

CAT'S CRADLE



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PATHFINDER
ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE

SUPPORTS PSI-WATCH 1993 AND FURSONA: UNLEASHED

PSI-WATCH

CAT'S CRADLE

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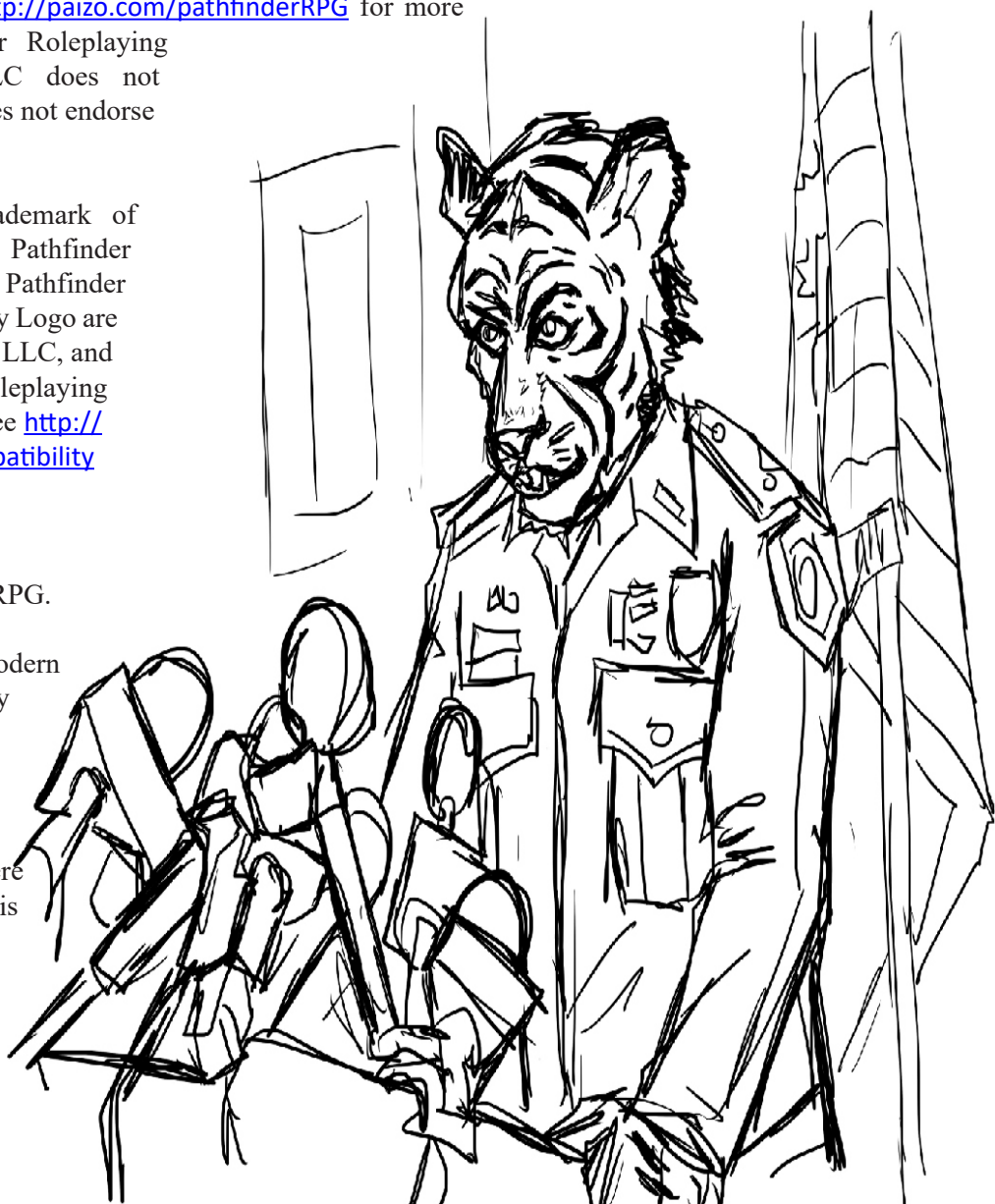
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Fully Compatible with the PFRPG.

Requires the Use of the D20 Modern Core Rulebook, published by Wizards of the Coast

No 1990s grunge rockers were harmed in the making of this sourcebook.





Cat's Cradle is the first in a series of short and mid-length sourcebooks detailing a particular piece of the **Psi-Watch Campaign Setting**. Cat's Cradle represents one of the major points of divergence between the Psi-Watch version of Earth and our reality – it is an alternate vision of the urban American Mid-West, populated by a diverse array of Anthro denizens. Cat's Cradle is a furry metropolis that used to be Omaha, Nebraska, in an alternate 1993 desperately in need of heroes.

Cat's Cradle makes extensive use of concepts introduced in *Fursona Unleashed*, in particular detailing a variety of worshippers, both good and evil, for many of the various Anthro deities introduced in that book. This sourcebook takes the character creation ideas in *Fursona Unleashed* and makes them concrete. It grounds Anthro adventurers in

a distorted, but recognizable version of modern America. Many of the plot hooks and threats introduced in this book make use of various monsters described in *Secret Soldiers*, giving gamemasters a good idea of how to use the diverse array of comic-inspired threats therein. Finally, some concepts introduced in *Action Features!* and *Cosmic Toybox* are followed up on here, including the rebirth of the legendary Brightstar Order.

CAT'S CRADLE

NEBRASKA

In 1971, a beam of blinding white light lanced out of Saturn's moon, Ganymede, and bathed the Western Hemisphere in supernal radiance. When the light receded, roughly three percent of *homo sapiens* in North America, chosen seemingly at random, were no longer quite human. After long minutes of painful spasms and unnaturally rapid cellular mutation, the transformed rose on shaky legs as Anthros – furred, animalistic hybrids of man and beast. The survivors of the *White Dawn* picked up their lives as best they could, waiting for a staunchly anti-Mutant Congress to restore their full civil rights. Even when the legalities were settled, in late '72, the newborn Anthro race faced the discrimination and fear that had nearly driven the Mutant subset of humanity into extinction.

Omaha, Nebraska was one of the few places in North America that offered a welcoming climate for those with fur and fangs. Gutted by the race riots of a decade prior, Omaha offered cheap land, cheaper rent and a desperation for civic resurrection. Over the next few years, Anthros from around the globe migrated into Omaha to rent apartments, buy homes, start businesses and live their lives with a level of equality offered by few other American cities. Their presence revitalized the city and its economy, as a host of Anthro-specialized businesses were born. In 1978, Omaha officially changed its name to Cat's Cradle, Nebraska, celebrating its proud Anthro-majority populace (which was more than 60% feline).

CITY STAT-BLOCK

This settlement stat-block incorporates options found in *Citiescapes* (Othervers Games, 2011).

Cat's Cradle, Nebraska

LN Metropolis

Corruption +6; **Crime** +7; **Economy** +11; **Law** +4; **Lore** +5; **Society** +4

Qualities

Academic (Creighton University has one of the best xeno-archeology departments on the planet)

Artist's Colony (the thriving Grawl scene)

Good Roads (including excellent commercial rail transport)

Population Surge (Anthros are a very carnal species that often gives birth to litters of multiple children, meaning a



relatively large percentage of the population are pre-teens)

Prosperous (thanks to the historic meatpacking, rail transport and insurance industries, as well as the recent rise of Grawl music as an entertainment powerhouse)

Racial Enclave: Anthros (Anthros are the dominant force in the Cradle)

Danger +10

Demographics

Government *Effectively a Plutocracy* (controlled by Miles Carlton Buffet and other local multi-millionaires, including the incredibly corrupt Mayor)

Population 1.2 million (63% Anthro, 28% Human, 8% Hard Gene or other Mutant species, 1% other, including a handful of Cityborn)

Notable NPCs

The Bad

Mayor Joseph "Scamper" O'Rourke (LE male Anthro Aristocrat 12) – laughably corrupt political animal
Chief of Police Warren Sokolov (LE male Anthro Fighter 14) – any police-involved shooting is a good shooting
Miles Carlton Buffet – billionaire bigot with a scheme for Anthro extinction

The Good

Stallion Cobain (NG male Anthro Bard 9) – the soulful voice of the new Growl sound
Father Reed Blacktail (LG male Anthro Cleric 6) – ex-Catholic priest who re-sanctified the local cathedral to Anthro use
Lordosis Shaw (NG female Anthro Smart 6/Cleric 2) – genius community activist who occasionally hosts sacred orgies

Marketplace

Base Value 20,800 gp; **Purchase Limit** 150,000 gp;

Spellcasting 9th

Minor Items virtually any; **Medium Items** 4d4; **Major Items** 3d4

Special Traits

Add Cat's Cradle Economy modifier on all Craft checks, not merely Craft checks made to earn a living.

Anthros can purchase mundane goods and services in Cat's Cradle at a 25% discount.

THE MONOLITH

The mysterious alien artifact responsible for the White Dawn Event still waits on Ganymede. NASA landed astronauts on Ganymede in the late 1970s, led by the leonine local astronaut-hero, **Capt. Burke Worley**. The mission placed sensors around the Monolith and ran extensive tests of the physics-warping device, but no conclusive answers to the *how* nor the *why* of the White Dawn Event were forthcoming.

International treaties forbid private exploration of the Monolith, and Psi-Watch's long-range sensor array keep a constant watch on the enigma. The planet and the proud Anthros of the Cradle, wonder whether there could be another White Dawn one day. Baseline humanity dreads the possibilities, but the world's Anthro minority wait anxiously for all *homo sapiens* to join them as uplifted animal-hybrids.

WHITE STAR MONOLITH

Common Major Artifact

Aura overwhelming transmutation CL 30th

Slot none **Weight** nearly immeasurable

These **Worldseeder** artifacts have been unearthed on hundreds of worlds. If one White Star Monolith is found upon a world, there are usually more, at least one upon every other major continent upon the planet. Most such Monoliths are buried under tons of topsoil and rubble, buried beneath the weight of centuries, just waiting to be discovered and unleashed. Many species of Anthro owe their creation to these monoliths.

The White Star Monolith is a three-meter-tall rectangle of smooth, absolutely flawless and brilliantly white stone, which resembles fine marble. A sixty-sided geomorph of the same ivory substance floats exactly 36 centimeters above the top of the pylon, slowly rotating. Once the White Star Monolith is activated the blunt facets of the floating star become flame-like points stretching in all directions, symbolizing infinite genetic possibilities.

It requires a DC 30 Use Magic Device check and one hour of effort to activate a White Star Monolith; creatures with the Anthro subtype gain a +5 competence bonus on this check. If the check is failed, the White Star Monolith cannot be activated again for a lunar month.

Once activated, all humanoid or monstrous humanoid creatures of a single species within a geographically isolated area (usually the continent upon which the Monolith is located) are affected by *speciate*, gaining the Anthro subtype and gaining two Gifts of Nature.

The transformations created by the White Star Monolith follow a system of internal logic, and have a certain consistency. Transformations usually follow a pattern based upon the transformed creature's original race, faith, profession or other traits. For example, all soldiers and police officers transformed become Doberman Pinscher Anthros, all characters with a Christian patron deity become lamb or sheep Anthros, an Anthro's pelt color is reflective of her original skin tone, and so forth.

Destruction

White Star Monoliths cannot be destroyed by any known force, and even moving the Monolith presents major logistical challenges. A species that wishes to preserve its genome has only one alternative if a White Star Monolith is discovered- lift the indestructible pylon off world somehow. The Monolith is immune to effects from the *conjugation* (teleportation) subschool and the *psychoportation* discipline, and despite its relatively small size, the Monolith has an apparent mass of more than a hundred

million tons. It is heavy enough that it warps gravity around it in minor ways: poured-out beer flows uphill towards the Monolith, coins tossed gravitate towards the Monolith, and so on. Ordinary humans can feel a palpable heaviness around the Monolith.

Ejecting a White Star Monolith directly into the core of a sun *might* destroy the Monolith, but it would likely just wait, inert, within the star's heart for aeons.

GROWL AND THE COBAINS

Growl is the new sound of the 1990s, a rough-edged and highly personal evolution of rock and roll. Anthro guitarists howl their hearts out, dressed in ragged flannels, their manes long and untamed. Growl is sung in a patois of English and Fursong, elongated, slurred vowels becoming echoing cries of rage and passion. Growl was born in Cat's Cradle, which means that the Nebraska metropolis is on the bleeding edge of style for once.

Stallion and Ocelotina Cobain are the power couple of Growl, fronting the (almost) all-Anthro supergroup **Black Feather**. Stallion Cobain (NG male Anthro Bard 9) is the poster-horse for Anthro pride who uses his celebrity not only to champion Anthro causes, but also to improve the lot of Mutants. Despite his resolute public persona, Stallion suffers from a deep and often poorly concealed self-loathing. If he could give up the pelt, he would in an instant; when he dreams, he dreams of the skinny blond boy he was born as, rather than the black horse he evolved into. Some days, he wants to die rather than live another hour as Anthro. On others, the better days, he fights for the rights and future of his species.

Ocelotin Cobain (N female Anthro Bard 10) revels in the power and sensuality of her lithe, spotted body and has no conscious memory of her human childhood. As much as she loves Stallion, she hates the part of him that wants to be human. Their once-close relationship has grown distant and painful, especially since the birth of their daughter, **Frances**. Especially since Frances was born fully *sapiens* without a trace of mutated DNA, which should be an impossibility for two full-blooded Anthro parents. Especially since Ocelotina has gone back to drugs, and is dragging Stallion down with her while Frances is tended by



a succession of pure-strain human nannies.

Unknown to her husband, Ocelotina has taken Frances to be examined by **Dr. Lissette Santiago**, one of Petroglyph's lead scientists. Dr. Santiago is fairly certain she can evolve the toddler into a full Anthro. Ocelotina considers the 30% chance of death or permanent disability an acceptable risk – she'd rather her daughter die than grow up as another sad, helpless *homo sapiens*.

Fun Fact: Black Feather was described as 'almost' all-Anthro. The one human in the group, the one unmodified *sapiens* who can jam with the Anthros is **Henry Rollins** (LG male Human Paladin 2/Bard 7). He absolutely does not trust Ocelotina and knows more than he lets on about Stallion's self-doubts.

SADDLE HORSE RECORDS

Saddle Horse Records produces and distributes *Black Feather's* albums, and its artist roster includes almost every other big Growl act native to the Cradle. The one exception is Bacon Vedder's *Pearl Before Swine*, distributed through the rival *Dvorak Records*. Saddle Horse is an old-school, mob-funded record label in the best Sinatra tradition, more than willing to bribe, blackmail and break fingers to get its artists prime airtime.

Saddle Horse Records is the child of **Tony "Omaha" Brando** (LE elderly male Anthro Rogue 11). On the day of the White Dawn, Tony Brando was a mid-level bookie in wingtips who was always ready to hire out for violence. His transformation into a powerful thoroughbred Anthro only made him stronger and more capable, not to mention a little smarter than he was as a *sapiens*. He rose through the Mafia's ranks, the traditional Mob distaste of non-humans notwithstanding, due to sheer competence. Far as Tony's concerned, turning into a horse was the best thing ever to happen to him. He's stronger than he ever was as a man, and he's damn proud to say he's well and truly 'hung like a horse'. That joke never gets old, and it ain't a joke.

By 1990, Tony Omaha was rich and connected enough he could step away from the street, effectively the head of his own crew of semi-connected Anthro mafiosos. He bought into a failing record label, renamed it Saddle Horse and pioneered the Growl sound. He caught one of the young Stallion Cobain's sets at a local club, and signed the young singer pretty much on the spot. Tony signed Cobain mostly because he liked the younger Anthro, and out of an odd sense that horses should herd together. Tony Brando never regretted signing Cobain, and these days he's making more than enough legit money that he's effectively bought out of crime entirely. He just wishes Cobain would kick the horse and actually enjoy *being* a horse more.

Tony's as proud of his new physiology and species as he ever was of being an Italian. Tony's nickname "Omaha" is a tribute to a world champion racehorse from the 1930s, named for the city. Tony's office on the top floor of Saddle Horse is decorated in black and white photographs of the famous race horse, as well as unique memorabilia, including the original Omaha's bit and bridle. Tony's got a bit of a social conscience as far as his fellow Anthros are concerned: he funnels some of his legit money into social programs around the Cradle.

PEARL BEFORE SWINE

Black Feather's number one chart rival is Pearl Before Swine. The band is the brainchild of the soulful pig-Anthro **Bacon Vedder** (LN male Anthro Expert 2/Bard 6), who

moved to the Cradle as a teen. His barnyard phenotype has made Vedder especially popular among the city's non-cat Anthros, especially working-class furs. Vedder laces his songs with muttered phrases in Clomp, making them all but incomprehensible to most felinoid listeners.

Vedder maintains a home, with a full recording studio on-site, at **Gopher Row**. He acts as mentor and producer for several up and coming Growl acts, and pours millions into the community annually. Vedder holds a one-sided rivalry with Stallion Cobain: he wants to be the cultural face of the city, wants the levels of celebrity that came so naturally to Stallion. To Vedder, Stallion's success seems effortless, while he toils for hours over every line, sweats blood writing his music. A few whispered conversations with Ocelotina have made it clear to Vedder that if anything were to happen to Stallion, the porcine Anthro singer would be her first choice to help her through the grief.

RAT CAGED

When **Pinktail Corgan** (NE male Anthro Rogue 3/Bard 3) was human, he had no interest in music... or revolution. When the White Dawn transformed him into a grey-furred rat Anthro, his family moved into the Cradle. In his teens, Pinktail started up a garage band with a few fellow furs, but his career really took off after dropping out of college. When Corgan started up Rat: Caged, he made a name for himself with intelligent, melancholy lyrics delivered at a hyperactive, nearly infrasonic, pace as popular with rodent Anthros as with the feline majority.

Corgan is one of the major financial backers of the **Unity Panthers**. When he was growing up, he got his ass kicked by baseline *sapiens* every school day until his family moved into the Cradle. While his money is welcome among the Panthers, some of his ideas are not. Corgan wants to move past self-defense and start arming some of the angrier Unity Panthers for first strikes against some of the evils infesting the Cradle. Corgan and **Elias Quaid** have argued often and loudly on the matter: Quaid is experienced enough to know that going on the offense is just gonna get good Panthers slaughtered. Privately, Quaid wonders if Corgan isn't really an agent provocateur on police payroll to stir up trouble; he's seen it before.

KIMBERLY KURTEN

Kimberly Kurten (CG male Smart 2/Bard 4) is the stage-name of an emaciated, androgynous coyote Anthro who makes it a point of pride to be Growl's most controversial singer. While Kurten's stage persona is all Hollywood Satanism, in his off hours he's a very articulate devotee of the Mates. His presence at **Lordosis Shaw's** celebratory orgies is a well-kept secret in the city.

But not a perfectly kept secret.

Rumors of his attendance have reached hostile ears among the city's anti-furry conservatives.

Reverend Breakhorn has seeded the secret with some of the local Christian conservatives – the plan is to tar both Shaw and Kurten by their association with one another, and cast the full moon celebrations in a decidedly Satanic light. A friendly cop got ahold of Kurten's paw prints and claw measure, and put them on the body of a murdered five-year-old Anthro before dumping it, all on Breakhorn's orders. When the body finally turns up, the PD will add child sacrifice to the rocker's list of 'crimes'.

HOWLBACK GONZALES

The shockingly vulgar and overbearing

Howlback Gonzales (CN male Extreme Anthro Charismatic 4) is the most popular DJ in the Cradle. His fame has grown alongside Growls – his three-hour morning show has featured every hot Grawl performer on the Top 40, usually right before they got famous. The electric blue and lime furred baboon-Anthro spends the rest of the show bantering with strippers and porno-stars, daring local

Cat's Cradle Bars and Clubs

D10	Name	The Type of Place	What's Cool About It?	The Problems
1	The Bat Cave	Bare concrete and sheet metal, popular with a Goth and metal crowd	Popular hook-up spot for worshippers of the Mates	OC Gangsters running hard drugs
2	Fur The Weekend	Hip dual use coffee shop and record store with a live music stage popular with college kids	Stallion Cobain played here before he got famous, and comes back once or twice a year	Caught up in one of Mayor O'Rourke's real estate schemes
3	The Stable	Mellow bar with a great attached restaurant	Doesn't bother carding Anthro kids	A serial killer selects Anthro victims from among the bar's patrons
4	Cat Scratch Fever	Graffiti covered mosh pit with a few attached kegs and crates and plywood for a bar	Walking distance from a local college, popular with students, lots of friendly weed dealers on hand	Conservative local <i>sapiens</i> politicians (who really don't like Anthros) are trying to shut the bar down
5	Snoopy's Doghouse	A legendary rock venue that dates back to the pre-Anthro days of the early 70s	There's a well-equipped Mutant Rescue safehouse built into the basement that local Mutants know about	A global mega-corp wants the land and is block busting to buy out the city
6	No Kill Shelter	Pricy martini bar for a yuppie crowd, good local bands on the weekend	Record label VIPs are usually in attendance, making it a prime spot for local bands to earn a reputation	A Cool Ghoul Vigilante played here a year back, now haunts the place looking for revenge against his or her killers
7	The Monkey Bar	Classic Irish bar décor with framed concert posters dating back to the Sixties	An occult-artisan sells minor enchanted trinkets some weekends	Secretly a front and meeting place for Evolution's Promise cultists – weird vibe
8	Nine Lives	Lots of soft furniture, beanbags, overstuffed sofas, ect and altars to the Mates – an excellent makeout spot	They clear out a fighting circle for bareknuckle boxing – good place to build a reputation	Every single kind of scam, identity theft and con gets practiced on the patrons
9	Pedigree	Overpriced corporate Top 40s/Rock bar and grill	Bulletin board for the local punk scene, lots of young musicians, SHARPS and anarchists got into the scene here	Western Dawn assholes are looking to make the bar their new hangout
10	Minx	Recently renovated after being closed down for most of the 80s, formerly a legendary punk or disco-era joint	Next door to something awesome that bar patrons are either going to or coming from	A sadistic Anthro billionaire trolls for lifestyle submissives here

homeless to do stupid shit for money and generally making an absolute asshole of himself.

Howlback's made a major enemy of the local conservatives, **Reverend Hinn** first among them, and has been tut-tutted at by national moralists like Tipper Gore and Barbra Walters. Most recently, a particularly tasteless joke about a 24-week *sapiens* fetus, a rotisserie and half a gallon

of Cajun briquet rub has made him the most hated Anthro in media. More famous than ever, Howlback doubled down by adding a 15 minute segment on proper baby cooking tips to his Friday show. He's got no idea that the Republican controlled state grand jury has started investigating him for entirely made-up charges of infanticide and cannibalism.

DIVES GROWL

BARS AND CLUBS

As the city that gave birth to Growl, Cat's Cradle has a thriving local music scene. Most clubs have names that celebrate the owner's Anthro pride and the species' deep love of word play. Some places might have cheaper drinks than others, some places might have better bands.

Roll 4D10 on Page 8's chart to quickly build a random Cat's Cradle joint.

PALEO'S TERRARIUM

Reptile, dinosaur and draconic Anthros are a distinct minority within the Anthro community, relatively rare compared to their warm-blood cousins.

Paleo's Terrarium has been a center of the 'scaly' community in the Cradle since it opened in 1983. Paleo's has been owned and operated by its namesake, **John Lee "Paleo" Sweet** (N male Anthro Bard 9) ever since. With a phenotype resembling a scaly pit viper with azure-mint scales as cool as the jazz his club specializes in, Paleo Sweet is considered one of the most stylish, old-school Anthros in the city. His age is nearly impossible to guess: he was in his late fifties when he was transformed by the White Dawn, and now, his reptilian body has given him back the vigor of youth combined with the wisdom of experience. (One of the mysterious time travelers who've visited the club have informed the old jazz-reptile that he's got a lifespan commiserate with a Galapagos turtle, and he's still running the joint well into the 23rd Century!)



Paleo's Terrarium and its classic jazz doesn't attract too much attention from the younger generation of Growl fans, but playing there is a status symbol for local musicians. Paleo has allowed both Cobains to perform unplugged sets at the Terrarium, to sold out crowds. The Terrarium is a dim, smoky place of burnished oak and frosted glass, and true to the name, the place is kept far hotter and more humid than most mammals can tolerate. The Terrarium is a staple of the Cradle's revitalized downtown.

ROO THE DAY

Roo The Day is a tough dive bar in the crappier part of the Old North, popular with off duty Anthro cops and bounty hunters. Local bounty-hunting legend **Becky Roo** runs the

joint, and lives in a grimy apartment upstairs, which she also uses as an armory. (For Becky Roo, use the **Bounty Babe** stat block, but give her a NE alignment, the Anthro subtype and a vertical leap that would do a kangaroo proud.) She also owns the gun range next door and the bail bondman's office upstairs of that, which operates under the name *AlAA Bail Bonds*.

Roo is infamous as a local hardass, and has a bad rep among the neighboring tribes. A lot of her bail jumpers hide out on the various reservations outside the Cradle, and Roo doesn't bother with niceties like checking in with tribal cops, nor does she give two shits about rez sovereignty. She's a bit more racist than she likes to admit, particularly when it comes to Amerinds. Come to think of it, she doesn't really like most humans. When Roo's got a bail jumper that's a baseline sapiens, he's more likely to come in beat to hell or just plain kneecapped. She can usually talk it out with Anthro bail jumpers and get them to come in peaceably. Humans aren't worth her effort.

THE TAIL HIGHER BURLESQUE

Hip, stylish and unabashedly sexy, Tail Higher! is a thrilling night out and a step-up, culturally speaking, from a night at the strip club. Before the chimeric, partially draconic **Dani Moen** (CN female Eroticized Anthro Wilder 10) took the space over, it was a closed-down comedy club. Dani leads an all-Anthro troupe of nude and semi-nude dancers, choosing performers with the most distinct and colorful phenotypes she can find. Her stage shows are dazzlingly acrobatic, often incorporating airborne routines from her avian staff, and openly carnal. There's never actual sex on stage, but most audience members never quite realize that.

Dani does double duty on local call-in radio shows as a sex educator and advice columnist, and a lot of her burlesque's discretionary funds goes to activism and feminist causes. She doesn't think of herself as a leader, but is one despite herself, and probably the staunchest ally of the Mutt within city limits. Moen is a good friend to **Lordosis Shaw** and her orgiastic temple. She is one of the few outsiders aware there is a **Breeder Obliv** cult in the Cradle, though she has no idea its extent, nor that **Evolution's Promise** is its public face. In a characteristic spasm of temper, she incinerated a cult recruiter she found trying to sway her dancers. In retrospect, she should have probably questioned her first....

NIGHTFUR LANES

The largest bowling alley in the Midwest offers fifty lanes, and is only open from sunset until 8 am. The owner is a firmly nocturnal bat phenotype Anthro who hasn't seen the sun in five years, by his own choice. **Blacksky Billy** (CN male Extreme Anthro Nomad 6) runs the joint the way

purely according to his own interests, and so far, Nightfur has been a huge hit. Nightfur Lanes are a non-stop, all-night party. The place is lit only by blacklights and arcade neon, and the beer is cheap. The bar (officially) stops serving booze at 2 am, but the kitchen is open all night, and serves some of the best fast food in the city. The chili dogs are fuckin' legendary and the onion rings are even better. Blacksky's got no taste for Growl – the music blaring out of the speakers is all old-school punk and 80s synth-pop.



RAVE NIGHTS

Rave culture is just beginning to make its presence felt in the Cradle. With the hypnotic, highspeed rhythms and trippy lightshows, the presence of the Raver, a young Anthro goddess, has come to the city. Several abandoned fields and warehouses, relics of the city's rail heritage, lying just beyond the fashionable Old North district, have become impromptu venues for weekend events. The best organized raves pay off the cops – most just hope nobody calls them in or they don't feel like racking up some easy drug busts.

One of the hottest rave organizers and DJs is the dim-witted but enthusiastic ferret Anthro, **Liz Frisby** (CG female Anthro Cleric of the Raver 1). She likes partying and listening to good music as much as the next mustelid, but she's touched the cosmic, rainbow-fire glory of the Raver and wants her events to share that glory. However, Frisby's attempts to explain her faith, and the deity she serves quickly loop back around into inarticulate, stoner-talk mish-mashes that leaves the listener more confused than before she started talking.

PUZZLE OPS IN CATS CRADLE

Gunnery Sergeant Edward Palmer (use the *Zookeeper* statblock) commands the USMC recruitment center in Cat's Cradle, and the battle-hardened Marine is a familiar site at local high school career fairs. GSGT Palmer has been tasked to bring as many combat ready Anthro recruits into the USMC as circumstances allow. He also serves as a stringer for *Puzzle Ops Scholarship Division*.

If a particularly impressive young Anthro resists GSGT Palmer's recruitment efforts, the Marines under his command are not above using their influence to cancel college scholarships, end careers before they begin, and cause the kind of family and personal crises that make the military seem like an attractive option. Teenaged Anthros (especially those few with latent psi-talents) are targeted for capture and brainwipe by *Scholarship Division* soldiers, accompanied by *Parentis* combat androids. In the past three years, over a dozen teen and pre-teen Anthros have disappeared into Puzzle Ops hands. Using their media pawns, Puzzle Ops has been able to lay the blame for the disappearances on an entirely fictional serial killer the papers call "*The Pelt-Hunter*". The Pelt-Hunter may be a complete fabrication, but 'his' crimes have still spawned.... Would calling them copy-cat killings be inappropriate in a city of cat-people?

Puzzle Ops deploys from the nearby *Offutt AFB*, just outside the city proper. When on kidnapping missions into the city, they use armored command centers and modified Blackhawk hover-coptors painted in Cat's Cradle SWAT livery. Until they can be transported to more secure facilities, kidnapped Anthro children are kept in drug-induced stasis in old barracks that have been fortified into high-tech, high-security command center. Offutt's Puzzle Ops detachment is under the command of **Major Wilhelm Slaine** (LE male Light Cyborg Dread 10), who served the *Chuck Wisenfeld* in Vietnam and who secretly despises Wisenfeld for a never forgotten insult at Kien Phong Province.

ZOO SQUAD

Zoo Squad is America's highly trained, daring special missions force, composed entirely of patriotic and experienced Anthro soldiers. Zoo Squad deploys worldwide as needed, including prolonged deployments to the Middle East during Operation Desert Storm, but is headquartered in the Cradle. Zoo Squad operates out of *Offutt Air Force Base*. Offutt was chosen because Cat's Cradle is the only place in America where Zoo Squad operators can relax off base and not stick out like a sore thumb. Many of the operators have homes and families in the Cradle.

Zoo Squad is commanded by **Lt. Staci Feathers** (use a LE *Nano-Commando* stat block with the addition of *winged flight 90 ft, good maneuverability*). This lithe, deadly serious, canary Anthro was the first woman, of any species, to serve with the Army's Delta Force. She was given command of Zoo Squad after the successful elimination of Hussein's post-human tactical advisor – a killing which allowed the regular Army to easily mop up Hussein's conventional forces. Staci Feathers favors silenced pistols and specially modified crossbows to heavier (and louder) firepower.

Lt. Feathers is well connected in the Black Ops community, and has run joint ops with everybody: Puzzle Ops, Psi-Watch and other players. While her initial instinct was to respect the office of the newly elected President, the things she's been hearing through the military whisperstream have her seriously concerned. She's heard rumors of planned Mutant internment camps, and she knows the local Anthro hating billionaire *Miles Buffet* has closer ties to the Spencer Administration than the media's reporting. She's worried for her own people. Over the last few weeks, Lt. Feathers has had some of her more trust-worthy team members investigating the Spencer Administration.

Everything they've found proves Staci was right to be concerned. Now it's a question of what she'll do with all the ultra-classified intel she's gathered.

MEET THE SQUAD

The other members of Zoo Squad are all Anthros of various breeds, unquestioned patriotism and shocking competence. All are experts in their field, the best of the best, even before they are recruited to Zoo Squad. Some of the members of this small, elite unit include the following, rolled up using 3D12.

Zoo Squad Members

D12	Identity	Specialty	Personality
1	Pace Setter, a female horse Anthro in candy colored fur	Field Medic (Smart 2/Alchemist 5)	CG or CN. Always comes up with unconventional strategies that usually work and always catch their opponents off guard.
2	Scar Wolf, a heavily battle scarred, fully masked male wolf Anthro	Communications/ Radio Officer (Smart 6)	LG or LN. Devoutly religious (Lion Messiah) and deeply conflicted about some of the Squad's missions.
3	Spider Bite, a female tarantula Anthro	First Sergeant (Cavalier 10)	LE. Dispassionate and capable of killing in a heartbeat on mission, but surprisingly gentle and non-threatening when off duty.
4	Death Roll, a male crocodile Anthro missing an eye	Heavy Machine Gunner (Fighter 4/ Gunslinger 4)	LN or N. Much smarter than expected, and an absolute nerd who geeks out about video games and the latest technology.
5	Marathon, a male cheetah Extreme Anthro	Sniper (Marksman 9)	LN or NG. Dimwitted patriot who is concerned about Lt. Feather's off the books investigations, torn between unit loyalty and obedience to the chain of command.
6	Bolt Hole, a hyperactive, rather androgynous mouse Anthro	Hand to Hand Specialist (Combatant 8)	CG or CE. Atavistic warrior with little time for human culture. Dislikes baselines and rarely interacts with them.
7	Luckbringer, a male dragon Anthro with gleaming golden scales	Tank/Transport Driver (Fast 5/Tactician 2)	LN or LG. Determined to prove themselves to the Squad, and has a bit of a deathwish. Determined to die heroically to save the unit.
8	Savannah Stalker, a male lion Anthro with glossy black fur and a crimson mane	Silent Weapons (Monk 5/Soul Knife 4)	NE. Secretly on Buffet's payroll, working for the Spencer Administration for the promise of riches and a 'cure' for their Anthro nature. The only cure they're gonna get is a bullet to the back of the head when they stop being useful.
9	Snapbite, a bulky male komodo dragon Anthro	Espionage and Infiltration (Rogue 12)	LG or LN. A 20 year veteran, on a twilight tour with the unit, contemplating a peaceful retirement. (Reroll if you get result 11 on the second column.)
10	Piton, a mountain goat Anthro male in drab, muddy colors	Propaganda and Counter Insurgency (Bard 5/Dread 2)	CN or N. A nasty prankster who torments other Squad members, but can always be counted to save their asses in battle. Reluctantly tolerated.
11	Warcry, a female hyena Anthro with eerie, glowing gold eyes	Infantry Recruit (Fighter 4)	LN or LE. Silent, reclusive ninja-assassin wannabe.
12	Stepper, a slender male gazelle Anthro	Tracker/Survivalist (Ranger 8)	CG or NG. Sex-crazed devotee of the Mates, often attends the sacred orgies. The chain of command doesn't know about it...yet.

TO PURRTECT AND SERVE

When the city was renamed, the local police force changed the motto painted on their armored black Ford Tauruses. Despite the whimsical pun, the Cradle's cops are highly competent and sometimes frighteningly lethal. Since the 1970s, the department has gone from nearly pure Irish to furred. Feline Anthros hold the majority of command positions, and for black cops on the street, the situation is worse than it was during the Sixties. Same goes for the city's black populace – the boot on their neck conceals a paw, but it's the same boot being felt by the people of *McDuffie, Missouri*.

Chief Warren Sokolov (LE male Anthro Fighter 14) commands Cat's Cradle's police force. Chief Sokolov is an almost supernaturally emotionless tiger, a career cop that thinks civilians are all potential-criminals unless tightly controlled, the browner the skin, the more probable the cause, and that if a cop does the shooting it's always a good shoot. Despite his icy dispassion and gift for press conferences, Chief Sokolov is thoroughly corrupt. At this point, he's several million dollars in debt, juggling half dozen mistresses, and is desperately scrambling to keep the money rolling in. He, and a handful of trusted, big-cat cops on his payroll, are major parts of Mayor O'Rourke's scheme to buy up and flip the city's black neighborhoods.



Rene Rotterham (N female Anthro Commoner 1) is Chief Sokolov's secretary, a curvaceous and chipper squirrel phenotype Anthro. She got the job on a 'personal recommendation' from the Chief, and is the latest and least demanding of Sokolov's many mistresses. She's not quite clever enough to realize how much actionable intelligence on the Chief and the Mayor's illegal schemes crosses her desk every day.

Commander Michael "Jag" O'Rourke (CE male Anthro Rogue 8/Magus 2) supervises the Cradle's special operations forces – aircraft officers and SWAT. Commander O'Rourke's callsign is based on his phenotype. He is a muscular, ebon-furred jaguar, in contrast to his mouse parents. The city's nobility studiously ignores his parentage, though he can't. He's met his real father twice now, and much prefers the dark-furred warrior to the ambitious rodent he cuckolded. Jag O'Rourke is a

brutal warmonger – at his insistence, the Cradle’s air ops division has purchased a pair of Apache attack copters to supplement their Bell Rangers, and are in negotiations to purchase a single *Cloudfire Mecha* for Jag’s exclusive combat use. Jag’s SWAT teams see far more action than a city of the Cradle’s size would suggest, and massive overkill is their first, second, and third response to any crisis.

Detective-Sargent Curtis Malley (LE male Anthro Cleric of Species Superiority 7) is a sadistic career officer with more than one hundred brutality complaints to his name. The fact that Malley is Jag O’Rourke’s biological father is immediately evident from the color of their pelts and their identical hunting cat phenotypes. Malley despises humans, especially poor ones, and is a Anthro hardliner who wishes he could put the baseline *sapiens* in the cages their genetic inferiority deserves. Malley is too much of a frothing specieist to be useful to Major O’Rourke’s land schemes, and wouldn’t be invited in anyway because of the elder O’Rourke’s long-simmering hatred.

Malley has been secretly tutoring his bastard son, nurturing his hatred of baselines. Malley baptized his secret son into the traditions of the Superiority cult, wetting Jag O’Rourke’s claws in the blood of a couple of *sapiens* drug dealers Malley picked up during a street bust. After the kills, the younger O’Rourke felt closer to his father than any other Anthro in his life, up-to and including the man who gave him his surname.

Patrolman Andy Belker (CG male Anthro Combatant 5) is the one honest cop in a department filled with the other kind. He’s stuck walking a foot post in the *Fontenelle Housing Projects*, but he’s the only cop in the Cradle that’s respected by *sapiens* and Anthro civilians alike. Belker is a pugnacious 5’ 2” with a rat terrier phenotype. Every inch of his salt and pepper pelt is marred by scars – Belker is a natural brawler, more likely to bring down a suspect with his jaws than by pulling his 9mm. The chain of command hates Belker because he doesn’t buy into their bullshit, but he’s too good a cop to fire without cause, and too popular with the community to murder outright. So, they stuck him in a bad foot post and hope some drug dealer eventually solves their problem for them.

Chief Medical Examiner Claudette Falstaff (LN elderly female Anthro Alchemist 4/Smart 4) is living proof that the White Dawn had a sense of irony. After a career helping identify the city’s John and Jane Does, she mutates into a whitetail deer Anthro. She took the change in stride, paying as little attention to her transfiguration as she did to most other things unrelated to the job. She did however, urge the city council to change the term for unclaimed stiff to John

or Jane *Poe*, in deference to the feelings of her fellow deer-kin. CME Falstaff is sharp-tongued and quick-witted in the morgue, and one of the best investigators in the region, but is an increasingly isolated spinster in her personal life. She dreads her looming mandatory retirement.

GOPHER ROW

In the 1800s, this district consisted of semi-subterranean sod houses built by the city’s Irish laborers. Today, the mansions, museums and eateries of Gopher Row represent some of the priciest real-estate in Cat’s Cradle. The city’s Anthro power-brokers make their homes here, beneath century old maples.

Some Gopher Row luminaries include:

Mayor Joseph “Scamper” O’Rourke (LE male Anthro Aristocrat 12) has served as the city’s mayor for two terms already. His strong streak of mustelid pride was the chief impetus for transforming Gopher Row from a working-class neighborhood into a multi-millionaire’s playground. O’Rourke went from wealthy to ridiculously fucking rich in the process, and he’s only gotten greedier over the years. O’Rourke has been stoking racial tensions in the Old North, through a crew of shockingly incompetent Anthro underlings to buy out the Old North.

Mayor O’Rourke’s thugs are culled from local street gangs and can be represented by *OC Gangsters* (with the addition of the Anthro subtype), Tougher (but not brighter) street enforcers can be represented by *Rocker Brutes*. The standard tactic is to beat the shit out of locals until they sell out to one of O’Rourke’s shell companies, though these goons aren’t above the occasional arson or message killing.

Andreas St. Mipple (NE male Anthro Rogue 7) runs one of the city’s most prestigious galleries, spotlighting up-and-coming Anthro artists from around the globe. An undefinable yet alluring mix of feline and avian phenotypes, St. Mipple is a gossip-column favorite as a playboy. He is also a highly competent art smuggler and forger. Most of the stolen art in North America passes through St. Mipple’s talons, and he specializes in *Cultureborn* antiquities. In addition to his mastery of the myriad Anthro dialects, French and Russian, St. Mipple can speak *Culture* like a high-born native.

Dr. Carmine Waller (LE female Anthro Vitalist 9), a fearsome and atavistic, yet brilliant smilodon Anthro staged a hostile takeover of her father’s chemical company after the bigoted old *sapiens* disowned his evolved daughter. In less than a decade, she transformed what used to be an obscure manufacturer of industrial lubricants into

Petroglyph Meta-Materials. Dr. Waller loathes baseline humanity, and only recently began allowing humans into her company's employ, after a court challenge forced the desegregation. She is a secret devotee of **Curtis Malley's Superiority Cult**, and has her own dangerously patient plan for local *sapiens* – by tainting the Cradle's water mains with some species-specific poisons of her own devising, she hopes to reduce *homo sapiens* fertility rate and IQ by about 20% come the Y2K.

Capt. Burke Worley (LN male Anthro Ranger 14), retired from NASA in the mid-1980s and lives a fairly quiet life in a three-bedroom colonial in Gopher Row. Capt. Worley is one of the city's most beloved local heroes – the city was named "Cat's Cradle" mostly in his honor. On the day of the White Dawn, he was a rookie astronaut trainee, evolved into a leonine form by the blinding light. Years later, Capt. Worley led the mission to Ganymede that discovered the Dawn's point of origin. Capt. Worley knows the location of the **White Star Monolith** that sparked the event, and his time with the ancient device gives him a decent idea of how to reactivate it, if needed. Sworn to secrecy by Psi-Watch, Capt. Worley rarely talks about his NASA days, except in the most general terms to attentive junior high science students now and then.

Noted celebrity psychotherapist **Dr. Immolata Khan** is the glamorous, tiger Anthro cover identity of a **Secret Chewing Rakasha** who has made Cat's Cradle her hunting grounds. Dr. Khan uses her practice to gather blackmail material and build a web of unwitting pawns. She practices out of a palatial private home in Gopher Row. Stallion Cobain is one of her clients: she studiously ignores his spiraling depression and growing heroin dependency. She has her own plans for the Cobains' fortune and for their seemingly human daughter's soul.

Mouse Anthros tend to be a little scattered and hyperactive by default, doubly so if they're unrepentant coke addicts. **David Danger** (CN male Anthro Alchemist 3) is the dealer to the Cradle's biggest stars. The over-exuberant little mouse prefers coke himself, but he's Stallion Cobain's heroin pipeline. Danger owns a McMansion in Gopher Row that is a non-stop party. This year alone, he's spent over ten million dollars on strippers, blow and champagne. On the rare occasions when he comes down off his coke high and needs to 'center himself', he books a session with **Dr. Khan**. She's got her claws well into the twitchy little cokehead and she's just waiting for the right moment to force Danger to slip Stallion Cobain some H with near 100% purity. Whether her schedule has to do with waiting for some behind-the-scenes legal wrangling about Cobain's estate to be put into place, or if she's just waiting for the stars to be right, who knows?

Kimberly Vandyck (CN female Anthro Idol Singer Bard 1/Wilder 1) is a glamorous skunkette kept in a small, but very expensive two-story by her lover, police **Chief Sokolov**. The 19-year old Kimberly pretends to a level of seductive maturity far removed from her trailer-trash beginnings, even affecting a faux British accent (which occasionally slips into pseudo-Aucklander). Calling her tastes 'expensive' is a dangerous understatement. She also regularly sees the celebrity therapist Dr. Khan, and through her loose lips, the Rakasha knows all about Mayor O'Rourke's secret schemes and the sickness gestating inside the Cradle's police force.

Tony "Omaha" Brando makes his home on a tree-lined cul-de-sac that is technically a block or two outside the Gopher Row neighborhood, but no less pricy and only a touch less prestigious. When Tony Omaha became Anthro, his wife remained as she was: fully human. Now, the once happy mansion where the Brandos raised their four children (only one of which is an Anthro like dad) has become a hospice. Tony's wife, **Beatrice**, is dying of stage IV lung cancer – a disease that Anthro constitution might have prevented. Tony curses fate, and wishes the White Dawn had transformed his once-lovely wife the same way it did him. Tony finds a bit of solace in the secret affair he's begun with his wife's live-in caregiver, a giraffe phenotype RN named **Tiptoe Buchelli** (N female Anthro Dedicated 2). Despite what he thinks, Beatrice knows all about the affair and doesn't disapprove – she hopes Tony finds new love with his own kind once she is gone.

THE CINCINNATI HOUSE

The five-star Cincinnati House opened just before the turn of the century. For the wealthiest inhabitants of the Cradle, the Cincinnati House is the only place to get a top-quality steak. Mayor O'Rourke and his inner circle dine there at least three days out of the work-week. The dark wood booths are the ideal place for supplicants to talk shop and earn the Mayor's favor, provided, of course, that they pick up the check.

The head chef and owner, **Maurice Mott** (LE male Human Expert 5) is the grandson of the Cincinnati House's founder. Though the Cradle's economic realities force him to smile and shake hands whenever the Mayor's inner circle walks in for an early lunch, Mott despises Anthros. He contributed heavily to the Spencer campaign, and at Buffet's urging, he's bugged the VIP rooms. Through him, Buffet knows every decision O'Rourke makes before he makes it. The Mayor's entourage is too arrogant and so fooled by Mott's false geniality they don't even take entry-level anti-surveillance precautions.

WINBURN MANOR

This palatial manor was built in an oddly Southern plantation style in the late 1800s. Ownership has changed hands many time down the decades, and currently Winburn Manor is back in private hands. Shielded by a newly installed curving driveway, ivy-sheathed brick privacy wall and copse of oaks, Winburn Manor is the city's most exclusive bordello. The Winburn Manor's prostitutes are a seemingly cheerful, giggly mix of human and Anthro courtesans, who rarely leave the Manor's hedonistic confines. The Manor's courtesans speak the hyper-eroticized patois of a bad porno script, and seem defined only by their lusts – they don't seem quite sane. Nor quite sentient.

There's a reason for that.

The house's madam is a dangerously insidious telepath, who promises her clients not only absolute description, but that she can break the will of any creature they lust after, transforming them into perfectly submissive slaves within six weeks. The proprietress answers only to *Miss Madeline* (LE female Anthro Telepath 8/Thrallherd 5). She is a sleek cheetah Anthro with hetrochromic eyes: one golden, the other darkly luminous violet. Miss Madeline maintains an utterly unflappable dominant's demeanor at all times. It's up for debate whether or not Miss Madeline is even psychologically capable of feeling any emotions at all beyond greed, self-interest and occasional mild irritation – it's a documented fact she cannot feel physical pain at all, for some reason.

Winburn Manor's stable of lust-slaves are all very beautiful and physically fit, but lack any significant psi-potential or post-human gifts. Miss Madeline very pragmatically avoids dealing with superhumans, and will fold her operation in the Cradle at the first sign of its discovery. Despite her studied refusal to involve herself in Mutant politics, Miss Madeline has *Puzzle Ops* ties of her own. She honed her talents with the Scholarship Division, and if things go bad, it's likely she could call in a favor from *GSGT Palmer's* detachment to cover her escape.

THE BUFFETT MANSION

The multi-billionaire *Miles Carlton Buffett* (use the *Futurist* statblock) has lived in Cat's Cradle since the 1950s, and still hates the new name. Possibly the third richest human on the planet, Buffett utterly loathes the Anthros that have taken over the city of his birth as the worst corruption of the pure human genome in a world already drowning in Mutants. Buffett is a close friend of the Spencer Administration, having donated over 12 million dollars to the election campaign. The lavish donation

bought Miles Buffett an entire *Project Watchtower* detachment as private security for his 2.3 million square foot mansion.

The southern topiary maze retracts to reveal a series of launch silos capable of deploying not only the sole *Watchcommander Assault Mecha* assigned to the detachment but the four *Type I Assault Mecha* on premises within one minute of Buffett's command. Six *Delta Guardians* (in their Urban Guardian configuration) openly patrol the perimeter, their hulls painted in the distinctive green and gold check of Buffett's company rather than the military grey common to most Watchtower mecha. Several more remain at the ready within the mansion.

Buffett's plans for the Watchtower Mecha under his command do not merely include protecting his estate. He plans to activate the *White Star Monolith* on Ganyamede one last time – this time an intentionally warped activation that atomizes the Anthro species. To this end, Buffett has had his agents scouring the globe for energy traces left over from the White Dawn. He's buying himself a private space program (with some not-so-subtle assistance from his friends in the White House in purchasing suddenly decommissioned NASA equipment). When everything is in readiness, Buffett's minions will capture Capt. Worley, a hired telepath will brain-rape the necessary intel out of him, and the Anthro species will die screaming.

It will be the happiest day of Miles Buffett's miserable, miserly existence. He might even allow himself a smile.

ALL AROUND CAT'S CRADLE

THE OLD NORTH

Most of what used to be the North Omaha neighborhood (North of 24th Street) were destroyed in race riots during the late 1960s. When Anthros began moving into Omaha, they were able to buy up the burnt-out lots cheap. Seemingly overnight, the neighborhood changed from a black enclave into the first Anthro city-state. The demographic shift left a lot of the older residents, and much of Omaha's black community, resentful of their new Anthro neighbors.

Eventually, everyone started calling the neighborhood "The Old North". Today it's the oldest Anthro community on the planet. Rents are a little higher than they were when the Anthros first moved in, but the Old North is still the heart of the culture.

THE UNITY PANTHERS

The Unity Panthers started off in the late Sixties as a chapter of the Black Panther Party, but like everything and everyone else in Omaha, they had to evolve and adapt when fur came to town. The Panthers' founder, **Yousef Saberhagen** (use **Breakproof Mutant** statblock with a LG alignment), realized the white *sapiens* power structure pitting black against Anthro in the Old North was neither side's friend.

The Unity Panthers are a throwback to the Panthers at their peak. Membership is open not only to African-Americans, but Anthros and Hardgene Mutants of any ethnicity. They serve the Old North's poor, regardless of their skin color or genome, running food drives and free breakfast programs for neighborhood children, as well as training locals in self-defense.

The Unity Panthers maintain a crude, but very effective training center in some converted warehouse space on the border between the Old North and South Omaha districts, which they call the **Full Freedom Gym**. The Full Freedom Gym is the low-tech equivalent of a Puzzle Ops combat training center, and most of the Cradle's combat-ready Anthros and Hardgenes spilled blood on the floor there. The gym's master is a full human, old-school Panther named **Elias Quaid** (LN male human Combatant 9), who refuses to let his students depend on their post-human talents. Nobody 'graduates' from his dojo without knowing how to fight. Back in '81, Chief (then patrolman) Sokolov ruptured Quaid's right eye over two joints in his rear pocket, and Quaid's been looking for righteous payback ever since.

With the city's 1994 mayoral election looming, the Unity Panthers are backing 23-year-old **Ember Haffi** (NG female Afro-Futurist Telepath 6), hoping she will earn the Democratic nomination for mayor. Ember Haffi is a charismatic, relentlessly optimistic reformer who's served with the Unity Panthers since she was ten. Haffi uses her telepathic talents subtly and intelligently, in conjunction with expert campaign research and debating chops to defeat political enemies with the rhetorical equivalent of the death of a thousand cuts. She's risen in local politics incredibly fast, and keeps her psi-ability a secret known only to herself, her mother, and Saberhagen.

THE KINGDOM INSURANCE GROUP

Before the White Dawn, **Edward Cudahy IV** (LG male Anthro Expert 8/Druid 2) was a contemporary and close personal friend of **Miles Buffet**. He was the well-respected, quietly wealthy heir to the insurance giant started by



his great grandfather. However, that morning changed everything: Cudahy was transfigured by the White Dawn, mutated into massive rhinoceros Anthro.

Immediately shunned by Omaha's ultra-conservative business community, Cudahy nearly lost the Kingdom Insurance Group. He kept his family's company out of bankruptcy through sheer stubbornness, losing his personal fortune in the process. Since he was no longer a patrician white man with a pure *sapiens* genome, Cudahy's former friend Buffet took a quiet pleasure in pillaging the desperate man's assets. By the time Omaha was renamed Cat's Cradle, Cudahy had rebuilt the Kingdom Insurance Group and made himself a millionaire all over again. His losses taught him compassion, and by the time the dust settled, Edward Cudahy IV was a much better Anthro than he ever was a human being.

The Kingdom Insurance Group survived (and eventually started thriving) because they were the first American insurance carrier to offer life and property insurance to Anthros. In 1974, they even extended their services to Mutants, another industry first. The decision was initially a purely pragmatic one – a desperate, failing company reaching out to an unserved market. However, by the 1980s, Cudahy had come to terms with his transformation, and considered himself a proud Anthro, and a civic leader

in the strange, post-human community.

While learning to accept his new body, Cudahy spent a lot of time touring the wild places of the world. After visiting Africa in '82, Cudahy awakened to a genuine love to the few unspoiled places on Earth, with saving the animals he now strongly resembled. Cudahy is a major donor to ecologist causes. A few years ago, his insurance company began funding the famed nature documentary series, *Eco-Kingdom*. This weekly, hour-long show features a charismatic and highly educated roster of Anthro naturalists, ecology activists, survival experts and veterinarians who travel the world to discover its natural wonders.

Eco-Kingdom provides scholarships to talented young Anthros to study ecology and natural science at *The University of Nebraska*. The sometimes-jovial old rhino has taken a personal interest in some of the smartest scholarship recipients. A handful share the old rhino's connection to the natural world, and Cudahy has assembled a tiny circle of Druidic apprentices, though he is very new to the role himself.

FRISKETS

The *Frisket's* restaurant chain was born in Cat's Cradle, and though it's reach has expanded, it remains mostly unknown outside the Midwest. A little higher grade than typical fast food, Frisket also boasts much lower lighting than the norm. These shadowy restaurants are redolent with the smell of burning meat and grilled vegetable with décor (including tail-accommodating chairs and booths) designed with Anthros in mind. Humans find their local Frisket's a bit uncomfortable, an almost alien re-iteration of McDonald-Land familiarity. The chain offers a great, full vegetarian menu for Anthros that are obligate herbivores, which is more than most human-run eateries can say.

The owner and founder is *Clarissa Frisket* (LN female Anthro Dedicated 3), whose portly opossum-derived face beams down from in-store advertising. She's currently a lot less chipper than normal, steering Frisket's through the choppy water of a hostile take-over attempt. *Petroglyph Meta-Materials* wants Frisket's to diversify its portfolio, and Clarissa doesn't want to sell. That would usually end things, but there's night-vision videotape of a lesbian affair starring Mrs. Frisket that's forcing the sale to go through.

RUBYS PAMPERING AND GROOMING

When Anthros started settling in Omaha during the 1970s, a disgruntled veterinary tech named *Ruby Elkhound* (NG female Human Commoner 4) saw an opportunity. Using the skills she learned grooming cats and dogs, trimming claws

and brushing out matted manes, Ruby opened the first Anthros-welcome beauty parlor in North America. Same skills, same work, but a better paying clientele and less chance of getting bitten or pissed on at work. What's not to like?

Ruby's big idea quickly became a neighborhood institution. These days, her expanded beauty parlor employs more than 30 stylists, including three of Ruby's granddaughters, as well as several skillful Anthros who practically grew up in the shop. Ruby is one of those rare humans truly plugged into Anthro life and culture. Her third husband, *Daryl Elkhound* (NG male Anthro Commoner 5) is a rough-edged but hilariously funny pitbull Anthro who runs a contracting business in the city.

DOORLY CATHEDRAL

The epitome of late 19th Century gothic stonework, the massive sprawl of the Doorly Cathedral began its existence serving the city's Irish-Catholic population. These days, it's something far stranger and more numinous. After years of censure from the Vatican for his distinctly non-traditional beliefs, *Father Reed Blacktail* (LG male Anthro Cleric of the Lion Messiah 6) officially broke from the church. Using the pooled resources of the city's Anthro community (as well as a six-figure donation from Stallion Cobain), Father Blacktail was able to purchase the historic cathedral and the acreage it sat on.

The cathedral was re-consecrated to serve the Lion Messiah, an Anthro-specific and semi-heretical vision of Christianity. The cathedral's human-carved statues of Jesus, Mary and the saints were returned to the Catholic church. Their places in the cathedral were filled by new statues and the traditionally Catholic stained-glass windows replaced with new panels depicting Anthro myths, all produced by local Anthro artists.

Father Blacktail's octogenarian mother lives with him in the rectory. *Bettina Wojtyla* (NG venerable female Human Expert 3) is fully human, but moved to Cat's Cathedral to be closer to her son after he grew fur. Though a devout Catholic her entire life, Bettina was never prouder of her son than the day he resigned the priesthood, rejected the Vatican and re-opened Doorly Cathedral. Now she is one of the only humans at daily Mass, receiving the Communion of the Lion Messiah and has become an integral part of the Anthro community. Over the last two years, she's become stridently anti-Catholic, always happy to offer running commentary on the Church's crimes, both historic and ongoing. Unknown to her son, she occasionally acts as an aide and informant to an *Irish Magdalene* who hunts in the American Mid-West and likes the old woman's acerbic wit.



THE STATUE OF SAINT MIPPLE

This obscure saint was disavowed by the Catholic Church during the 1950s, and is the very definition of 'spurious'. Supposedly, St. Mipple was a kind-hearted German monk (and brew-master) known for his boundless charity to the poor. The jolly old saint also reportedly had the head of a mouse (or maybe a vole), which today's Anthros think might have been the result of a historically unreported 12th Century White Dawn event. Doorly Cathedral's congregation have wholeheartedly embraced St. Mipple as their patron saint. A heroically sized concrete statue of a portly, tonsured rodent Anthro in a monastic robe stands at the entrance to the Cathedral's gardens. Saint Mipple holds an overflowing beer stein in one bronze hand, and a loaf of bread in the other.

Local art importer *Andreas St. Mipple* claims descent from the legendary saint, who obviously didn't take his monastic vow of chastity all that seriously.

KENEFECK PARK RAIL MUSEUM

Cat's Cradle has been a major Mid-Western rail hub since the turn of the century. A sprawling public park a few miles south of Doorly Cathedral hosts a museum dedicated to rail road history and locomotive technology. While the museum is popular, especially with local schoolkids on afternoon field trips, the real attraction are the two behemoth engines parked outside. These twin diesel locomotives are some of the largest ever fielded, identical save for their model number and livery: one is blood red and white, while the other is a striking blue and orange. The two locomotives are so big, so noticeable, they are easily visible to drivers on Interstate 80.

The red and white locomotive, *Big Boy #3402*, is Earth-built, assembled and placed into service nearly seventy years ago. Impressive and historic, but ultimately: ordinary. The blue and orange *Sentinel #6900* (LN male Colossal Battlechanger Tactician 15) is anything but ordinary. The train is a slumbering Battlechanger warrior who has waited, immobile and stoic, since being installed in the Rail Museum in the late 1960s. Sentinel #6900 is a *Free Gear*, whose massive, slow thoughts operate on a different scale than humanity's. The slumbering goliath's watch began before the White Dawn event, but the Battlechanger was unsurprised by it, nor was the Battlechanger surprised that Omaha became the center of Anthro culture in North America. Whether others of his kind know that Sentinel #6900 keeps watch on the Cradle is up for debate, certainly only a handful of humans know of the ancient robot's presence, and none of them are officially connected with the government.

Father Blacktail's aged and still-human mother is one of these. *Bettina*, like many of the widely scattered Wojtyla clan, has an easy, instinctive camaraderie with Battlechangers. Sentinel #6900 manifested a comm-screen to speak a handful of words to the elderly woman when she visited the rail yard. She asked the robot what he was waiting for. His single word answer "EVOLUTION" was the most conversation any Earther ever got out of the enigmatic Battlechanger. Thus far, she's kept his secret, not even telling her beloved son about the robot's presence. (She worries how lonely Sentinel #6900 must be, though, and has taken to slipping friendly notes under his wheels every Sunday morning, after early Mass.)

THE JOBBER CANYON FREE MARKET

With walls blazoned in a rainbow of openly pornographic Anthro graffiti, this converted shipping warehouse has become a weekend farmer's market and (as proclaimed by the murals) the largest worship space for the Mates in the city. Most devotees of the Mates keep small bedroom altars in their homes, but on warm, full-moon nights, the privacy-fenced rooftop becomes a hedonistic orgy in celebration of the Mates. The revels, which begin with dance, song and a feast at sunset, attract Anthros from all walks of life.

The rules are ironclad: no violence of any kind, no Anthros under 21, explicit consent is mandatory and condoms stay on. The multi-limbed, hulking roach Anthro, *Jack Forager* (NG male Anthro Combatant 4), walks the floor during the revel and enforces these rules. His stoic yet gentle nature and obvious physical superiority makes him an attractive potential mate, but his heart belongs solely to the Free Market's organizer.

Lordosis Shaw (NG female Anthro Smart 6/Cleric of the Mates 2) bought the Jobber Canyon market a few years ago and rehabbed the facility, turning it into the beating, carnal heart of Anthro life in the city. The indigo eyed, extremely clever puma Anthro lives with Forager in an improvised loft apartment overlooking the market space. Lordosis is famed for her intelligence even more than her stunning, feral beauty.

Not only was she able to build a thriving community market from nothing, Lordosis invented the revolutionary HIV test used at the door on orgy nights, a saliva test that gives accurate results in seconds rather than days. Several big pharma megacorps have made desultory attempts to steal her tech, but Lordosis doesn't want the technology to fall into their hands, where they can patent it, lock it down and sell it for \$300 per test kit. Instead, she makes her self-designed medi-tech available to local free clinics, gay rights and safe sex orgs at no cost.

Lordosis also designed several of the sacred statues on display at **Doorly Cathedral**, and has begun experimenting with low-level occult tech. She's capable of producing simple enchanted or psi-enhanced weapons and body armor for the city's Anthro defenders, but she only deals with Anthros she trusts, and almost never takes commissions from baseline *sapiens*.

THE FARMERS MARKET ITSELF

From Friday afternoon until sunset on Sunday, the Jobber Canyon's Farmer's Market attracts shoppers and Anthro-watchers from around the Midwest. It's a different crowd than the devotees of the Mates, but there's some solid overlap between the two communities. Lordosis Shaw is always at the Market, meeting and greeting vendors and customers, firming up relationships between locals. Charter buses park in nearby pay lots, bringing tourist dollars, and tourist curiosity into the Cradle.

Local artists set up booths near every entrance to the market space, offering animal-themed face painting to any human visitor who asks. Among the Cradle's baseline *homo sapiens*, only little kids get painted up; for anybody much past 11 years old, wearing animal-themed face paint is pure low-class tourist crap. (The one notable exception, is **Bettina Wojtyla**, who invariably asks for a racoon mask when her son takes her grocery shopping here. The locals give the kind old lady a pass.) In addition to fresh vegetables and home-made handicrafts, every few weekends the Farmer's Market offers a unique theme, attracting vendors with unique things to sell. Previous themed weekends attracted vintage record collectors, toy enthusiasts, sports memorabilia fanatics and other hobbyists. Last year's most popular theme weekend offered unique artwork from local Anthro artists.

THE BRIGHTSTAR REMNANT

Golden winged **Vex Rayner** (CG female Anthro Soulnife 2) is a sophomore at *Creighton University*. She is majoring in xeno-archeology, a field in which the university has a stellar reputation since so many locals have a vested interest in the White Dawn. On a class dig to Arizona last summer, the nerdy, wasp phenotype Vex unearthed an alien artifact that sang to her insectoid blood. She discovered a functioning **Brightstar Lens**, and bonded with the alien omni-weapon.

Now, her dreams are filled with visions of the long-extinct **Brightstar Order**, a cadre of insectoid knights who brought justice to the cosmos before their fabled fall. As best she can, the ambitious young Vex is trying to rebuild the

Brightstar Order. With the help of some engineering major buddies, she's managed to reverse engineer the Lens. Now, she's actively recruiting insect phenotype Anthros and Mantids with strong wills and good hearts to resurrect the Brightstar Order. For the last several weeks, she's been trying to get **Jack Forager** interested, but her invitations are so vague that Forager think her interests are purely romantic, and has been blowing her off.



THE YOUNG REMNANT

Vex Rayner has gathered an extraordinary set of volunteers to assist in her dream of restarting the Brightstar Order. Most of these would-be heroes also attend Creighton University and most are insect derived Anthros... with one very notable exception in both cases.

Some of the other members of Vex' Brightstar Remnant include:

Guillotine Gardner (CG female Anthro Smart 2) is acerbic and quick-witted, and every bit as proud of her brains as she is of her kelly-green praying mantis phenotype. (Though she can be a bit defensive around bigoted

humans.) Guillotine is a third-year engineering student at *Creighton*, and she was responsible for duplicating the Lens. “Her” lenses talk to her, tell her secrets of lost Brightstar tech she’s not smart enough to understand... yet. She’ll be the first Earther to master the Brightstar Lens or die trying. She also has a massive and mostly unspoken crush on Vex.

Pinchpoint Troy (LG male Anthro Fighter 1) came to the Remnant via the university’s ROTC program. While the iridescent-shelled beetle-phenotype Anthro had previously planned on joining the Army after graduation, Vex offered him a chance to protect the world on a scale he never considered. Pinchpoint is an idealist, a born hero – he’s known Vex since they were kids, reading superhero comics and watching *GI Joe*. Pinchpoint doesn’t realize that **Psi-Watch** is already interested in him, and the better he gets with his Lens, the more attractive a recruit he becomes.

Scottie and Jade Groundscraper are commonly referred to as “the twins”. Jade (CG female Anthro Dedicated 1) is older by seven minutes. Jade’s the stereotypical hippy art major with one exception: her art is really, really good, and her Lens creations are similarly intricate. Scottie (NG male Anthro Smart 1) is a business major, but his disciplined, meticulous accountant’s mind serves him well in the Remnant. Scottie has mastered more advanced Brightstar feats than any other member, and can manifest weapons and vehicles by sheer force of will. Both twins have dung beetle phenotypes, and yes, they’ve heard all the jokes.

Jack Kirby (LG venerable male Human Expert 6) spent a little time experimenting with a Lens, and Vex considers the legendary comic artist an unofficial ‘reserve’ member of the Remnant. Once Vex got her imagination powered weapon working, she made a road trip to Kirby’s home in California to pick the brain of the most imaginative human on Earth. She left King Kirby with a working Lens prototype, and in return, he showed Vex some new uses for the Lens that the wasp-woman hadn’t considered. The visit left Kirby creatively refreshed, fired up with new ideas to a level he hadn’t been since his *Fourth World* days back in the 70s. He’s telling the story of the Brightstar Order in all its para-cosmic, four color glory, partnered with the trend-setting **Sunburn Comics** to distribute the issues. These new books are part documentary, part hagiography, part training manual, and all Kirby.

THE TABBY GALLERY

The Tabby Gallery is one of many hip art galleries carved out of the warehouses just a few blocks from the Jobber Canyon Free Market. The small shop and workspace shares space with three other establishments (another gallery, a place specializing in body art, and a skate shop). Its proprietor, the feline **Joanne Tabby** (N female Anthro Wizard 5) studied occult-tech artisanry under **Lordosis Shaw**, but has already progressed farther along the path than her one-time teacher. Tabby is a prominent local artist, whose abstract and nanotech enhanced sculptures decorate City Hall, the Petroglyph corporate headquarters, and several other local buildings.

Her occult-tech weapons are growing in popularity among local adventurers. Unlike her mentor, Joanne has no problem dealing with humans – she sees baseline humans as alluringly exotic, since she was born and raised in the Anthro city. She trades a little with the **First Nations Federation**, providing their warriors with enchanted bows and fighting knives.

RECORD RIVALS

More than a dozen indy record stores operate within a four-block radius of the Jobber’s Canyon Free Market, plus countless hip clothing shops, skate stores and small restaurants. In a lot of ways, the Free Market neighborhood is the hard-rockin’ hipster heart of the city. Two of the many record stores, diametrically opposed in philosophy and clientele are separated by less than a city block.

Empire of Man Records is a hangout for one of the city’s toughest skin-head gangs. The **Hammerdown Cleanskins** shave their entire bodies, not just their heads, to make an even clearer contrast with the Anthros they despise. (Use a variety of *OC Gangster*, *Hunt Club Member* and *Nano-Soldier* statblocks to represent these human supremacist scummers.)

The Cleanskins’ founder lurks in the shop’s backroom-slash-demo studio. Locals usually just call him the Emperor – his skinhead minions, in awe of his superhuman combat gifts call him the God-Emperor. **Hank Dhalman** (use *Nano-Commando* statblock) is a nano-augmented veteran who was dishonorably discharged from **Puzzle Ops** in ’88. Since then, he’s been mentoring a new generation of skinhead musicians, and training skullkickers at the shop. Most of the white-power bands in the Midwest play at EoM for brutal weekend gigs, which is the only reason to bother coming into the hostile territory of the Cradle. The concrete concert pit doubles as a fighting arena where newborn Hammerdown Cleanskins are baptized in pain. Dhalman rarely leaves Empire of Man, sending his minions out on

food runs, and watching the sporadic street-corner violence from his rooftop, bottle of whiskey in hand. Below, his skinhead minions howl: "The God-Emperor protects!" as they cave in Anthro skulls.

Arlene Larkin (LE female Light Cyborg Bard 2/Combatant 5) is the hard-fighting skinhead princess of EoM Records. With her all grrl band, Larkin is the racist wet dream of every skin in the Mid-West. She fronts the white-power band *Steeltoe*, and is the only one of the Cleanskins able to stand up to Dhalman in the training circle for a full 3-minute round. He's been sharpening her natural aptitude for violence, and through Dhalman, Larkin has gotten access to some illegal combat bionics that have pretty much turned her into a walking tank. She's an eager puppy around Dhalman, and a rabid pitbull around everybody else. Metaphorically, of course.

DHALMAN'S SECRET

There's a pretty good chance that Hank Dhalman might not be everything that he claims to be. Hacking his service file finds all the expected decorations and redactions, but that's the problem, it's all too expected. Straight out of black ops central casting.

Some possibilities for Dhalman's true nature includes:

POSSIBILITY FLEE THE FUTURE

Dhalman isn't native to this time. He's a Lifer war-criminal from the alternate *Otherversa America* future, come backwards in time as part of a trans-dimensional 'ratline' to escape justice. The white power morons he's recruiting are just the start of his rebuilt AOG cell. If Dhalman is really from an alternate future, his nano-soldier enhancement is only the beginning of what he can do, as he's got access to thought-based weapons from a hundred years hence.

POSSIBILITY SCHOLARSHIP RECRUITER

Dhalman wasn't discharged from Puzzle Ops like his records indicate. Instead, he's still on their payroll, looking to recruit new operatives for Scholarship Division from among the skinheads. His skinhead acolytes have already proven sociopathic and good at taking orders – he's looking for the few with the capacity to rein in the violence when necessary and unleash it only on the government's orders.

POSSIBILITY SECRET WATCHMAN

Dhalman is one of Miles Buffett's most trusted minions, and through the racist billionaire, has access to Watchtower tech and firepower. Dhalman and the Cleanskins have killed several Anthros at Buffett's urging, and have been gathering up Anthro artifacts and traces of White Dawn

energy in service of Buffett's grand scheme of genocide.

POSSIBILITY CONINTELPRO

Dhalman is a deep cover FBI agent embedded into the Cradle's white power underground in hopes of bringing it down from within. Dhalman's real identity is **David Chesterfield** (LN male MPH Cryptic 10), and he's been using his psi-talents to mimic Dhalman's supposed combat enhancements. As Dhalman, the agent has uncovered the Cleanskin's ties to the Cradle's police force and power structure, but he's also gotten in too deep. As Dhalman, Chesterfield has committed a pair of murders the FBI knows nothing about, and worse, has fallen deep in love with a skinhead girl.

ANOTHER BRANCH OF THE GREAT TREE

Roughly six hundred yards down the block, things are radically different.

Great Tree Records is run by a fun-loving (and absolutely incompetent) crew of college-age humans and Anthros. This motley band of misfits somehow keeps the shop open despite a soap-opera rotation of personal, romantic and financial crises. Great Tree is a local indy-rock institution, and a place for rookie Growl bands to get their demo tapes out to the public. It's a friendly, welcoming place for human and Anthro music fans alike.... And a gaping portal to the Multiverse has opened up in one of the back offices.

Nobody's really in charge at Great Tree Records, so the staff usually just keeps the back room locked at all times and don't talk about the occasional dimensional weirdness that comes through. Open the door though, and instead of a poster-covered micro-office, you step out into the rainbow void of *Hyperspace*, walking amid the infinite branches of the *Great Universal Tree*. Anyone with the courage to take a step into the unknown, or with a good understanding of Multiversal physics, can travel the dimensions via Great Tree's back office. It's almost a safe journey, too.

Great Tree Records employs a small army of slackers, human and Anthro alike. Nobody's sure who's gonna show up to work the counter from day to day, because employees are constantly storming out, being fired, or rehired in a pinch. The line between regular customer and staff blurs pretty thin. You can roll multiple D12s to see what's going on in the shop this afternoon. The first D12 roll provides both a male and female name; either randomly decide gender or just pick one for the character. The relationship column requires another set of D12 rolls to determine who the initial character is in a relationship with.

The local record shops, especially **Great Tree Records**, have had plenty of trouble with the Cleanskins in the past. When a white-power band's in town, windows get broken, patrons get roughed up, queer, black and Anthro customers get the shit knocked out of them. The Cradle's cops don't do too much, so the **Unity Panthers** have started posting up guards when it looks like trouble is going to start. Some of the tougher boys (and a few of the girls) from Great Tree have started standing with the Panthers.

The Great Tree's Hangers-On				
D12	Name	What Kind of Person?	Their Relationship	Their Secret
1	AJ / MJ	Baseline human	Harbors a secret love for a character, hasn't told that person yet	Embezzled the entire till last night and lost it at a First Nations casino
2	Dean / Debra	Mouse phenotype Anthro	Jealous of a character's seemingly perfect life	Time traveler who came out of the back office, who is a child conceived in a hook-up by two staffers just a few nights ago
3	Cody / Corey	Baseline human	Wishes they shared a species or phenotype with a character	Secretly reports to the skinheads at EoM Records either for love or money
4	Greg / Gina	Songbird phenotype Anthro	Owes a character major money	Secret speed addict
5	Lucas / Lisa	Baseline human with a Wild Talent	Plans on opening a business of some kind with another character	Hidden psi-talents; escaped from a Scholarship Division camp a few months ago
6	Joe / Jo	Cityborn	Plays in a garage band with one or two other characters	A receptive audience to the city's Breeder Oblix cult, feels like the cult is their family
7	Marc / Millie	Housecat phenotype Anthro	Blood relation with another character	Parents going through a messy, traumatic divorce
8	Adam / Anne	Baseline human with Kiss Friend abilities	Despises another character and it's come to blows more than once	Survivor of some pretty horrid abuse
9	Rick / Rita	Labrador phenotype Anthro	Either knocked-up another character or was knocked-up by that character	The character is the child or grandchild of a major city NPC
10	Kyle / Kayla	Baseline human with a physical disability	Best friends with another character – the two are inseparable	Dimensional traveler from <i>Otherverse America</i> – the child of a Lifer war criminal fleeing down the dimensional 'ratline'
11	Chris / Kris	Wolf phenotype Anthro	The weed dealer (or best customer) to another character	Innate Sorcerer or Magus talents, looking for a teacher
12	Dale / Daisy	Goryohime (female only) who crossed the Tree from <i>Black Tokyo</i>	Everybody in the store wants to fuck the character regardless of species or sexuality	Survivor of a recent suicide attempt

THE WESTERN DAWN

As often as the Cleanskins kick the shit out of Great Tree customers, they spend more time trading punches with a particularly strange rival within the white supremacist community. The **Western Dawn** is an all-Anthro white-power cell. The Western Dawn was founded in 1990 by **Tanner Hodge** (NE male Anthro Combatant 8). Hodge grew up in the Cradle, brawling with human Neo-Nazis, so often he finally came around to their way of thinking, and took things one step farther. Potential members must not only have a documented, pure European heritage stretching back at least four generations, but their Anthro phenotype must represent a species native to Europe. Western Dawn is dedicated to Species Superiority but considers white, European-bred *homo sapiens* almost as evolved as Euro-

derived Anthros. Western Dawn embraces Nordic neo-paganism, and runes are often branded into their warriors' hides.

Tanner Hodge is a goliath bear-phenotype Anthro who bleaches his pelt ivory white, and has shaven both muscular shoulders, the better to display his swastika and 'bolts' tattoos. His inner circle follows his style. Tanner and the Western Dawn are unwelcome at EoM Records, but still make the big shows, even if they have to kick in several Cleanskin skulls as part of the ticket price.

The Western Dawn is less dangerous than the Cleanskins on the whole. The gang is smaller, less organized, and has less

money at its disposal. However, since the Western Dawn is all-Anthro, they have been more successful than the Cleanskins in sneaking members onto the Cradle's Anthro-majority police force. Several Anthro cops hide Western Dawn runes under their body armor. The most dangerous of these infiltrators is the sadistic Clydesdale phenotype detective **William Gorat** (LE male Anthro Fighter 6). Gorat works on the city's major case squad, and has already steered a pair of murder investigations away from Western Dawn and towards the Cleanskins.

THE VENOM OF A MAUS

In 1971, an embittered Holocaust survivor named **Vladek Avraham** (LN male Anthro Commoner 7/Aberrant Aegis 3) went through the second greatest horror of his long and sad life. Over the course of a day, the elderly man's human flesh became a sleek white pelt, and he transformed into a hybrid of man and mouse. The White Dawn's transformation almost destroyed him: had he become the vermin that Nazi propaganda always claimed his people were? It took Avraham nearly a decade to come to terms with his strange metamorphosis. Over a long decade of pain, Avraham realized something – his transformation nearly killed his soul, but it saved his body. His new shape was healthier and more vigorous than he was in his thirties. Vladek Avraham could live a long, long time in his new body, and since he had no real choice in the matter, he went on as best he could.

After the death of his second wife in 1991, Vladek abandoned New York for Cat's Cradle, not even bothering to leave his son a forwarding address. He cut all ties with the still-human members of his family, most especially his graphic novelist son, **Benjamin Avraham**. One of the leading lights of the literary and underground comix movement, Benjamin made a name for himself telling his father's stories: stories taken without permission, without concern for the father's feelings about the telling. *The Mouse That Bled History* – a graphic novel account of the Holocaust that cast the Nazis as cats, the Jews as mice and ethnic Poles as pigs, was inspired by both Vladek's life, and by his transformation on that strange day in 1971. When the first issue came out, Vladek saw it as the ultimate betrayal by a son too radically different from his father for actual love.

Once in the Cradle, Vladek settled into a tiny, dust-covered apartment and depressingly quiet life. He spoke to few, and had little interest in the company of fellow Anthros, nor in their emergent culture. During his waking hours, he shops for a few groceries, spends his days in the library, and retires early. That's his waking life.

His dreams – his dreams are different. Vladek's Anthro neurology is far more evolved than he ever realized. A lifetime of hate, fear and repressed rage and even more deeply repressed happiness, manifests as a skin of gleaming, tar-black ectoplasm that sheathes his slumbering body, evolves it even farther, into a bestial warform that is more rhinoceros than mouse. In this guise, Vladek's subconscious erupts into the night, and howls ecstatically as it runs the rooftops. It exults in Vladek's physical prowess, his grace and strength, and the strength of his mutant mind. And it hunts....

The Cradle's local Neo-Nazis are looking for the rhino-thing that's killed three of their toughest fighters and put another dozen in the hospital over the past few months. No connects the cackling, hyper-muscular behemoth capable of snapping a Nazi's femur in his bare paws with the tired, world-weary mouse buying cans of soup at Safeway. Even Vladek himself doesn't suspect – his brutally joyous other self is careful to wash the blood from his paws before returning control of their shared body to the old man.

TIGER UPPERCUT

AND THE SKATE SHOP NEXT DOOR

Tiger Uppercut! is a martial-arts school operating out of a grimy, half-way empty strip mall on the border between the fashionable Free Market neighborhood and the barrio just beyond. There's a skate shop next door, but it has no sign, and nobody ever calls it anything other than "that skateshop nextdoor to Tiger Uppercut!" Both businesses are run by Anthros – a pair of 30-something brothers who were twins before the White Dawn gave them dramatically different phenotypes and put them on dramatically different paths.

Terry Dawson (LG male Extreme Anthro Monk 7) owns **Tiger Uppercut!** and his muscular Siberian tiger phenotype is the inspiration for the dojo's name. He politely refuses to teach *sapiens*, but will occasionally train a Hardgene. He specializes in animalistic styles that incorporate natural weapons, and is a good teacher for Anthro-specific combat feats. **Ricky Dawson** (CG male Extreme Anthro Nomad 6) became a slender, green-scaled treefrog phenotype Anthro on the White Dawn. Ricky runs the skate shop next door, and has made a name for himself as a world-champion street skater. The two vacant shops to the right of the skate shop have been gutted, turned into an indoor skate park, which opens out into an outdoor skate park built behind the strip mall.

The two brothers compete fiercely in everything, and are always at each other's throats, but unite like Voltron when it comes to outside problems. The two brothers have been working together, combining their two interests

– skate stunts and physical prowess – into a prototype form of parkour, practiced in the Cradles avenues and alleyways. The two have also been working with **Elias Quaid** of the Unity Panthers, assembling a cross-species fighting tournament in town. If everything goes well, the first matches of the **Tiger Paw Tournament** will go down later this summer, with the finals occurring around Thanksgiving.

The final Dawson sibling remained baseline when the White Dawn hit. **Sabrina Dawson** (NG female Human Modern Spellcaster 9) has been studying the weird and inexplicable since she was 10 and watched her brothers mutate before her eyes. Her research has made her a phenomenally competent street mage, and she's got connections throughout North America's occult community. She makes a living as an enchanter for hire, specializing in transmutation and personal enhancement. She takes commissions from her brothers' students and hang-arounds. Sabrina works out of her family's tract house, a few miles down the road from the dojo, where she lives with older brother Terry. Ricky usually has his own place, but drops in every few months after being evicted from his latest apartment.

FROM BEYOND

An unexpected threat from beyond the stars has come into the Cradle.

A pair of **Zeth Trophy Hunters** has made the Cradle their latest stalking ground. These Zeth are female – sisters – who hunt cooperatively. The bolder of the two has tan scales, while her tactician sibling is distinguished by a long scar that bisects her horribly alien mouth. The Zeth have made Anthro martial artists their favored prey, and have taken an impressive count of pelts, skulls and horns even in their short time in the city. This summer's **Tiger Paw Tournament** will prove an irresistible temptation, as skilled Anthro fighters from around the planet descend on the Cradle to compete.



The twin Zeth lair in an abandoned stockyard on the fringes of the city. The heavily booby-trapped lair serves both a refuge and impromptu taxidermy studio, the place where the dark sisters clean their kills.

SKY CLAW AIRBOARDS

Sky Claw Airboards opened late in 1991, quickly transitioning from manufacturing high-end, customized skateboards a new high-tech, hipper-than-hip techno-toy for the skater set. Sky Claw produces **Flitters** and **Grav Skates** (see *Technology Unleashed*), as well as old style skateboards and roller blades. Sky Claw's founder and chief designer is a daring Siamese-phenotype Anthro with a real head for anti-grav technology. Not only can Sky Claw produce this cutting-edge tech, they can do it cheaply! So cheaply, in fact, that Sky Claw offers 1/3rd off list-price for *flitters* to Anthro skaters. As a result, most of the city's Anthro skaters have made the switch over to hover-boards, and never looked back.

Kelsie Slipstream (LN female Anthro Smart 5/Fast 2) opened Sky Claw a few months after she dropped out of Creighton University's engineering program, which really had nothing new to teach her. She's been skating street in the Cradle since she was a kitten – she totally shredded her left ear during a bad wipe out when she was 12. Most of neighborhood's skater boys think the scar makes her even

more attractive. This includes **Ricky Dawson**, much to her disgust. Kelsie only dates mammals, big cats by preference, and older brother **Terry Dawson** is looking damn good to her. The only reason she hasn't jumped Terry yet is she knows the blood-feud it would spark between the brothers. More to the point, she knows that the blowback might piss off the Cradle's skaters, no matter how it shakes out. So being a smart business woman, Kelsie controls her lust. For now.... but if she could get Terry alone at one of the Mates' revels, all bets are off.

Game Master's Note

Since skateboarding plays such a major role in Cat's Cradle as an adventure setting, look in this sourcebook's appendix for some simple boarding rules!

PETROGLYPH METAMATERIALS

Petroglyph is an Anthro-owned mega-corp and one of the city's largest employers, specializing in advanced polymers, construction materials and circuit components. Petroglyph products are found in everything from cassette tapes and car engines to the support girders of skyscrapers. The corporation's massive private campus and production facilities stretch for several acres.

Petroglyph employs more than 8,000 people at the Cat's Cradle facility alone, about 75% of which are Anthros of various phenotypes.

Company wunderkind racoon-phenotype **Dr. Ferris Freepaw** (CN male Anthro Smart 10) is using the city's Gopher Row and Old North neighborhoods to test out a kind of solar tile that absorbs heat and converts it into electricity as a replacement for traditional pavement. If the project works, not only will the world have an almost limitless source of free electricity, city sidewalks will be cool enough for Anthros to walk bare-pawed even during the dog days of summer. It was the second benefit that sparked Dr. Freepaw's interest in the project – converting ambient heat to electricity was merely the solution he came up with to the problem of walking barepaw in the summer. It's emblematic of the unconventional way Freepaw thinks – his own comfort comes first, and if solving a private problem benefits the world, or Petroglyph's stock prices, so much the better. Petroglyph's board of directors just gives Dr. Freepaw a lavish research budget, stands back, and sees what he comes up with.

The Genetic Materials Division (GMD) is headed by the bat-phenotype **Dr. Lisette Santiago** (LE female Anthro Alchemist 9). In deference to the department head's altered Circadian rhythm, the GMD operates on a nocturnal schedule, and has attracted several other night-adapted scientists. The GMD recently cracked the formula on a powerful mutagen, and can produce several hundred doses of *Anthro-Gen Mutagen* per month at current capacity. The path to the ideal formula wasn't a straight, nor an easy one. Several million gallons of dangerous pre-mutagens and failed experiments are stored in a subterranean tank farm on site. A major accidental release would be an ecological catastrophe that could potentially exterminate all life in the city, and even a minor release would unleash a zombie

outbreak among the city's Anthro populace.

Dr. Santiago knows how many corners her department cut in pursuit of the Anthro-Gen formula, and knows that one unannounced EPA inspection could result in Petroglyph's immediate bankruptcy and her imprisonment. As a result, she's prepared for the worst. She carries a sample of *Anthro-Gen Mutagen* in a hollow collar pendant, for use



as a bargaining chip. She's got enough of the zombie-spawning pollutant to cause a local outbreak in what looks like a tube of Mace hanging from her key-fob; she's inoculated herself against the gas. Dr. Santiago has no qualms about releasing the chemical to cover her escape if it looks like things are going bad.

As corrupt and unprincipled as Dr. Santiago is, she has no idea Petroglyph's true plans for the Anthro-Gen. Dr. Santiago assumes the mutagen is being produced for sale to the US military, to produce Anthro super-soldiers. It's not. Instead, the dangerous chemical is being stockpiled, and production is being ramped up dramatically. Company founder, and anti-human fanatic **Dr. Carmine Waller** hopes to produce enough of the mutagen for a planetary release – and the end of unmodified *homo sapiens* as a species – by 2003.

UNMARKED SEMETARY

Unknown to the Petroglyph board, some of the containment tanks where the flawed Anthro-Gen mix are stored are already beginning to leak into the ground water. The occult-tech pollution has transformed the ground within a mile of the tank farm into a *Semetary*, as described in the *Cosmic Toybox*. Even worse, the contamination can easily spread to *Saddle Creek*, where the megacorp is building a sprawling water resort...

SADDLE CREEK SPLASHDOWN

Just a few minutes' drive from the heart of the Cradle, Saddle Creek Splashdown is a multi-billion dollar waterpark, hotel and resort. Phase I of the park opened in 1991, and construction continues on Phases II thru IV. Phase II, which includes one of the largest steel coasters in the Mid-West, is set to open late summer of 1993. Phase III will add additional hotel space, a massive concert venue and additional onsite bar and restaurant options. Phase IV will expand the water park and break ground on a truly massive shopping archology. All phases are expected to be complete by 2001.

The waterpark attracted some mild controversy when it made the decision to allow Anthro guests to enjoy the park nude, but required shirts or bathing suits for human guests. However, the policy has proven popular with the local Anthro majority population, and looks to be here to stay. The waterpark employs many reptile and piscine phenotype Anthros, offering lavish sign-on bonuses for amphibian life guards. Many of the park's water-breathing staff live in an apartment complex onsite, which offers both fully and partially flooded floorplans (or just submerged bedchambers with a wet well that leads into an otherwise dry apartment) for the comfort of the fish-like tenants. When Phase II goes on line, the apartment complex will double in size, and new aquatic resorts will offer a similar experience to guests.

Saddle Creek Splashdown is a fully-owned subsidiary of *Petroglyph Meta-Materials*. Petroglyph's demographic projections indicated that piscine Anthros were an underserved, but potentially fast-growing market, and the four-phase superpark is their attempt to corner that market.

EVOLUTION'S PROMISE

Evolution's Promise is outwardly a socially conservative lobbying organization, run by the city's more conservative Anthros – something like what *Focus on the Family* would be if it suddenly grew fur. Just beneath the surface, however, Evolution's Promise is one of the largest and best organized *Breeder Oblix* cults on the planet. Evolution's Promise is headquartered in the ten story

Bradford Building, a modern office park built in the 1980s, which overlooks the beautiful botanical park at *Lauritzen Gardens*.

Evolution's Promise is a mostly unspoken power player in the Cradle's politics. They run several Anthro-only crisis pregnancy centers in the Old North, and have made alliances of convenience with human-run anti-abortion groups, including the Kansas-based *Operation Rescue*. Evolution's Promise has more influence on Doorly Cathedral's operating budget than the liberal *Father Blacktail* would like. The Promise funds (though a confusing maze of shell companies) ultra-conservative human-centric groups like *Mothers Against Furry Immorality* (MAFI), *Bothered by Furry Crime* (BFC) and *Against Anthro Sins* (AAS). Through these easily manipulated pawns, Evolution's Promise has been trying to close down the orgiastic celebrations of the Mates since Lordosis Shaw first started them a couple years back.

Rather than the condom-shod, pleasure-focused rites of the Mates, the Promise wants the city's Anthros to only give into their lusts when breeding strong, cult-approved new litters of soldiers-to-be. Shutting down Shaw's impromptu temple to the Mates is one of the Promise's chief local goals.

Rev. Jeremiah Breakhorn (LE male Eroticized Anthro Cleric of Breeder Oblix 12) is the Oblix cult's high priest, and the chief operating officer of Evolution's Promise. The Reverend Breakhorn is a charismatic, next-generation televangelist with a fit and heroically proportioned stag phenotype. Breakhorn preaches something that sounds like conservative, mainline Christianity when humans hear it, and which sounds like a strict interpretation of the Lion Messiah's creed to Anthro ears.... but which always carries Breeder Oblix ideals as subtext. Breakhorn and his doe wife, Amelia, have nine children already, and a pair of twins on the way. The Reverend Breakhorn's dalliances with the women of his congregation are an open secret. Because of his affairs with various female Anthros (all with herbivore phenotypes), Breakhorn has fathered more than 150 additional children.

When his wife's exacting calculations show the women of the cult are at their most fertile, Breakhorn leads his favored cult members in 'their rightful duty of procreation'. **Amelia Breakhorn** (NE female Eroticized Anthro Druid 7) is trusted with the cult's eugenic experiments – she takes great pride in choosing which Anthros earn the right to breed, and with whom. She handpicked every single one of her husband's mistresses, and considers the children of these unions to be her progeny, to be raised as she sees fit. Thanks to well-cultivated extraterrestrial contacts,



Amelia Breakhorn has learned of the existence of a clade of monstrosity called a “*Mother of Abominations*” – the dark, ultimate harbinger of Anthro hyper-fecundity. Much of her cult’s recent activities have been directed toward gathering the necessary components for a ritual to draw one of these alien aberrations to Earth.

REV HINN KNOWS SOMETHING HE SHOULDN'T

Rev. Georgie Hinn (NE elderly male Human Charismatic 9) has broadcast the *Jesus Saves Miracle Show* every night since 1963, and doesn’t believe a single fucking word he’s ever preached. Not that anyone in the audience would ever realize it. The blustering, red-faced and jocular televangelist is a wily liar with every line of Scripture memorized and enumerated for his audience. His frothing rants, which link the White Dawn event to the Mark of the Beast, and the United Nations to some ever-expanding

and exceedingly vague plan to steal white, Christian children, are legendarily hateful. They are also legendarily profitable, and Rev. Hinn is one of the city’s wealthiest private citizens. He maintains a private horse ranch outside city limits, and boasts the only animals he allows out there are the four footed kind.

For all his avarice and fear-mongering, Rev. Hinn is a small, purely human breed of evil. He recently stumbled onto a much darker species of evil. A coincidence pushed the hateful Rev. Hinn into close proximity to the *Breeder Obliv* cult. Hinn’s curiosity was aroused, tinged by some obvious jealousy over *Rev. Breakhorn*’s meteoric rise to fame. Hinn had an instinct that Breakhorn was every bit as much a fraud as he, and a little subtle digging confirmed that. That same digging also uncovered Amelia Breakhorn’s plan to bring a pan-dimensional monster to Earth (Amelia covered her tracks a lot more poorly than she imagined).

The night he discovered that little secret, Rev. Hinn hit the bottle hard, for the first time in more than 50 years. Hinn knows the danger

he’s in, and has become dangerously paranoid. He knows that if even if he revealed everything he know on the *Jesus Saves Miracle Show*, only his target audience of geriatric trailer trash would believe it, and the rest of world would laugh the (truthful) accusation off as another paranoid screed. Worse, he knows the cult would have him killed in retaliation. Hinn has few allies outside his ‘congregation’ and no friends, nobody he can trust with a secret that could save or destroy the world. But for the first time in decades, Hinn’s con-man instincts are awake again – he’s looking for a way out, and a way to bring down Breakhorn. He’s looking for competent outside ‘freelancers’. And if he can funnel some of Breakhorn’s money into his ministry in the process, so much the better.

APPENDIX

ONE:

HIT THE STREETS!

Given the prominence of skater-heroes and heroines in early 90s fiction, including some simple rules for skateboards and rollerblades seems appropriate. Years ago, in the *Extreme Action* sourcebook for LPJ Designs, I produced a full set of skater-related feats, but much of that effort doesn't translate neatly to the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game* ruleset. The briefer rules here more than suffice.

Skateboards and roller skates (either traditional, roller-disco-style skates or the stylin' new inline kind) are new pieces of gear available to any of 1993's adventurers. Skates and skateboards provide an equipment bonus to base landspeed while they are ridden, but require Acrobatics checks of varying DCs to stay in control.

SKATES

These items can represent old-style roller skates or the new inline skates popular with 90s teens.

Special

Skates provides the rider with a +10 ft equipment bonus to base landspeed over mostly smooth ground; this bonus increases to +20 ft over mostly smooth ground while going downhill. Each round the rider receives this benefit, however, they must make a DC 12 Acrobatics check to stay on their feet. The rider must also make a new Acrobatics check every time they make a REF Save while skating.

Failure indicates the rider drops prone, takes at least 1d4 bludgeoning damage and ends their movement. Skates, obviously, always remain on the skater's feet. Circumstances might cause the rider to suffer additional falling damage – be careful where you skate!

SKATEBOARD CHEAP

Undecorated, mass-produced boards made from high impact plastic and laminated wood can be found in sporting goods stores and malls across the country. They're good

Device	Description	Hard Ness	Hit Points	Weight	Cost
Skates	Speed boost: +10 ft or +20 ft downhill Control: Acrobatics DC 12 Failure Damage: 1d4 bludgeoning	-	5	2-3 lbs (pair)	40 gp
Skateboard, Cheap	Speed boost: +10 ft or +20 ft downhill Control: Acrobatics DC 15 Failure Damage: 1d4 bludgeoning	2	5	2-3 lbs	65 gp
Skateboard, Competition	Speed boost: +15 ft or +25 ft downhill Control: Acrobatics DC 18 Failure Damage: 1d6 bludgeoning	3	10	2-3 lbs	150 gp
Skateboard, Delivery	All terrain speed boost: +20 ft or +30 ft downhill Control: Acrobatics DC 15 Failure Damage: 1d4 bludgeoning	4	25	8 lbs	450 gp
Delivery Skateboard one-shot 'screamer' recharge (service)					100 gp

starter boards, cheap enough for young skaters to afford, but lack the agility of higher quality boards.

Special

A Cheap Skateboard provides the rider with a +10 ft equipment bonus to base landspeed over mostly smooth ground; this bonus increases to +20 ft over mostly smooth ground while going downhill. Each round the rider receives this benefit, however, they must make a DC 15 Acrobatics check to stay on the board. The rider must also make a new Acrobatics check every time they make a REF Save while riding the board.

Failure indicates the rider drops prone, takes at least 1d4 bludgeoning damage and ends their movement. The skateboard ends up in a random open square within 60 ft. Circumstances might cause the rider to suffer additional falling damage – be careful where you skate!

SKATEBOARD COMPETITION

These boards are extensively customized and decorated, and are works of street art. Competition-grade skateboards can go for hundreds of bucks, and are favored by pro and semi-pro skaters as well as enthusiasts with money to spend.

Special

A Competition Skateboard provides the rider with a +15 ft equipment bonus to base landspeed over mostly smooth ground; this bonus increases to +25 ft over mostly smooth

ground while going downhill. Each round the rider receives this benefit, however, they must make a DC 18 Acrobatics check to stay on the board. The rider must also make a new Acrobatics check every time they make a REF Save while riding the board.

Failure indicates the rider drops prone, takes at least 1d6 bludgeoning damage and ends their movement. The skateboard ends up in a random open square within 60 ft. Circumstances might cause the rider to suffer additional falling damage – be careful where you skate!

SKATEBOARD DELIVERY

Delivery Skateboards are used exclusively by daring urban couriers who use a combination of parkour and skater speed to rush packages across the busy, cyberpunk city. These heavy, durable polycarbonate boards boast ‘smart-wheels’ made of advanced meta-materials that adjust to the terrain. These wheels offer a smoother ride and phenomenal dexterity. Most of these boards are emblazoned in shocking, neon corporate colors.

Special

A Delivery Skateboard provides the rider with a +20 ft equipment bonus to base landspeed, which increases to +30 ft when travelling downhill. These boards function in any terrain that is not considered difficult terrain. Each round the rider receives this benefit, however, they must make a DC 15 Acrobatics check to stay on the board. The rider must also make a new Acrobatics check every time they make a REF Save while riding the board.

Failure indicates the rider drops prone, takes at least 1d6 bludgeoning damage and ends their movement. The skateboard ends up in a random open square within 60 ft. Circumstances might cause the rider to suffer additional falling damage – be careful where you skate!

Weapons

A Delivery Skateboard is equipped with a one-shot sonic weapon, which can be triggered as an immediate action by the rider. This emergency ‘screamer’ is designed to shatter any plate glass that the rider didn’t see in time to steer away from, or can be used as a nasty surprise for the rider’s

opponents if the rider’s cornered.

All creatures and objects within a 10 ft burst, centered on the Delivery Skateboard suffer 3d6 sonic damage and living creatures are deafened for 1d4 rounds. A successful DC 15 FORT Save halves the damage and negates the deafness. The rider does not suffer damage, but is at risk for temporary deafness.

DELIVERY GRAPPLE

Most skaters get by with pure muscle power and the skillful application of gravity, but those with delivery jobs sometimes carry this magnetic grapple gun. Fire this this magnetic dart onto the rear bumper of a Buick, and you can draft along in its wake at 65 mph. Just make sure you don’t fall off or you’re street pizza!

Special

Attacks with the Delivery Grapple are resolved as ranged touch attacks. A successful attack against a ferrous target does no damage, but adheres the grapple line. It requires a DC 20 STR check or Escape Artist check to free yourself from a Delivery Grapple.

While grappled to an automobile or moving, ferrous creature and riding any skateboard or pair of skates, the Delivery Grapple’s wielder’s landspeed increases to match the grappled vehicle. However, all Acrobatics checks to control the skateboard or skates are increased by DC +10, and the skater suffers 3d6 bludgeoning damage from any failed Acrobatics check.

The Delivery Grapple’s wielder can release the grapple as a free action. The cable automatically recoils itself to be fired again when it is released. The Delivery Grapple’s line has a 100 ft maximum range, and the carbon fiber line has Hardness 4 and 16 HP. If used as a conventional grappling hook, the line can support up to 400 lbs weight.

One Handed Firearms	Damage	Critical	Range Increment	ROF	Special	Magazine	Size and Weight	Cost
Simple Weapons Proficiency or Personal Firearms Proficiency								
Delivery Grapple	-	-	50 ft	Single Shot	-	1 internal	3 lbs Small	60 gp

SKATEBOARDER TRAITS

The following traits usually show up in any campaign incorporating 90s style skateboarding action.

Board Racer (social trait)

Ability Type Extraordinary

Requires Acrobatics 1 rank, DEX 13+

You've been skating your whole life, and can crouch for speed, getting more out of your board than other skaters. You improve the equipment bonus to land speed of any skateboard by +5 ft, which applies both to level and downhill travel. However, if you fall from your board, you suffer an additional point of bludgeoning damage from the increased, reckless speed.

Board Slam (combat trait)

Ability Type Extraordinary

Requires Acrobatics 1 rank

When trouble jumps off, you can slam your board into the side of somebody's skull to end it. You suffer no penalty for using a skateboard as an improvised weapon. Most skateboards are treated as improvised light maces. A Delivery Skateboard, since its significantly heavier, is treated as a heavy mace instead.

California Days (social trait)

Ability Type Extraordinary

Requires Acrobatics 1 rank

All skaters long for those perfect, hot clear days where the concrete is just begging to be tested. You gain a +1 morale bonus on Acrobatics checks, Swim checks and REF saves on any sunny, clear day with temperatures above 60° F. You must be able to see the sky to gain the benefit from this bonus.

Radical Courier (social trait)

Ability Type Extraordinary

Requires Acrobatics 1 rank, Profession (courier) 1 rank

You've got a job as a courier for hire, and your employer provided you with all the necessary tools of the trade. You begin play with the following gear: a *Delivery Skateboard* and a *Delivery Grapple*. You also begin with several durable, rip-stop jerseys emblazoned with your company colors to wear as a working uniform.

Road Grappler (combat trait)

Ability Type Extraordinary

Requires DEX 13+

You're a dead shot with your magnetic Delivery Grapple. You are proficient with Delivery Grapples and receive a +2 trait bonus on ranged touch attack rolls with this weapon.

SKATEBOARDER FEATS

The following feats allow you to directly use your skateboard in battle!

Board Sacrifice – Combat

When things are at their worst, and you're dodging bullets, you can use your board as a shield in a last-ditch effort to save your ass.

Requires Acrobatics 1 rank

Benefit Once per round, as an immediate action, you can interpose your skateboard to take an incoming attack in your place. Your skateboard suffers the damage from the attack, and might gain the broken or destroyed condition. You must be aware of the attack, riding a skateboard and not helpless or otherwise prevented from freely moving to use this ability.

When you use this ability, you must make an Acrobatics check to control the board, the DC of which is based on the type of board you are riding. If successful, you use this ability and if your board is destroyed, you land on your feet and your movement ends. Failure means you lose control of your board, drop prone and suffer the effect of the attack normally.

Ability Type Extraordinary

Skater Tricks – Combat

It's not cheating if it works. You can use your board to trick, trip, baffle, irritate, confuse, humiliate, humble and generally screw over your opponents.

Requires Acrobatics 5 ranks, Improved Dirty Trick or Improved Trip

Benefit Anytime you are riding a skateboard or pair of skates and make either a Trip or Dirty Trick combat maneuver, roll both the combat maneuver check and an Acrobatics skill check. You use whichever result is better to determine the effectiveness of the combat maneuver.

Ability Type Extraordinary

Wall Grind

When you've gotta move, you do it fast, with incredible athleticism and come at your opponent from unexpected angles.

Requires Acrobatics 1 rank, DEX 13+

Benefit While riding any skateboard or pair of skates, when making a charge, your movement need not be in a straight line. You may dodge nimbly around obstacles, grind on walls, convenient rails, or incorporate a dizzying series of short hops and acrobatic tricks. You still cannot charge through an opponent's square.

Ability Type Extraordinary

APPENDIX TWO: THE BRIGHTSTAR BURNS

Again!

Vex Rayner's reborn Brightstar Order are all rookies, but if they survive they might reawaken an ancient galactic power! Brightstar technology and feats have popped up across several Otherverses Games sourcebooks, and are consolidated here for your convenience.

ALTERNATE RACIAL TRAIT

The following racial trait is available to *Mantids*, described in the self-titled PDF released in 2013. At the game master's options, insect or spider-derived Anthros might also be able to take this racial trait.

Brightstar Mantid Remnant (EX)

Available To: Mantids (*The Mantids*)

Replaces: Natural Weapons

The distant ancestors of the modern Mantid species established the star-spanning *Brightstar Order*, a cosmic army of insect-hybrid soldiers that defended the Multiverse against alien evils. Though the Brightstar Order lies in ruins, a handful of Mantids retain some of the powers of their ancestors.

You receive a +1 racial bonus on attack rolls against Aberrations and Outsiders with the evil subtype, due to special training against these hated foes.

BRIGHTSTAR TRAITS

The following traits were originally presented in last year's *Action Features!* and are reprinted here because of the importance of the Brightstar Remnant plotline to adventurers exploring the Cradle.

Brightstar Lens (psionic trait)

Ability Type Psi-Like

Requires WIS 13+

You are the inheritor of one of the last weapons of the Brightstar Order, a will-focusing gem embedded in the palm of your hand that manifests your willpower as reality. You appear to have a disk of glowing amber, carved with the eight-pointed star of the Brightstar Order replacing the palm of your dominant hand, without compromising your hand's utility. The Lens cannot be removed from your body, and even if your hand is severed, it reappears on your remaining hand or elsewhere on your body within seconds.

You gain the ability to manifest *ectoplasmic trinket* at will. These trinkets take the form of glowing golden energy, like solidified honey, connected to your lens with a string of light. When you manifest a new *ectoplasmic trinket*, the prior *trinket* vanishes.

Upon your death, you can designate one creature who must touch you within one round of your death. This character gains the Brightstar Lens trait. No other character can make your Lens work.

Bug Knight of Skyguard (racial trait)

Ability Type Extraordinary

Requires Mantid race, Brightstar Mantid Remnant alternate racial trait, any good alignment

The scattered remnants of the *Brightstar Order* found their way to *Skyguard*, where they arrived as refugees. Finding shelter among the star-gods, the Order's survivors and their descendants fought with valor as allies of the Skyguardians. Such Mantids are marked by compound eyes that gleam like hot gold.

You gain the No Breath racial trait. You may select traits and feats exclusive to Skyguardians.

BRIGHTSTAR FEATS

The Brightstar Order is defined by imagination-powered weapons which grow in power as the hero selects faction-specific feats.

Brightstar Lens Focus

Through sheer willpower, you've unlocked the secrets of your Brightstar Lens, and can wield it almost as adeptly as the ancient knights of the order. Almost.

Requires Brightstar Lens trait, Iron Will

Benefit Your Brightstar Lens now provides you with a constant *emergency space suit* effect, protecting you from radiation, vacuum and suffocation, in the form of a glowing golden aura that sheathes you in times of need. In addition, you can manifest *ectoplasmic creation* with the lens at will, subject to all the same limitations of your Brightstar Lens power.

Three times per day, you may manifest *entangling ectoplasm* as a psychic warrior of your total character level. This ability may be augmented, and shares the same appearance as your other Brightstar Lens powers.

Finally, mastery of this feat enhances the abilities of a *Brightstar Order Skin* (*Shades and Spandex*) as if you were wearing a *Brightstar Collar* (*Cosmic Toybox*).

Ability Type Psi-Like

Brightstar Lens Imagination

Your willpower and imagination allows you to conjure even more impressive Lens-light constructs.

Requires Brightstar Lens Focus

Benefit Up to three times per day, you may manifest any combination of the following abilities as a manifester of your total character level. All powers manifest as constructs of glowing golden light, tethered to your Brightstar Lens by a thin string of energy. These powers may be augmented.

- Ectoplasmic Cocoon
- Inertial Barrier
- Wall of Ectoplasm
- Alternatively, you can expend a use of this ability to manifest a psionic power identical to *summon monster IV* or any lesser *summon monster* spell.

Ability Type Psi-Like

Brightstar Lens Mastery

You've unlocked the true, almost limitless power of your Brightstar Lens.

Requires Brightstar Lens Focus, Improved Iron Will

Benefit You can fire a powerful golden laser from your Brightstar Lens as an attack action. This beam of light has the following ranged attack line, and is considered both a magic and a mythic weapon for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction. When you reach 12th level, this attack ignores Force Resistance or Force Immunity.

- **Brightstar Lance** (4d6 force, 100 ft range increment, 20/x2, single shot)

In addition, once per day, you can manifest an *astral construct* with a level no greater than $\frac{1}{2}$ your total character level (thus, at level 18, you could manifest a 9th level Astral Construct). This construct shares the appearance of all your other Brightstar Lens powers.

Ability Type Psi-Like

Brightstar Mantid – Birthright, Racial

The universe-spanning Brightstar Order was begun aeons ago by a high-born breed of Mantid warrior who flew between inhabited worlds on the backs of gigantic insects capable of faster than light travel. Though the Order has fallen far from its days of glory, a handful of modern Mantids are born capable of bio-bonding to spaceworthy insectoid companions and soaring the stars. Your chitin has a gleaming golden sheen, and you might naturally display the eight-pointed starburst of the Order.

Requires Mantid race, Bio-Bond racial trait,

bounded insect must be flight capable, character level first

Benefit Your bio-bonded insect companion gain the No Breath racial trait and become immune to radiation, environmental heat and cold and vacuum. While astride your bio-bonded insect, you share these qualities. Your bio-bonded insect gains a zero-gravity flight speed of 6 hexes (1,000 ft for tactical, non-starship combat) and can enter or exit hyperspace by travelling at maximum speed through normal space for at least one minute. If your bio-bonded insect is slain or released from service, its replacement gains this quality, assuming it is a flight capable insect.

Ability Type Supernatural

Brightstar Warship

You can focus your will power into a tangible starship, a war machine cast in the shape of a great golden scorpion. Once, these vessels crossed the stars as part of the endless



Brightstar armada, but even today, your lone vessel fights with honor and precision.

Requires Brightstar Lens Focus, Pilot 3 ranks

Benefit You may summon or dismiss a starship with the Insectoid hull as a full round action. This is initially a Tier One starship with a hull made of solidified golden light. The vessel gains an additional Tier when you reach 5th, 10th, 15th and 20th level, to a maximum of Tier Five at 20th level.

You can change the capabilities of this starship each time you summon it, so long as it always has the Insectoid hull and respects the Tier's BP limit. (It will likely be useful to pre-build your favorite starship configurations on index cards or some other readily accessible manner, for ease of use at the gaming table.) This starship remains functional even when you sleep normally, and does not require concentration. However, this starship immediately vanishes if you become unconscious, succumb to magical or other involuntary sleep, die, or otherwise become totally helpless. Your mental connection to the vessel provides you a +2 circumstance bonus on Pilot checks with your Brightstar Warship.

If the Brightstar Warship is destroyed, you must succeed at a WILL Save (DC 10 + the starship's Tier) or become *stunned* for 2d6 hours. Success indicates you are merely *stunned* for one round. You may not summon the Brightstar Warship when shaken, panicked or frightened, nor within 4 hours of a previous summoning.

Ability Type Supernatural

THE INSECTOID HULL

Modeling starships after insect anatomy is a popular choice throughout the galaxy, producing tough, well-armed cruisers. Insectoid starships resemble enormous stylized scorpions with weapons modules in the forward mounted 'pincers' and a pair of turrets rising above the hull in the stinger-like conning tower. The hulls of these vessels are gleaming metal reinforced with glistening chitin.

Size Large

Maneuverability average (piloting +1, turn 2)

HP 120 (increment 20) **DT** – **CT** 24

Weapon Mounts

forward arc (2 heavy), port arc (1 light), starboard arc (1 light), aft (1 heavy, must be a tracking weapon), turret (2 light)

Expansion Bays 4

Minimum Crew 3 **Maximum Crew** 9

BP Cost 35

BRIGHTSTAR GEAR

The following magic and psionic items originally appeared in a few different sourcebooks, and they're reprinted here because of their importance to the Brightstar Remnant. Since the Remnant consists (at this point) of a bunch of under-funded rookies, they don't have access to most of this gear. If they could uncover some of this lost technology, it would mean a dramatic power boost for the Remnant.

WONDROUS ITEMS AND MAGICAL ARMOR

With a little help from some of the Cradle's other occult-artisans, Guillotine Gardner can put one of the **Brightstar T-Shirts** together. Non-magical versions of these black and gold t-shirts are the Remnant's de-facto uniform, and only Guillotine herself and Vex actually have an enchanted shirt among their combat gear. Even this stretched the young Remnant's resources near to breaking.

Brightstar Chitin

Aura moderate transmutation **CL** 10th

Slot armor **Price** 75,000 gp (DC 33) **Weight** 35 lbs

Similar in construction to **Outer Necklace Chitin**, this organic plate and mail is a sleek panoply of silver-cyan shell. The Brightstar chitin has a high collar and gorget, and the golden medallion worn at the throat, stamped with an eight-pointed star is the only actual metal anywhere in this insect-derived armor. The underside of this mail is impregnated with fragrant pheromone packages, which activate from the body heat of a living wearer.

Brightstar Chitin is a set of +2 **bitter, vermin-defiant full plate**.

While wearing Brightstar Chitin, the wearer's animal companion, familiar or eidolon (or similar bonded creature) becomes more insect-like, undergoing dramatic physical changes including the development of a light chitin exoskeleton, compound eyes and long, insect like antenna, regardless of the creature's natural physiology.

The bonded creature gains the following benefits as long as it remains in the wearer's service:

- Gains a +2 natural armor bonus to AC which increases by +1 per 4 HD to a maximum of a +6 bonus.
- Gains a Climb speed equal to the creature's base land speed.
- Gains the *scent* special quality if not present.
- Gains Alertness and Iron Will as bonus feats.
- Increase the FORT Save DC of any poison attack by +2.

The armor's natural and non-metallic construction allows it to be worn by Druids. Designed with superior maneuverability in mind, Brightstar Chitin does not reduce the wearer's base landspeed, and is considered to be Medium, rather than Heavy armor.

Construction

Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, creator must be a Mantid or insectoid Anthro or a similar creature, *polymorph*, *stinking cloud*, *summon monster I*

Cost 37,500 gp (DC 30)

Brightstar Collar

Aura moderate transmutation CL 12th

Slot neck **Price** 48,000 gp (DC 31)

Weight 8 lbs

This heavy pectoral is forged from heavy, angular links of hammered gold. The central link of the collar is a pentagon inscribed with an eight-pointed star design. While wearing this heavy collar, the wearer's physique becomes noticeably larger and more chiseled, and the pupils of their eyes glow golden.

While wearing the Brightstar Collar, the character benefits from a +4 inherent bonus to their STR and CON scores, and gains Darkvision 60 ft (or improves existing Darkvision by +30 ft).

Construction

Requirements Craft Wondrous Items, *bull's strength*, *bear's endurance*, *darkvision*

Cost 24,000 gp (DC 29)

Brightstar Order Skin

Aura moderate transmutation CL 10th

Slot armor **Price** 41,000 gp (DC 31) **Weight** 3 lbs

This space-worthy set of personal body armor is a rich crimson that is nearly black, like cherries in chocolate. An eight tinted golden star glows off centered at the breast, and golden filigree decorates each armored pauldron and clavicle. Such uniforms are common to the Multiverse-spanning justice-seekers of the Brightstar Order.

A Brightstar Order Skin is a set of +2 **champion**, **righteous action** wear.

Special: If the Brightstar Order Skin is worn with the **Brightstar Collar**, the occult-tech golden collar acts as a supercharged power source for the Skin. The Brightstar Order Skin's enhancement bonus increases to +3, and the

armor gains an integrated energy blast that functions as a +2 **axiomatic spacer's blaster of infinite ammunition**.

Construction

Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *protection from evil*, *righteous might*

Cost 20,500 gp (DC 29)



Brightstar T-Shirt (black)

Aura faint abjuration CL 2nd

Slot body **Price** 2,600 gp (DC 21) **Weight** negligible

This comfortable black cotton T-shirt has the eight-pointed star of the Brightstar Order emblazoned on the back in gold. There's a little cartoon bee, wearing a space suit, silkscreened in white and gold on the chest.

The Blackstar Black T-Shirt functions as a +1 **school uniform**, and provides the wearer with a constant *emergency space suit* effect.

Special: This tight fitting T-shirt is worn in the body slot, rather than the armor slot. It can be worn beneath other armor. Armor and enhancement bonuses to AC do not stack but special properties do.

Construction

Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *emergency space suit*

Cost 1,300 gp (DC 19)

Brightstar T-Shirt (gold)

Aura faint clairsentience **ML** 2nd

Slot body **Price** 3,200 gp (DC 22) **Weight** negligible
Another of Guillotine Gardner's creations, this sunflower yellow cotton t-shirt is silkscreened with the eight-pointed Brightstar insignia on the chest in basic black. The motto "The Brightstar Rises!" runs across the shoulders in black.

The Brightstar Gold T-Shirt functions as a **+1 school uniform**. While wearing the Brightstar Gold T-Shirt, the character gains a +1 insight bonus to their Initiative score per feat they possess with Brightstar in the name, to a maximum +3 bonus.

Special: This tight fitting T-shirt is worn in the body slot, rather than the armor slot. It can be worn beneath other armor. Armor and enhancement bonuses to AC do not stack but special properties do.

Construction

Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *precognition*

Cost 1,600 gp (DC 20)

Brightstar Veil

Aura faint abjuration **CL** 5th

Slot armor **Price** 48,000 gp (DC 31) **Weight** negligible
Woven from light as much as cloth, this dramatically revealing costume is a V of glowing magenta with an 8-pointed golden star that glows starbright just above the join of the wearer's thighs.

The Brightstar Veil acts as **+1 battle lingerie of electricity resistance and fire resistance**. While wearing the Brightstar Veil, the wearer gains Electricity and Fire Resistance 10, and becomes immune to radiation. The wearer is treated as if wearing armor with the *space suit* property.

Special: Only a female wearer can benefit from wearing a Brightstar Veil.

Construction

Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *emergency space suit, energy resistance*

Cost 24,000 gp (DC 29)

MAGICAL WEAPONS**Brightstar Blade**

Aura strong transmutation **CL** 16th

Slot weapon **Price** 58,000 gp (DC 32) **Weight** 4 lbs

Though the Brightstar Blade functions perfectly well as a single-edged longsword, it is really only half a weapon, a diamond-like double edged sword split neatly in half down the center line. The blade glows with blazing, stellar fury like a sun was trapped in the strange steel.

By default a Brightstar Blade is a **+1 flaming burst longsword**.

Two Brightstar Blades can be combined together into a complete, and more powerful sword. The combined Brightstar Blade becomes a **+3 brilliant energy, flaming burst greatsword**. Once combined, it requires a DC 22 STR check to separate the composite Brightstar Blade into two individual blades once again.

Construction

Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *continual flame, fireball, gaseous form*

Cost 29,000 gp (DC 30)

Brightstar Katana

Aura moderate transmutation **CL** 10th

Slot weapon **Price** 25,000 gp (DC 29) **Weight** 2 lbs

The design for this advanced particle katana dates back uncounted aeons, to a time when the insectoid heroes of the Brightstar Order defended the Multiverse. The hilt of this weapon is a gilded hexagonal shaft, emblazoned with the eight-pointed star of the Brightstar Order at the base, in black and gold. The energized blade is pulsing sun-yellow fire.

The Brightstar Katana is a **+2 advancing, allying particle katana**. The weapon is especially effective when wielded by a character with Brightstar training. The Brightstar Katana gains an additional +1 enhancement bonus per applicable feat, when wielded by a character with any feat with Brightstar in its name.

Special: Characters lacking the Brightstar Lens trait treat this merely as a masterwork particle katana instead.

Construction

Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, creator must be a Mantid or insect Anthro with the Brightstar Lens trait, *feather step, magic weapon*

Cost 12,500 gp (DC 26)

Brightstar Saber**Aura** moderate conjuration CL 8th**Slot** weapon **Price** 24,000 gp (DC 29) **Weight** 4 lbs

With a blade of shaped and laminated, alchemically-hardened chitin, this double-edged, elongated leaf-shaped sword chimes like church bells when it strikes, and gleams like bronze. There is a symbol of a stylized eight pointed star acid-etched into the guard. Such weapons are often carried by officers, nobles and heroes of insect-blooded species.

The Brightstar Saber is a +3 **courageous**, **vermin-bane** **shortsword**. It is non-metallic.

Construction

Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, creator must be a Mantid or insectoid Anthro or a similar creature, *heroism*, *remove fear*, *summon monster I*

Cost 12,000 gp (DC 26)**APPENDIX THREE:****LOCAL LEGBREAKERS**

This appendix includes a pair of stat-blocks representing low level local adversaries: a corrupt, big cat cop and a dim-witted street punk.

CAT'S CRADLE POLICE OFFICER - CR 3*Large LE Humanoid (Anthro) Warrior 5***XP** 800**Init** +6 **Senses** Lowlight vision, *scent*, Perception +9**Languages** English, Furroar**Defense****AC** 16 **Touch** 11 **Flatfooted** 14 (-1 size, +2 DEX, +5 armor)**HP** 5d10 +10 hp (38 HP)**FORT** +6 **REF** +3 **WILL** +2**Defensive Abilities** Ferocity**Offense****Spd** 30 ft**Melee** +9 baton (1d6+4 bludgeoning, 20/x2) or +9 claws (1d8+4 slashing, 19-20/x2)**Ranged** +7 Glock 17 (2d6 ballistic, 20/x2, 30 ft range increment, semi-auto, 17 internal)**Statistics****Str** 18 **Dex** 15 **Con** 14 **Int** 11 **Wis** 13 **Cha** 12**Base Atk** +5 **CMB** +10 **CMD** 22**Feats** Far Shot, Improved Critical (claws), Improved**Initiative****Skills** Intimidate +9, Perception +9**Gear** mwk. tactical ballistic vest, Glock 17 and 4x spare clips, metal baton, 2x pairs of handcuffs, police radio, some cocaine**Ecology****Environment** any urban**Organization** always outnumbering you**Treasure** standard (in home, including gear)**Special Abilities****Adrenal Surge (EX)**

Twice per day, the Cat's Cradle Police Officer can trigger an adrenaline surge as a free action. During the adrenaline surge, the Cat's Cradle Police Officer gains a +20 ft increase to base land speed and a +2 enhancement bonus to his STR and DEX scores. This ability lasts for up to 14 rounds (1 minute, 24 seconds); at the end of this time the Cat's Cradle Police Office is *fatigued* for 1d4 hours. If the character triggers this ability again, while *fatigued*, that condition is removed, but when the adrenal surge ends, the character is *exhausted* for 1d4 hours.

Anti-Sapient Bigotry (EX)

The Cat's Cradle Police Officer receives a +1 morale bonus on attack and damage rolls against Humans, due to special training against these hated foes.

Nature

The Cradle's street cops are almost exclusively hunting cat Anthros. Everybody else is weeded out during the hiring process. The feline cops under Malley and O'Rourke's command are the most dangerous crew of murderers in the Cradle, because they operate under cover of law.

- This hulking Anthro police officer is a mélange of tiger and cheetah traits. He stands ramrod straight in the dark navy uniform favored by the Cat's Cradle PD. The ballistic vest he wears is threatening and practical, military-grade protection. Combined with the Glock semi-auto he fingers with wickedly clawed hands, the lethal purpose of this cop's gear makes the whimsical "To Purr-tect and Serve" motto encircling his badge a very weak joke.

ROCKER BRUTE – CR 3

Large CN or CE Humanoid (Anthro)

XP 800

Init +0 **Senses** Lowlight vision, scent, Perception +1

Languages English plus one Anthro language chosen from: Clomp, Furroar or Fursong

Defense

AC 14 **Touch** 10 **Flatfooted** 14 (+2 armor, +2 natural)

HP 4d10 +12 hp (34 HP)

FORT +5 **REF** +4 **WILL** +5

Offense

Spd 30 ft

Melee +10 heavy mace (1d10+5 bludgeoning, 20/x2), +9 gore (1d8+5 piercing, 19-20/x2)

Ranged +4 boomer (2d6 sonic, 20/x4, 50 ft range increment, single shot) OR

12 Perform check* boomer (2d6 sonic, 20/x4, 50 ft range increment, single shot)

Statistics

Str 20 **Dex** 10 **Con** 17 **Int** 9 **Wis** 12 **Cha** 15

Base Atk +4 **CMB** +10 **CMD** 20

Feats Improved Critical (gore), Power Attack, Skill Focus (Perform: DJ)

Skills Drive +2, Knowledge (local) +4, Intimidate +9, Perform (DJ) +12

Gear mwk. leather armor with armor spikes, mwk. heavy mace, boomer and gold (+10) prox, potion of bull's strength

Ecology

Environment any

Organization usually pairs, sometimes gangs of 2-10

Treasure standard (including gear)

Special Abilities

Anthro Anatomy (EX)

To customize the Rocker Brute choose one Gift of Nature and apply it to the creature. The Rocker Brute can gain other subtypes of your choice as desired. Common adaptations include the Amphibious quality, Darkvision, enhanced senses or natural armor, an innate resistance to toxins or disease, or other minor abilities.

Prox (EX)

The Rocker Brute can plug a Prox into his *boomer*, gaining a predetermined result of Perform (DJ) checks made to fire the weapon rather than rolling a D20. Since the Rocker Brute is plugging in a Gold Prox, he gets a +10 result on the check. Inserting or removing a Prox is a move-equivalent action. With his bonuses, the total Perform check result with a Prox inserted is 12.

Nature

Rocker Brutes are dull-witted Anthro thugs in the vein of Bebop and Rocksteady from TMNT. They're big, dumb, mean and love pounding rock and roll. Mayor O'Rourke keeps a stable of Rocker Brutes on retainer as thugs-for-hire in his real estate scams.

Rocker Brutes are dimwitted muscle for hire with a deep love for the throb and grind of heavy rock n' roll. Rocker Brutes are often encountered as bodyguards or roadies, or doing collections for low-rent criminals. They are the quintessential bully – violent and insulting, arrogant braggarts when they have the upperhand and absolute fawning kiss-asses when they don't.

Rocker Brutes are three meters of ugly hide, muscle and horn. Most of them have some kind of combat horn, crest or tusks that can punch through a car door if they get pissed. They dress in dirty, extensively customized fighting leathers festooned with concert patches and studded with razors. They carry a heavy-duty metal club that snaps spines, but their favorite weapon is their 1,000 decibel Boomer, which resembles a weaponized, retro-futuristic boom box.

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