%	20ft.	15ft.	39 lbs.	—	—	—	3
	43,600	+8	+1	-6	45%	20ft.	15ft.	38 lbs.	—	—	—	4
	54,600	+8	+1	-6	45%	20ft.	15ft.	37 lbs.	—	—	—	5
Tech-Mail	19,750	+8	+1	-5	35%	20ft.	15ft.	35 lbs.	—	—	—	3
	29,750	+8	+1	-5	35%	20ft.	15ft.	35 lbs.	—	—	—	4
	40,750	+8	+1	-5	35%	20ft.	15ft.	35 lbs.	—	—	—	5
Full Combat Warrior	19,000	+9	+1	-6	45%	20ft.	15ft.	40 lbs.	—	—	—	2
	26,000	+9	+1	-6	45%	20ft.	15ft.	40 lbs.	—	—	—	3
	35,000	+9	+1	-6	45%	20ft.	15ft.	40 lbs.	—	—	—	4
	46,000	+9	+1	-6	45%	20ft.	15ft.	40 lbs.	—	—	—	5
EXO-ARMOR												
Amarok	50,000	+9	+0	-10	70%	30ft.	30ft.	10,000 lbs.	50	50	10/H	3
	62,500	+9	+0	-7	70%	30ft.	30ft.	10,000 lbs.	60	60	12/H	4
Mobile Motor Armor	99,500	+9	+1	-6	50%	30ft.	30ft.	3,950 lbs.	35	5	10/H	4
	125,500	+9	+1	-5	50%	30ft.	30ft.	3,950 lbs.	45	5	12/H	5
Rack Power Suit	79,000	+9	+2	-5	50%	30ft.	30ft.	4,050 lbs.	40	5	10/H	4
	110,500	+9	+3	-4	50%	30ft.	30ft.	4,050 lbs.	45	5	12/H	5
Tanker	78,000	+9	+1	-5	60%	30ft.	30ft.	8,000 lbs.	40	40	10/H	4
	110,000	+9	+1	-5	60%	30ft.	30ft.	8,000 lbs.	50	50	12/H	5
Apostle Motor Slave	141,500	+10	+0	-6	65%	30ft.	30ft.	4,850 lbs.	60	20	15/H	5
Testament	175,000	+10	+0	-6	70%	30ft.	30ft.	18,000 lbs.	60	60	10/H	5

with the sole objective to eradicating any possibility of their technology falling in enemy hands. Unfortunately, despite numerous failsafes in Mann hardware, a few of these armors have found themselves in the hands of those very same adversaries.

Defense Bonus: You gain the tech level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Reflex saves and Fortitude saves.

Maneuverability: You gain a +5 enhancement bonus to all Acrobatics checks.

Gravity Anchors: You gain a +5 enhancement bonus to Climb checks.

Gravity Drive: You suffer no damage from a fall.

Jump Jets: Use a move action and spend a battery charge. You can jump 20 ft. Horizontally or vertically without needing to make an Acrobatics check.

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if your armor is disrupted, it comes back online.

Shadow Field: Use a move action and spend a battery charge. You gain total concealment until the end of your next turn.

Mask: You are immune to inhaled poisons.

Resistances: You gain resist fire 5, electricity 5, and acid 5.

Special: The Covenant requires a power cell to operate and none of its functions work without it. If it disrupts, you are pinned.

Flak Longcoat: This clumsy but stylish piece of subtle outerwear contains a thick inner layer of flexible aramid patches able to resist cutting and piercing. It comes available in brown or black. It leaves the head vulnerable, even with the collar up. Most importantly, it flaps dramatically in the wind.

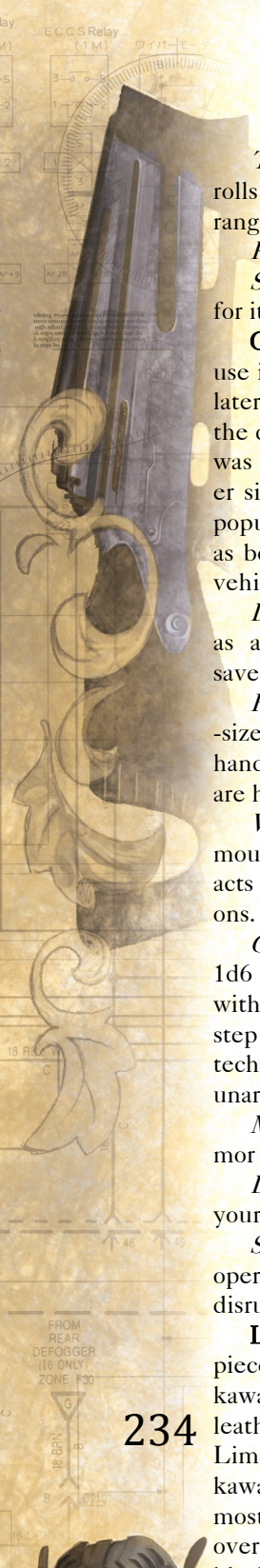
Force Body Vest: An upgrade from basic ballistics armor, this variation is lighter, equally as resilient, and is offered in a modular configuration, making it far easier to provide a proper fit.

Full Combat Warrior: The full combat suit is a mixture of aramid padding and titanium plates in water-resistant layers of nylon and metallic fibers covered by patterned camouflage. It offers an insulated backpack-mounted computer system that controls various systems on the suit.

Defense Bonus: You gain the tech level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Fortitude saves.

Nightvision: You gain darkvision.

Stealth: You gain a +2 enhancement bonus to Stealth checks.



Targeting: You gain a +1 inherent bonus to damage rolls with ranged weapons when firing past the first range increment.

Resistance: You gain resist fire 5.

Special: The full combat warrior only requires a cell for its nightvision and targeting system.

Gladiator: Originally built as a heavy lift assistant for use in the Selkirk mines, the gladiator found popularity later as a muscle augmenter for weapon applications by the defense division. Eventually a new suit, the tanker, was purpose-built for the role, but the gladiator's smaller size kept it in regular use, and it remains the more popular model. Depending on its loadout, it can serve as both a ranged weapons platform and a close-combat vehicle.

Defense Bonus: You gain the tech level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Reflex and Fortitude saves.

Firearm Stabilization: Even though you are Medium -sized, you can wield heavy weapons as if they are two-handed small arms and super heavy weapons as if they are heavy weapons.

Weapon Mount: The gladiator has a shoulder or arm mounted assembly, which frees up a hand. This mount acts as a hand or a brace for holding or mounting weapons.

Gauntlets: Unarmed attacks with the armor do base 1d6 damage. If you already inflict 1d6 or more damage with unarmed attacks, increase the damage dice by one step (1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12 > 2d6 > 2d8 > 2d10). Add the tech level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to unarmed attack and damage rolls.

Maneuverability: You gain the tech level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to all Acrobatics checks.

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if your armor is disrupted, it comes back online.

Special: The gladiator requires a power cell to operate and none of its functions work without it. If it disrupts, you are pinned.

Limshau Kawabari: Overlapping layers of leather pieces sewn together to form fit the wearer, Limshau kawabari looks as unique as it feels. A master leatherworker must individually fit each suit of Limshau leather to its owner, making Limshau kawabari distinctive against other leather armors. The most obvious telltale signs are numerous belt latches over the whole body. It is only available in white or black.

Mobile Motor Armor: In the wasteland of open echa, not all treasures are enchanted. In the mad dash to traverse this dangerous environment, occasional travelers fail, leaving their bodies clutching on to the lingering threads of their failed technology, to be found by others. There are rumors of some mercenary companies that refuse allegiance to any bastion and flaunt technology that rivals anything behind the walls by reverse engineering found relics, lost between bastion states, fallen from orbit, or survived from the previous age. Other than the named exo-armor flaunted by bastions, mercenary companies have produced prototypes of their own design, even selling them to other mercenary companies (though reserving the more advanced models for themselves). These unique designs are simply called mobile motor armors. No two look alike, but they all share similar properties.

Large or Agile: The armor can either be Medium and agile or Large and intimidating. If Medium, the armor gains a +5 enhancement bonus to all Acrobatics checks and a +2 enhancement bonus to Climb checks. It also gains its full tech level to Reflex saves instead of half. If Large, the armor has reach. Both armors can wield two-handed weapons as one-handed weapons.

Defense Bonus: You gain the tech level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Fortitude saves and half the tech level (rounded up) as an enhancement bonus to Reflex saves.

Gauntlets: Unarmed attacks with the armor do base 1d6 damage. If you already inflict 1d6 or more damage with unarmed attacks, increase the damage dice by one step (1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12 > 2d6 > 2d8 > 2d10). Add the tech level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to unarmed attack and damage rolls.

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if your armor is disrupted, it comes back online.

Resistances: You gain resist cold 10 and fire 10.

Special: The motor mobile armor requires a power cell to operate and none of its functions work without it. If it disrupts, you are pinned.

Nanotech Combat Armor: This advanced suit emerged with refugees from Mann, but even they admit to not developing it. They claim it was taken from a Porto craft, confiscated while on a diplomatic mission to Mann. It is an extremely rare item and according to rumor, less than a dozen can be found in Canam. The suit uses molecule-sized machines to alter the composition of the suit at the instant of impact. Usually, the combat suit remains elastic and comfortable. Anytime any impact occurs the micromachines react with a response time of less than 0.035 seconds. The impact point becomes immediately inflexible and solid, deflecting the attack.

Defense Bonus: You gain the tech level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Fortitude saves.

Nano-Reaction: As many times a day as the armor's tech level, you can nullify a critical hit against you as an immediate action.

Special: If this armor suffers disruption, it becomes ordinary clothing and provides no protective benefits at all.

'Rack' Power Suit: Following the trend of virtually all other exo armors, the Rack resulted from Sierra Madre reverse engineering an apostle motor slave with the intent of creating an anti-echan armor specialized in close combat. Adding their own sense of flamboyance, the end result is smaller and more agile, though still not to the extent of the Skinplate design. The suit is large but thinner in areas to reduce weight. The catchy nickname comes from the positioning of the pilot within the frame, which to an outside observer looks profoundly

uncomfortable (though it feels just as well-fitted as the Skinplate).

Large Size: You are considered a Large creature while wearing the armor. You gain reach.

Defense Bonus: You gain the tech level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Fortitude saves and half the tech level (rounded up) as an enhancement bonus to Reflex saves.

Amplified Strength: You gain the tech level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Strength-based ability and skill checks.

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if your armor is disrupted, it comes back online.

Boosters: You gain a +5 enhancement bonus to Acrobatics checks when performing a jump.

Gauntlets: Unarmed attacks with the armor do base 1d8 damage. If you already inflict 1d8 or more damage with unarmed attacks, increase the damage dice by one step (1d10 > 1d12 > 2d6 > 2d8 > 2d10). Add the tech level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to unarmed attack and damage rolls.

Mask: You are immune to inhaled poisons.

Resistances: You gain resist fire 5, acid 5, and cold 5.

Special: The Rack requires a power cell to operate and none of its functions work without it. If it disrupts, you are pinned.

Skinplate: This is a small powered armor, every suit of which is adjusted specifically to the user and conforms tightly to the contours of the body. It employs a combination of lightweight polymers and aramids reinforced with carbon fullerene rings. Solid limbs are made from silicon carbide ceramic which slide perfectly to allow movement via a magnetorheological fluid. The suit covers the entire body, with an attached helmet that seals it completely.

Defense Bonus: You gain the tech level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Reflex saves and Fortitude saves.

Maneuverability: You gain a +5 ft. Bonus to speed (already incorporated in the table).

Boosters: You gain a +5 enhancement bonus to Acrobatics checks to jump.

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if your armor is disrupted, it comes back online.

Mask: You are immune to inhaled poisons.

Resistances: You gain resist fire 5, electricity 5, and acid 5.

Special: Skinplate requires a power cell to operate and none of its functions work without it. If it disrupts, you are pinned.

Spider Silk Suit: Selkirk sold this technology to Angel, which was later stolen by Mann (thus being

about the only time in history when any other bastion had something Mann wanted). Computer-controlled looms weave super thin synthetic silk into an extremely flexible nylon. When struck with any attack, the spider silk resists as hard as steel but will still flex more than soft rubber. It employs several thicker pads of carbon fiber in key areas. The spider suit allows for extreme maneuverability.

Defense Bonus: You gain the tech level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Fortitude saves.

Agility: You gain a +2 enhancement bonus to all Acrobatics checks.

Resistance: You gain resist electricity 5.

Synthetic Weave: The predecessor to advanced aromatic polyamides, this full body set includes thicker pads for impact damage reduction from slashing. It is, however, vulnerable to piercing attacks. Nevertheless, they are a popular basic outfit and the comfortable choice for many in the field.

Tactical Body Armor: This is a slightly detuned version of the full combat warrior armor. It offers similar protection in a lighter package. It sacrifices several of its carbide plates to make the suit less expensive for those on a budget, and does not have a computer system built in.

Defense Bonus: You gain the tech level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Fortitude saves.

Resistance: You gain resist fire 5.

Tanker: The successor of the smaller gladiator, the impressive tanker has unfortunately not found as much recognition. The military division has critiqued the size of the machine and the logistics division has criticized its cost in comparison to its lighter and cheaper cousin. Despite this, the tanker is still the preferred model for Selkirk military in long duration trade missions with the narros and as an intimidating adjunct to diplomatic Orobas and Train Guard escorts, though it is seldom seen outside of these roles. In truth, its reputation as a weaker system is undeserving, as the tanker is considered one of the most powerful weapon platforms on the continent.

Defense Bonus: You gain the tech level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Reflex and Fortitude defense.

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if your armor is disrupted, it comes back online.

Firearm Stabilization: You can wield heavy weapons as if they are one-handed small arms and super heavy weapons as if they are two-handed small arms.

Weapon Mount: The tanker has a shoulder or arm mounted assembly, which frees up a hand. This mount acts as a hand or a brace for holding or mounting weapons.

Gauntlets: Unarmed attacks with the armor do base 1d8 damage. If you already inflict 1d8 or more damage with unarmed attacks, increase the damage dice by one step (1d10 > 1d12 > 2d6 > 2d8 > 2d10). Add the tech level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to unarmed attack and damage rolls.

Tech-Mail: The most advanced non-powered armor available from the bastions appeared from various sources nearly at the same time. Based on medieval scale mail, tech-mail utilizes overlapping discs no bigger than gold coins interlaced together to form a durable but flexible covering. The discs, comprised of silicon, ceramic, and titanium, spread out impacts across the entire body, allowing for greater protection. The exacting pattern of the scales is proportioned perfectly to maximize protection where needed most. Of course, to most of its users, the fact that it has no complex components to disrupt is what makes it of superior value.

Defense Bonus: You gain the tech level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Fortitude saves.

Critical Defense: Your AC increases by 4 when an opponent attempts to confirm a critical threat against you.

Testament: The most dominant and imposing suit in the known world, the testament appeared only recently as Mann started to take a more vested interest in external affairs. Often flanked by a lance of Mann military hardware, the testament isn't subtle: it is designed to take on the largest of targets or engage entire enemy squads by itself. There has not been a report of a testament being operated by anyone not in service of the fanatical bastion. If this were to occur, Mann would stop at nothing to ensure its retrieval or elimination.

Large Size: You are considered a Large creature while wearing the armor. You gain reach.

Defense Bonus: You gain the tech level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Reflex saves and Fortitude saves.

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if your armor is disrupted, it comes back online.

Amplified Strength: You gain the tech level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Strength-based ability and skill checks.

Gauntlets: Unarmed attacks with the armor do base 1d8 damage. If you already inflict 1d8 or more damage with unarmed attacks, increase the damage dice by one step (1d10 > 1d12 > 2d6 > 2d8 > 2d10). Add the tech level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to unarmed attack and damage rolls.

Nightvision: You gain darkvision.

Sensor Net: +4 enhancement bonus to Perception checks.

Phase: As a move action, spend a charge and teleport up to 25 feet.

Gravity Drive: You suffer no damage from a fall.

Regeneration: The testament recovers 1 hit point per round while the machine is active.

Repair Drone: You can spend a charge as a move action to recover 5 of the testament's hit points.

Mask: You are immune to inhaled poisons.

Resistances: You gain resist fire 10, acid 10, and cold 10.

Special: The testament requires a power cell to operate and none of its functions work without it. If it disrupts, you are pinned.

Vulture-System: This basic powered suit enables flight via a set of turbines, control surfaces, and vectored thrusters, but offers only rudimentary protection for its pilot. It also suffers from a limited range for each flight.

Defense Bonus: You gain the tech level of the armor as an enhancement bonus to Reflex saves and Fortitude saves.

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if your armor is disrupted, it comes back online.

Boosters: You gain a +5 enhancement bonus to Acrobatics checks to jump. You never take damage from a fall if you are conscious. You always land on your feet.

Jump Jets: You can fly (as per the *fly* spell) a number of minutes per day equal to the suit's tech level.

Special: Entering and powering the suit is the same as full plate armor. If this armor disrupts, it does not go immobile. Only its abilities are nullified.

SHIELDS

ARMOR	COST (UC)	ARM. BON.	MAX DEX BON.	ARM. CHK. PEN.	ARC. CHK. PEN.	SPD 30 ft.	SPD 20 ft.	WT.	HP	THRES.	CELL	TL
Janoahn Master Shield	40gp	+2	—	—	15%	—	—	10 lbs.	—	—	—	—
Limshau Buckler	50gp	+1	—	—	—	—	—	3 lbs.	—	—	—	—
Forced Defense Shield	75	+3	—	-1	20%	—	—	10 lbs.	—	—	—	0
Deployable Shield	11,000	*	*	*	15%	—	—	10 lbs.	—	—	H	3
	18,000	*	*	*	15%	—	—	10 lbs.	—	—	H	4
Active Dissuasion System	27,550	+2	—	—	—	—	—	5 lbs.	—	—	H/H15	4
	38,550	+2	—	—	—	—	—	5 lbs.	—	—	H/H20	5
Repulsor Engine	20,000	0/+4*	—	—	—	—	—	5 lbs.	—	—	H/H10	4
	30,000	0/+4*	—	—	—	—	—	5 lbs.	—	—	H/H12	5
Kinetic Baffle	26,000	0/+4*	—	—	—	—	—	5 lbs.	—	—	H	4
	35,000	0/+4*	—	—	—	—	—	5 lbs.	—	—	H	5
Energy Envelope	50,000	+1	—	—	—	—	—	5 lbs.	30	30	H	5

Yowie Suit: Not designed for actual combat, this clumsy but effective piece of camouflage offers some rudimentary protection. It is not terribly heavy but its overlapping layers of fake foliage renders fast movement nearly impossible. Pouches and straps conceal various other camouflage patterns which can unfold or release to alter the appearance of the suit.

Stealth: In any earth or forest terrain you gain the benefits from the suit. You do not suffer any armor check penalties to Stealth while in the suit. You also gain the armor's tech level as an enhancement bonus to Stealth checks. Additionally, if you don't move on your round, you gain concealment.

Special: TL 4 and 5 suits employ holographic imaging. If you spend a battery charge and don't move on your round, you gain total concealment.

SHIELDS DESCRIPTIONS

Active Dissuasion System: The successor of the energy envelope, the ADS contains a more powerful capacitor to respond to outside attack. The resulting system does not actually offer superior protection; if anything, it is slightly worse, but is kept in production due to an unintended side-effect. The ADS capacitor prevents breakdown of its energy shield by temporarily overcharging the repulsor field a microsecond before impact. This maintains shield integrity, but also discharges a significant electric shock which can disable or kill nearby soft targets. The ADS takes two battery cells: one for its shield and one for its force feedback system.

Augmentation: You gain a +2 inherent bonus to all melee damage rolls.

Backpack Mount: The energy envelope does not use up a hand.

Force Feedback: If you are hit by a melee attack, spend a battery charge and use an immediate action to inflict 4 electricity damage against the creature that hit you.

Deployable Shield: This arm-mounted device remains concealed and unobtrusive until needed. When deployed (usually by a flick of the wrist), it instantly unfolds and slides into position to offer protection. A single energy cell is required for the deployment of the shield. While collapsed, it doesn't grant its shield bonus but it neither imposes its check nor movement penalty.

Standard Configuration: Use a swift action to deploy or collapse the shield. While deployed, the shield uses up a hand but grants a +2 shield bonus to AC (with a -2 check penalty).

Tower Configuration: Use a move action to deploy or collapse the shield. While deployed, the shield uses up a hand but grants a +4 shield bonus to AC. The maximum Dex bonus is +2, and the armor check penalty is -10 while the shield is deployed this way.

Energy Envelope: The most advanced active defense system available, the energy shield covers its user only a centimeter from his skin, and thus is capable of protecting against all incoming attacks. Its only drawback is its tendency to temporarily neutralize when its user makes a melee physical attack.

Backpack Mount: The energy envelope does not use up a hand.

Hit Points: The envelope has its own hit points, the same as exo-armor. These hit points cannot be repaired. The energy envelope regains all lost hit points if it doesn't suffer damage for eight hours.

Limitation: You lose your shield bonus to AC until the start of your next turn if you hit or are hit with a melee attack.

Forced Defense Shield: This techan invention has found use in echa, strapped to knights unaware or uncaring of its origin. It is a heavy titanium shield with grooves on its bottom, allowing for a firm root into the ground. There is also a locked slit which can open once it has been planted.

Effect: If planted into the ground, the shield remains upright and acts as cover to anyone behind it. You must be occupying the same square as the shield to

receive its benefit. If you do so, you do not lose the bonus to AC against ranged attacks.

Janoahn Master Shield: Though many from the Bulwark employ the standard fare from the armories in the kingdom, the front line, and most knights and paladins sworn to the Wall, guard with a more advanced shield exclusive to Abidan. The master shield is lens-shaped giving it increased rigidity. It is also wrapped with hide leather and additional steel belts for reinforcement. Most shields destined for the Wall are also spiked.

Kinetic Baffle: This reactive system generates a contained energy field that only responds to high energy attacks from distant targets. It cannot react to close or massive targets and is inoperable if a target blocks its sensor net.

Backpack Mount: The kinetic baffle does not use up a hand.

Property: You gain the shield and enhancement bonus against ranged attacks only and only as long as no creatures are adjacent to you.

Limshau Buckler: The Limshau buckler is not a common sight but it has found popularity with some custodians. The buckler occupies a hand and is designed for offense as well as defense.

Property: Along with its bonus to AC, the buckler counts as a club for the purposes of two weapon fighting and feats.

Repulsor Engine: This device is less a method of resisting damage and more of a way of discouraging attack. It resonates an acoustic, magnetic, and gravitational pulse, preventing or dissuading targets from delivering melee attacks.

Property: The shield applies against opportunity attacks only.

Induce Pressure Wave: The repulsor engine requires a separate cell for the pressure wave system. Use a swift action with a battery charge and all Large or smaller adjacent creatures are pushed 1 square. A creature that cannot be pushed is stunned until the start of your next turn. Sacrifice five charges to increase the area effect to 15 feet centered on you. If you use the pressure wave in any way, the repulsor engine is deactivated for one minute.

EXO-ARMOR MODIFICATIONS

These modifications are only available to exo-armors and often have requirements for their addition. There is no limit to the number of modifications you can add to your exo-armor.

Auto-Reload: You have a mechanism to reload your weapons. You can reload three clips/cells before needing external loading (you either have to exit the suit to reload or have an ally do it for you). Reloading takes a swift action using this system.

Disruption Recovery: Once per day (or one additional time a day), as a swift action, if your armor is disrupted, it comes back online.

Electroactive Polymers (EAP) Enhancement: The armor grants a +2, +4, or +6 equipment bonus to both Dexterity and Strength.

Gravity Anchors: You gain a +5 enhancement bonus to Climb checks.

Gravity Drive: You suffer no damage from a fall.

Increased Armor: The armor gains an inherent bonus to AC between +1 and +5. These systems do impose penalties for their weight.

Increased Defenses: You gain a +1 bonus to Reflex saves or Fortitude saves (select one). The armor must already have a bonus to Reflex saves or Fortitude saves to receive this increase.

Increased Resistance: Increase one resist value the armor already has by 5.

Jet Boosters: You gain a +5 enhancement bonus to Acrobatics checks to jump.

Jump Jets: You can fly (as per the *fly* spell) a number of minutes a day equal to the suit's tech level.

Larger Gauntlets: Increase the damage dice of the armor's gauntlets by one step (1d8 > 1d10 > 1d12 > 2d6 > 2d8 > 2d10).

Maneuverability Booster: You gain a +5 ft. Bonus to speed.

Nightvision: You gain darkvision.

Stealth Net: You gain a +5 enhancement bonus to Stealth. Additionally, if you don't move on your turn, you gain total concealment until the beginning of your next turn.

Structural Reinforcement: The armor gains +20, +40, or +60 hit points. These hit points do not stack with other levels of Structural Reinforcement. Each level also grants an increase in threshold.

Target Analysis Software: The armor grants a +1, +3, or +5 inherent bonus to your Combat Maneuver Defense.

Targeting System: You gain a +1 inherent bonus to damage rolls with ranged weapons when firing past the first range increment.

TECHAN GEAR

As many seeking adventure migrate closer to bastions, the saturation of bastion exports increase. More and more goods constructed by the simply skilled find themselves replaced by the refined exports of sophisticated manufacture. Most conventional trade goods and adventuring gear are available in both their traditional forms and as bastion exports. In addition to being considered status symbols due to their comparative rarity, such goods are often (but not always) more durable and better able to weather the hazards of dungeoneering. The base cost of such items is the same as their echan equivalent, but is usually subject to a significant markup by canny merchants well aware of the demand for such machined goods.

EXO-ARMOR MODIFICATIONS

ARMOR	COST (UC)	MAX DEX BON.	ARM. CHK. PEN.	SPD 30 ft.	SPD 20 ft.	WT.	HP	THRES.	CELL	TL
Auto Reloader	4,000	—	—	—	—	50 lbs.	—	—	H	3
Disruption Recovery	4,000	—	—	—	—	20 lbs.	—	—	—	2
EAP Enhancement (+2)	15,000	—	—	—	—	50 lbs.	—	—	—	3
EAP Enhancement (+4)	45,000	—	—	—	—	50 lbs.	—	—	—	3
EAP Enhancement (+6)	100,000	—	—	—	—	50 lbs.	—	—	—	4
Increased Defenses	6,000	—	—	—	—	50 lbs.	—	—	—	3
Gravity Anchors	6,000	—	—	—	—	30 lbs.	—	—	H	5
Gravity Drive	3,500	—	—	—	—	30 lbs.	—	—	H	5
Increased Armor (+1)	3,000	+8		—	—	50 lbs.	—	—	—	2
Increased Armor (+2)	9,000	+6	-1	—	—	100 lbs.	—	—	—	2
Increased Armor (+3)	19,000	+5	-2	—	—	150 lbs.	—	—	—	3
Increased Armor (+4)	35,000	+4	-3	—	—	200 lbs.	—	—	—	4
Increased Armor (+5)	55,000	+3	-4	—	—	250 lbs.	—	—	—	5
Increased Resistances	10,000	—	—	—	—	50 lbs.	—	—	—	3
Jet Boosters	5,000	—	—	—	—	250 lbs.	—	—	H	3
Jump Jets	20,000	—	—	—	—	50 lbs.	—	—	H	4
Larger Gauntlets	9,000	—	—	—	—	100 lbs.	—	—	—	3
Maneuverability Booster	25,000	—	—	+5ft.	+5ft.	50 lbs.	—	—	—	4
Nightvision	16,000	—	—	—	—	25 lbs.	—	—	H	2
Stealth Net	9,000	—	—	—	—	50 lbs.	—	—	H	4
Structural Reinforcement, Level 1	20,000	+5	-2	—	—	250 lbs.	+20	+5	--	3
Structural Reinforcement, Level 2	40,000	+4	-3	—	—	400 lbs.	+40	+10	--	4
Structural Reinforcement, Level 3	60,000	+3	-4	—	—	250 lbs.	+60	+20	--	5
Target Analysis Software (+1)	2,000	—	—	—	—	20 lbs.	—	—	H	2
Target Analysis Software (+3)	15,000	—	—	—	—	20 lbs.	—	—	H	3
Target Analysis Software (+5)	25,000	—	—	—	—	20 lbs.	—	—	H	4
Targeting System	4,000	—	—	—	—	25 lbs.	—	—	H	4

READING TECHAN GEAR

Cell: If the item requires an energy cell, its type and capacity are listed here. If there is no capacity listed, it is considered unimportant to track its drain and, unless the item disrupts, you don't have to replace the cell.

Price: All costs are listed in uc.

Tech Level (TL): The tech level where the item can be found. This affects its availability, its sensitivity to disruption and its final price.

TECHAN GEAR DESCRIPTIONS

Anti-Echan Network (AEN): This York-designed device exhibits a level of ingenuity many other bastions don't attest to the lower-tech city. It has found circulation across the world by mercenaries and military groups. While battery-powered, it utilizes the EDF to its advantage. The AEN consists of metal poles driven into the ground or supported by tripods: each pole cannot be more than 50 feet (ten squares) apart from another. They generate an electrical field which transmits a signal back to the base system at camp. If

any creature that generates EDF passes through the field or interferes with one of the poles, the localized disruption is detected and an alert message is sent back to the transmitter. If the receiver shorts out, it breaks a connection to a backup mechanical siren, which goes off. Their only weakness is subterranean infiltration, assuming approaching echans notice the network. The receiver can locate where a break occurs. The AEN poles receive power from the transmitter so only one battery is required. Each charge used maintains four poles for one day. Each additional charge per hour allows the addition of four more poles.

Effect: A DC25 Stealth check is required for an echan creature to cross the net without it going off.

Anti-Gravity Generator (Personal): The subject using this belt device is able to fly.

Property: You can fly (as per the *fly* spell). The generator uses one charge upon activation and one charge every minute thereafter.

Battery Flare: A battery-powered bright candle, the charge only lasts for four hours but illuminates to a 50-foot radius.

Big Ear: This tiny device wraps around one's ear and amplifies incoming acoustic data.

Effect: You gain a +5 to Perception checks when listening. It uses one charge upon activation and an additional charge every round.

Binoculars: Ranging in size from small and concealable to large and clumsy, binoculars bring distant objects into close focus. They are sturdy, waterproof, and survive falls up to 50 feet. If broken, they cannot be repaired.

Effect: Reduces any penalties to Perception caused by distance by 10 when in use.

Bayonet Plug: This is not a weapon but an adapter to add a melee weapon to any small arm. Only one- and two-handed small arms can be equipped with a melee weapon. One-handed small arms can be equipped with a dagger only. Two-handed small arms can be equipped with any light blade. The melee weapon cannot be enchanted. You cannot equip a specialty weapon with a bayonet.

Effect: Switching between your firearm and the mounted melee weapon requires no action.

Camera Ball: This three inch rubber ball with a weighted flat bottom can be thrown or fired from a grenade launcher. Once it lands, it transmits audio and video input from a full 360 degree arc up to 500 ft. (100 squares) to a receiving monitor. The TL5 version contains a small antigravity unit, enabling it to hover for 1 minute per charge used.

Compass: Thankfully, magnetic fields are unaltered in magical saturation. Magnetic north remains strong and true. Modern compasses diligently point to it loyally. Rumors indicate that Ixindar emanates a large magnetic field, but this power source cannot be detected from Canam.

Demolitions Kit: Needed for any decent work with explosives, the Demolitions kit includes wires, plugs, and various tools. It does not include detonators or explosives. It includes a small battery that powers a circuit tester that uses a charge every time it is employed, though that is only required for disarming explosives.

Effect: You gain the tech level of the kit as an inherent bonus to all Demotion checks.

Detonator: Planted explosives require a detonator to explode.

Higher Tech: Purchasing a higher tech detonator increases the Demolitions DC in its application but also increases the Reflex DC to avoid it.

Friend/Foe Trigger: This detonator can be programmed to detonate the moment a specific monster enters its blast radius. It can also be programmed to detonate for everything but specific people. There is no limit on its parameters.

Impact Trigger: After the safety is pulled, impact triggers detonate upon impact with any rigid surface. This detonator is rarely used except with grenades.

Magnetic Trigger: These unique detonators only function on explosive payloads of 2 lbs. Or less. When armed, the detonator detects any sizeable metallic object (such as a vehicle, exo-armor, or suit of plate) passing within 30 feet and is pulled (together with its explosive) towards it, detonating on impact. If there is any form of cover or impedance, the detonator stops at the blocked square and detonates.

Motion Trigger: This detonator detects movement in its burst area and detonates regardless of the target.

Pressure Trigger: These trigger the moment a weight is pressed upon the detonator. Large and larger targets automatically trigger pressure detonators upon entering a square containing one. Medium and smaller targets have a 50% chance to avoid the sensor unless the person placing the explosive succeeded on a Demolitions roll for proper placement. The sensor can be manually adjusted to only detonate for Large or larger targets.

Radio Remote: The EDF suppresses radio waves, making remote detonators less reliable, but that doesn't prevent them from being useful within those limitations. The range limit of a radio remote is 500 feet, which cannot be boosted in any way. Both the transmitter and receiver require batteries.

Timer: Timers utilize a mechanical clock to countdown compared to a digital timer (unpopular in echa due to disruption). Although one may purchase a RDR (red digital readout) for the same price, this makes the detonator a TL2 item. The actual trigger is usually chemical or mechanical.

Trip Trigger: This detonator is a simple mechanical or chemical trigger attached to an explosive with a trip wire: a creature passing through the wire pulls the pin and detonates the device. You can run up to 25 feet of wire but the detonation only occurs in the square where the explosives are placed. Because the wire needs to be raised to be triggered, there is a +2 bonus to any Perception check to spot the wire.

Wired Remote: This simple form runs an electrical pulse that triggers the mechanical, chemical, or

TECHAN GEAR

COMBAT ACCESSORIES

ITEM	COST(UC)	WT.	CELL	TL
Bayonet Plug	20	—	—	0
Laser Sight	3,000	—	M	1
Scope, Digital	1,000	—	20/B	3
Scope, Targeting	100	—	—	0
Suppressor	75	—	—	0

UTILITIES

ITEM	COST(UC)	WT.	CELL	TL
Anti-Echan network	3,000	50 lbs.	5/M	3
Anti-Gravity Generator	16,000	30 lbs.	5/H	5
Battery Cell B (5)	5	0.5 lbs.	--	1
Battery Cell M (2)	50	0.5 lbs.	--	2
Battery Cell H (1)	150	0.5 lbs.	--	3
Big ear	3,000	2 lbs.	20/M	3
Boosters	See text	—	M	1-6
Camera Ball	1,000	1 lbs.	5/M	3
	16,000	2 lbs.	5/M	5
Disruption Muffler Bag	250	2 lbs.	--	2
Disruption Muffler Crate	500	10 lbs.	--	3
Disruption Patch	5	1 lbs.	--	1
Electro Optical Sensor	10,000	2 lbs.	10/M	4
Flash Goggles	2,600	0.5 lbs.	5/M	2
Force Shield	16,000	10 lbs.	20/H	5
Gravity Lens	9,000	2 lbs.	M	5
Grip Gloves	6,000	—	M	3
Holographic Generator	25,000	30 lbs.	10/H	5
Infrared Goggles	12,000	1 lbs.	20/M	3
Lie Detector	2,500	1 lbs.	10/M	3
Light Bender	20,000	5 lbs.	10/H	5
Metal Detector	1,500	2 lbs.	30/M	3
Nano-Healer	500	--	5/H	5
Rover Robot	3,000	40 lbs.	30/M	3
Ultrasound Goggles	25,000	1 lbs.	20/H	5

SKILL SYNERGIES

ITEM	COST(UC)	WT.	CELL	TL
Demolitions kit, Level 1	300	1 lbs.	—	1
Demolitions kit, Level 2	1000	1 lbs.	—	2
Demolitions kit, Level 3	5,000	1 lbs.	—	3
Medical kit, Level 1	300	1 lbs.	—	1
Medical kit, Level 2	1,000	1 lbs.	—	2
Medical kit, Level 3	5,000	1 lbs.	—	3
Medical kit, Level 4	9,000	1 lbs.	M	4
Medical kit, Level 5	15,000	1 lbs.	M	5
Repair kit, Level 1	300	1 lbs.	—	1
Repair kit, Level 2	1,000	1 lbs.	—	2
Repair kit, Level 3	5,000	1 lbs.	—	3
Repair kit, Level 4	9,000	1 lbs.	M	4
Repair kit, Level 5	15,000	1 lbs.	M	5

UNIQUE ITEMS

ITEM	COST(UC)	WT.	CELL	TL
Battery Flare	2	0.5 lbs.	1/B	1
Binoculars	20	1 lbs.	—	0
Light Sticks (5)	2	0.5 lbs.	—	0
Compass	1	—	—	0
Digital Audio Recorder	10	—	B	2
Digital Camera	20	—	B	2
Digital Video Camera	25	0.5 lbs.	B	2
Electric Torch	10	0.5 lbs.	—	2
Fire Extinguisher	75	2 lbs.	—	0
Gas Mask	1,000	1 lbs.	—	0
Handcuffs	5	—	—	0
ESR Pack (1 week)	4	1 lbs.	—	0
Lighter	1	—	—	0
Sleeping Bag	10	1 lbs.	—	0
Standard Techan Adventurers Kit	15	30 lbs.	—	0
Tent (2-6 person)	10	5 lbs.	—	0
Two-Way Radio (1)	30	1 lbs.	B	2
Watch, Automatic	10	—	—	1

DETONATORS

ITEM	COST(UC)	WT.	CELL	TL
Friend/ Foe Trigger	300	—	I/B	3
	400	—	I/B	4
	500	—	I/B	5
Impact Trigger	5	—	--	0
Magnetic Trigger	150	—	I/B	2
	250	—	I/B	3
	350	—	I/B	4
	450	—	I/B	5
Motion Trigger	150	—	I/B	2
Pressure Trigger	50	—	—	I
	75	—	—	2
	100	—	—	3
	150	—	—	4
	200	—	—	5
Radio Remote	75	—	I/B	2
	125	—	I/B	3
	175	—	I/B	4
	250	—	I/B	5
Timer	5	—	--	0
Trip Trigger	10	—	--	0
	20	—	--	I
	40	—	--	2
	60	—	--	3
	80	—	--	4
	150	—	--	5
Wired remote	25	—	I/B	0
	50	—	I/B	I

electrical detonator. Because the EDF increases the resistance of electrical wires, the maximum range of any wired detonator is 150 feet.

Disruption Muffler Bag/Crate: Though designers succeeded in creating a small container rendering its contents immune to disruption, larger attempts resulted in failure. The amount of insulation required increases proportionately to the size of the container, resulting in only slightly larger capacity for much large containers.

Effect: It protects all batteries inside from disruption. The muffler bag can carry five H cells. The crate can carry 10 H cells. There is no lifespan of the bag or crate. Two M cells will replace one H cell and two B cells replace one M cell.

Disruption Patch: A small square plastic tab the size of a bottle cap, the disruption patch is often hung from necks or from wrists. Each bastion developed their own unique approach to the patch though a common practice is a colored dye (red being the obvious choice) that breaches into the top layer of the patch when an extremely sensitive microwave thermionic diode is disrupted via enchantment. The patch detects increased disruption from localized increases in magic though one must be careful to keep the vacuum seal each patch is sold in enclosed as a patch will often naturally disrupt after a day in the open.

Effect: The patch activates if the EDF ambient penalty to all disruption rolls increase. The patch activates if placed against an enchanted item. Once used, the patch is useless.

Echan Survival Rations (ESR): Modern techans count their blessings every time they eat in the wilderness. They rarely need to fish or hunt. They are not required to stalk prey, gut and clean the kill, and cook them for hours over an open flame risking a number of contaminations when finally consumed (unless, of course, they want to). They simply tear open a ready-made meal and eat. These military rations, also called techan rations or bastion rations, began in Selkirk (which pioneered the modern product) as ESRs or Echan Survival Rations. They are no longer limited to freeze-dried meat and crackers, but offer a full range of cuisine including chicken and beef fajitas, hamburgers, meatloaf, beefsteak, and pastas with various sauces, beef stew, and jambalaya. Six days of rations for one person weighs one pound. Each package requires little preparation and can be eaten on the go. Beverages can be ingested right from the pouch. Each ration has a shelf life of five years with a peak temperature range of 60° C. Each day's worth of ration supplies, on average, 3000 calories. For reasons unclear, the narros adore ESRs and part of Selkirk's trade involves converting the imported narros food supplies into ESRs, which are then sold back to them for a profit. On the other side, laudenian and chaparran elves despise the stuff to the point that just the scent of the "human food" nauseates them.

Electric Torch: The most common device on a techan adventurer is the flashlight or electric torch. Modern torches do not employ fragile bulbs but instead use electronically regulated light-emitting diodes that make the end product more efficient, brighter, and more durable for the wilderness adventurer. It employs a miniature electrical generator and capacitor. By either shaking the light or winding a crank, the capacitor charges, allowing the unit to power its LED transmitter.

Effect: Illuminates a 75 foot cone from the user. It lasts 10 minutes before fading out and requiring a recharge (a full round action).

Electro Optical Sensor (EOS): The EOS is equipped with a 360 degree motion sensor meant to detect both ground and aerial targets within 250 feet. It sends all information to a source monitor that cannot be more than 100 feet away.

Effect: Targets must beat a DC30 Stealth or be detected. It only detects movement and cannot detect incorporeal targets. One charge is used up every hour.

Fire Extinguisher: Centuries of development resulted in a new multipurpose chemical which smothers the flame and cools the target. The result is a compressed container capable of putting out almost any kind of fire from combustible metals to burning oils.

Property: As a standard action, remove a fire effect from one square. Each container has enough to extinguish ten squares of fire.

Flash Goggles: This simple eyewear protects the wearer from any blinding effects from bright light, whether natural, technological, or magical. Flash goggles respond to incoming illumination and darken within 0.0005 seconds.

Property: Use an immediate action to nullify a blinding effect. Each time this power is used, 1 charge is drained.

Force Shield: Mann originally developed this technology, with Porto following soon after. They never traded it with anyone and technology theft remains the probable cause of its proliferation. The system consists of two ground-planted generator coils which, when placed up to 20 feet apart and activated, create barrier between them, impenetrable from one side but allowing those behind it to fire through.

Property: Use a standard action and drain a cell to create a 4 square wall that offers cover for those behind it. It uses one additional charge per round in use. It must be deactivated to be moved (standard action to deactivate).

Gas Mask: This flexible and compact unit, when donned, attempts to filter all outside gasses and will protect the wearer from many airborne poisons. It will not protect the user if the environment has no proper earth atmosphere at all.

Property: You gain a +5 inherent bonus to Fortitude saves against inhaled poisons.

Gravity Lens: An ingenious invention Mann stole from Porto and Motego, the lens resembles a 10x13 photo frame with a handle on one side when unfolded from its compact package. When attached to a wall, it allows to the user to peer through it as if looking through a window. It detects secret doors, compartments, caches and so forth as well as snares and pits.

Effect: You gain a +4 inherent bonus to Disable Device checks when attempting to open a lock or disable a trap, +4 inherent bonus to Demolitions when attempting a disarm, and a +4 bonus to Perception checks when taking 10 or 20 to search a room.

Special: This uses one charge on its activation and on every round thereafter.

Grip Gloves: This Selkirk prototype allows the user to climb walls with ease.

Property: You have a climb speed equal to your base speed. A DC of 30 is required to forcefully remove you from the wall.

Handcuffs: These high tensile steel restraints require a DC25 Strength check or Disable Device check to break.

Holographic Generator: This backpack-carried device deploys its own legs when activated. The fabric of the pack conceals most of the gear. Only a reflective sphere on a pintle rises from the top. The device can make a 50-foot circle look and sound like some other sort of natural terrain and can hide structures, equipment, and creatures within the area: multiple generators can be set up to conceal larger areas. All sounds within the dome are muffled from the outside. The effect is not solid, so interacting with the hologram reveals its illusory nature. This device cannot be moved when activated.

Effect: Targets inside the field gain total concealment.

Special: Each hour of use exhausts a charge.

Infrared Goggles: These non-telescoping goggles still provide stereoscopic vision and allow the wearer to see in total darkness.

Effect: You gain darkvision. Each battery charge lasts one hour.

Laser Sight: Laser sights may be used in conjunction with scopes. They paint targets with precision where the weapon's fire will strike. This also doubles as a psychological attack, as most individuals find a green target on their chest to be a great incentive to negotiation. A sniper may, if they wish, swap it for an infrared diode, which is invisible to everything except for night vision (darkvision). The standard sight uses a green diode solid-state laser which is effective for the maximum range of any weapon.

Effect: You gain a +1 inherent bonus to attack rolls.

Lie Detector: No paper, needles, or wire; this device is a simple palm-shaped item that is placed gently on the subject's body.

Effect: You gain a +4 inherent bonus to Sense Motive checks to detect deception. Each attempt uses a charge.

Light Bender: Thought once to be the realm of magic, the bender moves light around it, effectively making itself and its wearer invisible. The device, usually a backpack stored with a remote bracelet to operate, creates a magnetic field, removing the target from sight, even from darkvision and infrared. As bending *all* light would necessarily prevent the user from seeing out of it, light of very specific wavelengths is allowed through the field, creating a 'shimmer' effect when the field moves (to the wearer, the world merely looks constantly twilit): sudden movements or attacks disrupt the field entirely.

Property: As a standard action, you become invisible as per the *invisibility* spell. Each round uses a charge.

Light Sticks: Scientists battled for years to uncover a new chemical combination that provided the light of glowsticks without the danger of disruption (despite being very low-tech, the traditional mixture mysteriously became inert after five minutes of exposure to EDF). When activated, the chemicals mix with a fluorescent dye. They usually glow red, green, or blue. Light sticks are popular in echa and often impress many where flamboyant spellwork fails.

Effect: Illuminates a 20 foot radius for one hour.

Medical Kit: The formidable medical kit holds bandages, pills, trauma shears, ointments, and basic stitching implements for basic injuries. Larger kits have eye pads and cooling gel pads for burns. Along with wound irrigation, syringes supply help with delivering various medications. Other implements include splints, alcohol pads, an epinephrine injector, hemostatic pads, and various scalpels and scissors for

emergency surgical procedures. Trained medical professionals can pull off miracles with a medical kit. More advanced models feature scanning gear with ultrasound and x-ray emitters. Diagnostic tools assist with a prognosis. Advanced kits also feature robotic probes capable of injecting short-lived nano-machines to repair internal injuries.

Property: You gain the tech level of the kit as an inherent bonus to all Heal checks.

Metal Detector: This small device extends a small probe that scans for metal objects.

Property: You gain a +5 inherent bonus on Perception to search rolls for any metals. One charge is used per attempt.

Nano-Healer: Beyond just patching holes, these nanobots enter the body via an injection gun and repair it from within. Despite results verging on the miraculous, these are lower technology creations compared to some of the prototypes Porto is testing. The bots quickly run out of power after a few minutes, and disrupt instantly on exposure to echan flesh, making them impossible to use on any creature that generates EDF.

Effect: Use a standard action and a battery charge against yourself or an adjacent target. The target recovers 4d8+10 hit points.

Repair Kits: Electronic tool kits include diagnostic tools, a soldering gun, fine point insulated needle pliers, and wire cutters at TL1. Above that, it employs a battery for a digital multi-meter measuring ohms, amps, and volts. It also comes equipped with a variety of wires, clips, resistors, banana plugs and crocodile clips. Further advances include miniature diagnostic computers; advanced kits contain micromachines, which can reassemble entire motherboards. All diagnostic tools in the kit use gold wiring and are shielded by design, as it would be incredibly inconvenient to have to repair the kit before repairing another device.

Property: You gain the tech level of the kit as an inherent bonus to all Engineer checks.

Special: Regardless of its tech level, the repair kit is immune to disruption.

Rover Robot: This tiny machine resembles a small, flattened box with four large wheels. Regardless of how it lands or tumbles, it still can operate, as its wheels are larger than its body. A camera adjusts automatically to any change in orientation. It receives instructions from an operator that cannot be more than 100 squares away and sends back both visual and audio information. The machine rolls at a speed of 25 feet and can tread through rough terrain or even over water. It has AC 20 and 20 hit points. It has a +15 bonus to Stealth checks. It uses one charge per minute and both the machine and the controller require batteries.

Scope, Digital: This replaces a regular targeting scope. It enables someone using a Sniper weapon to reduce cover penalties by 2.

Scope, Targeting: This is a standard long-range targeting scope which can be fitted to any two-handed small arm or heavy weapon without an auto, blast, heavy auto, or sonic property. It cannot be used with specialty weapons. Attaching the targeting scope enables the weapon to become a sniper weapon with a +1 bonus.

Sleeping Bag: Sleeping bags now enclose one (or two snugly) occupant in a synthetic bag capable of protecting the occupant(s) from temperatures as cold as -50 degrees C. It resists wind and combustion (thought is still susceptible to magical fire). It is externally waterproof.

Property: While inside, you gain a +5 inherent bonus to Survival checks against cold weather.

Standard Techan Adventurers Kit: This kit includes the following: Two Battery Flares, five Chemical Light Sticks, one Compass, one Sleeping Bag, one Lighter, one Canteen (Waterskin) and one week of ESR rations.

Suppressor: These attachments muffle the flash and sonic blast of explosively propelled firearms. By slowing the expanding gases exiting the barrel, the suppressor stems the acoustical signature, but does not silence it completely – reducing it to merely loud instead of deafening. Suppressors cannot be used on shotguns, heavy weapons, or weapons rated higher than TL3 (most of which don't need it in any case). Affixing a suppressor takes a standard action.

Property: You gain a +2 inherent bonus to opposed Stealth checks when rolling against a target attempting to locate you after you have fired. Anyone within the weapon's first two range increments is still aware that a weapon has been fired, but not necessarily from where or by whom.

Synthetic Tent: Tents come in 2, 4, and 6 person capacities. Most tents utilize flexible poles and are available in dome, tunnel, single-hoop, and geodesic styles. It takes 5 minutes to set up and take down properly.

Property: While inside, you gain a +2 inherent bonus to Survival checks against cold weather.

Two-way Radio: Civilian and military radios use frequencies chosen specifically to avoid eavesdropping and interference with other machines or day-to-day electronics. Military models can tune to any frequency: civilian and emergency service radios are each restricted to a certain range. With the expanse of the echan landscape, keeping this communicator bottled in the low bands or with reduced power is no longer required. It has a clear range of 5 miles in open echa, 20 miles within a bastion. Even basic models can withstand some punishment and water pressure.

Ultrasound Goggles: These goggles translate sonic vibrations into visual stimuli. In the absence of ambient sound, they transmit high frequency pulses and detect the ricochet off objects. Any loud noise over 120 decibels causes the goggles to white out.

Property: You gain blindsight. You use a charge every hour of use.

Watch, Automatic: Digital watches have fallen out of favor in the world of today. Modern watches employ a balance wheel that winds via the motion of the wearer's arm. This allows the watch to keep perfect time

without requiring manual winding or any power source. The compact and complicated device is water resistant, shock resistant, and cannot be over-wound with abuse. They are also completely silent.

BOOSTERS

Boosters are medical treatments that alter the basic functionality of the human body, either with chemical compounds, genetic therapy, or nanobots. Boosters do not work on non-humans (not even gimfen) and only the most basic concoctions work on echan humans.

Drug Shot: A less popular option than micromachines or viral injections is drug therapy. This is because, unlike the other two options, a drug shot is temporary. It is also both cumbersome and painful and can have long-term side effects. Drugs are hit or miss with echan humans. If an echan human takes a drug shot, it has a 50% chance of failure. The process is accomplished via a jet injector and several doses can be loaded into a gun. Drug shots are either TL1 or TL2.

Drug Special Rule: A drug injection only lasts for one hour. Each purchase supplies five injections.

Injecting During Combat: Injecting drugs during combat takes a move action and provokes opportunity attacks. The booster does not take effect until the beginning of your next turn.

Micromachine Booster (MM): One of the most advanced versions of the nanobot booster, these permanent micromachines are self-replicating and self-powered, tapping into the energy of the human body they are injected into. Micromachines are not sensitive to disruption due to their insulation inside the human body but will disrupt if the human becomes an echan. Micromachine boosters are TL5.

Viral/Gene Therapy: Viral Therapy can accomplish similar results but doesn't create some of the more breathtaking effects that MM injections do. Genetically engineered viruses rewrite a specific genetic code before terminating themselves. They were used initially as therapy to correct genetic errors, curing various hereditary diseases. Further advances allowed for beneficial viruses that could improve the human body beyond what is normally possible. Despite the controversial nature of this practice, it found use among many military circles, especially those being forced to deal with the monsters of open echa. Because echan humans have their genes rewritten by Attricana, this therapy does not work on them. Gene therapy is either TL 3 or TL4.

Agility: This booster improves overall reaction time and swiftness.

Property: You gain the tech level of the booster as an inherent bonus to Dexterity checks and Reflex saves.

Quickstand: As many times a day as the booster's tech level, you may stand from prone as a swift action.

Acrobatics Talent (TL3+ only): Once a day, as a free action, you can reroll any Acrobatics check you just made. You must use the new result.

Flash (TL5 only): You gain a +5 feet bonus to speed.

BOOSTERS

INJECTION	TL	COST (UC)
Agility level 1	1	100
Agility level 2	2	840
Agility level 3	3	82,500
Agility level 4	4	110,000
Agility level 5	5	137,500
Alertness level 1	1	100
Alertness level 2	2	840
Alertness level 3	3	82,500
Alertness level 4	4	110,000
Alertness level 5	5	137,500
Learning level 1	1	100
Learning level 2	2	840
Learning level 3	3	82,500
Learning level 4	4	110,000
Learning level 5	5	137,500
Endurance level 1	1	100
Endurance level 2	2	840
Endurance level 3	3	82,500
Endurance level 4	4	110,000
Endurance level 5	5	137,500
Regeneration level 1	4	110,000
Regeneration level 2	5	137,500
Strength level 1	1	100
Strength level 2	2	840
Strength level 3	3	82,500
Strength level 4	4	110,000
Strength level 5	5	137,500

Alertness: This injection boosts mental awareness, concentration, and memory recall. It sharpens the mind and prevents distraction.

Property: You gain the tech level of the booster as an inherent bonus to Wisdom checks and Will saves.

Property: You gain a +1 inherent bonus to initiative, which increases to +2 at TL4 and +3 at TL5.

Endurance: This booster improves overall health, boosts resistance to poisons and other toxins, and enhances recovery from injury.

Property: You gain the tech level of the booster as an inherent bonus to Constitution checks and Fortitude saves.

Property: You gain the tech level of the booster as an inherent bonus to Survival checks.

Endurance (TL4+ only): You gain the tech level of the booster as an inherent bonus to checks against any poison.

Learning: This booster improves memory recall and the capacity to learn new skills. You are able to do difficult equations in your head without a pencil.

Property: You gain the tech level of the booster as an inherent bonus to Intelligence checks and all Knowledge class skills you have ranks in.

Limitless: As many times a day as the booster's Tech Level, you can gain a +5 inherent bonus to your next Intelligence-based skill check.

Regeneration: Overactive cell proliferation or advanced micromachines rapidly repair injuries when they present themselves.

Property: At the beginning of each round, if you have 0 hit points or more, you are cured of 1 point of damage. At TL5, this increases to 2 points of damage.

Strength: This booster increases muscle tension and reduces tendon strain on bones. It also improves overall body chemistry by burning calories faster and more efficiently to increase energy.

Property: You gain the tech level of the booster as an inherent bonus to Strength and Climb checks.

Property: You gain the tech level of the booster as an inherent bonus to attack and damage rolls with unarmed attacks.

SPECIAL MATERIALS

Most techan humans adept in the knowledge of chemistry were bewildered when magic refused to follow certain rules of nature. Controlled laboratory experiments confirmed that in the presence of magic (which many claim *prevents* controlled laboratory experiments), certain elemental properties change, some in minor ways, a few in major ways. Heavier radioactive isotopes (like Uranium 235 and 238) stop degrading while others (like Radium 226) break down more rapidly. This makes nuclear energy a hazardous technological path for bastions seeking alternative energy sources. Chemical reactions also change—not enough to impede the continued existence of life, but enough to change the rules of natural evolution, and even some basic chemical processes are altered in ways that are not obvious or straightforward. There are even numerous chemical compounds that, according to traditional science, simply cannot exist. Because of these newfound rules, the 'science' of alchemy has returned with vigor (and much to the chagrin of techans, actually works). It is assumed that if magic were to suddenly vanish, the changeover back to the traditional rules of science would be a deadly one to life forms requiring these new rules to survive. Most scientists are unable to explain the new rules of magically altered physics scientifically. Even more frustrating is the unpredictability of magic, which takes an almost intelligent delight in suspending any rules on a whim.

Bastions continue to find new and unconventional applications to materials with altered capabilities. New chemical elements, thought previously unstable, now can not only be synthesized for more than a few fractions of a second, but can even be found in nature. Industry and architecture both echan and techan value these new substances; furthermore, in the world of commerce, certain rare and expensive metals critical to the economy of particular civilizations become worthless or dangerous when magic is removed.

Silver and gold retain their traditional value, although gold is particularly valuable to techans for another reason: while magic may be able to touch it, it cannot saturate it, rendering the metal invaluable for use in bastion power grids. Techan industry and manufacturing has also made titanium a highly valuable commodity. The common isotopes of uranium are no longer strongly radioactive, opening up a wide range of uses for the metal. Traditional fantasy would have miners searching for iron and gold, but now mines like the Finer Fire Pits and Thos Thalagos also search for molybdenum, iridium, and rhodium, all of which can be extracted safely with narros expertise. There are also new materials that defy traditional categorization: the existence of angelite and coruthil confounds scientists to this day.

Available Materials: From the PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK, the following special materials are available in *Amethyst*: darkwood, dragonhide, and alchemical silver. Adamantine, cold iron, and mithril are not available.

Angelite: When the Second Hammer hit Ixindar, the virtually impenetrable stone shell that encased the gate was fractured. This mountain of rock blew apart and scattered across the globe. Some refer to this stone as 'absolute rock'. Techans believe this material to have once been rhodium, the most precious metal on Earth. This made the shell around Ixindar more valuable than all the gold, platinum, and uranium on the globe combined. When infused with magic when both gates reopened, the silver-sheened stone became the hardest substance on Earth. On cursory examination, rhodium and angelite exhibit similar properties (resistance to corrosion, amazing durability): lacking the ability to properly analyze it on the molecular level, techan scientists have squeezed angelite onto the periodic table between rhodium and ruthenium. Despite its amazing density (12.38 g/cm^3) angelite feels extremely light, over five times lighter than its other precious brothers. This has never been explained. Angelite is seldom found in mines and the largest concentration still sits in Kakodomania. Only the fragments found around the world or in mines can be refined. Demons have tried to chip off and process pieces from the original shell, but have never gotten the temperature high enough to melt. Usable fragments can be found as small as splinters and as large as houses (although the only known cases that large are the heads of Ramkava).
Property: Angelite has the identical properties and costs to adamantine in the PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK. Angelite radiates natural magic and cannot be used in the construction of techan equipment.

Coruthil: Coruthil simply did not exist until magic saturated the Earth. Techan scientists believe that this influence created a new transitional metal between scandium and titanium. When magic flowed through the mineral, coruthil emerged. Narros miners were overjoyed to discover these riches were unmined after 65 million years, not realizing until later that mankind never had the opportunity to exploit it before. When worked like steel, it becomes a wonderful material from which to create items. Despite its origins, coruthil is

naturally magically inert, although it can be enchanted just like steel.

TYPE OF CORUTHIL ITEM	ITEM COST MODIFIER
Ammunition	+5
Light Armor	+1,000
Medium Armor	+3,000
Heavy Armor	+5,000
Weapon	+500

Effect: Coruthil has the same hardness and thickness of normal steel. It is immune to all corrosion, natural or magical.

Fae Iron: This ore sears the flesh of all fae. Almost every fae culture has banned this ore except for Kakodomania, where it is wielded almost exclusively by shemjaza, despite their own reaction to it (or, given their disposition, because of), though some pagus brandish these weapons insulated at the hilt (these are always rebels, as the shemjaza do not allow such potent weapons against themselves to be wielded by their peons). It was first discovered – accidentally – by the tenenbri, which has often led to the narros claiming it as evidence of the tenenbri's sins against Oaken. When the pagus migration occurred, corrupted tenenbri took the invention to their new masters.

In modern times, techans analyzed samples and determined fae iron (or "leaded iron" or "cold iron" as it's sometimes referred, though not terribly accurate) is comprised of iron with extremely low trace amounts of carbon and lead (less than 3%). These ratios are extremely specific, as are the procedures for converting the material into a malleable substance for weapons. A simple deviation of half a percent of carbon or lead in either direction, and the metal is merely impure iron. No study has ever explained why this specific substance harms fae as it does. Techan humans, especially those from xenophobic cultures like Baruch Malkut, began trying to crack this ratio to arm their forces in mass with fae-iron weapons, but those who wield their obvious speciesism openly will find every hand of civilized echa turned against them. Narros will not forge it: even modern tenenbri refuse to have anything to do with the metal and consider its discovery the greatest sin of their past. It will never be found in any community with a fae population or in any city with good relations with fae. Even boggs and skeggs don't use fae iron purely because of the risk of personal injury.

Property: Fae iron has the identical properties and costs to cold iron in the PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK.

Gold: Apart from its aesthetic value, the benefit of gold as currency is that magic cannot touch it. Any other material transmuted into gold will bleed off the magic used to transform it and revert to its natural form within a few hours, making it impossible to counterfeit in this way. Furthermore, it can be added to any other magical item, even one that gains its powers from an alchemical alloy, to dampen or direct the effects without impacting the properties of the final item. Most magical items have at least a bit of gold about them to ensure that their negative properties are not transferred to the wielder. Gold wires are able to conduct electricity without any chance of being affected by EDF (unless over very large distances in open echa), and gold is an integral component in most forms of anti-EDF shielding.

Property: Armor or shields made of at least 50% gold or gold alloy grant only half their normal armor bonus (round down), but grant spell resistance 10 + the armor's unmodified armor bonus. The armor's weight also increases by 25%.

Magnarros: Already stubborn to ignite, magnesium becomes increasingly more difficult to combust in magical fields. This caused many echan blacksmiths to try to forge swords in magnesium for a time until they discovered this property had a knack of suddenly reversing without warning, making the weapon burst in a fiery white flame in a clash. It certainly was impressive and intimidating, but ultimately costly and dangerous to all, especially the wielder. A narros forge in Thos Thalagos, run by elder Magnalus Eneg, claimed to have perfected an alloy that prevents this dangerous combustion. He kept the process as a family secret until his death, forging weapons only for narros and never allowing the fruits of the technique to pass outside the species. Since his passing 50 years ago, more non-narros weapons have been appearing from forges. Other narros have learned the secret of its construction, although the method is still guarded from outsiders. It is a point of respect and awe for a narros adventurer to wield a magnarros blade. Magnarros is a very rare silvery, glistening metal that is lighter than iron but just as hard.

Property: Magnarros has the identical properties and costs to mithril in the PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK.

TECHAN VEHICLES

Though the overwhelming majority of travelers in the echan wilderness (or wasteland, depending on who you ask) still prefer beasts of burden for their transportation, a few still favor progressive methods. Vehicles designed to operate outside of bastions look different than those traveling effortlessly inside them. They are more rugged, with armored shells designed to withstand punishment both physical and magical. Though some vehicles in cities may employ internal combustion or short-life batteries, vehicles outside mostly utilize battery power, either from disposable cells or from rechargeable ones, generating electricity from solar power. Operating vehicles are rare in the echan landscape and many wandering travelers have come across ravaged and gutted techan vehicles, gears seized from disruption, their crew long dead with no way to return home. Along the Continental Cross it is not uncommon to see these vehicles towed along by horses like wagons when out of power or when conserving energy. All vehicles use batteries as they are far more

efficient, clean, and supply rechargeable power where internal combustion requires a fuel source not easily accessible since most bastions don't sit on stockpiles of fossil fuels.

VEHICLE RULES

For the most part, vehicles should not be featured in combat, as the logistics of handling two separate scales are too complex for general purposes. When they are featured, they involve a radical departure from regular movement rules. Vehicle speed rating is measured as acceleration rather than distance. You retain the same movement speed from round to round (carryover speed) unless you take action to increase or reduce it. For example, you can't decide to end your movement after 5 squares on your turn if you have a carryover speed of 40 unless you perform a difficult stunt to decelerate your movement to 5 squares. Otherwise, you still move 40 squares this turn.

Speed: The speed rating for a vehicle is not its top speed but the rate at which it can change its movement speed (up or down) as a single move action without making a Vehicle Operation roll. Your vehicle's speed at the end of your turn is its "carryover speed". Your vehicle has a carryover speed of 0 if the vehicle has stopped before the start of your turn. If you have any carryover speed (even if only 1), you must take at least a move action and either move forward that distance (plus or minus up to your vehicle's speed rating), perform a maneuver that alters your speed and/or direction, or crash.

Over open terrain, a vehicle can safely move a maximum of 4 times its speed rating. Accelerating beyond that or attempting to decelerate by more than double the vehicle's speed rating in one turn requires a stunt.

Control: Only one person can control a vehicle, and the vehicle operates only on that character's turn. If you are required to make a control roll outside of your turn, the effects of that roll take place at the start of your next turn (even if you are crashing). Large creatures cannot control vehicles no matter how big the vehicles are; whether a Large creature even fits in the vehicle is up to the GM's discretion.

Armor Class: The vehicle's AC is listed in the vehicle table. The Improved Vehicle Combat feat allows you to add your Dexterity or Intelligence bonus to this under certain circumstances. Driving skills can also grant temporary improvements to the occupants' AC and/or Reflex saves (see **Vehicle Operation**).

Fortitude Saves*:* Vehicles cannot be targeted by any effect that requires a Fortitude save.

Reflex Saves: A vehicle automatically fails a Reflex save unless it has a carryover speed of at least 2. A vehicle's Reflex bonus is the same as the driver's. The vehicle gains a bonus to Reflex saves based on vehicle modifications and evasive driving and receives a modifier (often a penalty) based on its maneuver value.

Will Saves: Vehicles cannot be targeted by any effect that requires a Will save.

Targeting and Cover*:* Creatures inside/on a vehicle receive protection depending on the situation and the attack.

Cover: Vehicles grant cover to their occupants. If an attack targeting a vehicle occupant benefitting from cover would have hit the target without the cover, the attack hits the vehicle instead.

Concealment: Creatures inside vehicles can go prone and gain concealment against opponents on the outside.

Modifiers: While inside/on a vehicle, occupants suffer a -2 penalty to their Reflex saves against attacks from outside.

Reach: Vehicles do not have reach but creatures inside still do.

Selecting Defense: Creatures inside/on a vehicle targeted by an attack from an opponent outside the vehicle may choose to use the vehicle's AC in lieu of their own. Certain vehicles prevent occupants from being targeted by disease or poison attacks. Opponents attacking a vehicle may choose to target the vehicle itself instead of occupants. A vehicle's resist rating is only effective against hits against the vehicle, not the occupants.

Vehicle Size: Huge or smaller vehicles cannot enter squares labeled as difficult terrain. Depending on the situation, they may get stuck or hit an obstruction. Both situations are considered a crash. Depending on the topography (marsh or debris, for example), Gargantuan or larger vehicles can ignore difficult terrain for the purposes of movement penalties and crashing. The severity of the terrain may impede even these vehicles: trees may stop a tank but not a behemoth. A vehicle cannot squeeze or adjust its occupying squares.

Conditions: Vehicles cannot bleed or be blinded, confused, dazed, dazzled, deafened, energy drained, exhausted, fascinated, fatigued, frightened, nauseated, panicked, paralyzed, pinned, shaken, sickened, staggered, or stunned. A vehicle cannot be knocked prone, rendered unconscious, or made helpless.

Destroying Vehicles: Reducing a vehicle to zero hit points renders it non-functional. A vehicle reduced to its negative hit point value bursts into flame, immediately inflicting 3d6 fire damage to every creature that moves through or enters one of the vehicle's squares or an adjacent square for five minutes.

Stunts: Stunts are driving achievements involving a Vehicle Operation check. Failure results in a control roll, a slide, or a crash (see **Vehicle Operation**).

Character Actions: Most character actions do not apply to vehicles, and some of the occupants' actions may be more limited while inside. Any action not specifically prohibited or modified below is allowed as-is.

Bull Rush: Vehicles cannot bull rush, although they can ram (see below).

Charge: Vehicles cannot charge.

GROUND VEHICLES

STANDARD GROUND VEHICLES

NAME	CAP	CARGO	MAN.	SPEED	AC	RESIST.	HP	SIZE	COST	TL	CELL
4-wheel ATV	1+1	100	-1	20 ft. / 4	15	0	20	M	900	1	2/M
Armored truck	1+6	3,000	-2	20 ft. / 4	20	5	60	H	2,500	1	2/M
Tracked APC	1+8	1,000	-2	15 ft. / 3	25	10	75	G	8,500	1	2/M
Tank	1+3	500	-2	15 ft. / 3	27	10	100	G	10,500	2	2/M
Wheeled bike	1+1	20	0	30 ft. / 6	15	0	15	M	420	1	2/M
Wheeled buggy	1+1	50	0	25 ft. / 5	20	0	30	H	1,700	2	2/M
Wheeled truck	1+4	1,500	-2	20 ft. / 4	18	2	30	H	8,500	1	2/M

ETV-ECHAN TERRAIN VEHICLES

NAME	CAP	CARGO	MAN.	SPEED	AC	RESIST.	HP	SIZE	COST	TL	CELL
Behemoth	1+50	30,000	-5	15 ft. / 3	25	5	400	C+	212,500	3	3/H(2)
Land shark	1+20	5,000	-5	20 ft. / 4	25	10	200	C	162,500	2	3/H
Nomad	1+10	2,000	-2	25 ft. / 5	25	10	150	C	112,500	2	3/H
Nuke truck	1+10	3,000	-2	20 ft. / 4	23	10	100	G	162,500	3	--
Panther	1+1*	50	+1	40 ft. / 8	20	5	30	M	10,500	2	2/M
Scrambler	1+4	1,500	-1	25 ft. / 5	25	10	100	H	32,500	2	3/H
Wanderer	1+1	150	-1	25 ft. / 5	23	10	80	H	22,500	2	3/H

Flanking: Vehicles cannot flank, though occupants can. Creatures in vehicles cannot gain the benefits of both flanking and cover.

Movement: Vehicles cannot run, take a 5-foot step, or go prone. Creatures inside a vehicle can move freely inside of it. Disembarking is a move action: the creature moves to any square adjacent to the vehicle.

Attack: The vehicle's driver suffers a -4 penalty to attack rolls while the vehicle is in motion and must also make a control roll: this penalty is reduced to -2 with vehicle-mounted weapons. Passengers suffer a -2 penalty to all attack rolls while the vehicle is in motion: this penalty is reduced to -1 with vehicle-mounted weapons. All vehicle occupants use the vehicle's movement to determine additional movement penalties to attack rolls when firing unmounted two-handed or heavy weapons: mounted weapons are considered stationary. Super heavy weapons cannot be fired unmounted while in a vehicle, and suffer a -4 penalty to all attack rolls when the vehicle is moving. Sniper weapons do not grant their proficiency bonus when aiming from a moving vehicle.

Opportunity Attacks: Neither vehicles nor vehicle occupants threaten outside squares and thus cannot make external opportunity attacks. Likewise, neither vehicles nor their occupants can be targeted by external opportunity attacks.

Total Defense: Vehicles themselves cannot benefit from total defense, but any occupant (including the driver) can take the total defense action.

Using Skills: Any skill that could be negatively impacted by the motion of a vehicle (such as Heal or Engineer) suffers a penalty of -2 to -6, at the GM's discretion.

RAM: STANDARD ACTION

Vehicle: You must be controlling a vehicle to attempt a ram. You can perform other vehicle stunts normally as part of this action.

Target: You can ram any creature or object you could target with a melee attack, up to one size larger than your vehicle. If you attempt to ram a larger target, you crash. You cannot target individual occupants of a vehicle (subject to GM discretion).

Movement: Before you attempt a ram, take a normal move action and end your movement adjacent to the target. You do not need to move your full speed: take note of your remaining speed.

Reflex DC: The target makes a Reflex save against DC10 + your ranks in Vehicle Operation + your vehicle's Maneuver value. If the target succeeds, it avoids you and you continue moving your remaining speed. If you pass through an enemy square and do not perform a ram, the target automatically avoids you.

Hit: The effect of the ram is determined by the size of the target relative to you. When calculating damage, refer to the Crash Damage table below, replacing the size of the damage die as indicated.

One or More Size Larger: All occupants of your vehicle are staggered until the start of your next turn. Your vehicle and the target take damage according to your current speed: the damage die is d8 for your vehicle, d4 for the target. You push the target 1 square and move into the vacated square. Your current speed is reduced to 0.

Same Size: All occupants of your vehicle and the target (or occupants of the target vehicle) are staggered until the start of your next turn. Your vehicle and the target take damage according to your current speed: the damage die for both your vehicle and the target is d6. You push the target a number of squares equal to 1/4

your remaining speed. Your carryover speed becomes 1/4 of your current speed.

One Size Smaller: The target (or occupants of the target vehicle) is staggered until the start of your next turn. Your vehicle and the target take damage according to your current speed: the damage die is d4 for your vehicle, d8 for the target. You push the target a number of squares equal to 1/2 your remaining speed. Your carryover speed becomes 1/2 of your current speed.

Two or More Sizes Smaller: The target (or occupants of the target vehicle) is stunned until the start of your next turn. Your vehicle and the target take damage according to your current speed: the damage die for the target is d10, while your vehicle takes only 1 damage per die. You push the target a number of squares equal to your remaining speed -1. Your carryover speed becomes your current speed -1.

Target Speed: If you ram a vehicle that has carryover speed, take note of its heading. If you ram it head-on, add its carryover speed to your current speed for purposes of calculating damage; if you ram it from behind, subtract its carryover speed. If you ram it from the side, there is no adjustment.

Impossible Push: If the target is not pushed or cannot be pushed, you crash instead. The target takes damage as indicated above: resolve the effects of the crash on your vehicle as normal.

Crash: A crash is a catastrophic failure in vehicle control. In most crashes, you continue your remaining movement in the direction you were previously pointed. In others (like jumps), you immediately stop your movement.

If you crash, at the start of your turn you decelerate at your speed rating if you haven't immediately struck an obstruction. If you hit difficult terrain, or you hit an obstruction (like a wall or another vehicle), your movement stops. The vehicle and all occupants inside take damage according to the vehicle's current speed.

SPEED	DAMAGE
Less than 5	No damage
5-6	1d8
7-9	2d8
10-13	3d8
14-18	4d8
19-24	5d8
25-31	6d8
32-39	7d8
40-48	8d8
49-58	9d8
59+	10d8

If there are no obstructions to crash into, you continue decelerating at your speed rating each turn until your movement is 0 or until you hit an obstruction or difficult terrain. When a vehicle starts crashing, all occupants of the vehicle are staggered until the crash is resolved. If you failed a control roll by 5 or more, the vehicle swerves 45 degrees in a random direction before the crash commences.

If you failed a control roll by 10 or more, the vehicle rolls as it crashes. The vehicle takes 2d6 damage at the start of every turn it spends rolling.

Jump Failure: If you fail by 5 or less, you make the jump, but enter an uncontrolled slide. If you fail by 5 or more, your vehicle rolls. If you fail by 10 or more, you drive into the ground or fall short, instantly stopping and suffering damage.

Seatbelts: Occupants in vehicles are assumed to be strapped in when a vehicle crashes (unless they are moving around inside the vehicle). If a vehicle suffers damage from rolling or crashing, occupants strapped in suffer half the damage inflicted on the vehicle. Those not secured take full damage. Removing a seatbelt is a swift action, fastening is a move action.

Aircraft: An aircraft that fails its control roll loses altitude equal to x2 its speed. Aircraft never fall under the effects of a crash unless they run into something. As long as the aircraft is functional, you can attempt to regain control of it at the start of your next turn. Unlike ground vehicles, aircraft do not decelerate in a slide.

The vehicle, as well as all targets on board, is considered helpless if the craft impacts the ground. Blimps and thermals do not lose altitude when sliding or crashing. They remain suspended in the air via a series of "lifting bags" contained inside a larger carrier. This can be another balloon or a rigid superstructure. Each airship of this type lists the number of internal lifting bags. An attack that inflicts 20 damage or more on an aircraft may puncture a balloon instead of causing damage to the craft (attacker's choice). If so, the hit inflicts no damage on the vessel. Half of an airship's lifting bags must be punctured for an airship to be affected. Once half the lifting bags are punctured, the airship drops 20 feet (5 squares) at the start of each turn, dropping an additional 20 feet for every additional bag punctured. Every bag punctured also imposes a cumulative -1 penalty to the vessel's maneuverability. Only by destroying the vessel can it crash violently.

Escape: If all appears hopeless during a crash, occupants can try to escape by making a DC20 Acrobatics check for the driver or a DC15 check for passengers, +5 if the character is strapped in. Because all the occupants are staggered during a crash, they each have one chance per turn to try to escape. A driver who attempts to escape no longer has any control over the vehicle. Any target failing the escape roll by 5 or less still escapes but takes damage equal to the vehicle's current speed.

VEHICLE STATISTICS

Capacity: The standard person capacity or crew. In most cases, only one person is needed to drive the vehicle; other crewmembers serve as gunners or co-pilots. Each unused passenger slot allows the vehicle to carry an additional 200 lbs. Of cargo.

LAND SHARK

Cargo Capacity: The amount of cargo the vehicle is designed to carry in pounds.

Maneuver: The modifier is added to any Vehicle Operation checks and Reflex saves attempted with the vehicle.

Speed [Rating]: The maximum number of feet or squares the vehicle can accelerate per round.

AC: The vehicle's base AC.

Resistance: The vehicle's resistance to various attacks. Half the value (rounded down) is the vehicle's hardness: the full value applies against cold, fire, and sonic attacks.

Hit Points: The vehicle's hit points.

Size: The size of the vehicle. A vehicle with the designation C+ is twice the area of colossal size.

Cost: This is the purchase price to acquire the vehicle.

Tech Level: Unlike other equipment, a vehicle's tech level does not grant enhancement bonuses; it only determines its susceptibility to disruption.

Cell: All techan vehicles are battery powered. Each charge lasts three days in a minimal EDF setting (such as within a bastion or open wilderness) and one day in standard EDF saturation (whether or not the vehicle is running) or if put into a combat situation. The battery can be prematurely drained by disruption events.

Weapon Mounts: Certain vehicles come equipped with mounting hardware to attach weapons. When available, the mount is able to house any class of weapon listed (the vehicle's size is not taken into account when determining the class of weaponry, as is the case with exo-armor). Adding a weapon mount to a vehicle that doesn't have one costs 1000 uc for a two-handed small arm and 5000 uc for a heavy weapon. A vehicle must have a hit point total greater than 60 to mount a heavy weapon.

STANDARD GROUND VEHICLES

4-wheel All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV): All-terrain vehicles are miniaturized motorized buggies that are seldom employed for long missions outside of a bastion, though York survivalists and thrill seekers occasionally employ them on short excursions from the city. They don't offer the protection their larger cousins have. When seen in deep echa, they operate as scouts from a larger convoy.

Special: ATVs operate like mounts for the purposes of combat instead of vehicles.

Armored Truck (AT): Armored trucks offer amazing resistance to outside damage without the high costs of dedicated ETVs. Tires are run-flat, and the wheels are as protected as the rest of the truck. The enclosed cabin may have open gun-hole sliders while offering cover to those inside. Since most outside techan expeditions from Angel employ ETVs, most armored trucks outside of bastions are used by York.

Armament: ATs are equipped with a single turret heavy weapon mount.

Tracked Armored Personnel Carrier (APC): Slow, awkward, but reliable, the tracked APC design dates

back to ancient man. The modern model employs a half-track configuration—easy for the common driver to use as its controls match those of the common truck. Primary propulsion is delivered through a caterpillar tread replacing the rear axle while a pair of massive tires controls the steering in the front. The enclosed cabin and cargo area provide sufficient protection through heavy gauge steel. From the outside, the halftrack APC appears primitive, and it is certainly less prone to disruption than more advanced vehicles, but the power requirements of the tracks remain steep, limiting its range. In York, where they first appeared, they found use with the military patrolling around the city.

Armament: Halftrack APCs come equipped with two turret heavy weapon mounts.

Tank: It is a fact of progress that weapons technology will always outstrip armor. The classic tank was almost engineered into extinction as advances in armor-piercing weaponry continually surpassed the ability of tank designers to compensate. However, when those same anti-tank guns have a better-than-average chance of misfiring, many crews find several inches of composite armor separating them from the outside to be a great comfort. Even most monsters have trouble combating the matrix of synthetic diamond tiles sandwiched between layers of steel. Add to that a sealed, self-contained environment and soon, the number of tank volunteers surged within large bastion expeditionary armies. Modern tanks offer the security and safety of solid weight. At more than 40 tons, the modern tank (namely the York Mark V Partisan and the ugly Angel TDM-001 "Toad") can still zip over the landscape despite the profusion of obstacles willing to stand in its way.

Armament: Tanks contain three turret mounts for heavy weapons.

Pressurized: The crew is immune to all external inhaled diseases and poisons until the vehicle is destroyed.

Terrain: Tanks suffer no penalties for passing through difficult terrain. Terrain a tank passes over is no longer difficult. Tanks may even be submerged in water, bringing in air from an outside snorkel that rises up 10 feet from the hull.

Wheeled Vehicles: Almost all vehicles seen outside of bastions still use wheels. In case of critical disruption, they can still unlatch their drive train, hook on some beasts of burden, and convert into wagons (some remain that way). Even the most advanced bastions still employ wheeled transportation for the majority of their population. The only real exception is Selkirk, which has no roads. Despite Mann's and Sierra Madre's magnetic technology or Angel's hover vehicles, most of the population still lumbers over pavement. The most advanced variations of these are the ETVs listed later. Some expeditions can't afford such luxuries

and modify city vehicles to serve their purposes outside of bastions. Because of dwindling fossil fuels, all wheeled vehicles run off battery powered electric turbines.

Bike: Though motorbike variations number in the hundreds, the ones employed in echa often rest mounted behind ETVs and larger trucks, used for scouting and emergencies. These are durable basic machines with strong chassis and thick, large, run-flat tires with heavy treads. They don't offer any protection to the rider. Some manufacturers refer to them as enduros.

Special: Bikes operate like mounts for the purposes of combat instead of vehicles.

Buggy: Outside of echa, this title usually refers to semi-enclosed vehicles with a wide footprint upon the ground with tires spaced far to the corners. They are much larger than a standard car. The buggy encloses the crew in a steel and plastic frame that offers protection from a crash but not from the outside environment. The body is formed in such a way that shifting a tumbled vehicle back to its wheels is a relatively simple procedure. Thick steel roll bars prevent damage to the frame or the people inside, provided they are strapped in. These buggies, though designed for wild terrain, don't possess the lifespan or durability for extended excursions within it. Like enduro bikes, they usually supplement convoys rather than dominate them.

Truck: This descriptor covers a wide range of vehicles, from the open flatbed to the all terrain 4x4. Not even remotely designed for the echan world, wheeled trucks are still employed regardless: thankfully, their lack of complicated parts compared with other vehicles makes them easy to repair when they inevitably break down. Smaller mercenary groups use them, and York operates hundreds, shepherding people between the bastion and various military outposts surrounding the city. Like most all-terrain wheeled vehicles (save ETVs), wheeled trucks seen outside of bastions are from York.

ECHAN TERRAIN VEHICLES

Virtually all Wasteland All-Terrain Transports, or WATTs (usually referred to just as ETVs in standard parlance), come from Angel or Selkirk originally, although organizations such as the Iron Sons that operate out of multiple bastions make use of the technology wherever they go. These models are impractical for city use, being generally too large and/or clumsy for narrow city streets. They employ a modular design, shielded electronics, massive wheels, and grunt horsepower. They start from svelte and nimble bikes to gargantuan dirt trains like the behemoth and sand shark.

Behemoth: The behemoth matches its name perfectly. This goliath lumbers over the landscape, delivering power equally to its 8x8 drivetrain. Massive steel-reinforced rubber/carbon tires supply little

cushioning, relying on the beast's floating platform suspension system to keep it smooth and stable. Its eight wheels cover a footprint 40 feet wide and 60 feet long, and the three-level atrocity towers nearly twenty-five feet tall. This monster usually heralds its approach with the cracking of trees and snapping of bushes as it pushes and heaves through forest and grassland. Though at home in the arid and rocky terrain around Selkirk where it was built, in the varied landscape of the southern lands, the behemoth is somewhat overkill. The brute clumsily bullies its way through whatever stands in front. The fat and awkward TDM-001 Toad prances gracefully in comparison. When spotted outside Dianaso, the behemoth serves a broader purpose, as either a mobile base of operations for mercenary groups or as a nomadic home for families. The behemoth was not designed to be a military vessel so lacks any weapon mounts, counting on its population for defense.

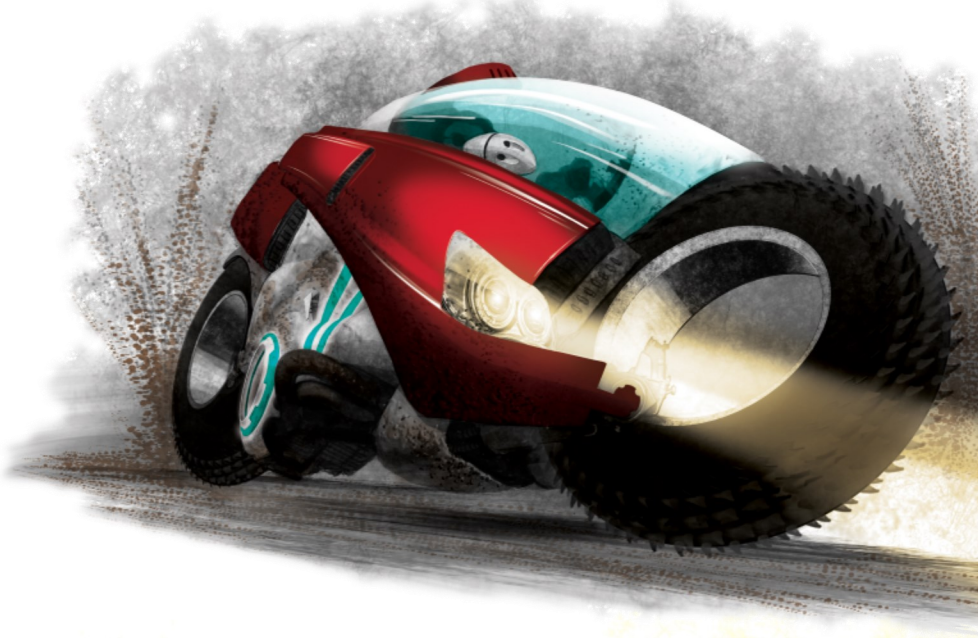
Clumsy: The behemoth can make a 45 degree turn no faster than three times its speed rating. It can make a 90 degree turn if it is moving no faster than twice its speed rating.

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if the behemoth is disrupted, it comes back online.

Energy: Solar cells covering the flat top of the behemoth regenerate one charge each week.

Sealed: The behemoth is waterproof. The crew is immune to all external inhaled diseases and poisons until the vehicle is destroyed.

Terrain: The behemoth suffers no penalties for passing through difficult terrain. Terrain the behemoth passes over is no longer difficult. It may even be totally submerged in water, bringing in air from an outside snorkel that rises up 10 feet from the hull.



PANTHER

SCRAMBLER

Land Shark: Also from Selkirk, this successor to the behemoth is substantially smaller, and while its redesigned motor system requires roughly as much power intake, it is much more efficient and can make do on a single battery instead of two. The 8x8 wheel system was replaced by an even more durable 4x4 tri-drive sprocket caterpillar system. In the middle of the 40-foot long vehicle is a pivot segment, allowing the vehicle enhanced mobility in tighter areas. Despite its convoluted drive system, the land shark is faster than the behemoth but not as roomy. It gained more popularity as a mobile command post for mercenary groups and military, and armed variants lead most Selkirk convoys into the Deep Pass. While the behemoth is wide and fat, the land shark is thin and tall. Even though only 20 feet wide, it still stands 25 feet high, as tall as its predecessor.

Armament: The land shark carries a single heavy weapon turret mount.

Clumsy: The land shark can make a 45 degree turn no faster than three times its speed rating. It can make a 90 degree turn if it is moving no faster than twice its speed rating.

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if the land shark is disrupted, it comes back online.

Energy: Solar cells covering the flat top of the land shark regenerate one charge each week. S*ealed:* The land shark is waterproof. The crew is immune to all external inhaled diseases and poisons until the vehicle is destroyed.

Terrain: The land shark suffers no penalties for passing through difficult terrain. Terrain the land shark passes over is no longer difficult. It may even be totally submerged in water, bringing in air from an outside snorkel that rises up 10 feet from the hull.

Nomad: The final Selkirk land cruiser variant released is the smallest of the trio, and by far the most popular outside of the Dianaso pass. The nomad uses wheels like the behemoth, though only having six. It

AIRCRAFT

NAME	CAP	CARGO	MAN.	SPEED	AC	RESIST.	HP	SIZE	COST	TL	CELL
Angel Hammerhead	2+2	500	-2	45 ft. / 9	20	7	60	H	15,000	2	1/H
Armored Zeppelin	1+15	2,000	-6	25 ft. / 5	20	5	80	C+	63,500	2	15/H
Mann Pantokrator	1+6	1,500	-1	50 ft. / 10	20	10	100	G	162,500	4	1/H
Thermal Blimp	1+4	300	-5	5 ft. / 1	18	5	50	G	22,500	0	[1]
Thermal Frame, Standard	1+15	1,000	-6	10 ft. / 2	20	5	100	C+	42,500	0	[1]
Thermal Frame, Large	1+30	2,000	-7	15 ft. / 3	21	5	150	C+	52,500	1	[1]
York Wasp	1	5	-2	45 ft. / 9	20	5	40	M	5,000	3	1/H

[1] See text

features a center pivot so the vehicle can maneuver in tighter confines like the land shark. It is the smallest at only 20 feet tall and 30 feet long. This model has found use all over Canam and, along with the scrambler, is the most common ETV seen in open echa.

The nomad moves via four separate electric motors contained in each of the axles. It receives power to all of them from its contained main drive in the rear of the vehicle, snuggled next to its ample cargo hold. The cabin occupies the entirety of the forward module. Unlike the land shark and behemoth, the nomad only has two levels but an efficient design makes it almost as roomy as the shark, with separated cabins and full air and waste management system. The nomad is both waterproof and self-sustaining. However, because of its smaller size, a rechargeable power system was never offered standard.

Clumsy: The nomad can make a 45 degree turn no faster than three times its speed rating. It can make a 90 degree turn if it is moving no faster than twice its speed rating.

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if the nomad is disrupted, it comes back online.

Sealed: The nomad is waterproof. The crew is immune to all external inhaled diseases and poisons until the vehicle is destroyed.

Terrain: The nomad suffers no penalties for passing through difficult terrain. Terrain the nomad passes over is no longer difficult. It may even be totally submerged in water, bringing in air from an outside snorkel that rises up 10 feet from the hull.

"Nuke Truck" (TDM-002 Maco): In order to combat EDF interference outside their walls, Angel R&D created a vehicle with its own shielded micro-nuclear fission power pack. The result is an extremely expensive and risky long-range carrier, the TDM-002 maco, mostly referred to as the "the nuke truck." The reactor, though miniature, is enough to keep the vehicle going and its systems fully powered for a full year before needing service. Because of the reduced degradation of Uranium-235 in the EDF and its increased resistance to shedding neutrons, scientists switched to Radium 226 and Thorium 232, which accelerate their decay while in magic. Since these materials cannot be found easily in nature, the only way to service and re-supply a nuke truck involves taking it to one of only two breeder reactors in Canam: one in York and the other in Angel. The breeder reactors expel more fissionable materials than they receive, but the process is not cheap and a full service and re-supply of a nuke truck takes a week and costs 10,000 uc. However, the advantages are plain to see. The extensive radiation shielding virtually removes any chance of the reactor shorting out in the EDF, although the rest of the vehicle's onboard systems aren't quite so well protected.

Clumsy: The nuke truck makes a 45 degree turn no faster than three times its speed rating. It can make a 90 degree turn if it is moving no faster than twice its speed rating.

Critical Mass: If the nuke truck is destroyed, the reactor melts. This causes everything for 20 squares (100 ft.) to suffer 10d10+100 points of damage. Everything for the next 20 squares (100 ft.) takes 10d10 points of damage (DC30 Reflex save for half damage). The initial area where the truck detonates becomes a severe radioactive hazard for 5 years (yes, that's it).

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if the nuke truck is disrupted, it comes back online.

Shielded: If a nuke truck disrupts, it gains a +4 to all saving throws to recover.

Sealed: The nuke truck is waterproof. The crew is immune to all external inhaled diseases and poisons until the vehicle is destroyed.

Special: To repair or even work on an engine of this complexity imposes a -5 penalty to the Engineer skill check.

Terrain: A nuke truck suffers no penalties for passing through difficult terrain. Terrain the nuke truck passes over is no longer difficult. It may even be totally submerged in water, bringing in air from an outside snorkel that rises up 10 feet from the hull.

Panther, Verkelen Alpha-1: Angel's government-funded arms maker dedicated to ETV and anti-echan R&D, Verkelen, started drawing plans to compete in the ETV market just under a century ago. The result, after millions of uc in development and testing, proved brilliant. The panther features a completely enclosed stretched ovoid body with two forks sticking forward and back where the spoke-less wheels are mounted. Huge computer-controlled gas shocks absorb impact by predicting upcoming terrain and adjusting accordingly. The panther features a gyroscopic stabilization control system (GSCS), preventing it from toppling over.

ANGEL HAMMERHEAD

Unless fully deactivated, the panther can never be unbalanced from any maneuver or attack. The computer works with the driver, allowing the bike to lean over when the vehicle intends to maneuver but sensors detect if it will result in a fall. The GSCS even allows the vehicle to adjust its angle of attack on upcoming terrain. The panther's wheels are magnetically driven, capable of stopping and forcing its wheels into a lock. Each wheel carries enough torque to lift the entire body of the panther on one axle. The GSCS can then maintain that angle. With this ability, the panther could even climb a steep hill it has no hope of scaling by simply walking up its side.

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if the panther is disrupted, it comes back online.

Properties: The panther requires a DC25 Strength check to be pushed over or moved. It can fit another medium sized creature, but all Vehicle Operation rolls in the cramped space suffer a -4 penalty.

Sealed: The panther is waterproof. The crew is immune to all external inhaled diseases and poisons until the vehicle is destroyed.

Scrambler, Verkelen Mark IV: Selkirk produces the largest ETVs in the world but at one point Angel made a play for the prize. They released two models within ten years, both large and somewhat clumsy, though in the end, nowhere near to the immensity of those from Selkirk. The most popular of all these was the scrambler ETV. This vehicle keeps the crew in a tightly sealed environment, elevated twenty feet above the ground. It rolls on six massive thick-treaded, steel-sidewall supported run-flat tires eight feet across. The scrambler can lose up to two tires without being disabled. The multi-level cabin can hold five people in relative comfort with many of the amenities the crew enjoys at home, including full sewage recycling and kitchen as well sleeping areas. It also sports one of the largest headlight assemblies of any vehicle, equipped

with twenty forward-mounted high intensity discharge lights capable of illuminating a cone of terrain hundreds of feet long. Much smaller than the behemoth or land shark, the scrambler is the preferred choice among smaller techan groups.

Lights: The scrambler can illuminate a 200 foot cone.

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if the scrambler is disrupted, it comes back online.

Sealed: The scrambler is waterproof. The crew is immune to all external inhaled diseases and poisons until the vehicle is destroyed.

Wanderer, Verkelen Mark II: The wanderer began its life as a next generation ground interceptor for the Angel military. As time passed before a successful prototype could reach testing, advances in hover technology surpassed ground possibilities and the newly formed Crimson Starlight soon captured the public attention and the entirety of military funding. Verkelen shelved the designs and mothballed the prototype for almost a hundred years until the increase in mercenary forces and the desire for echan expeditions encouraged a revisit to the old design. The wanderer measures thirty feet long but the main body only measures eight feet across. A complex motor system involving four large axles mounted on hydraulic powered limbs is capable of raising the craft anywhere from five to fifteen feet off the ground and/or widening its wheel placement to as far as twenty feet across. Two wheels are attached at each axle. The entire motor assembly also sits under a large swivel joint, allowing the entire cabin to rotate on its center. When traveling at any substantial speed or when committing any hazardous maneuvers, the wanderer must widen its drivetrain or risk tumbling over.

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if your armor is disrupted, it comes back online.

Clumsy: The wanderer can make a 45 degree turn no faster than three times its speed rating. It can make

a 90 degree turn if it is moving no faster than twice its speed rating.

Motor System: The motive-limbs are neither fast nor articulate, and require a move action to shift configuration, though this can be done as a stunt with the same DC as a 90 degree turn. By default, the wheels are spaced twenty feet apart. The wanderer can squeeze by adjusting this configuration.

Sealed: The wanderer is waterproof. The crew is immune to all external inhaled diseases and poisons until the vehicle is destroyed.

Turrets: The wanderer comes equipped with two turret mounts for two-handed small arms.

AIRCRAFT

Generally, most techans avoid air travel outside of bastions, stemming from the susceptibility of avionics to disrupt. Techans are paranoid enough worrying about an ETV breaking down: add in the possibility of falling to one's death and most people opt for ground travel. There are noteworthy exceptions, and these all come in the form of lighter-than-air vehicles.

AIRCRAFT DESCRIPTIONS

Angel Hammerhead: This military aircraft uses fanjets to keep itself airborne and is unable to stay aloft otherwise: thankfully, the fanjets have a built-in redundancy that can compensate if the craft loses one of its engines. It operates as both a transport and as an attack vehicle capable of parking over a location and securing ground like a tank. It doesn't deliver the massive punch of a focused attack helicopter but can nearly equal one when accounting for maneuverability. It is equipped with a laser range finder, thermal imaging night sights, and a digital ballistic computer. Both the fuel and ammunition are compartmentalized to enhance survivability.

Armament: Two heavy weapon turrets or three two-handed small-arm turrets.

Auto-Reload: You have a mechanism to reload your weapons. You can reload three clips/cells before needing external loading. Reloading still takes a move action using this system. You must land for external reloading.

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if the craft is disrupted, it comes back online.

Movement: The hammerhead can hover without making a skill check. You don't need to roll Vehicle Operation checks for operating at high speeds.

Pressurized: The crew is immune to all external inhaled diseases and poisons until the vehicle is destroyed.

Sensors: Darkvision 200 ft.

Armored Zeppelin: Thankfully, along with magnetic fields, lighter than air vehicles depend on a science undisrupted by magic. Before they developed magnetic technology, Selkirk employed low-tech rigid airships filled with helium to transport themselves around the mountains. Because of its resistance to disruption, the

zeppelin remains a popular choice for long journeys. Even if its fanjet nacelles short out, the craft will remain airborne. Engineers later added retractable sails for emergency propulsion if the primary drive fails. Internal cells separate the helium to prevent a catastrophic collapse in case of a puncture. The craft can lose pressure from more than half of its twelve segments and still not fall. Its ultralight polymer and metal envelope covers an internal aramid skin. The shell, wrapped around an aluminum skeleton, maintains its shape even when deflated, unlike standard balloons or blimps. This allows a greater capacity of gas and cargo. The majority of the crew lives in a pressurized segment inside the superstructure. Though several echans and techans use airships, the armored zeppelin from Selkirk is the only model employed by a bastion.

Lifting Bags: This aircraft is equipped with eight lifting bags. If deflated, you can use heated air in lieu of helium but the vessel suffers a -1 penalty to maneuverability for each bag filled this way.

Pressurized: The crew is immune to all external inhaled diseases and poisons until the vehicle is destroyed.

Movement: The zeppelin can hover without making a skill check. In addition, the zeppelin has sails. In an emergency, you can use them to substitute normal propulsion at 1/4 of its rated speed. You don't need to roll Vehicle Operation checks for operating at high speed. The armored zeppelin cannot attempt the following stunt checks: Acceleration (aggressive and floor it), deceleration (aggressive and hard breaking), evasive driving (all DCs), or turning (90 degree--any speed).

Repair Drone: A repair drone buzzes around inside the superstructure, patching breaches in the baffles before they hemorrhage their gas. Once per minute, a repair drone can seal a single breach as a standard action (taken by the pilot), using one charge in the process.

Special—Resupply Helium: If out of helium, all bastions and even some techan forts can resupply you. The price varies depending on the location but the average cost to fill a balloon is between 300-600 uc.

Mann Pantokrator: The only known Mann aircraft seen outside of the bastion's walls, the pantokrator was intentionally over-engineered to increase survivability in echa. Two pylon-mounted fanjets provide lateral movement and rudimentary lift if the vehicle's primary any-gravity module is damaged. The vessel also features visible weapon pods to increase intimidation. Its size and payload have dubbed it the "flying fortress". Increased armor makes it virtually impenetrable to small arms fire from the ground. The rear cargo area can hold up to six fully armed soldiers.

Armament: Two two-handed weapon turrets and one heavy weapon turret OR two heavy weapon turrets OR one super heavy weapon turret.

Auto-Reload: You have a mechanism to reload your weapons. You can reload three clips/cells before needing external loading. Reloading still takes a move action using this system. You must land for external reloading.

Disruption Recovery: Once a day, as a swift action, if the craft is disrupted, it comes back online.

Movement: The pantokrator can hover without making a skill check. You don't need to roll Vehicle Operation checks for operating at high speed.

Pressurized: The crew is immune to all external inhaled diseases and poisons until the vehicle is destroyed.

Regeneration: Every round, the pantokrator is cured of 3 points of damage.

Sensors: Darkvision 200 ft.

Active Camouflage Denial System: Use a move action a select a 10 foot radius area within 200 feet. All creatures in that area lose all benefits from concealment. Total concealment is reduced to basic concealment. Targets using concealment for stealth are detected. Invisible targets are visible.

York Wasp: The wasp is a one-man aerial transport popular in the eastern bastion. It is used in law enforcement, traffic control, and military divisions assigned to urban warfare. The wasp is occasionally fitted with weapons but is mostly employed for reconnaissance. It has no room for passengers, as the craft wraps around its user.

Armament: Wasps have a single weapon turret to hold a two-handed small-arm.

Auto-Reload: You have a mechanism to reload your weapon. You can reload three clips/cells before needing external loading. Reloading still takes a move action using this system. You must land for external reloading.

Movement: The wasp can hover without making a skill check. You don't need to roll Vehicle Operation checks for operating at high speed.

Pressurized: The pilot is immune to all external inhaled diseases and poisons until the vehicle is destroyed.

Sensors: Darkvision 100 ft. And you can see all invisible targets within 50 feet.

THERMAL AIRSHIPS

Since helium or hydrogen are hard to come by in the modern world, designers started brainstorming alternatives. With the exception of Selkirk, still employing a model of gasbag craft when flying outside of its perimeter, all the other bastions abandoned airships in favor of faster, more maneuverable vectored-thrust and rotor-lift variations. This knowledge refused to fall into antiquity and a few stubborn engineers, relics proclaiming a lost art, sold or imparted this expertise to the outside world. Airships moved in their own direction. Though a few rare models employ solar or battery powered propulsion, the majority (including all those under control of echans) utilize reliable methods including wind, steam, and dependable manpower. The laudenians are believed to employ a variety of airship powered by magic to travel between their semi-mythical castles in the air, but no non-laudenian has ever seen such a craft.

VEHICLE MODIFICATIONS

MODIFICATION	COST	TL	CELL	DESCRIPTION
Nawz!	420	1	--	Temporary speed boost
Auto-Reloader	500	2	M	Reload weapons automatically
EPCM Level 1	500	1	--	+1 enhancement bonus to AC
Parachute	500	--	--	Emergency escape method
Weapon mount (2-handed small-arm)	500	--	--	Mount a 2-handed small arm
Electronics Flash Reprogramming	900	--	--	+5 ft. (1 square) bonus to speed
Fly By Wire[2]	1,700	2	M7	+3 maneuverability
Reinforced Mainframe I	900	--	--	+10 hit points
Suspension Upgrade I[1]	900	--	--	Reduce maneuverability by 1
EPCM Level 2	2,500	2	--	+2 enhancement bonus to AC
Reinforced Mainframe II	2,500	--	--	+20 hit points (min 40 hit points)
Sails[2]	2,500	--	--	+1 inherent bonus to speed
Suspension Upgrade II[1]	2,500	--	--	Reduce maneuverability by 1
Weapon Turret (heavy weapon)	2,500	--	--	Mount a heavy weapon
Reinforced Mainframe III	6,500	--	--	+30 hit points (min 80 hit points)
Weapon Turret (super heavy weapon)	6,500	--	--	Mount a super heavy weapon
Battery Turbine[2]	8,500	2	M7	+4 inherent bonus to speed
Complete Composite Retrofit I	8,500	--	--	+2 enhancement bonus to resistance
Repair Drone[2]	8,500	3	M3	Repair holes in balloons
Solar[2]	8,500	2	M7	+2 inherent bonus to speed.
Suspension Upgrade III [1]	8,500	2	--	Reduce maneuverability by 1
EPCM Level 3	12,500	3	--	+3 enhancement bonus to AC
Premiere Performance Suspension I[1]	12,500	2	--	+1 enhancement bonus to maneuverability
Steam Drive[2]	12,500	1	--	+3 enhancement bonus to speed
Complete Composite Retrofit II	22,500	1	--	+4 enhancement bonus to resistance
Premiere Performance Suspension II[1]	32,500	2	--	+2 enhancement bonus to maneuverability
Reinforced Mainframe IV	32,500	1	--	+50 hit points (min 100)
Premiere Performance Suspension III[1]	62,500	2	--	+3 enhancement bonus to maneuverability
EPCM Level 4	62,500	4	--	+4 enhancement bonus to AC
Visual Active Camouflage	62,500	5	--	Total concealment / invisibility
Complete Composite Retrofit III	100,000	--	--	+6 enhancement bonus to resistance
Premiere Performance Suspension IV[1]	100,000	2	--	+4 enhancement bonus to maneuverability

[1]Ground vehicle only
[2]Thermal only

Thermals (as they are often known) remain popular in Canam and Lauropa more than in any other region in the world, though few attempt to cross the expanse between these great lands. In Canam, they proved more popular given the continent's girth and the influx of ground-based raiders. Almost every echan city, from Janoah to Limshau to Victrix, sports mooring towers. In Gnimfall, mooring cables hang from every grind tower. York and Selkirk are the only bastions to allow the mooring of echan thermals. Pilots must tread carefully when plotting a course: the northeast region of Canam swarms with dragons, and airship skeletons are scattered across the Gloam to the south. The sky is still not safe but is considerably healthier in comparison to ground travel.

Thermals are broken up into two subgroups: blimps and frames. All variations gain their lift through differentials in temperature between the outside air and the gasses contained within airbladders resting inside the structure. The choice of thermal lift over lighter gas comes from access: refining helium (the safer choice) is costly and requires techan processes to produce. The method of heating the air inside the balloon comes either from a natural heat (a coal fire for example) or from a magical one. All models are controlled by non-amplified mechanical flight control systems. This involves a series of pulleys and cables that directly transmit instructions to the control surfaces – though ineffective on faster aircraft, this method is perfect for slower-moving airships. Even on the larger thermal frames, a slightly more advanced servo-tab system allows the shifting of these massive fins with little force -feedback. All thermals are equipped with a basic pedal -based motor system requiring simple brute constitution for acceleration, making travel by flier just as exhausting as travel by foot, at least for a portion of a group. Rumors persist that it is possible to permanently enchant an airship. Though a basic blimp or standard

frame without any propulsion or control modifications could theoretically be enchanted, the possibility of the enchantment disrupting the control surfaces may be too high. Moreover, the amount of spellwork required would be staggering. Not only would the entire craft need to be animated, but so would its propulsion system and flame. Add to that the need to make the spells permanent and the result is a procedure probably costing upwards of 3,000,000 gp not event taking into account the rarity of casters capable of accomplishing such a feat.

Lift: All thermals come with a torch to heat the air. It is either coal or propane. Usually a thermal has enough flame to keep it airborne for a week. This simple energy source can be resupplied at any village-sized or larger settlement at a negligible cost (anywhere between 5-10 gp).

Movement: All thermals can hover without requiring a skill check. You don't need to roll Vehicle Operation checks for operating at high speed. Thermals cannot attempt the following stunt checks: Acceleration (aggressive and floor it), deceleration (aggressive and hard breaking), evasive driving (all DCs), or turning (90 degree--any speed).

Properties: The maximum altitude of any thermal is 12,375 feet. Being a lighter-than-air vehicle, thermals do not suffer from altitude loss if they fail a stunt roll.

Blimp: Blimps are hot-air ships with a non-rigid structure. Without pressure, they deflate. After cold air is pumped in and then heated, the baffles fill up and the final shape takes form. Only the passenger car or gondola has rigid construction. The difference between blimps and simple hot-air balloons is the addition of tail fins and propulsion.

Lifting Bags: This aircraft is equipped with four lifting bags.

Frame: This refers to a rigid airship—a dirigible maintaining its shape from a framework instead of internal pressure via a lifting gas. The rigid design offers the advantage of an increased lift capacity as the vessel can hold more and larger lifting bags inside the superstructure. Unlike blimps, where the crew sits in a gondola underneath the main balloon, frames only have a small cockpit with the cargo and crew compartments residing inside the balloon assembly. Some models come equipped with galleys and sleeping bays. Two sizes fly over most of Canam, with the larger reserved for mercenary units, public transportation, and charter flights. Manual propulsion keeps this vehicle incredibly slow, and most of those who can afford it and justify the disruption risk opt to upgrade to an automatic system.
If using the manual system, the standard frame requires 1 additional crewmember and the large model requires an additional 3. The large variant is by no means the largest; it's just the largest public option. Gnimfall flies the Ziggurat-Ex-Mundi between the various grind towers around Canam. It can hold up to fifty gimfen in comfort (though humans find the accommodations cramped). The ZEM's advanced steam drive makes it the fastest airship known. The largest frame of all comes from Limshau, the Abecedarian. Measuring a thousand feet long and weighing 150 tons, this 120-passenger transport connects with all the smaller cities in the kingdom.

Lifting Bags: This aircraft is equipped with six lifting bags.

Properties: The larger thermal frame uses a slightly more complicated flight control system over the smaller frames and blimps, and thus counts as a tech level 1 vehicle, though receiving a +5 bonus to all saving throws against disruption.

OTHER LOW-TECH VEHICLES

EDF is not kind to mechanical propulsion systems, especially those that rely on regularity – although the chemistry and physics work the same as ever, the systematic processes required by a fuel injection system is too easily interrupted. Interestingly, the chance of disruption seems to rise according to the volatility of the fuel source: steam power (relying only on pressure) is almost totally safe, while high-octane gasoline, even if it were readily available, causes the vehicle's engine to break down almost the instant it is turned on. Alcohol-based carburetors are the most stable combustion engines, functioning with minimal difficulty in low-EDF areas and disrupting once or twice a day or so but easily set to working order again, and even the occasional engine burning refined vegetable oil can be made to run as long as one has a capable mechanic on hand to repair it a half-dozen times a day. This presumes that the device only sees low-grade use, and is kept out of combat – a crop harvester is far more reliable than a jalopy, and not only are such low-powered engines totally unsuitable for the stress of conflict, but the pressure of EDF that builds up in such circumstances would inevitably get to the unshielded mechanism. Low-tech vehicles are all TL1, have a top speed of 10 mph and no tactical properties – such vehicles disrupt immediately if combat breaks out.

VEHICLE MODIFICATIONS

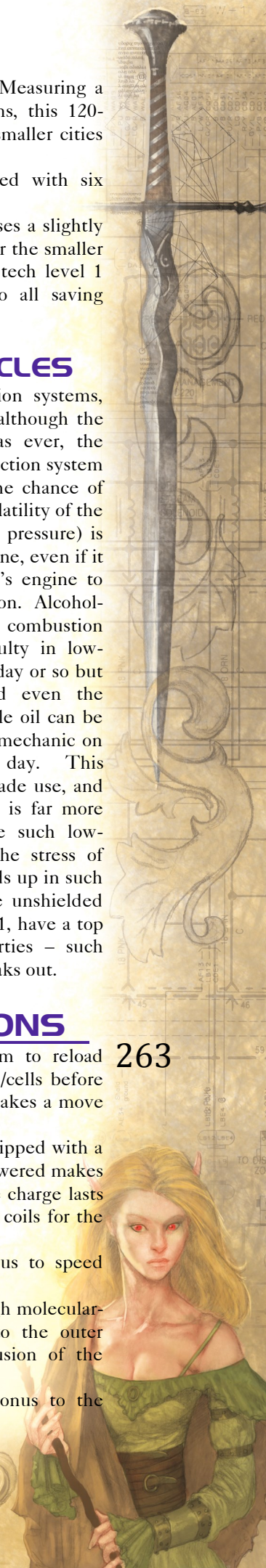
Auto-Reloader: You have a mechanism to reload your weapons. You can reload three clips/cells before needing external loading. Reloading still takes a move action using this system.

Battery Turbine: An airship can be equipped with a battery-powered turbine. Being battery powered makes it the most susceptible to disruption. One charge lasts one day. The battery also powers heating coils for the air chambers.

Property: +20ft/4 square inherent bonus to speed rating.

Complete Composite Retrofit: Ultra high molecular-density polyethylene plates are bolted to the outer panels of the vehicle, removing any illusion of the transport's purpose.

Level I Property: +2 enhancement bonus to the vehicle's resistance value.



Level II Property: +4 enhancement bonus to the vehicle's resistance value.

Level III Property: +6 enhancement bonus to the vehicle's resistance value.

Electronic/Physical Counter Measures (EPCM): This is not one modification but several accomplishing similar ends. Reactive plating, adaptive camouflage, and regenerative countermeasures assist in making even an immobile vehicle harder to target with both close and ranged attacks. Reactive systems run off the vehicle's power source and any gains by this system are lost if the vehicle is disrupted.

Level I Property: +1 enhancement bonus to the vehicle's AC.

Level II Property: +2 enhancement bonus to the vehicle's AC.

Level III Property: +3 enhancement bonus to the vehicle's AC.

Level IV Property: +4 enhancement bonus to the vehicle's AC.

Electronics Flash Reprogramming: EFP involves removing the vehicle's engine control system which limits the vehicle's power output by dictating throttle response injection timing. The unit is then replaced or reprogrammed for higher and more efficient output.

Property: +5ft/1 square enhancement bonus to speed rating.

Nawz!: Your customized vehicle has a slight modification you haven't told anyone else about. Once a day, as a swift action, the speed of your vehicle increases by +10 ft (+2 squares) for 1 minute.

Fly-by-wire: This system completely replaces the primitive control system with a digital fly-by-wire system common in all other techan aircraft. This turns the entire vessel into a TL2 craft, requiring a battery cell to operate, using a charge each day of use.

Property: +3 power bonus to maneuverability.

Parachute: Parachutes attach to the main cabin or cockpit of an aircraft and deploy in case of freefall. A mechanical barometric switch triggers parachutes to prevent a terminal crash. The vehicle must be at least 200 feet above the ground for the parachute to operate safely.

Premiere Performance Suspension: This expensive modification involves installing an intelligent active suspension system which includes computer enhanced systems like TCS (Traction Control System), ASR (Anti-Slip Regulation), and ESC (Electronically Stability Control).

Level I Property: +1 inherent bonus to the vehicle's maneuverability.

Level II Property: +2 inherent bonus to the vehicle's maneuverability.

Level III Property: +3 inherent bonus to the vehicle's maneuverability.

Level IV Property: +4 inherent bonus to the vehicle's maneuverability.

Reinforced Chassis: By strengthening the chassis with strut and sway bars, adding run flat tires, and replacing key components with harder and lighter materials like carbon fiber, the vehicle can endure more punishment.

Level I Property: Vehicle gains +10 hit points.

Level II Property: Vehicle gains +20 hit points. Vehicle must have at least 40 hit points for this modification.

Level III Property: Vehicle gains +30 hit points. Vehicle must have at least 80 hit points for this modification. Maneuver rating decreases by 1.

Level IV Property: Vehicle gains +50 hit points. Vehicle must have at least 100 hit points for this modification. Maneuver rating decreases by 1.

Repair Drone: A repair drone buzzes around inside the superstructure, patching breaches in the baffles before they hemorrhage their gas. The driver of the vehicle can use a standard action to make the repair drone patch one breach.

A repair drone can seal a single breach once per minute, using one charge in the process.

Sails: These pectoral and dorsal mounted sails provide a small boost in speed and can provide movement in an emergency if other means are neutralized. The sails can be drawn in and unfurled in one minute. This modification can only be added onto frames, not blimps.

Property: +5ft/1 square inherent bonus to speed rating when deployed.

Solar: This extensive addition covers the entire top half of the airship structure in solar photovoltaic cells. Stored energy is then used to power the propulsion system. This uses the same system as a battery drive, shunting power to turbines, providing propulsion. The ultimate advantage comes from an unlimited lifespan, supplying energy to the heating coils and the drive system. It turns the vessel into a TL2 craft. The solar array recharges the cell at a rate of 1 charge per day.

Property: +10ft/2 square inherent bonus to speed rating.

Steam Drive: This basic powerplant uses steam to not only power the propellers but also heat the air balloons as well. It replaces the basic standard torch with a much more powerful boiler, connected to a double-action steam engine. This requires a source of heat as well as a supply of water. The average thermal can run for four days before requiring more water, a week before requiring more coal or propane. Being a basic engine, the steam drive counts as TL1 but gains a +5 bonus to any disruption saves.

Property: +3 inherent bonus to speed rating.

Suspension Upgrade: This modification improves maneuverability with stiffer coils and springs. Various parts of the vehicle are replaced with lighter carbon fiber and aluminum components.

Special: You can add multiple levels of this modification to the same vehicle: its effects stack.

Level I Property: Reduce maneuverability penalty by 1 (maximum 0).

Level II Property: Reduce maneuverability penalty by 1 (maximum 0).

Level III Property: Reduce maneuverability penalty by 1 (maximum 0).

Visual Active Camouflage System: This is an active cloaking system that can conceal a vehicle when not engaged in combat.

Property: You can use a standard action to gain concealment. This effect ends the moment you move or are moved from your square. You also gain a +4 bonus to Stealth.

Thermoptics: Once a day, as a standard Action, you become invisible for up to five minutes. If you are hit by a melee or ranged attack, you enter a square filled with water, you are hit with debris, or you fire any weapons, there is a 50% chance you become visible and the effect ends.

Weapon Mount / Turret: A vehicle must have a listed hit point total equal to or greater than 30 to mount a two-handed weapon turret, equal to or greater than 60 to mount a heavy weapon (unless stated otherwise), and equal to or greater than 100 to mount a super heavy weapon (unless stated otherwise). Most vehicles can have only one weapon mount. Weapons use their original size when determining what can be fitted to a mount, even if they nominally count as a smaller weapon for a larger user.

It wasn't much of a road, but someone once strewn these rocks here with a purpose. The trees and bushes were pulled aside creating a path wide enough to accommodate a wagon. It was not an often used road.

Aiden kept his walk brisk. He didn't pass any travelers or found any evidence that there ever had been any for a hundred years. He couldn't see Angel.

Aiden wasn't sure why he had noticed the rock. It was a small round stone not unlike a million others on the path. It was smooth and grey with specks of black. It would offer a couple skips if tossed skillfully across a lake. It stood straight on a point against an ocean of flat brothers. Aiden reached down and picked it up. The bottom wasn't flat. He rolled his thumb across its surface and wondered how it found itself standing and how it could remain that way all this time. Was it chance or was it magic? Aiden placed the rock back. It immediately fell over. He tried again, but failed. Aiden finally kicked the stone casually off the path before continuing down the road.

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Aiden was not on the Continental Cross--the moderately traveled highway that bisected Canam which he had read about. In order to save time, the scrambler crew had gone northeast and made Aiden walk south. Aiden wondered if it truly was eight hours or eight days at his pace.

Night fell with no Antikari. Aiden hoped to find gas-fed fires atop of posts and the revelry of rowdy humans behind tavern walls. When he entered the forest the road began to narrow. The light from Attricana beamed down from a cloudless night. Aiden could almost read by it. It looked as any star. It warranted worship as he imagined the constellations did when people could still make most of them out. Now this single brightness reigned orphaned in the night. It was not like the other stars. This star required no cresting backbone over the darkness to stay up. Aiden walked but every step was predicated by the dread of breaking a twig and beckoning predators. The canopy above was thickening, dimming the light as Aiden braved deeper.

The lake Aiden approached was almost inviting. He stared at its stillness, it's perfectly smooth skin. It unnerved him. He felt the wind but the water refused to obey. Aiden's mouth crumpled and he swallowed. His canteen had been emptied by dusk. He approached the beach slowly and unscrewed the top off the decanter. The strap fell off his shoulder and dangled precarious close to the mirrored surface. Aiden stopped before breaking the surface. He carefully pulled the canteen back. He was positive he'd read something about this, but he couldn't recall the details. He would rather be thirsty. Aiden backed from the beach and continued alongside, following the fading path. It led him back into the dense growth.

When Aiden began his journey, he had refused any working technology. No flashlight. The perky and loyal spark that hovered around him tried to settle his nerves by shining as brightly as it could, but even that only reached a few feet. The spark was only an aide in reading and lighting candles. In a pinch, it might be able to light a fire, but that could cost its life and Aiden wasn't prepared to cast it to oblivion just yet. He still had no capacity to make one on his own. Aiden kept his pace slow but committed as Attricana became nearly completely obscured.

The vegetation started to clear, instilling some momentary hope in him that the road would return. Instead, it opened into a small clearing dominated by a jarring and unbefitting metal tree. Vines had begun winding their way through the shell. A few charred segments of titanium sat behind it. Aiden recognized it as only the tail end of some great beast. Beast, Aiden had to get out his fantasy thinking. It was an aircraft, or was rather a portion of one larger than he had ever seen back home.

Aiden's spark knew it was important and buzzed around the silver hull, delighted that it was able to cast its own reflection. The tail had opened a hole in the forest canopy when it fell, breaking apart bushes and branches on impact. Aiden could tell it wasn't an Angel aircraft. There was something too faultless about the hull, perfectly smooth, without an exposed rivet or puckered seam save where the rest of the hull was torn away. The skin was a sword-thin carbon composite, a sandwich weave beyond the likes seen in Angel. A jagged opening offered Aiden cover from the elements.

CHAPTER EIGHT:
MAGIC & SPELLS

THE SOURCE

Magic focuses its power through three sources:

Pleroma: The root of all spellcraft is the power to create something by speaking its name. This magic is imbued in the language of dragons. All wizards (and druids, who in *Amethyst* are just a different kind of wizard) access magic in this way. To the uneducated, this language is simply called draconic. To everyone else, it is Pleroma.

Magical Materials: Not only are there new elements like angelite, coruthil, and magnarros (born from previously rare minerals), there are also thousands of materials and combinations of elements that produce different results in the presence of magic. The arts of alchemy and magical crafting are born from these materials. Those with the knowledge to forge items of enchantment are simply educated in the exacting ratios of alloys and ingredients required. Miscalculate by only 0.01 percent or 1 milligram, and the material becomes magically inert.

Magical Beings: Just as some monsters are inherently magical creatures, some people possess magical abilities on their own, whether from birth or spontaneously manifested later in life: gneolistics, mystics, vivicators and the like are some such, although all the forms such 'blessings' take are many and varied. These appear at random, though some people claim that this gift must come from some divine source. Both creatures wicked and wise have claimed such power. They can offer mild magical enhancements or powerful spell-like effects to almost rival wizards.

THE GATES

Many scientists dedicating their lives to the study of Attricana ascribe to the theory that the white gate is a tear in the fabric of space connecting our universe to another. This other universe has rules of chemistry and physics abnormal to our own. Radiating from this tear is an unquantifiable aura where the clashing of two universes results in the bizarre repudiation of scientific laws currently infecting the globe. Authorities on the side of magic refute this, arguing that the white gate does lead to another world, but not another universe: a realm reserved for gods and/or those who pass on through at the ends of their lives. Still another argument goes that the white gate leads to outside our universe, to the flotsam our cosmos floats in, a literal infinity impossible to comprehend or even quantify in our reality.

Despite these arguments, physical laws change within the wake of this white gate. These changes are not always constant and often change with little to no warning. Because of this chaos, the principles of natural selection and evolution are rendered ineffective, as they cannot compensate fast enough for the changes in reality. Mutations that do occur create huge deviations that are systemic through a species, changing many suddenly but all in the same way. Interestingly, magic tends to suppress harmful mutations in any body it affects; while defects may still exist within a magical creature's genome, the influence of enchantment usually prevents such traits from becoming manifest (as is the case with the tenenbri and cystic fibrosis).

In the Terros age, the fae (the only beings to achieve intelligence after the dragons) never tried to define the rules of Attricana. Since they had no concept of any previous world, there was no frame of reference to define the differences. Humanity on the other hand, was able to differentiate which rules were unchanged and which were altered. For one, no matter how many scientific laws the white gate modifies, none are altered to such a degree as to prevent any existing forms of life from continuing to live. Many of the laws concerning

biology and chemistry are amendments rather than wholesale alterations. These allow greater variations of life without voiding existing ones.

The laws of physics are more varied and inconsistent. Certain principles are fixed and have never shown any signs of changing. Magnetism works the same as ever, as does electricity, although the conductivity of any material other than gold over long distances is severely reduced in the presence of EDF. Other laws work mostly the same way, but with varying degrees of inconsistency depending on the strength of the local magical field. Gravity is particularly susceptible to alteration by magic, and it is suspected (though not confirmed) that the range of the electromagnetic spectrum has expanded (researchers take as proof of this the fact that creatures subjected to invisibility magic can still see, when by all rights they should be rendered blind). Pressure and kinesis are problematic: while on a basic level they work the same as they did before the gate reopened, in closed systems above a certain complexity, the laws of thermodynamics suddenly take a vacation as mechanical systems simply lose their built-up energy, causing pumps to void and gears to seize spontaneously with no indicator of where the lost energy has gone.

One group of intrepid scientists believed they found the secret to understanding the chaos from Attricana. They referred to it as the "Flow of Everything," a massive cause-and-effect chart of millions of entries of data that connect with other entries via 2 to 2000 different yes/no questions. These scientists became obsessed with explaining all the altered rules and the conditions causing one to go into effect in one moment and then do the opposite in the next. With the millions of different factors involved, all the original scientists died before ever solving even 1% of the entire system, without even discovering proof that it worked. Though subsequent experts have picked up the torch, modern disciples of flow theory accept that even if every single altered rule is explained and connected, it would not make the slightest bit of difference. One echalogian dismissed the entire escapade as pointless, as the number of factors actually needing to be observed was implausible. Some point out that this is exactly the same approach that echan wizards take to the study of magic, but such commentators are rarely given credibility.

In locations saturated with magic via casters and monsters, the overall influence of Attricana increases. Observations have proved that more spawn creatures appear in regions populated by other magical beings or in populations where magic use is prevalent. Magic also appears to be drawn to life; in areas where life does not exist, magic does not follow. In light of this discovery, several techans have proposed moving to Antarctica, or even to the moon (if some way of overcoming the ambient EDF long enough to get an orbital vehicle out of the atmosphere could be found).

Inversely, humans – being natural beings graced with intelligence and thus capable of observing the universe in a quantum sense – can actively suppress the influence of magic if enough of them refuse to accept it into themselves; it is not necessary to deny the existence of magic, but the human mind can seemingly tell magic that it is not wanted here, and it appears to listen. However, magic is constant and though it can be reduced, it can never be fully suppressed.

Most animals wandering the wild, despite being evolved creatures and theoretically resistant to magical influence like man, eventually succumbed to its power. Though not every member of every species turned into some kind of monster, every major genus (even plants and bacteria) has produced at least one species begotten of magic. Some grew massive in size while others were able to channel great energy previously untapped. Given time, a few of them developed rudimentary intelligence of their own (kodiaks being a prime example).

Unlike animals, in the 500 years mankind has been exposed to magic, there has been virtually no major alteration to human physiology. There are reports of a few minor aberrations occurring in northern Canam and across the world in Lauropa and Slav, but overall humans seem resistant to the whims of the wave. One popular theory states that, if a race is intelligent enough to handle magic, they can prevent its total dominance. Dumber animals become slaves while smarter ones become masters. The fae, of course, are not an evolved species and thus not factored in to this theory.

Almost all magic in the world is from Attricana and finding sources of Ixindar magic is difficult except in Kakodomania, the heart of its power. The black gate of Ixindar corrupts rather than creates. Where Attricana is the embodiment of chaos and spontaneity, Ixindar codifies order and structure, allowing it to mimic many of Attricana's spells, though without its spark of life. The source of corruption has been hotly contested. Does Ixindar lead to hell or to a universe at the edge of death? If Attricana is every possible permutation, would it be also every type of dimension, and if so would Ixindar then be a doorway to nothing? If Attricana is infinity, then Ixindar would be zero. Magic from Ixindar radiates stasis, and therefore does not disrupt scientific laws. The creatures do not radiate EDF, nor do their spells. Instead, Ixindar fills the minds of those using its power with the conviction of perfect order: with every use, the wielder becomes more and more rigid in their thinking and set in their ways.

PLEROMA

'Pleroma' is a pre-Hammer philosophical concept, representing the entirety of divine power. It was adopted first by human wizards and thinkers and later by the fae as the name for the draconic language, since the tongue itself has no internal name. Even spellcasters, renowned for their logical approach and cynical minds, use the term despite its divine connotation. To many of them, it may still be a light above our world, and to a greater extent, our universe, but there may be nothing divine or spiritual about it; even so, it does represent the ultimate power to change the universe with a word. Pleroma allows individuals to direct power normally

reserved for gods in myth.

Pleroma is known to exist in at least three physical dimensions. Though more are theorized, humans and fae are only capable of perceiving three, giving each letter three views: this occasionally makes different symbols look identical when viewed at the same angle. Most mages have no knowledge of the true nature of Pleroma, as it is possible to cast any spell ever conceived by man or fae with a mere fifty-five letters, less than twenty percent of the total characters of the language. Some casters suspect even more powerful spells exist hidden in the script's barely-glimpsed fourth phsical dimension and point to foundation anchors as proof, constructed as receptacles for these rare and powerful spells. This may explain why one cannot copy the spell from an anchor, as it is impossible for a three-dimensional being to transcribe it properly even if they can (barely) conceive of it in mind.

Learning the true language of dragons and their written word is extremely difficult and even the oldest laudenians can only claim partial fluency. The original Bibles of Drasago were created in the original tongue, though thankfully, they can be converted to the flat variety with a simple wave of the hand: more poetic passages lose much in the translation. The small number of souls aware of Pleroma's true complexities point to the impossibility of this language occurring naturally as proof of their divine origin and the existence of God: no species could ever evolve a language requiring so many dimensions to fully comprehend. Another theory is that the language was not naturally evolved, but rather constructed and tied to the universe in a way no one has been able to explain. Yet another theory was put forward by Kereptis Rifts, who postulated, "As three-dimensional beings, we project our language onto two dimensions. A naturally-evolved four-dimensional language would then logically only emerge from a species existing in five." It is possible, however, that Rifts was not thinking big enough.

ATTRICANA SPELLS

Most spells originate from Attricana. The white gate does not force a particular morality upon its casters, but the general disposition of magic supports life in all its forms, beneficent and harmful alike. Unique Attricana spells are those blessed enchantments exclusive to the white gate, including all spells with the Good descriptor as well as monster summoning spells. In the case of the latter, monsters are not actually summoned—they are created at that moment by will of the spellcaster, happy to return to the chaos of Attricana once that purpose is fulfilled.

All spells drawing upon Attricana appear alive when cast; they exist with enough intelligence to accomplish their task along with the drive to succeed at it. To fail would be worse than death, even if that death occurs anyway moments later. From dancing lights to lightning leaping from fingers, every spell carries some indication that an intelligence other than the spellcaster is at work. Some wizards, particularly of the Koana schools, nurture this intelligence, while others constantly attempt to refine their spell in an attempt to minimize the apparent outside influence – with only limited success.

ENCHANTMENT

As the famous quote passed among wizards goes, "Anything you can think of thinks for itself." Attricana is about life in every possible combination, breaking rules that nature declares incontrovertible. A creature or force derived from these broken rules emanates that same chaos. Since technology is based on the principle that a given procedure will produce the same result every time, machines and magic cannot long commingle. This created a chain reaction 500 years ago, forcing all remaining fragments of working technology into the bastions. Although all fae are slaves to magic, humans have a choice, being born via the normal rules of biology. They can choose to accept the world of magic or remain disciplines of science. There is no good or evil in this conflict. There is only opinion, and there is no wrong answer. However, the choice is often permanent. By wielding that magic sword or by casting that spell, a human ties his soul to Attricana, becoming one with the world of magic, and disrupting technology just as an elf would.

SATURATION POINT

Saturation Point: Human characters start at level 1 with a saturation point total of 0. You gain saturation points under the following circumstances:

+1: You wield a magic weapon (per minute).

+1: You wear magic armor (per hour).

+1: You benefit from magic items in your possession (per hour).

+1: You study the arcane arts (per day).

+1: A beneficial magical effect (including magical healing) is placed upon you.

+1: You drink a potion.

+10: You are brought back from the dead via a spell or spell-life effect.

+20: You bond with a non-human.

+20: You select a supernatural trait.

The moment you reach a saturation point of 20, you begin to generate EDF (but you do not stop accruing saturation points). As long as you do not accrue any additional points, you remove 1 from your saturation point total every week (unless bonded or selecting a supernatural trait; if so, your total can never drop below 20).

IXINDAR AND MENGUS

It is a common misconception, fed by the religions of many cultures, that Ixindar is the physical manifestation of Hell. Such proponents point to the demons that emerged from it as proof. Yet Ixindar, for all its malice, is not a force for chaos but for order – absolute, unyield-

ing, incontrovertible structure. Its drive, more a natural law than a goal, is that all life must end or operate in service of order. When Ixindar corrupts, what it really does is subvert any originality in a subject. Its form of order results in degrading the real world to a constant level. This would not be the null background radiation the universe may be fated to reach but a collective consciousness possessing a power only described as absolute and divine. Another way to describe it would be that of a hive or overmind—to unify all thought and to make that thought able to control the universe. A cosmos with one occupant would have neither emotions nor a sense of individuality. Another concept follows the idea that Attricana may be infinity while Ixindar is zero. One is everything while the other is nothing. Given this, a single consciousness in an infinite space would be zero, while a single conscious in zero space would be infinite. That would-be infinite being has a name, and it is Mengus.

For as long as anyone cared to remember, Mengus has not been referred to by any other name; no mistranslation or even spelling error has ever marred the name of the embodiment of perfect order. No creature has ever claimed to have seen Mengus and everyone accepts that it no longer possesses a physical body or lacks the capacity to form in the real world. A few dragons suggested Amethyst and Mengus are two sides of a single metaphorical coin – a balance the world requires. Perhaps they were one god-like creature split into two, and Amethyst retained the body. Even a common gender assignment given to Mengus is up to debate. In the Gospel of Lazarus, page 956, paragraph 10 verse 5, Lazarus was quoted as saying, "I once allowed Mengus to peer into my soul. I do believe she flinched. Not all can be corrupted." Lazarus never explained this passage, but whatever the case, the gender assignment stuck in some circles.

Because Mengus could only look outward from Ixindar, when Amethyst buried the gate, her influence was frozen and locked inside. Nevertheless, some echalogians have theorized that the great acts of barbarism that have marred human history were due to the whisper, and the continual fear of hell and demons emerged from her playful manipulation of mankind's nightmares. Even now, despite the great force of the second hammer, Ixindar is still not completely free: Mengus must strive towards her ambitions of godhead through her proxies the shemjaza and typhox dragons, and through the subtle influence of the whisper spreading secretly across the world from Ixindar's resting place in Kakodomania.

SAEQAAR

The deified language of Pleroma has a dark counterpart, brought to this world by Ixindar and Mengus' whisper. This tongue is both the metaphorical and literal mirror of Pleroma, but draws its power from the black gate instead of the white, further reinforcing the theory that Pleroma is not the language of dragons at all. The symbols of this corrupted tongue resemble that of Pleroma as seen through a mirror, and are able to replicate similar results, but it only imitates the might of Attricana without the energy of chaos behind it. Ixindar does not spontaneously create anything; it must infect and convert what it finds to its side. There was originally no accepted name for this language; as with Pleroma, the name of the thing is the thing itself. Later it received its own sobriquet, *saeqaar*, a word with no meaning that can be rendered in any human tongue. While Pleroma utterances can be colorful and dancing with life, saeqaar words when spoken are sonorant and uniform – those who have heard them and lived to tell the tale speak of them as sounding like the tolling of funeral bells, with only their disturbing harmonics distinguishing different words. Appropriate, then, that the typhox dragons found in this language the tools for creating the most corrupt of the magical arts, necromancy.

IXINDAR SPELLS

Ixindar has many exclusive spells. These are vile spells with few redeeming qualities. All spells with the Death or Evil descriptor, and any spell of the necromancy school (even if it lacks these descriptors) are unique to Ixindar and thus are not available to casters bound to Attricana. Otherwise, Ixindar casters can use any spell except summoning spells and those with the Good descriptor. Casting Ixindar magic also locks the caster's thinking into the ways of the black gate, corrupting them eventually into an agent of absolute order.

Corrupted magic has no flamboyance in its casting. There is no life behind anything emanating from a corrupted spell. However, the corruption of saeqaar does allow a spell to be bottled in, preventing the eruption of magical disruption. Like all energy from Ixindar, saeqaar does not disrupt technology. Instead, it prefers to disrupt the very soul attempting to control it.

CORRUPTION

There can never be a Good spellcaster bound to Ixindar: eventually, the syntropic energy coursing through their bodies stratifies their worldview, and they become convinced that no perspective other than their own can even exist, let alone be valid. Those drawn too far down the path of corruption become perfect narcissists, convinced that the entire universe exists only for their benefit, or even that it would not exist without them. Characters with any alignment save for Lawful Evil cannot cast negative spells (those with the Death or Evil descriptors) without the risk of corruption.

Corruption Point: When you use magic tied to Ixindar, you will fall under the influence corruption. This works the same as echan saturation, but saturation and corruption points are recording separately. You gain corruption points under the following circumstances:

+2: You wield an Ixindar weapon (per minute).

+2: You wear Ixindar magic armor (per hour).

+2: You benefit from Ixindar magic items in your possession (per hour).

+2: You study the arcane arts of the corrupted tongue of saeqaar (per day).

+1: You drink an Ixindar potion.

+4: You cast a spell bound to Ixindar.

The moment you reach a corruption point of 20 or more, you must make a Will save with a DC equal to your current corruption point total. If you fail, your alignment shifts one step toward Lawful Evil, according to the Alignment Step diagram in the PATHFINDER CORE RULEBOOK. You can choose which direction you take (for example, if Neutral Good and you fail a Will save, you can decide to become Neutral or Lawful Good. Regardless of whether you succeed or fail, you repeat the Will save at the beginning of each day until your alignment becomes Lawful Evil.

The moment your alignment shifts into Lawful Evil, your soul is bound to Ixindar, and you no longer generate EDF. Your echan saturation point is set to zero (if you had any). If you later gain enough

saturation points to switch to being echan, you do not do so unless your corruption value falls first.

The only way to expunge corruption points is with time (or in rare occurrences, an *atonement* spell—see later). You will lose 1 corruption point each week as long as you don't accrue any during that time. If your alignment was changed because of corruption, it remains changed unless something else happens in play to change it again.

Divine Magic: The traits that grant access to divine magic (gneolistic, mystic and vivicator) are inherently tied to Attricana. However, their wielders are as susceptible to corruption as anyone else; as they lose their connection to Attricana, Ixindar subtly replaces it with a corrupted imitation. A corrupted divine caster has the option to change any abilities related to channeling positive energy to channeling negative energy (*cure* spells become *inflict* spells, alignment-based spells change, etc.). A divine caster who loses her connection to Ixindar may or may not regain her Attricana-based powers, as determined by the GM.

FOUNDATION SPELLS

Foundation spells, allegedly passed down from the dragons, laudenians, and shemjaza, are powerful spells only found on anchors scattered about the world. Because of their rarity, few casters of substantial power possess more than one or two. Only rare individuals know of them all, and they do not share this knowledge openly with anyone. Some anchors are buried for being too dangerous while others are guarded so obsessively that few have been able to successfully acquire them. Those who do are sworn to keep them secret. Anchors are considered artifacts, are thus extremely rare, and virtually impossible to destroy. Many anchors are one-of-a-kind pieces, the more powerful the rarer. Casters can transfer a spell from an anchor without destroying it: however, unlike normal arcane spells, others cannot copy the spell from a totem or spell scroll, as there are certain inscriptions from the anchor that are implanted into memory upon study. It is not possible to transcribe this hidden inscription in any meaningful way; it must be imparted either by the anchor or by instruction from someone who already knows it.

Foundation spells include all 8th and 9th level arcane spells. Even if the caster has 8th or 9th level spell slots available, he does not automatically learn appropriately-leveled spells to fill them without access to an anchor.

The Price: Each time a foundation spell is cast, the caster suffers 1d4 points of Constitution damage, over and above any other costs listed in the spell entry.

ANCHOR EXAMPLES

What follows is only a small list of anchor locations. There may be hundreds more forgotten or lost scattered about the world.

Antipathy: More common than other arcane spells, *antipathy* can be found in scattered places, mostly in books.

Clenched Fist: Like all hand spells, *clenched fist* was forged by the narros spellcaster, Galla Sagard at the Finer Fire Pits and all are located on one anchor, the Sacristan Stone, in Sagard's open library.

Clone: An anchor of this spell is only found at Laudenia on the stone that never touches the ground, the *Feysa*.

Create Greater Undead: One can be found scribed in the Kardia-Gothas, the legendary castle in the Sana Marsh.

Demand: This anchor is relatively common but the only confirmed location is the mage city of Kirjath-Sepher, across the ocean. Like all anchors there, it can be found in a book. The laudenians have also claimed to have one, though this is only a rumor.

Discern Location: The only known location of this anchor is on a section of wall in a gimfen grind tower. However, which wall and which tower is only known by a few gimfen.

Dominate Monster: The laudenian magos, Nacola Falconyr, created the *dominate monster* spell, which he still keeps in his spell book. Several copies have appeared elsewhere, but he possesses the only known anchor.

Earthquake: The only confirmed anchor location is in a library in the narros city of Thos Thalagos.

Energy Drain: This anchor, found on a tapestry made from fae skin, can be found in Kardia-Gothas in the Sana Marsh. Although claims have been made that an Attricana version of this spell exists, the only confirmed anchor is the Ixindar spell.

Foresight: Inscribed in a traditional spellbook called *The Art of Arcane Thaumaturgy*, this anchor is locked in a secret library in Kirjath-Sepher. Other copies of the book are sealed in Myre and Laudenia.

Hold Monster, Mass: This foundation spell is found in the slaver city of Najafi, supposedly burned onto the flesh of the king. Rumors pass that several other anchors exist in dungeons across the world.

Imprisonment: One anchor is hiding in an unlabeled book in Kirjath-Sepher, resistant to enchanted means of locating it. Others can be found in Laudenia and Selmana.

Incendiary Cloud: The words from this spell glow with a bright red light from a solid slab of stone in a dungeon under a volcano: *which* volcano is not known.

Meteor Swarm: There are three known anchors for *meteor swarm* in the world, all embedded on silver-coated longswords. Lazarus in the mountain of Draconia owns one. Another sits under lock and key in Castle Myre. The final was lost in a pagus raid against a Janoahn convoy, but the pagus who looted it vanished upon his return to Apocrypha.

Polar Ray: All known copies are inscribed upon crystal skulls. Both Myre and Laudenia own one, as does the Kuraukou Temple of Clouds. However, the original still sits inside a small keep atop a massive mountain guarded by ice dragons.

Power Word, Stun: More common than most, power words are scattered around the world. Like most com-

mon anchors, Stun can be found in Kirjath-Sepher and Castle Myre. Stun can also be found etched on a wall in the Dracontia, in a book in Mag-Farg.

Protection from Spells: Anchors can be found in Kirjath-Sepher and in Dracontia, the latter inscribed on the back of Kelto the Wise. Rumors suggest it can also be found on a staff in the bottom deck of the Alkanost.

Reverse Gravity: Only three golden feathers that carry this spell exist, all crafted by the creative minds of Laudenia. They use two; the third was stolen and is currently missing.

Screen: This book was stolen from Torfin Gendron and was the first item taken into Castle Myre and locked away. However, Torfin created a backup, now lost in the mage library. Kereptis Rifts apparently also held a copy.

Symbol of Death: The only known anchors hide in books in Piotre Raczik's library and on a dragon tooth in Ažhi Dahaka, guarded by one of the dragon lords.

Temporal Stasis: This anchor can be found in Laudenia, Kirjath-Sepher, and Hardstone Sig. All are in spellbooks.

Time Stop: *Time stop* can only be found on a scepter. Rumors say the single item is held by Selman the Titan himself. He promises retribution for anyone that copies it without his permission. However, stories abound that Lazarus and Lara Alkanost have copies on similar artifacts.

Wail of the Banshee: Like almost all Necromancy spells, *wail of the banshee* can be found in Kardia-Gothas. The necromancer Evanec Madrog created an identical spell and inscribed the spell in a laudenian's breastbone. Apparently, the tenenbri have one as well, deep in Vakai.

SPELL ALTERATIONS

The following spells have altered rules.

Alter Shape, Beast Shape, Form of the Dragon, Giant Form, Plant Shape, Polymorph, Shapechange: These spells work as written, even if the monster in question does not exist in canon *Amethyst*. The spells draw their altered forms from the caster's imagination rather than reality. However, anyone skilled in echalore will immediately be able to identify that a transfigurative spell is in use, so transforming into a non-canon creature is largely useless as a disguise.

Antimagic Field: Magical creatures that enter the field are wracked by pain as the altered rules of magic keeping them alive are removed. All echan creatures (including the caster) suffer 4d6 points of damage per round within the field, and must make a Fortitude save or be *stunned* for the duration. Ciphers, pagus, shemjaza, physical undead, and Ixindar magical items are unaffected by *antimagic fields*.

Atonement: This spell can only reverse magical alignment change and offer temptation or redemption. Additionally, a single casting will remove 4 corruption points or add or subtract 4 saturation points. Alignment changes caused by corruption can only be changed again when the subject's corruption value has reached 0. This spell may be forced on an unwilling subject, but it gains a Will saving throw to negate.

Comprehend Languages: This spell cannot be used to comprehend magical languages and scripts like Pleroma and saeqaar.

Detect Magic: By the second round, a caster can determine if the aura originates from Attricana or Ixindar.

Summon Monster / Summon Nature's Ally: Summoned creatures are not pulled into existence from another dimension; rather they are created by will of its spellcaster. They do not exist until the final command is given, vanishing back into the chaos of Attricana when the spell expires. As with shape-changing spells, the caster is not limited to canon monsters; however, those with an echan background will easily be able to identify that a non-canon creature is a summon.

NEW SPELLS

ION PULSE

School: Evocation
Level: Wizard 3
Components: —
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft. /level)
Effect: Ray
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: None

An ion pulse resembles a solid white stream of light that weaves and bends to a target. The caster targets a five-foot square or a single target (like a person or a vehicle). Any technology in the square or on the target is disrupted. If the vehicle is larger than a square, the pulse affects the vehicle and any other technology within the square. The next disruption recovery roll for the targeted technology suffers a –4 penalty. All items are affected, even those that recently saved.

ION PULSE, GREATER

School: Evocation
Level: Wizard 4
Components: —
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Medium (200 ft. + 10 ft. /level)
Effect: Ray
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: None

As *ion pulse* except the targeted technology suffers a -6 penalty to its next disruption recovery roll.

ION PULSE, MASS

School: Evocation
Level: Wizard 5
Components: —
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft. /level)
Effect: Area 20-ft-radius spread + 5 ft. /level
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: None

As *ion pulse*, but targets a larger area.

ION PULSE, MASS, GREATER

School: Evocation
Level: Wizard 6
Components: —
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Medium (200 ft. + 10 ft. /level)
Effect: Area 20-ft-radius spread + 5 ft. /level
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: None

As *greater ion pulse*, but targets a larger area.

He let his satchel fall aside and took a moment to eat. He unfurled the foil of an Angel nutrient supplement--500 calories of everything one might need in the wilderness, bound tightly in a pressed package of grains, nuts, and dried fruits. It was genetically engineered to maximize dietary needs without the pesky drawbacks of weight. It was supposed to be filling. It wasn't.

Still savoring the last few bites, Aiden began pushing through the fragments of debris around the crash. The faintest violet glow concealed in a broken crate caught his eye. As Aiden approached, he fell under the shadow of the steel sentinel, leaving only the purple light upon his face.

His hand rolled through fluttering pieces of snow that felt neither cold nor wet and refused to melt in the warmth of his hand. Sprinkles of the white packing foam fell onto the soil.

The item dropped to his knees; the violet light grew beyond a glint. The spark considered it competition and flew down to illuminate the stone as best it could. Aiden noticed four pearl-colored claws clamped around the outer edges of the unrefined jagged gem inset. The fingers of the lizard curled around back, not to form a hand, but to merge with other fingers. Two golden loops could support a chain if Aiden were inclined to flaunt the jewel from his neck. Such an item was jarring amongst the jagged metal and broken technology.

Aiden starred into the crystal.

He felt it staring back.

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Its body was the size of Aiden's fist with eight pencil-thin legs longer than a forearm. Every step taken was careful and quiet, slipping over branches and sidestepping leaves. It stalked up the wool and polyester coat Aiden was using as cover as he slept. A pair of black lidless eyes floating on truncated stalks glanced over the sleeping man. Its legs inched closer to Aiden's neck. Two spidery limbs reached up and tapped each other in front of Aiden's face. Aiden, eyes still closed, turned a nose up and blew out a breath. The creature repeated the soft drum but received no response. One leg from the arachnid stretched out and hung precariously over Aiden's nose. It tapped him gently. Aiden slept soundly. Then twice again.

Three firmer pats and Aiden cracked open an eye. He failed to focus on the blurry mass in front of him. As he adjusted, he stared at the vapid eyes and short jaws and two long legs in front that tapped each other once more to gain his attention.

The scream that sprung from Aiden's throat was loud from adult lungs but pitched high from childish fear. Aiden swatted the creature to the ground and rolled to his feet, flailing arms and legs outrageously. He checked his limbs and digits, shouting as he squirmed away from the calm arachnid as it tapped its two front legs again. Aiden jolted his head around to check for an ambush. Surely, the tapping was the cue for a face-lock from a falling predator Aiden would be too distracted to notice. There was nothing, just Aiden and the arachnid, both waiting at a distance. The spark had taken the cue to rest with the rising sun. Aiden reached forward and quickly snatched his bag. He pulled the blade from within it. The chunk of purple stone sat by the bag. Aiden stretched a hand and took it as well, tucking it to the bottom of his pack.

Aiden walked backwards down the path. He took a moment to ensure he wasn't returning the way he entered. Aiden finally remembered the entry from that long forgotten manual and announced it as if the creature could understand. "Book of Many Bugs. Page 346. Harvestman." It tapped its legs. Aiden continued on the road. The creature matched his pace. Aiden paused and so did it, drumming its legs until starting up again to follow him.

"Get lost!" Aiden flailed his sword arm. It followed. "Get out of here!"

Aiden stopped, then it stopped and tapped its legs. Aiden shouted as loud as he could, stepped closer, and stomped a foot down. It jumped nearly to Aiden's face. Aiden squealed, bolting down the road like his hair was ablaze. The spider ran surprisingly fast and kept up with him for five minutes before giving up. As Aiden ran out of sight, the harvestman tapped its front legs again.

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Emerging from the forest, Aiden squinted from the sun's glare. The road resumed as empty as before to a blurry horizon. Before the afternoon, he would eat three more bars and still be hungry. The plains passed to a valley. Dried grass turned to green fields. All Aiden could

do was walk, and did so until coming upon the wreck.

Its steel axle had bent. The wooden spokes had splintered. Aiden circled the broken wagon with a wide berth. The horses had been torn from their harnesses, leaving bloodied bits and hair tuffs on the straps. The half eaten hoof suggested a fast and messy meal by indiscriminate predators. Aiden was unsettled. The blood had the gloss of lingering moisture. A caravan had gone astray, no doubt. No wagon would chance solitude on a barren path. Aiden knew he was close to Antikari. A sane captain would take the extra day and follow the continental cross, the same detour the scrambler had made. The door was pinned closed by a rock-tipped spear half Aiden's height, too large for dog-sized puggs. They had been larger monsters.

Aiden orbited and checked the opposite door, unlocked. He almost missed the cage, half in the grass and overturned. The simple lock had broken with hammer falls with most missing their mark. Teeth indents around bars, dried spit at every corner, a dozen animals inside had molested each other for the shred of an inch of room. It hadn't been a detour. The slavers turned the moment their stocks were stuffed.

The door came loose off the hinges and fell. Aiden dropped his pack and swallowed as he leaned in. The spear had struck between the stomach and liver of the man but caught more of the latter. The spear had jammed the body against the wagon. "Oh god," Aiden mumbled.

"Huh," the body burbled after lifting his head. Aiden shrieked and fell back onto the door. He quickly composed himself and reentered.

"Oh my god! Can you talk? Can you..." He said nothing. "Say anything?"

"Mi y'ada," he groaned. Aiden held up his palms. "Hold that...don't move!" Frantic, Aiden paced around the wagon, unable to act, unable to freeze. He crawled back in. "I can't move you with the spear. Can't take it out either." Aiden reached for his pack and the dull blade meant for threats. He squeezed himself behind the body. He held the sword as high as he could in crammed quarters. He had hoped one slash would do it, but it only dented the spear, pushing the end further into the victim's chest. The man had lost any reserve for a scream and only choked. Aiden squirmed and tried for a harder strike, not that he had held anything back the first time. A second failed. A third cracked and the sword was wedged in the wood with a splinter holding the spear together. Aiden snapped it the rest of the way.

The man's head rolled flaccidly as Aiden pulled him onto the fallen door. He used the bloodied leather straps from the horses' harness and bound the man to the wood. Aiden swatted the man's lazy arm to finish the restraints.

"How far is Antikari?" Aiden asked. "An hour...two?" A cough was all that was afforded. "Just hold on." Aiden pulled another strap around the door and wrapped the other end around his shoulders. The man wasn't scrawny and the door was spruce. Aiden pulled a shoulder muscle lifting it up. Stones barely shuffled as he struggled for an inch. "You've got to be kidding me."

"Esta finderlohn por mia lebon," he moaned.

"Yeah, you said it." Aiden began to walk, slowly at first. Within a few steps, the gravel gave and his shoes slipped, stumbling Aiden to the ground. He punched earth, quietly cursed, and raised himself and the door again. "Come on! Come on!"

Aiden got momentum and dragged the door over a trivial summit and to the base that followed. The next climb bruised his pectorals and sprained an ankle. The body slipped off at the second crest. Aiden was sure to meet another night at this pace.

"Still with me?" Aiden called out. He wanted to keep talking but was loosing breath. Every lungful of air pulled his battered diaphragm. He should have exercised more. He couldn't stomach a meal and didn't bother offering one.

The saw a tree with branches twisted through a vehicle, lifting the wreck before the ground could swallow it. Only by pure chance had it survived. Boughs had peeled it apart, crucifying the car across the span of wood. Wheels were forged soft alloy with inadequate tread for unpaved terrain. Red and black and flaking from rust, the one remaining door tapped in the wind on its last unseized hinge. A stainless exhaust refused to wither. Aiden noticed its license plate, a flake of blue on a number, another of red on the word above. From his vantage, Aiden couldn't make out the number or the origin, not that it mattered. It was a relic from a lost time, five centuries forgotten. He couldn't afford to slow and kept on.

By late afternoon, the rain started and mixed with the dry clay into a viscous mud. The door built up a layer of sludge and Aiden's boots slithered across with little progress. He grimaced through it, letting the water roll down his face. The muck had slipped over his boots and into his socks. The water had pushed into his thermal ware. The clouds were ash, a constant slate which mixed the horizon to the mud.

Aiden lost his footing nearing another summit. The body and the door slid back down the incline until Aiden dug his cleats deep and cut his hand on the strap with whatever lingering strength he had. He could hear his sword fall down the hill, but he had no energy to retrieve it. He pushed back up the hill, dragging the door behind. Each boot slammed deep to get root. Reaching the crest, Aiden pulled the door back up to his shoulders and he stood cold and damp, a thick layer of grey running down his back.

He sighted the wagons, horses, and people of Antikari before dusk, emerging as a rising wave. The grass took a breeze and opened like a splitting river to guide him to town. A pair of aides by a wagon took notice and made for him. Aiden collapsed onto the ground. He stared at the passing clouds, coughing and wheezing as others ran to help.

CHAPTER NINE:
MAGIC ITEMS

Magic items are uncommon at best, except in centers of arcane learning or magically saturated locales like Laudenia. Basic enchanted weapons and armor are not too hard to come by for the dedicated adventurer, as such items are part and parcel of the narros' standard trade; potions, as well, are fairly common, as mixing them requires no innate magical talent (although it can't exactly be done by unskilled labor). But few major magical items exist without a reason. Major wondrous items are difficult to locate and magical weapons and armor beyond basic +1 and +2 enhancements cannot be casually bought (although anything up to a +5 total bonus can be specially ordered for a character, given the right smith or merchant). Artifacts as defined in the PATHFINDER core rulebook do not exist: the only artifacts in this universe are foundation anchors and the ones listed below, and their existence is not common knowledge.

CREATING MAGIC ITEMS

Although magic items are rare in the *Amethyst* setting, it is assumed that as exceptional individuals, player characters can reasonably expect to possess more than their fair share of those that exist (the fact that many tend to fall into their laps in the course of adventuring is treated as a convenient coincidence).

That said, it is not required to be a spellcaster in order to create magic items; for most, all it requires is knowledge of the proper crafting techniques and the precise ratios of materials necessary to 'naturally' produce magical effects. A crafter is still required to have skill ranks in the proper Craft skill as well as the obligatory feat, but for most purposes, the creator is considered to have a caster level equal to their character level for purposes of item creation. Any material components of the required spell must be used as part of the construction. Imbuing spells in magical items uses a Craft check rather than a Spellcraft check, unless the creator is a spellcaster; however, the appropriate Craft skill is still required to create the physical item (but the final enchantment is made with Spellcraft). Attricana-bound magic items cannot require spells with the Death or Evil descriptor, and Ixindar-bound items cannot require spells with the Good descriptor or any summoning spell. Crafting Ixindar-bound items also requires a soul bound to Ixindar.

All this, of course, presumes creating magical items from scratch. It is possible to enchant existing items normally, but of course, doing so requires the services of a spellcaster, which is actually uncommon in the world.

Costly Components: The rarity of magic items is less about the knowledge required in their making (which is still a factor) and more the materials involved. Making magic items requires not only the employ of skilled craftsmen or the attainment of tools required to craft the item, but also the acquisition of rare alloys and ingredients necessary to create the specific enchantment. An item not entirely made of coruthil or magnarros may still require trace amounts of it in order complete the item. Other rare earth metals like yttrium, iridium, and osmium may be required, forcing the party to search mines or seek out obscure shops. A forged item may even need to be quenched in heavy water, which is almost impossible to come by in quantity outside of a bastion. This is in addition to any spell components which must still be acquired even though no spell is cast. Any item costing more than a 1000 gp should have such creative obstacles, forcing players to quest as much for the materials for their magic items as the quests they need their magic items for.

Magic Armor: Creating magic armor requires the Craft Arms & Armor feat, as well as Craft (armor).

Magic Weapons: Creating magic weapons requires the Craft Arms & Armor feat, as well as Craft (bows or weapons). *Spell storing* weapons cannot be created by a non-spellcaster.

Potions: The Brew Potion feat and Craft (alchemy) are required to make a potion. Arcane spellcasters are treated as wizards when determining spell cost; everyone else is treated as a bard. The potion maker's class is not considered when determining available spells for the potion.

Rings: The Forge Ring feat and Craft (jewelry) are used to create magic rings. A *ring of counterspells, spell storing, spell turning, three wishes,* or *wizardry* requires a spellcaster to forge.

Rods: The proper Craft skill (jewelry, sculptures, or weapons) is mandatory to craft a rod, as is the Craft Rod feat. A *metamagic rod* or a *rod of absorption* cannot be created by a non-spellcaster.

Scrolls: Scrolls are created as normal, except that foundation spells cannot be inscribed in scrolls. Only arcane spellcasters can create scrolls.

Staves: Staves are created as normal, except that foundation spells cannot be imbued in staves. Only arcane spellcasters can create staves.

Wands: Wands are created as normal, except that foundation spells cannot be imbued in wands. Only arcane spellcasters can create wands.

Wondrous Items: These are a mixed lot of strange items and devices, and need a Craft skill appropriate to the item (usually jewelry or sculpture) as well as the Craft Wondrous Item feat. A spellcaster is required if crafting a wondrous item that interacts with spells, including *hand of the mage*, certain *ioun stones*, *mantle of spell resistance*, and *robe of the archmagi*.

RESTRICTED ITEMS

Certain magic items are not present in *Amethyst* for obvious reasons while others go against setting canon. Any item that deals with the planes is disallowed, as *Amethyst* has no planes (items dealing with the ethereal plane may still work on a case-by-case basis, at the GM's discretion). Any item that requires an 8th or 9th level spell is not prohibited, but should have a rarity commensurate with a major artifact. Items resembling technology, such as *apparatus of the crab*, may exist but would have to be recent creations made after contact with humanity. No artifacts exist except foundation anchors and those detailed below.

ARTIFACTS

THE BIBLE OF DRASAGO AND THE ARCHON GOSPELS

When the dragons emerged from Attricana, Lazarus (the oldest and most powerful of the survivors) went about commissioning tomes of knowledge from the other dragons. He picked one representative from each lineage and exhorted them to write in their ancient language a gospel of all that they believe in and imbue it with the very power they possess. These books chronicle all their knowledge and tell about the history of Terros through their ageless eyes. To read a gospel of Drasago is to peer into the very soul of a dragon.

Those who read such a tome are never the same, assuming they can find one in the first place. These books are extremely rare: only three or four copies exist of each gospel and the complete Bible of Drasago itself is owned and protected by Lazarus. Excerpts from these books have been found all over the globe. A reprinting of some passages translated into damaskan can be located in Limshau and Laudenia, but they lack the magical impact of the originals; only fragments have ever been translated into English, and these are often too cryptic to have any value even as proverbs. Dragons often share these books with each other, though never gaining the abilities from them. If a non-dragon skilled in Pleroma reads this book, which takes a total of 48 hours over a minimum of six days, he gains inherent bonuses dependant on the book. Once the book is read, the knowledge will always be present to that reader. A reader can only be affected by one book in their lifetime, no matter how many they read, and can only be thus affected once no matter how many times they read that book.

The books are very large, embossed with real scales sacrificed by the writer. They are laced with platinum and silver and gilded with gold. Surprisingly, they are all quite light and will float upon water if dropped. The books are locked with fragments of a dragon's talon and cannot be opened without their key, nor can they be destroyed by any means other than a *wish* or the breath of the dragons that authored them.

THE GOSPEL OF THE HOLY

Written by Aurannis of Dust and Greka of Babel

Leave it to holy dragons to write such a massive book, by two members as they couldn't agree who would write what. Only Greka's portion carries the gospel's enchantment; Aurannis' chronicle, while complementary to it, exists as a semi-apocrypha and is technically considered a separate book. Greka's book requires 72 hours to read over 8 days compared to the other books. It's a long, slow read, bouncing between subject matter and often diverting into seemingly boring and superfluous tangents. The holy book can be identified by the mirror-polished feather affixed to the cover. The book displays no artwork and the typeface is small and harder to translate than normal. A full quarter of the book is dedicated to the flight dynamics of holy dragons in comparison to other breeds.

After being read, the book imparts these abilities:

Spell-Like Abilities (7th level Caster): At will—*speak with animals*; 3/day—*endure elements* (radius 50 ft), *fireball*, 1/day—*suggestion*.

Resistance: You gain resist fire 10.

Natural Armor: You gain a +5 natural armor bonus.

THE GOSPEL OF THE GUARDIAN

Written by Kelto of the Guard

Kelto, a battle champion of a thousand engagements, refused to die despite losing an eye, two claws, and the end of his tail. His claws were severed by an unnamed and forgotten cursed blade which he later destroyed. His eye was plucked and stolen as a prize when Goch and Kelto dueled over the skies of old Terros thousands of years before the First Hammer. Goch keeps it still, hanging the undamaged orb from his neck, unknowing that Kelto can still gaze through it as long as the injury remains unhealed. Not even the book goes into details on how Kelto lost his tail tip. Despite these injuries, Kelto is still one of the more approachable dragons, seldom taken to pomposity. The book, marked by a bright orange/red smear of Kelto's own blood, details the arrival of the guardian dragons and their crusade to defeat the armies of darkness. Guardian dragons are warriors, champions, and knights of the oldest order, and consequently the book details many battles. The accounts are exhaustive, graphic, and not for the squeamish, for Kelto and his guardians have seen the very darkest creations of evil.

After being read, the book imparts these abilities:

Armor: Any armor worn by you that has an enhancement bonus has its enhancement increased by 1.

Vision: You gain darkvision 120 ft and blindsense 60 ft.

Natural Armor: You gain a +4 natural armor bonus.

Resistance: You gain resist lightning 10.

Weapons: Any sword held by you that has an enhancement bonus has its enhancement increased by 1.

THE GOSPEL OF THE NOBLE

Written by Lynissa of Essence

Lynissa's family and the responsibilities they have taken on are far more interesting than the noble dragons as a whole. As nobles are considered the intellectual leaders of the dragons (the holy being the spiritual leaders), one would expect the book to detail their administration of dragon culture as well as their structure of authority. Thankfully, Lynissa intermixed this with anecdotes about her family line and their connection with the humans and elves of Akoya (in Euras), which is far more interesting. Euras possesses only one human line of blood royal, the Lamontaes of Akoya. This endorsement came from Lynissa herself, passed down to the first Lamontae, Raymonde. The silver hair of all the royals and their offspring regardless of the appearance of their consorts encourages rumors across the land that Lynissa of Essence dipped into the royal line herself, siring a child while in human form with the king at the time. Such a pairing is not technically forbidden, though extremely rare and difficult to propagate (dragons must bond just like fae in order to reproduce with humans, although the side-effects of bonding for the human are unpredictable and often dangerous). If she endorsed the Lamontae line before or after the coupling is not known but Lynissa and her dragon offspring from the Terros Age all live within the kingdom, swearing to its protection. The diplomatic and noble landscape of Akoya is featured heavily in her gospel. Alas, the majority of the book still details the history of the noble dragons, and their arrogance and condescension about their intelligence does show through the words.

After being read, the book imparts these abilities:

Blessed Presence: All allies within 40 feet of you gain a +2 morale bonus to attack rolls and a +5 bonus to savings throws against fear effects. You do not gain these effects.

Somewhat Arrogant: You gain a +6 inherent bonus to all Will Saves.

Spell-Like Ability: 1/day – *holy sword*

True Leadership: You gain a +5 inherent bonus to Bluff and Diplomacy checks and a +4 inherent bonus to Charisma or Wisdom (chosen when finished reading).

THE GOSPEL OF LAZARUS

Written by Lazarus himself, this tome does not go into any details about general dragons but more into Lazarus's own life, as the most ancient living dragon. He talks about his feelings about the world and the fall of Amethyst. This book is extremely hard to find outside of the realm of dragons.

Of all the books, the Lazarus volume is by far the most cryptic. The words and speech meander from normal vernacular to poetry, with messages and meanings only revealing themselves after days, months, or years of contemplation and meditation. It is not an easy read to be sure. After appreciation of the words is finally reached, his thoughts and feelings carry through in clarity. Those finally understanding the book and its meanings often feel melancholy afterward, sharing with the author the curse of knowing too much. Though Lazarus does not impart many secrets, he does express his dissatisfaction about knowing them. After reading the book, one truly begins to understand the mentality of dragons, the immense responsibilities they carry, and the knife-edge they balance between wisdom and corruption. Lazarus knew the world the longest, and his book speaks of times known to no others, including the stretch of time between when Amethyst called the first dragons into being and the arrival of the fae.

After being read, the book imparts these abilities:

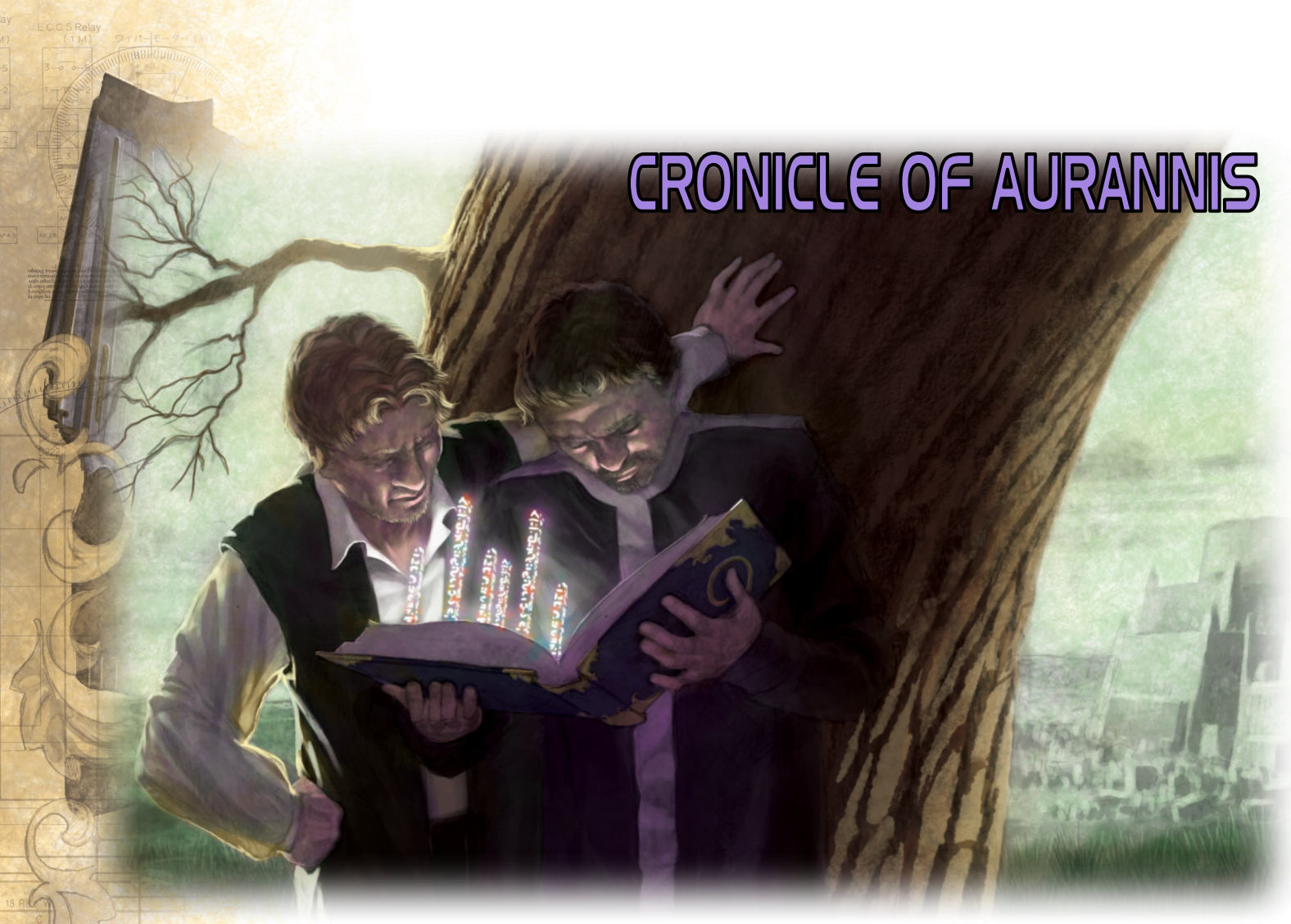
Call from Heaven: Once a week you can call an archon dragon (of any type of your level -3 or lower) to your aid. The dragon will arrive in 1d4 hours and remain for up to 1d4 hours, though it won't leave you helpless or in an unwinnable situation.

Immunities: You are immune to charm and charm-like effects.

Sanctified: Once a month, if you are killed, you are subjected to the effects of a *resurrection* spell 1d4 hours later.

Spell-Like Effects: 1/week – *regenerate*, 1/week – *control weather*, 1/day – *righteous might*

CRONICLE OF AURANNIS



THE CHRONICLE OF AURANNIS

The Chronicle of Aurannis is a single tome separated from the rest of the Bible of Drasago. It holds the knowledge of Amethyst, the shards of his crown, and the artifacts forged around them. It also details the history of echa, the fall of the great dragon and by what means. It mentions Gebermach and the other gospels of Drasago. The book is quite well written in comparison to Greka's tome and is an easier read despite the ancient tongue. Thankfully, unlike other books, there is a "Rosetta-stone" translation matrix on the back cover, though some trickery in magic has concealed it unless someone knows it's there. The matrix lists the same first page in laudenian and in damaskan. With this knowledge, one can translate the words but must still understand Pleroma to fully understand the content. Rumor has it that a complete English translation of this work exists somewhere within Genai, inside the bastion of Angel; regardless of whether this is true or not, any translation would have none of the special powers of the original.

On its own, the chronicle has no particular effect other than the advancement of knowledge, but it does glow brighter when an Amethyst relic is within 1 mile in any direction. Also, the chronicle, when finally read (after 72 hours to read over 8 days compared to the other books) imparts a permanent mark of power on the user, offering DR 5/magic. Afterward, the book vanishes from the user's possession and returns to Aurannis' side, where she either keeps it or sends it off again to find another reader.

STAFF OF KERIF

Many of the rumors involving Kereptis Rifts are false, conflicting with other tales spoken at the same table about his greatness. Was he a savior or a scoundrel? Was he a philanthropist or a villain? Many agree he had a temper, but no one contested his power or the loyalty he gathered because of that power. He is credited with numerous discoveries and creations, some later proven inaccurate. The one item everyone agrees came from his hand was the Staff of KeRif.

When Kereptis reached Ramkava, their behavior and triviality sickened him and he stormed away, unfulfilled. As he left, he discovered a piece of one of their heads that had broken off in an engagement with a death dragon. With this, he managed to gain their attention an unprecedented second time. After this second audience, Rifts took the shard back with him. He constructed a normal oak quarterstaff and topped it with the grayish shard of rock. The KeRif staff looks boring and only reveals its power with the testing of magic.
Beyond empowering the holder to communicate with Ramkava, the staff can do the following as per a 10th level wizard:

- *Know direction* (per spell) 4 times a day.*
- *Whispering wind* (per spell) once a day.

- *Shout* (per spell) once a day.
- *Legend lore* once every two days (only if the staff has the object at hand or is in the place of question).*

*This is an ability of the stone itself, and if the staff is broken, these abilities still work, as well as the ability to call Ramkava.

THE EIGHT SHARDS OF AMETHYST

The eight are the most powerful relics on the planet. Before Amethyst died, he cast a stream of white flame to heaven. It reflected back to drive Ixindar deep underground and solidify the Earth around it. His body turned to vapor soon after. Amethyst was gone and all that remained was a great violet crystal that shattered upon striking the rocks below. They scattered across the world, lost after the Hammer's impact. Despite a few shards surfacing throughout history, most of them remained quietly buried for millions of years. The fragments were of all different sizes and shapes – with some smaller than a pebble, others longer than a leg. Some were spherical while others held a razor's edge. One can imagine stumbling upon such a gem. It would not be fastened to rock and no amount of force and commitment could lay a scratch upon its surface. Despite their unusual properties, any that were found never received attention during the time of man before the Second Hammer, being indistinguishable, apart from their durability, from unremarkable quartz. Discarded and ignored, they stayed inconsequential for centuries.

After the gate's return, by some unexplained factor, the crystals all rose to the surface, regardless how deep in the earth they rested. Unlike before, their brilliance and power were impossible to deny. Before anyone knew of their potential, their fate, or their true origin, they had been sold, traded, and killed over. Armies clashed for their control despite knowing nothing of their history.

Those with wealth and weight of authority felt their power would be amplified if said crystals were imbued into ordinary items. Very soon, these items emerged with their own local legends, wielded by warriors and kings both noble and wicked. After their existence reached erudite ears, but before anyone could act, they vanished again. Some were stolen; some were taken as trophies when their wielders were slain. When the virtuous and mighty discovered the fragments of Amethyst had returned, they scoured the planet to locate them. Like an unnamed curse, the original owners, all of those that had created the artifacts, had lost them or died, often both at once. The relics fell into obscurity, passing through further hands until the trails and clues had faded. All that remained was the hope they would emerge again.

Paranoia and silence by the oldest races conspired to keep the knowledge of Amethyst and his shattered crown secret. Factor in a small portion of arrogance and many of those who knew the truth never bothered to seek out these relics. Despite the calls for their retrieval, some individuals honestly thought they were best kept buried, unaware of their vital significance in future events.

How Aurannis of Dust managed to write about them in her Chronicle has never been revealed, but the elder dragon disclosed specific details of the fragments, the items they were implanted into, and their potential power as a result. Though it does not give their locations, the Chronicle of Aurannis is a vital read to anyone seeking the power of these relics.

Though there are known to be eight artifacts of Amethyst, only three can be found in Canam. All the artifacts exhibit the same violet glow, growing intensely when other artifacts are brought closer. Their power increases as well, making them the few magic items that can grow along with the group questing for them. It is thought that when placed near each other, their total power would almost equal that of the original dragon. If that were to happen, perhaps he could even be reborn.

To increase in power, the gems must all be within 100 feet. Out of that range, the bonus abilities are no longer applicable. The items do not have to be wielded or carried by the same person. An evil creature carrying any Amethyst artifact loses 4 corruption points each day and gains 2 saturation points each day.

Because of the age and the history of the artifacts, they often go by different names and many cultures worship them without knowing what they truly are. Their stats are listed with their individual abilities and whatever abilities are boosted with additional nearby fragments.

The gems CANNOT be destroyed by any means. No spell or weapon cracks them, and even the strongest techan lasers and drills will blow up before they make a mark, assuming they do not instantly disrupt.

THE AMULET, STORMCAGE, THE EYE OF GOD

The amulet of Amethyst fell originally to Torfin Gendron, across the ocean. The mighty wizard stumbled upon the circular but jagged stone by accident, pulling it from the sediment of a shallow river he was walking alongside. Believing the stone a sign, he continued upriver and discovered the outcropping rock that would later be the home of Torfin's great library and school of magic, Kirjath-Sepher. He never bothered to create a great device to channel the power of the crystal. Torfin forged a simple frame and hung it from his neck, and those years found the halls blessed with a newfound wisdom unseen in any human at that time or since. Torfin continued his work for years, as a nearby castle watched with fanatical and envious eyes. The fortress was Myre, a zealous order of knights committed to keeping magic from mortal hands. To them, magic was destined for a select few (themselves,

of course, being among the few). Wilhelm Myre believed Kirjath-Sepher to be the greatest threat to the world and had ordered his knights to raze it to ash if the keep didn't willingly hand over all magic. Torfin and his loyal disciples refused.

To prove his piousness and dedication, Myre challenged Torfin to open combat, spell against sword, with no limits. Torfin agreed, and the Manora Vallis of Lauropa became the site of the greatest magical duel in history. Hundreds watched as the landscape erupted. Hours passed and the two were nearly exhausted, but neither accepted defeat. In the end, a final heedless charge brought Myre close enough to impale his sword into the heart of Gendron, but Torfin's retaliation struck lightning and fire from the heavens. Though his heart had stopped, the blade still skewered in his chest, Gendron remained precariously standing. The amulet slipped from around his neck and fell into his hand. He lifted his palm to the sky, and an eagle promptly swooped down to snatch the crystal.

The order of Myre and the mages of Sepher returned with their lords' bodies, declaring no further conflict would occur that day. The crystal vanished from the minds of both armies, and passed from hand to hand until it was found among the treasure hoard of a group of boggs annihilated by a patrol from Porto and taken back to the bastion for study. The intellectual elite of Porto poked and prodded the crystal but could not understand its mysterious properties. This item, unlike other echan artifacts, generated little disruption in comparison to its power. In a final attempt to unlock its secrets, they surreptitiously contacted an echan expert in another bastion, David Chen from Genai. However, while it was being transported there, a wandering dragon attacked the flyer, sending it plummeting to earth in the midst of the forest of Crax and scattering the cargo for miles. To the best of anyone's knowledge, the amulet was never recovered.

Item Slot: Neck

Enhancement: The amulet grants an enhancement bonus to all saving throws and to Intelligence-based checks, determined by the number of Amethyst relics within 100 feet.

On Its Own: +1 enhancement bonus
2 Amethyst relics: +2 enhancement bonus
3 Amethyst relics: +3 enhancement bonus
5 Amethyst relics: +4 enhancement bonus
7 Amethyst relics: +5 enhancement bonus

8 Amethyst relics: +6 enhancement bonus

Spell-Like Effect: At will/*light*.

+3 Amethyst Relics: The amulet grants spell resistance 10 + character level.

THE BRACERS / ARMS OF TRUTH / THE PRESENCE OF RHINFORGE

The great dwarven city of Thos Thalagos was actually built atop the ruins of a previous smaller narros mine called Rhinforge, though few remember this. The tiny village of Rhinforge was the wealthiest mine in the north. Storehouses had to be built to hold the treasures they had unearthed. The mine's leader, Rarikon Baxs, refused to share this treasure with neighboring camps, with plans to use the money to hire an army of swords to conquer all of the land that would eventually be called Fargon. It was during this time that Baxs discovered the amethyst shards, two long, wide and flat pieces, just slightly shorter than a forearm.

To his amazement, Baxs realized the shards could not be cracked by any weapon in his arsenal and ordered them to be set within his cuirass, but this ended up not being feasible and he later had them placed within a set of forearm protectors in hopes they would improve his bowmanship. This they could not accomplish, but he found that they did protect him from harm. Near invulnerable, Baxs took it as a sign to crusade, to finally take the land as his own.

To prevent the formation of a corrupted empire, all the surrounding camps banded together. They struck Rhinforge before mercenary reinforcements could arrive. The combined might broke the back of the city's lackluster militia and Baxs was forced to flee south, his hands and pockets bursting with pilfered gold. Considering him too dangerous to allow free, the commander and now ruler of the mine, Thalagos Gin, placed a hefty bounty upon Baxs' head. The despot was finally located and chased up the face of Mt. Tirocinia, an active volcano. To deny the prize of his opponents, Baxs hurled himself to the flames and was engulfed by the molten rock. Thalagos Gin had the

mining town renamed and decreed that none should ever speak Baxs' name again, excising this dark period from the narros' history.

More than 200 years passed before the bracers resurfaced, having somehow traveled another 450 miles south to wind up under Mt. Selkirk, eventually appearing intact from the back of a mining machine operated by the techan humans of the new bastion. Finding the discovery unusual, the miners brought them to their supervisor, who immediately ordered them locked in the company vault, where they remain in hiding to this day.

Item Slot: Arms

Enhancement: The bracers, on their own, grant a +2 enhancement bonus to AC or natural armor (user's choice). Every additional two Amethyst relics within 100 feet increase the bonus by 1, to a maximum of +5.

+2 Amethyst Relics: The bracers grant a +2 artifact bonus to Fortitude and Will saving throws, +2 for every two additional Amethyst relics within 100 feet. The wearer is also immune to fear.

THE BUCKLE / THE BELT, BOOTS, or BRACELET OF DRAGONKIND

The only group or individual more obsessed with locating powerful magic than the Order of Myre is Darius Konig, king of Baruch Malkut. The kingdom has always been magically underprivileged: therefore, the king ordered all items of any significant power belonged to the kingdom and required them to be handed over to prolocutors trained to categorize and quantify their powers. Konig also demanded any texts or records of such items be tendered for examination. The prized trophy he sought was the manifest of Myre, the massive tome detailing all which lays within the Castle Myre vaults, be they magical or remnants from the old age of man. Darius coveted these artifacts and any others with the promise of power.

It was in their fervent pursuit that an Amethyst crystal was found, worn as a belt buckle by the noble of a small village called Eathar, who claimed the item was found on the corpse of a slain elvish princess. In truth,

he had stolen the buckle from its former owner, but upon its discovery Konig insisted such treasures belonged to the kingdom and appropriated it for himself.

The amethyst gem had a longer history than that, having been forged into its present form by a mage from Laurama, Rhuunazodaeus. Rhuuna was not a powerful caster but did have a reputation amongst the other chaparrans of the forest. She stumbled upon the amethyst crystal in the most fitting way for a chaparran, finding it within a tree. A lightning strike during an unusually intense storm cracked an old conifer from tip to root. As Rhunna examined the char, she found the violet crystal embedded in its bark. This specific tree had predated the chaparrans' arrival and was dubbed the "Mending Tree" by their holy order for its ability to repulse the Tranquiss plague. Realizing the purity of the tree lay in this crystal, Rhuuna took it and fled back to her village. The Mending Tree was dead, but the crystal took on its name initially, as the Mending Sap. Rhuuna, in hope of channeling the crystal's power, affixed it to a buckle and tied it around her right wrist, believing she could channel its energy into her knowledge of Pleroma to cure the plague. She would not have her chance, as she was taken by slavers shortly thereafter, her ultimate unfortunate fate a mystery. The buckle, its true powers unknown, was passed through many owners over the intervening years, appearing at various times mounted as a bracelet, a belt buckle or a boot buckle by various dignitaries of the Blessed Kingdom.

Spell-Like Ability: *Haste*, for 3 rounds per day plus an additional 3 rounds for every additional Amethyst relic within 100 feet (maximum 24 rounds). Activating the effect requires a free action and it lasts until the start of your next turn.

+2 Amethyst Relics: *Boots*—The boots will always grip on a slippery surface, and grant a +5 artifact bonus to jump rolls and Reflex saves. *Belt*—The wearer becomes more resilient to damage, gaining a +5 artifact bonus to all Fortitude saves as well as light fortification (25% chance to ignore critical hit damage). *Bracelet*—The wearer is proficient with any one-handed weapon held by the bracelet's hand, and uses the fighter base attack bonus while using a one-handed weapon.

+5 Amethyst Relics: *Boots*—The wearer no longer touches the ground while moving, hovering an inch off the ground. They can cross any surface (water, mud, etc) and never leave any tracks. The bonus to Jump rolls and Reflex saves increases to +7. *Belt*—Light fortification is replaced with medium fortification (75% chance to ignore critical hit damage). The bonus to Fortitude saves increases to +7. *Bracelet*—In addition to the benefits given above, the wearer also gains the feats Weapon Focus and Weapon Specialization with the weapon in the bracelet's hand.

+7 Amethyst Relics: *Boots*—The boots grant a continuous *spider climb* effect, in addition to the benefits given above. *Belt*—In addition to the benefits given above, the wearer gains DR 5/— (cumulative with any other DR the wearer might have). *Bracelet*—In addition to the benefits given above, the bracelet also gains Improved Critical and Greater Weapon Specialization with the weapon in the bracelet's hand.

A monitor guard asked him, "Did you knew him?" A strong accent and muddled words meant this wasn't his first language. He tried too hard to pronounce every word.

"No," Aiden answered.

"We could not have saved him."

"Yeah…I know." He didn't.

"He was already half-dead."

"Thought perhaps you'd have a healer."

"Doctor tended. Too far gone."

"Vivicator?"

"Magic?" The guard shook his head. "One in a million, fewer with men."

"Nothing else?"

"Not more than chicken bones and blind prayer, I'm afraid. Doctors leave for bastion when good enough." The guard said nothing more, leaving Aiden by the roadside.

Aiden's ward had been a notoriously ungrateful slaver recognized for his stocks of broken puggs. He snatched his chattel in Xixion and passed the cross every six months to trade with caravans bound for Malkut. There was neither a reward nor grateful praise for his recovery. The corpse was tossed to a collective grave, a layer of lime the only consideration.

Antikari was unimportant in the world until progressive humans and fae from Limshau decided to set a road across the land, uniting its various kingdoms. The town nurtured a business of escorts and travel guides armed with allies and swords. Rising costs forced some committed pilgrims to chance the journey to Angel alone. At this late hour, gas powered lamps flickered with flame.

The Continental Cross was a beaten path that connected the bastion of Angel, through house Antikari and house Orchis, and finally to Limshau. Although not always safe, it was the easiest route to take with reduced risk. All Aiden needed to do was book passage and follow the single road to Limshau. He hobbled to the station, still forcing air into his lungs.

The Corrigan caravan was a string of a dozen slow moving conestogas, coaches, and carriages, laced together and towed by a group of oversized oxen. Endowed with magic, the two storey beasts never slept and seldom ate. They could pull a hundred tons for weeks before needing rest. It was what Aiden had waited his life to see, something truly unbelievable and impossible given the rules of science. It was real and alive and beautiful. The conestogas were double in height and the two monstrous bovine dragged them like living locomotives. Aiden had read about gargantuan snails with houses formed out of their shells and flying boats with stone wings which never flapped. This would do for now.

CHAPTER TEN:
CULTURE

The world of Amethyst may be one of fantasy, but medieval it is not. The common knowledge earned throughout human history dealing with building construction, agriculture, medication, and sanitation has survived. Even though anyone with advanced knowledge to better a technological society was allowed entry into bastions, many people outside still possessed the general knowledge developed centuries before nuclear power, computers, and antibiotics. In addition, many on the outside soon progressed on their own, rediscovering advances their protected brothers and sisters embraced years earlier. A few possessing this knowledge used it as currency to earn themselves entry into bastions. Others realized this knowledge, primitive by the standards of advanced cities, begot more power and influence on the outside.

Of course, any technical knowledge past about the point when electricity comes into play is rendered more or less useless by surrounding magic, preventing progress and forcing immigration for those wishing to pursue this path. Still, every bastion and even the free cities have sprawling villages outside their walls of people either trying to get in or pandering to those entering or leaving. Outside, the world of fantasy still shares some striking similarities with the world of the past.

ALIEN SIMILARITY

One of the greatest examples of echalogical influence—the first after the shock of how human-like fae appeared—occurred soon after the first civilized meeting. It had been widely accepted that Angel was the first city to have contact with the echan world, making sense given the age of the bastion. Despite the vagueness of history, there was one known positive initial encounter between the elders of Genai and Ravenar Limshau III when he and his loyal retinue came before the fledgling walls. The human elders were modern and understanding, not obtuse and arrogant about tradition. Ravenar's group was open and thoughtful, despite the language barrier that Ravenar was quick to defeat with his astonishing skill. The Genai hosts opted for vegetarian food, believing it to be the most amicable, and not knowing the damaskans' traditions, presented an assorted selection of cutlery to use. How shocking it must have been when Ravenar Limshau chose the chopsticks without hesitation and handled them with a skill reserved for his mirrors across the table. Many said later the relationship that blossomed between humans and damaskans began in that room. Was he reading their minds? Had he been taught beforehand? No: all damaskans had always used them, as did chaparrans (though theirs were always formed out of living wood), while narros and tenenbri had always used utensils similar to those of the ancient Greeks. In the same way, the narros culture had always borne a surprising resemblance to that of the human civilizations of old Asia, and the more agrarian gimfen culture to the agricultural societies of the old British Isles. Even the cleverest scholars were at a loss to explain such similarity between peoples separated by millions of years.

ECHALOGICAL INFLUENCE & CORPUS CONTINUITY

Neither the fae nor dragons questioned their origins or the purpose of life. If Amethyst knew, as many believed he did, he never shared such knowledge, lest he wish someone to share his withdrawn disposition. Even after Mengus arrived, the world and how it worked made perfect sense. For better or worse, they knew enough of the universe

to be complacent, something an evolved species like man would never settle with.

The very appearance of man confused many fae upon their return. They discovered that without magic, suppressed rules of nature resumed their original function: species adapt to their environment and do so much slower and less drastically then before. Not only that, but this intelligent new creature evolved from a primitive form – a social animal with bestial ways. Fae could not understand how intelligence could *arise* through evolution: their experience of the process was as a spontaneous degradation rather than a steady improvement. Added to that, these creatures looked nearly identical to the fae on the outside, and layered throughout their history, this species had generated a vast literary canon professing the existence of fabled creatures as such that roamed the world in a time when their own ancestors had been nothing but tiny shrew-like creatures. Mankind encountered their own mystery, barely surviving the holocaust of the Second Hammer only to discover a sudden population appearing literally from nowhere. Not only that, but they coincidently resembled creatures from fiction and legends dating back thousands of years.

Both sides suddenly faced the prospect of reexamining their belief system. Echalogians appeared offering answers and using ancient literature and modern observations as proof. Two new terms entered the lexicon in an attempt to appease the masses looking for an explanation: Corpus Continuity and Echalogical Influence.

Corpus Continuity is an overtly religious perspective, based on the assumption that God created mankind in his own image; therefore, it is reasonable to assume that the fae were a previous creation in the same image. As this theological theory runs into a slight difficulty when considering that dragons were the first intelligent life form on Earth and look nothing like humanity, others prefer the theory of echalogical influence without recourse to an intelligent creator. This theory assumes that the influence of the Terros age was encoded somehow, magically or otherwise, in the genetic memory of the natural species existing at that time: humans being the only evolved race to reach sentience were the only ones to unlock that ancient potential. In essence, had lizards or insects become the dominant species of Earth instead of primate mammals, they would still have ultimately evolved to resemble fae and carried that ancient legacy into their mythology. Echalogians often point to spawn races like the kodiaks developing hominid traits such as upright carriage and opposable thumbs as proof of this theory.

CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

The one attribute of man that fae find most surprising involves his capacity of adaptation beyond simple evolution. Fae adapt their forms to their surroundings spontaneously, their children assuming a completely new genotype according to the needs of their environment. Place them in darkness and they go blind, learning to see through sound and vibrations. Place them in water and they will grow gills and fins. Their language and their attitudes alter, and soon they even refer to themselves as a new species within a generation. Man, conversely, prefers to adapt the landscape to suit his needs. Place him in darkness, and he will make a light. Place him in water and he will build a boat. Humanity is hardly bothered by the breakdown of the processes of evolution, since human ingenuity has the power to trump even natural selection. Furthermore, Man remains Man despite creating a new culture. Language, clothing, diet, architecture, cultural attitudes all may change, yet they are the same people. Two human nations a distance apart with no means of communication will inevitably create completely different cultures. Yet despite differences in skin tone and minor variations in body structure, humans are still close to being clones, with less than 1% genetic variation between them.

With fae, cultural variation is the same as species variation: identical fae produce identical societies. Gimfen grind towers dot the world with no communication to share information on their construction, but they are all nearly identical. The narroni language is the same in Fargon as it is in the Finer Fire Pits, and the same as it was spoken in ancient Terros – not so much as a different accent impedes communication. Even Limshau and Damaska, separated by five hundred years and an ocean and showing the most marked cultural division within a single fae species, have similar beliefs and attitudes. Conversely, the human nations of Kannos and Abidan are separated by only a few hundred miles but have entirely distinct accents and cultural practices. The bastions of Angel and York both speak English, but with vastly different vocabularies drawn from different outside influences, and neither of them much resembles the language as spoken before the Second Hammer.

As the speech changed, so did values and motivations. Abidan became a bright light of peaceful religious equality while Baruch Malkut focused its energy in the exploitation and slavery of a species they considered inferior in the name of the very same god as Abidan. As these new nations developed, most grew tolerant of their neighbors and the various vices and viewpoints of their citizens, considered taboo or inappropriate in the past. Biases over ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and religion were subdued and silent. Controversial topics polarizing communities were no longer a serious concern in comparison to the essential issues of food and security. Given this, Baruch Malkut is considered an anomaly, though a large and dangerous one. Some fae and humans accuse mankind of only accepting his differences in lieu of finding new people to hate.

LANGUAGES

Many languages died following Attricana's opening. Others faded within a few generations while a few merged to create new variations. Before the gates, hundreds of languages dotted the globe: now, only a

handful remain. Surviving vernacular soon divided into regional slangs and patois, eventually becoming recognized languages themselves with distinct lexicons, syntaxes, and phonetic pronunciations. English surfaced as the only surviving dominant language in Canam, though divided into dozens of regional dialects, coopting vocabulary from upward of a hundred different languages, from the old Latin languages to the tongues of Asiatic immigrants fleeing the spread of Kakodomania, to the few surviving pockets of native tribal speech.

While each fae species has its own distinctive accent if not entirely separate language, fae tongues sound similar to one another, though different enough that a speaker could not fake one if fluent in another. Narros and pagus tongues sound more jagged and sharp, while other fae races sound more fluid and poetic. Even though sounding similar to their languages, humans have found learning any fae tongue extremely difficult.

Techan Special Rule: An echan language requires two skill ranks in Linguistics instead of one to select.

Language: This is the language name as translated into English.

Script Type: This is the system of writing the script uses. There are six variations:

Abjad – Very similar to Alphabetic, Abjad uses symbols representing consonants with little to no vowel use. This system includes some of the oldest languages still being spoken today.

Abugida – This system is similar to Alphabetic and Abjad in that it uses consonants, but it combines vowels with its consonants rather than having separate vowels.

Alphabetic – The root for many languages, this uses simple symbols representing individual consonants and vowels. This often creates a smaller spectrum of letters but added complexity may occur with a complicated vocabulary.

Featural – This is a strictly phonetic-based writing system often employing syllabic blocks. This language is not often seen but is easier to learn than most others.

Logographic – Symbols represent words and phonemes (though mostly the latter). These scripts can be extremely complex as the symbols can be intricate.

Pictographic – Symbols represent specific titles, vague concepts, or ideas. This is not considered a strong written language and is nearly impossible to translate without reference. These symbols have been known to be very extravagant.

Syllabic – Symbols represent syllables of words rather than whole words or consonants. This system can be nearly as complicated as pictographic or logographic but can convey a spoken language better.

LANGUAGE DESCRIPTIONS

Argose: Argose is the primitive language of the kodiaks. Argose consists of growls and mumbles barely distinguishable to the untrained ear from the random noises of an unintelligent animal. The specific patterns are hidden deep in the inflections of those growls, a

LANGUAGE	SCRIPT TYPE	SCRIPT NAME	ECHAN
Argose	Pictrographic	Argose	Yes
Chaparra	Pictrographic	Faen	Yes
Damaskan	Logographic	Damaskan	Yes
English	Alphabetic	English	No
Englo-Lingo	Alphabetic	English	No
Ferran	Pictrographic	Ferran	Yes
Guttoran	None	None	Yes
Ignotan	Featural	Kakkonin	Yes
Indic	Abjad	Shahmukhi	No
Laudenian	Logographic	Faen	Yes
Narroni	Featural	Narroni	No
Old Fae	Pictrographic	Faen	Special
Onespeak	Alphabetic	Terran	No
Paggin	Featural	Kakkonin	Yes
Pleroma	Logographic	Adonnic	Special
Romanic	Alphabetic	Romanic	No
Saeqaar	Logographic	Adonnic	Special
Semitic	Abjad	Aramaic	No
Sinitic	Logographic	Kanja	No
Slavic	Alphabetic	Cyrillic	No
Tenenbra	Logographic	Tenenbra	Yes

system few outside of the attuned ears of the kodiaks could even pick up, and which no other species can pronounce due to not having the right shape of vocal cords.

Chaparra: The chaparrans refused to alter their language from their roots and have been obtuse to adapt given the exposure from other cultures. Chaparrans believe their tongue is the closest to the original old language, Faena. Later chaparran branch species have an even more complicated version of this vernacular. Chaparran written form, an elegant and beautiful style known as Faen, has never been adapted or altered. It is also nearly impossible to translate unless one is chaparran. Chaparra is syllable-timed, making the speech sound like lasting poem of perfect rhythm though, unlike Laudenian, it is filled with hard alveolar and glottal sounds. The written form of chaparra and laudenian are nearly identical.

Damaskan: The language used by the fae of Damaska and Limshau, as well as all gimfen, is the most widely known non-human tongue in the world. More humans speak Damaskan than any other fae language. It is substantially easier to learn than Chaparra or Laudenian, though still presenting some complications, but is far easier to learn through exposure than any other fae tongue. The damaskan language is both compact and fusional, able to express quite complicated concepts in a short span of syllables, akin to old Finno-Ugaritic languages. Being a stress-timed language, the vocalization sounds similar to Sinitic: those fluent with the Asian tongue often find picking up Damaskan easier than English. Modern Damaskan has adapted in the last few centuries, amalgamating elements from Narroni and Sinitic into its syntax and vocabulary. Damaskan is very fluid language with soft sounds and few hard stops.

English: English is not really English, but a mixture of older English with fragments of French, German, Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Punjabi, with a smattering of Salishan, Pueblo, Cree, or Algonquian thrown in (depending on the region). The Angel dialect of the language is the lingua franca of the continent, by dint of their early association with Limshau, and is one of the most frequently learned human languages by non-humans. This language is more heavily influenced by Sinitic and Spanish, to the point that nearly half the classical English vocabulary has been replaced by Asian or Latin equivalents.

Englo-Lingo: This bizarre patois popped up around the eastern bastion of York and is thought to have emerged from the bastion of Mann, where it is the national language. Englo-Lingo filters out most of the Sinitic donations that found themselves in modern English and added older French and German slang to create a bizarre phonology that shifts through three different Germanic languages every sentence. Dozens of villages on the east coast insist upon it and York accepts it as their second official language, being different enough from common English to make the bastion effectively bilingual.

Ferran: A simplistic version of Damaskan, Ferran is a jagged, rough tongue used by the lower branches from the damaskans like puggs, boggs, and skeggs. It differs slightly with every village, making a proper translation from any source difficult.

Guttoran: Even harder to learn is the sharp dialect of the narros branch species (like chiggoths and oggraks). Since they have no real culture and are extremely phobic of society, their language is chaotic and hard to define. Guttoran as a term is a misnomer since there has never been a consensus of the phonology to define it as a language. It is thought that every group has personalized the language intentionally to prevent even neighbors to relating to them easily.

Ignotan: The native language of all denizens of Kakodomania and servants of Mengus, Ignotan is a simple sounding language easy to pick up but hard to master. Its written form is perfection itself. Completely phonetic, one could learn the basics of its speech in a day. The language is complicated but every phoneme makes intuitive sense. Like all creations of syntropy, it is nearly mechanical in its application, and thus makes for lousy poetry. All shemjaza, typhox dragons, and most pagus speak Ignotan.

Indic: This is an amalgamation of old human languages Hindi, Punjabi, and Urdu. It is not often spoken in Canam but still pops up from time to time.

Laudenian: There is a seemingly never-ending debate between the chaparrans and laudenians about which species is closer to the original fae. The laudenian language is slightly more askew from its roots, an evolution of the original that would progress into Damaskan later. Their written form, however, is closer to the chaparran system. The language flows

beautifully and is extremely poetic and fluid with a strong base in syllable-stress. Only laudenians speak laudenian; they are unwilling to teach it to anyone else, and find the mispronunciations of the few self-taught speakers highly distasteful.

Narroni: The narroni tongue is often confusing to linguists (though surprisingly easy to learn), its grammar being superficially similar to certain old Asian languages but with a sound system like a roughly equal mix of pre-Hammer Gaelic, Russian, and Turkish, despite being constructed out of wholecloth. The original narros' speech was a local patois of Laudenian, but as time went on, they found that the language was completely impractical for their present needs. Modern Narroni was constructed in committee and implemented instantly after it was cleared. As a constructed language, it is efficient and elegant in its simplicity, and is neither hard to learn nor hard to master. It is the simplest echan language to use and thus can be picked up easily by even techans.

Special—Narroni is not counted as an echan language.

Old Fae: Further chaparran branches continued to degrade the syntax of their parent tongue until finally, the lower species like faeries, sylphids, and dojenn began speaking in a bizarre language of songs and whispers even the chaparrans couldn't understand. Along with the holy language of dragons, Old Fae is impossible to learn by most mortals.

Onespeak: Similar to Narroni, Onespeak is a partially manufactured language devised by Baruch Malkut and imposed on the population. Using a regularized form of classical English as its structure, it borrows heavily from Spanish and Portuguese, and contains thousands of words with no known etymology. This language was devised to unite mankind but it ended up further isolating the kingdom from the rest of the world. It is the only official language of Baruch Malkut, and although the upper classes are usually perfectly conversant in Englo-Lingo, use of any language other than Onespeak by the general populace is discouraged.

Paggin: This language formed secretly among the pagus that lived out of control of the shemjaza. Pagus in Kakodomania speak Ignotan only. Those in Apocrypha and Ažhi Dahaka speak only Paggin unless a shemjaza strolls into their village: any pagus that speaks paggin to a shemjaza is instantly executed (of course, any pagus who speaks to a shemjaza unbidden runs the risk anyway). Rebellious pagus consider paggin the first mark of an independent pagus culture.

Pleroma: The language of the dragons, called Adonnaisis in all fae languages but having no name in its own, is considered the very first language spoken by any intelligent creature on the planet. The language and its written form are intrinsically linked with Attricana and it is thought that the dragon god Amethyst created the world of magic by speaking the correct words. This is the language all spellcasters use when casting magic but even they cannot carry a conversation with it. Only dragons are fluent. The language itself cannot be pronounced by any creature that doesn't have a prehensile tongue and an intrinsically pandimensional understanding of reality, so the intensity of magic with mortals will always be limited.

Romanic: Another language seldom heard in Canam, this merging of French, Italian, Portuguese, Romanian, and Spanish is thought to be the lingua-franca of Lauropa and the dominant language of the bastion of Porto.

Semitic: A growing dialect in Canam, this language underwent the fewest changes over the past few centuries. A descendant of Arabic, Aramaic, and Hebrew, it is a common second language to those in Abidan and its outlining villages. It is often heard in locations of religious importance.

Saeqaar: The mirror of the dragon language, this tongue has the same written form (albeit mirrored) and a similar pronunciation. It is spoken solely by typhox dragons and shemjaza for the purposes of spellcasting. Its actual name is not known (saeqaar being an Ignotan word), and it is probable that like Pleroma, the name for the language would have to encompass the entire language itself. There is no word for the tongue in any fae language and they refuse to create one.

Sinitic: A fast growing language in Canam, Sinitic came into being with the influx of various Asian refugees that appeared on the continent's west coast seeking an escape from the fallout of the Hammer and the growing power of Kakodomania. There, they combined with the already large Asian-derived population gathering in the fledgling city of Angel, and out of necessity their cultures and languages began to merge. Modern Sinitic uses the more regular grammar of old Korean and Japanese, with a roughly equal mixture of vocabulary from Mandarin and Cantonese, Japanese, Korean, Thai and Vietnamese. Most of the tonal features of the original languages have been abandoned, though a few remain. Written Sinitic uses a refinement of the old Japanese kanji and hiragana scripts called kanja, but can be written equally clearly in English orthography. It is the common second language in Angel and a common tongue for hundreds of miles around, including Limshau, where it was a popular choice among damaskans when first learning a human language, and Fargon (due to the inexplicable cultural similarities between old Asia and the narros).

Slavic: An extremely rare language in Canam, Slavic amalgamates Belorussian, Bulgarian, Czech, Polish, Russian, Serbo-Croatia, Slovak, and Ukrainian. There is no village in Canam that uses it exclusively. It is thought to emerge from several echan and techan nations in the similarly named continent of Slav, including the bastion of Krebet.

Tenenbra: The tenenbri (a lesser seen fae in Canam) are the sole speakers of this tongue, which stands clearly as the most bizarre of any fae language. Tenenbra is an agglutinative language that compounds flowing vowels, sibilants and fricatives with sudden and sometimes harsh dental and labial stops, interspersed with whistles, clicks, and chirps. This strange phonetic

characteristic came from their voices' capacity to double as echo-location devices. Most words are three or more syllables long, but may encompass concepts that English would require four or five words to express. The phonology also deals with the stress level of voice, implying different meaning depending on the volume of the words. Other than Old Fae, Tenenbra is the hardest for any outsider to learn.

RELIGION

A common belief in many religions is that the Almighty, whatever form it may take, wrote the rules of the universe everyone must follow. Some say the only way to hear the voice of the divine is beyond the grave. Some also say the Almighty exists in the flotsam that keeps the universe from flying apart. Others think it lives within Attricana, and/or it may be the realm itself. Some others say it is a "they", as hundreds if not thousands of spirits or gods watch us from an identical world on the other side.

There is no right.

Catastrophes are good for religion, and the wave of enchantment sweeping away the old world was no exception. Religion offers hope and order in a world seemingly on the brink of destruction. It promises a plan stemmed from intelligence – that everything happens for a reason. As Earth falls more towards the realms of magic and enchantment, many have flocked to religion to answer their questions. In this age, miracles occur daily, and worshippers find proof of god everywhere. After more than 6 billion people died following the Second Hammer and subsequent fallout, the religions that survived found little reason to fight over conviction, and in any case the old holy lands were gone or made inaccessible, their idols and icons shattered into dust. Many smaller faiths died along with those who had once believed in them. When Attricana opened, newer beliefs arrived with newer populations. A few humans embraced these faiths while some fae embraced human ideology.

Given their immense power, it is no surprise that dragons are the focus of many faiths, either as gods themselves or as angels of a god. Those who still profess belief in a less tangible supreme power, though, still have no proofs one way or the other. God or gods remain as quiet and as elusive as before.

Atheism is surprisingly rare, even among bastion populations (although bastions have a higher rate of them). Agnosticism is far more common. Almost 60% of all humans in the world, and a clear majority of the bastion-born, don't subscribe to any specific faith though almost all subscribe to some form of spirituality.

FAITH EVOLVED

Many religions of man survived, though none were unchanged. Most offshoots of major religions either merged or vanished, leaving only a handful. The modern dogma of these faiths rarely resemble their forebears in many or even most particulars, even to adopting certain traditions and conventions of their erstwhile competitors. Although many people embraced religion as an explanation of recent events, an almost equal number abandoned their faith, claiming the destruction of the world was proof of God's nonexistence. This led several splinter religions to claim God created this cataclysm to punish Man, or even (as with the faith endorsed by Baruch Malkut) to cleanse the Earth of the undeserving and bring forth the true Kingdom of Heaven for the survivors. Apocalyptic cults snapped up fanatical followers in the first few years, believing Judgment Day had occurred. As the centuries passed, such zealotry dwindled, leaving only a few begging for attention among the moral majority. Even fundamentalist sects of major religions rarely lasted long, with the sole exception being the bitterly intolerant Abrahamic offshoot endorsed by Baruch Malkut.

The only locations where the faiths of old have remained nearly unchanged are in bastions, which kept their faith as stable as possible (those that still followed it, that is). They still adapted to their environment, some in positive ways and some not so positive. Outside, in the open enchanted, faiths adjusted quicker and more severely. The Christian-based communities took the longest to accept the new world, as the Christian doctrine had always held that Man was meant to rule over all other beings of Earth. Islam, with its emphasis on submission to the divine and its ready acceptance of mala'ika and djinn as articles of faith, adapted much faster and more cultures rooted in that faith adapted to the new age than any other. Nearly all secular, agnostic, atheistic, and spiritual (but not religious) societies accepted the new world with few hurdles.

ECHAN FAITHS

Amethyst: Amethyst, the dragon god of the Terros age, fell to dust when the demon armor, Gebermach, plunged the Sword of Dogurasu into the dragon's heart. Many believe his spirit lives in the Gate, waiting for the time to return. In many ways, faith in Amethyst or Attricana is interchangeable, but subtle differences appear in the symbols. Amethyst represents all things good. He believes in creation and life. He frowns on destruction and those who wish to control others. In Canam sits an ancient temple as old as the Second Hammer. Its exact location has been lost to all but a select few. Mentioned in the Gospel of Greka, the temple stands atop a mountain, surrounded by a fortress of stone. Only a few know of the significance of this temple but refer to it as the Temple of Amethyst. Those following the faith hope to eventually locate it. Every decade or so, a crusade begins with as few as five or as many as five thousand to search the continent for this fabled temple. With little to work on, no crusade has ever succeeded.

The symbol of Amethyst is a chunk of Amethyst rock. To pray to Amethyst, worshipers place the stone

to their forehead and repeat a non-magical Pleroma chant four times in different directions. Many fae races worship Amethyst. Amethyst himself never wrote any scripture or preached any gospel. He resented the deification of him or his power, though not of the dragons as a whole – a race he always tasked with shepherding all the other souls of the world. One record quoted from Amethyst, "If there is a God, then he is truly infinite, and I am as far from his eternal greatness as any other."

Attricana: Like Amethyst, followers of Attricana believe in creation and despise evil in all forms. Unlike other religions, faith in Attricana does not presume a divine intelligence. Believing in Attricana translates to believing in a creation beyond science but not necessarily with a conscious design. Attricana followers consider their faith more a study of creation, the closest thing to a science echans have. Other faiths accuse followers of Attricana of being infidels, disbelievers finding a shortcut around faith to explain the new world. Worshiping Attricana proves that faith in an intelligent divinity is not required to rationalize magic. Some right-wing religious groups have sworn to crucify followers of Attricana for betraying God's gifts. Across the ocean, an entire culture has developed with a population of Attricana-endorsing theists. When one who follows Attricana gains wisdom or power, he or she believes it derives from an internal source and not from a divine creator. Worshipping would be an incorrect word to even describe it. The Attricana symbol is an amulet of the white star itself. Followers do not exactly pray, but stare at the gate in the morning, studying it, and gaining wisdom from internal meditation. Being of no intelligence, Attricana is simply neutral.

Dragons: Many people worship dragons, the most powerful creatures on the planet. They are immortal, predating all others by millions of years. Most dragons refuse such responsibility, frowning on such beliefs. Others accept and respect such faith but remain humble to their mortal origins. A few embraced the belief and maintain active roles in the lives of their worshippers. Evil dragons manipulate this belief to create hordes of followers to do their bidding. All dragon symbols resemble the dragon specifically being worshipped. The appropriate method of worship varies from dragon to dragon. Dragons are worshipped across the world.

Berufu: Many elves still follow their original faith in the creator of all things, Berufu – the mother of all fae. They believe Berufu lives in the shadow realm where the universe was formed. Attricana to them is a source of power, but not the home of God. According to legend, Berufu released the fae to hundreds of worlds across the universe through the gates. This view holds that shemjaza are alien fae brought into the world from the black gate, and the Berufu legend explains that both tap into the same resource. Amethyst and Mengus are not gods to them and there is no dark opposite of Berufu in the faith. The concept of hell is a purely human invention.

Another variation claims Berufu was willed into existence by the god of all matter, Oaken, to be his mate. Together, they would create a species bound of both their strengths to populate the universe. The two gods formed the original fae, seeding billions if not trillions of fae in Berufu's womb, only letting a fraction upon the worlds they chose. This womb is a spiritual chamber in the ethereal realm known as Otsharus (which may be the echalogical root of the Hebrew word, Otzar). The number of fae souls released from Otsharus is fixed and when it is emptied, the species will no longer expand into new worlds. Nothing is listed in the books on Berufu about mankind except one controversial excerpt that claimed every human born steals a soul from Otsharus and the reason for the fae de-evolution is due to the dwindling souls in the chamber. Only fanatical laudenian and tenenbri priests hold this belief. Shemjaza also use fae souls, another reason why their destruction is paramount with followers of Berufu.

The sacred symbol of Berufu is a string of white pearls wrapped around one's arm. Praying involves a wide variety of chants in one's native tongue while rubbing the pearls between open palms. This procedure takes as much as an hour every morning. Every fae descendant culture makes her look like themselves, but all depictions show Berufu graceful and tall for the worshipper's species.

Ixindar: Opposite of Attricana, Ixindar promotes an ordered, uniform existence, everything under complete control. To believe in Ixindar means to encourage a state where the universe no longer changes. Worshippers obsess about control. They don't preach their faith; they enforce it. Their homes are perfectly organized. Though they may not wish to create a world devoid of life, they do believe a perfect society involves perfect order and absolute discipline without the pesky distractions of imagination, emotions, or independent thought.

Like Attricana, Ixindar possesses no intelligence, only an ideal. Worshipping Ixindar, like Attricana, may be incorrect wording. There is no deity, more the disciplined study of the phenomenon. Some of the most loyal followers of Ixindar are scientists, thinking Ixindar possesses a uniform, constant, and stable power source to help retake the planet for techa.

The symbol for Ixindar is a simple black pearl, featureless. Being of no intelligence, Ixindar is simply evil.

Mecha / Machine God: Only the gimfen worship Mecha or Machine God. Gimfen subscribe to the idea that the knowledge of technology is passed down by a powerful deity beyond the gate and only to a precious few. Only by worshipping the Machine God can technology be safely used alongside magic. Gimfen believe that most bastions fight against the word of Mecha and could solve all their problems with simple belief in their almighty.

Gimfen hold that Mecha was the firstborn of Berufu and Oaken and became so powerful that it began

questioning the form of the universe. The parents forbade their child from giving precious knowledge to the fae, but it did so anyway. In response, Berufu took away Mecha's true name and Oaken robbed it of its gender. Mecha would only be a half-god. Though some devout followers have become eunuchs as part of their devotion, this is not widely endorsed. Mecha's symbols are tools, any tools. Everything the mechanic uses is laid out in the morning and the devout thanks the machine god for the tools and the knowledge, picking up every single item and expressing gratitude for its existence. For gimfen, known to have many tools, this sometimes takes half the morning before any work is done. Churches in gimfen communities are shops where followers can discuss their god and faith and pick up a few items at a divine discount.

Mengus: This spirit still exists beyond the black gate. Like Amethyst and Attricana, Mengus and the black gate of Ixindar are virtually interchangeable. Worshippers of Mengus believe in an overall plan for the world: not merely to reduce the universe to an unchanging state, but one ordered by a single infinite intelligence. Those who worship hope to share in her power, to combine with a greater intelligence and be one with a god. The Mengus symbol is a collection of tentacles curling around each other. Mengus is the sole deity of all shemjaza and typhox dragons as well as any pagus under their control.

Oaken: Narros elevate Oaken above all other deities, and though they acknowledge that Berufu has a place in their mythology, it is always a subordinate position. Oaken's myth claimed he arrived into this galaxy by breaking off a monstrous intelligence billions of years ago. This intelligence had no name but scattered to form all the planets of the universe magic would eventually appear on. The greatest segment drifted into the loose particles around the Sun before the planets were formed and the matter that drifted to Oaken formed the Earth. In this regard, Oaken is not one god, but hundreds, thousands, or even millions scattered across the cosmos. Some speculate Oaken is a hive mind, a combined gestalt of all the fragments. Either one or all of them together created Berufu (a singular entity no matter which version of the dogma) and decided to spawn the populations of the universe. Berufu however, wanted fae to dominate the worlds and Oaken wanted dragons. Eventually, Berufu and Oaken created the Otsharus and deposited the fae across the many worlds, while Oaken snuck dragons onto a few of them as a pet project. Oaken's mythos does not include Mecha except for one or two stories, all written by Mecha disciples.

Though technically part of the same religion, the dogma of the Oaken and Berufu faiths differ drastically and are full of inconsistencies. Both make huge assumptions on other fae species outside of the Earth with no evidence of their existence. Oaken dogma includes Otsharus but claims the souls from this great chamber exit via the black or white gates and thus both fae, pagus, and demons all use them. Man is innocent in this and receive their souls from another power altogether.

Narros and tenenbri (the highest ratio of believers) believe that Oaken tests the fae on his soil. If they don't prove worthy, they eventually devolve to dust. If all the fae eventually die, Oaken will verify to Berufu that dragons were the correct choice (oddly enough, no dragon professes faith or even curiosity in Oaken). The narros mythology contends that Oaken never agreed on the final form of the fae and since Berufu disliked dragons, Oaken eventually created the narros as his favorite children. Because Oaken lives underground, he forbids digging too deep into his realm. Narros believe the tenenbri dug too deep and were cursed; some tenenbri actually agree with this judgment and pray to Oaken for forgiveness, while others claim that their defiance of divine law was another test that proved their superiority.

Oaken loves picks and hammers and his symbol is each of them crossing against an unrefined rock. To pray involves kissing the soil and chanting straight into the ground, rising back up with dirt on one's lips.

Yok-Ani: Unlike most other dragons, yok-ani accepted and respect the faith granted them. They trust in nothing but balance. The majority believe in endorsing neither good nor evil; or rather, that the mere concepts of 'good' and 'evil' represent a fundamental misunderstanding of the truth of the universe. Despite this belief, yok-ani are kind and benevolent. A few enforce pure neutrality as the only belief, but most preach that their followers must be as a leaf on the river of life, flowing where it takes them without fighting the current. Yok-ani also despise unnecessary violence and believe drawing the sword to be the final solution. Most devotees seldom even see a yok-ani dragon. Most of them live across the planet in the mountains of Kuraukou; one, the dragon Genai, can be found in the massive temple at the center of the town which bears his name in the midst of the bastion of Angel. This enormous pagoda marks the focus of the faith for the entire continent, but few can brave the bastion walls to reach it, and fewer still ever receive an audience with the dragon himself.

Disciples must be able to speak Sinitic, considered by the yok-ani to be the most poetic and philosophical of human languages. The yok-ani symbol is the dragon shape, snaking around a staff or sword hilt. Praying to yok-ani involves striking the sword or staff into the ground and singing, in Sinitic, a poem declaring one's faith.

HUMAN FAITHS

It should be noted that the following pages are extremely brief summaries of extremely complex religions and belief systems. If you choose a real faith, you should research the details of the religion and make sure you understand the demands put forth. Don't insult half the world by not doing your own research.

Chinese Folk Religion: Also known as Chinese Traditional Religion, this encompasses a vast amount of practices including Taoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. It involves the worship of animals, deities, the sun, the moon, and the stars (although the latter has depressed somewhat in recent centuries). This also includes the worship of legends, ancestors, gods, goddesses, and demigods. In all, there are hundreds of different figures for followers to worship. These include the Jade Emperor, Cai Shen, Tu Di Gong, Hu Yi and Zau Shen. The concept states that a mirror of Earth floats beyond Heaven with a social hierarchy in which all these spirits, gods, and legends live in peace and war. In the past, they often clashed over control of what once was called China. Most modern worshippers believe this double Earth sits beyond Attricana. One must research a path before choosing the right deity. Today, hundreds of temples dot the landscape, and the religion appears across the globe, but the single largest concentration of followers is found in Genai.

Christianity: Once the most schismatic faith on Earth, the Second Hammer put an end to nearly all sectarianism in Christianity; without the bureaucratic organizations that had supported it in the old world, followers of the Cross reverted to a state similar to that of the earliest days of the Church, with only their sacred writings to guide them instead of popes and patriarchs. Which articles of faith survived the transition are unclear, but as a whole, Christians adhere far more to the notions of tolerance and mercy than in pre-Hammer days. Christianity falls into two major camps on modern Earth: Techan and echan Christians. Echans believe the Second Coming has already occurred and this new world of miracles stands as a result of a new design. The existence of Ixindar places the image of Hell back into public acceptance, and many believe the purpose of all life on the new Earth is to crusade against this evil, to finally free the world of sin forever.

Some fanatics still exist. It is believed Baruch Malkut began initially as a Christian kingdom, though its tenets of faith have deviated so far from the original scripture that the only thing it has in common with mainstream Christianity are some of the names. Thankfully, this is the only real exception as most other Christian kingdoms are well respected with kind and fair rulers (like Abidan). The cross symbolizes everything and its placement dominates worshipper attire. Prayers have seldom changed, and morning mass takes just under an hour with a strict progression of prayers and actions. Christianity is found the world over.

Hinduism: One of the oldest religions of man, Hinduism maintains that the soul lives eternal, undergoing a continuous circle of life, death, and rebirth. The beliefs of Dharma, Samsara, Moksha, Jnana, Ishvara, and Karma remain unchanged. They hold Brahman as the eternal and all-powerful spirit to which everything stems and that Ishvara is the only way mankind can interpret Brahman. Several denominations of Hinduism place Vishnu or Shiva as the seat of eternal and omnipotent power. No matter the course, the faith encourages virtue and acts of good, believing that will put a soul on the road to enlightenment, and that evil acts lead to darkness.

A soul's status at birth and their life is determined by their karma. Karma is more than just the sum and balance of your good and bad deeds: it is work or action and the results of that work or action. Karma is cause-and-effect on a cosmic scale. It determines what lessons you have to learn in this and other lives and what fortunes will befall you in this and future lives as a result of actions in this and previous lives. Gods and goddesses exist, but according to certain schools of Hindu thought, they are just another form of life, higher than humans but ultimately mortal. They will eventually die (some believe many have died in the intervening millennia). Even after the fall of the Second Hammer, Hinduism remains as much a complex religion as it ever was. Most believers of Hinduism live around the outside of Western and Easter Slav, but like many faiths, it can be found in smaller numbers everywhere there are humans.

Unlike Islam, which frowns on idolatry, Hinduism showcases several examples, the most common being the Aum, a symbol found throughout the faith. Many others embrace the mandala and even the manji (swastika), any last negative connotations of which were wiped away along with the old world.

Islam: Of all the human faiths, Islam has changed the least. Muslims share six basic beliefs: in the god Allah, in the books sent by Allah, in all the prophets and messengers god sends, in predestination, in angels (or mala'ika), and in the day of qiyama (Judgment Day). Sunni and the Shi'a branches (and many others), like Christian branches, amalgamated into modern Islam. They believe in the Towers of Islam (obviously related to the Five Pillars or Core beliefs of Islam), Shahadah (sole god worship), Salah (five daily prayers), Sawn (fasting during Ramadan), Zakat (giving charity), and finally Hajj (the pilgrimage to Mecca), the final one still mandatory to all Muslims once during their lifetime.

When Attricana reshaped the Earth, much of the eastern Mediterranean coastline sank below the waves, submerging the ancient city of Jerusalem and putting an end to the wars of faith for good. The city of Urtioch (part of the kingdom of Trinitas) sits on the new coastline. Founded by migrating Muslims, the city stands as a shining beacon of religious equality. The trek to Mecca is no longer simple or safe: the Hajj now tests all. No longer safely nestled in city walls, by a miracle of godly proportions, the Kaaba exists atop a mountain simply called Makkah. Dangerous peaks prevent a strong civilized foothold. Every year, tens of thousands attempt the voyage. Since many modern Muslims in Canam no longer know the specific direction to Mecca, many simply pray facing towards the east.

In modern days, some progressive Muslims have suggested that God may one day bless the world with

another prophet. Though Mohammed was the greatest prophet of mankind, this new one would strive to unite all species of Earth under a common shroud of wisdom and guidance. This belief is not popular across the world and no one is sure how such a figure would be greeted.

Muslims are taught to reject idolatry, needing no symbol but their own articles of faith. Muslims are everywhere but many live in Arkonnia and Canam. In Canam, the largest population outside of bastions can be found in the city of Taskin-Kada in Abidan.

Judaism: Related to Islam and Christianity, Judaism, involves the worship of one, all-powerful, all-knowing, omnipotent, and everlasting god who created the universe and continues to influence its development. He created the Tora (or five books of Moses), which dictates the laws and commandments (613 in total) of the Jewish people. Following these rules and worshipping God earns merit, rewarding one in the afterlife. This afterlife exists in the Garden of Eden that many believe sits behind Attricana. What this afterlife looks like has never been defined.

Further, even though there are many rules and principles of faith, no official creed or dogma is recognized as fully binding. The common points are that God exists, is all-powerful, has no physical form, is eternal, and is singular in presence. God gave humanity purity at birth with a free will to choose his or her own path. Mankind may atone for sins through sincere acts of redemption.

Followers of Judaism must commit to prayer three times a day, although specifics differ with interpretation. They still recognize the Shabbat, the weekly day of rest, as well as all other Jewish holidays. Like all monotheisms, Judaism also operates temples in Trinitas across the ocean. In Canam, those of Jewish faith fight an unfortunate constant stigma. Since Baruch Malkut uses a distorted Yiddish translation of the term "Blessed Kingdom," some incorrectly accuse the kingdom of the south as being Jewish, when in fact they follow a hideously warped version of Christian doctrine. Thankfully, the fae – the greatest sufferers from Baruch Malkut's dogmatic excesses – rarely judge humans on the basis of religion.

Sikhism: Sikhs follow the teachings of the Ten Gurus, dating back centuries before the Second Hammer. Over one million worshippers still live today, scattered across the planet. The followers adhere to the thousand page-plus scripture known as the Guru Granth Sahib. Thankfully, this tome, like the Qur'an and Holy Bible, survived through the end of the last world. The book preaches a simple approach to spirituality, a message directly revealed by God (Waheguru), who is singular and all-powerful. All created by God stand equal in all ways, regardless of race, sex, or religion. After the gates opened, many Sikhs accepted the new races without question, being all created by God. A laudenian priest once spoke highly of the Sikhs and their faith, claiming it made more sense than all other human beliefs. All Sikhs defend life in all its forms, especially those of fellow human beings and fae. They also believe in reincarnation. Followers wake before the sunrise and meditate on God's name. They must live their life in peace, give to those in need, and open their doors to all. Sikhs are encouraged to form communities where everyone is equal, and are prohibited from acquiring possessions based solely on greed, acting illogically, or treating any intelligent species less than they would treat themselves.

Shinto: The "Way of the Gods," Shinto still survives across the world today, often practiced alongside faith in the yok-ani. A few have even combined the two. Once one of the official religions of Japan, Shinto professes reverence and respect for nature and veneration of important spiritual figures from the mythic past of the adherent's nation. The religion lacks a specific dogma or a fixed way to act. One does not even need to profess a belief in Shintoism, as in many respects it exists purely as a way to express humanity's need for ceremony. Shinto believes in family and welcomes anyone. Its only simple commandment insists on a simple life unifying one's soul with nature. Spirits worshipped in Shinto are called kami. There are kami of various orders of power in all things, be they physical, metaphysical, or conceptual, but the most powerful remains the sun-goddess Amaterasu. Some believers claimed they found a connection between the dogma of fae and Shinto. They allege the Otsharus is the realm of the kami, the spirits of the kami are these unbirthed fae refusing to enter our world, and modern fae are, in fact, kami taking physical form in this world. The largest concentration of Shinto worshippers in the world is found in Genai.

MEDIEVAL TRAPPINGS

While every society is keen to claim its own system of government as right and natural, it cannot be denied that feudalism is one of the most enduring social systems ever contrived. As Attricana opened, the entirety of the planet was unclaimed. Those few flaunting influence over land or people took this opportunity to declare what they found as theirs. Calling themselves lords was an obvious next step. Even most fae, even the truly noble and chivalrous ones, would make such declarations on lands they deemed acceptable to build a nation upon, even if those lands were already populated. Generation passed onto generation, and a landowner would pass their holdings to an heir. Some claimed a lordship by simple right of wealth or military power, while a few arrogantly declared their title bestowed by a higher power. Eventually, the old titles returned. Some houses were led by lords, others by dukes, khans, counts, marquises, landgraves, or barons. A few humans even went as far to declare themselves monarchs of the highest order, kings and queens of divine royalty, defended by knights or royal guards.

Several changes did occur with the new age, influenced by the new landscape and people considering themselves "morally evolved." The concept of desig-

nating any gender or ethnicity as second-class citizens had been expunged by the years of travail, when everyone banded together on equal terms for mere survival. Furthermore, the fledgling aristocracy was of necessity forced to knight local landowners and betroth their children to lesser houses to increase their power. Added to that the fact that anyone could simply claim nobility upon the forming of a town, and the criteria for rulership became much more egalitarian. If the town became a city, the noble would become a ruler of grand stature.

Those human nations not declaring racial hatred to the fae would often embrace or even worship their neighbors as long-lived paragons of all things desirable. Many fae took this idol worship to heart, never having encountered such reverence before. This caused an increase in human-fae half-breeds as fae were often as romantic as the most quixotic humans. Powerful human monarchs sought marriages with ruling members of fae nations, desiring their patronage, their allegiance, and – more importantly – their popularity in keeping their own people loyal. When the positive side effects of human-fae pairing were discovered, many human aristocrats went mad pursuing a noble marriage with a similar classed fae. Alas, fae never bond for reasons other than love and these initial requests were always rejected.

A few nobles would eventually mix their blood with the fae lines, though this occurred more often by circumstance with lower class fae than by arrangement to forge an alliance. Human nobles having a fae spouse or being a half-fae themselves guaranteed respect and loyalty from the people. The public considered their rulers true royalty, for such long-lived sovereigns must contain stately blood. But to the fae, true royalty could only be bestowed from a higher power, one that could destroy kingdoms with its bellowing breath of fire.

In the history of all the fae and their descendant races, the highest rung of the social ladder was given to those blessed, metaphorically speaking, by a dragon's kiss. A benign dragon would declare the fae of noble heritage, to be one apart from the rest, exhibiting extraordinary charisma and moral fortitude. By such blessing, the dragon would swear to channel wisdom to the members of the family name, even beyond the end of its own life. The royal's family name would be synonymous with that of the dragon. This is not an act done lightly or on impulse: only one or two families in each major species have been so exalted across the world. The laudenians have Elrenar Alkanost; damaskans have Ellenthos Tellurian and Ravenar Limshau; chaparrans have Valentiarankerr, while tenenbri have Sharajaclypse. Despite some claims to the contrary, no narros or gimfen have been so christened.

This has not stopped several fae from declaring themselves king or queen or the land they control a monarchy, citing the righteousness of their conquests as proof of their royalty. No dragon needs to consecrate them as proof of their sovereignty. Furthermore, the blessing is by no means a guarantee of overlordship: even though Sharajaclypse is the only tenenbri gifted with a dragon on her crest, she is only a lord in Vanaka, ruled by Queen Karellanecrebet in the capital of Vakai. A few nefarious gimfen and humans have fabricated such symbols upon their crest but dragons take forging their blessing seriously. Only archon dragons ever bestow such titles on others, reserving their endorsements to those with the charisma and benevolence to become great and wise leaders. Such titles are not given to beggars or shopkeepers, but to those already exhibiting promise, already leading others in virtue and gallantry. Many are already leading nations, but few ever declare themselves royalty. Assuming such a position guarantees no endorsement. Though most of these fae are appointed by word from a dragon's lips, some are thought to actually have dragon blood running through their veins, inherited from bonded love between crossed species generations ago. Such pairings are known to have occurred but are infrequent, only happening when a dragon takes mortal form and falls for its emotions and urges while in that state.

This knowledge was not known to humans and when the new world took shape, many materialistic and selfish leaders with too much power and too many men declared themselves royal only for the purposes of christening their land a kingdom. The most notable exception was King Savarice of Abidan, the only human in Canam to have ever received such endorsement from a dragon's hand. Savarice's blessing by the holy dragon Silver River guaranteed a stature other kingdoms could only dream of. The title did create controversy. Several great fae leaders like Thalagos Gin of Thos Thalagos and Karlis Kronas of Gnimfall expressed resentment for being overlooked and the laudenian archmagos Nacola Falconyr condemned the choice, declaring that the blessing of a human devalued the practice entirely. This view was not felt by Alkanost himself, who immediately accepted the king, further declaring Savarice and his noble line "the first true king of men and the only leader fit to guide his species." Ravenar Limshau agreed with the godly sanction and hoped it would rally a greater influx of immigrants to Abidan and threaten the stability of Baruch Malkut. King Darius Konig, upon hearing of the legend and of Savarice's title, snorted at the notion, arrogantly alleging that God himself—outranking any such blessing from a primitive dragon—hallowed *his* noble blood. King Darius pronounced Savarice's title a blasphemy, punishable by death. If the Savarice line is eliminated, it is unlikely mankind will be fortunate to receive such an honor again for many centuries. Thankfully, because of the necessity of expanding their control, royalty rarely if ever intermarry. Though some suspect other families of such controversy, no dragon-blessed royal family ever mixed sibling blood. The commodity of their lineage was too valuable to squander on selfish ideals.

TRAVEL

Most fantasy worlds in fiction present a world of expanding beauty but short distances, or else mystical means of traveling between far-flung locales. The real world is no less fantastical but far less forgiving. Travel time is a problem. Roads are few and far between, and overland travel between distant locations can take weeks or even months. Even on the Continental Cross, the only highway and reasonably maintained road in Canam, it takes just under a month to reach Limshau from Angel by horse, and another six weeks from there to reach York – assuming that travel is not marred by bandits or wandering monster attacks or the more mundane depredations of tollbooths and competing tax and excise collectors from the various free houses along the road. Most travelers who must traverse long distances, therefore, prefer to do it by air.

DRAGONFLYERS

The architects and engineers of the tower of Dromos across the sea designed and mass-produced an enchanted flying craft for use in the southern lands of Arkonnia, but a lack of population and financially viable investors prevented wide distribution in their homeland. However, when they reached Canam, the Dromos enchanters sold off all their stock and filled backlogs for two centuries. The dragonflyers resemble oversized ancient Asian boats referred to as "junks" with large eagle wings made from marble or limestone extending from the sides. They don't flap and appear to have no purpose other than cosmetic, but the boats cannot fly without them. Each one can hold between six and twelve people though a few larger ones have been known to hold up to a hundred. Most of them only require a single controller. They don't travel anywhere near bastions, Apocrypha, Ažhi Dahaka, or Baruch Malkut and severe winds prevent travel to or through Alpinas. They seldom accept charters to unknown destinations. In the century since the introduction of the dragonflyer, a network has formed in the skies over Canam, though most of the traffic is still comprised of thermals.

THERMAL SHIPS

The most common aircraft by far in echa is the thermal, a slang term for all buoyant, lighter-than-air aircraft. The term refers to their common attribute of using heated air instead of helium or hydrogen to supply lift. Before the Second Hammer, the progress of these aircraft was halted in favor of faster, mass-produced winged vehicles, but even in areas of increased magical disruption, hot air still rises in an atmosphere. Though a helium dirigible would be more stable, the gas is hard to come by in the modern day, and advances in thermal designs have offset the disadvantages of hot air. Their moderate flying altitude allows more people to see them in use and their presence in echan cities and even some bastions is relatively common. The mooring towers for thermal ships are easy to spot. Where there are

TABLE: TRAVEL COSTS

SERVICE	COST	OVERLAND SPEED	PER DAY	PER HOUR
Dragonflyer (routine)	2 sp per mile	125 (Flight)	300 miles	12.5 miles
Dragonflyer (charter)	4 sp per mile	125 (Flight)	300 miles	12.5 miles
Thermal (coach)	1 sp per mile	100 (Flight)	240 miles	10 miles
Thermal (luxury)	2 sp per mile	100 (Flight)	240 miles	10 miles
Wavecrasher	1 sp per mile	100 (Sea)	240 miles	10 miles

thermal towers, dragonflyers often sit nearby, though flyers are more often employed for charter bookings, leaving the thermals for regular city-to-city travel. Thermals rarely travel to locations without a mooring tower, although exceptions can sometimes be made for the right price.

WAVECRASHERS

As the Moon was pushed into a closer orbit by Attricana, the swells and waves in large bodies of water increased in severity. This, along with Attricana's encouragement of ocean storms, has thrown atmospheric sciences out the window. Air currents constantly shift, making meteorology and climatology useless. Chaotic pressure systems have generated the largest oceanic storms ever recorded, separating the continents behind walls of weather. This maelstrom is continuous through every ocean and they dissipate only slightly when approaching shore. Massive coastal docks like those at York and Angel have installed immense breakers to halt the assault.

Nations from both techa and echa tried for centuries for a safe route across the water. The only real option was to travel above the clouds; Porto's Sail Galleons and Beluga carriers easily accomplished this task, but the altitude required was unrealistic for thermals and dragonflyers are not designed for such distances without the ability to restock supplies. For the longest time, therefore, contact with bastions across the ocean was sparse at best, and communication with distant echan empires was practically nonexistent. This lasted until only recently when the first wavecrasher appeared at the docks of York.

The sea is rife with monsters. Some grew from evolved oceanic behemoths like sharks and whales while others were unique creations of Attricana, grotesque or beautiful. Some were timid while others were hostile, swallowing anything they could wrap their impressive maws around. These leviathans were initially hunted for their meat or other resources. Short-range boats braved the weather to harpoon the mammoths and drag their hulks back to shore.

With the application of moderate magic and clever trapping, several of these goliaths were captured alive. Their wills were broken and they were trained to carry a load. This weight eventually turned into an entire vessel, built around the creature. Not a single wavecrasher looks the same, from monstrous sea turtles to whales larger than villages. The vessels dominate the waves by rolling effortlessly over or diving underneath them. Even with these audacious designs, the majority of wavecrashers seldom survive more than a dozen journeys before finally destroying the creature or the boat built around them. Some of the beasts near retirement are demoted to following coastlines, where they become shorerunners. It is thought there are less than a dozen of these beasts of burden roaming the oceans. Apart from the rare docking at York, they frequent only echan ports and rarely appear on the west coast of Canam, running exclusively across the narrow strip of Okeanos.

Ten silver Limshau carmot later and he had sleeping provisions that would travel during the night. Though the caravan was slower than galloping horses, it allowed a cushioned bed.

Antikari was a small house of questionable nobility in a town that ruled a dozen smaller farms. The main keep was a fenced house slightly larger than the surrounding buildings. Antikari also hated fae. Anyone approaching the town picked up that nugget of gossip. Any moral opposition to the population's xenophobic view needed restraining for those wanting to approach Angel. Travelers needed to unite as the raiders preferred smaller, less defended targets.

Most of the residents of Antikari believed anything non-human was responsible for man's fall from grace. Many of them wished to enter and live in Angel but their lack of useful knowledge prevented it.

The house baronet, Renan Torquil, inherited the keep when Stellen Antikari died from disease, leaving no heirs. Renan, his half brother and 2nd in line to Torquil, claimed the seat before any bastards or distant relations could object.

After taking in a proper meal of rice and chicken, Aiden found himself starring at the restaurant's bathroom. The paper was rough hemp. There was no seat, no plumbing, and no cover, only a hole in the ground with a bucket of water beside it. It ran to a closed pit a few meters away. Aiden took a glance outside and then back to the task. The ring around the hole wasn't clean, with muddy boot prints and various other stains he would rather not touch with bare skin. Indoor plumbing with moving water was a blessing Aiden instantly missed. There wasn't even a handle to maintain balance. Matters beckoned him and Aiden grimaced his way through it.

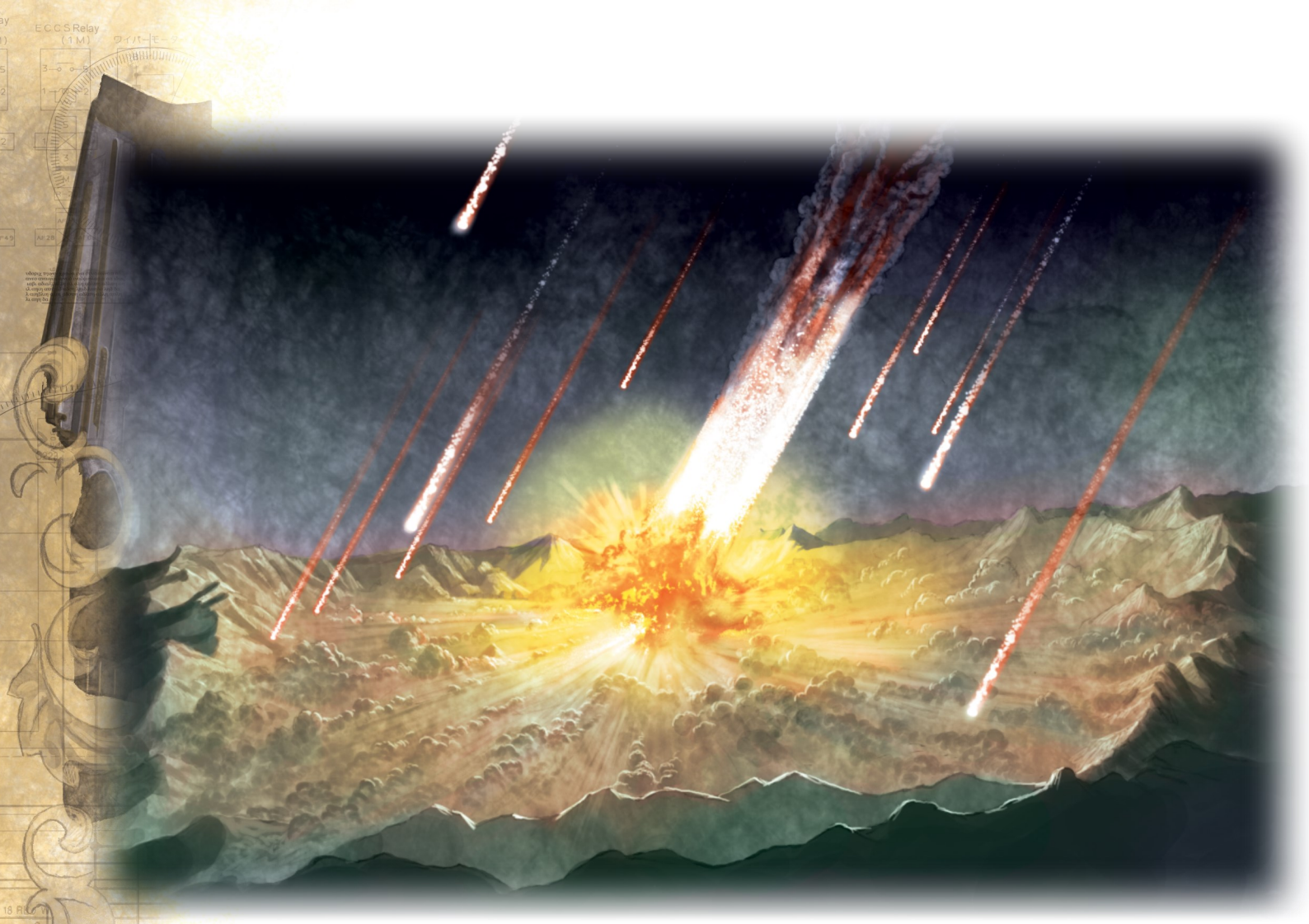
CHAPTER ELEVEN:
THE WORLD

The world once went by the name Terros, dating from the beginning of Amethyst's emergence (or landfall, depending on the legend) to the falling of the First Hammer, when the planet fell back under control of nature. In geological terms this span of time was only an epoch of the Cretaceous period, lasting only a few million years and explaining the relatively normal development of reptilian and mammalian life in fossil records throughout ancient history. Further, since fae developed their culture rather slowly, they never reached a point of creating materials capable of surviving 65 million years of erosion and decay. Any other evidence disappeared when magic dissipated. Even the bodies of these new creatures fell to dust with the closing of the gates, another odd feature of those birthed by magic. After only a few years, every remnant of what magic created was gone. Everything else escaped to the gate, into a deep slumber, hoping for a chance to return.

Man always knew a major bolide impact would be an extinction level event, but he hoped it would not repeat until his technology reached a level to detect and defend himself. The First Hammer, as it was later known, struck what was then known as the Yucatán Peninsula at the moment of Amethyst's death and created the Cretaceous -Tertiary extinction event, wiping out many of the non-avian dinosaurs and planktonic organisms on the planet. It was followed by a massive environmental shift resulting in further losses over the next few thousand years. The planet never fully recovered and the impact, along with massive volcanic activity, shifted the entire ecosystem. It allowed other lifeforms to prosper and permitted natural selection to evolve to mankind. The collision, environmental aftereffects, and simply time itself, removed any surviving evidence of the old world's existence. Though some bizarre artifacts were encountered pointing to the possibility of a hidden history of the world, these discoveries were dismissed as aberrations or hoaxes.

The second collision, now dubbed the Second Hammer, occurred with apparently so little warning as to not warrant a single announcement. The few surviving accounts never reported the discovery or the anticipation of the impact. Modern views believe the resident population knew nothing of the collision until it masked the sun and shook the entire planet. The bolide struck a region of land once called Eastern Siberia. By seemingly pure coincidence, this impact occurred exactly at the location of the buried Ixindar gate. Though the rock coffin sealing the tear inside could never be broken by mankind's hand given his then-current level of technology, a two-mile asteroid succeeded rather dramatically. Fragments of angelite scattered across the globe and Ixindar's wave of corruption flowed out like a broken dam. Coupled with Attricana's reopening, either shortly before or shortly thereafter, the world would never be the same.

The return of Attricana caused severe changes in the physical landscape of the Earth. Several large volcanic eruptions rocked the planet. Physical landforms became more extreme: mountain ranges rose higher, lakes grew deeper and vaster, disappearing glaciers replenished themselves, rivers burst their banks and expanded to many times their former size, while others dried to dust. Cliffs rose higher while valleys sank deeper. Fossil fuel deposits shifted: some sank to the crushing depths while others exploded upon the surface. According to *The Final Word of Echan Influence on Geochronology,* by Marikarma, magic disturbed the calm status of the globe by increasing the rate of seafloor spreading. For nearly a century, the amplified geologic turmoil destroyed every last fragment of mankind's presence. Harsh winds washed across skies. Earthquakes ripped the ground apart. Although the volcanoes and earthquakes eventually



subsided, they never reached a level of calm like mankind was blessed with in the thousands of years prior to the Hammer's fall.

The wave of magic sweeping the globe altered nearly everything. When the enchantment saturated the world's every molecule, the planet convulsed and shuddered. The first century saw great loss of life, especially with man, already weathered and battered from the previous age. No one is sure how many humans survived the pre-gate turmoil, but many more lost their lives to the ravaging Earth. More fell victim to monsters choosing them as prey. Finally, after a century, the planet fell back asleep. The earthquakes stopped. The winds died down. Nature swallowed up nearly every machine and building. Even the scars left by industry were overrun by plants and moving dirt.

BASTIONS

After the massive birth pains of Attricana's opening passed, the aura of enchantment finally subsided to a less chaotic level. Something passing for normality began to reassert itself. With what was left of humanity banding together, those still possessing technology also possessed the influence that comes with it. However, most of these initial communities could not expand that influence relying only on malfunctioning machines, and the majority eventually turned to magic, forgetting their heritage and the bulk of thousands of years of technological development. A few, however, grew fast and large enough to maintain their technological footprint. These surviving cities discovered caches or ruins from Earth's past intact enough to catapult the community to prosperity. The bastion of Sierra Madre discovered a colossal cavern and easily accessible thermal power; with Mann, an entire city pre-built by unknown hands was the catalyst to develop. Of course, the positioning of some bastions defies explanation: nobody, not even its current residents, knows what possessed the founders of Selkirk to build their society inside a mountain within one of the most magically active regions on Earth.

Like a weather map displaying topical zones and low and high pressure isobars, Earth displays regions of heavy and light magical saturation. Low disruption zones allow technology to function with virtually no side effects, although the EDF is always present and certain problems never cease. The more a bastion expands, the larger these dead zones grow. Most bastions have placed their highest technology or R&D facilities as close to the center of their cities as possible, to keep the EDF's effects on them to a minimum. If a bastion was to collapse (which has been known to happen), the background magical saturation would reassert itself very shortly after; and if the collapse was due to an invading enchanted force, the reversion could be instantaneous. Even a single echan in a bastion can cause havoc, if their inherent disruption field shorts out part of a power grid or disrupts a communications line. Some bastions

are more concerned about this effect than others: in York, a main road through the bastion allows echans to walk freely to the docks, mingling peacefully with techans (though it is advised they don't linger); in Angel, an entire section of the city was partitioned for the residential echans that helped build the first walls of the bastion; but in other bastions like Selkirk, Sierra Madre, and Mann, echans are strictly forbidden. For some, the prohibition is strictly to protect technology, but some communities have migrated towards bigotry with an unfortunate scientific justification.

Magic shrouds the Earth, blocking both low and high frequency waves. This suppresses cosmic radiation but also suppresses radio signals, preventing bastions from communicating. The rapid expansion of gas and plasma is slowed, preventing explosives from detonating or even combustion engines from running. While theoretically possible to communicate by laser with a satellite outside of the EDF's influence, no individual bastion has the resources to place such an object in orbit or the knowledge to locate any that might still be in operation. Therefore, like human nations of ancient Earth, bastions progressed completely independently from each other, altering their beliefs, their technological profile, and even their language. Even after messengers finally revealed these bastions were not alone in the world, regular communication was still unfeasible. As long as Attricana remains open, there is no way for the techans' way of life to escape their cities.

Calculating the rate of destruction and the amount of alteration to the climate and the geography of earth, I have come to an unforeseen conclusion. The increased tectonic activity occurs from altered gravity fields and reduced basal and slab friction along the plates. The sudden torrent of enchantment that proclaimed the opening of the gate was akin to a bursting dam, flooding the world in excess before reaching the level most swim comfortably in now. This great deluge resulted in a massive schism, causing more loss of life across the globe.

Even this increase does not explain the washing of nearly all evidence of the human footprint upon the planet. Not even 100 years of floods, winds, volcanoes, and earthquakes could account the total erasure of virtually every building or every foot of road. Little survived with the most prized possessions being a handful of books found surrounded by computers long neutralized. My confusion deals with these said books along with a few other artifacts that survived from the old time. These relics are few in number, never larger than a clothes hamper. They also all weathered badly. Is this all that remains of old man? I believe mankind had already reduced his technological footprint either by will or forced upon them by some great war or natural disaster before the impact finished the job.

There are other theories including a fault in my own experiments or a dating error between the opening of Ixindar and the follow-up by Attricana. Evidence is hard to come by dealing with this era. This question may forever be unanswered.

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The Final Word of Echan Influence on Geochronology

BASTION TECHNOLOGY

Bastions all flaunt a technological supremacy over their neighbors. Though their machines and electronics cannot survive long away from their city's borders without servicing, they still revel in such accomplishments as light bulbs, flat-panel televisions, and fuzzy-logic rice cookers. Still, not all bastions are on the same level of accomplishment. A bastion's listed tech level is the degree of sophistication at which the majority of the bastion sits, but prototypes and cutting-edge developments will always provide exceptions; likewise, the existence of higher-tech variations rarely renders lower developments entirely obsolete.

ANGEL

Kieran looked at his watch. He was going to be late for school again, even though he'd taken the early train. But Xiu-lin wasn't here yet, and he wasn't going to leave without seeing her. He tapped his foot impatiently, looking idly across at the illuminated billboard on the other side of the highway. This close to Genai, the lower corner of the LED display always flickered in the wrong colors. The owners of the fireworks factory just across the way claimed that their work was entirely mundane… but Kieran was at a loss to explain the amazing shapes that they formed in the sky when Xiu-lin took him to the festivals, trees and flowers and twisting, snakelike dragons in the sky.

He sighed, remembering, when a soft voice behind him spoke up. "I didn't keep you waiting, did I, Kieran-kun?" He turned, a little too abruptly, his face bright red. Say what they would, the vision before him could not be considered anything but magic.

Angel is the largest bastion in Canam, is usually the image outsiders picture when they think of the techan cities. From a distance, it resembles an oversized fortress, hundreds of miles across. Angel's development was the most troubled of all the Canam bastions. Setting up on a shoreline rich in the necessities of life and devoid of neighboring contested territories, its population grew quickly, but it was unable to maintain a high technological standard for that population. When Angel erected its first buildings hundreds of years ago, bogg raiders emerged from the surrounding forests, and sporadic attacks and supply raids kept Angel struggling for more than fifty years, until the immigrants arrived from across the ocean. Arriving as if by miracle, in a makeshift fleet ranging in size from rowboats to tankers, came a legion of displaced humanity fleeing the no-man's-land that had overtaken the far east in the wake of Ixindar's opening. They had fled from the mainland to the large archipelago off the coast, and from thence across the perilous ocean, braving horrifying typhoons and ravening sea monsters in the certain knowledge that what they left behind was worse. When they arrived, they found another human population equally desperate for survival. Needing workers desperately, the governing body of Angel made a decision, contro-

versial to this day: they welcomed the settlers despite the taint of magic that some of them carried, and offered them their own protected piece of land within the walls in exchange for a labor force. With this influx of manpower, Angel expanded to three times its original size and built a bastion wall worthy of the name.

Soon, the boggs found themselves incapable of harming the massive castle-city, but the goblin-folk are not noted for their intelligence and they still frequently launch assaults against the walls, though all they can hope to achieve now is to rustle a few head of cattle from the outlying villages; the city's crack snipers and quick-response VTOLs make short work of any concerted attack. Angel's population grows each year and plans have been put in order to build a larger wall several miles out, doubling the effective size of what is already believed to be the world's largest bastion.

The unique aspect of Angel is not the city itself so much as it is Genai, the settlement within. Built by its own residents, Genai cares nothing of its isolation. Legally, Genai is a separate enclave within the city of Angel: it has its own government, its own infrastructure, and its own laws and traditions, but shares certain civic responsibilities with the surrounding bastion. Citizens of Genai are also citizens of Angel, and are issued government identification cards when dealing outside the township, but many residents are born, live, and die having never stepped foot outside Genai. Their heritage insists on recording their history as well as the names of all of those who have died in the construction of the great wall. But the greatest legend of Genai is the source of its name and the identity of its most illustrious resident. It is said the pilgrims could not have survived the journey across the sea and made their way safely to the land of techans without the protection of a great dragon, almost as old and as wise as Amethyst himself: the yok-ani, Genai. Whether true or not, the story holds that this beneficence resides inside the colossal pagoda temple at the center of the district. Only the good and righteous are allowed to enter in hopes the rumors are true and that the great dragon lives inside, out of sight from prying eyes.

Angel is surrounded by major deposits of magic. With enchanted forests on every side, Angel suffers from radiant disruption and wandering monster attacks more than any bastion in Canam despite its massive wall.

Layout: Angel's central governing buildings stand in the center of Tower Park. The primary avenues spread out from this, intersected by thousands of circular streets. Fragments of the older walls can still be seen, circling the city like tree-rings. Genai resides in the southern corner, against the seaward wall. Outside the city are over a dozen satellite villages, home to hundreds of merchants and shops allowing visitors to buy horses or black market goods from echa or techa.

Unlike Angel, organized and methodically laid out, Genai is scattered, jumbled, and cluttered. Occupying 500 square blocks of Angel, Genai's roads split into dead ends, major walkways loop around onto themselves and buildings rise and fall weekly. Most buildings are constructed using traditional methods due to a

scarcity of supplies, with the result of Genai's cityscape looking a thousand years out of date. Asian influences are dominant – Genai is the last lingering shred of anything anyone remembers from China, Japan and the south Asian peninsula before the Hammer. Not a single building stands more than four stories, dwarfed by the skyscrapers around, except for the Great Temple of Genai at the center, set atop an eighty-foot-tall stepped pyramid. A traditional torii gate, painted a bright crimson with two supports and two curving crossbars bordering the realm of the mundane to the magical, greets those preparing to climb the massive flight of stairs. Atop the long climb is a five-storey iron and red brick pagoda with eaves stretching out to shadow the base of the pyramid. The pagoda itself is hollow, as a double-helix spiral staircase orbits around a massive shaft leading one deep into the pyramid. Within the depths, it is said, the yok-ani dragon slumbers, though few have ever ventured into the pit to confirm this and none have ever spoken of what they found there.

Entering Angel from outside is not easy. Only techan humans can pass through the main door. Outsiders must prove they are free of enchantment and that they have some useful skill. Echans are only granted provisional entrance on a case-by-case basis due to extant treaties with Genai, and even this depends largely on knowing someone with clout on the inside. Such visitors are carefully shepherded from the gates to the echan enclave with all due expediency. Several secret passageways are said to lead from Genai to the outside world, forgoing the gates of Angel.

Population: 55 million (Angel); 2.5 million (Genai)

Tech Level: 1 and 2; Genai is mostly TL0, but some TL1 technology can be found within it.

Government: Democratic republic. The ruling council sits at the center building of Tower Park and seats six people. Alan Miller holds the current Head Chair. He holds the power of veto but not the power to push legislation through on his own. Genai has no formal government, but is represented by the most respected community elders, with local neighborhood organizations keeping order in most of the district.

Military: Angel prides itself on how small its army is. Its distance from other bastions and from any significant echan community, combined with its great wall, make a large standing army unnecessary. Angel's military and police force are one in the same. The Crimson Starlight tower in the western side of Angel houses the aerial division. The police force is comprised of volunteers and trained professionals, working by choice to defend the walls. 95% of the armed forces on Angel patrol the outer perimeter. Internal crime in Angel is shockingly small for a community of its size and density, with fewer than fifty violent crimes being reported each year, but as the punishment for any violent offense is banishment, few are willing to risk repercussions. The Crimson Starlight Armed Forces (CSAF) operates mostly fanjet powered assault shuttles. In Genai, a volunteer police force using primitive weapons (and often, unusually fearsome martial arts) keeps the peace. Angel security only crosses the threshold when a serious crime is committed or when a public crime is seen from their positions at the edge of town.

Religion: The majority of the population is not spiritual, but Christianity and Judaism are highly respected even by atheists. The people of Genai are, if not actively religious, at least willing to give lip service to their ancestral faiths (Buddhism, Shinto, Chinese Folk Religion, and yok-ani worship) and even those that profess no religion are highly superstitious. Dozens of Shinto temples provide for a myriad of festive events throughout the year, in which all residents of the district (even those with no Japanese ancestry) partake.

Relations: Angel has virtually no regular contact with other bastions, being isolated at the uttermost west of the continent. Communications to and from Selkirk amount to little more than a page of script every year, and though travelers to and from York are not uncommon, they rarely carry the weight of an official embassage. Unofficially, Angel maintains hundreds of spies and isolated outposts as near to rival bastions as possible, in the hopes of poaching some useful technological development from them. Angel often trades supplies via Porto Beluga Carriers which arrive once every five years. Genai has no formal relationship with any outside bastions, though the elders do exchange communications with Limshau as often as possible, but even their relationship with Angel itself seems distant at times; Genai prefers to remain as self-sufficient as possible and does not trade with the bastion if they can avoid it. Genai merchants accept gold but not (usually) uc. A few will trade even though their exchange rates can be atrocious. Almost any echan goods, including a few basic enchanted items, can be found in Genai's markets (legitimate or not), but attempting to bring these goods into Angel proper is usually stymied by tight customs controls.

Names: Angel's variant of English is the closest thing to a common tongue Canam has, as its wide-ranging influences (encompassing elements of at least four old European languages and six Asian ones) make it a very popular human language in Limshau. Angel's original population was drawn from every major pre-Hammer ethnicity and a few less prominent ones, so there is a great variety and intermingling of ethnic names, but names of Gaelic, Spanish, Greek, and Japanese extraction are most common. In Genai, where more than half the population is ethnically Chinese, even families descended from other Asian nationalities tend to adopt a Chinese-sounding 'social name' despite everyone speaking the same Asiatic creole. Both Angel and Genai habitually use the 'given name – family name' structure on a day-to-day basis and the reverse in formal circumstances and on legal documents.

Angel Examples: Aiden Camus, Joachim Annikos, Kimiko Ross, Martha Tsukigawa, Shelley Delacruz, Xavier Moran

Genai Examples: David Obatala Chen, Ji-hu Kim (Jimu Qi-Hu), Hiroyuki Nogoe (Nuoguo Xiaoyou), Ma-

na Sieng (Xian Mana), Yeong-Sun Park (Pake Yun-Sung), Xiaolung Li

MANN

Adolphus should be here. I keep worrying I may to say the wrong thing to these abominations. Adolphus knows how to talk to the filthy beasts without giving the game away. We have been out of the bastion for a month now, and he still has not told me what our true mission is. I wonder if he even knows. I feel myself tainted by our contact with these creatures, so like humans and yet nothing like us. Yet it troubles me even more to think that all my family, my friends, my comrades must think me a traitor to my own species. Some days I wonder if I will ever see them again – whether my interaction with these inhuman things will forever mark me as an undesirable. Adolphus assures me that our work is for the greater good, and I must trust in him. I feel my purpose more strongly when he is nearby. When he is gone, I begin to doubt.

Glory to the Covenant, I pray – Glory to the Covenant. Yet some days, it does not seem as though I really mean it.

Whenever anyone looks upon the City of Mann, they blink—like staring into a great void. No one is sure how old the city is, only that it predates its neighbor, York. The most popular story tells of humans arriving to the east coast and discovering an island fortress standing empty, waiting for someone to claim it. Someone built it. It was erected for Man.

The construction mimics old human techniques, but to extremes. The buildings sport few windows and rise thousands of feet into the sky. A massive wall, taller than any other bastion, surrounds the island. The city includes a massive self-sustainable hydroelectric system. The first residents of Mann concluded that the city must have been built soon after the Hammer's fall by the initial survivors, but these had died off, possibly from a plague or echan army. This does not take into account that the city was left behind with no bodies or records.

Regardless, the humans living in the city found themselves isolated both from the outside world and from each other. As the centuries trudged on, the native population grew more xenophobic and paranoid of the world beyond the walls. Few have ever left – few have even expressed even the merest curiosity about what lies outside. The majority of the population of Mann believes everything outside to be blasphemous and immoral. They abhor all magic in any shape and the use or presence of magic within Mann carries a death sentence, not only for the practitioner but for anybody unfortunate enough to witness it lest they be tainted by the experience. No non-humans are allowed to enter for any reason; they receive broadcast warnings to stay away as they approach the shoreline, and pulse lasers are put through their heads if they do not make a move to depart within thirty seconds. Even the wall is rumored to be covered in sheets of fae iron.

Mann sits upon an island and rises as a dark blemish

on an otherwise colorful horizon. Unlike Angel, bristling with lights and life, Mann looks dead and deserted. The only time movement is ever evident upon its outer wall is when it fires on approaching targets. No one outside knows how the city was built, how it sustains itself with no external trade, or how the residents inside developed such a technological level surpassing all others on the continent. Those who leave it never speak of such things, out of terror that someday the city's masters may track them down and silence them if they reveal the bastion's secrets.

Layout: Mann covers nearly every square inch of the island it rests on, enclosed by a massive wall bordering the edge of the water. Each building within stands at least a thousand feet, with the tallest towering almost a mile overhead. The blocks run uniform and everything fits to a perfect metric unit. The entire city represents a mathematical perfection unseen anywhere else in the world. The buildings all stand at a height of prime numbers to the tenth power. Leaving or entering Mann is difficult: there are no land approaches, no doors, no docks anywhere along the perimeter, and every square millimeter of the wall is defended by high-powered lasers. Stories abound of infiltrators somehow pushing back the rapids and sneaking in through the hydropipes, but these accounts are unlikely.

Population: 12 million (estimated)

Tech Level: 5

Government: Theocratic oligarchy. Mann's ruling body is known as "The Ghosts." They dictate all laws but no one is sure how many there are or their identities. They walk among the population as normal people but meet every day at random locations to decide policy. Their numbers have been guessed at between eight and sixteen. When one Ghost dies, another is brought it to replace him or her. No one knows how the selection process works. Three Ghosts appear in a judicial court every day to pronounce judgment; while one would expect that rulings would be handed down by majority vote, all three always render the same verdict in unison, without apparent consultation.

Military: The Kir protects Mann from anything that appears hostile. Trained for defense rather than assault, the Kir patrol the outer wall, tracking every moving object above, below, or on the water. The Kir uniform is black as the city they live in, and their duty is to kill any echan found in the city or anyone possessing magic without hesitation. They have created technological machines capable of detecting not only magical devices but magical effects as well. Behind the wall, for emergency reasons only, several large cannons have been built against York in case their neighbor falls too far into chaos. The majority of the weapons patrolling outside the walls are automated machines. Rumors of a clandestine organization operating outside the bastion, dedicated to assassinating those who reveal any of Mann's secrets to outsiders and destroying any technology that falls into infidel hands, are unsubstantiated (and to ensure that everybody within the walls knows about it, discussing the rumors is high treason).

Religion: The entire bastion population follows a single state religion, though its details are known only by its residents. Based on Abrahamic roots, its central tenet is that the entire world of magic, without exception, is the corruption of demons trying to bring the world into a dark age of damnation. The only solution is the utter extermination of all magic, those who use magic, and those that associate themselves with magic users.

Relations: Mann seeks no relations with any other bastions. Only Sierra Madre is more isolated, but for Mann, isolation is by choice. They refuse contact with Angel and consider York and Selkirk anathema for maintaining friendly relations with outsiders and even allowing echans to enter their borders. York prepares for an inevitable invasion that may never arrive. Even though a few Porto aircraft have been seen entering Mann, no official relationship has been formed with the utopia across the ocean. Though they share with Baruch Malkut their hatred for non-humans, the southern nation is just as sinful because of their endorsement of magic. The loathing is mutual.

Those who leave Mann are not permitted to return without a signed permit from a "Ghost": otherwise, they are warned away like echans and shot if they do not comply instantly. The longer the resident stays outside, the less chance he or she will be allowed to return. All citizens' DNA imprints are encoded in the Mann supercomputer and are the only form of identification used within the city. It may be possible to temporarily place a DNA recorder that confuses the sensors to make a person register as someone else, but where someone with the knowledge to perform this can be found inside or outside of the city remains a mystery.

Names: Pure Englo-Lingo is the only language spoken in Mann, and their names have a strongly Teutonic cast to them.

Examples: Adolphus Rasmussen, Henrietta Schelber, Mila Eisdottir, Niermann Kessler, Olga Vandeker, Theodor Hanssen

SELKIRK

"C'mon! Call that a try? My old mother can make a better score than that!" the foreman shouted from the sidelines.

"That's not the only kind of score your old mother's made!" Jersey shot right back. "Why don't you come out here and put your money where your mouth is? When's the last time you won a championship?"

The foreman took off his cap and stamped on it. "Shut yer gob! I took fifteen points against the stonebones not two years back!"

Jersey's teammates laughed. "Yeah, and then they put you on the ground for a forty-wink penalty when you tried to tackle their mater around the chest!" they heckled their manager. It was all good-natured, but there'd probably be a fight in the locker room later. Good – this team needed to work off some steam before they went back into the mines. They'd lost two men in a cave-in just two weeks since, and tempers had been flaring on the line ever since. A good match should get things back to working order before they went back on military rota-

tion. Even if they ribbed each other in here, they would need to be tighter than the foreman's sphincter to survive the bag of foulness that was Outside without a canary.

No one remembers when or how Selkirk erected itself on such an unstable precipice. The bastion is located in the midst of the most magically active terrain in all of Canam, carved into a towering mountain surrounded by equally impassible peaks. Although they have access to the pass of Dianaso, to reach it requires going through a jagged section of rock and would be virtually inaccessible but for the bastion's magnetic tram lines – which none can now remember being put in place. Selkirk's strength lies in its goal of continued expansion and wealth. Their loyalty is to the almighty shilling. Holding onto ancient ways, Selkirk represents a massive mining consortium. Internally known as TERMINAM – TERran MINing AMalgamated – the bastion's entire population works in service of the syndicate. Everyone works. Everyone serves. Everyone has a share.

Selkirk's farms, bountiful as they were initially, lacked the resources to supply the entire population when it grew past their initial estimates, so they opened negotiations with the narros to the north in Fargon. The Echan Trade Authority (ETA) was soon formed to regulate trade between the narros of Thos Thalagos and the miners of Selkirk. Surplus foodstuffs and exotic mined goods travel down the pass in armed caravans or loaded aboard a steam-powered armored train that makes a single run through the pass every month. The supplies are offloaded in the village of Gateway at the base of the pass: no echans, not even gimfen, are allowed to board the Mag-Trains to Selkirk. In return, the narros gain access to the massive gold and coruthil deposits under the Range of Rock. The ETA maintains the trade agreement and shipments usually arrive every week. Since the early days, ancillary treaties have been struck with the scattered echan settlements that grew up in the Seliquam river valley, ensuring that Selkirk will never lack for food and is defended against incursions by the puggs and boggs of Xixion, though these attacks grow more and more savage year by year. The agreements are beneficial to all sides and none has any reason to break this profitable exchange.

Selkirk is the smallest bastion in Canam, sports no walls, and is not paranoid of its neighboring nations. They don't obsess over expansion or political domination like other techan nations. They only work to live and survive.

Layout: Selkirk sits half inside and half outside the mountain it was built upon. Large open areas sit under artificial lighting. Many of the mining levels supply minimal illumination, relegating some members of the population to perpetual darkness for nearly their whole lives. As one climbs higher, the construction appears more thought out, brighter with larger spaces. Colors blend in and the areas are more sanitary. The vibrations of the air circulators rumble through the whole mountain, the only real sounds until one dives into the

catacombs, thousands of miles of tunnels where automated machineries buzz. Workers follow behind and dig up the treasures found by the mining machines. "Mags" are the primary method of transportation – vehicles of varying size that travel along iron-core beams that criss-cross through and outside the mountain. A massive lattice of rails covers the eastern face, the side most exposed. The magnetic vehicles don't connect to the "roads" but float alongside, allowing many vehicles to cross along a single rail. Some wealthy administrators utilize sports-car style single person speeders while the majority of the population runs on the magtracks (multi-segmented trains). One single bar travels miles from high in the mountains to the town of Gateway below.

Population: 8 million

Tech Level: 3

Government: Socialist corporation. The entire mountain is governed by a single amalgamated corporate entity, but the workers banded together more than two centuries ago into the four core unions: The South East Moles, The South West Rakers, The North West Boilers, and the North East Strykers. Each one competes with the other and often takes out their frustration on the field, playing a sports game reminiscent of rugby. Shop stewards lead their unions with the understanding that no one strikes or prevents the flow of goods: as everyone has a stake in the corporation, there is rarely any need to do so in any case. The supervisors monitor the lower levels of administration. The high levels of administration are run by chief superintendents, finally culminating in the main board of twelve with the president of the colony, currently Tyler Norton. The miners take up more than 95% of the population even though the majority of them don't appear in the top fifteen levels of the city.

Military: Selkirk has no dedicated military force. The miners volunteer for service lasting three months to a year, allowing them to work on higher levels and even outside the walls. Few of them ever see action, as no sizeable force can easily approach the bastion and the raids that beset the lowlands and occasionally reach the Dianaso caravans are mostly driven off by the echans who live in the surrounding lands. The military operates a variety of hidden turrets and hard points along the outside walls. Most of the time, they perform escort duty when carry-alls are required to travel north to Fargon.

Religion: The bastion is driven by the principles of an ancient economic philosophy which holds a distrust of organized religion, believing it to be too easily swayed into a tool of worker oppression. Consequently, there are no churches or temples in Selkirk, and any spiritual beliefs a miner may hold are purely on their own time. Most would say they are far too busy to worry about such things.

Relations: If Selkirk were to vanish off the planet, it is possible no one far beyond the Dianaso pass would hear of it for several years. Isolated, the city barely appears on the radar of the other bastions. Selkirk's isolation works for and against it. It is the only bastion never directly attacked by any outside force with a chance of overtaking it. A one-time conference resulted in a modest technology trade with Angel, a relationship that has since dissolved from Selkirk's lack of communication, though according to that ancient treaty each bastion is bound to aid the other in dire need. Selkirk has a more productive relationship with echan civilizations. The continued trade with the narros of Fargon and the confederation of tiny nations in the Seliquam river valley keeps Selkirk alive. Occasionally, gimfen from the south are welcomed for their expertise and curiosity. Selkirk wishes to be more in touch with their neighbors, but their location prevents it. Other than their paranoia over disruption, Selkirk and TERMINAM do not hold the revulsion for echans many other techans exhibit. Since Selkirk primarily deals with narros (which basically look like short versions of Selkirk miners) and gimfen (who do not disrupt technology), the population has no reason to hate them.

Names: Selkirk's isolation and focus has made its population very homogenous and its language very utilitarian. Most of the original population was ethnically of Scottish, Irish, and Welsh extraction, with the result that fully fifty percent of the population has the surname 'Brown,' 'Jones,' 'Owen,' 'Smith,' or 'Walsh'.

Examples: Andrew Walsh, Maisie Nelson, Moira Owen, Patrick Kelso, Sean Smith, Tanith Westenra

SIERRA MADRE

"In my homeland, we have no poverty, no hunger, no prejudice," Marco said smugly. "Everyone has everything they need and is free to pursue their own self-perfection. I honestly cannot see why anyone would prefer starving, dirt roads, those horrible furry things with the teeth, and throwing crap out of the windows over safety, cleanliness and plenty for all."

Roka snorted. "You can see the sky, for one thing," she replied.

Marco grimaced. "I hardly call that a benefit," he said. "It is unnatural, living without a ceiling over your head."

The burly bodyguard raised an eyebrow, scratching the back of her head with her spiked club. "And yet, here you are," she remarked.

Sierra Madre could be the oldest bastion on the planet. Some believe it could be older than the new age, surviving the Hammer's fall, though how that can be considering the geological damage to the planet when the gates opened is unknown. It is believed Sierra Madre was originally some ancient vault or military base from Earth's past. The massive cavern the bastion was built inside may have formed later from magical influence, as it is simply too huge to form naturally and not collapse. The bastion made a point to reinforce their ceiling despite showing no signs of weakening.

Sierra Madre enjoys its isolation but does not hate and fear the outside world as some do. Tapped into massive geothermal energies, the population of Sierra Madre lives with unlimited power and limitless promis-

es for the future. Unlike many bastions, gripped in fear of the outside world and the encroaching magic, the people of Sierra sleep safe at night. Armies could walk over them, completely unaware of the city underneath. With the Gloam to the south, few people travel needlessly within the region, so there is little chance of accidental discovery. Sierra Madre, like Porto across the ocean, strives forward with reckless abandon to develop new techniques and new advancements. Clean power and virtually no crime gives the bastion a virgin mindset. Those who leave are more unprepared than any other pilgrims into echa for the harshness outside. The majority don't outlast a month, dying in the wastelands between civilization or fleeing back to their homes.

Being isolated from all external contact convinced the population they were the only survivors of the last age. When they emerged from their vault, they found a wilderness populated by monsters with no other refuge in sight save for the caverns behind them. A few expeditions only confirmed their fears. A frightening fog covered the south and nothing lived for nearly a hundred miles north that didn't immediately attack upon seeing prey. It would be centuries before anyone from Sierra Madre even knew of other human survivors. When it was finally confirmed, they expressed delight at the prospect, and then promptly returned to their city. They were self-sufficient and had no capacity for sustained trade over such long distances: the knowledge that civilization was not utterly lost was enough for them. Underground and out of sight, they remain safe, which no other bastion can boast. The city continues per the status quo, hoping their solitude will continue until it is no longer necessary.

Layout: The entire city is built throughout a single gigantic cavern. Unlike Selkirk, no conspicuous mountain marks the bastion's location, and there is no sign whatsoever that a thriving civilization exists beneath the ground. There are few exits to the surface, most being hidden service elevators. Without natural light sources, the bastion glows with a constant light of civilization. Over a controlled geothermal vent and blessed with an underground river, it continues to live off boundless energy. The presidential palace doubles as the power center and the focal point of the entire militia, small that it is. Every major street expands from that center, winding through the cavern and its branches. Sierra Madre's cavity is the largest enclosed space on the planet, stretching for more than 50 miles from one end to another with nearly a dozen sub-chambers radiating from that. The palace sits in a gigantic stone column almost a mile across. This makes the layout vulnerable, as the Column is also a major supporting structure for most of the bastion. Its destruction would not only cut the power of the bastion and send hazardous volcanic gas into the city; it would most likely crash more than ten square miles of roof above. The death toll would be catastrophic. Luckily, nothing short of a nuclear blast has the capacity of inflicting enough damage to compromise the stability of the column.

Population: 15 million

Tech Level: 4

Government: Hereditary dictatorship. The Column

houses the single ruling family. They are not considered royalty, but the rulership is nevertheless passed on from parent to child. If no heir apparent is available, a new family takes control. The current family is the Valterras who have ruled for more than 75 years. It is uncertain how long this method of government has persisted. Sierra Madre has the fewest codified laws of any bastion, and the rulers rarely abuse their power.

Military: Sierra Madre prides itself on having the best trained but smallest military, perfectly specialized in operating underground. The standing force is less than 1000, but with massive numbers of ceiling-mounted automated weaponry, to fight the Madrians on their home turf would be suicide. There are no surface patrols, as the bastion prefers invisibility to armament.

Religion: While the bastion's population has by and large abandoned faith, they have not turned aside from spirituality. Most embrace the power of the individual, channeling one's energy and maximizing their potential in society. Many embark on meditation and personal quests in order to fulfill their spirit. This philosophy is an incongruous mix of old-world Buddhism and Epicureanism, though neither term would be familiar to a Madrian. The updated expression they employ is "Spherist."

Relations: Sierra Madre sits below the radar of most bastions. With no exports and no communication with the outside, other bastions that know about Sierra Madre don't really care. However, with massive energy deposits and hardened workers, Sierra Madre could make a useful ally if anyone could find them.

Names: Much of the bastion's original population was of Latin descent, and their propensity for large extended families has resulted in almost every Madrian having a surname derived from Spanish roots even if they originally came from other ethnic stock.

Examples: Andre Semana, Cynthia Calabrea, Maria Jimenez, Sancho Milardes, Tomas Real, Zanetta Valterras

YORK

Blue light flickered across the nearby buildings as Gerard knelt over the body. Damaskan female, dressed in a pilgrim's dust-caked traveling cloak, but beneath which was hidden that distractingly tight leather armor those Limshau library ninjas wore. No signs of violation, which was good – there had been a rash of echan rapes and murders some months back, but the creep who did it was locked up tight. Still, best keep this one quiet. The last thing the department needed was another moral scare. Gerard looked more closely. Actually, there weren't even any signs of struggle – the elf's fingernails were undamaged, a short curved sword at her back hadn't even been drawn, and the way she was laying suggested she had been walking along and then had suddenly fallen: the body didn't appear to have been moved, even. He pulled out a flashlight – dead fae don't disrupt anything – and looked for a gunshot wound. Sure enough, right between the shoulderblades – the entry point of a high-powered rifle bullet, probably fired from the upper floor of one of the abandoned warehouses at the back of the alley.

"So the first question is," the policeman murmured to himself, "what was an elf doing so far from the Broad Way?"

York relied on old technology and building techniques to recover the lost glory of mankind. The second largest bastion after Angel, York never constructed a wall, despite the threat of the pagus and evil dragons of Apocrypha and Ažhi Dahaka. Thankfully, with Limshau, Gnimfall, and Abidan as their strongest echan neighbors, York has never had to worry about invasion from a superior force, and can easily repel attacks from the pitiful local bogg tribes.

Like Angel, York relied on echan means to build their city, but where Angel coopted the hard labor of human refugees, York turned to the technical services of the gimfen. A self-repairing robotic force known as zeros run all of York's hard labor and defenses, a system designed and built in concert with the gimfen of Gnimfall. In the earliest days of construction, York and Gnimfall signed an agreement whereby York would supply the gimfen with precious raw materials and knowledge of the advanced sciences which mankind had acquired over the centuries, and the gimfen would use their ingenuity to apply that knowledge to the problem at hand, advancing York and helping them build a power system based on tidal energy. This required the construction of massive generators deep underground that, according to rumor, still contain gimfen technicians, living for hundreds of years without ever seeing the light of day. Many in York's hierarchy refuse to acknowledge the gimfen's connection, insisting human expertise single-handedly built the city; Gnimfall does not care whether they are given credit or not, since they have already been amply paid for their services.

With no walls to hem them in and no serious threats from outside, York expanded quickly but could do little to resist the constant magical influx into the city from other races and magically endowed humans. With the largest port on the east coast, York became the mouth of the vital corridor between Canam and Lauropa. As a result, the bastion's progression became severely hindered and could not advance as quickly or as consistently as other techan cities. The only notable exception to their technological footprint was the zeros, which being derived from gimfen designs remained somewhat resistant to disruption. The relatively low technological level has allowed some mingling of magic and science, although relations between the two groups have never been smooth. York exhibits the widest variety of attitudes toward echans, some decrying them as defilers of humanity's destiny and others accepting them as signs of Earth's progress, with the majority remaining guarded but noncommittal.

Layout: York resembles a city of Earth past. Old style construction sped development and allows for quick expansion. The only clear sign of advancement is near the coastline, where the tallest and most advanced buildings stand. The coast also sports the largest dock

in Canam and the tallest techan structure, the tower of Shinar (at 7,000 feet). Beyond that, the western half of the city is somewhat disjointed and unorganized. Most tourists get lost in the jumble of roads and highways. A single eight-lane freeway passes in a more or less straight line through the city to the port, with a wide verge separating it from buildings on either side. Those travelers that generate the most EDF are gently encouraged to restrict themselves to the innermost lanes and not to linger within the bastion.

Population: 35 million

Tech Level: 0-1

Government: Judiciary democracy. York does not separate its legislative, executive, and judicial processes, the entire city being governed by a High Court, headed by an elected President who governs with no fixed term until recalled by a vote of no confidence. Any citizen has the right to argue a case or propose a motion before the High Court, and any citizen can be chosen to serve on it by appointment from the President or by garnering enough signatures on a petition. All motions are carried by a simple majority. Laws are enacted by judicial precedent and can be overruled by the Court with sufficient justification. The ruling body battles constantly with the problem of crime in the city. The current President's priority is keeping the populace stable and on ways to minimize the city's dependence on its robot workforce.

Military: The York Self Defense Force (YSDF) is tasked with defense of the city and is the largest standing techan army in Canam: however, 85% of the law enforcement in the city is robotic. Should the YSDF ever be called upon to operate extensively outside the bastion, they would find their manpower seriously reduced as the zeros do not work reliably far beyond the periphery.

Religion: Various. York is the only bastion with cathedrals dedicated to echan faiths. These churches are permitted as long as no magic is performed within and no illegal acts are witnessed. Beyond this, virtually any human religion has a representative in York, with the various Abrahamic faiths dominant due to the bastion's proximity to Abidan.

Relations: Paranoia lingers between Mann and York, and many fear armed conflict is inevitable. Besides Mann, York's other relations are strong, though many other bastions look down on them for their tolerance of echans within their borders and the commensurate limits this has placed on their technological development. York maintains good relations with Gnimfall in spite of downplaying the echan nation's role in the construction of the bastion, remains on reasonably good if somewhat distant terms with Limshau, and while they have no official relationship to the other echan settlements nearby, they neither interfere with them nor prevent their entry for trade or transport. Unfortunately, racism and crime often follows those non-humans who enter unless protection is provided. A day pass for non-humans and mages costs 40 uc; the cost for non-resident humans is 10 uc. Those found without a pass or resident identification is politely escorted to the bastion's borders and instructed to go through proper channels for entry.

Names: York's population has always been ethnically diverse, but with a large population that speaks Englo

-Lingo as a first language (even though it is not the primary language of the bastion), most names have a strong French or Germanic influence.

Examples: Celeste Dupont, Clement Morel, Jeanne Milokovic, Konrad Tombs, Marie Kandler, Theo Vandersaar

THE WORLD BEYOND

While bastions represent beacons of humanity's ancient legacy, they are not the dominant forces in Canam. The majority of what would commonly be considered civilized life on the continent falls under the dominion of several major kingdoms, communes and confederations. Because of the great distances between them, diplomatic and trade relationships between these nations are sporadic at best, but by the same token open warfare between them is also rare. Most of the major nations are connected by tributary roads to the Continental Cross and thus are relatively easily reached by travelers, but a few are isolated by hostile wilderness, only safely traversed by thermal flyer.

ABIDAN

The bucket chain ran from the fountain at the center of the courtyard, up the steps leading to the crenellated wall – a line of mostly townswomen, passing the water from hand to hand to put out the balls of flaming pitch that flew over the Bulwark, keeping their husbands, brothers, sisters and children on the wall safe from fire to focus on holding the line.

Two days ago, the fountain had been abuzz with chatter and laughter. Today, the chapel bells tolled the alarm, and every citizen of Janoah was either safe indoors or lending what help they could to defend the city. God willing, in another two days only the burn marks would indicate that there had been a battle here – and there would not be many new crosses scratched into the wall's unyielding stones as silent memorials to the fallen.

Abidan, land of faith and chivalry, is located in northeastern Canam in the crux between the Grand Lakes and a yawning gulf leading out to the sea. It guards the land bridge of Tethuss, the only safe route into the civilized lands of southern Canam from the darklands of Apocrypha. Its capital Janoah is a massive fortress stretched across the bridge's entire breadth, whose doughty knights man the Bulwark keeping the pagus armies at bay.

The nation was founded by the Christian Paladin King, Vincent Savarice, who gathered fleeing refugees throughout the north and personally oversaw the guard of the city until his death at the ripe age of 134. It is said his longevity was due not to any magic, but to divine purpose – one of the few individuals in history to have this claim almost universally acknowledged.

Savarice's true origins are lost to legend. According to the tales, he washed ashore on the eastern seaboard, battered and bruised from rapids and rocks, his armor rusted, cracked, and falling off his body. He offered the salvageable pieces of refined steel to a nearby forge in exchange for nothing more than a loaf of bread and a lump of cheese. The fragments contained pieces of a symbol, a great crest of a house of prominence from across the ocean. The man cast them aside easily and watched the seals melt in the fire. Then he traveled north along the shore, never lingering more than a day at any dock or village. He lived simply, not wishing to impose and accepting only the barest fare he was offered, always insisting on paying for even this largesse with his own labor. He wore rough clothes, simple boots, a rough, uninspiring metal shield at his back, a notched and pitted blade with a wrapped leather hilt his only weapon, yet wherever he went his charisma shone out like the kings of legend. Wherever he walked, he spoke, and crowds gathered to listen. He spoke of nobility and truth. His tales told of bravery and kindness. In a land of slavery and spite, his words resonated with people praying for dignity and chivalry. Though a cross hung from his neck, Vincent never preached his faith and contended that kindness from the heart surpassed any grace from heaven. He spoke simply of kindness of the soul and the capacity of civilized men to rise above what the animals inside told them to do.

Followers followed, as followers do. Savarice refused to call himself their prince or even their commander, but did not turn away any who came to him with chivalry in their hearts. These few men and women remained at his side as they made their way up the coast. The King's Caravan, as it came to be known later, was hardly any legendary ride: merely a dozen-odd warriors in mismatched armor on mismatched steeds, leading a great refugee camp away from lands wracked by slavery and intolerance. Among them were such storied names as Nobah Kohein, a brave holy warrior from another faith, and the Monster of Mauron, an enormous gladiator with a gentle soul, forced to fight until Savarice freed him. The caravan clashed with slavers and defeated monsters both mythical and modern. They freed the oppressed and championed virtue and honor to those in fear. In one town, outside of York, Vincent would meet Devorah Miller, a steel-eyed woman of fierce will and his future wife, though they would not marry for many years.

Throughout this journey, Savarice never accepted any title from his followers, despite the legends that have grown in the subsequent centuries. Besides, a king needed a kingdom and Savarice had only people, not yet a nation. But as his caravan grew to the hundreds, Savarice felt a calling. He knew a destination waited at the end of his unnamed crusade.

When the caravan, after many years, at last came to the lands surrounding the mouth of Tethuss, every fiber of Savarice's soul told him this land was to be their home. Here was a land empty of settlers, but showing all signs of being rich in natural resources. A kingdom needs growing land, mineral wealth, stone and timber more than faith. It also needs allies, but these Savarice's caravan had earned in plenty with their good and selfless deeds. From Limshau and Finer, he hired car-

penters and engineers, miners and architects. The Bulwark on the southern side of the bridge was erected in less than a year, though it would undergo extensive renovations over the next century. Behind the fortress wall, the town (later the city) of Janoah grew just as quickly. Though Savarice insisted the homes and agricultural networks of the realm be built first, his closest friends and most loyal subjects put pencil to parchment almost immediately to design a great keep for their new ruler, named after the wall.

It was not until Savarice and his order of knights, the Line of Abraham, took it upon themselves to rescue a Limshau caravan attacked by a superior force of boggs, however, that the king's legend was spread throughout the continent. Though the Line suffered losses, the fae were freed and carried back to Janoah for tending. When they returned to Limshau, they spoke of the courage and charisma of the knights and their Paladin King, the first time Savarice had been referred to by such a title. Several well-regarded librarians traveled to the city to record the many tales of the knights' bravery, which they later edited into a hefty book that found circulation across Canam, *Accounts from the Caravan of the King*. The book became a prized possession of many libraries and found distribution among thousands of shops and bibliotheca across Canam. A copy of this book eventually came to a powerful holy dragon, whose name was never revealed and would be further referred to as Silver River, on account of his long mane of burnished hair.

Silver River arrived dramatically at the bulwark and informed Savarice that, whether he wished the honor or not, his actions had earned him the grace of blood royal. The dragon claimed to speak for Lazarus and placed a seal upon Savarice's palm, which would forever render the human immune to any disease, natural or magical. Silver River then decreed since the paladin had no heritage he could recall, the holy dragon would adopt the human as its child, making the name of Savarice a symbol of power and faith. The dragon's proclamation echoed throughout the skies of Canam, and Savarice, though ever humble, could no longer deny the title laid upon him. The Kingdom of Abidan was born in truth.

Within a few years, the kingdom expanded to encompass more towns and thousands more people. Immigrants to Janoah ballooned to such an extent that even a few nearby communities with no prior connection to the blossoming nation raised Janoahn flags, voluntarily annexing themselves to the new kingdom. Savarice and his Line of Abraham were inundated with requests for patronage and blessings. Though its founders variously followed the three Abrahamic faiths, and many of the immigrants also professed one of these religions, the king insisted that no single faith be allowed to dominate: Abidan would be a haven for all faiths and philosophies. All its ruler demanded of his people was kindness. Savarice, a devout holy man, also believed in logic and his teachings, although derived from old Christian books, promoted more flexibility and acceptance of new ways and theories on life. That said,

other human and fae religions do not have a strong presence within the kingdom. The advantage of the Abrahamic triad is that they are founded on the principle of the Word of God, and their doctrine is revealed through holy texts which have been reinterpreted and debated by scholars for millennia. Such religions naturally lend themselves more to the philosophical and scholastically-minded people of Abidan than ritualistic animist faiths or contemplative spirituality.

The king died as he had lived: not from old age, but defending his people on the Bulwark against the death dragon Laban of Miserere. Laban, critically wounded, his army wiped out, fled into the uttermost north and was never seen again. To this day, the kingdom remains strong. Its current king, Claudas, prefers his knightly duties than his kingly ones, but his siblings maintain the image of complete authority and wisdom. Abidan's nearest neighbors are the human kingdom of Kannos, the gimfen of Gnimfall, damaskans and humans of Limshau, and the narros from the Finer Fire Pits. Abidan has a strong relationship with all of them, with oaths of brotherhood with Kannos and Limshau. Baruch Malkut, however, is anathema to all their traditions; the so-called 'Blessed Kingdom' placed a price on the head of the Paladin King during the march of the Caravan, and the rulers of Abidan have always considered the southern nation to be the greatest threat to peace in Canam, not the pagus and dragons of the north. Kannos and Abidan have shared noble blood, but in keeping with the fae traditions of the blood royal, the kings and queens of Abidan have never matched for political purposes. Abidan is strong in farmland and livestock, but is nowhere close to Kannos. They have rich mines but nothing compared to Gnimfall or Finer. Abidan is only extraordinary in the wills and dedication of its people and the goodwill of its allies; should open war ever erupt in the south, Abidan's knights will be there to defend the innocent.

On the surface, Abidan is much like any other echan kingdom, though it has a distinct old-world feel to it reminiscent of the pre-Hammer classical romances – a characteristic, incidentally, also found in modern Lauropa. Some cynics have suggested that the only reason the country sustains its 'fairytale kingdom' aesthetic is because of how clean it is, and such commentators would not be far off the mark. Abidan has a strong tradition of civic service, and consequently is a great deal cleaner and better tended than a truly medieval kingdom would be. Streets in the towns are well-maintained – some are even paved – and public parks and gardens are plentiful. The old Abrahamic traditions of constructing great edifices to the glory of God are very much in evidence throughout the nation. Every major city contains at least one great cathedral or mosque, usually both (often situated on the same square and designed by the same architects); the city of Taskin-Kada also bears an impressive Hebrew temple modeled after the long-lost Temple of Solomon.

Because of its alliances with Limshau and Gnimfall, Abidan is also a center of learning and progress. Its people push the boundaries of what is possible in a world saturated by EDF. The larger farms use horse-drawn combine harvesters to bring in their crops, and even smaller homesteads boast early industrial conveniences. The cities even maintain a rudimentary sewer system and coordinated public sanitation. Unlike many echan nations, Abidan maintains a public school system, free to any citizen, where the kingdom's youths are taught to read and learn at least the basics of mathematics, literature, the arts and sciences. Though some nobles hire private tutors for their children, all royal scions attend the same schools as the children of burghers, merchants, and farmers, and so most of the nobility follows their example. Dozens of faith-based schools exist as well to educate their followers on the finer points of their own, and neighboring, religions.

Other noteworthy towns in Abidan other than the capital of Janoah include Clarvus, Pilbara, Sclavia, and Taskin-Kada, this last being home to the largest Islamic and Jewish populations in Canam and the center of operation of the Watchers, the closest thing Abidan has to a secret service.

Names: Englo-Lingo and Semitic are the dominant languages in Abidan, albeit more archaic and formal dialects that emphasize the classical French and Arabic elements, and it is not uncommon, especially among the nobility, to hear names that would not have sounded out of place in the ancient crusader states. Given that the kingdom still sees a constant stream of immigrants from elsewhere in the continent, names of any ethnic extraction (or combination thereof) are possible.

Examples: Claude Guiscard, Elise Beauchamp, Fatimah Mosoul, Mahan Vaaris Farcon, Roland Amuad, Sarah Minaschent

BARUCH MALKUT

Caleb sneered. "You think be all siesta on ta verandah, sippin mint juleps, lookin out atta diabos toilin inta fields and zappin they wita lightnin wand when they get stroppy, no?" He spat. "You be watchin too many puppet shows. Be nothin like tha, even for ta ricos. You plain never had sleep hip-deep in mud, hopin ta heat don kill you before ta mosquitos do, prayin your toes don get chomped by thievin caimans, thata chaparrans won come take your head off while you sleep, and thata succubus won steal your caralho in your dreams. Tha what real life be like. An our bastardo of a king has ta bolas to call it ta 'Blessed Kingdom'—though he slept rougher in his time if you believe ta legends." Instinctively, he looked shiftily back over his shoulder. "Anta worst of it be," he went on in an undertone, "me own mãe'd probably turn me in jus for sayin all tha."

A prosperous nation in the midst of swamps and saltwater marshes, dependent on slave labor to work its fields while its populace indulges in the twin national pastimes of luxury and bigotry, Baruch Malkut is a land held in the iron grip of a seemingly ageless prophet, who uses his peoples' religious ardor as part of a scheme

to rule the world – a world of magic, in which only humanity has a right to exist.

Southam is not a hospitable terrain for humans. Between the ravening monsters that suddenly populated the jungles and rivers, and the more civilized monsters who viewed humans as just another strange animal to be hunted for food or sport, those humans who stayed after Attricana's opening were almost wiped out. A few managed to find respite with a few narros and ogre towns, but these were rare occurrences. Thousands attempted to migrate north, but many failed attempting to cross the Gloam, and others were devoured by sea monsters attempting to follow the shoreline by boat. However, four hundred years ago, a small population reached the shores of southeastern Canam. Exhausted, unable to travel farther, they settled into the swampy lowlands and began the slow work of recreating a civilization.

Then Darius Konig arrived.

Legend tells that Konig came from Southam or at least near the border of the Gloam almost two centuries ago. He gained a few avid followers, captivated by his charisma and physical discipline. With life dangerous for humans, Konig and his people (the Cloth) immigrated north through the Gloam. They passed through the darkness, but only half survived the journey. Few reports tell of Konig's disposition before the pilgrimage but many tell of the fanatic that arrived in Canam. Konig believed himself the new prophet of God. During his eastward trek, he wrote the Helios Codex. The book does not teach followers virtue or kindness, but preaches a rabidly xenophobic view of the world. According to Konig, God deemed technology a sin no longer welcome in His kingdom, rejected man's old ways and brought the Rapture. To those that remained, He granted the secrets of magic, but also brought forth inhuman demons from Hell to test Man's faith.

As they entered the southeast of Canam, Konig and the Cloth were welcomed into the small echan town of Faustis. The people there lived in the shadow of a small bastion called Sebring. Sebring resembled Angel in many ways, although smaller, with less than 150,000 residents. They lacked advanced technology, being like York limited to the most basic of conveniences. Even though Sebring never harmed or suppressed the people of Faustis, Konig created a feeling of fear and hatred towards the techans. Zealots and fanatics flocked from surrounding villages. Sebring never realized how large this force had grown, and did not even anticipate an attack until magical bombardment brought the short walls of Sebring down in less than three days. The armies of Faustis ravaged the bastion, taking no survivors and showing no mercy. According to one report, Konig demanded the city be burned to ash, with the surviving population inside. Anyone trying to escape was crucified and their bodies posted around the bastion as a message to others. By the time the last flame died out three weeks later, a thousand grisly crosses surrounded the gutted bastion of Sebring. This fanatical hatred spread quickly through the land, the zealots founding new towns or subjugating existing ones. When all the land of the marshy peninsula was under his sway, Konig appeared once again to the masses. He revealed a new vision from God: the world still belonged to magic, but it also belonged only to Man. Fae creatures were nothing less than Hell-spawned demons, and only when the last fae had been exterminated would the Kingdom of Heaven come to being on Earth. The frightening pace on which Konig swayed the masses alarmed non-humans already living in the

kingdom. Half-breeds were exiled or lynched. Pure blood fae were murdered wherever they were found, or captured by slavers and brought south to work the humans' lands as beasts of burden. Of all non-humans, Konig despised the tilen above all else, labeling them succubi dedicated to coopting the pure blood of humanity. Tilen were never officially taken as slaves; whenever they were captured (or discovered as slaved), they were marched to the sea under the blazing sun and ceremonially drowned. This resulted in them being prized by rich landowners, and exceptions are known to have occurred.

Within a century, the Blessed Kingdom claimed all the land of southeast Canam, from the Great River to Okeanos. As Konig closed his grip on new lands, his eyes turned to nearby territories like Tranquiss, Laurama, and especially Limshau. The first delegation from Limshau was brought before Konig who had them executed on the spot, their books burned and the ashes sent back to the fae. The custodians of Zorahn (who sent the delegation) swore to avenge their brothers and books: a few small clashes have occurred in the following century but an official declaration of war has never been announced. Limshau remains alert to the Malkut threat, and is backed by powerful allies in Abidan and Gnimfall. Meanwhile, the armies of the Blessed Kingdom have been unable to stage a successful attack on Laurama, and Tranquiss demoralizes any army that looks upon it. Konig refuses to let such a setback hold him and swears Malkut will cover all of Canam in his lifetime.

The greatest threat to Canam, and maybe the known world, is the growing fanaticism of the humans of Baruch Malkut. The kingdom is, in some ways, more dominated by religion than Abidan – for that matter, more than any other state in Canam except Mann. Their entire way of life is dominated by the strictures of the Helio Codex – not that most of the population can actually read it, but they are told what it says by the kingdom's fanatical priests and missionaries in services that everyone attends at least once a week. The zealotry that characterized the early days of the Blessed Kingdom has largely died down, replaced by a low-key simmering callousness for all non-human life and a casual assumption that followers of Konig's way are inherently superior beings, but the spiritual atmosphere of the realm is such that Konig or his followers in the Cloth could easily whip the populace into another religious frenzy should it become politically expedient to do so. Baruch Malkut missionaries also travel extensively throughout Canam, preaching human superiority, the sinfulness of technology, and warning of the retribution to come if the local population does not submit to Darius Konig before his armies come for them. Other than these itinerants and other agents of the Kingdom, there are no followers of this religion outside of Baruch Malkut.

Time has refused to claim Darius Konig after these years and the dictator continues his maniacal crusade against technology and non-humans, despite being more than two hundred years old. Not a stupid man, Konig has recently allowed plans to be set in motion for a traditional rail network ridden over by stream powered trains (steam power being, according to Konig's proclamation, the limit of God's acceptance of technology). Though it is estimated this effort will take fifty years to complete, Konig hopes the rail network will ferry troops and supplies to outer towns, allowing him to finally

overcome the stalemate and subjugate Limshau once and for all. Limshau, in turn, hopes that over the next few years or decades, as society progresses united past Baruch Malkut, the native population would overthrow the man responsible for retarding their civilization's potential. Furthermore, many believe the kingdom's fanaticism will die with its king, though as Konig is over 200 years old and shows no signs of age, unheard of in any unbonded human, no one knows exactly how long they may wait for this deliverance.

Though the kingdom can no longer expand its borders, its population continues to grow and it boasts some of the most fertile crops in all of Canam, tended exclusively by enslaved fae. Though Konig preaches the eventual extermination of all faekind, he is unwilling to overlook the economic potential of exploiting them, though he prohibits breeding of fae slaves within his demesne. He also personally despises fae indentured prostitution, declaring it a sin against God and Humanity – however, there are no actual laws against it, and even if there were it would likely not stamp out the thriving trade in fae bordellos. Almost all towns, save for Itinera and Nassau, use and sell slaves though the prime exports emerge from Matronis and Tobias. They hardly refer to them as elves or even slaves, preferring more dispassionate, but equally merciless terms like merchandise, property, goods, or furniture. The Malkut slave markets move the most gold in a day of any place on Earth, which helped secure the kingdom as one of the most stable and successful in the world. Because of this, although few who live there would realize it (education being somewhat discouraged within the realm in favor of mass indoctrination) Baruch Malkut's way of life fairly closely mirrors that of the region's distant colonial past in the old Age of Man.

Noteworthy cities in Baruch Malkut include Archytas, Faustis, Itinera, Karum, Kavus, Maskell, Matronis, Miynos, Nassau, Orlov, Sykar, Tobias, and Vallis.

Names: The official language of Baruch Malkut is Onespeak, which has a strong Portuguese component thanks to the most common background of its populace, but it also contains many terms with strange or completely invented etymologies. Names with a religious significance are particularly common.

Examples: Abel Medeiros, Carla Danassan, Eneas Ferreira, Fabia Albeirao, Henrique Araullo, Nathalia Victoris

DAWNAMOAK AND THE TOWERS OF JIBARO

Looking down from the balcony, her reaching hands draped over the polished railing that grew from the living wood of the tree, Valakkinye's keen eyes could pick out the newcomers even from this distance, despite the intervening tree canopy. From up here, the visitors' horses looked like ants, and the men themselves like grains of sand. "Why are they here, chichya?" she asked her father as he stepped out into the evening sunlight beside her.

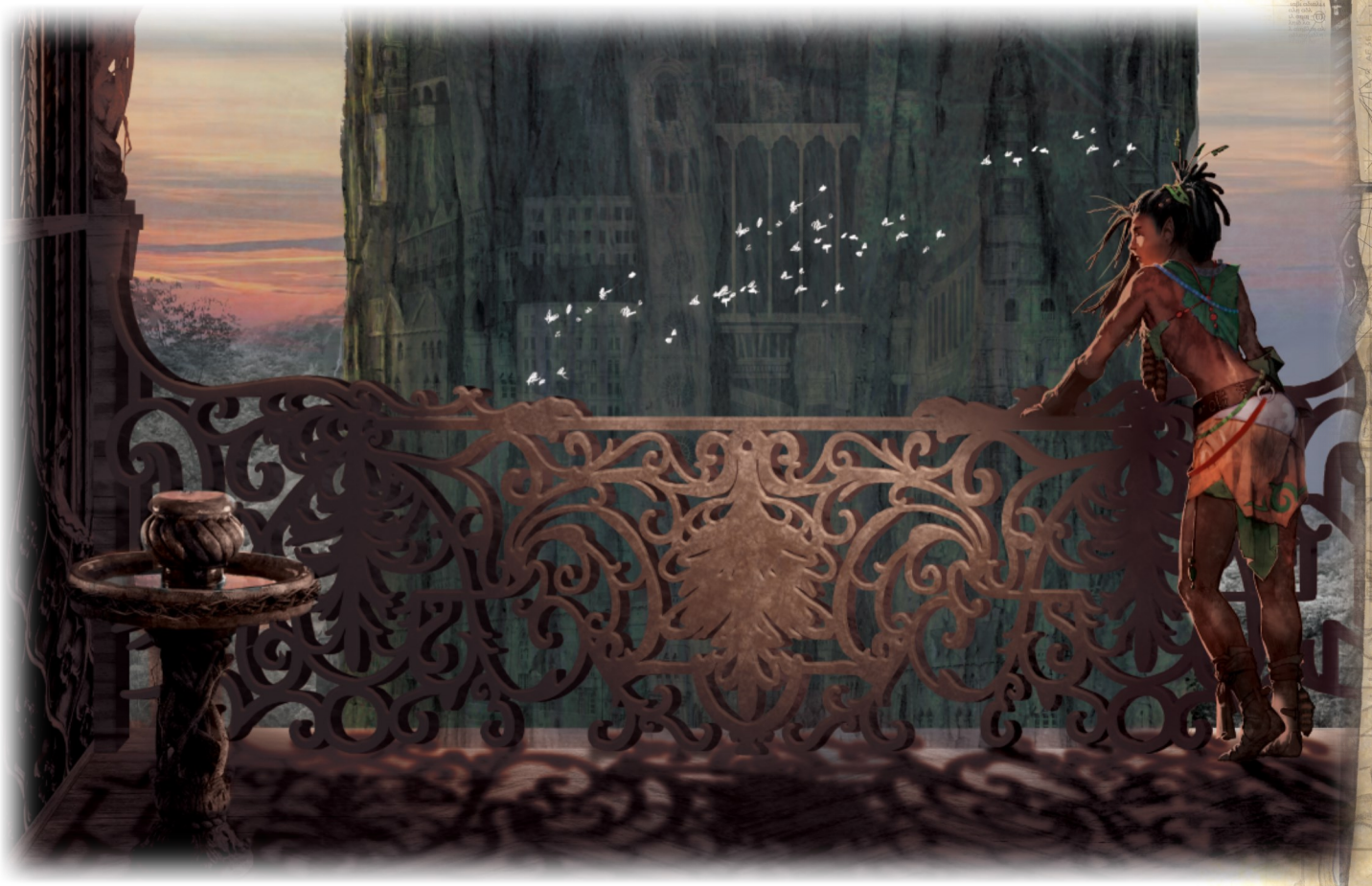
"They are here to study," he told her. "They want to know about our ways."

The girl's brow wrinkled in confusion. "But Mistress Kalkirrin says that the monkey-folk are brainless yahsor—"

Her father rapped her sharply on the head. "We do not use that word, even if Mistress Kalkirrin does," he said firmly. Valakkinye pouted and rubbed her scalp as he went on. "And it is true that humans are an ignorant people, but a few of them are just wise enough to realize that they know nothing. That is what brings them here – to learn a better way. With diligent teaching, we may grow them into better creatures before their brief time on this world is over."

Dawnamoak is the largest chaparran civilization in Canam and what most outsiders – at least those who have ever heard of the place – think of when they envision chaparrans. Spotting the great forest of Dawnamoak is easy. The fields of grass and bushes stop abruptly, replaced by wooden behemoths. The trees of Dawnamoak stand many times taller than other forests. Many of them stretch more than 80 feet across at their base and tower a mile up, and yet even they are dwarfed by the Towers of Jibaro at the center, trees grown from the graves of the wisest elders. A fortress graces each peak, grown directly from the wood: Strongwood, Berustar, and Larenoak. Berustar is the heart of the chaparran religion, with their highest priest, Sylvanakassus, governing the tower and its inhabitants. The tower Larenoak holds the chaparran scroll library and the Darawren academy, with Ramankasagranthos maintaining order. The last, Strongwood, is home of the military and governing body. From here rules the highest chaparran and leader of Dawnamoak: Valentiarankerr.

No-one knows whether the forest came before the chaparrans or the chaparrans before the forest. The woodland fae do not keep extensive historical records, and although there are a few chaparran elders who could probably remember, they consider such questions not worth worrying about. Certainly, if someone were to tell any human of the neighboring territories that the land where Dawnamoak now stands was once desert and scrubland, they would be met by disbelief, for the enchanted forest gives off the sense of unimaginable age, far older than five mere centuries. How long it has been inhabited, none can say. There are many human settlements just beyond the fringes of the forest that are not even aware that the woods are the chaparrans' demesne. No one is sure how many chaparrans live in the forest but numbers guess between 35,000 and 65,000. Visitors are not automatically turned away, but they will find no welcome unless they speak chaparra (even if they know another language, the residents will not speak anything else). Those who speak the proper language may stay… for a short while. This is not to say that outsiders are entirely unwelcome, but they have an uphill struggle ahead of them. Sometime within the first century after Attricana opened, humans sent a delegation into the forest to make contact with its reclusive



residents. What happened at that exchange has not been recorded, but the humans were soon thereafter escorted out of the wood and warned never to return. But in 355 A.E., the human wizard Sugi Gantilanna entered the great forest in hopes of establishing a sociable relationship with the fae, something no human had ever succeeded in doing previously. Though the chaparrans of Dawnamoak still regard mankind as a whole with mistrust, Sugi struggled against the stereotype for many months and eventually earned acceptance. Despite sending occasional correspondence, Sugi would never leave the forest in his lifetime. During the following fifty-five years, Sugi found a greater respect offered to him than to any human before or since.

Although most believe the trees to be oak, the majority are actually conifers, specifically cupressaceous variants like giant sequoias and dawn redwoods. While in a traditional forest, the lack of sunlight resulting from such a dense canopy would starve out lesser trees, a side-effect of magical saturation also allows smaller deciduous flora to survive and flourish beneath the huge cedars, and even a few grasses and wildflowers below them. Search hard enough and one could even find a coconut palm, a flowering cherry, or any one of a dozen species of flowering and fruiting trees not indigenous to the region (or even to the prevailing climate). A strange attribute only seen by the chaparrans of Dawnamoak is their family attachment to specific trees. Every child born in the forest is given a tree to care for. Although this is not uncommon for all chaparrans across the world, in Dawnamoak specific species of trees seem to equate to specific chaparran ethnicities: those with the darkest skin tones always bond with the sequoiadendrons, while the lighter tan chaparrans always choose giant pines. There are more than a dozen other connections made between the various families of chaparrans and specific species of trees.

Chaparrans become more agreeable to the outside world the farther away they are encountered from the three towers. Although those residing in the towers claim all forests they see as theirs, there are dozens of smaller villages hidden in the woods that claim no loyalty to them. Their beliefs can often be different than those in the capital. Noteworthy villages include Koanas, Kerrana, Ulknas, and Widdig.

FARGON

Lorrask grunted as he pulled himself up onto the ledge. It wasn't that he resented the obligation of climbing the mountain – if nothing else, it got him out of earshot of his younger sister, who talked like a tenenbri and had about as much tact as one – but he had been perhaps overly dedicated to his last piece of work and had ended up putting off the pilgrimage until the middle of winter. Narros were supposed to be hardy folk, but sometimes Lorrask secretly suspected that this was partly an act that his people put on to impress the other fae with their dedication, and had made the mistake of buying their own hype. His sister would say that he was a disgrace to the family for thinking so, and the thought of her disapproval made him feel warm again. Only a little further to go. He gritted his teeth and climbed to the next ledge and then the last few feet

to the worn pinnacle of the mountain. Balancing atop it, he exhaled into the thin air and looked about him, just as the sun rose over the eastern horizon. Moments like this made it all worthwhile – the whole vastness of Fargon spread out before him, from the mountains to the tundra to the sea, the rooftops of the great temples further down the mountainside flaring red in the morning light. He gave a sniff of satisfaction. Now, to climb back down…

When the fae returned to the world, each lineage appeared in a place that suited their kind best, whether by some subconscious desire or merely by fortuitous chance. Most of the narros fell in the north. They must have wished for isolation, as they landed in an area that virtually locked them off from the rest of the world. Being stalwart and rugged, they easily could have crossed the Nankani Mountains and joined their cousin fae to the south, but they chose to remain and gladly planted roots in a land still chilled but no longer wracked by permafrost, slowly made more habitable by the influence of magic. By the end of the second century, half a dozen cities and twice as many villages had emerged. This land was still far from being entirely hospitable, however, and every city contains a monument to the thousands dead in the creation of their nation.

The harsh environment created a people of unshakable will. The narros of Fargon are the most relentless in the application of whatever path they embrace. They work hard and play even harder. Unlike those in Finer, living their lives in the mines and getting dirty with the spoils of hard labor, Fargon narros are far more spiritual, taking pleasure in a cold breeze or a frigid waterfall with no other noises to distract them. They are also a proud folk even by narros standards, quick to anger and slow to forgive.

Despite the isolation of their distant country, Fargon narros can be found everywhere in Canam. They find pesky obstructions like rivers and mountains a welcome challenge rather than an impediment. A featureless desert would be more of a barrier to narros expansion than a mountain range, though no more difficult to circumvent. Their first contact with outsiders occurred shortly after their largest and most southern city Thos Thalagos was formed. After Thalagos Gin finished erecting his castle, he sent a dozen pilgrim convoys to search for allies or treasure. Travelers east found kodiaks, who wanted little and had less to offer, and also boggs and skeggs, who wanted exterminating. West found nothing but rivers and rumors. South stumbled into a safe crossing of valleys and plateaus later called the Deep Pass at Dianaso, and followed it until they reached the fledgling bastion of Selkirk. After sharing knowledge and company with the resident humans and discovering the unfortunate side-effect of their nature on technology, the pilgrims returned to Thalagos with something better than treasure: a trade agreement and a

firm alliance that has never faltered in the intervening centuries. Eventually, these narros would push past Selkirk to finally encounter fellow fae in Limshau and Salvabrooke. As they traveled, they would build waystations to mark their passage, some of which grew into small settlements centered around some monument or temple, and yet when their exploratory phase was concluded most of these were abandoned by their creators, to be filled by humans or fae stragglers of other species. Sadly, the greatest of these structures now lie under the thrall of Xixion, their stately halls defiled by puggs.

Narros don't dig and mine only for the sake of mining: they are builders as much as they are warriors. Although they use wood, they do so only when stone cannot be employed. Narros were bitter at the lack of artifacts and ruins from the previous age. Of all the nations, the narros are most obsessed with leaving their mark upon the world. Narros cities are the greatest of all the fae. They boast perfection in construction. Every corner is a sharp edge. Every line is without fault. Every building is a mark of mathematical precision. Every tower is an avatar of the narros' faith in their own skill. Narros fortified themselves and created a nation of stone. Their sworn enemies, the pagus, dare not approach these lands unless they arrive in the thousands in preparation for war.

In addition to the treaty with Selkirk and informal agreements with Salvabrooke, the Fargon narros maintain regular diplomatic relations with the Seliquam Confederation, most of the nations of which (at least the human and damaskan ones) sprang up in the wake of the narros' explorations, moving into abandoned narros camps and deciding to expand on them. Narros ravnorra train the elite warriors of Seliquam, and often travel with them on expeditions into Xixion to explore or cleanse narros-made monuments of the goblin-folk's filth. They maintain less frequent relations with the kodiaks of Alpinas, although they are happy to fight beside them against the boggs and skeggs who infest north-central Canam. They have few trading relationships with the rest of the continent, as the southern nations find the Finer Fire Pits more convenient. All narros mines in Fargon feature thermal mooring towers but no dragonflyer flyer posts.

Noteworthy cities in Fargon include Hardstone Sig, Mag-Farg, Majed, and Thos Thalagos.

THE FINER FIRE PITS

"So, can you make it for me or not?" I looked back at the human through narrowed eyes, not stopping my work. "Oh, I can make it for you. But it comes with a price." He frowned. "I already said money was no object—" I shook my head. "I ain't talking about money. The properties you want placed on this thing – you must be hunting some pretty big game. Big, scaly game by the look of it." I hefted my hammer, the forge-fire glinting in my eyes. "I want a piece of that action."

Over a hundred thousand narros call this gargantuan underground metropolis home. In total, twelve forges are found within the cavern, each as large as a human castle, dwarfed inside the colossal cavern that has never fallen despite a lack of supports. The founder (and still ruler after four centuries) Garach Glim still digs alongside his people. He has shown no signs of senility or exhaustion. When asked why he put down roots so far from Fargon, Garach's answer was simple: "I hate cold." Huge deposits of coruthil and titanium can be found in the Pits, along with practically every other mineral necessity in the modern age.

Above the mines, the narros settlers carved out an immense cave, miles across with the only exit being a single massive staircase leading to the surface. This massive construct, more than 300 feet wide, descends for almost a quarter-mile before finally reaching the Fire Pits. A consistent and uncomfortable red glow radiates over the cavern, which the narros continue to hollow out. Inside, ovens a dozen stories tall work overtime constructing materials and smelting precious ores. The city grows from the walls and roof of the cavern as well as from the ground. In the dark, with only the slight glow of the smelters, the city resembles a Christmas tree turned inside out and spread across every available surface of the cave. Ugly, utilitarian box-shaped buildings grow down, up, and out. Many live out their whole lives without ever seeing the sun, in spite of the strictures of the narros faith. Despite four hundred years of constant digging, the pits continue to be fruitful and were the most profitable narros mines in the world until a recent windfall at Thos Thalagos. Though many in Fargon look down on the Finer Fire Pits, Thos Thalagos is the exception, with Thalagos himself expressing admiration for the tenacity of the narros of the Pits, though also expressing concern that the name is false advertising (the forges are called 'Finer' not because they are in any way superior to other narros cities, but because the name of valley the Pits were dug into was called Finer Vallis by a group of local humans).

A narros from Finer often looks distinct from those from Fargon. While Fargon strives for self-perfection, Finer permits the occasional personal flaw, on the assumption that this frees the individual to focus on their work rather than their self. One of the personal imperfections that Finer tolerates in its residence is a looser approach to spirituality and faith. While all narros give at least token credence to the worship of Oaken, many of the associated traditions of the faith are laid by the wayside by the necessities of life in the Pits. While thus far there has been no occasion to violate the narros' ultimate taboo, some have come to believe that given a rich enough vein, Garach Glim would not hesitate to dig below the proscribed depth. Whether his workforce would continue to support him in that event remains to be seen. That said, few narros are disposed to take advantage of this freedom. Given a choice, most narros would prefer to remain isolated with their brothers and sisters in Fargon, and if the Pits weren't so profitable,

the entire system would collapse. The Fire Pits maintains its success not so much because of its rich veins, but because of the diversity of its neighbors and the trade goods they can provide in exchange for Finer's metal and craftwork. They are able to bring in goods that narros in the north envy.

Traders, however, do not like to stay in Finer itself. The forges work nonstop and are built with inadequate insulation, keeping the average temperature of the entire complex at 46 degrees Celsius, with only a 5- degree drop during the winter. Though the resident population is acclimatized to the severity, visitors are greeted by a wall of heat that hits like an ogre immediately upon entrance. Many of the few non-narros residents are opportunistic hedge wizards peddling heat resistance spells to the narros' customers.

The Fire Pits house the largest repository of narros weapons and armor: only narros gear are kept in storage, while other goods are crafted to order. Though finding magic items can be a chore, many mages from across the world seek out the Pits – not for items or armor – but for Galla Sagard, the famous spellcaster and her well-known Open Library for Arcane magic. Galla loves entertaining visitors even though she seldom gains the opportunity to share her wisdom with other casters.

Most caravans travel through the Limshau city of Kodex before continuing north to the Pits, and few other allies take alternative routes. Even Kannos, their nearest and most profitable human ally, transports their supplies from Warraqeen to Kodex before traveling north. Most of the visiting population is damaskan though a few humans have appeared time and again. Many of those are either independent merchants or wanderers looking for work. Since the narros here never developed a tight bond with humans like Thos Thalagos, the Finer populace considers humans another non-narros race best avoided when there is no business to be done. The Fire Pits feature a dragonflyer flyer service but no mooring towers.

KANNOS

My master was too fat to ride a horse, yet he owned dozens. He never even came down to the stables to care for them – that was my job. I fed them, groomed them, mucked out their stalls, exercised them: as far as they were concerned, they were my horses. He just happened to possess them. Then the skeggs came and raided the ranch, and took the horses away. My master ordered me, then pleaded with me, then begged me on his knees to get them back for him. All his wealth was tied up in those horses, and without them he'd have to sell the land – he'd be ruined. Instead, I gave my notice, took down my grandfather's halberd and chainmail, and went north. If I find them, I'll take them back… for someone who will appreciate them. Finders keepers.

Kannos formed from the remnants of a failed bastion, Appareci. Now the kingdom's capital, more towns flourished in the lands around and became steadily absorbed into the greater whole. The name 'Kannos' was offered by the damaskans of Limshau, meaning "Iron Will" in their tongue. The king at the time approved and adopted it as the name of his proto-empire.

Kannos, along with Abidan and Baruch Malkut, are the three largest human-dominated echan kingdoms in Canam. Kannos and Abidan have approximately the same population, though Kannos claims nearly double the land area, with the same strengths in numbers and weakness in magic. Kannos is somewhat more cosmopolitan than Abidan, though not nearly as much as Limshau, and not nearly as obvious because of the kingdom's low population density. Some outsiders, especially in more xenophobic communities, believe this is the reason for the notable lack of religion in Kannos. Fae tend to be private about religion, assuming that they have one at all, and those that do pray do so without ostentation. The human population follows suit: even those that are openly atheist or agnostic do not make a big deal of the fact, regarding other peoples' beliefs to be none of their business. The kingdom's mixed population and perceived atheism makes them an avowed enemy of Baruch Malkut, but Abidan counts them as one of their closest allies, even more so than Limshau and Gnimfall.

Kannos is rich in land and precious materials, but lacks the population to properly maximize its potential. The kingdom's greatest treasure is its livestock. With rich farmland but without the military presence to defend it against migrating pagus from the east and boggs from the north, Kannos developed a profitable breeding program for a more mobile form of agriculture: cattle, pigs, chickens, and especially horses. Horses are more abundant than dogs in Kannos, with many children given a young steed as soon as they learn how to walk. These horses are treated as equals within the family. The kavaliers, Kannos' elite mounted warriors, spend the majority of their lives training their mounts and develop a bond with their steeds bordering on the telepathic. But despite their proud cavalry traditions, Kannos has yet to be involved in any major war. As all of its civilized neighbors are staunch allies of the kingdom, the largest engagements occur between lance companies and swarms of puggs, boggs and skeggs threatening outlying towns, and the encroaching evil of the Sana Marsh to the south. Like many horsemaster nations of humanity's past, Kannos generals glorify combat, but rarely have the opportunity to indulge in it; jingoism is thus a common failing of the Kannos nobility, and many have expressed a hope that Baruch Malkut does eventually invade Limshau so that they can be called upon to defend their damaskan allies. Of all the united nations of the north, Kannos places the most pressure on the others to preemptively declare war on Darius Konig, despite never having sustained an attack from the rival kingdom. Compared to Abidan, trained in defensive warfare and the use of shield walls and castle bulwarks, Kannos considers the best defense to be a devastating cavalry charge, trampling down their foes and sending them screaming back to their lands.

Because raising livestock requires vastly more land than farming, wealth and nobility in Kannos are tied directly to how much land a person can control. The throne, as well as the most land in the kingdom, belongs to the Nezekin family of Appareci, and there has not been a significant threat to their seat of influence in 150 years. The first lord of any given city is the one in possession of the most physical acreage and the beasts to go with it. The kingdom's aristocracy is often considered very homespun and provincial by other kingdoms, as fine clothes and ostentatious jewels are considered lesser status symbols than good horseflesh and plentiful grazing land. Furthermore, Kannos values bloodlines more in its breeding animals than in its nobility, so a sufficiently wealthy merchant or businessman can simply buy himself a sizeable plot of land and a landgrave or count's title to go with it. Kannos has such a small population relative to its borders that often, an aspiring investor only needs to purchase unclaimed acres from the royal charter. Less scrupulous investors may build a ranch or even a free house beyond the border and request, or most likely bribe, the reigning monarch to appropriate the claimed land into the charter and expand the borders of the kingdom. This has occurred several times in Kannos' history, but no major land grabs have occurred recently, as Kannos is reaching the limit of what it can safely annex: with allied nations to the east and hostile wilderness encroaching on its remaining borders, there are currently only three such houses awaiting the protection of the Kannos Kavalry, with as yet no royal word if their petitions will be accepted.

Though humans are on average weak with magic, Kannos is proud to name one of Canam's most powerful wizards as a past resident. Kereptis Rifts claimed a keep in Sarnathi, and even though that town was not absorbed into the kingdom until after Rifts' death, Kannos has given him posthumous citizenship (despite rumors that Rifts was a vile tyrant and that Sarnathi's people celebrated upon his death). Downplaying the rumors as baseless, the city of Sarnathi now cherishes the name of Kereptis Rifts, or rather the booming tourism industry that name brings in the form of adventurers tempted by the tales of treasures in the labyrinthine and treacherous tunnels of the Kereptis Catacombs.

Notable towns in Kannos include Appareci, Golana, Jairus, Sarnathi, and Xiphos.

Names: With its nearest neighbors being Limshau and Salvabrooke, the dominant languages in Kannos are common English and Damaskan. Due to freely absorbing minor houses and smaller kingdoms in their formative years, there is little ethnic consistency within the kingdom, but their preoccupation with mercantilism and the record-keeping that goes with it has resulted in some idiosyncratic modification of the common alphabet, ostensibly for more efficiency (most immediately notable in the firm distinction between 'C'—now a 'CH' sound—and 'K'). Most common names reflect these changes.

Examples: Adryin Kesig, Karl Waldun, Kordylya Harkos, Sesily Mondavé, Shon Makavoi, Wilma Shyn

LAUDENIA

Lannik goggled at the sight of the enormous tower, held in the sky by nothing more than a wish and a prayer. "Stop staring, boy," the wizard chided. "You are already attracting enough attention to me. Acting like a tourist makes it the worse." The boy hurriedly shut his mouth, but he still continually shot wide-eyed glances around him as they walked among the floating island, across white bridges draped with crimson like inverted sunsets. All around the pair, the graceful figures of the city's inhabitants passed by, very pointedly not noticing them—save for one; as they approached the tower, a willowy laudenian came forward and greeted the wizard with a bow. "You have returned, Temmosus," she said. "But why have you brought this groundling here?"

The wizard returned her bow, his expression unchanging. "Lannik will be my apprentice. I am not inclined to explain my reasons. They will become clear in time."

The woman did not look shocked, but her porcelain features became even more masklike. "The council may demand those reasons of you," she warned. The wizard gave an imperceptible shrug. "And I will give them the same answer."

Laudenian arrogance refused to die when they lacked corporeal forms, and has only grown stronger in the centuries since they were restored to them. After their arrival, they utilized their greatest magic and built a mighty city atop a mountain in the west. Deliberately isolated from almost every other culture and guarded by enchanted shrouds, those few ground-dwellers who claim to have seen the city are often dismissed as dreamers or madmen. Its location is vague, floating among a hundred different mountains in the Nankani range, never appearing in the same place twice. On the surface, Laudenia resembles a city of technology, a marble-white floating bastion of towering skyscrapers; but underneath the shine of the walls flows pure magic. The city floats on air, connected to whichever mountain it currently anchors on only by a bridge of solidified cloud. The Alkanost, the massive dragon-shaped flagship the laudenians arrived in, floats atop a river of enchanted air alongside the city. The Council of Six runs Laudenia. Elrenar Alkanost, the oldest fae descendant alive and nominal king of Laudenia (although laudenians do not have the same concept of royalty as ground dwellers) still sits at the head of the council. Nacola Falconyr, the most powerful fae mage, also holds a seat. Laudenians commonly turn those who do find their land away without even bothering to learn their business. The only culture they find even tolerable are the narros of Fargon, with whom they infrequently trade the rich resources of the western Nankani Mountains for those few commodities they cannot obtain themselves. Even then, the laudenians insist on bringing the narros traders into the sky with them and alter their memories afterwards, so that no ground-dweller has a clear idea of the skyrealm's true nature. Visitors are thus not only extremely rare but practically unheard of, and those who enter must adhere to a strict code of respect for the inhabitants: make fewer waves and an outsider's presence may go unnoticed by those who do not want her there. No evil acts are permitted within the realm of Laudenia, with 'evil' being defined entirely at the discretion of the laudenians (who are, thankfully, fairly discerning when not being knee-jerk reactionaries). Voluntary isolation does not prevent those looking for rare items, both magical and not, seeking out the floating city.

When they emerged from the gate, the laudenians found the land below remote and hazardous, an ideal place to build their floating city away from prying eyes. Laudenia was raised in a single day, using the combined magical power of the entire laudenian people, the city emerging right from the mountain stone smooth as polished marble. They ensured all surviving laudenians that did not arrive with the Alkanost migrated to the same point to help in rebuilding their society. Because laudenians have the most spellcasters of any species besides humans, and their magical prowess far surpasses that of other folk, they never endured many of the hardships suffered by other races. Anything they wished for formed itself from thin air before their thought could finish. Looms wove cloth by themselves; food and drink sprang forth from magical cornucopiae and endless fountains; crystals projected illusory images from one place to another, so distant friends could speak to each other as though they were in the same room; and for what they could not simply create, the laudenians built giant quicksilver golems to go down to Earth and mine and harvest what they needed.

Once their new capital was built and the ship's population disembarked to their new home, the Alkanost departed to begin the long journey of exploring the skies and the wilderness underneath. During this time, the magos traveling aboard began forming the network of floating keeps. Applying the same power that made their city, the laudenians harnessed the ambient magic found in rare stones that enabled them to disobey gravity and elevated them above the clouds, laying down the foundation of an expanding empire. When they wandered too far east, they were turned back by increasing dragon attacks; traveling north or west, they struck an impenetrable wall of wind; and they possessed enough wisdom to turn back rather than brave a passing over the Gloam. After three centuries, the Alkanost returned to Laudenia and moored itself, having completed its work of building castles in the air across the whole breadth of Canam. The keeps peer down from high above, out of sight of most ground-dwellers, never offering the hand of friendship to anyone, rarely lifting a finger for those in need. The laudenian belief professes that to help would offer false hope to the needy, for they themselves are too few to offer any sort of reliable aid. They must choose their battles carefully, only rising to the call when they feel the time is suitable. Some would say that this is merely an excuse to justify the laudenians' fundamental distrust of the ground and

all that live upon it, but the laudenians don't care what the earthbound think of them.

The city of Laudenia shines with its own inner light. Even at night, the towers glow with a soft white shimmer emanating from the polished stones themselves. The inhabitants have no need of torch or candle, and can control the light wherever they wish with the simple wave of the hand. As the sunlight refracts through the atmosphere and shifts the sky to different hues, the city often echoes those same changes. As the sky turns orange to red, the city's exposed stone flushes to a rosy tint. Beyond this, the glimmering white stone is carved to precision to build every step, every bridge, every building, and every vase; no cracks nor mortar foul the sheer, smooth surfaces of the fantastical structures. Flowers and fruit grow freely in the public walks and gardens that line the roadways and many of the roofs. Each building in Laudenia supports itself on its own floating island, connected to one another via stone bridges. Seen from above, the city resembles a spider's web with buildings at the intersections and hundreds of bridges and roads connecting them all. The buildings range from short, expansive coliseums to thin and soaring towers scaling nearly as high as the city is wide. Red banners are the most common adornment of the walls, growing in complexity with the height of the building: the peaks of the greatest towers dangle tapestries of intricate designs or wave flags longer than a dragon's wingspan. Inside, the buildings reflect dozens of colors depending on the artistry of the designer, though white brick with red fabric remain the popular choice. There is neither a need of window glass, as no rains fall or winds blow except when and where the Council wishes it so, nor any need of doors, for there are no thieves or vagabonds in Laudenia. No pollution from noise bothers anyone over the tinkling of endless fountains, the chanting of priests and sonorant utterances of magical ritual, and the clanging of bells in the cathedrals. Not a single piece of woodwork can be found in the city: close inspection of the flowers and fruiting trees reveals them to be magical constructs, hewn from the same stone as the buildings. Throughout the city, the white stone is carved with waves, circles, and inscriptions many forget to admire. The markings swirl like water through the supports and pillars, across the arches, and even through the seamless walks. Many of the designs flow towards the center of the city-web, to the tallest tower of Elsius which spears through the cloud cover, dwarfing the highest skyscrapers. At the peak, the tower blossoms like an oak tree to a half dozen platforms and pedestals where the Council meets and the Alkanost docks. From here, the panorama offers little of the city through a veil of clouds. The city floats perfectly calm without threat or thrill.

With a city of such majesty, the laudenians seldom wish to show it off to anyone but themselves. A massive artificial cloud shrouds the periphery of the capital. From high, only the peak of Elsius is visible. The inhabitants appear to those they wish, usually reserving such an honor for the greatest dragons and the most powerful fae leaders. Those who leave only do so for one reason: to alleviate the unending boredom of living in a city without dangers, adventure, or responsibilities. Such malcontents are few and far between.

LIMSHAU

The city looks very different from above than it does from below. Down there it's all mazelike streets, where you might find the walls beside you suddenly replaced by bookshelves at any moment; hawkers, harlots and storytellers vying for your atten-

tion from a hundred alcoves, librarians listening to travelers' tales and writing everything down, and overwhelmed tourists desperate to find a place to lose their money; intermittent areas of noise and silence, a crushing crowd only a corner away from a completely deserted street. But up here on the rooftops is a traceur's paradise: a wide open, boxy landscape of stone and adobe, criss-crossed with ropes, ladders, staircases leading to open patios, makeshift bridges across the crowded streets… it looks chaotic, but consider who built it. The drone of the city below filters up only dimly, and you can be free to ponder whatever mysteries you choose as you climb and jump. You could just run from one end of this city to the other forever and never get bored.

Fae exist everywhere, and central Canam accommodates the oddest branch of them, the Limshau damaskans. They erected great academies and training facilities and then did something no fae expected: they invited others in – humans, narros, gimfen, anyone willing to teach and to learn. The Limshau librarians thus became the keepers of the largest repository of knowledge on Earth. These damaskans first appeared on the vast field of Serapea, home to plentiful food stocks, verdant plains, wide rivers, ample supplies of limestone and the raw materials for adobe, and less violent wandering monsters than those that graced the forests and mountains. The leader of the damaskans, Ravenar Limshau III, left most of his followers behind to build the new capital while he himself traveled westward with a small embassage. He had many adventures in his perilous journey (now referred to as the 'Crusade of Knowledge'), and none are entirely sure how far he traveled, for these crucial records were lost, along with their transcriber, in the first major assault on the city. What is known is that he eventually came before the fledgling walls of the bastion of Angel, and there met with the elders of Genai. Upon his return to the plains, he brought no promises of alliance, but hundreds of Angel humans, mostly of Asian descent, as loyal followers of a new age. The empire grew quickly upon these foundations. Ravenar, the oldest damaskan and one of the oldest living fae at the time, looked upon the new world and understood that a new path awaited him. He told his thousands of followers, both human and fae, to think of this new kingdom as the utopia all other future civilizations would look upon for reference. They would welcome all outsiders and respect their beliefs and laws. The realm would be bound by reason and compassion, with an eye towards knowledge, for in their eyes, knowledge separates the civilized from the barbaric.

Ravenar encouraged his fae brothers to mingle freely and accept his new human friends. Although the process took time, eventually a cosmopolitan community grew from the first seeds. Of all the fae, damaskans are most physically similar to humans, and their peculiarly Asiatic features meant that the earliest human immigrants to Limshau were not that different on the surface from their new fae neighbors. These humans were carpenters, architects, hunters, smiths, tailors, bricklayers, plumbers, doctors, teachers, and civil engineers.

They brought vital knowledge the damaskans quickly absorbed. Despite the fae's superior skill in art and song and their renowned mental and physical discipline, they were astounded by the breadth of applicable knowledge offered by the short-lived humans. Together, they truly believed their new nation would set an example for others to follow. Assisted by magic and enhanced by the perseverance of its population, the town's progress was unstoppable. Hundreds of kilns fired thousands of pale-white bricks every day, laid down while still warm. The roads spread out from the center, intersected by streets and avenues. The humans' planning gave the city structure and precision: the fae gave it personality. They painted tiles and mosaics across plain white walls and topped the tallest buildings with the grandest sculptures. At their root, the city would be a storehouse of all knowledge. Every wall in every house would support shelves for books. Where other settlements might have a central market or a grand bazaar, Limshau built the Central Stacks, the most expansive public library in the world, open to the air, protected by magic from the elements, and hosting at least one text on every subject known to man or fae as well as a catalogue of all other books to be found anywhere within the growing empire. Citizens were encouraged to donate works or words to the collections for all to share. As a community, they would learn from each other and strive to create a civilization based upon the freedom of choice and speech, uncorrupted by religious bias or corporate preference. Churches were not permitted within the walls of Limshau (though its citizens could worship privately as they wished), nor were merchants and shopkeeps allowed to expand into a chain. Ravenar promoted freedom with laws designed to protect those from others that victimize them, but otherwise did not impede the individual. If a vice caused no harm to society at large, it was permitted; if it could be controlled and regulated by the government to minimize or prevent harm, it was also permitted. Although such decisions mired the city in controversy for many years, the necessity of such measures was ultimately recognized.

The number of books and scrolls arriving eventually proved too extensive for one town to handle, and Ravenar decreed that more cities be built, with each satellite city dedicating itself to a specific field of knowledge. A few towns expanded to a dozen by century's end. Ravenar did not share the paranoia of other fae and encouraged the uniting of the peoples, not only culturally but by blood. Limshau was not the first city to birth half-breeds between fae and human, but it did eventually possess the largest ratio of them. The humans were attracted to the fae's beauty, grace, and wisdom and the fae were attracted to the humans' spirit, determination, and enthusiasm. More than a quarter of the first human settlers took fae mates, and though this ratio dropped into the single digits after the first century, the human breeding cycle and the fae long life generated a massive population boost.

In response to the first concerted attack against the city by a large force of unusually organized boggs, Ravenar's successor, Ravenar Limshau IV, formed the custodian order, devout disciples of knowledge. The protectors of paper, these scholar-warriors would defend the walls and the words inside. With cities and an army, the sovereignty of Limshau was official, though Ravenar refused to be called a king despite being blessed by a dragon. Even today, publicly referring to the Limshau family as royalty is a serious faux pas within the kingdom, though in private nearly everyone calls them such. Ravenar IV has no official title, being referred to informally as the 'First Citizen' in public and simply 'Limshau' on formal documents; he is not even the head librarian of the Central Stacks, only of an admittedly extensive collection of historical texts located in his large and central but otherwise ordinary residence. Should the Limshau line ever become remiss in their duties, no doubt another family would displace them in prominence, but thus far none has ever challenged them.

That was not the first time an elf asked me that question nor I imagine the last. I see them burning symbols of human faith, destroying the icons of their history. They expect me to understand. All I know is that one cannot justify evil in reprisal for another evil. I will admit my kind can bloat their bellies in ignorance and it truly shocks me. We, of all, should learn from our past. Humans must record their history, given their lifespan lies in a breath of ours. We remember them from experience. Chaparra and Laudenia claim superiority for we never enslaved another species or hunted them down in xenophobia. How dare they forget our past? The humans I speak to know nothing of our unsmothered hate. Pagus were elves. They still are fae despite the ignorant claims to the contrary. The humans' personal decree of corruption is but a candle to our bonfire. I will not judge all of mankind based on the paranoid actions of the hated few or for the deeds they committed in the past. Those people are dead in a world long forgotten. This world has changed. Adapt. Accept it.

Limshau Historical Entry 4684G
Ravenar Limshau IV

Damaskans were and are known for being fearless and approachable. They neither fear change nor the unknown. They offer the courtesy of respect even to their enemies and expect the same regard in return. They welcome outsiders, but expect them to pull their own weight. Relations with other fledging nations took time to develop, as most grew much slower than Limshau. The first foreign ally was the failed bastion of Appareci, visitors from Limshau even giving the newborn kingdom of Kannos its name. Despite Limshau's stance on religion, they still opened a dialogue and forged a profitable alliance with Abidan. Damaskans and gimfen have always been friendly, and Limshau soon made allies of both Gnimfall and Salvabrooke. However, later clashes with Baruch Malkut stained the continent in blood, although instead of openly engaging in a costly conflict, Ravenar suggested to his people that they take refuge in the cities, whose fortifications rival the walls of Angel for security. Many fae chose to re-

main in their villages and often suffer at the hands of Malkut slavers, though fewer since the construction of the city of Zorahn to guard the border. A few fae now and again still vanish, especially from the free villages south of Zorahn. Ravenar is still unwilling to commit to open warfare, despite strong pressure from Kannos and promises of support from Abidan and Gnimfall. They all understand that, even though a conflict may result in a short-term victory over the outer towns and villages of Baruch Malkut, the marshlands and swamps of the south could only be taken after a long and costly war of attrition.

Despite being at the center of what may be the greatest brewing conflict between man and fae, most damaskans are trusting of humans, if for no other reason than that a large number of them are related to a human at some point in their family tree. Thanks to this multi-ethnic influence, a uniquely Limshauan culture formed away from the other damaskans across the ocean. Damaskan culture had always had superficial similarities with the cultures of old Asia, but these influences became more pronounced in Limshau, to the point that many Sinitic terms completely displaced the native Damaskan words for similar concepts, particularly in the fields of cuisine, weaponry, and fashion. The Asiatic propensity for reservation and propriety, interspersed by short periods of intense revelry, resonated with the Limshau fae, who became quieter and less disposed to levity than their brethren in Damaska. All damaskans, of course, abhor public physical contact, but the fae of Limshau also began to resist being referred to by their personal names except among close friends and relations. Most unusually, Limshau damaskans will voluntarily eat fish and certain kinds of meat, while those of Damaska and other fae nations are strictly vegetarian. At present, Limshau is the only place on Earth that a fae culture has altered so significantly without a corresponding species shift, and thus far nobody is able to propose a suitable theory explaining this.

Every Limshau city contains both a thermal mooring tower and a dragonflyer dock. Though Limshau is filled with hundreds of small villages, there are only a handful of walled library-cities. These are Abarbanel, Athenaeum, Enchridia, Escorias, Kodex, Limshau, Primmer, Serapea, Warraqeen, and Zorahn. Every city has its own proud division of librarians and custodians, save for Zorahn, which only has custodians.

Names: While damaskan naming traditions are fairly consistent with the rest of their species, placing the given name before the family name, due to the influence of Asian immigrants Limshau fae are less likely to use their given name than their family name in public (assuming they do not adopt an 'open name') and using a person's given name without their permission is considered rude. Limshau fae frequently draw their open names from old Japanese history and mythology. Limshau humans have tended to retain their original family names (Japanese-derived names still dominate by a large margin despite later immigration from elsewhere in Canam), but have adopted the fae naming sequence, and in the modern day there is no cultural consistency with given names: a Limshau human is just as likely to have an African, German, or Welsh given name as a Japanese one, or even use a fae-style open name as their given name. Limshau's gimfen population, of course, is as idiosyncratic as ever. Regardless of their cultural extraction, everybody born in Limshau learns to write their name in Damaskan rather than whatever writing system it originated in.

Example Human Family Names: Oda, Miyamoto, Nakamura, Suzuki, Yamada, Watanabe

Example Open Names: Enma, Grasscutter, Juubei, Raiden, Shinobi, Tetsubo

SALVABROOKE

"Ten pebbles? Nine? Eight? C'mon, chipper, it's the deal of a lifetime..." Waving the peddler away, Marconi dodged through the fairground crowd. Fortunately there were enough 'bigguns' here, even a few techans, that he didn't stand out. He stopped for a moment to haggle with a certain merchant over a string of glass beads, another to inspect and discard a pocketwatch of dubious provenance, and briefly bent down to tie his shoelace next to a completely insignificant stall selling takoyaki – he briefly wondered where they'd gotten the octopus from this far inland, and decided he didn't want to know. Then he made his way to a picturesque little tavern – deliberately picturesque, for he had seen the original pre-Hammer painting in a gallery in Limshau.

His diminutive contact was waiting at one of the human-sized tables, looking amusingly like a lost child. Marconi kept the smirk off his face – despite her appearance, he know she could gut him ten different ways before he could draw his revolver, if ever she felt like it. "The word is on the Books," he

said, gesturing to the tapkeep for an ale. "Every leaf from here to Angel will be whispering in the wind." The gimfen woman smiled, showing her perfect white teeth.

A lone oak tree that never changes with the season stands like a centurion to mark the gateway to the land of light-hearted gimfen, a huge expanse of spreading homes and villages. One seemingly continuous expanse of civilization spreads to the corners of the massive valley. Mountains line the perimeter, making the entrance marked by the Lone Tree the only safe passage to the inner fields. The population of the entire valley is more than 150,000 with houses spread thin along a flat land 150 miles across. There is no centralized government, leaving each patch of land under control of a clan elder or sheriff. The population shifts so much in the valley that naming the individual clans and their townships is pointless. Every year, all the headmen and women meet to discuss affairs. Little is actually accomplished at these meetings; most motions (particularly ones involving large and expensive construction projects) are proposed, planned, and then tabled until the next year, at which point everyone will have forgotten about them because nobody bothers to take the meeting minutes. The most powerful ruler is Lora Longfellow, peacefully running a community of more than 3,000 gimfen in the area closest to the Lone Tree and whose judgment represents the norm followed in the rest of the valley.

The farming soil in Salvabrooke is extremely fertile and fresh water flows from nearby mountains to large clean lakes, as close to a natural paradise as one may find, corrupted by as little technology as possible. The majority of the gimfen wish to keep it that way. Celebrations are central to Salvabrooke's life, with revelry and festivals occurring every week. Gimfen welcome outsiders and treat those who enter as kings or queens with hopefully deep (but easily accessible) pockets. Crime is quite low across Salvabrooke, although this is due in part to the gimfen predilection for not considering anything a crime that can be dismissed as a harmless prank: pickpocketry is an epidemic across the land, with the culprits happy to return their stolen goods with a laugh and a wave if they happen to be caught (no gimfen considers this in any way illegal). They adore human exports, but they adore even more the propensity for humans to buy cheap knockoffs of those same exports in the name of tourism. In the larger communities, huge open markets begin business at the crack of dawn, peddling shoddy imitation trinkets to anyone interested. Tourists drifting through one of the many walking streets in a gimfen village should expect to be accosted by no less than a dozen different wandering merchants attempting to vend designer clothes, imitation gadgetry, or on occasion, legitimate pieces of folk art, though not of gimfen culture (since gimfen culture consists of wholesale robbery of other peoples' ways of life). All prices are negotiable and begin at an outrageous markup, since haggling is perceived to be part of the fun. There are a few respectable merchants, but these are not the ones harassing passing non-gimfen. What law enforcement a community might have (which usually amounts to only a couple of stout lads with shillelaghs) attempts to keep the dishonesty in check, but most of the time, the enforcers just break up the fights and shift the few homeless from the streets to maintain a positive image.

Salvabrooke is a common destination for echan tourist trips by techans. It's echan enough to shock them but safe enough to keep them at ease, and since most of its merchants are happy to take payment in barter, they don't have to find some way of turning uc into gold. Since such tourists infrequently approach by land, they remain blissfully unaware of how precariously close Salvabrooke is to the ravening hordes of Xixion, and nobody in the valley is going to disabuse them. Salvabrooke is one of the few echan locations where techan ETVs are commonly seen. Salvabrooke features a thermal mooring tower and a dragonflyer flyer service.

SELIQUAM

Lelan looked nervously behind her. The shrieks and squeals were getting closer. "Hurry up!" she hissed to the third member of their band.

"Nearly finished," Mescalos called back, calmly fiddling with the chalk. The damaskan had drawn a complicated series of lines from one end of the nearly hundred-foot-wide bridge to the other, and was now running down the length adding finishing touches. Lelan held her rifle at the ready, really wishing at that moment that she were a chaparran and could see the swarm coming in the dark. By the time the puggs entered the circle of light that was the limit of her vision, it would be too late to stop them. Of course, at that point the vermin would have overwhelmed Kobur, on guard at the bridge's entrance, so there wouldn't be much chance left for either of them.

"All right!' Mescalos shouted. Lelan didn't wait before running to join him. "Kobur, get over here!" There was a scream, a sickening ripping sound, and out of the darkness lumbered a huge kodiak, half of a pugg still grasped in his hand. Wordlessly he threw the carcass over the rail and carefully hopped over the line. Ten steps behind him, the swarm descended, crowding so close onto the bridge that many were forced over the edge into the deep waters below. Mescalos shouted a word that tried to force Lelan's brain out through her ears, and the puggs crashed against an invisible wall, piling up against each other, crushing and suffocating the beasts in the lead. "Good, but it will not hold them forever," Mescalos said with an impish grin. "Now, shall we see what lies on the other side?"

Though most travelers are quick to characterize the central west coast of Canam as a monster-infested wilderness due to the inhospitable expanse of Xixion, this is not entirely accurate. Amid the forested highlands of the northern mountains, the peninsula to the south, the islands that dot the coastal sea protected from typhoons by high cliffs and twisting fjords, and the fertile valley of the river that flows through the Pass at Dianaso can

be found dozens of tiny tribal nations, minor houses, and small fiefdoms. These nations live in an uneasy truce with one another, having little in common except the threat of Xixion to the south and the covert support of the bastion of Selkirk to the east. Collectively, they are known as the Seliquam Confederation.

During the narros' explorations south from Fargon, they found the lack of impressive buildings to be galling, so as they went they built superb structures, which they then simply abandoned as they moved on. Many of these monuments found themselves inhabited by squatters, mostly descendants of human survivors from the region who had banded together into small neo-tribal groups out of mutual need, some turning to magic to survive while others held on to as much of their technology as possible (it is possible that the founders of Selkirk were one such group that got lucky). Many of these settlements were joined by lost damaskans and gimfen who had appeared separately from their kindred, and even by a few wandering narros who, for one reason or another, elected to leave Fargon permanently. In time, these camps coalesced into communities, counties, even a few moderately-sized cities, but limited numbers prevented any one nation from ever growing powerful enough to impose its will over the entire region. However, the growing pugg and bogg raids on the settlers' farming and hunting lands eventually forced them to make common cause. Unfortunately, the strength of that alliance is far less strong than similar treaties elsewhere in Canam have proven.

The peninsular rainforest holds little of interest for the puggs, and by and large they leave it alone save for the occasional raid. More than twenty small tribes—mostly chaparran, but with a few human and mixed-race, even several kodiak bands—inhabit the peninsula, living largely by hunting and fishing, and trading with (and sometimes thieving from) their neighbors. Settlements in the rainforest tend to be seasonal rather than permanent – there are a few large, rooted towns (usually quite literally, as it is far safer to live in a tree than on the ground even for non-chaparrans), but for the most part each tribe maintains a summer and a winter camp, with certain grounds—such as the shellfish flats at Shiwoos, home of the largest kodiak settlement west of Alpinas—held in common between them. Though hardly on the level of the great forests to the south, the rainforest is home to several unique and highly valued creatures and plants. Legend has it that a guardian dragon sleeps beneath the mountain at the peninsula's core, but evidence of this is sorely lacking.

The central islands, home to some of the most impressive narros monuments, were once heavily populated by humans, but the growing strength of the pugg 'city' of Seelanus eventually drove them north to the coastal islands. Here, free as they are from the threat of a Xixion invasion (puggs do not like to swim and build no boats), can be found the most proud and carefree of the member nations. Consisting largely of free houses, pirate ports, and militant tribal groups, they trade their military prowess for food and finished goods from the mainland, although 'extort' might be a more apropos term in the case of some.

The valley of the River Seliquam, which flows from the mountains bordering Alpinas to the sea, is one of the most fertile farmlands in the west. Many believe the river itself to carry a potent enchantment that keeps the pugg hordes very firmly on the southern bank, but magical scholars have thus far found little evidence of this. As this region is at greatest risk of invasion, those living there have largely opted for a feudal lifestyle, but as they still greatly value their independence, the result is a motley collection of small baronies. Practically every hill worth the name hosts a castle, with a handful of tiny ramshackle villages huddled around it. Every year in the midst of the harvest season, the puggs swarm into the valley to plunder. Every year, the inhabitants gather their crops as hurriedly as they can, take what possessions they can carry, leave their homes to be burned by the horde, and travel upriver to the Redoubt at the city of Last Hope, a massive fortress wall built, with narros expertise, across the approaches to the mountain passes. The wall is manned by soldiers sent by every member nation of Seliquam, the central tenet of the treaty binding the confederation together. Last Hope is the one place where all of Seliquam stands united. The unofficial representatives of Selkirk are also in attendance, trading bastion-engineered goods, weapons and armor (including a limited supply of masterwork bolt rifles and revolvers) for the valley's surplus harvest and the assurance that the defenders of the Redoubt will continue to keep the puggs far, far away from the bastion.

Each nation within the Seliquam Confederation has its own method of government, from tribal councils to rough democracy to feudal fealty, but each member nation sends a delegation to the Grand Council. Ostensibly the purpose of the Council is to discuss the business of the whole confederation and to resolve grievances brought by one member nation against another, but in practice it is a hotbed of suspicion and corruption as councilors finagle and make backroom deals to advance their own nations at the expense of long-standing rivals. The people of Seliquam may stand united against Xixion, but they have a long history of raiding and swindling one another, and each nation clamors for a bigger share of the limited supply of bastion-produced goods. To prevent this hornet's nest from being completely ungovernable, the eight most prominent nations set up the Inner Council, which enforces the few laws that hold over the entire confederation and appoint the commanders of the Redoubt and the Train Guard.

The dominant powers in the region are the eight nations on the Inner Council: Last Hope (human/narros), Victrix (human), Shiwoos (chaparran/kodiak), Gwaii (human), the Abbey (human/damaskan), Vanguard (techan human), and Squalmos (human/gimfen), plus Gateway as the unofficial face of Selkirk. Victrix and Last Hope have thermal mooring towers. Most transport between the major regions of the Confederation is by boat, but most watercraft must hug the coastline to defend against storms.

Names: Non-humans in the Confederation use their traditional naming systems. For some reason, the upheavals of Attricana spared much of the aboriginal human culture of the region, and while the actual original languages are long since extinct, the Seliquam dialect of English is liberally peppered with terms derived from Salish and Haida roots, including a disproportionate number of personal and place names (even though few remember what they actually mean anymore).

Examples: Bella Mallaquin, Gwenlitu Hosten, Kallumi Brown, Mahcut Rowan, Robert Jacks, Teqmut Caseway

FREE HOUSES

Canam's most distinct feature lies with its large number of independent houses. Lauropa's larger empires quickly absorbed every spare inch of land, brushing borders within decades of Attricana's opening. With Canam, more than a century passed before any nations encountered others. Those with slightly more power absorbed smaller adjacent villages, usually by oath of betrothal or by threat of violence, forming the first feudal principalities. But much of Canam remained unclaimed, and without the ability of the larger kingdoms to patrol and hold vast fiefdoms, many villages could declare themselves free from alliance or external obligation.

Hundreds of small villages dot the land, though most are tied to a larger house. Most free houses control one small town and perhaps a half-dozen villages, bonded to the ruling house because of a need of protection or by forced hands. Large nations usually don't directly border each other, most being buffered by several such small nations. Many of these houses are short-lived, especially if a larger nation sets sights on them, but even then, such empires rarely have the manpower to maintain their conquests and they often break away again within a few decades. The majority of the rulers of free houses (sometimes also referred to specifically as "free-lords") are human. Their culture, relations, and diplomatic standings are varied but seldom extreme. The most notable free-houses are Antikari, Ogium, Orchis, Plicato, Quinox, Torquil and Skyrose.

THE WILD

Canam has no specific borders between its nations. Kingdoms patrol as much territory as they think they can hold, but wide expanses between their territories prevent most conflict. Dozens of villages claiming no allegiance fall between them. This creates more of a wide blur instead of a defined line. The only way to know if one enters a specific kingdom is to ask the citizens of a village. There are no border markers or sentries on many of the trodden paths, though well-patrolled roads such as the Continental Cross and its tributaries leading into the major nations will maintain border guards, especially those along the roads controlled by the house of Skyrose and eastern Limshau because of their nations' proximity to Baruch Malkut. This leaves tens of thousands of square miles unclaimed, a sea of wilderness in which islands of civilization flourish. Many of these would dangerous locations in which to settle, thanks to the presence of magic or monsters.

The easiest way to check if a forest is enchanted is to look at the variety of trees growing. If the trees are of radically different species, growing in the same region without regard for light or temperature (conifers mixing with fruit trees, or cactus growing on mountain slopes), it is a forest populated by magic. Oftentimes, the creatures that inhabit the forests spill out into the surrounding scrub and plains, making open space only slightly safer to traverse than the paths under the trees. The upheavals caused by Attricana's opening also opened many spaces beneath the mountains and under the ground, into which less than savory new life-forms quickly descended. Some of these chasms even swallowed up artifacts of the old age, so it is not unknown (though hardly common either) for a dungeon delver to descend into a natural cave system and find an expanse of steel and concrete inside. These unchecked areas of the world feature the most dangerous life forms. Some rumors claim the largest percentage of chaparrans in the world is spread over the unclaimed forests in Canam. Beyond chaparrans, not known for their hospitality anyway, these forests, plains, and mountains showcase the greatest ratio of magically endowed life, from dire and elemental animals to monstrous beasts of ill will.

ALPINAS

The eastern slopes of the northern Nankani Mountains are covered with thick conifer forests that stretch far out onto the central plains, jutting up against the icy tundra of Ashur in the north. Even though kodiaks control this area in force, they have never formed an organized nation: instead, hundreds of villages and roaming bands dot the landscape for hundreds of miles. No town lasts more than a few years before being broken up or destroyed. The few open plains are cold and windswept, forbidding travelers from making roots. No one is sure how many kodiak camps there are. Few bands sustain a population of more than a hundred. The largest and only permanent settlement, over 1500 strong, is Maknicul sh, ruled by Raknash.

Though animalistic and tribal, the kodiaks prefer to keep to themselves. They have a devotion to nature many other species admire but skeggs in particular do not share. The kodiaks of Alpinas are considerably larger and more savage than their kindred in Seliquam, and remain disdainful of the trappings of civilization which some of the southern lines have come to embrace. Nevertheless, many now wield weapons forged for them by the narros of Fargon to aid in their endless war against the skeggs of Dagron. This may eventually cause problems in the future if the kodiaks finally overwhelm their enemies; the narros hope the trading relationship will eventually civilize the northern kodiaks

before their newly acquired weapons can be turned against their benefactors.

HALYC

The western plains from York stretching almost all the way to Gnimfall were given the broad name of Halyc. While nominally York claims this territory as part of its domain, in practice it leaves most of it alone. The majority of the plains are untamed grasslands leading up to mountain foothills, turning to dense forests in the north leading up to the Gulf of Tethuss. More than thirty small chaparran villages call the forest home, and defend it vigilantly against intruders of all sorts. Independent farms and villages along the road between Gnimfall and York sell to both echa and techa, with those nearer to York receiving the blanket of protection offered by the YSDF. Most military patrols in this region are mere formalities to guard against the possibility of pagus crossing the water or to clear the road of wandering monsters. Less dedicated patrols roam the southern border, as York has never considered Baruch Malkut a serious threat.

KESAKAS

The isthmus of land between Dawnamoak and the Gloam is a twisting labyrinth of mountains, deserts, mesas, scrub plains and savannah. Few people live here, as it is home to innumerable savage beasts. With the advent of magic, the land regressed to the Pliocene epoch. Dire animals of every description hunt each other through the canyons and grasslands, and most settlements in the area are either itinerant or perched precariously on and within the sides of cliffs. The bastion of Sierra Madre is located somewhere underneath this dangerous terrain, the terrors of which serve to protect the techan city far better than any artificial defenses could but which make excursions from the bastion a harrowing experience that discourages casual tourism.

LAURAMA

The chaparrans occupy a great forest and mountain range. Unlike their western cousins, the fae of Laurama are extremely militaristic – not surprising, when you consider their neighbors. To the north, they are bounded by the pestilent forest of Tranquiss; to the west, the holy but perilous wood of Skepsis; and to the east, the despoilers of Baruch Malkut, with whom the chaparrans have been engaged in an ongoing guerilla war since the first Malkut slavers came to their lands in search of fae flesh. Even before the Blessed Kingdom began to encroach upon their borders, the chaparrans lived in constant dread of the infection spreading from Tranquiss, and this fear altered their attitude towards life. No longer being content with patience and relaxation, they grew increasingly aggressive with each other and other surrounding lands. Their already reduced magical aptitude virtually vanished save for a few unique adepts and savants, most of which end up traveling to Jibaro to study due to the lack of avenues to learn at home. They do not grow cities, but spread their community out to cover a wider footprint within the forest. Their presence is quiet and looming, more hidden than even the fae of Dawnamoak. Many travelers through Laurama have no idea that a chaparran kitarri lurks in the trees above them, watching their every movement for the slightest sign of aggression. Laurama fae are intensely distrustful of humans more than any other chaparrans: Malkut slavers are usually killed on sight, and any others that the chaparrans even suspect of harmful intent never leave the forest. Even innocent travelers have been known to be attacked, stripped of their armor and weapons, and dumped at the borders of the forest, a clear sign that outsiders are not welcome. Other nations do not acknowledge Laurama as a sovereign power – even Jibaro considers them a satellite colony of Dawnamoak – and so their open declaration of war against Baruch Malkut has thus far brought no allies.

NANKANI MOUNTAINS

A huge mountain range dominating western Canam, the Nankani Mountains stretch from Kesakas to Fargon, bisecting the western third of the continent. Several tributary ranges lead into it, particularly in the north, where the highest and most dangerous peaks sprout between Selkirk and Thos Thalagos. While many isolated echan settlements and even techan atolls can be found among the peaks and valleys, the most populous species within the range are puggs and boggs, who claim large cave systems and build ramshackle 'cities' inside them, where the strongest goblinfolk rule over their lessers with fear and violence, and send them out on raids into the lowlands to take food, treasure, and slaves. Dire wolves roam the forested slopes, and many a rogue dragon has been sighted among the peaks. The only safe path through the mountains is the Continental Cross, kept clear of monsters by the various free houses that claim portions of the road. The mountains are also full of ruins, including monuments from the days of the Fargon expeditions, as well as older structures locked away within the earth, some full of remnants from the last age of Man.

WASTELANDS

The wilds of Canam are full of many dark and dangerous regions. No goodly folk live in such places; they are the preserves either of monsters or wicked creatures whose 'societies' are born of violence and malevolent will. Often, a nameless and shapeless evil will infest a portion of the wild, turning into an unhallowed land of danger and death. Travelers learn to avoid such places, or tread carefully if they have no choice but to cross them.

APOCRYPHA

After the puggs, the largest individual fae population in Canam is the pagus. They control a massive expanse of land dubbed Apocrypha by humans, or Sollasum by

many fae. Most of the pagus armies on the continent fall under the control of typhox dragons, which brought them across from Kakodomania when the dragons discovered an unspoiled land across the polar ice and resolved to spoil it. Separated from the darklands by thousands of miles of ice and tundra, the dragons could enslave and ravage as they willed without needing to answer directly to Mengus. The recent arrival of several shemjaza in Canam threatens to disrupt the dragons' monopoly. The pagus are bound in their souls to follow the orders of the generals of Kakodomania, who outrank the dragons, though so far the shemjaza have not attempted to exert their authority on a grand scale. There is a growing number of pagus that have thrown off the influence of their masters and attempt to live free in the inhospitable wastes.

Pagus with their souls bound to Ixindar are not necessarily tied to its control. With the dragons killing and enslaving them to the east, the pagus must look elsewhere to expand. Cold and water awaits them to the north. Mountains, skeggs, and kodiaks sit over the horizon in the west, leaving only the narrow land bridge of Tethuss to the south, guarded by the Janoahn Bulwark. This great fortress of man has never fallen, even when a dragon lord attempted to storm the walls and was only repulsed at the cost of the Paladin King's own life. Since pagus fear the natural elements of earth (mountains, winds, water), they prefer to continue to slam against the Janoahn wall, plummeting to their deaths into the churning gulf when they cannot retreat. Though a massive land with rich potential, Apocrypha will, within 500 years, no longer be able to support any life thanks to the despoilment of dragons and pagus.

The best-known tribal leaders are Mennos, Nemis the Gatherer, Saemus, Amon the Nomad, Arrenna, and Kallis the Monster, leading camps named after themselves. The biggest issue with these camps lies with the pagus' short lifespans: since even the eldest seldom live past forty, most of the villages are equally short-lived. Their successors seldom follow the same ethics (or lack thereof) as their antecedent, and the village often tears itself apart in very uncivil wars with few survivors. Only a few rare exceptions have allowed certain villages to survive past a generation, and these mostly where power is maintained by a loyal cadre of the toughest warriors.

AZHI DAHAKA

The greatest typhox dragons, the Ažhi seven, claim this region under their direct control, though most of them are never seen, living out their lives in solitude within self-proclaimed kingdoms deep in the northern regions, leaving their lesser brethren to impose order and terror on the land. Pagus followers give most of their own food as offerings, or risk being snatched up as food themselves. There is no border between Apocrypha and Ažhi Dahaka; any land that falls beneath the shadows cast by the winged monstrosities is the evil dragons' domain. The only thing stopping the dragons from launching a full-scale invasion of Canam, other than their relative small numbers, is the lack of any centralized control of the region. No typhox dragon will bow before another, despite victories proven by scars, age, or size. Though they may respect and envy the power of their elders, they will not rally to any common cause.

The seven dragon lords of Ažhi maintain keeps of varying strength across the land, and none can be entirely sure where they roost at any given time. These dragon lords are rarely seen, but are known across the continent through tales to frighten troops and children: Baenis of Gorge, who forces his slaves to raise exotic beasts, feasting on them as he sees fit; Balaur of Debauch, who captures free pagus to engorge his numbers and maintain the high population of his slaves; Goch of Wrath, one of the surviving dragon kings who, with no citadel of her own, wanders the lands taking what she wills (though stories tell that she once gutted and claimed a laudenian sky keep as her throne); Lindis of Avarice, who keeps her storehouses of treasures hidden and never lingers in any one place for long; Lotan of Scorn, whose massive citadel, built around an entire mountain with walls as high as its peak, lies mostly empty due to constantly driving his pagus to war; Verkelen of Spite, who despises and distrusts all the other dragons and never reveals his location to anyone; and Zilant of Indolence, who is far too lazy to do anything other than lie on a bed of treasures brought to him by his fearful followers, and occasionally eat one of those followers who doesn't show sufficient deference to his majesty. Though each of the seven claims to rule the entire land, they do not fight each other for control of it except by proxy, sending their pagus slaves to massacre and plunder the slaves of the others.

CYON

Though not enchanted and tall like chaparran woods over the horizon, Cyon is still equally massive, encircling the entire northeastern wall of Canam. In their fledging first years, Angel clear-cut most of the landscape in their frantic construction, but the trees returned as dense and stout as before in barely a generation. Each time the trees were felled, they grew back just as strong, until the branches began to brush against the Angel wall; there are rumors that a few saplings have begun to spring up inside the walls themselves, but the Crimson Starlight suppresses these whisperings in the name of public morale. On their own, the trees don't appear to be magical at all, but they do radiate an ambient EDF far above that of the surrounding lands. Other than boggs, no other intelligent species are known to inhabit the woods, though the Angel snipers who patrol the outer wall pass locker-room stories that tell otherwise: not just boggs but puggs, skeggs, and even rumors of a chiggoth once. Along with the horrors, there are tales as well of the more obscure fae anathema like faeries, dawnlings, and sylphids.

DAGRON

Over two hundred years ago, the kodiaks of Alpinas, trained and supplied by the narros of Fargon, drove a large swarm of skeggs out of the central Nankani Mountains into the unclaimed wilderness to the east. They adapted to the bitter cold very quickly and grew in size and numbers. They formed several large communities both underground and on the surface, and their disposition grew colder than even their brothers to the south. They became known as the "Bugbears of Dagron," making regular raids south into more temperate human lands and attacking travelers and undefended communities, even those of their erstwhile brethren. They leave few survivors of these raids, stripping their victims of valuables and taking them back as slaves, destined for the cookpots when they can no longer work. Only two villages are believed to have survived more than a few years: one, Lilecrog, is ruled by the despicable Numak; the other is Silcroge, ruled by Omerogroge, resting at the entrance of a large dungeon filled with stolen treasure. Despite their prosperity in their new homeland, the skeggs have not forgotten their defeat by the kodiaks and wage endless war against them, the longest sustained conflict in Canam's history. The skeggs' superior numbers and greater intelligence might have doomed the Alpinas kodiaks long ago but for the support of others; Fargon continues to supply the largest kodiak bands in the north, and many of the kodiak among Seliquam's Train Guard have kindred fighting in the ancient feud.

The skeggs are not alone in their land: trolls and various ice monsters also rampage throughout the region. Further north, in the frostlands of Ashur, frost dragons control and rule over a small fae population. The largest known frost dragon in Canam, a creature known only as "The Snow Devil," resides here, but its exact location is unknown. Above the tundra lies the great glacier Chronzia, worshipped and feared by all the denizens of the north, and somewhere beyond that the mythical titan city of Selmana.

SANA MARSH

A perpetual and permanent fog has spread for hundreds of miles in the land once called the Kingdom of Kardia. The Marsh is the single most dangerous place on the continent. Beasts shuffle into the black and vanish, waiting for an unsuspecting foe. Rumors tell of a terrible evil that lurks in the castle once controlled by King Saran Sana, gathering the power of the Marsh towards it.

Legends tell of one of the first kings of man in the new age, and how his arrogance and naivety reduced his empire to eventual damnation for him and his people. The legend claims that King Sana ruled over one of the first kingdoms in Canam after the opening of Attricana, Kardia. Older than any other surviving human realms, Kardia expanded to dozens of villages while Limshau was still building its first walls. Kardia used knowledge gleaned from the first bastions to create a stable, growing empire with well-paved roads, a reliable underground sewer system, plentiful crops and powerful magic. It is even said that the master mage Kereptis Rifts originally came from Kardia.

Sana, however, grew troubled over his own mortality. Unlike the bastions, afraid and xenophobic, Kardia embraced the new world, almost to a fault. As the fae and half-fae population of the kingdom continued to grow, with much of the population obsessed with magic and the elder folk who had mastered it, Sana came to realize that his own lineage was threatened with obscu-

rity. Though already married with two sons, he began seeking a fae bond – at first not for gift of long life it would bestow on him, but so that his heirs would receive the adulation that the merest peasant could command as long as their ears were pointed. However, every one of his invitations was rebuffed, and not long after, both of Sana's young sons given to him by his innocent wife fell to a rare infection, taking them slowly and painfully. Without heirs, Sana became paranoid about losing his lineage and set his wizards to examine any avenue that might extend his life or grant him the fae bride he desperately needed. Finally, in his declining years, a great dark dragon with decayed skin, perforated wings, and a near-barren skull appeared at the gates of Gothas. The creature promised to return the empire to power and vowed to force the arrogant fae to kneel to true immortality. Though tempted by the offer, Sana had no desire for immortality, only the endurance of his lineage. The dragon then offered him something else: his long-sought bride.

Her name was Umala. A tightly wrapped silk bandage covered her eyes, though she could still sense her surroundings with ease. She possessed the ears of the fae but little else Sana could recognize as chaparran, gimfen, or damaskan. The dragon declared its own blessing was proof of the fae's noble blood. Umala even possessed a great book of magic claiming to hold a power the gods feared to offer man. Though Saran's first wife objected to the pairing, the king agreed to the bonding.

The events that followed have fallen into obscurity: even the libraries of Limshau do not hold an accurate account. The public was not permitted to see the concubine of the king. Though elderly and near senility, the thrust of Sana's manhood returned. His old and faithful wife was cast aside quickly in favor of newfound pleasures. After Sana's lust was satisfied, one story claimed Sana would bellow a great exhalation of soot and smoke which would settle and float about the kingdom. A similar account, less popular but likely more accurate, claimed that the very citizens of the empire would fall asleep to awaken aged to the point of death, their bodies expelling a great darkness upon their demise which refused to evaporate with the morning dew. More people fell to dust, replaced by the growing mist, which wafted about the living, whispering dark thoughts in their ears, turning some to madness and violence and the rest to dull servitude. Little food grew in the mist-wracked land, and those who ate what did grow turned into monsters and fed on those who remained. The castle of Gothas became infested with sourceless shadows. Where Sana walked, they followed, they watched, yet never revealed themselves. As more of his people died, the shadows increased; the fog thickened. Sana's forgotten bride perished in the empty halls, along with all who had once been loyal to him. Years passed into decades, finally leaving only a few souls lingering in the darkness, unable to change their fate. The fog seeped into the soil and salted the earth. Contaminated water rose from the depths. The castles and manors of the great houses collapsed to rot and ruin, until only the tower of Kardia-Gothas remained. The shapeless forms roamed the landscape as an army, raised from the ashes of withered corpses. A few soon spread from the dark shroud into the outer lands, encouraging others to enter the Marsh with similar promises of immortality and magic, knowing protracted stays ensured another meal for the king and the demon at his side.

It is said that Sana lives still, twisted and aged but refusing to die, an empty shell of a man driven by the twin curses of boundless sorrow and unquenchable desire. Umala, unchanged in those years, refused her husband's undying appetite unless new souls entered the Marsh. Those daring to breach the cursed land should exercise caution not to stir the attention of the mistress of Sana or her king, lest they fall victim to their lust.

TRANQUISS

Twisted with evil, blackened with corruption and cloaked in darkness, Tranquiss is, after the Sana Marsh, one of the most dangerous territories of Canam. It began with the infection of a single tree but soon spread to others, then dozens, and then hundreds. The trees lost their leaves and the sap turned to blood. Hairlike tendrils grew from the bark which gravitated toward living flesh, and anything they touched was sucked dry of its energy and left as a desiccated husk. The wood can neither be burned nor cleansed of its infection by any known magic. Even the most powerful spells only halt the spread temporarily rather than cure it. The plague known as Trendance covered hundreds of square miles before any even realized the threat. The canopy of the central hive of the forest is so tightly packed with long, sharp branches, no creature has ever successfully found the first tree which started the calamity. Though some believe destroying this tree would cure the entire forest, there is no evidence for this.

The infection has taken most of the natural trees and now threatens both Skepsis and Laurama. Much of Laurama has already been taken though not enough to threaten the chaparrans there. Some believe enemies of the fae created the deadly forest in hope the infection would suffocate or consume them.

The only creatures that reside in Tranquiss are unnatural monstrosities that carry the infection with them like a symbiote, and the cancer dragons, one of the most notorious of which is Carcin of Pathos, a despicable creature known to belch living tumors that slither across the ground to attach and infect victims with their plague. Carcin is even more insane than most cancer dragons, and only a lingering sense of self-preservation keeps him from blindly attacking Laurama or Limshau directly. Cancer dragons feel welcome in the pestilence of Tranquiss and fear the holy, healing power of Skepsis, dreading that the fabled Skepsis Tree, with its power to cure all ills, might free them from the diseases wracking their immortal forms. Every year Tranquiss grows another few meters, spreading its claws about Laurama and Skepsis.

XIXION

Puggs, even more than pagus and humans, are the fastest-growing intelligent species on the planet. They broke off late from the damaskans and are considered one of the least civilized of all fae races. They have little culture of their own, preferring to steal and corrupt the trappings of it from their more civilized neighbors, and reproduce at an alarming rate. Puggs spread across the globe quickly, though the highest concentration remains where they first appeared, on the central west coast of Canam. Their elder brethren, the more intelligent boggs, found that they could use their own size to subjugate the smaller goblinkind and use their strength of numbers to amass great wealth and power, though most puggs live a feral life beholden only to the strongest of their swarm.

The pugg-infested region known as Xixion covers almost half of the land west of the Nankani Mountains, but no roads cross it. Their growing armies push ever to the north, south, and east, encroaching on the bastions of Selkirk and Angel and the lands around them. A brief siege of Angel resulted in the total annihilation of the attacking army, and they have not attempted it again. With the bastions' official policy of non-involvement in the realms of magic, it is left to the echans to keep the pugg population down, though both bastions have been known to offer covert support. In the north, the Seliquam Confederation formed to combat the menace, while in the south the various free houses and independent settlements take arms against the swarms' incursions. Narros and damaskans are particularly fierce in clearing out large concentrations of their evil little cousins wherever they occurred. To the east, the onward push is stymied by the unpassable evil of the Sana Marsh and a strange power that somehow prevents them from simply swarming over the mountains protecting Salvabrooke. Instead, they pushed south throughout the Nankani Mountains, burrowing into holes and filling them up with stolen treasure, piles of decaying garbage, and more puggs. Passing travelers in the lands surrounding Xixion still need to contend with raiders, but otherwise the 'nation' lies quiescent but for their annual invasion of the Seliquam river valley, where they batter their oversized heads against the Redoubt at Last Hope for a few weeks before returning to their holes. This may turn out to be a sleeping lion, as their frantic reproduction continues.

Puggs do not coordinate or plan, only rage. They have no talents for strategy or stealth, and no appreciation for the things they steal. They are a mass of living death – a humanoid locust swarm that ravages terrain and then moves on. The central areas of Xixion are barren and lifeless. Even the trees have been stripped of their bark and burned. Several years ago, a bevy of custodians and librarians attempted to analyze the patterns of the pugg swarms and managed to distinguish four different masses of puggs, which all continually shift positions and are slowly approaching civilized neighbors. The Etaraki ('Cockroach') swarm comprises of 70,000 puggs while the Eletharius ('Grasshopper') swarm has 100,000 and the Ephesia ('Cicada') swarm has 50,000. But all these together are a mere pint in a gallon in comparison to the pugg 'city' of Seelanus ('Millipede'), dug into the crater of a slumbering volcano in the north coastal Nankani range and which, at last count, had nearly 1,200,000 puggs.

Puggs viciously attack anything that doesn't look like them, and if nothing immediately presents itself, they turn their violence on their own kind. They are one of the most primitive species and what many higher fae fear all faekind is destined to devolve into. Puggs paint no pictures, write no poetry, and carve no sculp-

tures, though they will gladly carry such things off, deface them, and use them to adorn their foul pits (or, more often, use them as toilets). Their towns and villages are nothing more than huts of logs and mud, holes in the ground, or cliff faces strung haphazardly with rotting timbers and ropes. They despise farming and prefer to hunt or steal. If they run out of prey, they eventually turn on each other.

Caravans alive and rolling as well as sacked and burned could be spotted along the Cross's route. Wandering shops sold trinkets from the backs of wagons. Carts stayed together for protection, creating nomadic markets that roamed the roads.

A day after leaving Antikari, the Corrigan passed Arciducha--a caravan of 35 wagons that sold fine clothes, rare foods, and even protective lodging with optional vendible flesh to keep merchants and adventurers warm and satisfied. It took four minutes for the road trains to pass each other. Flowers and drinks were share through windows. The drivers passed gossip and news about the road ahead. Aiden noticed various passengers waving and smiling. None of them were techan. All were human.

For the first few days, Aiden was forced to sleep alongside a farmer with leather skin forged from fifty years in the sun. After passing the village of Nymanis, Aiden slept beside two miners that smelled of week-old cheese. As the caravan left the land of Antikari and made for the free house of Orchis, Aiden was upgraded to a wool covered bed of straw in one of the conestogas with four other humans, three from Antikari and the fourth from Plicato.

After the second week, the caravan stopped in Orchis. The "sand-castle," as it was often mocked, was spotted on the horizon, flapping into vision from the waves of heat from dried desert soil. The ruling founders preferred the term "Desert Flower." Regardless of its name, the smooth towers of the relatively small keep soared over those in Antikari or any other buildings outside of a bastion.

A mockery of a legend claimed a demigod of child-like whim packed the sand with water and sculpted the keep with his own hands. Upon completion, he ordered a dragon to fire the castle to an ironstone ceramic. The castle was then given to the Orchis family on condition that neither the immediate family nor their direct descendants ever sleep beyond the limits of the castle. They ruled over a dozen smaller villages across seventy miles including stops along the continental cross like Archena, Kerria, and Bitterblush.

The Book of Free Houses, read to Aiden when he has nine. It was true to.

It was there when Aiden switched over to a larger stagecoach. It had two floors, a hallway, and four rooms with a narrow set of stairs and drapes separating the cabins from the beasts and their reigns. The population increased the further he approached Limshau. The caravan stopped at Blackbaronne and Kendelkorne, swelling in wagons and people. Aiden began recognizing cultures and landmarks from the books he had read. Still no fae. He shared the cabin with a pleasant looking musician wielding an acoustic bass guitar marked with colorful rosettes sprinkled with damaskan elvish. Aiden was still trying to pick up the tongue. It was one of the easier of the elvish languages.

"Ou frei haum y'habit?" the man asked.

"I'm sorry," Aiden answered," I don't speak…whatever it is your saying."

"Ou niima bastion?" Aiden was sure it was Englo-Lingo, a strange dialect no one at Angel knew.

"Yes…bastion, yes." The man plucked a few chords, evolving with each pass into a complex melody. It was far superior to any of the synthetic tunes Aiden had heard from his youth, only matched by the ethnic songs from Genai. "It's very good."

"Muzak ze sin knacko civila ze verbessern de mecha"

"Whatever you said, I'm sure you're right."

Aiden appreciated the talent the man exhibited, and the level of hygiene was a blessing considering the weeks prior. It was between a surprisingly lengthy tune when the caravan shuddered and stopped. The coach drivers were all trained to pull their breaks in chorus but the vehicles still struck each other, causing Aiden to fall onto the floor. Aiden poked his head out to see what caused the halt.

It was a dumpy figure jabbing a dead jackrabbit repeatedly with a sharpened stick. Despite the state of the prey, the predator continued to perforate the body. The creature resembled a hairless dog walking on bipedal legs. Floppy ears ran down a flattened head. The caravan was understandably cautious. One could mean thousands. A forward guard readied a crossbow shot. Despite the racket of animals and passengers, the pugg ignored the group. They couldn't allow it to live, even if it did pay them no mind. It turned sharply and uttered a scream that crossed the laugh of a monkey with the shriek of a bat.

Dozens more vermin swarmed from the trees towards the caravan. Aiden fell back into the coach and slammed the shutter down. The voices and clatter of armed guards rushed past him.

"All able bodied men to the front!" screamed Captain Rothschild as he walked by the coach. "Grab a sword. If you can hold it, you can wield it."

"Ze sang froid!" said the musician as he took the call and departed. Aiden leaned forward to follow. The screams of the innocent forced a moment of pause and Aiden froze.

The captain poked his head through the door. "Out of the room, this duties' for all," he snapped. Out of reflex, Aiden grabbed his totem book as he left. "What's that?"

"Spell book," Aiden answered.

"A mage, we've hit the fools luck." He snatched Aiden's shirt and pulled hard. "Get behind a sword and throw some fire."

"I actually–" Aiden was cut short as he was tossed onto his feet out of the coach. He fell in behind a hefty fellow draped in mail and topped with a burgonet. His weapon was a well weighted often-used broadsword already blessed with pugg blood. The rodents were rolling over each other to get to their prey. A few wore scraps of clothes, many were naked, wielding sharpened sticks with the rare pack leader with a rock or steel tip. The guard cleaved one on his downswing and caught another as he brought his blade back.

CHAPTER TWELVE:
MONSTERS

Earth was, and always shall be, a dangerous place for those who venture into shadow. Across the entire world, no valley, mountain, forest, or town is immune to the influence of magic. Where humanity did not take root to at least moderately direct the land's development, the flow from Attricana would saturate it, giving birth to the truly bizarre, fantastic, beautiful, or revolting. Classed together as spawn creatures, the majority of these beasts possess no culture and many never develop an intellect that can be measured or tested. A scant few have broken from these primitive and primordial bonds to stake a claim as a species worthy of respect.

FAE ANATHEMA

When magic first flooded the world, the saturation of enchantment began to reshape the animals and landscape. The dragons arose in imitation of the shape of the dominant life-form of the time, and an indeterminate amount of time later, well after the dragon kings had spawned their own descendant races, a new species appeared without warning from the forests. These new creatures resembled nothing that had come before. They were intelligent and beautiful, with the power and will to form a civilization while the other creations of chaos could only hunt and reproduce. Communities formed, towns were built, and cultures flourished.

The elder fae had emerged.

These creatures were tiny in comparison to the dragons, but reproduced a hundred times faster and were just as ageless and deathless except through unhappy accident. They spoke a single tongue, looked the same, and their traditions were mirrored in every civilization they founded. Yet, though creatures wrought of magic and able to imitate a fraction of the powers of dragons, they were not masters over magic. One day, without warning, every new fae child began to be born as a completely different species. They resembled the original fae in only the broadest ways. This first branch was seen as a deviation or worse, an abomination. They instinctively rejected the ironclad traditions of their elders: even their speech was slightly different. Most of these children were cast out of their communities, and soon began to seek each other out. They shared similar beliefs and in time, they developed a culture aberrant to that of their parents, their idiosyncrasies of speech developing into barely-related languages. As more and more came into the world, the original fae realized a drastic shift in their species was occurring. The members of this first offshoot had sprouted from the fae communities formed in plains and valleys. Shortly thereafter, the fae that took the forests as their home spawned their own unique subspecies. Fae in the mountains formed another.

This entire process took less than a thousand years, but by the next millennium, only one child in ten thousand was born a 'true' fae, and by the following millennium the original species was completely stillborn, the entire culture slowly becoming extinct as accident or quarrel claimed them one by one. Three young species rose to replace them: the laudenians, chaparrans and narros. Unlike the original fae, these three branches were shorter lived and took pride in cultural distinctions from their cousin races, though identical within their own communities. Narros built underground empires and cities atop of mountains while laudenians erected vast and expanding empires in valleys. The chaparrans vanished in the dense forests that birthed them.

These new fae were settled and complacent, but in less than half the time the original fae had reigned on the planet, the laudenians suffered another deviation. This new branch was shorter, with larger ears and a frenzied desire to learn and record what they knew. The laudenians became petrified at the prospect of vanishing like their ancestors. Believing the earth itself was the cause, laudenians employed their power of magic to uproot themselves and took to the sky, leaving their ground cities to their children, the damaskans.

The narros and chaparrans were not immune, and soon started to branch their own deviations. Through this chaos, there did appear a pattern to these mutations: they emerged more often in areas bountiful with life, and regardless of where the parent species settled, as long as the environment was similar, the offspring species was identical across the world. In the time it took the damaskans to emerge as a distinct people, chaparrans—the most varied and widest-ranging of the new fae—spawned not one, but three different distinct subspecies, each bound to a specific element of the forest (water, earth, and air). Later, these lines broke off still further, amalgamating animal and insect parts into their physiology. Many of these subspecies grew smaller, more isolated to their particular niche, and were harder to categorize and define by outsiders. There were other odd idiosyncrasies. The chaparran branches produced fewer and fewer males with every iteration, with the youngest species being over ninety percent female. The narros, due to their homogenous environment, produced descendant races less frequently, unchanged for millennia before branching to the ogres, which themselves mutated almost immediately thereafter into variations with one eye and two heads. As the chaparran branches became smaller and overwhelmingly female, narros were becoming larger and predominantly male, with the monstrous chiggoth towering over them all. The most devolved creations became known as the fae anathema.

Building upon the foundations of the fleeing laudenians, the damaskans grew fast. They became the most populous of all fae, helped along by their increased reproduction cycle and social structure. While the chaparran anathema vanished into their woods and the narros in their mountains, the damaskan anathema spread quickly over the globe. The first were the skeggs and boggs, then finally the puggs, a locust swarm of fairy vermin that had no purpose beyond eating, rutting, and pillage. But not all the damaskan branches were entirely uncivil; a portion of their population had vanished under the ground, lost their sight and became the tenenbri. Another group begot the gimfen, curious and playful creatures which thus far has not spawned a devolved species of their own, a fact that most gimfen take as proof (together with their lack of technological disruption) that they are the final form of fae to inherit the planet.

Setting aside these last, newer fae branches always emerge less civilized and more perilous than their ancestors. The chaparrans thought they had escaped this, believing their future awaited them in the trees and that the faeries and nariisa were a preferred fate, until these almost angelic creatures descended into harpies and hags and finally the dojenn, one of the ugliest creatures on the planet, appeared from the watery depths. The ultimate narros anathema, a fate feared by even the ogres, is the dumb and massive chiggoth: the builder folk's descendants are fated to grow large and stupid, smashing down the mountain keeps the narros spent their empire's span building. Tenenbri have pushed their dark side into the crevices of their underground labyrinths, but as these subterranean fae begin moving north, their secret has begun to move with them, the kythix. Damaskans, alas, cannot bury their descendants in dungeons or in the depths of oceans. The skeggs are large and mean, but of limited and controllable numbers, but their descendent species of boggs was more numerous, and these in turn have been displaced (when they do not rule over) by the growing mass of puggs, an unstoppable feeding frenzy of animalistic fae.

Then there are the tilen. With a complicated history of emergence, this young people has never branched into a descendant species. Tilen always produce pure tilen even when they breed with other species, even the never-changing pagus. Since the tilen look the most like the original fae (according to their claim), their existence may be the solution the fae need to maintain their heritage and prevent the madness of a chaotic future.

THE FALL

The exact date was never recorded, though assumed to have been thousands of years after the emergence of the fae. Darkness washed across a starry night. There was no fire or brimstone, no oracle to herald the end of days, no trumpets blown, no seals broken. A gloom settled with the passing wind and a million fae walked from their homes and families, following an undeniable temptation. They were no longer slaves to whimsy, no longer products of chaos. They embraced a way that would ensure the stability of their lives – an order of things, never changing; masters instead of slaves to enchantment. They were corrupted by the Fall – the arrival of Mengus. This influence could only corrupt what Attricana created, and an army of followers emerged in a single day, a stream of pilgrims to the shores of a distant land, a growing expanse of black glass where the dark star settled. Of all the fae, the chaparrans were the hardest hit. Many years passed before these corrupted fae returned as the pagus, their bodies transformed into identical, perfect killing machines, their might unleashed upon their unwitting former kindred. Unlike the fae birthed from Attricana, those from Ixindar never changed, neither devolving nor evolving. They simply were, are, and will forever be. While Ixindar cannot encourage spawn races, it can twist any existing life to its own purposes. The most feared of these transformations is the dark mirror of the

The Fae

Chaparrans

Laudenians

Narros

Sibharil

Neirryd

Damaskans

Changelings

Sylfaen

Faeries

Hag

Dopplegangers

Satyrs/Fauns

Harpies

Gimfen

Tenenbri

Ogres

Trolls

Dawnlings

Dojenn

Centaurs

Sylphids

Skeggs

Cyclops

Ettin

The Fall

Kythix

Oggrak

Boggs

Pagus

Tilen

Puggs

Chiggoth

elder fae, the shemjaza. Like the old fae, these creatures were tall and beautiful in their own ways, but obsessed with control and order rather than dance and play. They put forward methods of war while their opponents pondered and argued over celebration and joviality. Mankind now calls them devils or demons, and there is more than a little justification behind those titles.

SPAWN

Most monstrous creatures of the wilds are, of course, ultimately not of fae extraction, but are results of Atricana's influence on the world's natural flora and fauna (and, occasionally, the natural elements themselves). The most common effect of this influence is to expand the creature to tremendous size, similar to the dire beasts that flourished in the epochs prior to the ascent of Man, but occasionally a creature is subjected to some particular magical mutation which gives it unusual supernatural powers. A few rare animals are gifted with limited intelligence in this way, though few have yet developed any sort of civilization or culture. As any mutation caused by magic is invariably passed on to the monster's descendants, over the centuries many of these initial sports have produced true-breeding subspecies. They are usually far more dangerous than their animal forebears, as they have no intrinsic fear of humanity and will not hesitate to attack people when they feel hungry or threatened (or, in the case of some of the more intelligent species, when bored).

AVAILABLE MONSTERS

What follows is a list of the monsters from the PATHFINDER BESTIARY available in canon *Amethyst*. These creatures either exist in the real setting of the story or their inclusion would not break the setting's logic. If a creature is not listed, there is usually a good reason. You are welcome to include other monsters from any valid source, but non-canon monsters should be treated as accidental or deliberate magical mutations, without a developed history or a natural place in the ecosystem. Summoned and shapechanged monsters, of course, are constructs of the imagination and are not bound by this limitation; it is highly unlikely, however, that any spellcaster capable of such effects would produce a creature that has no canon analogue.

Some monsters included in the *Amethyst* bestiary may seem obviously inspired by mythology, which fits well within the setting, and thus, may be similar to monsters in the PATHFINDER BESTIARY. *Amethyst* is meant to imply these are the creatures that mythology and fairy tales are based on, but did not get entirely correct. Since there is no dialogue with these monsters, the English name for them is the same as their historical mirror. In that case, *Amethyst* does refer to them by their original name and they would use the proper entry in the PATHFINDER BESTIARY.

MONSTERS IN AMETHYST CANON

(part of the setting)
Ant (spawn)
Ape (spawn)
Assassin Vine (spawn)
Barghest (spawn)
Basilisk (spawn)
Bat (spawn)
Bear (spawn)
Beetle (spawn)
Boar (spawn)
Cat (spawn)
Centaur (fae, chaparran branch)
Centipede (spawn)
Chimera (spawn)
Cockatrice (spawn)
Crab (spawn)
Crocodile (spawn)
Cyclops (fae, narros branch)
Dire Animal (spawn)
Dog (spawn)
Dolphin (spawn)
Eagle (spawn)
Eel (spawn)
Elemental (spawn or construct)
Elephant (spawn)
Ettin (fae, narros branch)
Familiars
Flytrap (spawn)
Frog (spawn)
Gargoyle (spawn)
Ghost (Ixindar)
Ghoul (Ixindar)
Golem (construct)
Green Hag (fae, chaparran branch)
Griffon (spawn)
Harpy (fae, chaparran branch)
Herd Animal
Homunculus (construct)
Horse
Hydra (spawn)
Hyena (spawn)
Kraken (spawn)
Leech (spawn)
Lion (spawn)
Lizard (spawn)
Lycanthrope
Manticore (spawn)
Mantis (spawn)
Minotaur (spawn)
Night Hag (fae, chaparran branch)
Octopus (spawn)
Ogre (fae, narros branch)
Pegasus (spawn)
Pixie (fae, chaparran branch)
Rat (spawn)
Rhinoceros (spawn)
Roc (spawn)

Satyr (fae, chaparran branch)
Scorpion (spawn)
Sea Hag (fae, chaparran branch)
Sea Serpent (spawn)
Shadow (Ixindar)
Shark (spawn)
Skeleton (Ixindar)
Slug (spawn)
Snake (spawn)
Spectre (Ixindar)
Sphinx (spawn)
Spider (spawn)
Squid (spawn)
Tiger (spawn)
Treant (spawn)
Troll (fae, narros branch)
Unicorn (spawn)
Vampire (Ixindar; commonly known as 'ghulath')
Wasp (spawn)
Wight (Ixindar)
Wolf (spawn)
Wolverine (spawn)
Wraith (Ixindar)
Wyvern (spawn)
Yeti (spawn)
Zombie (Ixindar)

MONSTERS AVAILABLE IN AMETHYST

(Not canon but does not break the setting)
Aboleth (spawn)
Animated Object (construct)
Ankheg (spawn)
Basidirond (spawn)
Behir (spawn)
Black Pudding (spawn)
Bulette (spawn)
Cave Fisher (spawn)
Chuul (spawn)
Cloaker (spawn)
Darkmantle (spawn)
Devourer (Ixindar)
Froghemoth (spawn)
Gelatinous Cube (spawn)
Gibbering Mouther (spawn)
Girallon (spawn)
Gorgon (spawn)
Grey Ooze (spawn)
Intellect Devourer (spawn)
Iron Cobra (spawn)
Mimic (spawn)
Mohrg (Ixindar)
Mummy (Ixindar)
Ochre Jelly (spawn)
Otyugh (spawn)
Owlbear (spawn)
Phase Spider (spawn)
Purple worm (spawn)
Remorhaz (spawn)
Retriever (construct)
Roper (spawn)
Rust Monster (spawn)
Shambling Mound (spawn)
Shocker Lizard (spawn)
Stirge (spawn)
Tarrasque (Ixindar)
Violet Fungus (spawn)
Worg (spawn)
Yellow Musk Creeper (spawn)

MONSTERS REPLACED IN AMETHYST

(These monsters don't exist because there is a duplicate monster already present in the setting).
All elves, replaced by equivalent fae
All goblinoids (goblins, hobgoblins, and bugbears), replaced by puggs, boggs and skeggs
All dragons (both chromatic and metallic), replaced by archon and typhox dragons
Giants (but not the giant type), replaced by oggraks and chiggoth
Kobold, replaced with pugg
Morlock, replaced with kythix
Orc, replaced by pagus

RULE AMENDMENTS

Descriptions: No monster flavor text from an outside source is canon in *Amethyst*. If a player inquires, be inventive.

Fae = Fey: For dealing with magic items and monster descriptors, the fey type is part of the fae tree. However, only specific fey like nymphs and hags are canon. Any creature on the above list designated as fae has the same common fae traits as PC fae, but only has the common traits of the fey type if it normally has that type.

Ixindar: Ixindar is a new monster descriptor. An Ixindar creature does not generate an EDF and does not affect disruption rolls. All creatures on the above list designated as Ixindar creatures, as well as all undead, have this descriptor. Any non-canon creature with an alignment of Lawful Evil may also be an Ixindar creature at the GM's discretion.

Outsiders & Extraplanar Creatures: There are no planes in *Amethyst*. Any such creatures produced by summoning spells are magical constructs created by the caster's imagination, and use the aberration type rather than the outsider type. Etherealness is considered a state change within the natural world, and not a change to a different plane of existence.

BOGG

Before the puggs emerged, the boggs were considered the largest growing threat in Canam. They were numerous enough to be a hazard on their own and just smart enough to realize stealth and numbers prevailed against smarter and tougher enemies. Although it is believed boggs came from the larger harrier skeggs, there have been reports of boggs emerging directly from damaskan roots. Skeggs are often chiefs among bogg tribes, especially when a bogg mother has not been established, and individual boggs have in turn been known to set themselves up as the leaders of pugg swarms. The common trait of a bogg is its perpetual smile and hideously distended mouth. With three times as many teeth as a human, the bogg can show nearly them all when it grins, and does so often. Boggs' pain receptors are wired differently from other species, releasing a flood of endorphins and adrenaline when the creature is hurt. This may explain their giggling laughter even when impaled upon an enemy's sword.

BOGG LORE

A character knows the following with a successful Knowledge (nature) check.

DC 15: Boggs delight in both giving and receiving pain, and the saying 'that which does not kill us makes us stronger' is particularly apt when applied to them. Any physical harm that does not kill them outright makes them more dangerous.

DC 20: Each bogg nest contains at least one bogg mother. This grotesquely obese female bogg is

BOGG SCABB CR 1/2

XP 200
CE Small fey
Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception –1

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+2 armor, +2 Dex, +1 shield, +1 size)
hp 10 (2d8+2)
Fort +4, **Ref** +4, **Will** +0

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee short sword +2 (1d6+1/19–20)
Ranged short bow +3 (1d6/×3)

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 15, **Con** 12, **Int** 10, **Wis** 9, **Cha** 6
Base Atk +1; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 13
Feats Improved Initiative
Skills Ride +10, Stealth +11, Swim +4; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Ride, +4 Stealth
Languages Ferran
SQ masochistic response

ECOLOGY

Environment temperate forest and plains
Organization gang (4–9), warband (10–16), or tribe (17+ plus 1-4 skeggs)
Treasure NPC gear (leather armor, light wooden shield, short sword)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Masochistic Response (Ex): If an enemy hits a bogg scabb but doesn't kill it, the bogg scab gains a +4 bonus to all attack rolls until the end of its next turn.

BOGG RAKE CR 1

XP 400
CE small fey
Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception –1

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+2 armor, +2 Dex, +1 shield, +1 size)
hp 15 (3d8+1)
Fort +4, **Ref** +4, **Will** +0

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee punching dagger +3 (1d4+1 plus *infliction* and *sneaky bastard*/19–20)
Ranged blowgun +3 (1d4 plus *foul concoction*)
Special Attacks sand in yer eye! (DC13 Ref)

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 15, **Con** 12, **Int** 10, **Wis** 9, **Cha** 6
Base Atk +2; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 13
Feats Improved Initiative
Skills Ride +10, Stealth +10, Swim +4; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Ride, +4 Stealth
Languages Ferran
SQ masochistic response

ECOLOGY

Environment temperate forest and plains
Organization gang (4–9), warband (10–16), or tribe (17+ plus 1-4 skeggs)
Treasure NPC gear (leather armor, light wooden shield, short sword)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Foul Concoction (Ex): The bogg rake can coat its blowdarts in poison of its own devising. It typically carries enough poison to coat 6 darts, chosen from the poisons below:

Rancid meat: The target must make a DC14 Fortitude save or be sickened for 2d6 rounds.

Swamp weeds and spit: The target must make a DC14 Fortitude save or be dazed until the beginning of the bogg spitter's next turn.

Bodily fluids: The target suffers 1d6 damage at the beginning of its next turn.

Infliction (Ex): If the bogg rake scores a hit with its punching dagger, it inflicts the target with putrid spit.

Type poison, injury; *Save* Fortitude DC 12
Onset 1 round; *Frequency* 1/round for 4 rounds
Effect 1 Con damage and 1 Wis damage; *Cure* 1 save

Masochistic Response (Ex): If an enemy hits a bogg rake but doesn't kill it, the bogg rake gains a +4 bonus to all attack rolls until the end of its next turn.

Sand In Yer Eye!: As a move action, the bogg rake can throw sand in an adjacent target's eyes. The target must make a DC13 Reflex save or be blinded for 1 round.

Sneaky Bastard (Ex): The bogg rake deals an additional 1d6 damage against any target denied its Dexterity bonus to AC.

BOGG MOTHER CR3

XP 800
CE Large fey
Init +4; **Senses** darkvision; Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 10, flat-footed 15 (+5 natural)
hp 72 (6d6+48)
Fort +15, **Ref** +3, **Will** +7

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.
Melee meaty fists +7 (1d4+4 plus *ham hands*)
Special Attacks gnaw (2d6 acid damage AC 13, 8 hp)

STATISTICS

Str 19, **Dex** 10, **Con** 26, **Int** 14, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 8
Base Atk +3; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 18
Feats Great Fortitude, Improved Great Fortitude, Toughness
Skills Climb +9, Craft (sculpture) +11, Escape Artist +15, Handle Animal +10, Knowledge (nature) +11, Perception +11, Stealth +15, Survival +8
Languages Common, Ferran
SQ masochistic response, my babies

ECOLOGY

Environment temperate forest and plains
Organization part of a warband (with 4–9 boggs) or tribe (with 17+ boggs)
Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Gnaw (Ex): The bogg mother may attempt to gnaw on a creature it is grappling. She attempts a new combat maneuver check (as though attempting to pin the opponent). If she succeeds, she begins to gnaw on her prey, which is similar to swallow whole except that the opponent takes bite damage and additional damage each round.

A creature being gnawed remains grappled, while the bogg mother does not. A gnawed creature can try to cut its way free with any light slashing or piercing weapon or it can try to escape the grapple. If a creature being gnawed cuts its way out, the bogg mother cannot gnaw another creature until the damage is healed.

Ham Hands (Ex): When the bogg mother hits with her meaty fists, she deals normal damage and attempts to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. Each successful grapple check she makes during successive rounds automatically deals 2d4+8 damage. The bogg mother can grapple two targets at once without suffering any penalties.

Masochistic Response (Ex): If an enemy hits a bogg mother but doesn't kill it, the bogg mother gains a +4 bonus to all attack rolls until the end of its next turn.

My Babies (Ex): When a bogg or skegg is killed within line of sight of the bogg mother, she can move up to 15 ft (3 squares) and make a meaty fists attack as an immediate action. If the bogg mother is already grappling a victim, it may immediately make a gnaw attack.

pregnant one hundred percent of the time, with between four and six uteri and an incubation period of twelve weeks. Each pregnancy produces between four and six bogg whelps or puggs (puggs born to bogg mothers are usually eaten, but a few are allowed to live as slave labor).

DOJENN

Chaparrans were proud of their pedigree. Their descendant races were not massive ugly monsters with stone appendages or feral rodents devouring everything they could wrap their grotesquely oversized mouths over, but became beautiful, angelic creatures sought after by lustful mortals. Even when taking on the attributes of their environment, these descendant races had flair and artistry in how they expressed these features. Their echalogical echoes were represented with respect and worship, called centaurs, nymphs and faeries. This aspiration died when the dojenn appeared, rising from the depths of rivers, lakes, and oceans to feed upon drowning victims before the water claimed them. Dojenn are the dark reflection of everything the chaparrans had hoped to become.

Another noted difference between the dojenn and their cousin races is their appearance. Dojenn are one of the most feared creatures to look at in the world. They have lifeless eyes over a jaw of needle-like incisors. They can disengage their jaws and swallow creatures twice the size of their own head, and have been known to do so to live prey, using their long teeth to keep food from escaping. As time progresses, these monsters are appearing more and more, migrating farther inland, following rivers deeper towards established and unsuspecting nations. They have already started attacking Baruch Malkut and York, striking during the night and pulling dock workers before an alarm can be raised. Like all fae anathema, the dojenn are fated to be the ultimate legacy of the chaparrans unless something even more monstrous should emerge.

DOJENN LORE

A character can know the following information with a successful Knowledge (Nature) check.

DC 10: Dojenn prey on the innocent and complacent, and take joy in the terror of others. They have no qualms in devouring both fae and humans, with marked preference for their own cousin races like faeries and nariisa. It has been suspected that the dojenn have eliminated several faerie branches, forcing these innocent creatures from their waters and woods.

DC 15: Dojenn scales ooze a toxic secretion which burns the flesh of dryfoots on contact, but it evaporates quickly in air and washes off just as quickly in water.

DC 20: The dojenn are an offshoot from an earlier chaparran deviation; a merfolk-like aquatic fae species called the jeilynn. The dojenn systematically destroyed each jeilynn home, and the vast oceans now contain little intelligent life other than scattered dojenn tribes and the occasional spawn creature. Rumors still persist some jeilynn have survived, hiding from their progeny.

DC 25: All dojenn most ever see are female. The males may still be visible as tiny, remora-like parasitic creatures that attached themselves to the female's underside and merge with her for life.

DOJENN MATARK CR 9

XP 6,400
CE Medium fey (chaotic, evil)
Init +4, **Senses** darkvision; Perception +17

DEFENSE

AC 24; touch 14, flat-footed 20 (+4 Dex, +10 natural)
Hp 117 (15d6+72)
Fort +13, **Ref** +10, **Will** +6
DR 5/magic

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., swim 50 ft.
Melee harpoon +14 (5d8+5 plus grab), bite +17 (6d8+7/19-20)
Space 5 ft., **Reach** 5 ft.
Special Attacks caustic excretion (2d4), feeder tendrils (DC 23 Ref); 3d6 damage plus grab

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 18, **Con** 26, **Int** 10, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 3
Base Atk +11; **CMB** +17; **CMD** 24
Feats Ability Focus (feeder tendrils), Improved Natural Armor, Improved Grapple, Stealthy, Weapon Focus (bite)
Skills Acrobatics +21, Climb +14, Escape Artist +17, Perception, +17, Sense Motive +14, Stealth +24, Survival +17, Swim +21
Languages Old faen
SQ feeding time

ECOLOGY

Environment swamp, underground, water
Organization solitary, pair, or cult (3-6)
Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Caustic Excretion (Ex): When an opponent hits the dojenn with a melee attack, the opponent takes 2d4 damage.

Feeder Tendrils (Ex): Swift action; Reflex DC 23; 3d6 damage plus grab. Up to three enemies may be entangled in the dojenns' *feeder tendrils* per round.

Feeding Time (Ex): The dojenn has a +2 bonus with its bite attack against any creature it is grappling.

Grab (Ex): If the dojenn hits with either a feeder tendril or its harpoon against a Large or smaller target, the dojenn can attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If using the harpoon, then the weapon is not available as long as it is grabbing. The dojenn receives a +4 bonus on combat maneuver checks made to start and maintain a grapple.

DRAGONS

The most iconic symbol of fantasy, when the world of magic swept over the globe, dragons became a confirmation more than a realization, the final evidence that fantasy had invaded reality. Unlike many other fables, legends of dragons can be found in every corner of every nation in history, the symbol of both the greatest wisdom and the greatest evil. Across the globe, they took many shapes. Some walked upon two legs, some four, or even six. Many twisted in coils with snake-like bodies through the clouds while others slumped across beds of gold, silver, and skulls like lumbering cows. Winged or not, most dragons of legend could fly. Some devoured maidens, staving off a greater appetite for villages offering the sacrifice. Some fell to lances wielded by saints or squires while others died by the hands of their own tricks, fooled by clever wizards. Throughout the legends, dragons were either dumb lizards or keepers of great knowledge and magic. Some brought fire and disease while others water and plentiful crops. The sight of a dragon in the skies rained fear on everyone below. Their deaths heralded both ages of wisdom and despair. Their images upon coats, crests, and colors signified a country's dominance over the monster or their reverence for it.

Modern dragons were exultant over the respect they had received in their absence, regardless of the source. They were shocked at the amount of detail that had survived and the accuracy or liberties taken both condemning and glorifying them. Some were especially surprised at the singular attitudes dragons would take dependent on the nation. Rarely would dragons be represented in different lights within a single culture, causing no end of disagreement regarding their actual nature – how their bodies moved, what powers they controlled, or even how many toes they had.

Nevertheless, to many people, defacing an image of a dragon regardless of its character was considered insolent and unlawful. The dragons' elevation to godhood was an obvious transition to some. Most dragons insist that such worship is undeserved, but even the noblest dragons have a streak of vanity in them, and few despise the adulation they receive. In one form or another, almost every dragon from human literature is represented on Earth, from the grotesque soot-belching eaters of the young, to the erudite masters of fire and water. Even the aberrations with many heads and tails and legs can be found, though somewhat rarer. Their origins are uncertain, even to themselves: it is suspected that Amethyst, the first and greatest dragon, created them from the dinosaurs who roamed the ancient Earth, but this is by no means confirmed. Initially, four dragon kings arose, each controlling a section of Earth. Lazarus of Grace, controller of the West and Shaka of Dawn, ruler of the East, remain the only known surviving dragon kings, though Goch of Wrath, one of the seven Ažhi lords, claims to have been a dragon king at one point. Lazarus believes, although he omitted such a conclusion in his book, that Jahada of Glass is that fourth, taken by Amethyst as a mate. Her fate remains a mystery.

Soon after the kings appeared, many more dragons emerged. The yok-ani, born from Shaka's will, were the first, though with their slow reproductive cycle, they quickly became the fewest (only nine exist in the modern day). Over the rest of the world, holy, noble, and guardian dragons fell under the umbrella title of 'archons'. Later, corruption from Ixindar claimed its first victims: from Goch came (whether as her offspring or her corrupted minions, none are sure) the Seven Lords of Ažhi, the first fallen dragons. Soon after, more dragons of hideous disposition appeared, including the cannibalistic death dragons and the cursed cancer

dragons; these were feared and cursed by the name of 'typhox'. Many dragons, including Lazarus, believe that it was a beacon from Goch that originally summoned Mengus to Terros, and that the despoiled dragon king has within her hearts an evil not claimed by Ixindar.

CLASSIFICATIONS

There are three types of dragons: archon (good dragons), typhox (corrupted or cursed dragons), and neutral dragons (elemental and yok-ani). All have decidedly different roles and cultures, but all of them are proud: any ancient or older dragon should bear a title appropriate to their nature. Among these three types are several unique individuals of great power who stand out from the rest. The dragon kings stand above even these. Any dragon given a name and title in an *Amethyst* publication is generally so powerful that they should not appear as an opponent in combat.

GENERAL MODIFICATIONS

All dragons in *Amethyst* bear more than striking resemblance to dragons in literature, both modern and mythological. The background enchantment permeating through history influenced later myths and legends to describe the creatures, all the while fooling those writers into thinking they created something original. Imagination holds no bounds and many descriptions departed often from the reality of the true creatures living millions of years earlier.

Spells: Dragons cast spells as wizards, not sorcerers, with the words of Pleroma burned onto their skins, and the most powerful dragons branded with hundreds of words wrapping around their wings and arms. Only the dragon scribing them can read them, making transfer or copying impossible. All dragons have this feature, though some display them more visibly than others. All dragons can sacrifice any prepared spell to cast any other spell they know of equal or lower level, but this requires a full-round action.

ARCHON DRAGONS

The title of 'archon dragons' applies to the three broad classifications of holy, guardian, and noble dragons – categorized not by their powers and nature, but by their role in draconic society. Holy dragons are the keepers of draconic faith and mysticism, a complex discipline of which lesser beings are fundamentally incapable of understanding more than a fragment: their wisdom is great, but frequently cryptic to mortals, and they are renowned for being long-winded. Guardian dragons are the warrior class, defenders of the dragon way of life and the lower creatures under their care: they are all expert strategists and deadly combatants in both body and spell. Noble dragons are administrators and adjudicators, the bureaucracy of dragonkind: they all have formidable minds and are more focused spellcasters than the holy dragons, but they have a tendency to focus on their own areas of interest or expertise, which is not a problem for dragons but may be difficult for the rare mortals they interact with.

No game statistics are provided here for archon dragons, as they refuse to get involved in mortal conflicts: if attacked, they will use powerful spells to confound their opponents and simply vanish. Archons summoned by magic are always presumed to be just powerful enough to accomplish whatever task they have been summoned for without difficulty.

TYPHOX DRAGONS

Goch was the first fallen dragon, corrupted from within, though whether by her own supremacy and immortality or by Ixindar during the first migration, none can say for sure. Although there are hundreds of typhox dragons, only seven are called Ažhi, the first corrupted dragons. After them emerged three distinct classes of dragons of the typhox line. These are the fallen and death dragons, both bound to Ixindar, and the cancer dragon which is not bound to Ixindar but rather cursed by it.

CANCER DRAGONS

The ugliest of them all, cancer dragons live their lives wracked in agony. They cannot die from any disease but have no way to defend themselves from any

TABLE: CANCER DRAGONS

AGE CATEGORY	SPECIAL ABILITIES	CASTER LEVEL
Wyrmling	Ambient disease, Expel DC14 disease	—
Very young	Putrescence	—
Young	Proliferation	—
Juvenile	Expel DC16 disease	1st
Young adult	DR 5/magic, spell resistance	3rd
Adult	Regurgitation	5th
Mature adult	DR 10/magic, putrescence (10 ft.)	7th
Old	Expel DC18 disease	9th
Very old	DR 15/magic	11th
Ancient	Plague	13th
Wyrm	DR 20/magic	15th
Great wyrm	Putrescence (20 ft.)	17th

infection. They are receptive to any ailment afflicting any creature. Acid and poison courses through their very blood, their eyes are bloodshot and ooze puss. Many archon dragons sympathize with these pathetic creatures unable to rest or even sleep. This constant suffering has turned the dragon's disposition bitter and spiteful, wishing only to inflict their pain unto others. The only time the misery subsides is when the creature transfers disease or poison to a victim.

CANCER DRAGON LORE

A character knows the following with a successful Knowledge (nature) check.

DC 15: Cancer dragons are among the most revolting, loathsome creatures to walk the earth. Their enormous bodies are carriers for every malady known to man or fae, and the oldest of their kind have complete and utter mastery over the maledictions that afflict their enemies. A cancer dragon's breath is a disturbing mixture of bone shrapnel, diseased fluids, and gas, most part of the cancer dragon at some point before expelling them.

DC 20: It is a common misconception that cancer dragons are Ixindar-bound creatures; they are not. They were originally desert dwelling elemental dragons that were cursed by Goch. They are still Attricana-bound creatures, only suffering from a curse from Ixindar. Simply being in an area where a cancer dragon is or has been is hostile to a creature's health. Vegetation withers, animals grow tumors, and the ground oozes with rot.

DC 25: Cancer dragons live in hot climates and seldom in areas that are cold or damp. Their skin carries a natural bluish tint often marred by scars and lesions. A few cancer dragons, old and near decrepit, have killed enough and infected enough that they have finally vanquished the pain in their bodies, but they remain infectious and their blood is as toxic as ever. Avoid any attack from a cancer dragon which can penetrate skin; an infection will surely set.

DC30: On a few rare occasions, a few sympathetic souls have used intense magic to cure a cancer dragon of their afflictions. If they survive the ordeal, the pain passes and the contagious blood purifies, allowing them to vanish and live peacefully in solitude from then on. Few cancer dragons have undergone the practice and even fewer have survived it: most will go to any lengths to avoid the treatment, fearing change more than pain. Those that emerge healthy find a new zeal for life. The stains of their sins remain, however, and those cancer dragons turning away from darkness have few allies on either side.

CANCER DRAGON

CE dragon (earth)

BASE STATISTICS

CR 5; **Size** Small; **Hit Dice** 6d12
Speed 40 ft.
Natural Armor +5; **Breath Weapon** cone, disease
Str 13, **Dex** 14, **Con** 13, **Int** 10, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 10

ECOLOGY

Environment any
Organization solitary
Treasure triple

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Immunities (Ex): A cancer dragon cannot suffer damage from any diseases or poisons.

Ambient Disease (Su): A cancer dragon touching food or a body of water (100 liters / age category) instantly infects it with blinding sickness. Touching the skin of a cancer dragon with direct skin infects the subject with the shakes. Increase the DCs by 1 for every age category the dragon has.

Expel Disease (Su): Cancer dragons can infect targets with various diseases with bite, breath weapon, or claw attacks. Unlike other diseases, onset occurs instantly, regardless of the disease's normal incubation. Targets hit by the attack are infected by any disease with a base Fortitude DC of 14 or less. Juvenile dragons or older can infect a target with any disease with a Fortitude DC of 16 or less. Old dragons or older can infect a target with any disease with a Fortitude DC of 18 or less. Ancient dragons or older can infect a target with any disease with a Fortitude DC of 20 or less. Once a disease has been selected, increase the Fortitude DC by 1 for every age category the dragon has. Each time a cancer dragon infects a target, it can select a new disease. Only juvenile or older cancer dragons can infect via bite or claw attacks.

Breath Weapon: The cancer dragon's breath weapon is cone of deadly shrapnel mixed with bodily fluids and gasses. It infects by either inhalation or injury.

Bite & Claw Attacks: A juvenile or older cancer dragon can infect targets with its bite and claw attacks with any disease that is transmitted by injury.

Plague (Su) An ancient or older cancer dragon's breath weapon does not immediately vanish once expelled. An area equal to the cone's width remains after the breath weapon concludes and lingers for 1 hour afterward. Any target passing through the area is infected with any inhaled disease DC20 or less. Once a disease has been selected, increase the Fort DC by 1 for every age category the dragon has. This disease does not need to be the same as the breath weapon.

Proliferation (Su): Young cancer dragons and older are able to infect another dragon with the same Ixindar-born blanket disease all cancer dragons suffer from. In order to infect another dragon, the target must be at least two age categories younger than cancer dragon and be hit by the cancer dragon's bite attack.

> **Type** disease, bite attack; **Save** Fortitude DC 12 + 1/per age category
> **Onset** 2d4 days; **Frequency** 1/day
> **Effect:** No initial effect. After two consecutive failures, the target dragon falls into a slumber and awakens 1 day later as a cancer dragon.

Putrescence (Ex): Very young cancer dragons and older radiate a *stinking cloud* (as the spell). The Fortitude DC is 10+2 per age category of the cancer dragon. Adjacent targets to the cancer dragon must make the Fortitude save or be nauseated. The effect lasts as long as the target remains in the cloud and for 1d4+1 rounds after. A mature adult cancer dragon radiates the cloud to 10 feet and a great wyrm cancer dragon radiates the cloud to 20 feet.

Regurgitation (Su): An adult or older cancer dragon can inflict 3d6 damage on itself as a swift action to decrease the time before it can use its breath weapon again by 1 round.

YOUNG CANCER DRAGON CR 9

XP 6,400
CE Large dragon (earth)
Init +5; **Senses** dragon senses; Perception +14
Aura putrescence 5 ft., DC 16

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 10, flat-footed 20 (+1 Dex, +13 natural, –1 size)
hp 75 (10d12+10)
Fort +10, **Ref** +8, **Will** +8
Immune disease, paralysis, poison, sleep

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 200 ft. (poor)
Melee bite +15 (2d6+7), 2 claws +14 (1d8+5), 2 wings +12 (1d6+2), tail slap +12 (1d8+7)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with bite)
Special Attacks breath weapon (40-ft. cone, disease), expel disease

STATISTICS

Str 21, **Dex** 12, **Con** 12, **Int** 12, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 12
Base Atk +10; **CMB** +16; **CMD** 27 (31 vs. trip)
Feats Dazzling Display, Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Shatter Defenses, Weapon Focus (bite)
Skills Appraise +14, Fly +8, Intimidate +14, Knowledge (local) +14, Perception +14, Stealth +10, Survival +14
Languages All
SQ ambient disease, proliferation

ADULT CANCER DRAGON CR 13

XP 25,600
CE Huge dragon (earth)
Init +4; **Senses** dragon senses; Perception +22
Aura frightful presence (180 ft., DC 21), putrescence 5 ft., DC 22

DEFENSE

AC 31, touch 8, flat-footed 28 (+23 natural, –2 size)
hp 120 (16d12+16)
Fort +11, **Ref** +10, **Will** +13
DR 5/magic; **Immune** disease, paralysis, poison, sleep; **SR** 24

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 200 ft. (poor)
Melee bite +23 (2d8+12), 2 claws +22 (2d6+8), 2 wings +20 (1d8+4), tail slap +20 (2d6+12)
Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft. (15 ft. with bite)
Special Attacks breath weapon (50-ft. cone), crush, expel disease
Spells Known (CL 5th)
2nd (5/day)—*invisibility, resist energy*

1st (7/day)—*cause fear* (DC 13), *mage armor, shield, true strike*
0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 13), *detect magic, mage hand, read magic, resistance, touch of fatigue* (DC 13)

STATISTICS

Str 27, **Dex** 10, **Con** 12, **Int** 16, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 16
Base Atk +16; **CMB** +26; **CMD** 36 (40 vs. trip)
Feats Combat Casting, Dazzling Display, Deadly Stroke, Hover, Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Shatter Defenses, Weapon Focus (bite)
Skills Appraise +22, Fly +11, Intimidate +22, Knowledge (local) +22, Knowledge (geography) +22, Perception +22, Spellcraft +22, Stealth +11, Survival +22
Languages All
SQ ambient disease, proliferation, regurgitation

ANCIENT CANCER DRAGON CR 18

XP 153,600
CE Gargantuan dragon (earth)
Init +3; **Senses** dragon senses; Perception +32
Aura frightful presence (300 ft., DC 27), putrescence 10 ft., DC 30

DEFENSE

AC 41, touch 5, flat-footed 37 (–1 Dex, +36 natural, –4 size)
hp 204 (24d12+48)
Fort +16, **Ref** +13, **Will** +19
DR 15/magic; **Immune** disease, paralysis, poison, sleep; **SR** 29

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 250 ft. (clumsy)
Melee bite +33 (4d6+18/19–20), 2 claws +32 (2d8+12), 2 wings +30 (2d6+6), tail slap +30 (2d8+18)
Space 20 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft. (20 ft. with bite)
Special Attacks breath weapon (60-ft. cone), crush, expel disease, plague, tail sweep
Spells Known (CL 13th)
6th (4/day)—*circle of death* (DC 21), *eyebite* (DC 21)
5th (7/day)—*blight* (DC 20), *persistent image, waves of fatigue* (DC 20)
4th (7/day)—bestow curse (DC 19), *contagion* (DC 20), *enervation, stoneskin*
3rd (7/day)—*dispel magic, displacement, haste, vampiric touch*
2nd (7/day)—*darkness, false life, invisibility, resist energy, shatter*
1st (7/day)—*alarm, mage armor, shield, true strike, unseen servant*
0 (at will)—*arcane mark, bleed* (DC 15), *detect magic, light, mage hand, message, read magic, resistance, touch of fatigue* (DC 15)

STATISTICS

Str 35, **Dex** 8, **Con** 14, **Int** 20, **Wis** 21, **Cha** 20
Base Atk +24; **CMB** +40; **CMD** 49 (53 vs. trip)
Feats Combat Casting, Dazzling Display, Deadly Stroke, Extend Spell, Hover, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Quicken Spell, Silent Spell, Shatter Defenses, Weapon Focus (bite)
Skills Appraise +32, Fly +10, Intimidate +32, Knowledge (arcana) +32, Knowledge (history) +32, Knowledge (local) +32, Knowledge (geography) +32, Perception +32, Spellcraft +32, Stealth +14, Survival +32
Languages All
SQ ambient disease, proliferation, regurgitation

DEATH DRAGON

LE dragon

BASE STATISTICS

CR 3; **Size** Tiny; **Hit Dice** 4d12
Speed 60 ft.
Natural Armor +3; **Breath Weapon** line, 2d6 fire
Str 11, **Dex** 16, **Con** 13, **Int** 8, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 8

ECOLOGY

Environment marshes, swamps
Organization solitary
Treasure triple

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Breath Weapon (Su): A death dragon's breath weapon is a flammable napalm-like phlegm which is ejected as a narrow stream, sticking to unfortunate victims. Any creature which fails its save must make another save at the same DC at the beginning of its turn or suffer half dice damage. This continues with successive failures (reducing the dice damage by half each time).

Essence Siphon (Su): Any damage the death dragon inflicts with his claw attacks cures the death dragon of the same value. A death dragon can also make a single claw attack with a swift action.

Grave Call (Su): A young dragon or older gains *grave call*: All corpses within 20 feet of the death dragon at the beginning of its turn are affected by an *animate dead* spell, requiring no action on the part of the dragon. The dragon can raise 4 HD of undead per age category. All undead raised this way fall under control of the death dragon and the dragon cannot lose control of any undead in its *grave call* aura. Depending on terrain and situation, a death dragon is expected to have 2 corpses per age category nearby at the beginning of combat. And old dragon or older can cast *create undead* once a day on one corpse in its aura. An ancient dragon can cast *create greater undead* once a day on one corpse in its aura. These are separate spell-like affects and can be used as a free action. An adult death dragon's aura increases to 30 feet, and a very old death dragon's aura increases to 40 feet.

Spell-Like Abilities (Sp): A black dragon gains the following spell-like abilities, usable at will upon reaching the listed age category. Juvenile—*darkness* (radius 10 feet per age category); Old— *waves of fatigue*; Ancient— *circle of death*.

Swamp Stride (Ex): A very young or older death dragon can move through bogs and quicksand without penalty at its normal speed.

Touch of Ixindar (Sp): A juvenile or older death dragon can invoke its negative nature against everything it touches. Any creature the dragon touches, including with physical attacks, must make a Will save or suffer 1 point of Strength damage. The DC is the same to avoid the dragon's breath weapon.

TABLE: DEATH DRAGONS

AGE CATEGORY	SPECIAL ABILITIES	CASTER LEVEL
Wyrmling	Essence siphon, immunity to acid	—
Very young	Grave call, swamp stride	—
Young	Grave call	—
Juvenile	*Darkness,* touch of Ixindar	—
Young adult	DR 5/magic, spell resistance	1st
Adult	frightful presence, grave call (30 ft.)	3rd
Mature adult	DR 10/magic	5th
Old	Grave call (*create undead*), *waves of fatigue*	7th
Very old	DR 15/magic , grave call (40 ft.)	9th
Ancient	*circle of death*	11th
Wyrm	DR 20/magic	13th
Great wyrm	Grave call (*create greater undead)*	15th

DEATH DRAGONS

Despite many assumptions, death dragons are not undead. They embraced Ixindar and dedicated their souls to its power, pursuing its ability to decay rather than create. When Mengus ceased to have any interest in necromancy, the death dragons – until then thought to be her favored children – were outcast. They possess astounding negative energy. They can control undead and cast necrotic spells. This effect decays their flesh and rots their souls. Death dragons look thin, with barely an ounce of fat and thin muscles hanging off their bones. Even their wings are pitted and frayed: however, the unchanging power of Ixindar keeps them as strong and deadly as they were in their prime. They cannot consume any food unless it has been dead at least a week. Anywhere death lurks in abundance, you will find them.

DEATH DRAGON LORE

A character knows the following information with a successful Knowledge (arcana) check.

DC 15: Death dragons will always be near areas with high concentration of undeath, as simply being near the dragon acts as a catalyst for nearby carrion or the corpses of the creatures the dragon kills to rise and obey their master.

DC 20: Of all the typhox dragons, the death dragon is the most magically adept, if only in a single form. Though the dragons did not create the discipline of necromancy, they are now, undoubtedly, the masters of it.

YOUNG DEATH DRAGON CR 7

XP 3,200
LE Medium dragon
Init +6; **Senses** dragon senses; Perception +14
Aura grave call (20 ft.)

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 12, flat-footed 19 (+2 Dex, +9 natural)
hp 52 (8d12)
Fort +5, **Ref** +8, **Will** +7
Immune acid, paralysis, sleep

OFFENSE

Speed 60 ft., fly 150 ft. (average)
Melee bite +13 (1d8+6), 2 claws +12 (1d6+4 + essence siphon), 2 wings +7 (1d4+2)
Special Attacks breath weapon (60-ft. line, DC 17, 6d6 fire)

STATISTICS

Str 19, **Dex** 14, **Con** 10, **Int** 10, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 10
Base Atk +8; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 24 (28 vs. trip)
Feats Alertness, Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Stealth), Weapon Focus (bite)
Skills Fly +13, Handle Animal +8, Intimidate +11, Perception +14, Stealth +16, Swim +23
Languages All
SQ essence siphon, grave call, swamp stride

ADULT DEATH DRAGON CR 11

XP 12,800
LE Large dragon
Init +5; **Senses** dragon senses; Perception +24
Aura grave call (30 ft.), frightful presence (180 ft., DC 19)

DEFENSE

AC 28, touch 10, flat-footed 27 (+1 Dex, +18 natural, –1 size)
hp 119 (14d12+28)
Fort +10, **Ref** +10, **Will** +12
DR 5/magic; **Immune** acid, paralysis, sleep; **SR** 22

OFFENSE

Speed 60 ft., fly 200 ft. (poor)
Melee bite +21 (2d6+10), 2 claws +20 (1d8+7 + essence siphon), 2 wings +15 (1d6+3), tail +15 (1d8+10)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with bite)
Special Attacks breath weapon (80-ft. line, DC 22, 12d6 fire),
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 14th)
At will—*darkness* (60-ft. radius)
Spells Known (CL 3rd)
1st (6/day)—*chill touch* (DC 13), *mage armor, obscuring mist*
0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 12), *dancing lights, detect magic, mending, read magic, touch of fatigue* (DC 13)

STATISTICS

Str 25, **Dex** 12, **Con** 14, **Int** 14, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 14
Base Atk +14; **CMB** +24; **CMD** 33 (37 vs. trip)
Feats Alertness, Improved Initiative, Improved Vital Strike, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Stealth), Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (bite)
Skills Fly +12, Handle Animal +16, Intimidate +19, Knowledge (arcana) +19, Perception +24, Spellcraft +19, Stealth +17, Swim +32
Languages All
SQ essence siphon, grave call (*create undead*), swamp stride, touch of Ixindar

ANCIENT DEATH DRAGON CR 16

XP 76,800
LE Huge dragon (water)
Init +4; **Senses** dragon senses; Perception +34
Aura grave call (40 ft.), frightful presence (300 ft., DC 25)

DEFENSE

AC 38, touch 8, flat-footed 38 (+30 natural, –2 size)
hp 209 (22d12+66)
Fort +16, **Ref** +13, **Will** +18
DR 15/magic; **Immune** acid, paralysis, sleep, **SR** 27

OFFENSE

Speed 60 ft., fly 200 ft. (poor)
Melee bite +32 (2d8+16 plus 4d6 acid), 2 claws +31 (2d6+11 + essence siphon), 2 wings +29 (1d8+5), tail +29 (2d6+16)
Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft. (15 ft. with bite)
Special Attacks breath weapon (100-ft. line, DC 28, 20d6 fire), crush
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 22nd)
At will— *circle of death, darkness* (100-ft. radius), *waves of exhaustion*
Spells Known (CL 11th)
5th (4/day)—*cone of cold* (DC 21), *wall of force*
4th (7/day)—*bestow curse* (DC20), *black tentacles, enervation* (DC20)
3rd (7/day)—*dispel magic, hold person* (DC 19), *ray of exhaustion, slow* (DC 19)
2nd (7/day)—*blur, false life* (1d10+10), *ghoul touch* (DC18), *invisibility, whispering wind*
1st (7/day)—*chill touch* (DC17), *mage armor, magic missile, obscuring mist, true strike*
0 (at will)—*dancing lights, detect magic, light, mage hand, mending, prestidigitation, read magic, resistance, touch of fatigue* (DC16)

STATISTICS

Str 33, **Dex** 10, **Con** 16, **Int** 22, **Wis** 21, **Cha** 18
Base Atk +22; **CMB** +35; **CMD** 45 (49 vs. trip)
Feats Alertness, Combat Expertise, Flyby Attack, Greater Vital Strike, Improved Initiative, Improved Vital Strike, Multiattack, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Stealth), Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (bite)
Skills Fly +19, Handle Animal +26, Intimidate +29, Knowledge (arcana) +32, Knowledge (history) +32, Knowledge (geography) +31, Perception +34, Spellcraft +31, Stealth +23, Swim +44
Languages All
SQ essence siphon, grave call (*create undead*), swamp stride, touch of Ixindar

TABLE: FALLEN DRAGONS

AGE CATEGORY	SPECIAL ABILITIES	CASTER LEVEL
Wyrmling	Betrayer's deception, fire subtype	—
Very young	Berserk response	—
Young	*Daze,* sibilant whispers (1 target; 50 ft)	1st
Juvenile	Frightful presence	3rd
Young adult	DR 5/magic, spell resistance	5th
Adult	Sibilant whispers (2 targets; 50 ft), *suggestion*	7th
Mature adult	DR 10/magic, sibilant whispers (2 targets; 70 ft)	9th
Old	Manipulate flames, *geas, lesser*	11th
Very old	DR 15/magic, wretched majesty	13th
Ancient	Sibilant whispers (2 targets; 100 ft), *suggestion, mass*	15th
Wyrm	DR 20/magic, sibilant whispers (3 targets; 100 ft)	17th
Great wyrm	*demand*	19th

FALLEN DRAGONS

Most dragons of legend slain by brave knights or braver squires tell of fire dragons. Their scales are either dark blood-red or green as ancient bronze, and they bellow smoke and flame with every breath. The closest match to them in the modern age is the fallen dragon. The fallen were the first corrupted dragons, loyal followers of their greatest, Goch of Wrath. Unlike the repellent death and cancer dragons, fallen dragons are beautiful, with uniform scales and proud manes. Their teeth interlock without a gap or chip and they never display a stain or smudge upon their skin. They are the parallel of holy dragons, equally as ravishing to the eyes. Their voices are deep and commanding. They refuse to sully themselves by acting like undomesticated or uncultured monsters. Indeed, they believe themselves to be fair in their actions and just in their role as the most powerful creatures on the planet. They consider themselves to be the highest authority and superior to all others – a responsibility not to be taken lightly. A fallen dragon will gladly accept the worship of an inferior being and feel perfectly entitled to it: and when these followers march to war, they are the only force on

FALLEN DRAGON

LE dragon (fire)

BASE STATISTICS

CR 6; **Size** Small; **Hit Dice** 7d12
Speed 40 ft.
Natural Armor +6; **Breath Weapon** cone, 2d10 fire
Str 17, **Dex** 14, **Con** 15, **Int** 11, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 10

ECOLOGY

Environment anywhere
Organization solitary
Treasure triple

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Berserk Response (Su): A very young and older fallen dragon gets very upset when an enemy has the audacity to inflict an injury against a living god. If an opponent scores a critical hit against the dragon, the dragon scores an automatic critical hit with its next successful melee attack (against any opponent).

Betrayer's Deception (Su): As an immediate action, when an opponent scores a non-critical hit against the fallen dragon, the fallen dragon can redirect the attack to the target's closest ally in range.

Manipulate Flames (Su): An old or older fallen dragon can control any fire spell within 10 feet per age category of the dragon as a standard action. This ability allows it to move any fire effect in the area, as if it were the caster. This ability also allows it to reposition a stationary fire effect, although the new placement must be one allowed by the spell. Finally, for 1 round following the use of this ability, the dragon can control any new fire spell cast within its area of control, as if it were the caster. It can make all decisions allowed to the caster, including canceling the spell if it so desires.

Wretched Majesty (Su): A very old or older fallen dragon generates a negative aura over its already menacing presence. Enemies of the dragon that begin their turn within range of the aura are shaken until the end of their turn.

Sibilant Whispers (Su): A fallen dragon's voice can enchant unfortunate people foolish enough to listen. As a standard action, a young dragon or older can target one opponent able to hear the dragon's voice. The target must make a Will save (with a DC the same as the dragon's breath weapon) or be confused. At the beginning of the dragon's next turn, any target that failed the save can make another. A fallen dragon can only confuse one target at a time. An adult fallen dragon or older can confuse two targets at a time and a wyrm fallen dragon can confuse three. The range of *sibilant whispers* is 50 feet, increasing to 70 feet when reaching mature adult, and 100 feet when reaching ancient.

Spell-Like Abilities (Sp): A fallen dragon gains the following spell-like abilities, usable at will upon reaching the listed age category. Young—*daze*; Juvenile—*detect thoughts*; Adult—*suggestion*; Old—*geas, lesser*; Ancient—*suggestion, mass;* Great wyrm—*demand*.

YOUNG FALLEN DRAGON CR 10

XP 9,600
LE Large dragon (fire)
Init +5; **Senses** dragon senses; Perception +15

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 10, flat-footed 21 (+1 Dex, +12 natural, –1 size)
hp 115 (11d12+44)
Fort +11, **Ref** +8, **Will** +10
Immune fire, paralysis, sleep
Weaknesses vulnerability to cold

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 200 ft. (poor)
Melee bite +17 (2d6+10), 2 claws +17 (1d8+7), 2 wings +12 (1d6+3), tail slap +12 (1d8+10)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with bite)
Special Attacks breath weapon (40-ft. cone, DC 19, 6d10 fire), sibilant whispers (1 target; 50 ft)
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 11th)
At will—daze
Spells Known (CL 1st)
1st (3/day)—shield, true strike
0 (at will)—mage hand, message, prestidigitation, read magic

STATISTICS

Str 25, **Dex** 12, **Con** 19, **Int** 13, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 12
Base Atk +11; **CMB** +19; **CMD** 30 (34 vs. trip)
Feats Cleave, Improved Initiative, Improved Vital Strike, Iron Will, Power Attack, Vital Strike
Skills Appraise +15, Bluff +15, Fly +9, Intimidate +15, Perception +15, Sense Motive +15, Stealth +11
Languages All
SQ Betrayer's deception, berserk response

Earth that can say without a doubt that god is on their side.

Fallen dragons rule over Ažhi Dahaka in Canam and often fight with the shemjaza for control over the pagus. Because of this rivalry, few of these dragons live near Ixindar, preferring to stake their claims elsewhere.

They strive for dominance, resulting in more attacks from fallen dragons on civilized lands than from any other typhox. They prefer controlling land to dungeons or keeps, and will rarely be found underground or hiding behind castle walls. Fallen dragons will attempt to control everything they can see. That which they cannot outright command, they will destroy.

FALLEN DRAGON LORE

A character knows the following with a successful Knowledge (History) check.

DC 15: Fallen dragons have absolute control over flame. Where they go, mundane fires flare to follow them, and dry kindling may burst into flame of its own accord. The ground beneath their massive bodies is scorched black. Mages beware to use fire spells where a fallen dragon is, for fear that the wyrm will turn the magic against its wielder.

DC 20: Pagus in Canam are almost always under the direct control of a fallen dragon, and only rarely are led by their own unbound chieftains. The fallen will usually dominate every living creature in a massive area around its lair.

DC 25: The fallen were the original typhox dragons, and have always been the most powerful. They loathe the shemjaza for some long-past transgression but will rarely face them directly, choosing more subtle means to dispatch them.

ADULT FALLEN DRAGON CR 14

XP 38,400
LE Huge dragon (fire)
Init +4; **Senses** dragon senses; Perception +23
Aura frightful presence (180 ft., DC 21)

DEFENSE

AC 29, touch 8, flat-footed 29 (+21 natural, –2 size)
hp 212 (17d12+102)
Fort +16, **Ref** +10, **Will** +15
DR 5/magic; **Immune** fire, paralysis, sleep; **SR** 25
Weaknesses vulnerability to cold

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 200 ft. (poor)
Melee bite +25 (2d8+15), 2 claws +25 (2d6+10), 2 wings +23 (1d8+5), tail slap +23 (2d6+15)
Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft. (15 ft. with bite)
Special Attacks breath weapon (50-ft. cone, DC 24, 12d10 fire), crush, sibilant whispers (2 targets; 50 ft)
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 17th)
At will—daze, detect thoughts (DC 15), suggestion (DC 16)
Spells Known (CL 7th)
3rd (5/day)—dispel magic, haste
2nd (7/day)—invisibility, resist energy, see invisibility
1st (7/day)—alarm, grease (DC 14), magic missile, shield, true strike
0 (at will)—arcane mark, light, mage hand, mending, message, prestidigitation, read magic

ANCIENT FALLEN DRAGON CR 19

XP 204,800
LE Gargantuan dragon (fire)
Init +3; **Senses** dragon senses; Perception +33
Aura frightful presence (300 ft., DC 27)

DEFENSE

AC 38, touch 5, flatfooted 38 (–1 Dex, +33 natural, –4 size)
hp 362 (25d12+200)
Fort +22, **Ref** +13, **Will** +21
DR 15/magic; **Immune** fire, paralysis, sleep; **SR** 30
Weaknesses vulnerability to cold

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 250 ft. (clumsy)
Melee bite +35 (4d6+21/19–20), 2 claws +35 (2d8+14), 2 wings +33 (2d6+7), tail slap +33 (2d8+21)
Space 20 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft. (20 ft. with bite)
Special Attacks breath weapon (60-ft. cone, DC 30, 20d10 fire), crush, manipulate flames, sibilant whispers (2 targets; 100 ft), tail sweep
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 25th)
At will—daze, geas, lesser (DC 21), suggestion (DC 19), suggestion, mass (DC 22)
Spells Known (CL 15th)
7th (4/day)—Insanity (DC23), limited wish
6th (6/day)—antimagic field, contingency, greater dispel magic
5th (7/day)—dominate person (DC21), feeblemind (DC 21), teleport, wall of force
4th (7/day)—crushing despair (DC20), fear (DC 20), greater invisibility, stoneskin
3rd (7/day)—dispel magic, displacement, haste, rage (15 rounds)
2nd (7/day)—detect thoughts, hideous laughter (DC 18), misdirection, resist energy, see invisibility
1st (8/day)—alarm, hypnotism (DC 17), magic missile, shield, true strike
0 (at will)—arcane mark, bleed, light, mage hand, mending, message, open/close, prestidigitation, read magic

STATISTICS

Str 39, **Dex** 8, **Con** 27, **Int** 21, **Wis** 21, **Cha** 20
Base Atk +25; **CMB** +43; **CMD** 52 (56 vs. trip)
Feats Cleave, Critical Mastery, Greater Vital Strike, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Improved Iron Will, Improved Vital Strike, Iron Will, Multiattack, Power Attack, Quicken Spell, Stunning Critical, Vital Strike
Skills Appraise +33, Bluff +33, Diplomacy +33, Fly +11, Intimidate +33, Knowledge (arcana) +33, Knowledge (history) +33, Perception +33, Sense Motive +33, Spellcraft +33, Stealth +15
Languages All
SQ: Betrayer's deception, berserk response

THE SEVEN LORDS OF AZHI

These powerful fallen dragons are all great wyrms. In canon *Amethyst*, these are the only great wyrm fallen dragons. There should never be a point at which a fight against them should be anything less than grueling: invent new powers for them (on the fly if necessary) to ensure that they can always challenge any party.

Baenis of Gorge: Baenis sits bloated on his treasure, growing fatter on the rich livestock his pagus followers bring for him. Baenis is huge, but also slow and cumbersome. He stopped being able to fly long ago. He gorges on food every day with an insatiable appetite. In his prime he feasted on elves, giants, and even other dragons. Today, if his pagus don't feed him, Baenis will feast on them.

- Baenis cannot fly. He has 1200 hit points.

Balaur of Debauch: Balaur follows neither logic nor reason. It is hermaphroditic, capable of shifting its sex and preference on a whim dependant on daily desires. It only acts out of passion and instinct and never out of rationale. Balaur desires continued physical gratification and the desire for external stimulus. It craves destruction and lusts for beauty. Balaur enlists slavers to capture those of beauty of various sexes from various species and often has its way when assuming their form. Balaur is even rumored to have sent emissaries to purchase slaves from Baruch Malkut (without their knowledge as to the source of funds). It lusts over the youth, the striking, and the otherwise unattainable. It cares not for emotion and prefers only personal indulgence. These slaves never live more than a year before Balaur grows bored and slays them in the most violent ways possible.

- Balaur can *shapechange* at will.
- Balaur can cast *charm monster* per spell 3/day as a 19th level mage.

Goch of Wrath: Goch feeds on violence, fear, and anger. Goch, the oldest and most powerful fallen dragon, prefers to allow enemies to destroy each other. Using her unique complement of abilities, she can inspire rage and violent actions in others, corrupting them to commit the most despicable acts. Goch is far older and powerful than the other Ažhi Seven but is

often lumped in with them, a categorization she despises.

•Goch has 1080 hp.

Lindis of Avarice: This fallen dragon spends every moment searching for more treasure. She ravages narros mines, attacks wandering travelers, and ambushes mage towers. She considers the taking of wealth of higher importance to causing destruction, and Lindis will often be very selective in her attacks, even sparing the lives of her victims in exchange for all their magic and wealth, especially if her attack may blemish or damage possible loot. No matter how much Lindis acquires, it is never enough. She is not arrogant as Verkelen and has the most guarded lair of any dragon known. Her dungeon is littered with symbols of varying magical potency with layers of multiple traps over many levels.

•Lindis' treasure horde is quadruple.

Lotan of Scorn: Lotan is proud. His over-inflated ego often nets him trouble as he brazenly strides into enemy lands, where he is often forced to retreat from greater foes. Legend claims Lotan lives in a great castle, though its location is a mystery. From a bed of gold, he commands others to do his bidding. He believes himself too important to go into combat, but will if a single enemy challenges him. Several opponents have tried but none have succeeded, increasing Lotan's already bloated self-image.

Verkelen of Spite: This dragon hates all other dragons and intelligent creatures and covets all they own. Verkelen assumes the world belongs to him and takes whatever he wishes. He is the last creature anyone wishes to make deals with, as he never keeps his side of a bargain. Verkelen keeps a large cadre of creatures as personal servants.

Zilant of Indolence: Zilant is a lazy beast. He wishes to do nothing but sleep and eat. He believes he has done enough for the cause of evil and wishes just to be left alone. Every single time he closes his eyes, he sleeps for a century. When he awakens, he finds quick and easy prey for a feast. His dungeon supports an array of defensive battlements, making him difficult to slay. He never initiates an attack, believing it uses far too much energy, though will still defend his lair from assault. He also sleeps with one eye open and as light as an elk. He may be too lazy to commit evil acts but finds good acts an even greater waste of energy.

NEUTRAL DRAGONS

Many dragons rejected the whisper of Mengus, but neither did they adhere to the side of Amethyst, whether out of some ideological prohibition or simple self-interest. While birthed from Attricana, they hold themselves apart from the rest of draconic society, content to pursue their own agendas preferably a long way away from their kindred.

ELEMENTAL DRAGONS

Many neutral dragons were concerned only for their own affairs, maintaining strict neutrality in the conflict except when it spilled into their own domains. These dragons exhibited every conceivable shape and power, but the majority reflected in some way a connection to the natural elements of the world. There are dozens of unique lineages among the elemental dragons, most with only two or three members across the world. They exhibit no particular moral proclivities, beyond their typical draconic arrogance and self-centered nature. Only one lineage, the frost dragons, has been particularly prevalent in their interactions with the mortal world, and unfortunately they tend to have some of the nastiest dispositions: many lower beings classify them with the typhox dragons, which frost dragons find supremely offensive.

As elemental dragons are so varied, they do not have unified statistics. Any dragon with appropriate powers from any compatible source can be used to represent an elemental dragon.

YOK-ANI DRAGONS

The yok-ani were the first dragons born after the dragon kings, and bore more than a passing resemblance to the four that came before them (and indeed, to Ame-

thyst himself). They most closely resemble the dragons of Asian mythology: wingless and sinuous, swimming through the air like snakes with no obvious means of support. Their scales are usually bright and colorful, and their mane-like crests resemble jeweled crowns. They are among the most powerful spellcasters ever seen upon this Earth, in either age, surpassed only by the dragon kings. Unlike other dragons, yok-ani do not claim titles.

Only nine yok-ani were ever born, and none has ever been killed or subverted by Ixindar. The only reason they are not classified among the archon dragons is their strict adherence to neutrality. They count themselves as the world's ultimate diplomats. They even believe if the dark gate and its denizens remained in their own land, they could be allowed to exist in peace. In wars, yok-ani refuse to take sides, preferring to maintain the peace when finally forced to intervene; this they only do when an ongoing conflict (such as that between the narros and the tenenbri) becomes so bitter and protracted that genocide becomes a very real threat. When this occurs, the dragons use their magic to stop the fighting and force the warring leaders to a truce. Breaking such a peace treaty brings immediate and conclusive, though rarely terminal, retribution.

Of the nine, only one yok-ani dragon resides in Canam: Genai-Dilong, after whom the echan township within the walls of Angel is named. It is said that it was by his power alone that the refugee fleet was able to make the crossing across the turbulent ocean to the shores of western Canam, and that he now resides somewhere within the temple at the center of the town; there have only been a handful of confirmed sightings in the intervening centuries, however. For a mortal to see a yok-ani once in their life is thought to be a sign of the greatest good luck: two sightings are considered a sign of lifelong blessing. No lesser being, not even the eldest laudenian, has ever seen a yok-ani three times in a lifetime.

All yok-ani dragons are too powerful to be meaningful opponents, even if one could be forced into conflict.

HAGS

Unfortunately, the image of witch and hag are often mixed. Where one can simply be a user of magic with a connection to nature, the other is a descendant species of chaparran, which has a renowned distaste for company and personal hygiene. The discovery of these creatures was not made immediately, and their origin is still disputed. As only female hags have ever been sighted, nobody knows what a male's abilities are (or even what they might look like). As a monster, the below are all classified as green hags.

Baba Yaga: Another piece of folklore, baba yaga is a forest spirit almost as devoutly connected to the woods as nymphs, though not being bound to any specific location or tree. Although not pleasant to look at, she has been known to impart some wisdom to travelers who come upon her, though she is just as likely to kill the one asking. However, baba yaga will not immediately kill all that approach her. If they have a talent she can exploit, she may impart her wisdom at a steep cost (and may still attempt to kill the querent afterwards). Legend has it, the only way to ensure survival when dealing with baba yaga is to maintain proper manners, be as polite as possible, and not wince when looking upon her face.

Though folklore believes there is only one baba yaga, there are several scattered in various places throughout the world. The first common sign of their appearance is the small hut formed of natural wood that sits atop four footlike living trees. One account claims the trees can uproot, allowing the cabin to move on its own accord to a new location.

Banshee: Traditionally, banshees, or bean nighes, were harbingers of death, but seldom assisted in the shuffling of souls to the afterlife. They appeared as omens from the underworld or otherworld (depending on the source). Like many myths, they were corrupted by other religions to be portents of evil. In reality, they appear as enchanted singers with melodic voices when an important chaparran is about to die. They have also appeared among other fae nations when significant figures are near to passing. The more banshees that appear, the more eminent the death. Because of their wisdom, they are often sought after as oracles, though their knowledge is limited to the moment and circumstances of a person's death, and they are loathe to divulge this information to any (and will never divulge it plainly to the person in question).

Banshees appear in various clothes in various states, with long and short hair, as ugly hags or as beautiful faeries, hidden and reclusive or open and hostile. As their mythology is so varied, so are their abilities.

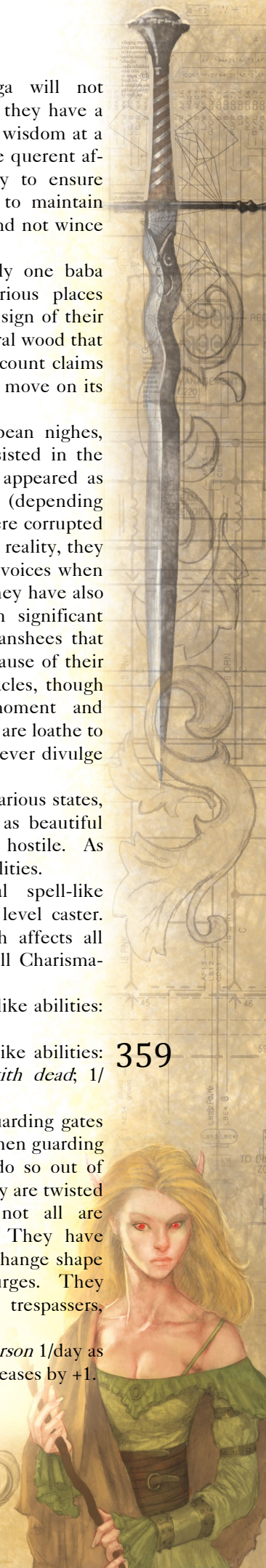
Good banshees can cast additional spell-like abilities: At will—*gentle repose* as a 9th level caster. They also gain a +4 to Charisma (which affects all saving throws for hag spells as they are all Charisma-based).

Evil banshees can cast additional spell-like abilities: 1/day—*command undead*.

All banshees can cast additional spell-like abilities: 3/day—*sound burst*, *hypnotism*, *speak with dead*; 1/day—*shout*.

Sheela-na-gig: These are often seen guarding gates and protecting areas of powerful magic. When guarding something not belonging to them, they do so out of some undisclosed obligation. Though many are twisted in how they protect their territories, not all are absolutely evil, just inherently selfish. They have insatiable sexual appetites and will often change shape into just about anything to satisfy their urges. They adore appearing as beautiful creatures to trespassers, tempting them to their death.

The sheela-na-gig can cast *dominate person* 1/day as a 9th level caster. Her challenge rating increases by +1.



IRON SONS SERGEANT CR4

XP 1,200
N Medium humanoid
Init +1; **Senses** normal; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 16 (+3 Dex, +1 dodge, +6 armor)
hp 30 (6d8+6)
Fort +5, **Ref** +6, **Will** +6

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee 1 rifle butt +9 (1d6+3)
Ranged 1 stub rifle +9 (1d8+3)

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 16, **Con** 12, **Int** 13, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 13
Base Atk +6; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 20
Feats Dodge, Great Fortitude
Skills Bluff +4, Diplomacy +4, Intimidate +9, Perception +9, Sense Motive +6, Stealth +5; **Languages** Common
SQ good timing, linked targeting, look into my eye

ECOLOGY

Environment any
Organization alone with between 6 and 12 Iron Sons
Treasure NPC Gear

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Good Timing (Ex): If an ally cannot attack on its turn due to the *bad timing* ability, the sergeant makes a single ranged attack as an immediate action.

Linked Targeting (Ex): When the sergeant hits a target with a stub rifle attack, one ally may make a single ranged attack against the same target as an immediate action.

Look into my Eye (Ex): As a standard action, up to two allies that have been reduced to 0 or fewer hit points within the last round stand back up, with hit points equal to twice their hit dice. The sergeant can use this ability once every 1d4 rounds.

IRON SONS CORPSMAN CR3

XP 400
N Medium humanoid
Init +1; **Senses** normal; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 14, flat-footed 18 (+3 Dex, +1 dodge, +8 armor)
hp 25 (5d8+5)
Fort +4, **Ref** +6, **Will** +6

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee 1 rifle butt +7 (1d6+3)
Ranged 1 assault rifle +7 (1d8+3)
Special Attacks rapid fire

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 16, **Con** 12, **Int** 13, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 13
Base Atk +4; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 20
Feats Dodge, Great Fortitude
Skills Bluff +4, Diplomacy +4, Intimidate +9, Perception +9, Sense Motive +6, Stealth +5; **Languages** Common
SQ bad timing, minion

ECOLOGY

Environment any
Organization gang (6–12), always with a sergeant
Treasure NPC Gear

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Bad Timing (Ex): If the corpsman misses a target by 10 or more on his attack roll, he cannot use his assault rifle on his next turn. The weapon either disrupts or has run out of ammunition.

Minion: If the corpsman suffers more damage in a single hit as his hit dice, he is killed (5d8 = 5 damage or more in a single hit kills him). As a result, the corpsman has half experience.

Rapid Fire (Ex): The corpsman makes two assault rifle attacks as a full-round action but cannot take a 5-foot step in that same round.

IRON SONS GRENADIER CR4

XP 1,200
N Medium humanoid
Init +1; **Senses** normal; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 16 (+3 Dex, +1 dodge, +6 armor)
hp 30 (6d8+6)
Fort +5, **Ref** +6, **Will** +6

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee 1 rifle butt +9 (1d6+3)
Ranged 1 stub rifle +9 (1d8+3)
Special Attacks grenade attack (DC 14 Ref, 2d6+2)

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 16, **Con** 12, **Int** 13, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 13
Base Atk +6; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 20
Feats Dodge, Great Fortitude
Skills Bluff +4, Diplomacy +4, Intimidate +9, Perception +9, Sense Motive +6, Stealth +5; **Languages** Common
SQ bad timing, linked targeting

ECOLOGY

Environment any
Organization pair or gang (3–6), always with a sergeant
Treasure NPC Gear

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Grenade Attack (Ex): As a full round action, the grenadier can make a *grenade attack*. He selects a 10-foot area within 80 feet. All targets in the area must make a DC 14 Reflex save or take 2d6+2 damage (save half). After using the *grenade attack*, the grenadier cannot use it again for 1d4 rounds.

Bad Timing (Ex): If the grenadier misses a target by 10 or more on his attack roll, he cannot use his assault rifle on his next turn. The weapon either disrupts or has run out of ammunition.

Linked Targeting (Ex): When the grenadier hits a target with a stub rifle attack, one ally may make a single ranged attack against the same target as an immediate action.

IRON SONS COMPANY

The Iron Sons is the largest techan free-company in Canam and possibly the world. Very few people outside of the Iron Sons' ranks knows how old the company is or who originally founded it, although it is believed that the current operating general is not its first commander or even its second.

Though virtually every community apart from Angel and York thinks of them as a terrorist organization, the Iron Sons take contracts from all bastions and – occasionally – from echan nations. They don't care who pays, and their success rate is extremely high. The Iron Sons continue to spread their fingers across the land, operating independent cells in several bastions and in nearly two dozen stationary and roaming bases across the continent. Their membership is wide, comprising of humans from every walk of life. Though many members would prefer taking assignments that allow them to act like heroes, all of them are willing to swallow that preference for a steady paycheck. Most of them have contempt for the fantasy world and believe what they are doing is patriotic for the human race.

IRON SONS LORE

A character knows the following with a successful Knowledge (History) check.

DC 25: The current general of the Iron Sons is a man known only as Chauk. He has personally commanded several contracts and possesses such high-level intelligence on bastion technology and knows so many of the bastions' darker secrets that the same bastions which hire him have also posted bounties on his head. As such, he has not been seen outside of his inner circle in several years.

KODIAK

Kodiaks are one of the few spawn races to emerge in modern Earth with any semblance of a culture. They began as simple folk in the frigid north, slowly developing a social structure, farming skills, and the first signs of a spoken tongue. Their massive size encouraged a preference for violence and a brutal first encounter with the skeggs affirmed it. While a few communities have grown in size and civility, others have degraded back to feral ways, retaining enough intelligence to plot their attacks on the unsuspecting. The region in which a band originates determines its proclivities. Most live wild, ignoring the outside world and ignored in turn. Those kodiaks bordering on Fargon forged a trading relationship, bartering animal hides for weapons and education. The narros dealing with the kodiaks also hoped their civilized neighbors would beget a safe border and an eventual host of unstoppable warriors ready to rally if the narros were called to battle. Unfortunately, some of these kodiaks took this knowledge of weapons and went to war immediately against their own brothers as well as the skeggs. After the skeggs were pushed back by the modernized mass of muscle and steel, the victors

KODIAK BRUTE

KODIAK BRUTE CR4

XP 1,200
N Medium animal (spawn)
Init +1; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 15 (+1 Dex, +6 natural)
hp 42 (5d8+20)
Fort +8, **Ref** +5, **Will** +2

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee 2 claws +10 (1d6+5 plus grab), bite +10 (1d6+5)
Special Attacks iron chains +10 (1d10+5), ravenous, unstoppable onslaught

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 13, **Con** 19, **Int** 2, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 6
Base Atk +5; **CMB** +9 (+13 grapple); **CMD** 20 (24 vs. trip)
Feats Endurance, Run, Skill Focus (Survival)
Skills Perception +6, Survival +7, Swim +10
Environment cold forests
Organization solitary, pair, or pack (4-8)
Treasure NPC Gear (heavy wooden shield, broken iron chains, other treasure)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Iron Chains (Ex): A basic kodiak weapon, the chains have +5 feet reach and struck targets are knocked prone.

Ravenous (Ex): If an opponent scores a critical hit on the kodiak, it will attack the nearest creature on its next turn until it is dead. If there are multiple creatures within reach, it will attack enemies before allies. While *ravenous*, the kodiak gains +4 bonus to damage rolls.

Unstoppable Onslaught (Ex): When the kodiak charges, it gains +10 speed and ignores difficult terrain. It may only make bite attacks on the charge.

continued their blood rage until they were killed or ran out of food. A few bands, smaller and less savage, moved west of the mountains as far south as the lands bordering Xixion, where they have become almost civilized. Although kodiaks have rarely been seen southeast of Quinox, the rumors of their migration grow each year. They are often sought after as bodyguards, thugs, or as savage warlords on the battlefield. Regardless of their role, they stand the tallest and instill the greatest fear on those that see their eyes.

KODIAK LORE

A character knows the following with a successful Knowledge (nature) check.

DC 15: Kodiaks have wide, trunk torsos but are still humanoid and easily differentiated from the bears they came from. Few people can tell the males and females apart. Kodiaks don't need to hibernate but they do eat massive amounts of food, nearly four times any other creature. They have no table manners.

DC 20: There are three distinct subspecies of kodiak. The best-known are the hulking brutes that most resemble the natural Kodiak grizzly bear after which the species was named. A smaller variety, more akin to the smaller coastal brown bear, is found primarily in the Seliquam valley and peninsular rainforest. The least known is a tiny population of throwbacks who are barely distinguishable from the animals they spawned from, and are revered as the closest thing the kodiak religion has to saints. The eldest of these, said to be as old as the present age, is rumored to reside atop a mountain somewhere in the far east of Canam.

DC 25: Kodiaks have developed a culture in their short span of time. Little is known about the kodiak religion. They worship several gods unique to them. Their major deities include Fressen, the maiden of winter and slumber. She attempted a mortal life with a kodiak shaman and was punished for her actions with the death of her lover. She birthed Chronzia, the kodiak devil, creeping from the north in the form of a colossal glacier. Fressen returned to her realm to rejoin with her other half, her twin brother Kwuoia, who is always silent and spends the entirety of his existence planting and growing trees.

M.A.X. CR 10

XP 9,600
N Large construct (robot)
Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., blindsight 50 ft.; Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 28, touch 12, flat-footed 25 (+3 Dex, +16 natural, –1 size)
hp 101 (13d10+30)
Fort +4, **Ref** +3, **Will** +4
DR 10/adamantine and bludgeoning; **Immune** construct traits

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.
Melee 2 slams +19 (2d10+7 damage, and the target is pushed one square)
Ranged reliquary plasma caster +10 (2d10 +15 fire); range 100 ft; this attack bypasses all damage reduction.
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Special Attacks subroutine K1.98 burrowstrike rockets, subroutine R8.2 targeting array, subroutine F93 multi-tracking coordinator, subroutine D7.1 scorched earth, subroutine Z0.0 reactor meltdown

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 16, **Con** —, **Int** 10, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 1
Base Atk +13; **CMB** +21; **CMD** 33
Feats Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Shot on the Run, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (plasma caster), Improved Bull Rush, Improved Overrun
Skills Acrobatics +8, Climb +13, Perception +5, Stealth +8, Swim +12
Languages Common
SQ construct

ECOLOGY

Environment any
Organization solitary
Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Construct: MAX is a machine built by person or persons unknown. It is immune to disruption (from being extremely well shielded), all mind-affecting effects (charms, compulsions, morale effects, patterns, and phantasms), disease, death effects, necromancy effects, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, and stunning. MAX has a built-in repair system that allows it to regenerate 10 hit points an hour unless it is below 0 hit points. MAX cannot be subjected to ability damage, ability drain, fatigue, exhaustion, energy drain, or nonlethal damage. MAX is immune to any effect that requires a Fortitude save (unless the effect also works on objects, or is harmless). MAX is not at risk of death from massive damage. MAX does not breathe, eat, or sleep.

Subroutine K1.98 Burrowstrike Rockets (Ex): As a swift action, MAX can make a ranged attack with its micro-rockets (+25; 1 point of damage, which ignores all damage resistance). If hit, MAX can automatically find the target, regardless of terrain, for the next 24 hours. MAX may detonate the *burrowstrike rocket* at any time as a swift action, 3d10+15 points of damage. After using *K1.98*, MAX cannot use it again for 2d4 rounds.

Subroutine R8.2 Targeting Array (Ex): As a full round action, MAX can make a *reliquary plasma caster* attack and gain a +3 bonus to the attack roll. The critical threat range is also increased to 19-20.

Subroutine F93 Multi-tracking Coordinator (Ex): As a full round action, MAX may make one *reliquary plasma caster* attack and one slam attack.

Subroutine D7.1 Scorched Earth (Ex): When an enemy scores a critical hit on MAX, it releases a fire attack in all directions as an immediate action. All targets within 15 feet of MAX must make a DC 19 Reflex save or take 3d10 +15 damage (save for half).

Subroutine Z0.0 Reactor Meltdown (Ex): If MAX is reduced to 0 hit points or less, it instantly explodes. All targets within 50 feet must make a DC 20 Reflex save or suffer 5d10 + 10 damage (save for half).

M.A.X.
(Mobile Anti-Echan eXoskeleton)

The appearance of this armored figure is rarely reported, as few ever survive the encounter. Despite the rumors and accounts, no one knows what its goals are, its origin or destination, or if more than one even exists. It resembles an oversized exo-armor, but with no apparent openings to accept a pilot. Its body is black without any insignia, and its arms and legs are as thick as the torsos of similar sized enemies. MAX possesses rudimentary intelligence and problem solving skills. Its low, deep voice demands obedience and its sympathy is non-existent. No bastion in Canam has claimed its construction. It is never found with anyone else, has no marks of origin, and has never been found as wreckage to be salvaged. It seems to be on a mission and is singular in that purpose, never resting, never stopping until it has completed its objective—after which, it vanishes until another assignment is downloaded into its memory banks by its faceless masters.

M.A.X. LORE

There is currently no lore associated with MAX.

MERFOLK

As these chaparran descendants lived their lives on and under the water, they eventually replaced their legs with fins and a tail. It is believed these fae branched around the same time as other nymphs, specifically water-based ones like nereids and naiads. Being so tied to nature, and thus the world that reflected the power of Attricana, they were especially vulnerable to its effects.

The few fae legends that speak of them refer to them as jeilynn, but many modern fae are unaware that such a creature ever existed; it was only their substantial consistent inclusion in human mythology that verified their existence in the previous age. They kept to themselves for thousands of years in the ancient world, and in the modern one they are virtually invisible, having been hunted close to extinction by their children, the dojenn. As it stands, sailor tales are the only evidence of their continued survival. The legends claim the females are as beautiful as the men are revolting—as close to vicious animals as can be before they stop being fae altogether.

Despite many fairy tales, there has never been a factual record of a bonding between any land creature and a jeilynn. Though human sailors seem fascinated by the idea, there are obvious physical hurdles popular fiction seems to ignore on a regular basis, which require fairly substantial magic to overcome (since bonding does not grant either partner the power to survive in their mate's hostile environment).

Though they are classed as mammals and reproduce the same as dolphins, this is as close as they come to being related to other fae or humans. Another unfortunate misconception insinuates that eating the flesh of a jeilynn grants one immortality. This is false but has led to some barbaric attempts to test the theory.

PAGUS

Ixindar cannot create, only transform. Within a single night, as the black star fell from the sky, a million fae walked from their homes and vanished into the night. Many of the unfortunate victims came from the chaparrans that lived in a large forest near the land later called Kakodomania. When they returned a century later, they were completely unrecognizable: not only had they been transformed to be physically identical regardless of their original species, but their carefree hearts had been replaced with dark, destructive purpose. Ixindar's corruption caused their skin to become thin, cracked and veiny. They lost all their hair from head to toe and their once slender forms bulged with slabs of corded muscle. After centuries in darkness, only their ears remained the recognizable feature from the old fae, around the same length as chaparrans. An oddity of modern pagus is that some survivors of their attacks have reported pagus with naturally round ears, though there has never been an explanation for this.

All other fae descendants have disowned this breed. Chaparrans and narros have sworn to their annihilation. Alas, the most unfortunate side effect of the pagus' corruption is their reproductive system. Unlike other fae species, pagus females enter into season every two weeks and gestation only takes three months. Worse, pagus do not require pair bonding to breed outside their species, causing their numbers to increase at an inconceivable rate. Pagus know how to forge their own weapons and beat their own armor from an early age. They are taught every facet of war and the quickest routes to success. Pagus warbands rarely fail in their goals, if only because their innumerable hordes can simply overwhelm all but the strongest opposition.

By the time the First Hammer fell thousands of years later, pagus outnumbered all other fae combined. While Amethyst reduced most to ash in his death throes, when the black gate re-opened, they returned with an obsessed fervor. Thankfully, Ixindar lost control over most of them as the pagus spread throughout the globe. Kakodomania found itself without much of an army, forcing Mengus to reconsider her plans and wait for their numbers to replenish. However, she is nothing if not patient. Without the dominating whisper, the unbound pagus went wild. Some pagus claimed freedom from Kakodomania but most followed the dictates of the corruption implanted in their souls hundreds of generations prior. Raiding bands appeared across the globe. Evil dragons took control of many to form their own personal guard, claiming lands in Canam for themselves. Many of those that were left became nomadic. Their hatred for the other fae never died, and they found new enemies aplenty in this new time. Oddly, every year, more and more pagus are trying to better themselves. The further they are raised from Ixindar, the greater the chance for redemption, but first they must somehow escape from the self-destructive tendencies of their kindred and find their own place in the world.

The human mage Kereptis Rifts calculated that more than six million pagus walked the earth in his day, and with their rate of reproduction (even considering their high mortality rate) that number must have easily doubled or tripled in the modern day. Their communities never grow larger than a few hundred before internal conflict splinters them. Their culture does not predate the present age, for they were neither permitted nor interested in expressing themselves while under the influence of Ixindar. This culture is noteworthy for what it lacks: they have no independent writing style (unnecessary, as they keep no histories and the only tales they tell are braggartly retellings of their battle exploits), they don't play music (excluding war drums), and they never dance. Since they were created for war and reproduction, the society that developed indulges in such actions.

One notable development of this is a festival of procreation called San Lossom ("The Founding"). All sexually mature pagus in the community divide by gender, and the males challenge the females to single combat: the women may wield weapons in this battle, the men may not. The males must disarm their opposites

PAGUS BATTLESWORN CR 4

XP 1,200
LE Medium fey
Init +6; **Senses** darkvision; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 15, flat-footed 17 (+4 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 armor)
hp 44 (8d6+16)
Fort +4, **Ref** +10, **Will** +6

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee maul +9 (1d8+6/x3)
Ranged short bow +8 (1d6/×3)
Special Attacks brutal slam, direct approach, onslaught

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 18, **Con** 15, **Int** 12, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 14
Base Atk +4; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 22
Feats Dodge, Mobility, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (maul)
Skills Acrobatics +16, Climb +10, Escape Artist +16, Handle Animal +6, Intimidate +12, Ride +10, Survival +10, Swim +6
Languages Common, Paggin
SQ focused aggression

ECOLOGY

Environment Any except near water or mountains
Organization pair, warband (3–6), or patrol (7–11)
Treasure standard (maul, scale mail, other treasure)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Brutal Slam (Ex): Instead of using *onslaught*, a pagus battlesworn may push the hit target back 10 feet and knock it prone.

Direct Approach (Ex): The pagus battlesworn makes a charge attack as a standard action against any target in range. The pagus battlesworn does not grant opportunity attacks or flanking bonuses until the beginning of the pagus battlesworn's next turn.

Focused Aggression (Ex): When the pagus battlesworn is first injured in battle, he makes (and must make) a melee attack against the enemy that triggered *focused aggression*. If the triggering attack was ranged, the pagus can replace his melee attack with a charge. The pagus gains +1 to attack and +2 to damage against that enemy until the pagus or the enemy is dead.

Onslaught (Ex): When the pagus battlesworn hits with an attack, it may move 10 feet after the attack is resolved. This movement does not provoke opportunity attacks.

PAGUS UNBOUND CHIEFTAIN CR6

XP 2,400
LE Medium fey
Init +6; **Senses** darkvision; Perception +1

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 15, flat-footed 17 (+4 Dex, +1 dodge, +7 armor)
hp 55 (10d6+20)
Aura unshakeable conviction (25 ft.)

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee heavy flail +10/+5 (1d10+6/19-20)
Special Attacks kinetic transference

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 18, **Con** 15, **Int** 12, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 14
Base Atk +6; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 24
Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Mobility, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (maul)
Skills Acrobatics +18, Climb +12, Escape Artist +16, Handle Animal +8, Intimidate +16, Ride +12, Survival +10, Swim +7
Languages Common, Paggin
SQ focused aggression, unshakable conviction, war howl

ECOLOGY

Environment Any except near water or mountains
Organization leading a patrol (leading 7–11 other pagus), or a small invasion (with 10-100 other pagus)
Treasure standard (heavy flail, half plate, other treasure)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Focused Aggression (Ex): When the pagus battlesworn is first injured in battle, he makes (and must make) a melee attack against the enemy that triggered *focused aggression*. If the triggering attack was ranged, the pagus can replace his melee attack with a charge. The pagus gains +1 to attack and +2 to damage against that enemy until the pagus or the enemy is dead.

Kinetic Transference (Ex): As a full round action, the unbound chieftain can make a single *heavy flail* attack. If the target suffers damage, it is dazed for one round.

Unshakeable Conviction (Ex): All pagus within 25 feet of the unbound chieftain are immune to fear and gain a +2 bonus to melee attack rolls for 1 round after the unbound chieftain suffers damage.

War Howl (Ex): As a swift action, all allied pagus within 15 feet of the unbound chieftain can move 15 feet. This movement provokes no opportunity attacks. Once the unbound chieftain uses *war howl*, he cannot use it again for 1d4 rounds.

to earn the right to mate with them, while the females resist with deadly force. After the highest-ranked couples have concluded their private duels, the festival degenerates into an orgiastic grand melee. All the while, the war drums beat rhythmically, no different from any other battlefield. Because female pagus are as large and dangerous as the males, there is no separation of gender in their day-to-day life. Females have as many rights as the males and if a female reaches the rank of chief, she is expected to never be defeated by challengers; most female chiefs have already birthed a dozen or more whelps in their lives, so this is rarely a problem for them. Most shemjaza and dragons discourage the pagus forming their own culture, but a few have tolerated the San Lossom as it accomplishes two tasks: weeding out the weak and ensuring continued pagus stock.

Pagus were created to be perfectly obedient armies: separated from Kakodomania, their barbaric tendencies intensify because they no longer have a clear authority to follow and turn to the simple expedient of obedience to the strongest. As it is hard to dispute the physical superiority of dragons, this makes the winged gods natural choices for leadership. Sympathizers believe

PAGUS SHAITAR CR6

XP 2,400
LE Medium fey
Init +6; **Senses** darkvision; Perception -1

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 15, flat-footed 17 (+5 Dex, +1 dodge, +7 armor)
hp 75 (10d6+40)

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee morningstar +10/+5 (1d10+6/19-20)
Special Attacks kinetic transference

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 20, **Con** 18, **Int** 10, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 14
Base Atk +6; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 26
Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Mobility, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (maul)
Skills Acrobatics +18, Climb +12, Escape Artist +16, Handle Animal +8, Intimidate +16, Ride +12, Survival +10, Swim +7
Languages Common, Paggin
SQ fury of Ixindar, unfocused aggression

ECOLOGY

Environment Any except near water or mountains
Organization part of a warband (with 3–6 other pagus), or part of a patrol (with 7–11 other pagus)
Treasure standard (morningstar, half plate, other treasure)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Kinetic Transference (Ex): As a full round action, the pagus shaitar can make a single *morningstar* attack. If the target suffers damage, it is knocked prone.

Fury of Ixindar (Ex): The pagus shaitar deals an additional 1d6 damage against prone foes.

Unfocused Aggression (Ex): If the pagus shaitar suffers damage, he automatically confirms any critical threats until the end of its next turn. If someone inflicts a critical hit on the pagus shaitar, the shaitar gains a +1 bonus to attack and a +2 bonus to attack rolls until it is killed (or 1 hour)

PAGUS STRIFEBRINGER CR 4

XP 600
LE Medium fey
Init +6; **Senses** darkvision; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 15, flat-footed 17 (+4 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 armor, +3 natural)
hp 44 (8d6+16)
Fort +4, **Ref** +10, **Will** +6

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee maul +9 (1d8+6/x3)
Ranged short bow +8 (1d6/×3)
Special Attacks direct approach

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 18, **Con** 15, **Int** 12, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 14
Base Atk +4; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 22
Feats Dodge, Mobility, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (maul)
Skills Acrobatics +16, Climb +10, Escape Artist +16, Handle Animal +6, Intimidate +12, Ride +10, Survival +10, Swim +6
Languages Common, Paggin
SQ minion

ECOLOGY

Environment Any except near water or mountains
Organization pair, warband (3–6), or patrol (7–11) or invasion (50-5,000)
Treasure standard (maul, scale mail, other treasure)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Minion: If the pagus strifebringer suffers more damage in a single hit as his hit dice, it is killed (8d6 = 8 damage or more in a single hit). As a result, the strifebringer has half experience.

Direct Approach (Ex): The pagus strifebringer makes a charge attack as a standard action against any target in range. The pagus strifebringer does not grant opportunity attacks or flanking bonuses until the beginning of the pagus strifebringer's next turn.

that, if instructed in ways of peace and given a benign figure of respect, pagus could civilize. Evidence of this has already been seen in Apocrypha.

Pagus are despised by every single race, even the ones that rule over them. Shemjaza think of them as hounds, dragons as cattle. All other races swear to their destruction. Only a small number of nations and rulers have permitted pagus to exist within their borders, and only when it has been conclusively proven that they do not live under the influence of Ixindar.

PAGUS LORE

A character knows the following information with a successful Knowledge (nature) check.

DC 15: Pagus are militaristic to a fault. Each pagus whelp is trained harshly and vigorously from a very early age to become a vicious warrior. When in combat, the pagus are regimented and single-minded, unlike the riotous skeggs or the often solitary oggrak. The pagus take pleasure only in death, not in torture, and as such they are very quick in dispatching any opponents remaining after a battle. Pagus don't believe in much other than what they see and feel. They act on instinct and seldom with reason. Because of their skewed disposition, their intuition endorses violence and an unwavering dedication to the one they consider their leader. When pagus mark an individual as their chief, they swear untiring loyalty to that authority. For thousands of years, that fidelity was firmly tied to the forces of Kakodomania. No matter how powerful a pagus chief was, she always answered to a shemjaza, dragon, or occasionally the direct whisper of Mengus. When freed of that authority, pagus wander wild. Uncontrolled, they follow their last directions—to kill anything that opposes Mengus. Unfortunately, pagus must be told to stop fighting and, without those instructions, their path of blood will continue unabated.

DC 20: Pagus think forward, never backward. They desire what they see and rarely plan ahead. They were created to kill and do so very efficiently. Unlike the shemjaza, pagus seldom play with their kills. They dispatch as quickly as possible, razing villages and eliminating its population before moving on. If they have carnal desires, they commit them quickly in order to resume their regular duties. Pagus are impatient and easy to rouse. They will take to war over a morning meal with no preparation from the previous night. They are decisive in action and when ordered to commit or if taking a quest by choice, pagus are narrow-minded in their fixation. They cannot be distracted and have been known to refuse sleep for days in their obsession.

Crossing a pagus is unwise and in battle, opponents are warned never to leave pagus alive. If they survive, they will remember who wounded them and will think of nothing but vengeance. Pagus don't taunt opponents, and they never cheer. On the battlefield, they are silent, cold-hearted machines. They march forward and mark their targets. When a rival sees a pagus locking eyes upon him, that opponent must be ready, for that pagus is coming to kill them.

DC 25: Pagus are a dominated race. The shemjaza and typhox dragons have held them under their thumbs since the fall and ruthlessly murder any pagus that begins to chafe under the yoke of Ixindar's rule. There are few pagus in Kakodomania older than twenty years of age. As a pagus ages, it doesn't become weaker and decrepit as do other races. A pagus continues to grow larger and larger until the day it is killed. However, the mental health of the pagus, unless strong to begin with, degrades until little is left aside from an insane monster. Most of these creatures are killed by the shemjaza before they can destroy the settlements they inhabit, but some are enslaved and brought from battlefield to battlefield in chains. These pagus are called the shaitar – the breakers. The pagus strong-willed enough to avoid this horrible fate find their mental agility increasing, rife with thoughts of free-will and culture.

PUGG

Unlike other fae descendants like the chiggoth, kythix, and dojenn, the puggs are not difficult to find. Collectively, they are a massive, destructive organism quickly advancing beyond nuisance to real threat, a danger to nearly every nation on Earth. In some areas, they are a random and uncontrolled pest, amounting to little more than a handful of rock-throwing, blunt-spear-jabbing animals. While not dumb beasts, they have no avenues for directing their intelligence and when not given clear and explicit commands (backed up by the threat of force) they generally default to the most destructive action they can perform. However, they have proven to be domesticable, and when raised in a culture that doesn't promote thievery or deception, puggs can sometimes be raised to live normal lives as servants. Whenever someone hears the term "house elf," it is usually a pugg that is being referred to. For every chaparran or damaskan captured or broken in the slaver markets, there are ten puggs that are processed and forgotten. Domestic puggs are usually bred in pens like pigs, as the feral ones are too difficult to re-educate, but many slavers will still capture wild puggs to replenish their breeding stock. They are trained for simple chores, hard labor, and occasionally cooking. Sad to say, they still live longer and happier lives than if they had been born into a bogg or skegg encampment, or even one of their own swarms. Freeing a house elf is no kinder than throttling it in its sleep, as even when they retain their feral instincts, they lack the brutal experience necessary to survive on their own. In open echa, when left to their own devices, puggs are inevitably savage and destructive. In history their likenesses have been attributed to several fantasy creatures like boggles, brownies, leprechauns, and various other malicious sprites.

PUGG LORE

A character knows the following with a successful Knowledge (nature) check.

DC 10: Puggs have no aspirations, and only desire the freedom to eat and kill whatever they want. They have no self-control and only stop eating when their

PUGG

PUGG CR 1/6

XP 65
CE Small fey
Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 13, flat-footed 11 (+3 Dex, +1 size)
hp 2 (1d8)
Fort +0, **Ref** +4, **Will** –1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee blunt spear +2 (1d4)

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 16, **Con** 4, **Int** 8, **Wis** 9, **Cha** 8
Base Atk +1; **CMB** 1; **CMD** 14
Feats weapon focus (spear)
Skills Acrobatics +4 Perception +4, Stealth +4;
Languages Ferran
SQ bloody innumerable

ECOLOGY

Environment any
Organization gang (2–4), family (5–30 with 1 optional bogg mother), or tribe (31–300 with 1 optional bogg mother)
Treasure NPC gear (if any)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Bloody Innumerable (Ex): If the pugg and its allies outnumber their enemy 2:1, it gains a +2 bonus to melee attack rolls and melee damage rolls. If the pugg and its allies out number their enemy by 3:1, this bonus increases to a +3 bonus to melee attack rolls and melee damage rolls.

stomachs are too full to fit anything else. Their bodies can process any organic substance they can wrap their jaws around, and many will cheerfully attempt to eat inorganic matter as well. The two most common causes of accidental death among puggs are choking on something too big to chew and being crushed or suffocated in a swarm.

DC 15: Puggs can be found anywhere on Earth but are especially prevalent in western Canam where they grow at an alarming rate. Female puggs can produce a litter of two to four offspring every three weeks, though only one in five hundred survives the eight months required to reach maturity (the rest usually being eaten by their siblings and occasionally their parents). Estimates indicate that every square inch of the planet will be covered in puggs within a thousand years if drastic measures are not taken.

DC 20: Slavers often capture puggs to sell as house pets to human owners. The puggs often don't even realize they've been captured, as they are beaten less under human care than under the skeggs'. Small groups of puggs have been known to wander into slaver camps and give themselves up for the promise of food, especially if they don't have numbers to overwhelm their enemy. On their own or when in small numbers, puggs are absolute cowards.

SATYRS

Satyrs, called scians by themselves and other fae, were represented somewhat accurately throughout human history. They are one of the earliest chaparran branches, eventually leading to centaurs. However, satyrs are not the peaceful skittish creatures the centaurs are. While less feral and animalistic than puggs and boggs, they are still wild creatures, and additionally are hypersexual, orgiastic, and hedonistic. The neurochemicals which in humans cause happiness and satisfaction instead produce an adrenaline response and a strong hallucinogenic effect in satyrs. They quickly crash from this high and must immediately seek out new pleasures or lapse into a dull fugue, during which they are easily provoked into mindless, wild rages. Satyrs are also incapable of bonding with any creatures, and thus can only breed with their own kind. Because their conception rate is the lowest of any fae, satyrs engage in as many sexual encounters as possible. However, the species has a strong sexual dimorphism, with female satyrs (also known as maenads) being virtually indistinguishable from human women, albeit with slightly pointy ears and profoundly unstable minds. Male satyrs are not generally patient enough to determine their partner's species beforehand, preferring to seduce first and not bother asking questions. They are incredibly charismatic and never take a lover by force, although their passions have been known to result in broken bones.

Satyrs seldom get involved in combat and are considered by many of the other races to be cowardly. They hide in forests the same as chaparrans and centaurs, though keeping away from both. Because of the increasing population of humans and their heightened sexual drive, many satyrs have migrated to nearby human communities to persuade passing locals.

Satyrs should not be confused with fauns, a very miniscule later branch from satyrs. Fauns are smaller, less cowardly, equally as hedonistic but in different ways, preferring drink and song as their pleasure of preference.

SHAPELESS WILD

Many opponents swear these creatures are undead, while others claim them to be shadows, but they are neither. They are born from the death throes of lost souls within the Sana Marsh but are neither ghosts nor wraiths. They breathe, but have no faces one can see; they have claws but no arms. They throw no shadows but seem to emit darkness, concealing their true shape (if they even have one). Only illuminated white eyes, jaws of knives, and dripping silver claws twice the length of human fingers emerge from a mass of blackness. Their sole purpose is to protect the Marsh and follow the commands of their demon mother. They have recently been seen outside the Marsh, attempting to drag victims back to the darkness to increase their numbers.

SHAPELESS WILD CR2

XP 600
LE Medium monstrous humanoid
Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., Perception +2
Aura evergloom (25 feet)

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 14, flat-footed 11 (+4 Dex, +1 natural)
hp 22 (3d10+6)
Fort +3, **Ref** +9, **Will** +5
Immune disease, poison

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.
Melee 2 claws +5 (1d6+2)
Special Attacks hidden ways

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 19, **Con** 15, **Int** 5, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 6
Base Atk +3; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 19
Feats Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes
Skills Acrobatics +9, Climb +18, Stealth +18
Racial Modifiers +10 Stealth, +4 Acrobatics, +10 Climb
Languages None
SQ madness given form, shapeless distortion

ECOLOGY

Environment any
Organization solitary, pair or band (3–6)
Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Evergloom (Su): All light within 25 feet is reduced to dim shadow.

Hidden Ways (Ex): As a full round action, the shapeless wild may move to any square within its aura, and make two claw attacks. This movement does not provoke opportunity attacks.

Shapeless Distortion (Ex): The shapeless wild never grants flanking bonuses and always has concealment.

Madness Given Form (Ex): After rolling initiative, the first attack by any enemy on the shapeless wild misses.

THE SHAPELESS WILD LORE

A character knows the following with a successful Knowledge (arcane) check.

DC 15: One must take the tales told by tavern drunkards with a grain of salt. Though many stories of formless beasts beyond the bogg-controlled forests are told, no one worth the price of a pint ever recounted a reliable tale. Some described the shapeless as living shadows, as if the shade they cast peeled from the walls and enveloped them. Others proclaimed them to be smooth-skinned creatures with nary a hole or wrinkle in their bodies save for a pair of white eyes floating in their featureless skulls. A similar story adds claws of silver sticking from black fingers. Because of the lack of definition, all one can see is a pair of glowing eyes looking out from a black void, and vicious talons whirling about it. Some claimed the creatures were cursed fae, maybe tenenbri or some offshoot of nymphs

turned to shadow, while others insisted they were rejects of death, raised to inflict their rage upon the living.

DC 20: The shapeless are moving beyond their marsh and attacking nearby villages, or reaching far beyond to entice distant rulers with similar promises of immortality that drove the king of Kardia to madness and evil. The Torquil town of Barbecallis is rumored to have fallen to shapeless hands, but in that case, it was because the two lords in charge of the keep had rejected the advances of the demon succubus as they had already taken each other as lovers.

SHEMJAZA

The greatest departure from legends, the modern commanders of the dark armies of Ixindar don't wield pitchforks, have cloven hooves and spiked tails, or sport horns, though they do have pointed ears. They resemble the oldest fae races, but are not fae: they are the pure manifestation of the power of syntropy, given the form of the ancient fae by the intelligence of Mengus. How this came about remains a mystery. The fact that they closely resemble tilen gives credence to the claim that the tilen are the nearest to the original fae form, but has not helped the tilen's desire for peace with the various nations of the world. Their appearance was uncommon in the time of Terros and unseen in Canam until only a few years ago. The shemjaza are usually the ones leading armies and committing secret tasks bestowed by their lords or god. Each one is worth a hundred pagus.

They stand much taller than any fae, growing in stature as their power increases and have solid black eyes with no differentiation of the pupil, iris, or sclera. They feel nothing except for physical and emotional extremes. Everything must be pushed to an excessive limit, even pain, a sensation they are fascinated by and go out of their way to inflict on both themselves and others. Some intentionally mutilate themselves to keep

their sensations constant. Despite their size and the intimidating aspect of their eyes, they are described as being astoundingly attractive and charismatic. Another misconception claims they are all sadistically evil, which is not entirely true: what they are is the epitome of amorality. The concepts of good and evil are meaningless to them, and even chaos and order confuse them as philosophical notions. All they understand is obedience, and unlike the pagus and typhox dragons, they do not need to be prodded or threatened to obtain that obedience. To a shemjaza, fulfilling the interests of Mengus and Ixindar are as natural as breathing. They are permitted the greatest latitude of any of Ixindar's creatures, for they regard freedom as the greatest evil in the universe. All pagus in Kakodomania are controlled by the shemjaza, and a few have even appeared in eastern Canam to usurp the dominion of the typhox dragons. Shemjaza still number quite few even in Kakodomania, though they are by far are the most dangerous servants of Mengus.

Shemjaza are all unique creatures with capabilities and powers tailored for a particular role in the armies of Ixindar. There should never be a point at which shemjaza are a pushover for player characters, and so no game statistics are provided for them.

SKEGG

The skeggs share the boggs' desire to achieve satisfaction through violence. However, they are not capable of the boggs' casual masochism, and so direct all their energy into harming others. Since they have no talent for building large communities, they must raid for food and supplies. On their own, they attack caravans and hamlets but rarely towns or villages unless they have enslaved boggs or puggs to wear down the enemies. Skeggs are the smartest of the damaskan anathema, just intelligent enough not to rush head strong into a fight, driving the lesser castes up first. They have a love/hate relationship with the boggs, but feel nothing but disgust for puggs, which they regard as little better than useful vermin.

SKEGG LORE

A character knows the following with a successful Knowledge (nature) check.

DC 15: The skeggs consider themselves the ruling caste of damaskan anathema and will always assume control over boggs and puggs whenever they encounter them. Both skeggs and boggs look upon their descendant puggs with contempt, offering them no rights or privileges, throwing them in front of a battle line, assigning them the hardest labor, occasionally using them as furniture, and even breeding them as a food source.

DC 25: Skeggs will not breed with boggs and will oftentimes keep a bogg mother in chains to maintain order over a nest. Skeggs also have a basic knowledge of weapons and armor and enough intelligence to appreciate treasure and the affectations of culture—skills worth their weight in a chained bogg mother. Puggdrivers occasionally sell some of their stock to human traders.

SKEGG INCITER CR3

XP 800
CE Medium fey
Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 11, flat-footed 16 (+3 armor, +1 Dex, +3 natural, +1 shield)
hp 20 (5d6+5)
Fort +3, **Ref** +5, **Will** +2

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee morningstar +6 (1d8+3)
Special Attacks ambiguous ferocity, you're not finished

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 13, **Con** 13, **Int** 10, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 9
Base Atk +3; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 16
Feats Intimidating Prowess, Skill Focus (Perception)
Skills Intimidate +9, Perception +9, Stealth +11; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Intimidate, +4 Stealth
Languages Ferran
SQ get over there!, vicious temperament

ECOLOGY

Environment mountains
Organization gang (1 with 3–6 boggs), mob (1-2 with 1-3 skegg thugs, 4-8 boggs and 10-20 puggs)
Treasure NPC Gear (leather armor, heavy wooden shield, pug prodder, other treasure)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Ambiguous Ferocity (Ex): If the skegg inciter charges a target already engaged by an ally and uses its warclub, the attack deals an additional 5 damage.

Get Over There! (Ex): As a swift action, the skegg inciter can move one ally within 10 feet up to 10 feet (2 squares). This movement does not provoke opportunity attacks.

Vicious Temperament (Ex): When first reduced from its maximum hit points, the skegg inciter may immediately make a melee attack as an immediate action. If the skegg hits, the attack deals an additional 1d6 damage.

You're Not Finished (Ex): When an ally within 25 feet of the skegg inciter drops to 0 hit points or less, the ally can make a single melee attack before falling. Once used, the skegg inciter cannot use *you're not finished* for 1d4 rounds.

SKEGG PUGG-DRIVER CR 2

XP 600
CE Medium fey
Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16 (+2 armor, +1 Dex, +3 natural, +1 shield)
hp 15 (4d6+3)
Fort +2, **Ref** +4, **Will** +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee pugg prodder +5 (1d8+3) plus *reach*
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft. (with *pugg prodder*)
Special Attacks nice throw, boss!

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 13, **Con** 13, **Int** 10, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 9
Base Atk +2; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 16
Feats Intimidating Prowess, Skill Focus (Perception)
Skills Intimidate +8, Perception +8, Stealth +10; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Intimidate, +4 Stealth
Languages Ferran
SQ rabble rouse, vicious temperament

ECOLOGY

Environment mountains
Organization gang (1 with 3–6 puggs), or mob (2 with 12-18 puggs)
Treasure NPC Gear (leather armor, heavy wooden shield, pug prodder, other treasure)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Nice Throw, Boss! (Ex): As a swift action, the skegg may throw an adjacent pugg 20 feet (4 squares). If the pugg lands in an adjacent square to an opponent, it attacks as if it had made a charge. This movement does not provoke opportunity attacks.

Pugg Prodder (Ex): The skegg may attack through squares occupied by puggs.

Rabble Rouse (Ex): As a swift action, puggs within 30 feet each count as two for the purposes of the puggs' *bloody innumerable* ability until the end of the skegg pugg-driver's next turn. After being used, the skegg cannot use *rabble rouse* for 1d4 rounds.

Vicious Temperament (Ex): When first reduced from its maximum hit points, the skegg may immediately make a melee attack as an immediate action. If the skegg hits, the attack deals an additional 1d6 damage.

THORNSHROUD CR 13

XP 25,600
Medium construct
Init –1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 31, touch 13, flat-footed 30 (+3 Dex, +18 natural)
hp 129 (18d10+30)
Fort +10, **Ref** +9, **Will** +8
DR 10/adamantine; **Regeneration** 5

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.
Melee holocaust +28/+23/+18 (1d10+7/17-20)
Ranged blinding macabre +25 (2d6+6 + paralysis; 50 ft.)
Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.; 10 ft. with *holocaust*
Special Attacks holocaust traits

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 16, **Con** 10, **Int** 18, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 12
Base Atk +18; **CMB** +25; **CMD** 38
SQ absolute articulation, construct, regeneration (5), riposte, structural integrity

ECOLOGY

Environment any
Organization solitary or gang (2–4)
Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Absolute Articulation (Ex): Thornshroud cannot be denied his Dexterity bonus to AC and never grants flanking bonuses.

Bindings Macabre (Ex): *Holocaust* is able to turn into a long whip-like weapon, able to reach targets up to 25 feet away. On a hit, the target suffers 2d6+6 damage and is paralyzed for 1d4 rounds. A second hit with *bindings macabre* on a paralyzed target can pull it into an adjacent square. While *bindings macabre* is being used, *Holocaust* cannot inflict Strength damage. Switching between *Holocaust* and *bindings macabre* takes a free action but cannot be done during a full round attack.

Construct: Thornshroud is a humanoid head grafted onto a machine, but is still counted as a construct. He is immune to disruption, disease, death effects, necromancy effects, paralysis, poison, sleep effects, and stunning. He cannot be subjected to ability damage, ability drain, fatigue, exhaustion, energy drain, or nonlethal damage. He is immune to any effect that requires a Fortitude save (unless the effect also works on objects, or is harmless). Thornshroud is not at risk of death from massive damage. Thornshroud still needs to breathe and eat, but he does not sleep.

Holocaust (Ex): Holocaust is the name of Thornshroud's negatively-infused longsword. This weapon cannot be destroyed except by the breath of a dragon king, and cannot be sundered. Each time Thornshroud hits with *Holocaust*, the target must make a DC 22 Fortitude save or suffer 1 point of Strength damage. If the target suffers Strength damage, Thornshroud gains 10 temporary hit points. *Holocaust* ignores all damage resistance. When needed, the weapon can turn into a long, whip-like weapon. *Holocaust* can attack targets up to ten feet away.

Regeneration (Ex): Thornshroud regenerates 5 points of damage every round until his hit points are reduced below 0.

Riposte (Ex): If an opponent misses thornshroud, as an immediate action, Thornshroud may take a 5-foot step and make a single *Holocaust* attack.

Structural Integrity (Ex): When reduced to 0 hit points or less, Thornshroud's head detaches from his body, grows four spidery legs and attempts to escape. In this form, Thornshroud has 50 hit points, a speed of 30 ft., and an AC 30.

THORNSHROUD

In the darklands, there is a complex hierarchy, which not all of Mengus' minions care to follow. Shemjaza, typhox dragons, and other powerful evil creatures engage in an intricate dance of dominance and deference. In theory, shemjaza overrule all other subjects of Ixindar, but in practice they often have their own concerns and feel no compulsion to enforce their will, enabling other overlords to take power. None of this mattered when Thornshroud arrived.

Thornshroud is a construct of living armor with the head of a human grafted onto it. The head is withered and decrepit but still conscious and aware. Negative energies keep the psyche intact, though twisted by whispers from the darkness. When Thornshroud arrived in Canam, he swayed any forces he approached. Pagus, shemjaza, and dragons wilted under his will. Instead of corralling the masses of evil behind him in an assault on Canam, this armor vanished on a mission no one else was aware of, one he wouldn't share with his subordinates. He told them it came from the highest authority, orders from the greatest voice of all.

Thornshroud takes joy in the torture and suffering of those he deems inferior, which includes every living and unliving creature on the planet. Unlike a pagus, Thornshoud wears his emotion visibly, laughing at the pain he inflicts, taking trophies of those he kills, brandishing pelts and skulls as marks of this glory. His ears are round, proof that such depravity could only come from a human. Not even he knows his own age or where on the planet he fell under the shadow of corruption.

THORNSHROUD LORE

There is currently no lore associated with Thornshroud.

THORNSHROUD

WEREBEAST

Contrary to popular belief, one does not contract the disease of lycanthropy by being bitten by a werewolf. Most werecreatures are born that way, either to fae (mostly chaparrans) or humans unusually susceptible to magic. Afflicted lycanthropy is not a disease, but a deliberate curse, usually inflicted by a particularly invidious spell.

Throughout human history, therianthropes, as some prefer to call them, have been described as being tricksters, villains, wise shamans, or faithful lovers. There is no distinct therianthrope culture, though the condition passes along family lines and may influence local traditions. Natural werebeasts are believed to have originated when one of the rare spirit-bonded grew so close to their spirit animal that the two became merged. As with most magical mutation, some of the traits of the now hybrid being would have passed on to its progeny. Of course, this theory does not account for the number of such creatures relative to the rarity of spirit-bonded, and it is possible that other forms of magical shapeshifting may contribute to the phenomenon. The therianthrope condition has also been seen in reverse. Though magic usually creates a dire creature, occasionally a normal animal may develop a level of intelligence equal to or higher than humans or fae. The darawren believe that when such an uplifted animal develops a connection with a humanoid, it can eventually discover how to take their form, though rare is the animal, even an intelligent one, that can pass for a hominid without any tells. Regardless of its source, the transformative condition is only passed on to the werebeast's offspring about half the time, even when they bond with another werecreature.

Natural-born werecreatures are not predisposed to any alignment, although the majority have an at least semi-feral lifestyle and live in their hybrid and transformed state almost as often as their original form. Those cursed by magic often turn into psychotic monsters, as their minds are unable to handle the shock of the first transformation and crack under the strain. However, it is not unknown for a werecreature's mate to voluntarily accept such a spell, and while such folk tend to be more capricious than most due to not having the psychology of shapeshifting ingrained since birth, they are no more disposed toward antisocial behavior than a natural therianthrope.

In history, puggs had been attributed to brownies, boggles, leprechauns, and various other sprites. They were the fastest growing species to emerge from the gates. All they cared for was breeding and eating and finding the easiest and fastest solutions to both. They painted no art, wrote no poetry, and carved no sculptures. If they ran out of prey, they turned on each other.

"I heard right...mage?" the guard asked Aiden behind him.

"Apparently. Watch out!" Aiden shouted as a pugg dove to impale a stick into the guard's shin. It was kicked away by a spiked boot.

"Human wizard," he responded with hardly a strain, "good marks on ya. Barking storms and cackling fire, eh?"

Aiden held a tuff of steel loops in his hand to ensure his cover remained in front. "I don't really follow you, no."

The guard leaned back. "Well, cast something."

"I could..." Aiden had a hard enough time concentrating on his normal thoughts. To keep such a word in his mind, to recall all his knowledge of it, and in its expression, alter the physical rules of the world, was out of his reach when ferocious monsters were within theirs. "You know, I'm not good with a sword, but perhaps I should–"

The guard turned sharply back. "Are you a mage or not? Throw down the pillars, boy–"

"Holy fuck!" Aiden shouted. The guard turned back to see the blurry point of a rock-tipped spear only an instant before it drove into his eye. The lumbering corpse fell back on Aiden, pinning his legs under 300 pounds of dead flesh and steel. The pugg pulled the spear from the wound and smiled teasingly. The terrified wizard kicked and struggled under the weight. His book was still in his hand. This pugg had more than a few scraps of cloth draped over it, the chief. Aiden waited for his rescue, for that moment in every book where the hero would be saved at the last second. A dragon would be good but a well placed arrow would–

The creature's spear drove an inch through layers of cotton and polyester and into Aiden's leg. The pain was shockingly intense. The pugg pulled it back quickly and strolled over the corpse to aim for Aiden's face. The leather-bound spellbook had a skeleton of wood. It was heavy for its size and durable. Only a handful of pages were pierced as the book was held up as a shield. When Aiden pushed the book back, the creature fell off the guard's body.

After dislodging himself from under the armored carcass, Aiden rolled back and slammed the tome as hard as he could upon the pugg's head. He brought it down again, hearing a crack, and another, which added a blemish of blood on the cover. All his strength in a third cracked the creature's bones and snapped the spear. A fourth, fifth, eighth, twelfth, and there was little left other than broken bones and blood. Aiden kept at it up until jostled by the shout.

"Hey...Wizard!" shouted the captain sarcastically. Aiden looked up from his kill. The remaining puggs had been driven off or killed. Three guards had fallen along with two passengers. "You done wowing it with your magic? It's over." Aiden lifted himself from the ground, looked at the nearly destroyed book, and limped back to the carriage. As he struggled up the steps, the captain added, "That was some spell you got there."

Aiden ignored him.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN: CAMPAIGN

Ultimately, what distinguishes *Amethyst* from other fantasy settings is the contrast between the familiar and the alien. Merely the act of looking at the map and seeing the broad outline of North America cements the idea that the adventure is taking place in a familiar world, even if it has no other elements in common. Both GM and player will approach the setting with their own preconceptions drawn from their own real experiences, and want to integrate those elements into their play.

THEMES

The overarching theme of the setting is 'lines between extremes'. The line between fantasy and technology is the most obvious, but this is only the tip of the iceberg. There is the line between humanity and the fae peoples, and the discrimination that often results therefrom; the line between the religion that betters the believer and that which subjugates the outsider; the line between civilization and wilderness, and the difficulty each has in co-existing with the other.

What is most important is the way in which these lines manifest. At first, it is appropriate, even encouraged, to represent them as dividing lines: partitions between extremes, and never the twain shall meet. Over time, however, they should evolve to represent a continuum, as the characters' experiences with the world beyond their preconceptions cause their ways of thinking to change. Not just the characters' attitudes, either – player characters are dynamic and powerful individuals capable of making a global impact. The actions of the party should have the potential to change the world, even if only one small corner of it.

Where most fantasy settings start from an exotic basis and grow gradually more familiar as the players are exposed to them, *Amethyst* should start from a basis of familiarity and grow more and more outlandish. The modern-style techan, with his day-to-day conveniences that roughly equate to the player's everyday life, is thrust into a realm of floating stone heads, trees the size of skyscrapers, teleporting wild cats, and impossibly beautiful and graceful near-immortals. The staid librarian is forced to leave her peaceful stacks in pursuit of a lost tome, and begins to experience the things that once she only read about. The miners who have never left their underground tunnels must venture out into the daylight and fresh air. In every case, no matter how jaded the character may claim to be, these experiences should be presented to them as the greatest of wonders. The one dividing line that underpins any *Amethyst* adventure is the line between isolation and experience.

CONCEPT

Virtually any adventure concept can be fit into *Amethyst*; the basic dungeon crawl; the epic quest; the noir mystery; the war story; the fairy tale; psychological or body horror; even sports stories have their niche. The only thing necessary to give the adventure a particular *Amethyst* feel is to emphasize any contrast between familiarity and otherness, injecting symbols of modernity into fantasy and symbols of fantasy into modernity.

The foremost manifestation of this theme is the conflict between magic and science. Even if they never leave the bastion, a techan party has to deal with at least a low-level of disruption, not to mention the consideration of why they're in a bastion in the first place. Even if they never encounter techans, a fantasy party likely has some synthetic equipment or would give up a large chunk of a

treasure haul to obtain some. Regardless of the adventure concept, therefore, the first decision to be made when planning an *Amethyst* adventure should be whether the party will be echan, techan, or a mix of the two. Some adventures will only be possible with one type of party, while others can easily switch between the two, but the choice will inevitably impact the way the players approach the adventure.

An adventure with the same locations and the same monsters can often have radically different approaches, outlooks, and outcomes depending on whether the party follows the path of technology or fantasy. The characters themselves will have different motivations. A traditional fantasy character adventures to make a name for themself, to acquire wealth, or because they are called by a higher power (whether a personal moral calling, a command from a superior, or an undefined sense of destiny); an echan party tends to have a variety of individual motivations and approaches the adventure with much less focus as a result. A typical techan character is part of a unit, often paramilitary, and thus pursues the adventure's objective more single-mindedly because it's their job. A techan party will usually play through an adventure in a more linear fashion, even if the details of the adventure are unchanged.

ORIGINS

The choice of path also determines the physical starting point of the adventure. For fantasy games, the old expedient of 'you all meet in a tavern', while cliché, is nevertheless a viable option. Fantasy characters are presumed to be capable individuals, can come from virtually anywhere in the world, and have no real need to know their companions prior to the start of the game. A fantasy party will usually be broadly diverse, with characters more often created according to the whims of the individual player rather than the needs of the group. While most groups tend to cover as many of the tactical bases as possible (rare is the party that will set out into the wilderness without a healer, for instance), sometimes this will require the adventure to be tweaked to accommodate a deficiency in the group.

Techan parties do not have the luxury of individuality. As outsiders in the fantasy realm, without ready access to the means to repair and resupply, they only have one another to rely on for support. As such, they should know each other extensively before the adventure begins. Techans who meet over a brew and decide to take on the world tend to have their bones scattered across the wilderness in very short order. A techan group is usually part of an organization. They are accustomed to hierarchy and uniformity, their equipment is issued to them rather than found or crafted, and with very few exceptions, they all come from the same bastion. The bastion is the default starting point and 'home base' for a techan party, and the group will have to periodically return to it to restock their batteries and ammunition, to convert their unenchanted loot into the means to upgrade their equipment, and to indulge in the luxuries that they are fighting to preserve. As part of the techan experience is dealing with the fantasy world on its terms with often-inadequate equipment, even if there is a hole in the team's strategic makeup, the adventure should not be adjusted to compensate unless the disparity between the capability of the party and the power level expected by the adventure is too great.

RELATIONS

The techan group should define its perspective on the fantasy world before starting play. If dragon attacks are threatening bastion and village alike, this is usually merely a matter of flavor – whether the techans look down on their echan allies as ignorant bumpkins, are uneasy around them for the effects they may have on technology, or are even fascinated by their seeming exoticism, they do not require any additional motivation to make common cause. When offered a quest, however, a party that despises echans is probably going to demand some pretty hefty compensation in exchange for interacting with them. On the other hand, a group that is curious or even sympathetic to fantasy (but not enough to want to give up refrigerators and microwave ovens) is just as likely as any echan adventurer to help a dragon-ravaged village out of the goodness of their hearts (and for the less philanthropic, the lure of the dragon's hoard applies as much to techans as it does to unlikely heroes out for adventure). As the techan game lends itself strongly to military or paramilitary groups, those with no opinion one way or the other may be content to simply follow their orders. Regardless of their motivations, though, techans tend to view all echans as essentially the same, until they are confronted by the realms of variation throughout the world. A techan adventure, despite being very focused, should take care to accentuate both the common and the epic fantasy elements: these are all new and unique experiences to the characters, and even if they try to shut them out, they cannot help but be affected by the novelty.

An echan group does not need to define its position relative to the bastion-born, but each individual should consider where they come from and how that background relates to the world at large. An ex-slaver from Baruch Malkut is going to relate very differently to a Limshau damaskan than a knight of the Bulwark. A party from Limshau and a party from Seliquam might be equally cosmopolitan, but the one comes from a background of cooperation and cultural exchange while the other comes from an untrusting, cutthroat society. Additionally, while echans are broadly more experienced with the wonders of the world than techans, most are just as isolated, having never traveled more than a few miles from their homes, or ventured off the beaten paths if they are habitually nomadic. They are used to the standard elements of the fantasy world – the diversity of peoples, the idea of magic if not

necessarily all its implementations, the dangers of the wild – but they are also aware that there are many things in the world that they have not seen yet. An echan adventure should accentuate the differences between the characters' home experiences and what they encounter on the road, or the strange similarities that can arise despite very different circumstances.

TALENTS

Techan and echan parties each have some things they can do that the other cannot. Obviously, the techan group cannot perform magic, and while some may have access to sufficiently advanced technology that can replicate some of its effects, that technology must be carefully guarded and rationed. An echan party has more reliable access to efficient healing, large-scale damage effects, powers that boost individual prowess, and spells and items with the potential to change the way they think about obstacles. An adventure for such a group must take into account the possibility that someone can fly over a wall to open a gate from the inside, or use magic to read a hostile courtier's mind and devise a counter for his arguments the night before their audience with the king.

A techan team, while lacking the ability to affect the world in such profound and unusual ways, has a slightly broader base of power. They are better able to compensate for one another's' deficiencies. With very few exceptions, any techan can use any other techan's equipment, so very rarely will the outcome of a plan depend entirely on one character's special abilities: techans have more latitude to adapt as a result. As their abilities focus on improving the ability of the group rather than the individual, their damage output and defensive ability are more consistent than an echan party, and while they do not have ready access to instant healing, they do have fortress-like vehicles that they can retreat to when the going gets tough. An adventure for a techan group should account for their ability to take down large numbers of low-powered enemies without much difficulty, their ability to amplify their effectiveness with concentrated fire or explosives against more potent threats, and their power to overcome or simply demolish physical obstacles, depending on what means of transportation they have access to.

ADVERSITY

The most crucial consideration for any techan party is the threat of disruption. Sooner or later, all their nifty toys are going to break, and oftentimes their survival depends on their ability to either repair them or find some way to do without them. As a result, techan parties rarely venture far from home, as it is too difficult to find replacement parts far from their bastion of origin. Techans will never find useable treasure in the hordes of the monsters they dispatch. Any technology they might find would have been disrupted and rendered useless after such long-term exposure, and the only value magical items might have for such a group is the paltry amount they would be able to sell them for at the nearest village, since the prolonged exposure to EDF required to find a suitable buyer is rarely worth the risk. As a practical consideration to ensure the characters do not fall behind the curve expected by the game, treasure drops for techans should rarely include magical items unless those items have major plot significance (and that importance should be made obvious at the time). When fighting techan monsters (Iron Sons, MAX, etc.), this is not an issue, and salvaged technology can be a viable reward. Even if the enemy carries nothing that can be retrieved whole, it would be reasonable to award the group with an appropriate value in widgets a character with the Engineer skill can use to resupply and upgrade the group's equipment.

Another inevitability that techans must contend with is their own attitudes toward echa. Although there are exceptions, most techans have no idea how to relate to echans, and constantly risk causing offense with their perceived superiority complexes. They intrinsically view fantasy as something that doesn't belong in the world – a view which echans do not hold of them in turn, and which they will have to come to terms with in the event, increasingly likely with prolonged exposure, that they become saturated with magic and are unable to return to their home.

As much as techans do, echans must contend with the fact that the world at large is a dangerous place, and unlike techans they have less reliable refuges to retreat to. Echans as a whole do not have the same sense of solidarity that the bastion-born do, and the variety of peoples and attitudes throughout the civilized world, let alone the wilderness, means that they cannot be certain of how they will be treated from one settlement to the next. While the ability to freely use magic is a great help in defending against the unknown, the unknown can often use it right back, frequently with more expertise. Furthermore, while anyone in an echan party can benefit from magic, only a few can actually use it, and if those few are somehow incapacitated, the group's collective effectiveness is substantially reduced.

Closeness with the fantasy world can be a double-edged sword, because the problem with magic is that it is inherently chaotic. Familiarity breeds contempt, and that can be deadly when one expects to easily dispatch a clutch of mindless puggs and instead falls into a pit trap contrived by one of the few wily ones. Forejudgment is a particular problem for fae, who are accustomed to homogeneity within populations: even a Limshau damaskan would have difficulty understanding that challenging the tough but good-natured barbarian to an arm-wrestling contest, despite being certain to lose, would be a better way to get information out of a group of rival adventurers than defeating his touchy wizard companion in a battle of wits. An echan group must be constantly made to realize how much they don't know about their own

world, preferably in the most inconvenient way possible.

MIXED GROUPS

Though the game separates fantasy and technology by default, the dominant theme of the setting is the interaction rather than the segregation of the two. While normally this applies on a macro-scale, it can just as easily apply to interactions within the party. Mixed groups have hurdles, but this has never stopped them from trying. All that is required is a suitable justification for why echans and techans would be working together. The biggest consideration from a gameplay perspective is the impact of disruption on the team dynamic. The GM should monitor this situation carefully: if the party is getting constantly tripped up by the default disruption rules, consider adopting one of the less punitive variants in the interests of the group's fun.

In a standard group, the most common mix is the inclusion of a single outsider. Perhaps techans have allowed a fantasy character in their fold to help them with diplomacy and regional expertise. Maybe a techan has fallen prey to the lure of enchantment. As not all 'echan' humans actually generate EDF, the inclusion of a single non-mage human may not actually impact a techan party at all. A mage or a fae (gimfen aside) would be a different matter, as consideration would have to be made for their effect on the group's technology. Furthermore, as many techan adventures promulgate the cause of technology over magic, a truly echan character would have to be highly unusual to hold similar goals.

A lone techan amidst fantasy characters would have more difficulty. Most techans leaving bastions on their own are tourists looking for a temporary escape into enchantment. They keep to the main roads like the Continental Cross, never witnessing the hardships of those living under fear of pugg or bogg attack. They travel to a secured and safe echan nation like Limshau or Salvabrooke, have a happy little adventure among the elves, and return thinking they have gone rugged and tackled the harsh world. If forced to endure for long in that world, their equipment will start to fail, and unless they have the expertise to maintain it on their own (or can make friends with a gimfen mechanic) they may soon have to become echan themselves if they want to survive. Mixed echan-dominant groups are therefore more likely to contain two techans than a single one. If a lone techan joins an echan party, it may be reasonable for the GM to create an NPC party member with the necessary technical skills that the player character lacks.

PATTERNS OF LANDSCAPE

In fiction, the focus of the quest is the journey rather than the goal. The lands that they pass through should take up more of the party's attention than what awaits them at their destination. In order to retain the sense of familiarity versus otherness, *Amethyst*'s regions are only broadly defined, allowing the GM to populate them with wonders as the adventure requires. The following general descriptions can aid the GM in converting adventures from other sources to *Amethyst*'s world. Over the course of a single adventure, the party should travel to between one and three locations: even if they remain within the same region (or even the same city), every adventure should involve going somewhere amazing and seeing something fantastic.

Abidan: Abidan is a civilized and well-populated country with little excitement to offer adventurers beyond those serving on the Wall. Though not as safe as Limshau, Abidan is blessed with friendly neighbors and a solid infrastructure, albeit one constantly under threat of pagus attack (only really a consideration for the inhabitants of Janoah – most others feel themselves perfectly safe). Unlike Limshau, Abidan is more like a traditional fantasy kingdom – it actually has a king, for one thing, and knights and priests as well as wizards. Its strong basis in religion but lack of a single state-sponsored church makes it less prone to corruption than other nations, with such occurrences being largely limited to the outer fringes. Abidan is most suitable as a homeland or base for an echan party, the destination for a delivery or escort quest, the site of a great battle between forces of good and evil, or merely as an example of what Man is capable of if the best parts of his nature are indulged.

Baruch Malkut: Konig's kingdom would less likely be a passing diversion and more appropriately a major element of a larger quest, if not the catalyst of the quest itself. The rich live in fabulous mansions and employ every type of magical convenience, their wealth ensured by the slave-tended fields. The poor are crowded into cities with inadequate sanitation and amenities, denied the ability to read and better themselves, and conditioned to accept the word of the theocracy as fact. Thieves and assassins lurk in the shadows. The swamps that surround the cities are rife with bandits, slavers, and other examples of human monsters. Chaparran and damaskan guerillas striking back against their oppressors are unlikely to distinguish would-be heroes from Malkut mercenaries, and may attack without asking questions. Players venturing into Baruch Malkut must always be on guard against everything around them.

Bastions: Bastions are launching points and home bases for techan groups, but rarely quest goals. Each bastion has a slightly different attitude toward echans, but all ultimately want to keep them out. Nevertheless, an echan party might be forced to penetrate bastion defenses on a retrieval or a rescue mission; a techan group might defect from their own society or infiltrate an enemy bastion, and have to use stealth to evade the authorities or steal away secrets. Non-humans will have the most difficulty in a bastion-based adventure, as their physical traits immediately give them away: pointy

ears are a lot harder to disguise than just wearing a wide headband, not to mention that their mere presence shorts out high-tech equipment, making them fairly easy to track. Angel and York are the most obvious bastions for an echan party to infiltrate, whereas Mann is the most exciting and dangerous option for anyone to try to sneak into: the other bastions are simply too hard to actually *get* to for the purposes of most adventures.

Enchanted Forests: Dawnamoak, the triad of Laurama, Skepsis and Tranquiss, the forests to the north of York, and the various other mystical woods of Canam are perilous places even for those with a right to be beneath their eaves. The traditional role of a forest in a fantasy quest is as an obstacle that must be passed through, and the denizens of the woods do not make this easy. Chaparrans value their privacy and will attempt to hinder those who approach lacking their blessing, and outright attack those who come with hostile intent. The beasts that inhabit the woods are liable to treat any adventurer they come across as food, and some of them are intelligent enough to set traps for the unwary. Even the trees may resist onward passage. Traveling through a forest should be as dangerous, if not more so, than traveling through the mountains. Rarely will any of the chaparran settlements within the woods be the destination of a quest, but they may be a waypoint where a party stops to gain knowledge of how to proceed.

Fargon: Myth and literature are full of tales of the wonders of the dwarven underground halls, and many a quest has such a citadel as its terminus. The reality is slightly less impressive, as most narros living spaces are very dimly lit and tend to be somewhat claustrophobic for taller species (it being somewhat impractical to build high vaulted halls when you have to contain your city's entire population within a single mountain and your religion forbids digging too deep). That said, virtually every mountainside and peak in Fargon is replete with wide-eaved temples, as if all the architectural wonders of the Orient were crammed into a single mountain, and even the isolated, unpopulated regions are home to fantastic monuments. Fargon is a relatively peaceful place as narros aren't known for being bandits or thieves. However, the constant warfare between skegg and kodiak forces has upset the tranquility of the nation, and the farther east characters travel, the greater the threat; furthermore, dragons and beasts of cold claim mountains the narros dare not touch. Fargon is the most remote of Canam's civilized lands, and is most likely to be seen either as the homeland of a wandering echan party or as the destination of a quest, perhaps to craft a particularly potent magical item, to study an ancient magical or martial technique, or to slay some ancient monster of legend.

Kannos: Assaults from the Sana Marsh, with boggs and skeggs approaching from the north and waves of puggs shifting from the west, means that no caravan is safe in Kannos. All merchants have mercenaries guarding their interests. Lost merchandise needs to be reacquired. Burnt wagons are an often sight on Kannos roads, and sellswords never go hungry. The larger cities have rarely suffered attacks, but they have dangers of their own: opportunistic businessmen, arrogant nobles itching for a fight, the organized crime that comes with a highly capitalistic society, bored mercenaries between jobs, and inconstant attitudes towards outsiders make for an interesting, if not necessarily a dangerous sojourn. Along the roads between the distant settlements, opportunities for side-quests are plentiful. Kannos is perhaps the most typical of all the human kingdoms, showcasing neither the best nor the worst of humanity in a neo-medieval world, but plentiful elements of both the bad and the good.

Laudenia: There are any number of reasons for adventurers to travel to Laudenia, but actually getting there is difficult enough to be the focus of a quest on its own. Most people are only dimly aware of the existence of the laudenian capital and fewer still know anything about the network of floating castles that criss-cross the continent; most non-laudenian airships don't fly high enough to encounter them, and magic cloaks the keeps from idle scrutiny. The only ways of reaching the sky realm are by accident or by enlisting the aid of a laudenian willing to overcome their species' scruples for a good cause or good cash. Once there, the challenge becomes not being kicked straight back off again. Laudenia can be the ultimate destination of an adventure, or the party may travel there in search of powerful magic or secret lore, but whatever their reason, they will never be just passing through.

Limshau: Limshau is urbanized and safe. Travelers can pass from town to town with little fear of being assaulted by anything other than merchants. The walled cities are well guarded, with little bureaucracy and therefore little corruption. Every city is also a library and an academy, and whenever the party requires specialized knowledge to complete a quest, this is likely where they will go to find it. The outer villages are more typical fantasy fare as might be seen in any other setting – or would be, if they were not the only place on Earth that such settlements are common. Nowhere but Limshau are you likely to encounter settlements with at least a few members of every civilized species. Limshau is the Constantinople of the new world, the hub of trade between the urbane peoples of the continent, and the place where every adventurer will find herself eventually, even if just passing through.

Salvabrooke: The agrarian gimfen settlement is somewhat unique in not being often a destination nor a home base for a party. It is more of a waystation, an opportunity to stock up supplies, gather intel, possibly meet new friends, take in the majestic beauty of the lands within the ancient caldera, and generally play tourist in a relatively safe environment. It is fairly easy to get to from anywhere, for all the various threats in between, and may serve as a staging area to reach more inaccessible regions of the continent.

Seliquam: While collectively as cosmopolitan as Limshau, Seliquam is a political viper's nest of

conflicting interests and cultural grandstanding. Mixed communities are common, but usually no more than two or three species at a time, and homogenous settlements still outnumber them. Despite the fact that this is the only place in Canam where one can see a kodiak walking down a town street and nobody will bat an eyelid, where castle ramparts are patrolled by riflemen, and where ancient narros monuments can be seen without the long trek to Fargon, most Seliquam communities are intensely suspicious of outsiders, and adventurers must earn their welcome. Thankfully, there are plenty of opportunities to do so: the lands to the north and the south are replete with ruins and treasures waiting to be explored and cleaned of their monstrous filth. A quest from one end of Seliquam to the other would pass through every type of fantasy cliché, and even a few venturing beyond fantasy.

Wastelands: It is ill-advised to linger in such places. There are few settlements of any kind and those that do exist tend to be hostile to outsiders. Most have been uninhabited since the Hammer fell, and so any ruins or dungeons of interest are few and far between. More vicious and unusual monsters can be found in the wastelands, making them of greater usefulness for monster hunting quests, and caches and artifacts of the last age of Man tend to surface more often in such places, having had fewer adventurers survive the process of picking them over. Of the great wastelands of Canam, only Xixion provides much general adventuring opportunities because of its location and proximity to the ancient centers of civilization: the other lands are far more remote and hazardous to travel in, and are more likely to be the focus of a more epic quest.

THE SINGLE STONE

The following short adventure can serve as the group's introduction to the *Amethyst* setting, or serve as a campaign seed for a more experienced group. It involves travelling to different locations, researching the history of the setting, and fighting off some truly fiendish foes. Simultaneously, the party will involve themselves in a conspiracy that may take them across the world and involve enemies singular and powerful as well as numerous and influential. They will find evil parading in the light and allies hiding in shadows.

This is an adventure for four to five 1st-level characters of either echan or techan origin; the specific events do not change, though certain obstacles along the way may. Although this adventure can serve as the starting point for a campaign focused on the Amethyst relics, the party is under no compulsion to follow this path at the adventure's conclusion. Where they go after this is for you and the group to decide.

SUMMARY

Greedy or generous, techan or echan, the group of heroes stumbles upon or is sent to investigate the rotting carcass of a crashed transport plane. No one is sure where it came from or where it was going, but apparently its sole purpose was to transport a small item a great distance: the Amethyst amulet. Little does the group know that they are not the only ones aware of this crash, for a rival organization has been tasked to take the amulet for themselves and eliminate any obstacles.

ECHAN INVOLVEMENT

The characters are on their way to Limshau, but before they arrive they are asked to escort a merchant caravan along the Continental Cross. When a band of boggs attack and make off with a rare piece of treasure, the players will give chase and stumble upon the plane wreckage, starting their quest.

TECHAN INVOLVEMENT

Regardless of which bastion the players are from, they should be around the bastion of Angel when they are dispatched to a specific set of coordinates and investigate an aircraft from another bastion that crashed on its way to Angel. This may be a normal mission for this group or their first outing from the walls. The story begins just outside of Crax in Antikari.

SECTION I: THE CARBON CRUCIFIX

If the players are chasing boggs, they will encounter them at the following location. If they are travelling here intentionally, then they will be ambushed. As the heroes press through the forest, read or paraphrase the following:

You push through the heavy foliage and come upon a tree stouter than the others. The sheen of its silver skin glints in a fading sunset. Only two branches reach from its peak, spreading its arms to the sky. Jagged roots have sliced into the soft dirt, an invader among its neighbors of wood.

The towering centurion left a scar of ashes and death behind it when it fell from heaven. This was not some great hammer of god cast to Earth but a machine made from the hands of men. Where once it obeyed undeniable rules to allow its flight, now a carcass rests to prove the chaos of a new age. From dirt to sky, it stands taller than most trees.

This is the tail section of a very large aircraft. Over 100 feet tall, it's still only a small section of the monstrosity it once was. It plainly does not come from anywhere around here.

Knowledge (history) DC20: The craft comes from Porto—the utopian bastion known to prosper far across the ocean. How it got here would be an obvious question without a speedy answer. Though Porto has been known to send flights as far west as Angel, they rarely send more than one a decade. To find a wreck would be a rare prize indeed. Porto flaunts the greatest

technology of the planet, though the chances of any of it still working by this point would be slim.

Perception DC20: A successful check will net 300 uc in widgets from the wreckage.

ENCOUNTER

If the characters are chasing the boggs, they only have a few brief moments before reinforcements arrive. If not, the group is ambushed by a horde that has been using the towering tail of the aircraft as their chief's hut.

2400 XP

- 1 Skegg Inciter
- 2 Bogg Rakes
- 4 Bogg Scabbs

The chief, although a skegg and thus of superior stock, wasn't bright enough to understand the distinctiveness of his metallic keep. He stacked crates and used them to form a throne without bothering to attempt breaking them open, not that the steel reinforced plastic boxes would have yielded to his simple tools. The locking mechanism is intricate and far beyond his limited intelligence.

There are three boxes, two larger ones the skegg used as armrests and one small one he used as a seat. The security on each box is a mechanical but complex disk tumbler lock, making it difficult to break. An *open lock* spell will open it instantly: any other magic used on the box will cause the lock to fuse and require brute force to open.

Each box has AC 2, HP 100; Break DC25

BOX	LABEL	LOCK DC	CONTENTS
1-Large	Security	24	4 disruption patches, 3 sets of handcuffs
2-Large	Emergency	24	Contents of one Standard Techan Adventurers Kit
1-Small	See below	22	See Below

The small box carries the label, "Open under controlled conditions—Disruption Hazard" but no other indicators. It also appears the lock has suffered some damage and may be easier to pick. Upon opening it, read or paraphrase the following:

Echan: *Your hands roll through fluttering pieces of snow that feel neither cold nor wet and refuse to melt in the warmth of your hand.*

Techan: *Your fingers rifle through the packing foam. You can see a faint violet glow through the packing.*

You reach in and curl your fingers around the light, and from the box you pull a strange purple jewel. Four pearlescent silver dragon's claws are clamped around the outer edges of the unrefined, almost jagged gem. The fingers of the lizard coil around back, not to a hand, but across to other fingers. Two golden loops could support a chain if one were so inclined to flaunt the amulet from his or her neck.

If any of the players attempt a closer look (or with an additional DC18 Perception), read or paraphrase the following:

You notice movement within, as glints of light jolt through the imperfections in the jewel, like lightning bolts arcing from one side of the gem to the other, following the sharp angles of the stone. No outside light source reflects in it, but it does reflect your faces perfectly in the glossy finish. It also gives off its own light; visible only when staring past the arcs of sparks, into the heart of the rock itself. This is unusual even for magic.

At night, this item glows much brighter. Though magical, no one can identify its properties or origin. No spell can discern any information about it. Its oddest property is that for some reason, the item does not disrupt technology.

Techans have no chance of identifying the item on their own, and echans will find it difficult without access to a library. Either way, Limshau is the obvious next destination.

Knowledge (arcana) DC22: Obviously a magical item, this relic was likely forged by a wizard of great power: the Pleroma lettering running down one side of the setting proves that. But enchanted jewels never glow with an internal furnace like this one. This is a natural enchantment that someone later set into an amulet.

Trained Only: One of the Pleroma letters has been marred by a gash, possibly from a powerful sword strike. Further, this is most likely created by human hands: chaparrans would set it in wood; tenenbri wouldn't have used only one metal, and narros would not have used one as mundane as silver; gimfen have few competent wizards and none of this caliber; and neither damaskans nor laudenians would have allowed such an artifact to become lost in the first place. This leaves a human mage, but there have been very few of those on this continent of any significant power.

Knowledge (religion) DC22: There is a faith based around the dragon god, Amethyst, but this is not a symbol of faith (though it is obviously made to resemble one). The markings on one side are Pleroma, indicating it was made by a mage.

Knowledge (history) DC24 (only if both the above checks succeed): To cause a gash on a magic item of this magnitude would require a powerful enchanted weapon. The only notable account of a duel between a powerful mage and an equally adept swordsman comes from Lauropan history, and the mutual destruction of the mage Torfin Gendron and the fanatical knight Wilhelm Myre.

SECTION 2: BY THE BOOKS

When the heroes arrive at Limshau, read or paraphrase the following:

They call them the White Walls of Limshau—a maze of dense stone and adobe walls dozens of miles across, radiating from a central archive. It holds the combined knowledge of a hundred nations, modern and extinct. One could find the rhythmic dance rituals of the chaparrans or the spastic drum beats of the narros. Look further and one could even stumble across tomes smuggled from the human bastions. Diligently, the damaskan fae and humans of Limshau maintain their city. Ten storeys tall and virtually uniform in texture, the white walls encircle the entire library, every branch, every building. The wall twinkles in the orange sun. The marble facing of the granite walls seem fragile at first… until you realize how thick the barrier really is.

When the heroes pass through the gates, they must check their weapons with the storehouse. Only custodians and the militia are allowed weapons in the city. Clever deceit or sleight of hand may allow smaller weapons to cross but anything bigger than a short sword would be confiscated. The guards provide detailed receipts for everything before passing the party through.
When the heroes enter the city, read or paraphrase the following:

Limshau is orderly, calm, and beautiful. Hundreds move without a shove in the streets. The various buildings blend together in uniformity. Footbridges pass overhead, connecting higher buildings. As you wander deeper, the city grows taller, bridges criss-crossing over each other as the levels climb. A pair of leather-clad custodians with katana at their backs chats with merchants. An orange-haired gimfen stands atop his cart, selling various silks gathered from his village to the northwest. A few legal tall-eared scarlet women promote their pleasures from a second level window.

A huge form eclipsing the rising sun bathes the street in shadow. You glance up to see the silvery-white skin of a 1,200-foot long airship floating over the walls with hardly a whisper. Only a small cabin hangs underneath the perfectly smooth untarnished body, with most of the crew and passengers resting comfortably inside the superstructure. Propellers bigger than men spin as the vessel slows towards the mooring tower at the city center.

Limshau is enormous and the heroes may feel somewhat confused on where to start. If they have never been to Limshau before, this is a perfect opportunity to get lost and pick up some local color while they search for the arcane history stacks. If they do not wish to wander, any passing librarian or custodian can direct them to the appropriate branch. Once they begin searching around the branch, they can introduce themselves to the local chief librarian, a human female named **Inara Setinga**, and the custodian assigned to this branch this week, a damaskan male, **Baelin Stonesthrow**. Both will help the best they can.

Special: The library grants a +6 inherent bonus to Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (religion), and Knowledge (history) to the above checks to identify the amulet, with an additional +2 from Inara and +1 from Baelin if the characters enlist their help. They may attempt a new roll every day.

Succeeding on all three checks allows the group to discover a book giving a rough history of the amulet, identifying it as Stormcage, Torfin's most prized magical possession. The book does not go into detail about the amulet's powers or history, only that Torfin found the indestructible amethyst stone and created the setting to place it into.

If asked about further avenues of research, either Baelin or Inara will volunteer the following:

"There is someone that might be able to help. He's an expert on lingering legends and relics that refuse to be buried. A very devout man, too, but we won't hold that against him. His name is Filipe Paraerra-sensei. You'll find him in the Philosophy branch of the University."

FILIPE PARAERRA

Paraerra is not an old man with worn and weary eyes, pinching his nose when his heavy glasses strain his head, but barely into his 40s, 230 lbs. Of toned muscle. He is not about brute strength but total physical perfection. As an athlete, he could outrun the stoutest of knights even without their laden steel. He is also a Buddhist. When the heroes enter his classroom, they find thirty students of various ethnicities, ages, and races squatting straight-backed upon mats placed erratically about the room. The desks have been pushed to the walls. No one pays the heroes any mind, regardless of how they enter and how they look. They find Paraerra at the head, wrists resting on his knees, addressing the room.

"Does the pursuit of truth without finding it have purpose?" Paraerra asks slowly, almost at a whisper. "You will find evil if you chose to seek evil. You will find faith if you chose to seek faith. But do not seek truth. A drive to find a truth will lead to faith, and will be perceived only in your eyes as fact. Truth…is what you find along the way of seeking. Truth…is stumbled upon, never fought for. The same it is with the salvation of the soul. The harmony we establish within ourselves, the love we accept, comes along the path, never at the end. Faith, belief, are yours to claim … truth is for all of us." He looks over the group, then rubs his palms together. "This week, pick one of the following books. Have it read by the end of the month. We'll then discuss them at length, including the possibility that I may have wasted your time in the assignment. Fear & Loathing by Soren Kierkegaard,

Prophetic Fragments by Cornel West, Novum Organum by Francis Bacon, or The High Cost of Death by Marikama."

The class files out, passing the heroes looks ranging from curiosity and confusion to annoyance, leaving Paraerra alone. He makes one passing glance at the heroes and says, *"By your presentation, I assume you're not nihilists."*

The heroes can present their information and what they have learned. If they have not solved the previous skill checks by this point, he'll answer it for them, giving the heroes any information they may need about the item. It may take him a few minutes and he would have to see the artifact, but he will be successful against all the checks required. Beyond this, he confirms the unique powers of this item.

"It's as powerful as a foundation spell but apparently requires no sacrifice for its use. It's also possible it gains in power with its owner. The markings on the inside suggest that. You have in your possession a powerful relic that binds the arcane with faith, a declaration even I must acknowledge is more than a little incongruous. There could only be one other explanation, but that answer does not lie with me."

<Response>

"If you'll permit me a momentary indulgence, I believe I know where the answer rests."

<Response>

"As with everything else in Limshau, this truth rests in the pages of a book."

Although there is a library branch dedicated to the history of relics, there is also another smaller one doubling as a museum, dedicated to the study of the relics themselves. Paraerra believes what the heroes seek is there and decides to help them look for it. The book in question is the *Chronicle of Aurannis*. The chronicle was once part of the great *Bible of Drasago*, the holy book written by dragons, but was removed due to its length. Unlike the other gospels, Aurannis' collection does not enchant the user if read but is still magical itself. Paraerra flipped through it once and could have sworn to have seen a relic like this amethyst among its pages.

When the group arrives at the specific branch, Paraerra questions the librarian, an attractive damaskan elf wearing bifocals named **Chenai Pagekeeper**. She has some unfortunate news as she leads them to the location in the branch the book was kept: it has been stolen.

"I hate to say, we lost that tome recently. It even carried a marker to prevent theft, but obviously they found some way around that. The book was taken not more than a few days ago. Interesting that nothing else was stolen."

This is obviously not coincidence but who would take it is a mystery. If the heroes ask the significance of the amulet, Filipe answers with, "*From what I remember reading, if the fragments of his heart are brought together at place of his death, Amethyst can be brought back … and then the armies of order will have no hope against the power of his will.*"

Filipe doesn't know how many fragments there are or how powerful they have the potential to be. All of that was in the book. Limshau will also offer a 2,000 gp reward for the book's retrieval.

TO FIND THE CHRONICLE

The *Chronicle of Aurannis* was stolen by thieves belonging to a techan mercenary company known as the **Iron Sons**, a cell-based organization and one of the largest and most successful free companies in the world. This cell operates out of the crumbling kingdom of Torquil, and is currently heading back to wait at their rendezvous in the abandoned keep of Zellis.

If the players inquire about the theft, Chenai is very forthcoming.

"The last people to look at the book were a pair of techans, judging from the way they were dressed. At least, they were wearing techan-style combat fatigues. One sported a badge on his arm—a sun dipping below a line with a solid sphere of wrought iron below. They just flipped through the book briefly, then left without a word."

Knowledge (history) DC20 (Techan) or DC25: This is the symbol of the Iron Sons. They operate across the continent, but most bastions technically classify them as a terrorist organization, so they operate like a secret society, soliciting contracts privately rather than advertising their services. Rumor has it that a major cell is operating out of Torquil.

If nobody is able to make the above check, they are directed to the lead custodian in charge of the investigation: a human, **Robin Hataori**. While he suspects the Iron Sons to be responsible, he is unable to track them beyond the city gates, having ascertained from the gate guards' registers that a group of five arrived in the city four days ago and left again the next day, heading west. Among their equipment were several disruption muffler bags, which any techan in the party realizes could be used to shield the chronicle against magical alarms and scrying. Hataori presently lacks the manpower required to track the Iron Sons and has been engaged in research to try to narrow down their possible destinations: if the heroes offer to help, they can make the above check with a +4 bonus. On a

success, Paraerra-sensei suggests that Zellis keep is the most obvious destination, as it is the closest. On a failure, Hataori is only able to suggest that the heroes may be able to pick up the trail again in Antikari.

If the heroes note that it seems odd to entrust the recovery of a valuable tome to a bunch of perfect strangers (especially if they are techans), Hataori tells them that he has perfect faith in their abilities and trusts to their word and the offer of the reward to bring them back once they've found the thieves. After they leave, he also dispatches two custodian apprentices to follow them secretly and make sure that the book comes back to Limshau. These shinobi are too well trained to be noticed by the heroes and will not intervene overtly: their only purpose is insurance (and to take over the mission should the heroes fail).

SECTION 3: SHADOW OF TORQUIL

From Limshau to Zellis is two weeks by horse, one week by ground vehicle, and four days by air. If they are certain of their destination, Hataori will commission a thermal to transport them to Antikari: otherwise, Paraerra will offer to hire them horses and sufficient stores for the journey (if they have their own transport, the offer of supplies still stands). If they are tracking the group via ground travel, the journey is much longer but would be an opportune time to insert one or two random encounters.

THE JOURNEY

If traveling by land, the group keeps to the Continental Cross for most of the journey. The cross is a beaten path that connects the bastion of Angel, through House Antikari and House Orchis, and finally to Limshau. The highway is inconsistently paved, being little more than a wide dirt road in some places, gravel in others, even asphalt in a few, depending on the resources available to the house or kingdom that maintains that stretch. The road is commonly used by thousands of people. A traveler can count on at least three encounters with fellow wayfarers or caravans every day. Wandering shops sell trinkets from the backs of wagons. Some carts stay together for protection, creating nomadic markets that roam the road, never straying apart. The most well-known is the Arciducha, a caravan of 35 wagons selling fine clothes, rare foods, and even protective lodging between Antikari and Gnimfall, usually staying near Limshau borders, where the road is patrolled more frequently. When the group reaches Antikari, they easily pick up the trail of the Iron Sons, which requires them to break from the road and push through Crax.

ENCOUNTER

Pugg raid. Swarms of puggs storm from the forest. They emerge 10 at a time for four rounds.

1950 XP (reduced because the enemy arrives in waves)
40 Puggs

After three days through Crax, the group pushes through an opening into a huge valley, where they can see the majesty that once was Zellis Keep.

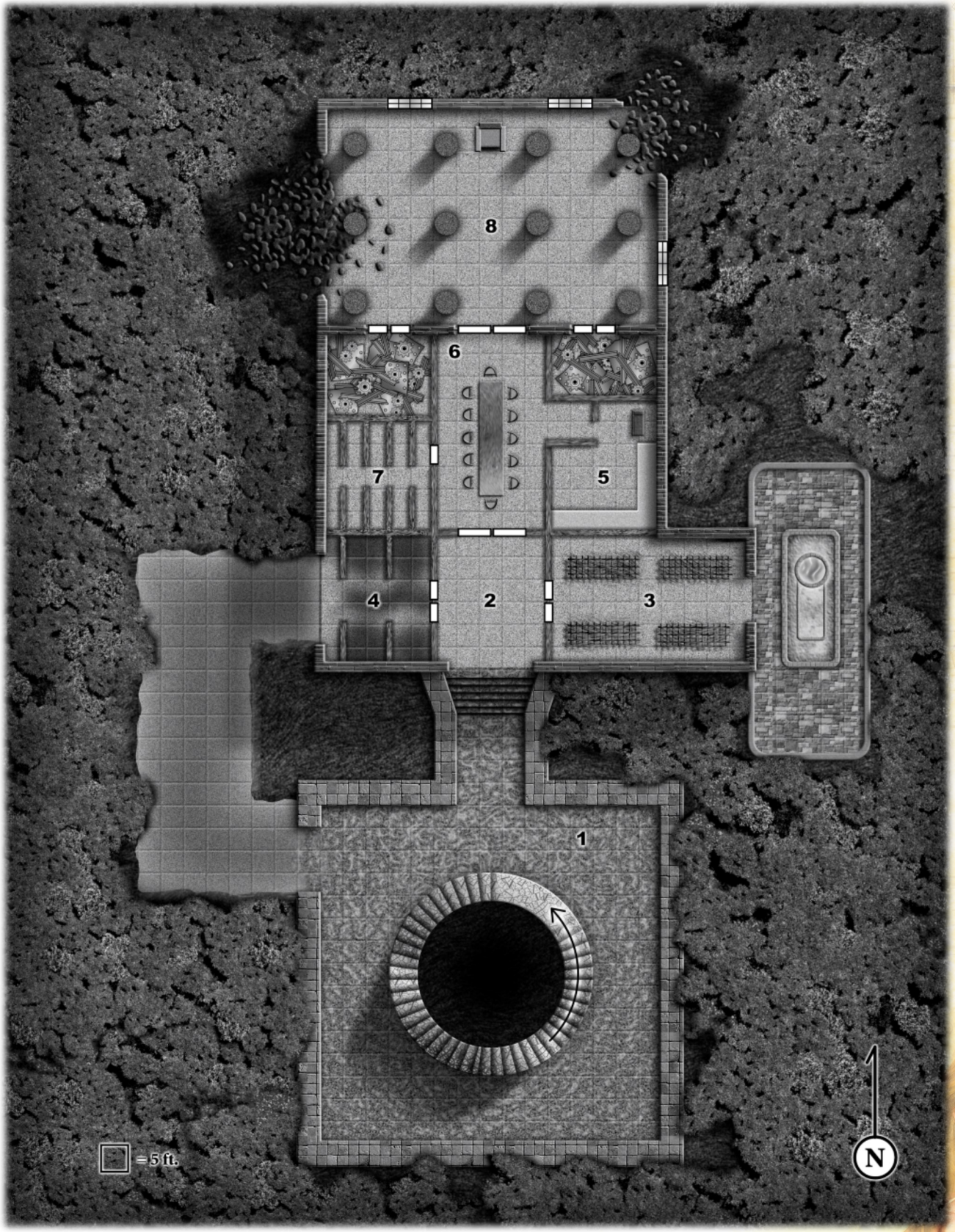
THE TOWER OF ZELLIS

Read or paraphrase the following:

The peak holds just enough room for the keep constructed atop it. Many of the battlements overhanging the cliff point down rather than across. The outer walls and towers curve at every corner to deflect siege works, though no ballista, catapult or trebuchet could reach this height. Only cannon could breach these walls. Battlements circle the keep with three rows of embrasures atop each other. Hundreds of arbalests could rain straight down with gravity as their ally. Buttresses from the sides of the mountain rise up to join the walls of the castle. Most likely, the same construction of the mountain catacombs was employed in the building of the fort. The blackness of the entrance is reflected in the outer wall of the keep, formed of huge slabs to prevent handholds. The construction must have taken the kingdom a king's lifetime to complete. Those who planned its construction never lived to see its completion. Now, moss and weeds have crept up the sides and breached the indestructible walls. Grass pushes from arrow slits. Most of the castle has crumbled into ruin.

As the group reaches the base of the tower, read or paraphrase the following:

Though the wood rotted a century ago, the massive opening still remains, three storeys tall. The main door sits at the back of a thirty-foot corridor into the side of the mountain. The lintel above, carved from polished limestone, took an army to lift into place. It stretches from the doorframe, across the ceiling, sticking out of the entrance just far enough for a pair of weathered soapstone dragons, no bigger than a man, to perch, greeting those who entered. Their wings have long since broken to stumps, the gems encrusting their eyes stolen. Both walls around the architrave are divided by intersecting lines, opening squares wide enough for a man to reach to either end with his fingertips. Several engravings fill a few openings. At least two show bears, one foraging on all fours, the second rearing back to ward off enemies. Another image is of a great spread-winged eagle. A few others show animals lesser known, spawn species finding form after the wave of magic


8
6
7
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4
2
3
1
= 5 ft.
N

swept the globe: short, squatty puggs, flightless cockatrice, and various boggs.

There is significant damage to the entrance door, having broken from all but one hinge, opening the inner chamber to the light outside. As the players enter the keep's entrance, they spot three fresh corpses. Everything of value from weapons to gear has been stripped.

Perception DC15: A close examination reveals deep slashes across their chests, most likely from a talon rather than a knife. What remains of their clothing indicates a techan origin but anything more than that is a mystery.

There is a shaft of light coming from up ahead but the passage between entrance and light is long and dark. When the heroes reach the shaft, read or paraphrase the following:

You reach the light. Cylindrical and wide enough to fit an adult dragon, the shaft carries up through the entire mountain to an opening to the sky. There might have been glass or shutters at the top, but no longer. Unfiltered daylight glints off the embedded crystallized chips within the granite. The bouncing bands are visible through floating dust. Stone and wood beams run across the shaft, climbing up the sides all the way to the light. The sound of sporadic rain dapples to the ground level. A spiraling pathway orbits the tunnel to the top. The path is wide enough for a two horse-drawn carts abreast.

The crossing beams of wood and stone form part of a complicated pulley system, connecting by sprockets and chains to a warped wooden gondola suspended halfway up the shaft. The system is surprisingly well maintained and complicated, using the pulleys as a way to lift the gondola instead a bulky counterweight. It even appears automatic, requiring no slaves to strain in its use. If anyone attempts to use it, the entire construction will fall apart, raining wood and steel to the base. Everyone must make a DC15 Reflex save or take 1d6+4 points of damage (save half).

The collapse ricochets and reverberates through the entire mountain. Unfortunately, the heroes must climb all the way to the keep above.

THE KEEP OF ZELLIS

Timetable: The climb is lengthy. No matter what happens as they ascend, the group arrives at the peak near sunset.

AREA I: GARDENS

As the heroes reach to the top of the passage, read or paraphrase the following:

To slowly crumble through centuries is not a fate fitting for such a keep. The granite stone of the castle will take eons to fall to dust. The potential for recovery still lingers in its foundation. Yet, no one has come to claim its prize. The fragments of House Torquil have enough problems maintaining their keeps in the south; other free houses are too far east. Not to mention, the new tenants would also need to act graciously to the chaparrans of nearby Dawnamoak. But even considering the costs of maintenance, it's still quite the treasure in itself, rivaling anything stolen from its coffers since the empire's collapse. The surrounding lands are plentiful, and once cleared and secured the keep could be a stout defensive post. All one would need is ambition, masses of loyal indentured workers, and an army large enough to daunt neighbors.

When you burst into the late afternoon sun, you are greeted by a moss- and weed-plagued court. There had been glass covering the shaft at one point, and thick shards still jut from the sides. This beautiful court would have been covered with flowers and short grass surrounding a glass-covered pit where one could peer down into the bowels of the nation. Around the perimeter of the court, which fills half the peak, several broken windmills shudder rather than spin in the breeze. Across the field, you can see what remains of the keep itself.

Your attention, however, is diverted elsewhere as more than a dozen figures on the other side of the pit notice you and begin to approach. They wear loose mail and old blades but their cloak of velvet black appears cared for. Up the path to the keep, a roar bellows like a trumpet out of the entranceway. Under the shade of the keep, you see only the massive torso of a form twice the height of any of you.

Zellis is one of many abandoned castles and forts in the failed kingdom of Torquil. This one fell into darkness when a shemjaza attempted to seduce one of its two lords. Rejected, the demon set loose the shapeless wild upon the population. Most died in the carnage, others rose up as shapeless as they slept—a side effect of the curse the shapeless bring with them. Cultists followed, believing everlasting life awaits those that allow the shadow to embrace them. They are led by a necromancer, Katho Kovacs, who believes he has found a way to control the shapeless in the shemjaza's stead. Many of the shapeless are still here, hiding until night falls. Kovacs had been waiting outside the keep for sacrifices and found them when the Iron Sons arrived on their own business. Most of the Iron Sons have already fallen victim to the cultists.

The beast at the entrance to the keep is a kodiak the cultists have tortured into servitude and now guards the keep.

ENCOUNTER

The cultists are west and south of the pit. While most engage the heroes, at least one will run north to free the kodiak. The cultist requires two rounds to free the

kodiak, though he is killed immediately after by the beast (only Kovacs can control it). It enters combat the following round.

3200 XP (plus kodiak, below)
16 Disciples of Kovacs

The cultists hope to take the group alive, and tie them up until night arrives. Shapeless don't attack those sleeping or restrained, preferring to let their curse produce more of their kind. As the victim sleeps, their soul is devoured by a shadow that withers the body to dust and emerges fully formed as a shapeless. The cultists wish to join this order, believing their souls are reborn as immortals. Their leader believes he can control the wild and is hoping to create an army of shapeless under his control.

All this information can be retrieved by careful Interrogation of a captured cultist. These cultists are loyal to Kovacs but are apprehensive about dying, since this will prevent them being reborn as shapeless. If the fight goes badly and the disciples are unable to break the kodiak free, they will attempt to push past the kodiak and alert their master.

DISCIPLE OF KOVACS CR 1/2

XP 200
LE Medium humanoid
Init +0; **Senses** Normal; Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 10, flat-footed 15 (+3 armor, +2 shield)
hp 7 (1d8+2)
Fort +3, **Ref** +0, **Will** +0

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee ritual weapon (morningstar) +2 (1d8+3/×3)

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 10, **Con** 13, **Int** 8, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 8
Base Atk +0; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 12
Feats Power Attack
Skills Perception +2
Languages Common
SQ martyrdom

ECOLOGY

Environment any
Organization solitary, group of four, or cult 10-20, always in multiples of four.
Treasure NPC Gear (leather armor, heavy wooden shield, spear)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Martyrdom (Ex): For every 4 disciples that die in combat, every other disciple of Kovacs gains +1 to attack rolls and +1 to damage rolls (cumulative).

AREA 2. GATE GUARD

Read or paraphrase the following (ignore the second paragraph if the kodiak entered combat in the first encounter):

The massive oak gate doors lie slightly ajar, creaking in the wind. A portcullis has long since rusted and fallen to broken bars upon a granite path. The doors do not sit at the top of the stairs but a distance underneath an overhanging round archway thirty feet up. Unlike the rest of the keep, this construction has survived time with every impost still standing. The painted white stone has flaked from weather, creating a speckled finish. Two doors, nearly the size of the main entrance, stand to your left and right.

The beast you saw before waits for you to step closer. A tortured kodiak hurls phlegm from a tongueless maw, rough and jagged. Its grey and black fur covers every inch, right to its black claws. Still primitive, many kodiaks have been exploited by more intelligent beings

BROKEN KODIAK CR4

XP 1,200
N Medium animal (spawn)
Init +1; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 15 (+1 Dex, +6 natural)
hp 42 (5d8+20)
Fort +8, **Ref** +5, **Will** +2

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee 2 claws +10 (1d6+5 plus grab), bite +10 (1d6+5)
Special Attacks ravenous, straining at the leash, unstoppable onslaught

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 13, **Con** 19, **Int** 2, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 6
Base Atk +5; **CMB** +9 (+13 grapple); **CMD** 20 (24 vs. Trip)
Feats Endurance, Run, Skill Focus (Survival)
Skills Perception +6, Survival +7, Swim +10

ECOLOGY

Environment cold forests
Organization solitary
Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Ravenous (Ex): If an opponent scores a critical hit on the kodiak, it will attack the nearest creature on its next turn until it is dead. If there are multiple creatures within reach, it will attack enemies before allies. While *ravenous*, the kodiak gains +4 bonus to damage rolls.

Straining at the Leash (Ex): The kodiak can deal up to 10 damage to itself to inflict double that amount with its next successful attack.

Unstoppable Onslaught (Ex): When the kodiak charges, it gains +10 speed and ignores difficult terrain. It may only make bite attacks on the charge.

for their strength and brutality. This creature has been scared and tormented, broken and brainwashed into serving its captors. The once-proud warrior that could rise to its hind legs and hold onto tools with its claws has been reduced to nothing more than vicious guard dog.

ENCOUNTER

The kodiak can move within reach of every door but not beyond the archway. Every round it is injured, it can make a DC20 Strength check to break its chain. If it does, nothing will prevent it from trying to kill everything it sees.

AREA 3. ATRIUM

Read or paraphrase the following:

The influence of magic has had its way with the unmaintained plants of this garden. The atrium's glass roof has long since shattered and fallen to sharp fragments upon the stone floor. Four stone trellises in the room are overgrown by weeds and hanging ferns. On the opposite side of the room, it opens to the outside where you spy a moss- and algae-covered fountain.

The horticulturist that saw after these gardens grafted together several bizarre species and had others imported from all over the world. Unmaintained for all these decades, they crossbred and basked in the chaos of Attricana and now have turned into a mass of killing writhing thorns that lash out to anyone trying to cross.

ENCOUNTER

The mass waits until the group is between the trellises before surrounding the group. There is one for each trellis. They drag victims to their trellis where they can be devoured slowly with caustic juices.

XP 3200
4 Triffids

The fountain beyond is open the sky, outside of the keep. It is covered in mold and moss and the water is slick and sickening. A DC20 Perception check will reveal one of the following (roll 1d6, each result only occurs once):

1: A pouch with 4 gp, 10 sp, and a fingernail
2: A jade pendant worth 10 gp
3: Triffid poison (contact), 3 uses
4: A leather scabbard
5: A skeleton with 4 gold teeth (1 gp each)
6: Potion of Healing (50 gp)

TRIFFID CR 3

XP 800
N medium plant
Init +0; **Senses** blindsight 30 ft., low-light vision; **Perception** +1

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 15 (+6 natural)
hp 30 (4d8+12)
Fort +7, **Ref** +1, **Will** +2
Immune electricity, plant traits; **Resist** cold 10 and fire 10

OFFENSE

Speed 5 ft.
Melee slashing vines +7 (1d8+7 plus grab)
Ranged night quill +5 (1 point of damage plus special); 40 ft.
Space 5 ft.; Reach 10 ft.
Special Attacks constrict (1d8+7)

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 10, **Con** 16, **Int** —, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 9
Base Atk +3; **CMB** +8 (+12 with grapple); **CMD** 18 (can't be tripped)
SQ camouflage

ECOLOGY

Environment temperate forests
Organization solitary, pair, or patch (3–6)
Treasure incidental

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Camouflage (Ex): Since a triffid looks like a normal plant when at rest, a DC 20 Perception check is required to notice it before it attacks for the first time. Anyone with ranks in Survival or Knowledge (nature) can use either of those skills instead of Perception to notice the plant.

Night Quill (Ex): The triffid's alternate weapon is a poison dart, which it can fire up to a range of 50 feet. A target hit only suffers 1 point of damage but is inflicted with triffid poison. After using *night quill*, the triffid cannot use it again for 1d4 rounds.

Type poison, injury, contact; *Save* Fortitude DC14
Frequency 1/round for 2 rounds
Initial Effect: 1 Con damage; *Secondary Effect* unconscious for 1d3 hours; *Cure* 1 save

AREA 4: STABLES

Read or paraphrase the following:

The dozen horses the cultists had brought were once tied safely within the stables. Their bodies have been torn apart by the dark shape that refuses to show its form despite the light coming from the open stable door beyond. The shapeless form shifts and weaves under the bands of light cast through breaks in the wall. The creature casts no shadows. Its arms seem to vanish when covered by its body. Its eyes cast their own light, reflecting off matte silver claws.

ENCOUNTER

This is a shapeless wild that has woken early. Shapeless wild don't convert basic animals, only those with high intelligence. It immediately attacks. On round three, two more rise from a pile of hay.

600 XP

3 Shapeless Wild

Characters checking the horses notice the excessive level of violence inflicted on the poor animals. A Perception DC15 will locate the pouches and saddlebags the horses had when they were killed. In one, they find 30 sp; in another, a fine black powder used in some more nefarious rituals. There is food in two bags, although it has been saturated by horse entrails. Further searching will find a silver chain (2 gp), a diary detailing the obsessive desire to convert to the shadow of one Ennis Carson, and a single holy dragon scale (5 gp, though not many people will trade for it).

A Perception DC25 check will find a crushed silver and bronze goblet under one carcass. This is used often in rituals and is worth 120 gp given its current state.

There is an exit here that proceeds down a small dirt path, all the way around the keep, to the pit stairwell.

AREA 5: KITCHEN

This is the main kitchen of the banquet hall. Read or paraphrase the following:

A large stone counter jutting from all the walls of this kitchen rests under a coat of dust. An open oven still has its spit and a thick layer of char and burned bone. Blackened chairs sat at either side of the spit for unlucky servants to spin. Anything else in the room has long since been stolen save for a few broken steel bowls and a hanging rack of cast iron cookware, black as oil and slicker than ice. At the far corner sits a pile of old bodies, withered and dried like raisins.

The characters will have passed the chef's office (so he could check and double-check all the food that came and went). His papers are scattered, faded, and worthless. There are eight bodies in the corner, all naked and mummified to such a degree as to prevent any identification. They are decades old. Under the charcoal, a character can search against a DC20 Perception check to notice a small black lockbox amidst the ash. It has a simple lock (Disable Device DC18) and inside, the characters will find two gold wedding rings (2 gp each) and a silver pendant (10 gp).

AREA 6: BANQUET HALL

Read or paraphrase the following:

Instead of leading into a royal chamber, this keep opens directly into the banqueting hall. A long stained wood table extends for 25 feet down the length of the room. Worn but sturdy chairs surround the room. A large serving hatch connects the hall to the kitchen. A hallway beside the hatch leads to the head chef's office. Another door is closed on the opposite wall from the kitchen. Across from the entrance is an equally large set of oak doors, leading into the receiving chamber. Empty metal bars once held tapestries, and the nails in walls once hung paintings, but anything of value has been stolen. This makes the three bodies tied to chairs at the table all the more alarming.

Despite being bruised and bloodied, these match the descriptions of three of the five Iron Sons thieves. They are not dead, only deep asleep, suffering from the curse of the castle. They cannot be awakened in any way, not even if they are injured. When night falls, the bodies will wither and shapeless will emerge. If they are aware of this, the players can kill the techans to prevent an ambush later, but it is too close to nightfall to get them out of the castle in time to save them. There are score marks in the floor, indicating the table has been moved often.

Treasure: The techans' gear is all still here and both echan and techan players can take what they like. The techan gear is still functional. Two TL0 machine pistols (only one with a clip with 30 rounds), three battery flares, one electric torch, one lighter, two two-way radios, three sets of spare combat fatigues, and 10 uc from various bastions.

A DC25 Perception check discovers a loose stone beneath the pile of gear. Under the stone is a pouch filled with 20 sp and 50 cp and a letter written in English:

If the sun sets, stay awake, lock yourself in. Bar the doors. Light torches about the room. Avoid the darkness. The shapeless will scrape and claw to get in. By day, defend the keep. Cultists want their offering and will kill those that try to leave. Only half of us sleep every morning while others fight. If you find this, look at the light. You live as long the sun still shines. By nightfall, be somewhere else. Don't bother praying for salvation. We tried.

AREA 7: SERVANTS QUARTERS

Read or paraphrase the following the moment the characters open the door:

Echan: *Three loud bangs like thundercracks echo from the room as you open the door. Instinctively you pull back behind the frame. You noticed two humans inside but you couldn't see what weapons or magic they might have brought to bear. Three holes explode from the open door. This room seems to have been the servants' quarters and these poor souls appear to have*

been locked within for who knows how long. They don't appear in the talking mood.

Techan: *Three loud gunshots echo from the room as you open the door. Instinctively you pull back behind the frame. You noticed two humans inside, both armed with assault rifles with an obvious intent to use them. They don't appear much better equipped than you, but you don't know how much ammunition they have. This room seems to have been the servants' quarters and these poor souls appear to have been locked within for who knows how long. They don't appear in the talking mood.*

IRON SONS SURVIVORS CR4

XP 1,200
N Medium humanoid
Init +1; **Senses** normal; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 16 (+3 Dex, +1 dodge, +6 armor)
hp 30 (6d8+6)
Fort +5, **Ref** +6, **Will** +6

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee teeth and nails +9 (1d4+3 plus grab)
Ranged stub rifle (Martin) +9 (1d8+3); 50 ft.
shotgun (David) +9 (1d8+3 and targets hit are knocked prone); 20 ft.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 16, **Con** 12, **Int** 13, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 13
Base Atk +6; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 20
Feats Dodge, Great Fortitude
Skills Bluff +4, Diplomacy +4, Intimidate +9, Perception +9, Sense Motive +6, Stealth +5; **Languages** Common
SQ bad timing, linked targeting, shattered sanity

ECOLOGY

Environment any
Organization unique
Treasure NPC Gear

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Bad Timing (Ex): If either survivor misses a target by 10 or more on his attack roll, he cannot use his weapon on his next turn. The weapon either disrupts or has run out of ammunition.

Linked Targeting (Ex): When either survivor hits a target with an attack, the other survivor may make a single ranged attack against the same target as an immediate action.

Shattered Sanity (Ex): The Iron Sons survivors are immune to all fear effects.

ENCOUNTER

These two men, David Stone and Martin Wood, represent the surviving members of the Iron Sons cell that stole the Chronicle of Aurannis.

2,400 XP
2 Iron Sons Survivors

If either survivor is taken alive, the following can be made with the proper checks.

Sense Motive (DC18): He's obviously traumatized, but more importantly, he appears sleep deprived, which doesn't help matters in the slightest. They were probably ambushed in the receiving room or banquet hall. Given that his friends have yet to turn to the shapeless, he's only been locked in here for a day or so. Perhaps these two locked the other two out when the fight became too severe and they made a decision which cost the team.

Heal (DC18): He isn't physically wounded beyond the sleep deprivation, which appears to have been going off and on for the better part of a week. The heroes are able to stabilize him, but he needs sleep to properly recover. His lucidity may only be temporary. The heroes are not properly equipped to determine the long term psychological effects.

Diplomacy (DC18): The heroes try to talk him down; assuring him they mean no harm. The heroes' appearance must have been initially alarming, but the offer of food and water helps greatly. Seeing the light outside has also helped.

Through his frantic speech and hyperventilation, he says the following*: "It-it-it was just a j-j-job. Taking the book was ea-ea-easy. Cake walk, good money, low risk, no w-w-weapons. They said h-h-here—wasn't our idea—they said here. Ok, w-w-why not."*

"I don't know. The general set it up. He got the c-c-contract. Whoever they were, they c-c-c-can't handle magic for very long. They said they were c-c-c-coming here to pick up the book. I-I-I c-c-can't fall asleep.

They t-t-took it. The hoodoo and his flock, p-p-p-preparing for tonight. Don't be here. G-G-G-Got to g-g-get out."

No amount of diplomacy will convince the survivors to stay and help in the fight. If allowed to depart, they will flee without looking back, not even stopping to try to help their comrades.

AREA 8: RECEIVING ROOM

Read or paraphrase the following:

How magnificent this receiving hall must have been hundreds of years ago when two great lords welcomed anyone willing to trek up the mountain to request an audience. Now only fractured brick and decayed wood remains. The two thrones, once carved from oak and gold, sit in tatters, the wood rotted away and the gold long since been pilfered. Only stone feet, barely a foot high and embedded in the floor, remain. Tiles of jade checkered with marble have cracked with time and abuse. The thrones are not elevated. A stone table, shaped like a crescent moon, curves around the two chairs. Here, knights, businessmen, and landowners would convene to discuss affairs of the day. The room stretches a fair distance to the wooden doors at the

entrance. Broken pillars occupy the remaining empty space in this dilapidated room. In front of the table, a dozen cloaked figures – the same as those you killed before – silently kneel before a taller man gleaming in silver and platinum plates. His complexion is perfect, his smile charismatic. He appears like a noble, beaming with allure and chiseled features, but his eyes give away his lack of virtue as he looks across the room to you. This is no knight, but a human monster.

"Do you grow restless, my children?" he asks. "You wish to waken anew. Cast off your mortality. All that is required is your desire. No bloodletting, no sacrifice. Just the will. Sit with us."

When the characters refuse, he concludes, *"Then the shepherd must cull his flock." He then motions his followers to attack.*

"Alive if possible, let's be merciful." Of course, his brand of mercy involves forcing victims to slumber for the oncoming curse of the shapeless.

KATHO KOVACS CR 4

XP 1,200
LE Medium humanoid
Init +4; **Senses** Normal; Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +4 Dex)
hp 39 (6d8+12)
Fort +4, **Ref** +9, **Will** +2

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.
Melee 2 short swords +6/+6 (1d6+2/19–20)
Spells Prepared (CL 5th)
3rd (2/day)—*haste, vampiric touch* (DC 15)
2nd (3/day)—*blindness* (DC15), *false life, ghoul touch* (DC15)
1st (4/day)—*cause fear* (DC 14), *magic missile, shield, ray of enfeeblement*
0 (4/day)—*bleed* (DC 13), *light, mage hand, message, prestidigitation, read magic, touch of fatigue* (DC13)

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 18, **Con** 14, **Int** 16, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 13
Base Atk +4; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 20
Feats Double Slice, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse
Skills Climb +6, Perception +4, Sleight of Hand +5, Stealth +4;
Languages Common
SQ my will be done, nihilimancy

ECOLOGY

Environment any
Organization unique
Treasure NPC gear (studded leather armor, short swords [2], other treasure)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Nihilimancy (Su): As a swift action, Katho Kovacs kills one disciple of Kovacs within 25 feet. Kovacs gains 15 temporary hit points. He can also inflict 5 damage on himself as an immediate action to increase the damage of his or an ally's next successful attack by 5.

My Will be Done (Ex): If an opponent hits Katho Kovacs, Katho can redirect that attack against the nearest alternate target within range as an immediate action.

ENCOUNTER

The cultists will not attempt to kill the characters if they drop below 0 hit points. If all the characters are reduced below 0, then the cultists will stabilize and immobilize them. Characters may make a DC20 Fortitude save after 10 minutes to rouse before the curse sets in, but their weapons will be removed and they will still be restrained.

3800 XP
Katho Kovacs
13 Disciples of Kovacs

The cultists will rush in to attack and protect their master. Apart from the furnishings already detailed, there is a pile of gear and treasure in the corner of the room, pilfered by the cultists as well as the other bandits and mercenaries that have frequented this keep.

Treasure: Although there is substantial treasure here, every piece retrieved takes a standard action. The most accessible are: one suede pouch with 50 gp, two linked gold rings worth 30 gp, four short swords in sellable condition, one random magic item worth no more than 500 gp, and the Chronicle of Aurannis.

PREDATOR AND PREY

Once only three or fewer cultists remain, or if Katho Kovacs is reduced below half his hit points, read or paraphrase the following:

All remaining natural light bleeds from the room. The shadows begin to grow long and fill the entire chamber. A few formless shapes rise from the casting blackness. Illuminated solid white eyes glint off the silver sheen of razor claws which slide and dance in the blackness, making you unable to see arms or shifting legs. As they emerge from the crevices about the room, whatever light still lingers refusing to reflect off them, they quickly close in.

Four shapeless wild emerge from each corner and go about attacking both the characters and the cultists. Their first attack should kill one cultist instantly regardless of his remaining hit points, to impress upon the players that this is not a fight they can win. Every two rounds after this, one more shapeless emerges. This will continue until the heroes make their escape or are all reduced to 0 hit points or below. Kovacs will attempt escape through the rubble in the west. If he makes it to the edge without pursuit, he escapes. None of his followers will survive. As the group passes through the banquet hall, the restrained techans transform into shapeless and attempt to block the escape. If the shapeless in the stables have not been killed, they emerge when the players pass that door.

When the heroes emerge back into the courtyard, read or paraphrase the following:

The sun has fallen and what few stars can fight against the glare of Attricana poke out from the curtain of night. Splinters of a few clouds thinly stretch out to the horizon. The black silhouette in the sky at first appears part of the night as it carries stars down with it.
The vessel is taller than it is long, longer than it is wide, hovering just under the clouds and just over the trees. As a floating centurion, it dwarfs the mountains and the keep perched atop them. The Moon and Attricana bare their light through a temporary break and the glisten of the shape's metallic skin begins to twinkle. The top looks like inverted boat bigger than any ocean vessel ever seen. Underneath expands into gaping maw. The vessel is daunting in its profile—an overturned boat settling on a dragon's skull. Bumps and divots pepper the hull. No smoke escapes from the exhaust, no glow from idling engines. It hangs as if on wires suspended from heaven. Metal boarding ramps reach out; too thin to sustain weight at that distance, but without supports, the bridge doesn't bow, even as the first figures cross it.

Six shapes under the shadow of the vessel scurry over, taking the keep in no time. The technological level of this group appears far beyond anything the characters have seen before. As their weapons dispatch the shapeless quickly, the players should make their escape. If they approach the interlopers, they will be fired upon. The first shot will miss and vaporize a nearby statue. Next round, if the characters have not taken the hint, fire a real shot (attack +15, 3d10+6 damage). Any attacks by the heroes fail to do any damage even if they hit their mark: this is not a fight the characters should have a hope of winning.
As the players race down the tunnel, at least two shapeless will emerge behind them. As they reach the base of the shaft, two more shapeless will emerge below. The characters can fight or continue their escape. If the players had horses, they are still waiting outside. The shapeless will not pursue outside the keep if the heroes continue their escape. When the heroes have reached the edge of the valley, read or paraphrase the following:

The monstrosity pulls slowly away from the keep. It begins to lift to the sky, pushing through the threshold of clouds. Before the bottom jaw finally vanishes above, a small prick of light leaps from its point. It moves with precision to the keep. A brilliant flash strikes the landscape an instant before the wave of thunder reaches you. It shatters the peak and splinters the mountain as a hammer to a sand sculpture. Smoke and cinders covers what remains under the moonglow. Shards of grass fly like knives past your skin. The first trees lose their needles.

The blast is not radioactive, only a destructive concussion wave. All characters must make a DC15 Reflex save or suffer 2d6+4 damage (save half). The blast continues all the way to the forest, where it strips the needles and leaves off the trees. The keep, as well most of the rock tower, has been destroyed. Dust and pebbles are all that remains. If the players have not acquired the book, they can search through the debris.

Perception DC30 (one per hour): The Chronicle is the only thing undamaged in the explosion, lying in the cleft of two shattered rocks that from a certain angle resemble a dragon's claw.

CONCLUSION

Even if they did not defeat Kovacs, they receive a 1000 gp reward for his defeat if they return to Antikari. If they also recovered the book, the heroes can return to Limshau and deliver the book for the 2000 gp reward, or they can take it to Paraerra-sensei before rendering it up to the librarians for the reward. He will open the book and read the following:

"Before the First Hammer, the greatest dragon—he of violet and lavender scales—gave up his soul to stop the encroaching darkness of Ixindar. It was Gebermach that wielded the demon blade Dogurasu, plunging it into the dragon's heart, ending the mortal life of an immortal soul. In his final scream of defiance, this dragon of violet and lavender scales brought down a mountain upon Ixindar and orphaned the world to science. The impact that followed closed the world from magic. Before that instant, the crown of this dragon fell upon the ground. It was shattered, scattered, and forgotten."

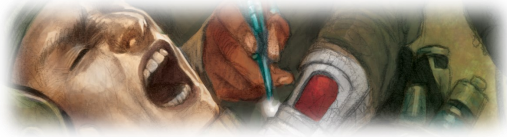
"Amethyst was the living deity that forged the first world before it was our world. Before the Hammer. Before science had its reign. And there are others … all infused into artifacts by owners since passed and forgotten. As they bond to their owners, or as they are brought closer to other fragments, their powers amplify. Eight they are in number. They have earned names across various kingdoms.

"Amethyst opened the first gate, or maybe he was inescapably connected to it. To control them would be to control the fate of this world, and the fate of his soul. According to myth, to bring them together at the point of his death would allow one to call him back to life. And, in that moment, he could save the world. The power to open or close the gates is contained in these items. With Attricana gone, Earth would fall back to science, leaving man unhindered in his pursuit to retake it, but for Ixindar of course. Some of techa insist the gates are connected and with one goes the other: perhaps they are right, though reality is rarely so simple. Where these artifacts rest, dark souls converge. Those bound to science wish a normal world while those bound to darkness wish only to see it burn. It is to be hoped that those reading this are more moderate in their desires.

"To find the other artifacts means to seek out those brought to their knees by overwhelming evil. Seek out the greatest temples, the tallest towers, and the deepest dungeons. Seek out the vaults closed tight. Seek out the obsessions that drive men mad. The answers have been recorded. Somewhere, at some time, someone noted their presence … For they have already all been found. And no one would give up such power willingly or without compensation regardless of their motives. Bank on greed as your bitterest enemy and staunchest ally."

LEADS

Where the players go from here is up to them and you. They may continue this quest or continue with their lives. If they choose not to take on this responsibility, then Paraerra will offer an additional 2,000 gp for the relic and insist that the amulet stay in the city (if they refuse, it is stolen from them within a week of leaving Limshau, by high-level custodians who leave no sign of their presence and are not detected, regardless of how good a watch the party keeps). This would be the opportunity to plan out the campaign with some clues … or leave the quest hanging for now to allow the players the chance to develop their characters with other adventures until the quest calls upon them again.



It was hours after the caravan got moving again did a doctor see to Aiden's injury. As the healer pulled the broken layers of clothing away, they both realized how pathetic the wound was. The doctor didn't comment and went about with three stitches. Aiden didn't voice his concern if the needle or thread was sterile or if brandy was the best cleaning solution. The sutures were clumsy and the brandy hurt as much as the needle sewing his flesh. Aiden winced away the pain the best he could but a single tear still found itself rolling down his cheek. He lifted the cover of his spellbook. It was beautiful once, blind tooled with symbols from Chen that Aiden was still trying to decipher. The uneven and muddled pages were a requirement, filled with scratches and notes on the sidebars. Equations and shorthand filled every space. Sitting perfectly even and parallel were the symbols of Aiden's devotion, the words of Pleroma.

The leather cover was broken. The spine was cracked. A bushel of papers fell out as he placed the book on his lap. The spark flew out of a fallen page and whizzed around Aiden's head, around the room, before flying back to its written word on the scattered leaf. The blood had gotten through the hole and stained the first few pages. Aiden gathered the fallen notes and minor incantations and slipped them back into the broken book. After he was left alone in the coach, Aiden glanced at the abandoned guitar and realized who one of the fallen passengers was.

"Shit..."

• • •

Captain Rothschild called Aiden to the reigns at mid afternoon on the next day. Aiden was still nursing a mild limp as he pushed through the drapes and stepped onto the front of the road train.

"Captain?" said Aiden.

"Yes, have a seat." The captain had a cushion. Leaf springs didn't soften every rock. The vantage was impressive. Three storeys up and Aiden could just see over the crest of trees. Looking down brought him square into the ass of a cow twice the size of an elephant.

"How's the wound?" The captain emphasized the last word.

Aiden stroked the bandage he could see through the hole in his pants. "It's nothing."

The captain shook his head. "Could have told me you couldn't do magic. My fault for not knowing better. Human casters were rare enough."

"I know the words, but--"

"Not in combat. If you want a light, make a fire. That's a useful skill. Carpentry, metalwork—hell—musician, there's some value in that. Do something productive. Wizard…same spells then are the same today. Nothing changes, never gets better. Can't build on a spell, son." Aiden nodded. He didn't wish to engage in an argument, not now, not here. Aiden had practiced the basic words for years. The pain had been distracting. The creature's scream had been unsettling. Those were good reasons but they were probably wrong. "So which house?"

"House?"

"A peasant-born would know a blade. You've got skin as pure as a fae's ass. You were raised in sanctuary. So which house? Antikari? Torquil? You don't look inbred."

"You need to slow down." The captain looked ahead to see the approaching dust plume, moving fast.

"Storm? Stampede, maybe?"

"I don't think so."

The captain stood up and shouted to the controller at the rear of the coach, "Full stop!"

The man at the back stood up and a chain of screams followed down the line, "Full stop!" The captain pulled on the huge brake and the coaches slowed with the animals. "You know what that is?" Rothschild asked. "If it's a chiggoth, we're all dead."

As it rose over the hill, Aiden recognized it. It was taller than all the trees around, with eight wheels that dwarfed even the caravan's beasts of burden. The goliath lumbered over the landscape with carbon-kevlar wrapped tires, scarring the earth with deep treads. The brute clumsily pushed and bullied its way through whatever stood in front. The scrambler Aiden had ridden in pranced gracefully in comparison. It was twice the height of the caravan and held twice the people. It's main body was lifted high over its axles, allowing it to drive over the forest rather than through it. Only leviathans like this ever made it this far from a bastion and even then, they were a rarity. It was flanked and escorted by a half dozen all-terrain bikes with enclosed cockpits and chunky tires.

Aiden grimaced at the eyesore as it passed.

"My God, what a monster!" the Captain admired.

"Aptly said," Aiden replied. Monster was related to monstrosity, an abomination, something exaggerated, perverted, a sin against nature.

"Still beautiful in its own way. Nothing to fear with that. Not dragon or chiggoth. That's traveling in style."

"It's 2500 tons of iron and carbon driven by an energy that would vaporize this forest if it were released." Unlike the scrambler, this vehicle couldn't generate enough power from solar cells alone. Hidden deep inside, locked in an iron shell, was the energy of the sun.

"Still beats walking," the captain replied. Aiden turned to reenter the coach. "What would you call something like that?"

"Mark 13 Behemoth, via the Angel Strongyards," Aiden answered as he left the captain.

The captain turned and watched Aiden vanish into the

vehicle. "Well, good luck out there, techan."

• • •

It was four days later when Aiden heard the shout.

"Custodians! What fortune!" Captain Rothschild shouted from outside. Aiden jumped from the bed and scratched franticly at the wood to slide open the shutter. The parade had passed into Limshau's borders during the night.

"The anathema flee further into the west," a sharp, clear, and charismatic voice answered, a master of the language, "chasing food and from that which feeds upon them." Aiden poked out his head to see. When that failed, he went for the door.

"Yeah, they were here, 'bout two dozen. Never seen them this far," the captain replied. Still with half his layers on, Aiden threw open the doors, missed the steps, and slammed into the dirt. He flinched from the pain still in his leg. It passed quickly as he saw them, as real as every wish wanted them to be.

The damaskans noticed Aiden with their piercing almond eyes as he rounded the carriage. These two wore new clothes, pressed and clean–a common feature of the species. They abhorred getting dirty. The ears, their most distinguishing feature, tapered straight out a few inches from the sides of the skull to a sharp point. Both these guards were male. Supposedly, a female's ears were pointed higher and fluttered depending on her mood.

Their hair was dark and cut under shoulder length. Their skin was light tan. Aiden took note of their visible age, younger than himself. They wore the black kawabari and overcoat distinctive of the warrior scholars from the city of books. The kawbari Limshau armor was the uniform and signature of the custodian. Overlaying leather, both conditioned and boiled, covered nearly every inch of their bodies. The longcoat of thick split leather, ran down to the base of waist in the back, but flowed down past the knees in front. Their blades were locked and safe on their backs.

"Perhaps the speculation of a chiggoth in this region is accurate," the one custodian said.

"Either way, you here for escort?" Rothschild replied.

"No. You are three days from the city. You will find no other threats in your approach. We patrol to find the nest. We suspect it not far from your path. Have you suffered losses?"

"A few, yes."

Aiden just watched and admired the accuracy of those stories. They walked with such subtlety and lightness, they were hardly leaving impressions in the soil. Every arm movement was intended, no peculiar itches or nervous ticks, no idle hands. They stood straight and balanced without shuffling. Their very existence was a denial of common sense and if the gate above were to close, their deaths would come quick under the unforgivable wrath of logic.

"Unfortunate," the custodian said.

Other passengers had emerged from the convoy to get their glimpses. Some had seen the likes of them before. The women were smitten. The men were unsettled but unsure why.

"Should we worry over contraband?" the custodian added. Aiden noted they had no horses. They ran without a drop of water or sweat since the city and would continue to do so until nightfall.

"Never gave you reason to suspect before," the captain answered. "Still, you're in your place and welcome to check."

"We already are."

The third custodian wore white and was orbiting the opposite side of the caravan. Aiden turned back to notice and instantly became aware of his unbuttoned undershirt, his damaged pants, his unshaven face and morning hair.

She studied every passenger, scrutinized each vehicle, and did so with only a passing glance. She looked like a human girl barely at the sunset of her teens. Aiden couldn't find a single flaw on the modest amount of exposed skin. Gentle enough to be swept away by a stiff breeze, strong enough to push the breeze back. A sharp nose led to brilliant green eyes. Narrow in face but high in cheeks, her slender body floated towards him.

Aiden's jaw became unclenched. In a beat, he was fourteen again, ogling the sketches under the bedsheets. He became ashamed by his imperfections and hygiene. The light caught her flowing straight dark hair thrown back from a head turn. Strands pulled aside to expose the ears. Her smooth, light brown skin peeked from gaps in her armor. She was close and he appreciated the perfection. The coat had round buttons that continued up from the hips to the high collar, where it was topped by a firmly secured short belt. The collar continued half way up her long neck.

She passed him and stopped as they locked eyes. He wanted that to last forever. Everything everywhere led to this instant. It was beyond anything he had imagined or prepared. She broke the moment and looked down at his arm. When she reached for and grabbed it, the adrenaline could be measured in wattage. She pulled his sleeve and revealed the watch. "Rompere?" she asked

"Pardon?" Aiden answered.

"Non functional." She shared the accent of the others, a strange sort similar to Minx's, but with an emphasis on perfect pronunciation.

"Yes."

She released him. "A wizard's book but bastion born. You have a tale."

"I do indeed." Aiden tryed to form the best smile he could. His thoughts quickly migrated to remind him of the unbuttoned shirt and rumpled hair.

She tilted her head and a slight smirk to lift the spirits of the dead crept over her face. "Then the city will welcome you."

"Thank you," was all he could marshal as his brain rambled on with other distracting thoughts.

"Anything of concern, Raven?" called out the lead custodian.

She answered him. "There is nothing tainted or corrupted. No advanced technology."

"Very good."

Aiden glanced at his watch. "Prohibited?" he asked.

"Not exactly," Raven answered as her smile faded. "Unprotected power cells are unsafe in environments such as these."

Aiden attempted to impress. "Actually, I know…I've… I've read."

"Then reminding you of it was avoidable," she answered directly and stepped away. Aiden furrowed his brow, unsure

how to make of that.

The lead custodian resumed his conversation with the captain. "We will leave you to your journey," the custodian said. He called out, "let us continue, Raven."

Raven started for the other two. Aiden stepped up to follow her. "Raven, nice name."

She continued walking. "It is," she replied. Fae seldom sported curves. Detractors complained of their lack of definition, that females missed many of the voluptuous aspects of women, and males the tone and muscle of stout and sturdy men. All Aiden could think was how those critics never spotted a damaskan from behind strapped in kawabari leather.

The captain offered his hand to the lead. "Thank you again." When it wasn't accepted, the captain let it drop. The two custodians approached Raven.

Aiden watched her slip away. He didn't want to follow but he couldn't let it drop.

"My name's Aiden," he finally announced.

She looked back as she walked away. "I did not ask." He had read they had no concept of deception, that their outlook and behavior was foreign to those unaware. A year visibly older or younger could mean a century. A century of traumas and delights can change a person. His hand under no conscious control finally took the initiative and flattened his hair and buttoned his shirt. The elves vanished into the woods, her white leather the last to fade. The passengers and guards boarded the caravan. Aiden kept his eyes on the fluttering leaves.

The captain walked back around. "Hoping for an impression?" he asked, finally jostling Aiden out of his delirium.

"I don't know. I guess…yes."

"Next time don't ask a question you know the answer to." Aiden broke his stare to finally look at him. "Don't fret, you'll see more where that one came from." He patted the disillusioned wizard on the shoulder.

"Yeah, but..." Aiden had ceased being an adult some time ago.

...no higher than a princess, an exotic, a target that could never be struck...

"You'll remember this meeting, but it's not memorable. Sorry to say." The captain climbed on top of the lead coach. Aiden brought his eyes back to the forest. He wasn't sure what the captain meant. "Hey! Wanna walk the rest of the way?" was the final snap Aiden needed to recover his adulthood. He walked up the steps, back into the coach. "God have mercy on you in Limshau."

Adding to a library bequeaths unlimited freedom of all books. A rule and principle of Limshau. Aiden knew the directives put forth by the nation of knowledge. Chen told him to take a book with him and offered one from his personal collection. He handed him an unlabeled pre-gate book of some age. Gilt rosettes ran inside gauffered edges of the front and back cover of the black tome. Inside the border, more gold engravings of urns and vases tumbled around a central tapestry of ovals and squares. Aiden noted the lack of a label anywhere on the cover or binding. The inside held a mouthful, The Glory of Her Sacred Majesty Queen Anne in the Royal Navy. A rare book. Chen promised the volume would yield indefinite access to whatever library he offered it to. Aiden flipped through its rough pages once or twice, never fully understanding the prose or context. Better than any currency, it would pay for Aiden's stay in Limshau for as long as it would tolerate him. Like other late arrivals by foot, mount, or caravan, he waited outside until the main gate's opening at sunrise.

The White Walls of Limshau were a maze of dense stone walls radiating from the central archives. They held the combined knowledge of a hundred nations. After the gate reopened, damaskans rebuilt their civilization, splitting into two empires on either side of the planet. On one side, Damasia was rebuilt to its former glory. On this opposite, the fae erected the empire of knowledge. All damaskans lived in homes made of stone, not wood. Most of their cities were built into tall mountains or next to cliffs and always facing a major river or body of water. Where they differed was that Damaskan cities expanded across open fields stopped only by water and cliffs where Limshau restricted its cities by raising walls. Damaskan cities scraped the sky with sharp spires, a landscape of porcupine quills. Limshau's jigsaw of flat, interlocking, and tessellating buildings allowed an unobstructed sunset.

Fae races seldom recorded anything. Their history was marred with inaccuracies, legends claimed as fact, facts discredited as myth. Damaskans brought little with them when they returned to this world and were forced to reconstruct their past from scattered memories and the occasional relic.

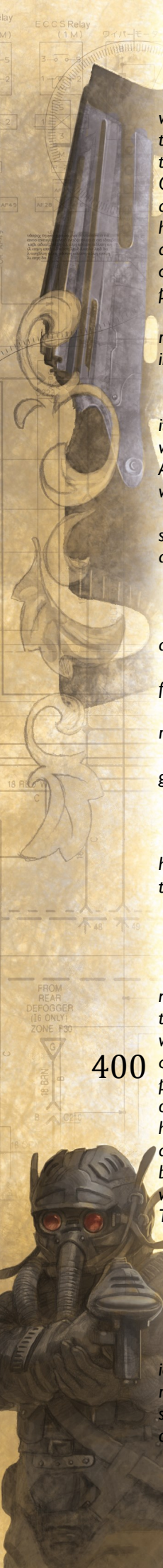
Ten stories and uniform in texture, the white walls encircled the library entire, thirty miles from end to end. When engineers proposed the periphery, they envisioned a flawless circle of mathematical precision. Not a single error survived the obsession of hundreds of dedicated engineers over the century of the wall's assembly. Single slabs of waxy white marble reached ground to sky. A heavier layer of granite behind offered protection. In three hundred years, the wall never suffered an attack. Like Angel, a substantial population grew outside to take advantage of those arriving and leaving.

Shops were scattered about the housings, selling hundreds of various items for the passing and departing traveler. Aiden purchased a bowl of rice pudding farmed from nearby paddy fields. The moment the dealer spotted Aiden's mechanically spun pants, the price of the bowl doubled. Aiden sat in the corner of the open-air brasserie, flipping through the bound pages of his unique currency. He barely registered the approaching figure until the shadow blocked the overhead oil lamp.

"You read," the man stated, not asked. Though his English was perfect, his accent came from speaking Malkut Onespeak for most of his life. He wore a dirtied brown longcoat of thick threads closed with every oversized leather shank buttoned. Large traveling boots clopped the floorboards. An unzipped hold-all hung from his shoulder. Aiden recognized him from earlier but tried not to notice. Throughout the sprawl, he stood upon boxes preaching the unswerving dedication of his faith. He judged passing sins and cursed those of fae blood he spotted. All the while, the symbol–a cross with circles at the points–was visible on his coat and on the small book he never opened. The pamphlets he distributed throughout the day also featured the mark. Aiden saw one palmed in the man's hand as he made conversation.

"Apparently, yes," said Aiden, refusing to look at the immigrant.

"Give this one a try." He revealed the pamphlet and dropped it on the page of Aiden's book. Badly drawn sketches



with pretentious dialogue detailed the fall of man due only to their decadence and over-reliance on technology. It preached the new world existed only as a test for mankind to overcome. Only by resisting the temptations of the new world would man ascend. This included such dramatic illustrations as a proud human turning his back on the hand of friendship from a chaparran, and the man suffering a heart attack at the end proclaiming, "TAKE ME HOME!" after a lifetime of unwavering piety.

Aiden glanced at the pamphlet only a moment before raising it up between them. "Is it true these count two-for-one in the city's brothel."

The man was taken back, snapping. "You insult me–"

"If I were to, I'd be honest and say that I'd prefer to tear it up, though destroying the written work in front of the white walls is an offense even I won't commit, despite the contents." Aiden tossed it back. The man caught it and pointed a finger with it still in his hand.

"This world awaits our hand to cleanse it. If you saw the scars upon our land by the claws of machines, you would agree. They live a life against God."

"That was never the reason why I left...move on."

"God will remember this conversation if you won't."

Aiden looked down to continue his reading but added as a mutter, "Sure he pays attention to me."

"He attends every second of all our lives. No one can fully understand his plan–"

"Least of all some imbecile handing out repression and racism outside of the greatest repository of all knowledge."

"I am a humble servant, willing and able to share his grace and wisdom with others."

"And the fae are exempt from this?"

"By his word."

"Then spoken by an ugly god. Even when I believed in him, he was never that petty. Move...on." Aiden ignored anything else the man had to say.

• • •

By sunbreak, Aiden had checked from the hostel and made his way to the eastern gates. He reached the front of the line before the crowds gathered. The seam in the door was nearly invisible until it broke the instant the sun's rays drifted down the wall. The simple assemblage of gears and pulleys moved the huge slabs of stone effortlessly. On the other side, a smaller gate of chain and iron was guarded by a handful of custodians. Two damaskans guarded either side, armed with katana and tanto with a human custodian sitting behind a podium, brandishing a clipboard and pencil. They were dressed in the black kawabari Aiden had seen before. The human greeted him.

"Gutag, hola. Sprakke, langua? "

"English?" Aiden answered and asked.

"Lingo or Franca?"

"Franca."

"Ohayouzaimas. You carry papers?"

"Yes." Aiden brought up the various papers proving his identity. This included the Angel Ident Card and a letter of recommendation from David Obatala Chen. The custodian stopped at the latter and didn't bother flipping through the others.

"Aiden ka-moo?" the custodian verified.

"Kae-mus."

"Just arrived or spent the night?" The guard filled out Aiden's temporary passport.

"The night."

"No aggravations, I hope?" The custodian stamped the passport and handed it back with the papers.

"Just some Malkut baka pandering his paranoia."

"Odd they still do after escaping that madness."

"Keeps them safe I suppose, a delusion to depend on. Thank you." Aiden retrieved the papers and made his way through the gate.

As he passed through, the custodian said to his back, "The gods may be dead but faith is no delusion. Enjoy your stay in Limshau." Aiden turned back and paused, but didn't comment.

• • •

Thousands moved without a shove in the streets. No one needed to control the crowds, though wagons and horses often found it difficult to press through faster than a crawl. The buildings blended together. As Aiden wandered deeper, the city grew taller.

He navigated through the narrow cobblestone streets. He pushed against the chalk walls as beasts and wagons plowed by. Various silks were danced in front of him to entice a sale. Another peddler promised increased lovemaking in a pouch filled with powdered dragon testicles. A pair of custodians chatted with a merchant. An orange-haired child-like gimfen stood atop his cart, selling various silks gathered from his villages in the north.

Gimfen came from those playful tales about helpful spirits that would lend a hand in need or work without compensation making toys in the bitter cold inside some fat man's sweatshop. The gimfen was barely four feet with the thin body and eyes of a child.

A few legal tall-eared scarlet women promoted their pleasure from a second level window. They were damaskans. Aiden made himself stop. The fae smiled and flaunted their thin subtle curves to passing eyes that viewed them. They did what they wished and needed few laws to keep them ethical. Aiden forced his eyes back on the road as the temptation was increasing as he stared.

More books rested on the shelves of Limshau libraries than anywhere else on Earth. The namesake capital was the largest of all of them. Escapees from the bastions often smuggled forbidden manuals from their home to barter into Limshau to get a head start on a new life.

Twinkling chips of granite fell across his face as a heavy cart rolled over a stone bridge above. Limshau was as a stacked city, with a lattice of stone and wooden paths above the main roads. Aiden took the lure and diverted to one of the wooden overpasses to get a look across the ocean of stone, wood, and flesh. The market ran for miles with a hundred thousand humans and fae going about their lives.

There was nothing out there, Martin had said. Aiden leaned his weight on the railing and admired the labyrinth. It reminded him of Genai—a network of mathematical imperfection. The outer walls might have been faultless but city was a delightful mess. Obstructing statues standing in intersections.

Living trees peeling apart stonework to gain their roots.

Aiden heard two long high-pitched notes boom over the market. It brought up his eyes along with all those of the street. Considering the volume, Aiden had expected a colossal horn atop a citadel, coiling around the tower to a tiny mouthpiece connected to an embouchure of a broad-lunged dwarf. The notes repeated, calling out for attention from the entire city. Aiden's eyes focused on an immense silhouette climbing over the shrouded sunrise. It bathed Aiden and the market in shadow. He recognized the colossal outline of an airship, the Abecedarian–an illustration Aiden had previously seen in a book. It was real, too.

The golden coat of the 1200-foot long vessel floated past the outer wall. Only a small cabin hung underneath the smooth untarnished skin with most of the crew and passengers resting comfortably inside the superstructure. Aiden took a moment to drink in the sight. Such a vessel sat on the border of disruption, relying on unbroken physics to keep itself aloft. It was a thermal, lifted by heated air. The behemoth hadn't touched more than a single wheel on the ground in 115 years. Propellers bigger than men spun as the vessel slowed towards the mooring tower. The sun appeared again behind it, turning the dirigible black. It wasn't a forty foot French horn, but it would suffice.

• • •

The appraiser had a desk plate announcing him as Roland Gauss. Gauss rolled his fingers over the spine of the book. He opened the cover and checked for bends, ensuring the bleed was undamaged as it folded over the front. Aiden's book was without rips, and the leaf had significant strength. Gauss was impressed. The room resembled Chen's biblio but with more collections and total works over singular novels.

"The Glory of Her Sacred Majesty Queen Anne in the Royal Navy and Her Absolute Sovereignty as Empress of the Sea, Asserted and Vindicated by Joseph Gander, amazing," the appraiser complimented. "Printed in 1703 and only once, a treatise for an age no one remembers. You weren't brandishing this book openly, were you?"

"No," Aiden lied, and Gauss could tell.

"Good thing no one out there appreciates real treasure," Gauss answered as he examined the book. "Gold is such a distraction. How many riches wait ignored by the rabble? Chen must have faith in you to offer this as a trade."

Aiden still hadn't checked in. His pack sat across his lap, covering the hole in his pants. "You know him?" Aiden asked.

Gauss was pleasantly plump with three inches of growth across his face and a mop of chestnut hair. His teeth were straight and gleamed white across his dark beard.

"Every custodian worth his sword, every librarian worth his books knows him," Gauss said. "His life is priced more than the tomes in his collection." Gauss danced his articulate fingers across the embossed cover. "He's invested greatly in you, my friend. You looking for passes or currency?"

"I think both."

Gauss rolled his chair across to a nearby shelf and retrieved a ledger. "Well, passes translate to more for you. Compensation will be higher. Wizardry?"

"Uh…yes." Aiden was almost apprehensive to answer.

"What I love to hear," was his legitimate jovial response. "Human mages are rare in this world. A perchance for wonders and whimsy." Gauss loved words and enjoyed their expression. "You flipped?"

"Not yet."

"Well, it's not easy. I know too well." He opened his book and began logging in the details of the transaction. "Could never manage more than a card trick myself." After filling out some initial documents, he opened a drawer and revealed a piece of hard cardstock barely bigger than a pocket photograph. "This is an access pass. Hold that." He offered it to Aiden and he accepted. Aiden's signature, which he hadn't given, and his likeness, which he hadn't offered, etched upon the surface. "Pretty clever?"

Aiden flipped it around in his hand. "Actually it is."

"Can't even be stolen now. Hand it over." Aiden did so. Gauss dropped it in his drawer and closed it. "Check your pocket." Aiden followed and reached in, felt the card, and removed it. Aiden smiled at the real magic. Gauss opened hands and leaned back in his chair. "Your approbations are drippings from a Christmas turkey. I do have a hand with card tricks."

"You a wizard?"

"No," Gauss laughed. "Parents forbad it. Dad recommended I pick up a serious profession like silversmith. In the end, he settled for alchemy. Not all magic comes from the spoken word. There are those naturally blessed and those that mix materials fallen from heaven." Aiden disputed the use of heaven as science had its own theories. He didn't voice those thoughts. "Don't get jealous. Pleroma is still the standard. You figure that out, kingdoms will open their legs for you."

"No pressure though."

"If it was easy, everyone would do it, and a genocide by fools would follow."

"I thought all genocides were by the hand of fools."

"Point. Unfortunately, to master Pleroma requires intelligence, not wisdom."

"If everyone could wave a wand, there'd be anarchy," Aiden quoted his memory.

"Exactly. Thankfully for every hundred students following the arcane, usually only one emerges a wizard. If you're interested in classes, start with Paraerra-sensei. He doesn't teach spellcraft but many say you can't walk the path without him." Gauss pointed at the card in Aiden's hand. "Regardless, that will get you into any branch. With Chen's recommendation, you have the red banner. Flash it to borrow private editions from homes if you require. Trust and respect is assumed."

"Thank you."

"You were expecting…exploitation?" Guess leaned forward as he toyed.

"The trip here…was—"

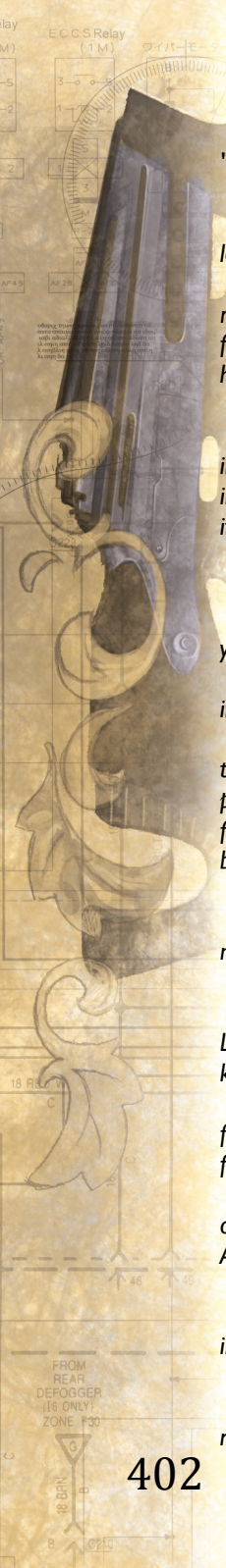
"Anyone claiming a journey is half the fun lost faith in the destination." Gauss pulled out a stack of papers and signed the bottom of each. He then offered them. "Six months paid room and board. Private accommodations, you have a guest?"

"No," Aiden answered, though trailing off at the end.

"Planning on one?"

"I don't think so."

Gauss tendered the currency next. "And carmot, only currency we deal in. Four hundred remains after lodgings. Keep it in ration." He filled out a receipt. "Even a white city has shadows." Aiden looked at the paper in Gauss's hand.



"We have banks," Gauss added.

"Oh–" Aiden accepted it receipt.

"Didn't think I'd hand you a stack of gold and silver in a leather pouch, did you?"

Aiden laughed it off, "Sorry, of course." He looked at the receipt as his signature and face drew themselves onto its surface. He looked back to Gauss as the realization washed over him. "You said you knew alchemy?"

"A hankering is all I'll admit."

Aiden opened his pack and pulled out the stone he found in the crash. It still glowed with its own fire, uncaring for having been ignored. "What do you imagine this is?" He offered it without worry.

Gauss looked at it over indifferent. "A glowing rock."

"Thank you," Aiden answered blankly.

"It could be sapping your life force as we speak or gifting you with foresight. Suffer from either?"

Aiden smirked. "I believe the melancholy is purely self-induced."

Gauss handed it back. "I like the clasp. Someone thought it was important. There's a religion based around purple stones. Something about a dragon god, I think. Older faith, pre-gate. Never seen one glow. Could be naturally imbued. You ever get drunk?"

"No–"

"In human mythology, amethyst would stave off drunkenness. Many of those stories had some measure of truth."

"That they did."

"I'll take it off your hands if you need extra coin. Limshau has an artifact library. I can tender a price when I know more."

Aiden casually slipped it back in his case. "I'll hold onto it for now." Aiden wasn't sure why. He trusted Gauss but preferred caution.

"Well, it's been nice having you," said Gauss. Aiden held out his hand and Gauss accepted. The appraiser turned over Aiden's hand to see the watch. "That can't be working."

"It's not."

"Well here time can stop if asked to. It's all in the wording." Gauss released Aiden's hand.

"Thank you, Gauss-san. It's been enlightening."

Gauss exclaimed as Aiden left, "It's Roland, and may the milk of mermaids quench your thirst."

• • •

Aiden stared at the toilet. It was wood and stone, but it had a seat. The chain flushed water from the large cistern above. It was primitive, using gravity fed water from towers about the city, but it was heaven compared to the past two months. The seat was hard. The stone was cold. He didn't care and neither did his bowels. The bed was cushioned with a down pillow. The white walls were more than a design aesthetic. A cool breeze flowed to every crack and corner. Aiden found a second floor room with a view of a market street. The circular stone window held no glass, only a wooden shutter to block out the noises if needed. It was never too loud and the overlapping voices in various languages reminded Aiden of traffic clatter in Angel. A pull of a similar chain ran a pump bringing clean water. The toilet and the sink was knowledge brought over by bastion-man, what the fae could never manage on their own. It wasn't stupidity but a lack of the obsessive drive to better one's life that only came from evolution. Fae found a simple solution and never attempted progress. The disruption of their very being on even the most basic mechanisms did the rest. Before men and their printing press, the fae stuck mostly with scrolls. Books for them were a luxury reserved for special editions as each had to be stitched by hand.

The sun hadn't set before Aiden shut his eyes. He slept for twelve hours. He woke without an ache and thoroughly cleaned himself in the communal showers on the lower level. Aiden felt scrawny and bare amongst the hairy, barrel-chested human men in the other stalls. The water was freezing as was everything else that morning. The city was still a slave to weather. He had a brazier and a few sconces in his room but they would do little against the cold when winter hit, mild that they were at this latitude.

There was no way to keep food cold so it was to the market for produce every morning. Aiden raced for an empty seat, fought through his deficient proficiency of the Sinitic tongue the server's used, and ordered a plate of what looked like raw sewage. He tasted garlic. He didn't recall seeing garlic. Aiden felt something crunchy and hoped it was intended. He left his remaining Angel grain bars for emergencies. He knew he had to acquire a stout stomach if he had any chance to acclimatize to echa. The caravan had helped but that was mostly bread.

By afternoon, he found the arcana wing, three blocks of libraries, stores, and schools. Aiden slammed his tattered tome of incantations and power words in front of a storekeep that specialized in totems. It jostled the spark out of the book, which quickly went back into hiding. Aiden was awaiting some castigation from the owner but only heard, "I've seen worse," as the clerk took the book and went about finding the rare components required to repair it. Later, Aiden wondered if the keeper had seen worse from many of his patrons, or just the humans, few that they were.

Before lunch, Aiden signed up for a philosophy lecture. The teacher was not some old man with worn and weary eyes pinching his nose when his heavy glasses strained his head. He was barely into his forties with dark skin with toned muscle. There were thirty other students of various ethnicities, ages, and races sitting with backs straight upon mats placed erratically about the room. Aiden had entered late and noticed the desks pushed to the walls.

"I'm Doctor Philippe Paraerra and if you have any hope of understanding this world, you have to begin with your awareness. Of how you perceive it. This class does not deal with specifics. It deals with color." Aiden furrowed his brow at the statement. Others followed. "Got you all looking crooked, didn't I?" A few laughed. "I'm serious. Color is a name we give our perception of the basics of what we see. Something is blue. Something is yellow. Something is black and something is white. In this world, what we see is interpreted by our brains. What we perceive we take instantly as reality. What we are taught we accept...as gospel, even to the extent of altering our perception of the world around it. Yellow and blue do not make green and the true color blue isn't even something our brains can handle. If you have any hopes of understanding this world, you have to accept that there are no absolutes."

"Anything is possible–" Aiden found himself whispering.

"Damned straight," Paraerra exclaimed with a clap.

It jolted Aiden as eyes focused on him. "Sorry," he said.

"Don't be. Anything IS possible. God has been replaced by the will of the very people he created. This is his parting gift, the keys to the kingdom. It's not a test. There's no virtuous morality at play, no good versus evil. For the first time, the world is malleable. Why do you think they send all wizards to me first before they put any spells in your head. You're a dreamer."

"Is that a problem?"

"No, but you're sitting near me for your stay in my class."

Aiden held up his hands in protest. "No, no, that's quite all right." Paraerra raised his hands as if preaching to god, and then firmly pointed to an open area next to him. Aiden sighed and shuffled to the position.

"Let me start with a rhetorical question. If there was no intelligent life in the universe, does the universe have meaning? We all know the adage about the tree falling in the forest. I move beyond that by saying that if no one hears the falling tree, even though it makes a sound, the act of the fall and the sound it generates is utterly worthless. Intelligence is the universe's way of acknowledging its own existence, and a cosmos with no eyes to see it, ears to hear it, or brains to understand it...has no value. So if intelligent life is the ultimate goal of the cosmos, is there room or even a need for a greater intelligence? If there was a divine creator--a greater thought--behind everything, then that could devalue our own importance. This would lead me to say that there's meaning to the universe, but not a purpose. It may have a function, but not necessarily significance. That would transfer the responsibility onto us. We are not obligated to find purpose in our lives, but it may be something only we can seek ourselves, as no guiding light will show us the path.

"We now have the capacity to alter the universe, actually change how it functions. Only a cosmos aware of itself could control how it acts and if we're the gestalt of this consciousness, then God is only the sum of all the minds in the universe and had no capacity to think until we thought of it." Paraerra smiled. "...and I'm only four minutes into my first class."

The students laughed and Paraerra continued, "If you follow this logic any further, then the removal of god and science simultaneously allows us absolute freedom to pursue personal meaning without any obligation to the universe, which, as I said, may not have a purpose at all."

"So there would no predetermined path for anyone, by science or by God, real or not?" Aiden asked.

"There may still be a set path but one you may be only partially in control of. Think of it as...cosmic socialism.

"That sounds somewhat absurd."

"My thoughts exactly...but that's a conversation for another day."

• • •

As evening fell, Aiden sat at the edge of the window. The moon and Attricana were bright but a few well placed candles were still required for Aiden's reading. He didn't feel the need to flaunt the spark. He glanced at his open pack and the azure glow inside. Aiden walked over and pulled out the amethyst. He returned to the window and his book, placing the jewel on the open face. He could see the storms swirling away inside. He resumed his reading.

She was a fae. That much Aiden could easily tell. She was taking in the breeze from her larger window across the street. Second floor, the same as him. His height but half the weight, with a frame of a normal person that had been stretched. She leaned from her window to let her blonde hair dry naturally in the wind. Her neck was long and thin, uncovered by a flowing layer of silk which danced about the air. She wore nothing underneath the simple gown but nature's current refused to reveal anything by whisking away the cloth. It would only permit Aiden a glimpse of her slender legs below the knee and everything above the shoulders. As her hair dried and lifted in the air, the strands parted to reveal her ears.

Aiden didn't notice the amethyst sliding off his book until it clanged on the floor. He bolted from view of the window to snatch it back up. When he returned to his admiration, he noticed the human male entering the room behind her. He wore well pressed blues and purples, satin and linen with accents of leather. He removed his coat as she turned. She slowly embraced him. He paid generously. She placed him on the bed and walked to the window. Her's had two shutters. As she closed one, she looked across the street and met Aiden's eyes. He flinched but continued his stare. She smiled and rolled her fingers in a wave and closed the final shutter.

Aiden sat himself back on the window edge and dropped the rock back on this book. It slid down to his hand, brushing across his wrist. He stared at the storm caught within it.

Tick.

Aiden wondered if he had been so lucky to find some unique item, a mcguffin to start him on a great quest. If this was, would he take it, accept such responsibility? If it was worthy for midgets and melancholy mages, why not? But in fiction, the storyteller ensures the survivability of his characters and Aiden had no such guardian watching over him.

Tick.

Aiden didn't spot it initially. His mind was lost not on the stone but on the lingering image of the prostitute in the window. Tick. Right next to the amethyst, the gem commanded all attention. Tick. When the second hand moved again, Aiden spotted his watch. Tick, the second had moved.

Tick, again. Aiden tilted his head rather than risk shifting the watch as it rolled over to 10:04 am. He saw the hand mark off another second. Aiden mouthed a curse as he palmed the amethyst and moved it away from his watch. The second hand stopped abruptly before 10:05. He brought the stone back alongside the mechanism. Time resumed, closing to the end of the minute.

"How is that possible?"

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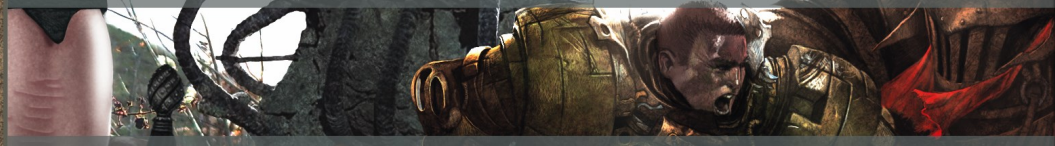

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