

SUZERAIN



Continuum Guide



Disclaimer

Suzerain is a fictional depiction of our universe. Any resemblance between any proper noun we come up with and any real person/place/whatever is purely coincidental. By the same token, the book you are reading is a game based on a fictional depiction of our universe. It is not reality. The GM sets a scene in a fictional realm and the players play characters in it. Repeat after me, "I am not my character. I cannot do the things that my character can do because he is a fictional character in a fictional universe." Don't try to fly just because your character can fly. Don't kill anyone just because your character is a master of the Scottish claymore. Roleplaying is meant to be fun, but comes with serious responsibilities.

We would also like to explain that Suzerain is our take on reality with mythological and magical elements. It depicts religions and mythologies with a twist – that is to say, differently than a true believer might see them. We mean no disrespect if you are such a believer but ask you to respect our right to our own interpretation.

Thank You

I'd like to thank everyone who allowed me to text them in the middle of the night with questions about matters both sundry and relevant to this tome. Megan, Marissa, Amy, Stuart, Ashley, Andrew, and Alex, you know a lot about a great many areas.

Surely, you seven are not the only ones with something to say about Suzerain or its inhabitants. We're happy to receive feedback from anyone – all lines are open, as they say. Check us out at hello@savagemojo.com and say hello.

Have fun, friends.

Zach

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Alan's Dedication: To Miles for letting me play in and help shape his universe and to Genevra too, neither of them get nearly enough recognition for their myriad contributions. My parents also deserve a mention, especially mum – I wouldn't be the man I am without them and she'd be so proud.



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For Players



The Suzerain Continuum

Suzerain isn't a setting, it's all settings. You've heard that one before, right? It starts out with fun and high promise, but by the end you're a necromantic sharkman with six-shooters for hands and acid for blood and no idea what happened to your original character. We're not like that; we've got standards. Your character will begin in one setting – a particular realm in a particular time and will grow in capabilities, achieve mighty deeds, and become a big fish in a small pond. From there he will attract the greater attention of the universe – or at least the universe's housekeepers, who will send your hero hurtling through the Maelstrom of time and space to places where only legends dare tread. This rulebook keys you in to our greater cosmology, some of its notable realms, and the domain of the spirits, which connects it all. All you need to start exploring is a copy of the *Savage Worlds* rules... and this book.

Right out of the gate, adventuring in a Suzerain realm is more or less what you'd expect. There are a few differences, but they're more along the lines of refinements than pulling the rug out from under you. Then your characters hit Heroic rank and the walls around their world begin to become more malleable, buckling under the forces of ascension. Before they know it, your young gods-in-training will begin influencing events beyond their immediate environs. It is at this stage most characters will first encounter other times and campaign worlds.

How big is the difference from Veteran to Heroic? Veterans will survive the alien invasion and help rebuild society. Heroes sail beyond the sunset and take the fight to their foes' inverted pyramids of crystallized ichor, battling through to the heart of the alien planet where the laws of physics are, well, inverted.

Once you make it to Heroic, the stakes get raised a notch and you'll find your characters in ever more demanding situations. At the start of Heroic a character might well be the guardian of a

nation or the best con man in the star system. That's small fry compared to what's coming: our reactive protector leads his nation through a world-spanning renaissance, while our con man becomes The Con Man, an idea given flesh. It's time to take him out to new places, and new times.

Come ascension to Demigodhood, those will be the cakewalk and salad days. Because once you are tightly tied to the universe as a Demigod, you begin to work not through time but also across alternate realities. Each could easily have the length, depth, and impact of one 'normal' plot campaign, and you will do them all, with one character, across who knows how many realms, through time and across reality. Welcome to Suzerain. Please drive carefully.

Most importantly, Suzerain is about having fun with awesome characters in amazing settings and a chance to create high octane stories with your friends. This book lets you do that seamlessly, in a single overarching continuum.

Imagine the ever-changing experiences of characters in *Doctor Who* and *Sliders*, the potential for genres intermixing from *Rifts*, and the enormous epic storytelling promise of the transformative *Torg*. They're all possible, without being mandatory. One system, endless settings... infinite fun!

What's New In Suzerain?

The Suzerain experience is one that values grand, heroic scope over the slim-and-trim ideals of the *Savage Worlds* core system. No longer are heroes constrained to being merely Legendary. Instead they are able to access a wider stage where their very words will shake the heavens. In comic book terms, this is cosmic-level stuff. The fantasists would have you believe that it is epic, while classicists would prefer the term 'mythic.' Either way, your characters won't be spending a lot of time fighting rats and bugs in the sewers.

This is represented mechanically with a wealth of new options, both for building characters and interacting with their surroundings. Everybody who's anybody has access to minor special powers, which are fueled by natural wellsprings of bioelectric

All The Detail, All The Time

The Suzerain Continuum is a big place. Lots happening. Very exciting. We're aware there's a limit of what your brain can store before the space worms suck it dry, so we've created a safe haven for all the best info (and plenty of neat little details): www.suzerain.info. You'll find extra features on all our realms, and much more besides.

Head over and, in particular, you might want to type "Suzerain Continuum" into the search box. Just a suggestion for a good place to start browsing the universe.

energy – Pulse. This invigorating life-force is the stuff of spirits: the human soul, specters without a physical form, and gods alike. These spirit forms aren't a natural part of any of the Suzerain realms, but they have ready access to them through the spirit world.

The spirit world is a moonlit reflection of the solid world, where every action is suffused with pale light and symbolic gravity. The terrain surrounding spirits of pure emotion often warp and pool to reflect their inner states. Those rare sages and street-corner madmen who tell stories of such places of pure energy often tease their audiences further with the promise of a layer of reality even deeper than the spirit world – one where even Pulse breaks down and is reformed into the transcendental residences of the gods.

We'll get into all of that before we're done.

Suzerain uses the Savage Worlds rules, but adds a few twists; it is best if you are already familiar with those rules before reading this section, starting with....

Terminology

Bennies. Suzerain replaces bennies with Karma, giving them a few more tricks along the way.

Karma. See 'bennies'.

Power Points. Suzerain replaces this term with 'Pulse'.

Pulse. See 'Power Points'. Every Suzerain realm knows something about Pulse, but very few know the

entire story. What is generally agreed upon is this: everybody possesses Pulse, and it is somehow vital to their living processes. All abilities that are powered by Pulse draw from the same pool.

Realms. Some people call these 'settings' or 'campaign worlds': you have your pirate world, your leprechaun world, your Gothic horror special. In Suzerain we refer to these as realms in order to avoid confusion. Consider for a moment a sci-fi story where you might visit one hundred planets (or worlds). That is fine for roleplaying games where travel from one setting to another means a new campaign, but that isn't the way Suzerain rolls. Suzerain is the setting (we call it the Suzerain Continuum), and it is a setting with as many places and game genres as you wish to explore. We are always looking for new realm developers and the Suzerain Continuum has the potential to contain almost anything, so if you think you are up to it – drop us a line!

Telesma. A special gemstone, usually integrated into an object of some kind. Most often jewelry but sometimes found in other objects too. Your character has one. You'll find out more soon.

Advancement

Advancement works exactly as it does in Savage Worlds, with the addition of a new rank after Legendary. The rank table now looks like this:

Experience Points	Rank
0-19	Novice
20-39	Seasoned
40-59	Veteran
60-79	Heroic
80-119	Legendary
120+	Demigod

We recommend retiring your characters at 180 xp to become the founding gods of a whole new pantheon, perhaps even to be venerated by or become patrons to your group's next characters. It gives a nice sense of legacy, carrying on your old man's mantle and all that.

The Touch Of Greatness

There's something that links your character to greatness. This could be a profound inner transformation, a chapter in the tome of blood and glory, or the power to revolutionize the world through the boundless imagination of the mind. What it isn't is destiny – destiny's for saps without options. Instead, your character has access to an otherworldly conduit that grants access to Herculean opportunities... or titanic ruin.

This 'touch of greatness' as it's referred to by self-aware mooks and flunkies, is what insures your story won't slip on a banana skin or rot away in a dead-end plot line. The Suzerain Continuum has detected some spark in your character, and it hasn't gone unnoticed by the gods in their immortal realms. One way or another, your character has wound up with a physical symbol of this connection – a Telesma. When several Telesmae come together with an adventuring group of heroes, they form a pocket realm within the fabric of the Maelstrom, that ethereal place beyond the Veil where divine entities live. Both these are explained in more detail in the 'Saving The Universe' section on page 39.

A lot of heroes will no doubt feel crowded by the ready presence of gods in Suzerain. Nobody likes knowing that there's someone bigger around, especially the BMoC (Big Men of the Campaign, natch). To be perfectly frank, the gods don't care enough about the heroes that this should be a concern. Don't get us wrong – the gods love the characters and hope they'll be able to help in all sorts of tight scrapes in the mortal realms, but there are dozens and dozens of heroes out there at any given time. The characters aren't unique and precious snowflakes. Sorry about that.

Not that you can't change that paradigm. There are always stories about the divine prince (or demon prince) falling in love with an earthborn maiden, and if that's your shtick go for it. As a whole, though, gods are pretty busy. The tides don't ebb and flow by themselves, and pushing the sun across the sky all day is tiring work. Messing with the moment-to-moment antics of a stable of strong-minded heroes on top of that? Not likely. The gods hire the characters to deal with problems while they run the universe, not to micro-manage them.

So how does it all work, working for the gods? It's really like being free agents, guns for hire with a sense of ethics, realm-based problem specialists. Your character can put whatever he wants on his business card. There are all sorts of actions required to keep the universe from tearing itself apart, and a gazillion problems that need fixing lest the Grand Machine busts a piston. For that stuff the gods pass the buck to their intermediaries: demigods or devoutly faithful spirits. From there, it's just a matter of time until the characters get a knock on their clubhouse door.

This isn't to say that the gods are entirely lazy and detached. There are solid political reasons for not fraternizing too closely with their sponsored heroes. For one, it gives the heroes a protective level of neutrality. No one is eager to repeat the massive Hero Wars that spanned the universe in eons past, except for the occasional mad, one-eyed soul eater. And you really don't want to go back to that.

More importantly, it allows your heroes to go anywhere. If they're all wearing large, glowing crests of the Firelord on their tabards, chances aren't so great that the Icelord will let them into his lands. As a result, only the most devout or ground-shaking characters have any direct contact with their particular god. Everyone else can work for whichever mix of deities show an interest in the current crisis.

What sorts of things do the gods need doing? Well, you'll get the idea from the campaign in this

Wild Cards

To continue delivering great Suzerain flavor we've sneakily replaced the Wild Card icon from the Savage Worlds book with our own symbol.



This is our Telesma symbol, and it still means the critter, character or whatever it's linked to is a Wild Card.

book, but it tends to break down into the three stages of character development. Until your character hits Heroic rank you can expect him to be building his skills and proving his mettle to the universe. He'll be dealing with bigger and bigger adventures, but in his home realm, the world he grew up in. At Heroic he gets access to all of existence, every time and place. He'll be expected to fix the sorts of problems that could threaten entire worlds. Then he hits Demigod, and the universe itself is at risk. Well, it was probably at risk many times before, but this time it's your character's turn to stop the End Times from crashing the party. Hop around reality, and change it as needed to stop the big bad from happening.

Pulse

Pulse, also called the Pulse of All Things, is everywhere and in everyone. This makes it a derived Attribute. Pulse is 10 for all characters and goes up by 5 points with each rank. A Novice character without any modifiers has 10 Pulse, a Seasoned character has 15 Pulse, a Veteran gets 20 Pulse, a Heroic character gets 25 Pulse, 30 for a Legendary character, 35 for a Demigod. Should a character have to pay Pulse (perhaps because some evil entity is draining it...) and not be able to afford the whole amount or already be on zero, he loses all remaining Pulse and gains a level of Fatigue.

Fatigue

In Suzerain we have extended the Fatigue track to a third box so characters can take an equal amount of Wounds and Fatigue. The third step after the existing 'Fatigued' and 'Exhausted' is called 'Debilitated'. Your character becomes debilitated just before he hits 'Incapacitated'.

Why do this? Well, we believe Fatigue should cover social/spiritual Fatigue and mental Fatigue too. To reflect this we have opened up new uses for existing skills allowing new methods for you to wear down opponents on the battlefield, as well as new options in places where conventional weapons are not appropriate, such as a courtroom or a fancy dress ball.

It isn't possible to Incapacitate or kill someone through normal taunts or intimidation, but supernatural forms of physical, social or mental

Fatigue follow no such rules. There's no accounting for what the horrors of the undiscovered world or its perilous magic may inflict. Don't say you haven't been warned. Seriously, be extra wary of those octopus guys; they'll suck your brain and burn those Fatigue levels for breakfast.

Fatigue Recovery

Fatigue levels recover at the rate of one for every 15 minutes away from the situation where the Fatigue happened. We should point out this is a rule of thumb. You may decide there are certain effects that cause Fatigue you can't cure without a good night's sleep, for instance, and that's fine. Whatever suits your game.

Races

Just humans. That's because races work a little differently in Suzerain though, so don't feel like you've been snookered. If you want your character to be a dwarf, there's still hope! Races have been switched to background Edges for reasons that may become clear as your characters' adventures progress. Remember, background Edges may be taken freely at character creation but require GM permission to take once the game has begun. Your GM has more information on how and why this is possible – and why it's still only possible to belong to one race at a time. (Unless a particularly exotic realm-specific Edge says otherwise....)

There are four broad categories into which all sentient Suzerain races can be divided. Their presence, role, and attitudes are culturally based and realm-specific, but their powers are pretty consistent. Here are some broad generalizations to get you started:

Shifters contain strong bestial elements along with their humanity. As civilized as they may be, shifters are able to reach back and call upon their primal Edge when necessary. The wolf-like furies are one example of shifters, but as many varieties exist as there are animals.

Channellers were once human, but exposure to intense Pulse processes has given them control over energy. Each race has a specialized type of energy that it channels, such as heat, electricity, or light. One example is the auroras, who control both light and shadow.



Elementals are the physical counterpart to the energy-attuned channellers. Every elemental is both more than flesh and less, a creation of dumb matter and living Pulse. They are the dwarves with mastery over earth and stone, the metallic gremlins, and the airy djinn.

Perfecteds claim a pure bloodline, with all genetic muck purged from their system generations ago... only problem is, each race disagrees on what was muck and what were the perfect traits. As a result, there are very different races out there who all claim they're perfect!

Followers And Companions

What's a Gilgamesh without an Enkidu, Robin Hood sans Merry Men, or Batman without Ace, the Bat-Hound? Lessened, that's what. A good hero has allies, companions, sidekicks, or some form of a pit crew that ends up making him look better. That's not to say the support staff are total slouches! After the core hero hits Seasoned, they advance every time he does. They're always one rank behind the character, but at least they do progress. And remember, they're not Wild Cards unless something totally unexpected happens.

Extras and animal companions get to travel between realms and to the Maelstrom with the

character under the same principle of the 'emotional bond of ownership' as a character's trademark weapon, clothes and other personal effects. We'll come back to that when we talk about the spirit world in a moment.

The following Edges are modified in Suzerain:

Beastmaster: In addition to the Edge's normal effects, the animal companion is considered to be one rank lower than the character at all times for the purposes of choosing Edges and advancing Attributes. The animal can be saved from death in the same fashion as a character with a special use of Karma.

Followers (Requirements: Heroic): Followers have an effective rank of two lower than your hero for the purposes of choosing Edges and improving Attributes. Lost or killed followers are replaced in 2d6 days.

Rapid Recharge (Requirements: Spirit d8+)

Mr. Fix It (Requirements: Smarts d10+, Repair d8+, at least two other scientific Knowledge Skills at d6+)

All other Edges and Hindrances are allowed and work as normal.

Changing Races

With all of the realm-hopping that cosmic-level characters undergo, it's not much of a surprise that they'll be exposed to change-inducing phenomena. We can hope they will grow as people, allowing their life experiences to influence their thoughts and reactions to the outer world. They'll also pick up some cool powers. There's a more fundamental type of change out there though, especially for those who find themselves drinking from strange fountains every chance they get.

Race is a fluid concept in Suzerain, at least to a degree. Given the proper in-story justification, characters are allowed to change race once in their careers – any more and the strain on one's body and identity would be crippling. That said, the first change is easy as waking up one day and deciding to be a dwarf. The actual transformation, however, takes something special, such as a magical artifact of untapped power or a healthy dose of genetic therapy performed by the finest transhuman specialists.

Consider the Emergent Squall, as practiced by certain societies of djinn within the realm of Relic. In order to boost their numbers, the air elementals take on applicants for transformation. Following several weeks of intense philosophical teachings on the nature of change, the applicants purify their bodies with the smoke of rare herbs, which grow in only the most isolated of mountain valleys. If the desire for change is earnest, the applicants are then guided through dreams to a brilliant green crag, spiked with the spires of fallen towers. One by one they fling themselves into the clouds surrounding their great height. As their old bodies fall, that which is djinn separates itself and ascends toward the heavens. Not all racial transformations are as invested in ritual, but they should nevertheless be memorable. It is a major life choice, much more than deciding pointy ears are stylish this season.

The Spirit World

The spirit world is everywhere, and more than one or two places beyond that. It's a big part of the Suzerain Continuum, no matter how much of it is readily visible. So you best know how it works.

The most basic way of thinking about the spirit world is like a big, silvery sheet of packing material that goes around each realm to keep them from smacking into one another. That's certainly not the whole truth, but it will do for now.

Despite the cosmetic details, the spirit world isn't overly different than the physical plane. There aren't hook-handed horrors around every corner or pulsating waterfalls of souls – not usually, anyway. Adapting to its quirks is the work of mere moments. Everything glows slightly, revealing its animating Pulse as silvered sparks that throb to celestial rhythms. Communication is by telepathy. Physical matter doesn't exist here, at least not in the conventional sense. It's kind of peaceful, really.

If you're only peeking into the spirit world, the main thing to be aware of is its native inhabitants. Spirits have forms that are unique to the spirit world. For example, a simple invisible poltergeist in the solid world may be revealed to be a dead ringer for a murdered king once you look at it with the eyes of a spirit. Most spirits can have very little impact on the physical world, but once you're in their territory, that's a whole different matter.

If, for whatever reason, a character finds his spirit unshackled from its physical tethers, the spirit world feels no different than the real. He can walk around, pick things up, or get socked in the jaw for eye-balling someone's spirit wench. It's like flipping a switch: if you're keyed to the spirit realm, the solid world seems unreal and distant. If you're part of the solid world, it's the spirits who come off as spooky and insubstantial. Normally someone aligned to one world cannot interact with someone aligned to the other, but there are enough exceptions to that particular guideline that it's best to be on your toes at all times.

So what does change? Well, telepathy and neat visual effects aside, the role of Spirit and Vigor are reversed. When a character would normally be called on to make a Vigor check (on a Soak roll against a

ghostly cutlass, for example), in the spirit world he would instead roll his Spirit die for the check. Likewise, when asked to make a Spirit check, the character would instead roll Vigor. This is why victims of unearthly possession so often receive physical shocks, such as pure-white hair and heart attacks. The Spirit/Vigor switch also affects a character's Toughness, as the Spirit die is used as the basis of the calculation. Natives to the spirit realm undergo the same switch when they manifest in the physical world.

'Dual-aligned' characters have it hardest of all, being present (and therefore vulnerable) in both worlds simultaneously. They can get their soul sucked by a hunger spirit and their body diced by a band of brigands at the same time! Their Spirit and Vigor remain the same as the world in which they're native – the spirit world for spirits and the physical world for the rest of us.

The oft-mentioned Maelstrom is an especially important part of the spirit world. Unlike the more traversable regions, it has no physical counterpart, existing in its own bit of the universe beyond the Veil. Whether that makes this a domain of limitless energy or unbound dreams, it's about as weird as you're going to find. To some, it's a never-ending Hell dimension peopled by the spirits of the unborn. Others describe it as the true heights of Mount Olympus, Shangri-la, or the Unending City Across the Sea. The truth is up to your characters to find out, isn't it?

Optional Extras

Boom and Doom: Also known as jokers, for those of you who're more familiar with Savage Worlds. Traditionally, one joker in each deck of cards is red, while the other is black. Treat the red joker as normal – this is the boom card, and is all kinds of good. The black joker works exactly like the red joker, with just one little twist: the GM gets one extra point of Karma. She can use this Karma however she likes, although it is most thematic to apply it to the character who drew the doom. This represents a type of tainted luck, or jumping out of the frying pan and into the firing squad.

The Emotional Bond

Let's talk about the 'emotional bond of ownership'. We all get attached to certain items, and develop a sense of ownership to things after we've had them for a while. When a character shifts between worlds, all the items that are bonded refocus too, for as long as he's holding them. If a shaman shifts to the spirit world, his clothes will most likely shift with him. Similarly with his favorite walking cane (if he's carrying it). It normally takes about half a week for a person to form a bond with an item after becoming its owner, as long as he's using it and doesn't just stick it on a shelf. On the other side of the coin, extreme emotional attachment can happen much quicker. Pick up a sword off a battlefield and immediately use it to save your life a couple of times during the furious fighting, then you'll get that bond pretty much instantly!

Adventure Deck: Pinnacle's solution to giving characters more surprising, luck-based powers. It's a fun addition to any game, and is particularly fitting for the increasing sway a Suzerain character holds over the unspoken favor of the universe. In Suzerain games, characters get one card per session until they hit Heroic, then two cards until Demigod, and three cards from Demigod to godhood.

Karmic Influence: Many people already use this option in their games, so we've decided to formalize it. Players may spend Karma to bribe the GM into giving them a taste of narrative authority – that's bordering on fancy-talk for working player suggestions into the plot. Let's say your character is backed into a corner by a mob with pitchforks and torches, through no fault of your own. Instead of ending the game there, you might offer the GM a point of Karma or two for there to be a trap door under the rug. It is the GM's call in the end, but she should remember what a precious resource Karma is, and how long it took to earn.



Heroes And Demigods

As characters rise through the ranks, they become increasingly in tune with the rest of the universe. This isn't just hippie-talk – they physically change as their bodies begin utilizing Pulse more efficiently. Standing against these champions becomes tantamount to telling the universe it is wrong and you are right. It's like willfully disobeying the laws of thermodynamics (in a realm where they apply, naturally). That kind of burden isn't something the Continuum would thrust upon the unprepared – even the smallest licks of phenomenal cosmic power have been known to drive mortals over the edge. With the kinds of challenges that shake the fast-track to godhood, both internal and flesh-eating, the following bonuses are the least that the will of the universe could provide.

Karma

The Suzerain Continuum loves heroes – or at least those who have proven themselves. Characters receive the normal amount of Karma at the start of each session: 3. This increases to 4 once the character reaches Heroic rank and goes up again to 5 at Demigod rank. This is modified as normal by Edges and Hindrances (Bad Luck, Young, Lucky, etc.). A Demigod-rank character with Great Luck gets 7 Karma every session!

Shaken

Heroic rank characters get +1 to recover from being Shaken. This increases to +2 at Demigod.

Soak Rolls

Heroic rank characters get +1 to Soak rolls. This increases to +2 at Demigod.

Recovery

Time, damage and Pulse regeneration just don't mean what they used to when the gods are footing your karmic expense report. Heroic-rank characters can make a natural healing check every three days (instead of the standard five days), and Demigods get to make a check every day. Furthermore, Pulse recovery increases by 1 at Heroic and by a further 1 at Demigod. Yes, that stacks with the 'recharger'

Edges, so a Demigod with Improved Rapid Recharge recovers 3 points every 15 minutes.

Wild Die

The Wild Die for Demigod rank characters becomes a d8. Even the most unfamiliar task can be related to something that the character has accomplished at a prior time. As ground-shaking as this change is, would you really want a bunch of heroic tricksters stealing an alien moon with only d6's as backup?

Life And Death

Player characters can escape death with alarming ease, and there's nothing wrong with that. The universe loves a good story, especially the slam-bang kind where heroes aren't piling up left and right from boring-yet-efficient sniper fire. Ever since the Underworld replaced its three-headed dog with an honor system, death has just had a hard time sticking to the bold.

Novice, Seasoned and Veteran rank characters in Suzerain only require the expenditure of 1 Karma to escape death's clammy grasp. Instead of kicking the bucket, the character is spared by his Telesma sending out a mighty distress signal to the gods and they orchestrate a suitable coincidence or act of 'dumb luck'. The gods work in ways that can be as humble as a runaway kangaroo or as surprising as a last-minute religious conversion.

In practical terms, the player should look forward to controlling Extras, getting drinks, and ensuring other players never want for snacks for the rest of the session, but his character will return at the start of the next session – no longer Incapacitated but bearing whatever Wounds and Fatigue he had at the time of 'death'. The gods don't suffer foolish deaths gladly, however; the character starts his second (or third, or fourth) lease on life with no Karma for that session. If he dies in that session... well, that's just careless. He had it comin'. With no Karma it's time to roll the credits and think up another character idea.

At Heroic and Legendary rank, a character begins the post-'death' session with 1 Karma. Demigod rank characters begin the session with 2 Karma. These numbers aren't modified by Edges and Hindrances,

Realm Hopping

Characters have a number of ways to travel between realms. Being given a Telesma by the powers-that-be is one, and it's the one that Savage Mojo's own settings focus on. That's far from the only way, though. Characters can also get drawn through by randomly blundering into a portal, a 'wormhole' between realms. They can find they'd been living inside a virtual reality simulator inside another realm. They can even be caught at the moment of death and find their souls entering new bodies as 'reincarnates' (which is how Suzerain 1st edition worked).

nor by being Heroic or Demigod, nor anything else for that matter. Them's the breaks, but it sure beats the alternative.

Now some of you might ask, "What happens when my character flies the nukes into the sun to sacrifice himself for the greater good?" Simply enough... he's dead. Honestly, there's no coming back from that. The Telesma is fried and never gets to send out the distress call. Also, if a character volunteers to make a great sacrifice, his Telesma will pick up on that vibe and let him die a hero's death with full honors.

There are going to be some situations where it's genuinely not right for the story that the character survives, and this rule isn't there to stop that. Instead, consider the following option in those cases: the Telesma scoops up the life essence of the character at his instant of death, then somehow finds its way into the hands of another potential hero, about as skilled as the deceased character (same rank), and binds itself to him instead – create a new character, but he has the sum of the life experiences of the old character imprinted on his memories. He thinks it's a past life thing, but it's actually the pretty jewel he just found.

Which option you use when a character would otherwise die, that's up to you and your GM. Each situation is different and different results are appropriate for a gritty horror realm than a heroic fantasy realm. Bottom line, though... in Suzerain, death is not the end, even if you have to go questing to some shadowy afterlife realm to bring your character's soul back.

Flexing A Nexus

As your characters reach Heroic rank and above, they're going to find themselves in some pretty uncommon situations. Time and space will become far less familiar than they are now, and chances are good that you'll end up exploring your world's future or its past. There's a big, complex reason for why time travel doesn't tend to wreak havoc on all events that occur after the insertion point, but we leave that for the scholars (and the GM) to handle. All you need to know for now is that it's all right if you litter in the Italian Renaissance or give Hitler some art lessons – usually. Important historic anchors, known as *nexus points*, are resistant to change.

Demigod rank characters are able to temporarily subvert nexus points as part of their standard skill set. They accomplish this by bending reality until a major nexus on the timeline pops and moves across to an alternate reality. After a while, reality responds to this change and snaps back into place. Although these changes are small in the grand scheme of things, they're still a gleaming shot of divine power that most characters are unaccustomed to. To flex reality, a character pays either 1 or 2 points of Karma:

1 Karma flex: Flexes of this intensity are able to introduce moderate physical changes into reality. We're talking about things like discovering an overlooked, fully operational hovertank in a post-apocalyptic setting. Or picking the key to an opponent's home out of a nearby flowerpot. It's also enough to drive a bitter wedge of hate between two lovers, ensuring that a particular Extra (but not Wild Card) was never born. The effect only ever lasts for about five minutes, and the effects need to be able to take shape in an area of about 100m, centered on the meddling demigod. For example, in the case of the disappearing Extra, he'll need to be within 100m of the character to be flexed out of existence (for those five minutes).

How's about another example of how this might work in a game? The characters are in France, 1944. It's shortly after D-Day and they need to hold a bridge in a small, half-destroyed town against a relentless assault by the enemy. Somebody plays an Edith Piaf record and then all hell lets loose. After furious street fighting the characters have been driven to the far

side of the bridge. Five minutes from now the cavalry will turn up but for now it's a desperate situation. But what if the bridge was destroyed when the town was bombed a few days before. Suddenly, there's no bridge for the enemy to cross... though the characters know it'll be back in five minutes – just as the cavalry turn up. If there were any troops on the bridge when reality was flexed, the GM gets to pick what happens to them – do they appear on the river bank with their fellow soldiers, or suddenly find themselves trying to swim across instead (blissfully unaware there was ever a bridge)?

2 Karma flex: At this level, demigods can get into the good stuff. Any historical point that you know about becomes a virtual “what if...” point, transforming every event that radiated out from it. For example, our guys in 1944 France could change history so that Hitler was assassinated early on and the war was already over. Reality would warp outward, changing every necessary detail so that the portion of the realm around the character (again, about 100m) was reshaped to fit the divine vision. For five minutes, the bit of town around the characters is a bubble filled with a different reality, one of little pastry shops, happy schoolchildren playing by the river, and people talking about getting back to normal after that short but terrible war with Germany.

These changes are far-reaching, but limited to the 100m bubble around the characters. Those people outside the 100m zone of effect aren't aware of the difference around the demigod – they're part of one reality, but if they get closer than 100m they become a part of another reality in that instant, unaware of anything else.

In both cases, if you can't describe the changes within one reasonable sentence, the timeline proves too rubbery to mold. Generally, you tell the GM what you want to achieve (“I want to remove the Extra with the rifle from this scene”) and he makes it happen as appropriate (“It turns out he fell and broke his leg this morning, so never showed up for work” or “Years ago, his parents had an argument about the color of the wallpaper in their home, and the guy was never born” or whatever).

There is such a thing as a **3 Karma flex**. Nexus-flexes of this level are available only to true gods. They can remake entire realms, not just the area around

them, but such power always comes with a price. Somewhere in time and space, someone is paying for what is done. Furthermore, these changes set quickly and can inadvertently become permanent. The resultant tremors along the timeline are something everyone wishes to avoid. No god wants to be responsible for bringing about the End Times.

While changes last up to five minutes, they can be extended with additional Karma with the GM's approval. There's something else you should bear in mind about flexing a nexus, before you go crazy and change the world multiple times per session: your character doesn't get the Karma he spent on flexes back at the start of the next game session. Rather like the death penalty in Suzerain, these are major ways to mess with reality and there's a longer term cost for that power. If you spent 2 Karma on flexing during a session, the next session your character will start with 2 less Karma.



Character Creation

If you're looking to create a Suzerain character from scratch, this is the right place to be. Before getting to Traits, Skills, and statistics, think about what role you want your character to have in the story. Will the character be a reluctant hero, dodging every speck of divine interference? A highly trained professional with abandonment issues? A muscled lunkhead with a heart of gold? Go over the possibilities with your GM and the rest of the group so that everybody has a unique, valued voice once play begins. This isn't as simple as making sure that every group of heroes has a tank, an infiltrator, a buffer, and a healer. What's more important is that the characters have points of interest where they will be able to interact with one another and the GM's stories without falling prey to boredom.

Race: All Novice characters start as humans, with the usual free Edge. If your realm has exotic races and you want to start as one of those, use the Edge to take the appropriate Racial Edge.

Attributes: As normal in Savage Worlds rules, you start with d4 in each of your Attributes and have 5 points to raise them. Each die type increase costs 1 point. For example, raising a d4 to a d8 costs 2 points.

Skills: As per normal Savage Worlds rules, you have 15 points to spend on Skills.

Derived Statistics: Pace is 6 unless modified by Edges or Hindrances. Parry is calculated normally as $2 + \frac{1}{2}$ the Fighting Skill die type. Toughness is calculated normally as $2 + \frac{1}{2}$ the Vigor die type. Charisma is 0 unless modified by Edges or Hindrances. Pulse is 10.

Edges And Hindrances: Standard rules apply. A character may take up to one major Hindrance (worth 2 points) and up to two minor Hindrances (1 point each). With these points a character may:

Points Effect

2: Gain an Edge

2: Raise an Attribute

1: Gain one extra Skill point

1: Gain additional money equal to your starting funds

Gear: You have the standard equivalent to \$500 with which to purchase starting equipment. Your GM should have (or create) a price list tailored to the realm in which you begin.

Starting At The Top

If you don't want to start at the bottom and ease slowly into the realm-jumping hijinx, you have a couple of options. All of them depend on the entire group deciding to operate at higher power levels, otherwise you'd just be hogging the spotlight. This works fine for television shows about specific individuals, but not so well with a circle of friends who all want equal input.

The first option is to create a character as outlined previously, and manually advance the character to the Heroic (60xp) or Demigod (120xp) rank. While normally a chore, the handy advancement tracker on our Suzerain character sheets makes this fun! Just follow all the standard rules for character advancement and you'll soon have a hero or demigod ready for action.

The other option is for those of you who are no doubt asking, "Why can't I just do the setting jumping/alternative dimension thing from day one, as a starting Novice character?" Well, if you want to, of course you can. This is your game now. Write your name on the inside cover if you don't believe us. Plenty of quality stories can (and have) been told about a small band of outmatched protagonists, jumping from dangerous setting to dangerous setting because they had run out of options at home.

Just keep in mind the same caveat as before: the GM and other players should agree that it's an interesting idea. If everyone is prepared to take on some seriously tough challenges with only the Skills and Edges available to Novice-rank characters, have at it. The official, Suzerain-approved way to run that kind of game is in the GMs section of the full *Savage Suzerain* book.

New Edges & Hindrances

Hindrances

Doomed (minor or major)

Have you stolen from any gods lately? Born on cursed ground in the middle of a thunderstorm? Decided that a secret, universal truth is just a 'harmless superstition?' If you've answered yes to one or more of these questions, you may be doomed.

As a minor Hindrance this gives the GM one additional Karma each session to add to her general Karma pool. As a major, the GM gets two additional Karma. This Karma should be used against the character with this Hindrance, making his life less comfortable in fun and interesting ways. Remember, the gods of Fate tend to have the wickedest sense of humor.

Evil spirit (minor or major)

A malicious spirit stalks your character and does its best to make his life hell. Although it's not necessarily your character's fault, something happened to trigger this burst of ill-will. Is it too late to get this invisible stalker off your back? Probably.

The minor version of this Hindrance results in a distraction capable of making subtle noises and lights only the character can perceive. Once per session, the GM may use the spirit to give the character a -2 penalty to any Trait check. As a major Hindrance, the spirit has the previous power in addition to being able to physically manifest. It's not a very big manifestation, but enough to make minor physical changes to the world such as hiding keys, ringing bells, tripping traps and alarms etc. The GM is encouraged to make the most of this. Alternatively, the spirit may expend its entire power for the session to give the character a -4 penalty on a Trait check. These effects are used at the most inopportune or embarrassing time for the character.

Cha-ching!

Different times and different places use different ways of paying for things. From clam shells to precious metals to little bits of plastic, mankind has come a long way... and eCash is just around the corner. As for the future, who knows what a far-flung space colony will use? To keep things simple and not get bogged down in tracking the spare change of a dozen realms, Suzerain works in standard dollars as per Savage Worlds. A realm might use a different name for its currency - crowns instead of dollars in Relic for instance - but we always keep the exchange rate 1:1. That keeps a little flavor, but it's really simple to remember. 30 Crowns... that's \$30 to you. If you want more historical accuracy and detail, go for it. But we're happy to have some fast, furious fun rather than doing the precise accounting. Now, back to stealing that million clams we need to bankroll our audacious plan for world domination!





Fanatic (minor)

You gotta have faith. No really – you gotta. You're one of those religious types who just can't stop. Everyone must know your exceptional happiness, purity, and devotion. Characters who pair this Hindrance with the Empowered Edge should have it grow more noticeable with each increase of the Faith Skill.

Hungry Telesma (major)

Your character's Telesma isn't the most efficient of heroic companions. It may have expensive tastes, or maybe it's a secondhand artifact, battered by the ravages of whatever destroyed its previous owner. No matter what the root cause, it takes out its flaw on your character.

Whenever your character uses Pulse, his Telesma consumes an additional point. This increases the cost of all your Pulse effects by 1.

Optimist (minor or major)

Your character is having a wonderful time being alive, and it's starting to get on everyone's nerves. It's not enough to be cheerful in silence, but your character must share the joy with everyone – especially those no-good pessimists who think they're only being realistic.

As a Minor Hindrance, your character's perpetual chirpiness gives your character -1 Charisma and a pronounced tendency to get himself and others into trouble that could have been avoided with a little forethought.

As a Major Hindrance, the Charisma penalty increases to -2 and the character is blissfully immune to the concept of failure and actively encourages others into similar acts of bravado the likes of which would make the Darwin Awards with ease. On the plus side this grants a +1 bonus to Spirit checks against Fear effects.

Rebellious Telesma (minor or major)

Your Telesma isn't quite as helpful as you'd like, and may sometimes even be downright dangerous. It may believe that it's helping train a hero who can overcome any adversity, or there was an error in the initial synchronization process. On the other hand,

Telesmae can be like people: some of them are just jerks.

Once per session (minor Hindrance) or twice per session (major), the GM can force your character to:

re-roll a Trait check and take the lower result

or

take the lower result after you spent your character's Karma to re-roll

or

discard your highest re-roll if you spent more than one Karma on a check.

New Edges

Bearer Of Ill Omen

Type: Weird

Requirements: Heroic

Your character was born under a bad sign, but didn't let it faze him. Instead of suffering fate's slings and arrows like a commonplace whipping boy, he fought back and learned some tricks about bad luck. All it takes is a slight nudge to redirect the luck toward a more deserving target.

When an opponent makes a check against your character and succeeds, your character may respond by paying as much Pulse as he likes. Every two Pulse spent reduces the opposition's roll by 1.

Bearer Of Ill Omen: Improved

Type: Weird

Requirements: Demigod, Bearer Of Ill Omen

Your character has flirted with bad luck and gone on to seal the deal, as it were. Coils of dodged fates flicker at the feet of his spiritual form, ready to be cast at less adept opponents.

When an opponent makes a check against your character and succeeds, your character may respond by paying as much Pulse as he likes. Every one Pulse spent reduces the opposition's roll by 1. If spending Pulse in this way reduces a check to less than zero, the action becomes a critical failure!

Carpe Diem!

Type: Leadership

Requirements: Heroic, Command

Your hero has seen enough of the battlefield that its swirling chaos is no longer a cause for alarm. Instead it is a source of new opportunities and split-second stratagems.

Immediately after initiative cards are dealt, your character may pay 1 Pulse to switch their order. Take the initiative cards from all willing (note – willing!) allied characters, including himself, and redistribute the cards as you see fit. While this doesn't guarantee acting before your enemies, it will allow you to optimize your side's attacks and time some perilous stunts.

Cat's Descent

Type: Weird

Requirements: Heroic

Through guided training or extended experience with pit traps, your character has learned to fall with preternatural grace. He may land on his feet after a fall of any distance so long as he passes an Agility check.

Furthermore, he may pay Pulse to reduce falling damage. Each point of Pulse reduces the effective distance fallen by 10 feet, so 10 Pulse would turn a 150 foot fall into a 50 foot fall in terms of damage.

Cat's Descent: Improved

Type: Weird

Requirements: Demigod, Cat's Descent

Your character automatically lands on his feet after every fall.

Furthermore, he may pay Pulse to reduce falling damage. Each point of Pulse reduces the effective distance fallen by 20 feet, so 10 Pulse would turn a 250 foot fall into a 50 foot fall in terms of damage.

Finally, as long as your character has at least one point of Pulse, he may pay all his remaining Pulse to ignore all damage from one fall.

Companion

Type: Weird

Requirements: Seasoned

You have a trustworthy, loyal, and able companion who follows your character and helps him out to the best of his or her ability. This character is the 'Tweetboy' to your 'Ratman' and might occasionally get in trouble, but is generally pretty good at watching out for himself. The companion has an effective rank of one less than your character for the purpose of improving Attributes and choosing Edges. Should your companion be slain he can be saved with a use of Karma just as you would to save your own character. Failing that, some other lucky individual will be drawn into the void your previous Companion left, appearing in 2d6 days.

Cool As Ice

Type: Combat

Requirements: Heroic

Your character has become a battlefield calculator, confident under pressure that would send lesser minds crawling for the nearest foxhole.

After making a Spirit check to recover from being Shaken, your character may spend 2 Pulse to improve the result. If the check failed, he automatically becomes unshaken. If the check succeeded, he may add a Raise to it.

Cool As Ice: Improved

Type: Demigod

Requirements: Demigod, Cool As Ice

If your character doesn't already have a godly portfolio in mind, he should consider looking at battle, tactics, or glaciers. Lesser blows are like sparks on a smith's apron to him, or gnats against a tank. When tempers flare, he stays cool, collected, and focused on victory.

After making a Spirit check to recover from being Shaken, your character may spend 1 Pulse to improve the result. If the check failed, he automatically becomes unshaken. If the check succeeded, he may add a Raise to it. Alternatively, if the check failed he may spend 2 Pulse instead of 1 Pulse to make it a success with a Raise.

Crushing Blow

Type: Combat

Requirements: Legendary, Strength d12+

This character crushes bones and rips sinews with each blow. Whenever he gets a Raise in close combat he rolls +1d10 to damage instead of the normal +1d6.

Deadly Aim

Type: Combat

Requirements: Legendary, Shooting d12+ or Throwing d12+

The character deals death from a distance. Whenever he gets a Raise on a shooting or throwing attack he rolls +1d10 to damage instead of the normal +1d6.

Extreme Luck

Type: Wild Card

Requirements: Heroic, Wild Card, Great Luck

The best thing about being your character is everything. Events tend to work in his favor, even when he doesn't deserve it.

Whenever the character is dealt a joker, he gains 1 Karma.

Favorite Of Fate

Type: Weird

Requirements: Veteran, Luck

Fortune may favor the bold, but fate favors the compulsive gambler. To make your character's eventual downfall all the sweeter, Fate has decided to give him a slight boost. With all this luck, you're bound to get cocky someday.

The character may spend Karma to add 4 to the result of one of his actions. When he rolls multiple checks in one action (like casting more than one Bolt as an action, Frenzy, or rate-of-fire weapons), he adds 4 to ONE of those results, not all of them.

Fearsome Presence

Type: Social

Requirements: Seasoned, Intimidation d8+

Parades halt and guards shake when your character gets angry.

Your character can intimidate more than one Extra at a time by placing a Medium Burst Template and making an Intimidation check. This is treated much like a ranged (2/4/8) attack with an area effect. Non-allied Extras under the template make a resistance check with the normal consequences for failure. Wild Cards cannot be affected by this Edge.

Fearsome Presence: Improved

Type: Social

Requirements: Heroic, Fearsome Presence

Crowds part and trained soldiers falter when your character gets mad. There's something about him that's just... unsettling.

Your character can intimidate more than one Extra at a time by placing a Large Burst Template and making an Intimidation check. This is treated much like a ranged (3/6/9) attack with an area effect. Non-allied Extras under the template make a resistance check with the normal consequences for failure. Wild Cards cannot be affected by this Edge.

Feel My Pain

Type: Combat

Requirements: Heroic, Vigor d6+, Spirit d6+

You can make your wounds look worse than they are, sickening and repelling your opponents. As a free action on your turn, your character can spend 1 Pulse to apply his Wound modifiers to all Trait rolls made by other characters under a Medium Burst Template centered on him. This effect lasts till the end of the Round.

Feel My Pain: Improved

Type: Demigod

Requirements: Demigod, Feel My Pain

Even if your character looks like bloody hamburger, he's not the only one suffering from it. His wounds are so distressing that even the grimmest torture artists aren't sure how he carries on.

As per Feel My Pain, but your character may choose to use a Large Burst Template. Furthermore, when triggering the effect, he may choose to spend 5 Pulse instead of 1 Pulse to ignore all Wound penalties until his next action.

Fleet Footed

See Savage Worlds core rules.

Fleet Footed: Improved

Type: Weird

Requirements: Demigod, Fleet Footed

Some people start running one day, and never really stop. No world is too large for your character's journey.

Running is a free action for your character. Furthermore, by paying 1 Pulse he may move as if he were the wind and travel horizontally without regard for the surface underneath – so running over rice paper, wet cement, water or even thin air is possible. The only catch is that his movement must begin and end with solid ground.





Flight Of The Ascendant

Type: Weird

Requirements: Heroic

After a certain level of accomplishment, walking becomes far too prosaic for a certain breed of heroes. They recognize that they're larger than life, and as such must take large steps.

You may increase the distance your character can jump to a maximum of 12 inches. Each inch beyond his normal distance costs 2 Pulse.

Flight Of The Ascendant: Improved

Type: Demigod

Requirements: Demigod, Flight Of The Ascendant

Whether through sterling muscle control, daily exercise, or a strident disdain for gravity, your character can travel in great bounds that approach flight. Doing so is incredibly showy, and a great way to demonstrate one's superiority over lesser foes.

Your character's basic jumping distance is increased by 1 inch and he may increase the distance he can jump by any amount. Each inch beyond his normal distance costs 1 Pulse.

Indomitable

Type: Weird

Requirements: Novice, Smarts d8+, Spirit d8+

The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak? Not anymore! Your character can use his faith or unflagging willpower as a battery to power any action.

Your character may voluntarily take a level of Fatigue to re-roll any one roll. He chooses which result to use. This may be done as many times as required, until the character is Incapacitated. The newly gained Fatigue is not applied to the re-rolls.

Iron Inside

Type: Social

Requirements: Novice, Smarts d6+, Spirit d6+

Your character is accustomed to attempts to break his mind or spirit, and has learned special defenses to resist them. Perhaps he chants sutras, retreats into an

alternate personality, or is simply too conceited to be affected. Your character gets a +2 bonus on resistance checks against any check from a non-physical source that could cause Fatigue.

Living Banner

Type: Leadership

Requirements: Command Presence, Demigod, Natural Leader

The mere presence of some charismatic figures is enough to change the tide of an entire battle. His exploits have grown to be legends on several worlds, and victory is assured to those who follow his lead without faltering.

Your character's leadership radius is increased to 50 inches. He may pay 2 Pulse at any time as a free action to have any bonuses from his leadership Edges apply to allied Wild Cards and Extras until the end of the Round.

Master Leader

Type: Leadership

Requirements: Legendary, Natural Leader

Master leaders know that they're only as good as the most vulnerable of their troops. In order to survive contact with the enemy, the character must look out for even the lowliest of his charges. The character can spend a point of Karma to give all allied Extras within his leadership radius a Soak roll, which they can each use when needed that Round.

Monkey Grip

Type: Combat

Requirements: Novice, Strength d8+

Your character can use a weapon that normally requires two hands in a single hand. When doing so, treat his strength as if it were a die type lower for determining damage and whether he can effectively wield the weapon. This does not allow a character to wield a two-handed weapon in each hand. However, it does allow him to use a shield with a two-handed maul, or answer his cell phone while firing an AK-47.

Monkey Grip: Improved

Type: Combat

Requirements: Heroic, Monkey Grip

Your character no longer treats his strength as a die type lower while using the Monkey Grip Edge. Also, he may spend 1 Pulse to heave any weapon he can hold in one hand (it becomes a throwing weapon with range 2/4/8 for that Round).

Opportunistic Push

Type: Weird

Requirements: Heroic, Spirit d8+, Vigor d8+

Just being good enough doesn't always cut it. Sometimes it takes giving 110%, pulling out all the stops, or going completely overboard. Your character may spend 1 Pulse (and only 1 Pulse!) to give any die roll a +1 modifier, as long as that +1 would be enough to grant the check a Raise or additional Raise.

Patron God: Crafts

Type: Weird

Requirements: Heroic, No other Patron God Edges

A god or goddess of artists and craftsmen has looked favorably upon your character and offered him divine patronage. Hephaestus is one such god, as is Ptah. Such gods expect their representatives to promote creativity, and to act as protectors for craftsmen. In exchange for devotion, your character is granted a choice from the following supernatural abilities. He picks one on gaining this Edge and a second when he reaches Demigod (or two immediately if he takes this Edge once he's already at Demigod rank).

Inspiration: By spending Pulse when making a Repair, Knowledge (Craft), or similar roll to create, improve or repair an item (even if it's mechanical, electronic, or magical in nature), the character can affect the outcome. If spent before rolling, he gains a +2 bonus per Pulse spent. If spent after rolling, he may improve the result by +1 per 2 Pulse spent.

Keen Eye: Before rolling, by spending 1 Pulse as a free action the character gets +2 to a check related to noticing visual details such as spotting forgeries or valuing an item. This affects a single check whether

that check takes 3 seconds, 5 minutes, or 3 days. After rolling, the check may be improved by spending 2 Pulse to add +1 to the result.

Craftsman's Hands: Before rolling, by spending 2 Pulse as a free action, the character gets +2 to all actions related to fine manual dexterity, such as checks to make paper animals, Sleight Of Hand tricks, and less creative endeavors like lock picking and bomb disposal. This affects a single check, however long that check takes. After rolling, the check may be improved by spending 3 Pulse to add +2 to the result.

Patron God: Death

Type: Weird

Requirements: Heroic, No other Patron God Edges

A death god or goddess has looked favorably upon your character and offered him divine patronage. Among the better-known death gods are Hades, Anubis, and Relic's Pemephona, goddess of the Storm Ascendancy. Many do not realize that the death god is not cruel at all – he is simply part of the natural order. Such gods expect their representatives to mete out death on their behalf but also to reduce suffering for those who are dying. In exchange for devotion, your character is granted a choice from the following supernatural abilities. He picks one on gaining this Edge, and a second when he reaches Demigod (or two immediately if he takes this Edge once he's already at Demigod rank).

Ease Pain: As a free action the character lowers Wound penalties for himself, and anyone covered by a Medium Burst Template centered on him, by 1. This costs 1 Pulse and lasts for 3 Rounds.

Wound Transfer: As an automatic action the character may transfer Wounds from a willing target within 2 inches of him. He spends 2 Pulse per Wound; the target is immediately healed of those Wounds, which the character immediately suffers. This cannot be soaked or otherwise prevented.

For a number of Rounds equal to half his Spirit, the character may then spend 2 Pulse for every Wound he gained and make an opposed Spirit check against another target within 2 inches. If successful, those Wounds are removed from the character and inflicted on this new target instead.

Gaze Of Death: The character looks with his naked eye at a person who is badly injured and that person dies instantly. Spend 1 Pulse as a free action to make an opposed Spirit check against a Shaken Extra or Shaken Wild Card who has sustained 3 Wounds already. Success shakes the target again and counts as a damaging source which will wound even opponents with the Hardy ability or the Tough As Hell Edge.

Patron God: Fertility

Type: Weird

Requirements: Heroic, No other Patron God Edges

A god or goddess of life, healing, and fertility has looked favorably upon your character and offered him divine patronage. This could be Bes, Marduk, Osiris, or Relic's Istopa, goddess of the Growth Ascendancy, among others. Such gods expect their representatives to provide healing, comfort, and medicinal aid on their behalf. In exchange for devotion, your character is granted a choice from the following supernatural abilities. He picks one on gaining this Edge and a second when he reaches Demigod (or two immediately if he takes this Edge once he's already at Demigod rank).

Divine Medicine: Before rolling, by spending 1 Pulse when making a Healing check (magical or otherwise) the character gets +2 to the check. After rolling, the check may be improved by spending 2 Pulse to add +1 to the result.

Fleshknit: As an automatic action, the character begins to heal his recent Wounds (any Wounds inflicted in the last hour). The first Wound heals after 1 minute, with another Wound healed every minute thereafter. Each Wound healed in this way inflicts a level of Fatigue on the character, and costs 3 Pulse.

Faithful Replication: By spending 5 Pulse as an automatic action that deals 1 level of Fatigue to the character, he bleeds onto the ground and on his action next Round a replica of himself springs up where the blood hit the ground. This replica does not have this Edge, nor any Pulse of its own, though it may use its master's. The copy acknowledges him as its master and will do as he tells it, even to the point of death. This duplicate has a duration of 3 Rounds; alternatively the character may spend an additional

10 Pulse when creating the duplicate to make the duration 5 minutes instead. When the time limit elapses, the replica collapses, 'dies', and fades into the ground leaving only a bloodstain.

Patron God: Knowledge

Type: Weird

Requirements: Heroic, No other Patron God Edges

A god or goddess of knowledge has looked favorably upon your character and offered him divine patronage. This could be Athena, Odin or Relic's Etaro the Wanderer. Such gods expect their representatives to be wise and to pursue knowledge for its own sake. In exchange for devotion, your character is granted a choice from the following supernatural abilities. He picks one on gaining this Edge and a second when he reaches Demigod (or two immediately if he takes this Edge once he's already at Demigod rank).

Know Weakness: By spending 3 Pulse as an automatic action, the character gains an inherent understanding of the weaknesses of one opponent he can see within 24 inches. For the next three Rounds (extendable by paying 1 Pulse per additional Round) whenever he attacks that opponent and gets a Raise, he gains an additional bonus die. In other words, on a regular attack roll he would deal +2d6 damage on a Raise.

Borrow Knowledge: By spending 2 Pulse as an automatic action lasting 3 Rounds the character may touch someone (requiring a touch attack for unwilling subjects) to become aware of every Edge and Skill that person has. The character may gain any single Skill the target knows at the same level he knows it for the duration, or until another target is touched using Borrow Knowledge. The duration may be extended by spending 1 Pulse per additional Round.

Divine Understanding: By spending 1 Pulse as an automatic action the character gains the equivalent of Knowledge (some broad type) d6. For instance, this may be Knowledge (World Geography), Knowledge (Arts And Crafts), or Knowledge (Science) rather than Knowledge of a particular town, of a particular craft, or of a particular science. This affects a single check, however long that check takes.

Patron God: Love

Type: Weird

Requirements: Heroic, No other Patron God Edges

A goddess of love (they tend to be goddesses rather than gods) has looked favorably upon your character, and offered him divine patronage. Aphrodite, Astarte, Freya, and Ishtar are the best known, though there are many others. Such gods expect their representatives to sow love and lust everywhere, forming and easing relationships and enhancing sexuality. In exchange for devotion, your character is granted a choice from the following supernatural abilities. He picks one on gaining this Edge and a second when he reaches Demigod (or two immediately if he takes this Edge once he's already at Demigod rank).

Silky Voice: By spending 1 Pulse as a free action, everyone within earshot of the character is impressed by him. He gets +2 to Persuasion checks for the purposes of seduction, and people who couldn't otherwise be seduced can now be (albeit at a -4 penalty). This affects a single check, however long that check takes.

Heightened Passions: By spending 2 Pulse as an automatic action for 3 Rounds, the character causes one target he touches to become more susceptible to emotional stimulus, giving them -2 to resist Taunt, Intimidation, and Persuasion checks. This may require a successful touch attack – especially in combat! The duration may be extended by spending 1 Pulse per additional Round.

Divine Compassion: By spending 2 Pulse as an automatic action, the character heals a willing target he touches of 1 level of Fatigue - but only if inflicted in the last 5 minutes.

Patron God: Nature

Type: Weird

Requirements: Heroic, No other Patron God Edges

A god or goddess of nature has looked favorably upon your character and offered him divine patronage. Artemis, Ceres, Gaia, and Kupala are all nature deities. Such gods expect their representatives to help keep nature safe, and to make sure the natural

order is maintained and supported. In exchange for devotion, your character is granted a choice from the following supernatural abilities. He picks one on gaining this Edge and a second when he reaches Demigod (or two immediately if he takes this Edge once he's already at Demigod rank).

Nature's Ally: By spending 1 or more Pulse after making a check to resist the effects of natural factors, the character gets +2 per Pulse spent added to the check. This includes exposure to extreme weather, snake venom, jumping out of the way of sudden jets of lava, etc.

Plant Manipulation: By spending 2 Pulse as an automatic action, the character takes control of one non-sentient plant (yes, in some realms there are sentient ones). He may cause it to grow to double its size, shrink to half its size, or move its branches/stem/trunk/vines (though it can't uproot itself), effectively allowing it to make physical Skill checks as per the character's Skill. Each effect takes 1 Round to happen. This control lasts 3 Rounds, which may be extended at a cost of 1 Pulse per additional Round, then the plant returns to its original state.

Animal Speech: By spending 1 Pulse as an automatic action, the character can talk to and understand animals. The conversation may be a little limited in the case of earthworms, but dogs and eagles tend to have more to say for themselves. This effect lasts 5 minutes.

Patron God: Trickster

Type: Weird

Requirements: Heroic, No other Patron God Edges

A trickster god or goddess has looked favorably upon your character and offered him divine patronage. This might be Coyote or Susano-o or Loki, among others. Such gods expect their representatives to shake people up, confuse them, and make them question their lot in life, introducing change and creativity to their world. In exchange for devotion, your character is granted a choice from the following supernatural abilities. He picks one on gaining this Edge and a second when he reaches Demigod (or two immediately if he takes this Edge once he's already at Demigod rank).



Aura Of Truth: By spending 1 Pulse as a free action, there is a -2 penalty to the next check to spot the character lying, whether that check uses natural or supernatural means. This affects a single check, however long that check takes, but if nobody has announced such a check within 5 minutes, the Aura Of Truth ends.

False Positive: By spending 2 Pulse and succeeding at an opposed Spirit check, the character can make one target within 2 inches become obsessed by something that isn't true, as per the Hindrance Delusion (major). The target absolutely believes in some lie, and that lie becomes the most important thing to him. For example, a guard who (falsely) thinks there are intruders in his town will obsess on patrolling and catching them above all else. This effect lasts 1 minute but it can be extended by spending a further 2 Pulse per minute.

Prestiocation: By spending 1 Pulse as an automatic action, the character creates a static illusion in a small area, like making a book seem to have a different title or a drink appear to be a different liquid. People seeing the illusion may attempt a Notice check at -2 to see through the illusion. This effect lasts 5 minutes.

Patron God: Unknown

Type: Weird

Requirements: Heroic, No other Patron God Edges

A mysterious god or goddess has looked favorably upon your character and gives him divine patronage secretly, behind the scenes. Your character knows very little about this enigmatic figure, apart from the benefits that are being bestowed on him. Is it a benign or malevolent force in the universe? Only time will tell.

In exchange for devotion, your character is granted two supernatural abilities of his choice from those offered by other patron gods in his realm, or those can be used as guidelines for the creation of new abilities. The first ability is bestowed upon taking this Edge, while the second is activated at Demigod (both are active immediately if the character takes this Edge at Demigod rank). These powers give a hint of the god's hidden nature.

While this flexibility sounds great, your character suspects that his shadowy patron has big plans for him. While other patrons see characters as their messengers and representatives in the mortal realms, discussing plans with them openly and with trust, there is some reason this character is different.

This is a terrific roleplaying opportunity for the GM, a chance to weave the character into the heart of the epic that she's developing. There are bound to be some twists and turns along the way, and a shocking revelation or two before the dust settles.

Patron God: War

Type: Weird

Requirements: Heroic, No other Patron God Edges

A war god or goddess has looked favorably upon your character and offered him divine patronage. This might be Ares or Neit, or the goddesses Agrona, Brigit, or Menhit. Such gods expect their representatives to take part in battles on their behalf, ensuring that the god's preferred side wins. In exchange for devotion, your character is granted a choice from the following supernatural abilities. He picks one on gaining this Edge and a second when he reaches Demigod (or two immediately if he takes this Edge once he's already at Demigod rank).

Steadfast In Battle: By spending 1 Pulse as an free action, the character gives allies under a Large Burst Template centered on him a +2 bonus to Spirit checks against Fear effects for the next 5 Rounds, allowing anyone who had previously failed a Fear check an opportunity to reroll.

Resilient In Battle: By spending 2 Pulse as an automatic action, the character gives allies under a Large Burst Template centered on him a +1 bonus to Parry and Toughness, lasting for 2 Rounds and extendable by paying another 1 Pulse per Round.

Mighty In Battle: By spending 3 Pulse as an automatic action, the character gives allies under a Large Burst Template centered on him a +1 bonus to Shooting and Fighting, lasting for 2 Rounds and extendable by paying another 1 Pulse per Round



Patron God: Weather

Type: Weird

Requirements: Heroic, No other Patron God Edges

A god or goddess of weather or the sky has looked favorably upon your character and offered him divine patronage. Thor, Zeus, Horus, and Quetzalcoatl are among the best known weather gods. Such gods expect their representatives to alter the weather as necessary to ensure a desired outcome, whether that means aiding a side in battle or helping crops grow or flooding a disloyal village. In exchange for devotion, your character is granted a choice from the following supernatural abilities. He picks one on gaining this Edge and a second when he reaches Demigod (or two immediately if he takes this Edge once he's already at Demigod rank).

Deluge: By spending Pulse as a free action, the character can (as long as he's outside) start a torrential downpour of rain within 12 inches of him. The

downpour covers an area the size of a Large Burst Template. Movement within the area is considered difficult and ranged attacks passing through the area suffer a -1 penalty to attack rolls. This costs 2 Pulse and lasts 3 Rounds, extendable by paying 1 Pulse per additional Round.

Static discharge: By spending 3 Pulse as an automatic action, the character can unleash a blast of electric force from the atmosphere on a target within 12 inches. This deals 2d10 Damage or knocks out a single electronic system for 1 minute. This effect drains the area within 12 inches of the character of any static charge, and it takes 24 hours to build up enough to be used again in that location.

Purify: By spending Pulse as an automatic action, the character can remove harmful impurities – including poisons and radioactivity – from natural substances including air, earth, and water. A 1 inch square can be affected for each Pulse spent (a 2m cube of material, if you're being all rules lawyery about it).



Penetrating Strike

Type: Combat

Requirements: Novice, Notice d8+

Many warriors find that simply smashing away at their heavily armored opponents is a waste of energy that could better be spent elsewhere. They have learned to find weak spots in their opponents' defenses. Your character adds +1 Armor Penetration to all his attacks.

Penetrating Strike: Improved

Type: Combat

Requirements: Heroic, Penetrating Strike

Why have a little Armor Penetration when you can have a lot? Your character increases his Armor Penetration by +2. Furthermore, he can pay 2 Pulse to make his attacks for the Round count as Heavy Weapons.

Penetrating Strike: Mastery

Type: Combat

Requirements: Demigod, Penetrating Strike: Improved

Why have a lot of Armor Penetration when you can have LOTS of Armor Penetration. Your character's bonus Armor Penetration increases to +3, which can be further increased by spending 1 Pulse per +1 Armor Penetration. This increase lasts until the end of Round. Furthermore, he can pay 1 Pulse to make his Fighting attacks for the Round count as Heavy Weapons.

Pulse Armor

Type: Combat

Requirements: Heroic

Sometimes Pulse has subtle effects that could be mistaken for luck. Other times it turns knives aside and deflects bullets. This is one of those other times.

After damage has been calculated but before making a Soak roll, your character may pay 1 Pulse to add 1 point of Armor across his whole body. This is effective against one attack and he may spend as much Pulse as he likes in order to boost the Armor

Perfected Races

A Perfected character has the benefit of being from a part of the gene pool that has been altered by the use of Pulse, making it particularly adept at one type of activity. Perfected characters are born to Perfected parents, and such bloodlines tend to be massively proud of their racial heritage. That said, there's nothing stopping a Perfected character from taking a racial type Edge as well – it's rare but not unheard of, and heroes are well known for being rule breakers. Such a case might cause social problems when the Pure Strain Human son comes home from his hiking trip to the mountains as a Pure Strain Dwarf... the roleplay possibilities are intriguing for sure. You can see the Pure Strain Human Edge at the top of the next page.

New Edge Type: Perfected

Perfected Edges are very powerful, but they're also demanding. A character may only take a Perfected Edge at character creation (never later in his career), and may only have one Perfected Edge. Perfected Edges 'cost' double a normal Edge. A human taking one could use his free Edge from being human toward the cost of the Edge but would still need another 2 Hindrance points to finish paying for it. Optionally you may choose to build your character with one less Attribute point than normal (4 for most or 2 if you've taken the Young Hindrance) to pay for half a Perfected Edge.



rating. He may do this against a single damage result per Round. For example, a person hit by a machine gun takes three serious hits. After discovering how many Wounds each would inflict he may spend Pulse to gain Armor against one of the shots – each point of Pulse buys a point of Armor.

Pulse Armor: Improved

Type: Combat

Requirements: Demigod, Pulse Armor

After damage has been calculated but before making a Soak roll, your character may pay 1 Pulse to add 2 points of Armor across his whole body. This is effective against one attack, but he may spend as much Pulse as he likes in order to boost the armor rating, and may spend Pulse on multiple attacks that Round. For example, a person hit by a machine gun takes three serious hits. After discovering how many Wounds each would inflict he may spend Pulse to gain Armor against one, two or all three of the shots – each point of Pulse buys two points of Armor against one of the hits.

Pure Strain Human

Type: Perfected

Requirements: Novice, Smarts d10+

Your character's mind and body are perfect, absolutely flawless – and he probably does everything possible to keep it scar free because he's so proud of it. His Smarts can be raised as high as d12+2 over time with normal advancements (and beyond that with the Edges 'Professional' and 'Master' each increasing it by a further +1). He gains a +1 bonus on all Skill checks where Smarts is the linked Attribute and suffers only half the normal multi-action penalty for additional cerebral actions. Having the perfect form also has social perks – the character gets +1 Charisma.

Reader

Type: Professional

Requirements: Novice, Notice d6+, Taunt d4+, Intimidation d4+

Careful observation has taught your character a library of personal quirks and 'tells' that suggest veiled truths. He is now skilled enough at social

manipulation to gain +2 to all Notice checks to see through disguises and to mark lies (both overt and through omission). The character also gets +1 in all opposed social actions, including Tests of Will.

Resonance

Type: Weird

Requirements: Heroic

Your character's Pulse is such a roiling tempest of activity that it's just bubbling to get out. His spirit world representation looks like a chained thundercloud. When the fury is unleashed, every ready source of Pulse nearby sings in harmony. The effect is quite forceful.

As an action costing 1 Pulse, your character may place a Medium Burst Template up to Spirit inches away from him. He makes an opposed Spirit check against the Strength of each creature under the template. If he defeats any targets they are moved 1 inch away from the center of the template and 1 more for each Raise. Anyone moved in this way must make an Agility check or be knocked prone by this burst of Pulse resonance. No damage is inflicted by the burst, but it's a way of making enemies fall off ledges for instance. Getting slammed into solid objects makes the target(s) Shaken.

Resonance: Improved

Type: Weird

Requirements: Demigod, Resonance

In the spirit world your character is now constantly sparking with untapped Pulse. In moments of strong emotion, the energy flares and dances visibly around him. Activating the resonance is no longer a song, but a penetrating howl.

As an action costing 1 Pulse your character may place a Large Burst Template up to Spirit x2 inches away from him. He makes an opposed Spirit check against the Strength of each creature under the template. If he defeats any targets they are moved 2 inches away from the center of the template for a success and 1 more for each Raise. Anyone moved in this way must make an Agility check or be knocked prone by this burst of Pulse resonance. No damage is inflicted by the burst, but it's a way of making

enemies fall off ledges for instance. Getting slammed into solid objects makes the target(s) Shaken.

Sidekick

Type: Weird

Requirements: Heroic, Beastmaster or Companion

Your companion or animal companion's fate becomes intertwined with that of your character – the companion becomes a Wild Card. Rare are the moments when he is not by his master's side, and most people have trouble conceiving of one without the other. Your character can also share his Heroic and Demigod-related benefits (bonuses to Soak rolls, recovery from Shaken checks, etc.) with his companion by spending 1 Pulse per Round.

Stutter

Type: Weird

Requirements: Demigod, Smarts d8+, Spirit d8+, Vigor d8+

Your character's Pulse is so potent that time has started to warp upon contact with it. He may pay 1 Pulse to repeat an action in a combat Round. For example, your character can make two Shooting rolls or two Intimidation checks. This may only be done once per Round, and the multi-action penalty still applies.

Surge

Type: Weird

Requirements: Heroic

The blast doors are closing, the villain is escaping, the ground is crumbling beneath you. Just... a little... faster. Your muscles shriek, something surges within you. Jackpot!

Your character may increase his Pace by any amount for one Round. Each inch of movement beyond normal costs 1 Pulse.

Surge: Improved

Type: Weird

Requirements: Demigod, Surge

Three seconds and nothing will be left of the city. The coruscating artifact is so close to the portal, but so far. Time slows, the faces of your companions begin to blue-shift as you rush past them. You're in the zone.

Your character may increase his Pace by any amount for two Rounds by spending Pulse. Each point of Pulse spent adds two inches of movement to your character's Pace.

Tough As Hell

Type: Combat

Requirements: Legendary, Tough As Nails

Lesser heroes succumb to minor wounds or scratches, but not this character - he doesn't suffer a Wound from a second Shaken result.

Trait Perfection: Heroic

Type: Weird

Requirements: Heroic, Relevant Trait d12+

Heroes known across multiple realms for their feats of strength do not have bad days where their efforts are stymied by a stubborn door. By the same token, heroes of the mind are able to reason their way through any problem beneath a specific threshold. When so much is at stake, bad days are a luxury heroes can't afford.

On a failed check your character may spend 1 Pulse for a +1 bonus to the check and may continue to do so until the check is a success or he runs out of Pulse. In the case of checks with multiple Trait dice (such as when using the Frenzy Edge), the bonus applies to only one result, but Pulse may be spent to add a bonus on each result independently. This Edge may be taken more than once, but it may never be applied to the same Trait twice.



Trait Perfection: Demigod

Type: Weird

Requirements: Demigod, Trait Perfection: Heroic for the affected Trait

When was the last time that Hercules couldn't lift something? Exactly.

On a failed check your character may spend 1 Pulse for a +2 bonus to the check and may continue to do so until the check is a success or he runs out of Pulse. In the case of checks with multiple Trait dice (such as when using the Frenzy Edge), the bonus applies to only one result, but Pulse may be spent to add a bonus on each result independently. Additionally, when he rolls a fumble on this Trait, he may pay 5 Pulse to turn it into a failure with an effective result of 0... which he can then spend more Pulse to increase as above. This Edge may be taken more than once, but it may never be applied to the same Trait twice.

Pulse Paths

The source of magical power, whatever it may be, exists somewhere in the universe. Some claim it is hidden in the deepest cloud of the Maelstrom, among the crumbling bodies of petrified gods. Others have reams of evidence proving the primal source prospers in a backwater realm where it is shared among a coven of fierce guardians.

Whichever truth is the most popular in a given era, it is generally agreed that four rivers emerge from the source: divine magic, spirit magic, the power of sigils, and the unadulterated magic of spells. Each realm or culture has found different ways to harness and focus these four primal streams to create a profusion of schools, traditions, disciplines, and circles... and some realms have discovered other ways to harness Pulse which aren't easily classified in these categories (but that's a teaser to future books!). In generic Savage Worlds these would be called Arcane Backgrounds; in Suzerain they're Pulse Paths.

Each of the four branches of magic has a 'seed' Edge that must be taken if a character wishes to use magic. They are: Empowered, Enabled, Gifted and Sighted. These Edges allow the character the ability to work one type of magic, grant him two powers selected from the appropriate list, and a d4

in the relevant Skill for using those powers. The seed Edges can theoretically be found in any realm in the Suzerain Continuum but that doesn't confirm their legality, ease of use, or popularity. Rough-edged, hobo-scrawled wards of protection on the walls of a train car are as much the work of scribes as techno-magical pyramids coursing with the rerouted Pulse of an entire planet.

Selection of a single seed Edge is enough to call your character a mage, shaman, or what-have-you. It's also enough to get pretty good at it. You can always pick up more spells and increase the related Skill. While the trappings of the spells may change from realm to realm, or even from one caster to the next, these are the basics. If your character concept is leaning toward being archetypal or you don't want magic to be the entire focus, this is the way to go.

However, if you want something with a more realm-specific flavor, there are further options. Those hobo scrawls from two paragraphs up weren't just a throwaway example. They're part of the *Noir Knights* book, our take on the Great Depression with supernatural elements. A more immediately relevant example is anatomism, used by specially trained body-wizards who are prevalent in the Relic setting. For further information on them, check out page 50. Fitting your character with one of those Edges represents specialist training, granting greater focus to their power. The specialist Edge works exactly like the seed Edge, giving the character a d4 in the new specialty's requisite Skill and two Powers from the new list. Your character can gain additional Powers on the list by taking the Extra Power Edge, as usual.

Selecting a realm-specific Pulse Path has more prerequisites than being a generalist, but also offers greater rewards for those who develop them to the highest levels. While there is no universal rule forbidding a character from branching into several different schools, the end benefits will not be as great. On the other hand, you could have yourself the shamanic equivalent of a polyglot, able to commune with the spirit of absolutely anything at a basic level. Generalization versus specialization... it's an age-old dilemma.

Basic Terms And Edges

Here's the lingo you'll want to know if you're planning on exploring the Powers available to heroes and villains in the Suzerain Continuum.

Prayers. Mystical powers used by 'empowered' characters. Usually priests, but not always.

Rituals. Mystical powers used by 'sighted' characters. Rituals get spirits to perform a supernatural task for a shaman.

Sigils. Mystical powers used by 'enabled' characters. There are plenty of flavors of scrivener, writing mystical symbols.

Spells. Mystical powers used by 'gifted' characters. This is your classic wizardry.

Empowered

Type: Pulse Path

Requirements: Spirit d6+

A divine patron has agreed to oversee your character's connection to the mystical source of all existence. The character does not need any formal connection to the divinity or its earthly organization, only faith in the deity itself. Certain deities will have rules that their empowered must follow, but most don't feel it's necessary except among their cloistered elite. On taking this Edge your character gains:

Faith in a particular god or pantheon (Spi) d4

Two prayers from the following list: Armor, Barrier, Beast Friend, Boost/Lower Trait, Burrow, Burst, Deflection, Detect/Conceal Arcana, Dispel, Divine Intervention, Elemental Manipulation, Entangle, Environmental Protection, Fear, Fly, Greater Healing, Healing, Invisibility, Light, Obscure, Puppet, Quickness, Shape Change, Smite, Speak Language, Speed, Stun, Telekinesis, Zombie.

Multi-Prayer: A divinely empowered character may recite one prayer multiple times in a single action. For example he may recite Boost Trait on three targets instead of one. Each additional target gets a separate Faith die (as with Bolt or rate-of-fire weapons), but the whole action gets only one Wild Die as normal. The full Pulse cost of the prayer must be paid for each instance. Each additional instance of the prayer increases the difficulty of reciting it and

incurs a -1 penalty on the check. For example, a priest reciting Boost Fighting on 4 party members would roll 4 Faith dice and one Wild Die. He would then pick the four best results, apply a -3 modifier to each die to determine success or failure, and pay the cost of Boost/Lower Trait 4 times. He would only need to pay upkeep on the instances that succeeded.

Enabled

Type: Pulse Path

Requirements: Strength d6+

All scribes share one thing in common – their bodies have been enhanced to allow them to lay down magical symbols that would otherwise be beyond mortal control. Depending on the realm, the required change may take the form of cybernetic implants, ritual anointing of the hands, or 20 years of sequestered monastery training. Mental changes mirror the scrivener's physical transformation; his mind is either warped or strengthened to allow for the terrible strain that the shape of magic brings to flesh and spirit. On taking this Edge your character gains:

Scribe (Agi) d4

Two sigils from the following list: Armor, Barrier, Beast Friend, Blast, Bolt, Boost/Lower Trait, Burst, Deflection, Detect/Conceal Arcana, Dispel, Elemental Manipulation, Environmental Protection, Fear, Fly, Invisibility, Light, Obscure, Quickness, Shape Change, Smite, Speak Language, Speed, Stun, Telekinesis, Teleport, Zombie.

Transference: Scribes can inscribe a sigil they know onto an object or person, then give someone else access to its power (or leave the sigil 'open' for anyone to use). Transferring a sigil's power this way costs 1 Pulse per rank of the sigil. Pulse spent in this way does not recover as normal. However, other people may now use the power. The Trait check required to use a transferred power defaults to Spirit, but a more logical choice may present itself in certain instances. For example, Shooting makes sense for a Bolt spell transferred to a wand. The scrivener can break his link to the sigil at any time. The invested Pulse then replenishes as normal.

Gifted

Type: Pulse Path

Requirements: Smarts d6+

Traditional wizards fall under this Pulse Path. They've acquired their control over magic through strict mental discipline and often invest years of research in the art of casting spells. As such, their view of magic tends to be an extension of the user's strength of will. Most people with the gift for spellcasting see their connection to the Pulse source as the purest form of magic, as it exists without the intermediary actions of other beings or objects – no gods or spirits are needed, and no bodily enhancement either. It's not something to get too vain about, though. The gift strikes at random, with some people discovering a talent for wizardry despite living a life of drudgery for decades. On taking this Edge, your character gains:

Spellcasting (Sma) d4

Two spells from the following list: Armor, Barrier, Blast, Bolt, Boost/Lower Trait, Burrow, Burst, Deflection, Detect/Conceal Arcana, Dispel, Elemental Manipulation, Entangle, Environmental Protection, Fear, Fly, Invisibility, Light, Obscure, Puppet, Quickness, Shape Change, Smite, Speak Language, Speed, Stun, Telekinesis, Teleport.

Flood The Channels: Gifted casters can make their spells harder to resist by paying more Pulse. Each point of Pulse spent in this way gives the target(s) -1 on opposed checks and Soak rolls against the power. This cost is paid after the character rolls, but before his opponent makes the resistance check.

Sighted

Type: Pulse Path

Requirements: Vigor d6+

Shamans – those in the physical world who deal with those in the spirit world. Most realms have some people who perform rituals to summon spirits with specific powers and offer them Pulse in exchange for their services. Different groups of shamans use different strategies for switching their sight to the world of the spirits, but it mostly involves chants, rituals, and secret blends of dangerous substances, which requires a certain amount of physical sturdiness to consume repeatedly over a period of years. On taking this Edge, your character gains:

Perform Ritual (Vig) d4

Two rituals from the following list: Armor, Barrier, Beast Friend, Blast, Bolt, Boost/Lower Trait, Burrow, Burst, Deflection, Detect/Conceal Arcana, Dispel, Elemental Manipulation, Entangle, Environmental Protection, Fear, Fly, Greater Healing, Healing, Invisibility, Light, Obscure, Puppet, Quickness, Shape Change, Smite, Speak Language, Speed, Stun, Telekinesis, Teleport, The Sight, Zombie.

Ritual Use: All sighted Powers require a ritual to cast, with the exception of The Sight (see below). The specifics depend upon the shaman's culture, but tend to involve chanting, repetitive movement, and spiritually significant (but non-magical) components. Performing a ritual takes 5 minutes per point of Pulse the power requires. At the end of the ritual, the shaman makes a Perform Ritual check as usual. Rituals with non-instant durations remain in effect for 24 hours, during which time they can be dismissed as an action. Instant effects may be triggered at any point during the next 24 hours as an action. Pulse spent on rituals doesn't begin to recover until the effect is spent, dismissed or ends, at which point recovery begins as normal. Rituals both started and finished during the spiriting hour (midnight – 01:00) receive a +2 bonus to the Perform Ritual roll, as spirits are unusually co-operative at that time.





Two New Powers

Divine Intervention

Type: Prayer

Requirements: Novice, Empowered

Pulse: Special

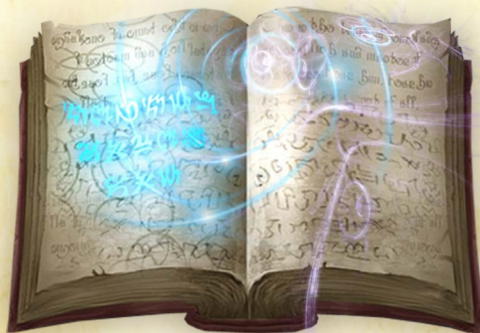
Range: Self

Duration: Special

Trappings: Beseeching your god loudly and offering placating deals or proof of faith.

Your character has a hotline to his chosen deity and may plead with them for assistance – ideally you'll roleplay his platitudes to tempt your GM into being more generous. For 1 Pulse he may ask to be temporarily bestowed with any Edge for which he qualifies. The bonus Edge normally lasts for the duration of a scene. In combat, it lasts until the battle's end or until a joker is drawn, whichever occurs first. Your character can also request Edges for which he does not qualify. The basic cost of this is 3 Pulse plus 1 Pulse for each rank he is short of qualifying. No check is required to do this. If your character has been especially devout, his prayers may well be answered.

Prayers can be answered as the character expected, in a way more befitting of the patron divinity's philosophy, or not at all. Praying to Hela, the proud sun goddess of Valon, for the Thief Edge to better sneak into an enemy temple is unlikely. Instead, the request may be met with the boon of Command or Attractive so the empowered can take the more direct route. If the character is trying to sneak into one of Hela's own temples, he should consider himself lucky if all that happens is wasted Pulse.



The Sight

Type: Ritual

Requirements: Novice, Sighted

Pulse: 1

Range: Self

Duration: 1 hour

Some of the places that shamans go, eyes just get them into trouble. Normal eyes, that is. To see the spirits they converse with, shamans need sight beyond mortal sight. Despite its name, The Sight refers to all of the five basic senses.

For 1 Pulse, the shaman shifts all senses from the physical world to the spirit world for one hour, which shifts his body too, making him a ghostly presence in the solid world and a solid form in the spirit world. The duration increases to two hours with a Raise. He may end this effect prematurely by making a Spirit check with a -2 penalty. Unlike all other shamanic Powers, invoking The Sight requires a single normal action rather than a lengthy ritual.

Saving The Universe

Suzerain makes your characters truly heroic and then turns them into demigods, before finally (hopefully) they transcend to godhood. That's about as epic as it gets. They're obviously going to need some help to face the challenges that inevitably turn up to sour their day. They get Pulse, and Karma, and once they hit Heroic rank they get improved Soak rolls and other perks, and a d8 as a Wild Die at Demigod. And let's not forget the ability to avoid death at the cost of a single Karma.

It's still not enough. Trust us, these challenges aren't little niggling issues like finding matching socks in the morning. They're not minor impish problems biting their ankles and trying to undo their shoelaces. We leave that stuff to other settings. These are serious challenges for mortals who are favored by the very gods themselves. As such, your characters get two additional bits of supernatural aid: a fortress of their own and a tour guide to the universe.

Characters' Pocket Realm

After a few Telesmae get close to each other, they communicate with one another and start forming strange, interconnected geometries that burrow through the Veil separating the mortal realms from the Maelstrom. If the gods can strike an accord over the gathering of champions, the Telesmae's connections deepen, hollowing out a section of the Maelstrom for their bearers.

The creation of this pocket realm is a subtle event. Just because the gods have chosen to back a gathering of heroes doesn't mean they'll immediately break out the golden drinking horns and mythic taxidermy. More than likely, your characters will first notice their new safehouse when they keep on returning to it, no matter how unlikely the circumstances. That'll be the Telesmae chirping amongst themselves, trying to return to their god-blessed home. As the forces of history bend around your characters' actions, the links between them, their Telesmae, and the Maelstrom will become ever deeper.

It's comforting to know your adventuring group has access to a base of operations – a pocket dimension crafted of Pulse and capable of surreptitiously transporting itself from one realm to the next, along with your characters. The pocket realm is a relatively stable area of the Maelstrom that is maintained for the characters by their Telesmae, but without your characters knowing about it at first. Until Heroic rank, Telesmae keep a low profile, and the pocket realm will look like any other accommodation that's suitable for the local environment – a cozy inn room, a fine, sturdy tent big enough for the whole group, etc. Your characters' Telesmae maintain this space, as well as its contents. For example, if characters leave some possessions in the closet of their cheap motel room while beating a hasty retreat, those same items will be waiting for them in the next dusty motel in the next tumbleweed town. This might give some sharper characters pause to think that things aren't exactly what they seem...

The pocket realm grows and becomes increasingly grand as the characters increase in rank. The quality of the hotel rooms they get seems to improve, until they have a nice suite at Veteran rank instead of a roach-infested basement at Novice. But it's still a place that looks right for the local environment.

As soon as the average rank in the group reaches Heroic, everything changes. The characters are contacted by their Telesmae, and it's time to see the universe for what it really is. Their souls are now strong enough to handle the transition to different times and places through the Maelstrom. As a first step, though, they need to meet the representatives of the gods, and that happens in the pocket realm. As the characters step through the door into their realm, suddenly they're aware they've traveled through a portal to another place. It's like a veil has been lifted and they see what's really going on – the space inside no longer matches the space outside (sort of like a certain blue police box...). And there, in the middle of the main room, is the welcome party made up of various senior spirits and demigods who want to check out the newbies. If the GM has any 'big reveal' secrets about the workings of the universe, this is a good time to slip them in. Otherwise, the new Heroic characters are clued in to what you, the reader, already know about the wider Suzerain Continuum.

As part of their Heroic rank briefing, the new kids are taught how to rearrange their pocket realm. From then on the characters are able to modify the trappings of their realm to suit their tastes. Since it's a shared resource, dependent on the psyche of each of the characters, its architecture and particulars will be tailored to the group. Followers of the Grand Singularity can expect an eventual technotopia of free-flowing information falls; a group with strong patronage from Relic's Etaro, the Wanderer, is more likely to be granted an ever-evolving hunting lodge with room for a great number of interesting guests. As the heroes prove their worth to the universe, their Telesmae work to strengthen the realm's ties to the Maelstrom. By Demigod rank, the realm will be saturated with enough Pulse that it could easily reach the size of a palatial estate, complete with its own ecosystem.

No matter what its internal trappings, access to the pocket realm is always through an unassuming entryway. Everyone who isn't capable of traveling to the Maelstrom (including most mortals) will just see the normal room beyond, while the owners will see the entrance lobby to their realm. As they step through, they disappear from the mortal world – leaving any observers with a new tale to tell about our heroes' many wiles. Permanent animal companions

and followers bought with Edges get to travel with the character who has the Edge, using the same rules as people carrying items to and from the Maelstrom.

When characters travel into a mortal realm, the flow of time in the pocket realm synchronizes with that realm. If characters hide in their pocket realm for ten minutes, ten minutes pass on the other side of that unassuming doorway too. If the characters go back through a portal to the Maelstrom, the pocket realm synchronizes to 'Maelstrom time' instead of 'mortal time'.

The pocket realm is a home away from home, a secret hideout, Fortress of Solitude, and private lodge. Because of the pocket realm's deep ties to the characters' great potential, the messengers of the gods also prefer it as their meeting area. When the higher powers want the heroes' help, they send a high-ranking functionary (say, an angel or a Demigod-level phoenix) into the pocket realm to share what's going on and what bold hearts can do about it.

A Character's Telesma

We've mentioned Telesmae a few times so far, but what are they exactly? Each is an individual gem, usually part of something else, like a ring that has been handed from seventh son to seventh son for generations. Or a smooth rock that your character picked up one day, and never got around to tossing. Or an ugly tourist charm, which nevertheless ends up hanging in conspicuous locations, that your character bought to get rid of that weird old lady at the side of the road. Just one of those things, right?

Wrong. That little gem casts eerily familiar patterns when it catches the light, and silently hums of nostalgic times. It feels like a mix between an old friend and a favorite pair of pants. Also, it's sentient. Maybe it's not very smart – in the area of a cat or dog – but that's still a serious step up from most jewels. Whatever shape the Telesma is in now, it was originally created by a divine power and designed as a conduit to a chosen one: your character. (Note the difference between being a chosen one and The Chosen One. Gods know that heroes often fail – heroically. It's good planning for them to keep a few spare chosen ones up their nigh-infinite sleeves.)

The gods discovered early on that repeatedly pulling mortals through the Veil between realities could destroy their very soul, shredding it like so much tissue. Not wanting to add to the growing pile of pulped heroes, one of the gods had an idea. Nobody remembers who, but it was a good enough idea that everyone took the credit, as divine egos tend to do.

At any rate, one of the gods created a small yet flawless gem, which he filled with one of his spirit servants. Its job: to guide the appointed hero as he fulfilled his divine purpose. Each major deity has hundreds of lesser spirits at his beck and call, so bonding a few to gems wasn't a great loss. The god set this gem into a piece of jewelry, divinely beautiful, and offered it to his hero.

This was the first Telesma, the first talisman of the gods.

A powerful bond grew between Telesma and human. Better still, the god could bring the human to and from the Maelstrom by summoning the gem back – it would then bring the human with it, safely cocooned in its power.

Time passed and more gods gave Telesmae to their followers, each creating new designs as they went. Not all Telesmae guided their appointed heroes as closely as the first. Over time, most gods agreed it was better to have a pool of free agents, unfettered by the eon-spanning politics associated with being a direct servant. If your character takes a Patron God Edge or has Faith in a particular deity, his Telesma will inevitably have been created by that deity for

Telesmae In Play

There are three basic approaches to playing Telesmae. You can ignore the fact that they're sentient and just play them as powerful magic items. Or you can decide on a basic personality and let the GM handle all Telesmae like they're Extras. Or each player's Telesma gets played by the player on his left, and everybody plays both their character and occasionally a Telesma. Try them all out and see which is most fun for you.



him. Otherwise, it's likely the Telesma was created by the gods as a group without a particular one-to-one relationship between a god and your character.

Although there are exceptions, Telesmae tend to have only limited consciousness. While they are generally obedient and are strongly loyal to the human they have bonded with, it's a narrow intelligence. Telesmae can be playful, or even mischievous, but also contrary if asked to work against their core purpose. Like any divine artifact with the intelligence of a golden retriever, bribery and tricks may be necessary to guide them toward individual goals rather than godly dictates.

Telesmae are incredibly useful items for your character. They transport him through portals and across the Veil, and they ease the transition into each setting. Telesmae can learn different additional powers, too. Characters start to feel the benefits of the Telesma before they even hit Heroic rank, but it's only

then that the gods let the Telesma reveal itself and open its direct telepathic link.

It's impossible for a hero to lose his Telesma: the two are connected by a force deeper than Pulse. Each can sense the other's approximate location from any distance within a realm, and precise position from close range (within 1km). But that doesn't mean they are physically bound. Your character can still take off his Telesma just like any other piece of jewelry. That means they can be stolen. Certain mortal legends involve heroes seeking enchanted items, and growing in power and prestige once those are located – those stories may actually be about heroes fighting to claim stolen Telesmae, or reclaiming one stolen from them. Excalibur was encrusted with jewels, after all ...

There are also drawbacks to having a Telesma. The first is that it links the character to the gods, allowing the gods and their representatives to contact him and call him back to the Maelstrom. This can be annoying, because the view across the Veil is misty, fading in and out of focus, so the gods might choose an inappropriate time to call a hero back for an update. This can make for some fun roleplaying, and it also provides a handy excuse when one of the players can't make it to a session.

The second is that anyone with the power to see the spirit world will instantly notice a Telesma and recognize it as something not native to their realm. Beings of opposed philosophy are drawn to it, good to evil, chaos to order. The character stands out mystically because of the touch of the gods, making him a clear target for demons and devils and evil spirits and all manner of nasty beings who want to tear down anything good or heroic. And if your character is the sly, malicious sort, he'll find himself a target for every do-gooder in the universe. It's not fair, but that's why most heroes find themselves at the center of plots and plans, forever being assaulted from all sides. And there always seems to be a nemesis lurking in the wings. The character-and-Telesma's bonded aura draws danger to him and makes him a temptation to anyone who can see or sense his enhanced power. Subconsciously, unknowingly, opposites attract – and it's not a good thing!

The third problem is Telesmae do have some sentience, and aren't always perfectly obedient. Again, this is great for roleplaying – you get to give your item

a bit of personality. The GM also gets to have some fun; if your character tries to use his Telesma to do something that's inappropriate for his patron god (if he has one), he needs to make a Spirit roll with a negative modifier based on how inappropriate the action is. Fail, and the Telesma stubbornly refuses to help out. The fallout could be embarrassing, or merely deadly, depending on the circumstance.

Only a mortal who has been flagged by the gods as a potential Hero can own or use a Telesma, and even then only the one that's bound to him. This describes all characters in a Suzerain game, even if they don't have the Patron God Edge – that's for characters who want an extra close relationship with a particular deity. Characters who don't know they have patron gods or don't believe in the divine right of the space faeries to control their destiny aren't exempt either. There's a Maelstrom full of gods and great spirits who've marked him for greatness, like it or not.

Other people may be able to force a Telesma to share its power, but their body, mind, and soul are not prepared for the exchange. The granted power is too much for them to handle, and they will go insane. All those tales of men and women driven mad by cursed relics has some basis in fact – many of those people foolishly tried to wrest power from a Telesma and were overwhelmed by the experience.

The Mechanics Of Telesmae

A Telesma becomes part of the character during character creation, and you have some say in its appearance and personality. A Telesma is like having a wizard's familiar, only it's a magical gem. It has some sentience and it has certain powers. The Telesma has a spiritual link with its owner, and is unlikely to disobey a direct order. But because it has intelligence it also has a personality. And that's something you can work out with your GM.

Is your Telesma snarky? Is it eager? Is it hesitant? Is it playful? Aggressive? Afraid to be left alone? And what form does it take? All Telesmae are gems, but the type, color, and cut vary. Is it a large square ruby, set in a heavy gold ring? Will it be a round star sapphire, suspended from a fine gold chain? Or a small, rough quartz attached to a watch fob? Decide what would be fun to play and what would suit your character.

A Telesma has a few inherent powers that it'll reveal at Heroic rank:

Focused Telepathy: The Telesma can mentally communicate with its owner and vice-versa, in either the physical world or the spirit world. Its range is limited to sight – it must be within sight of the character to hear him and be heard. This is a passive power, and costs no Pulse. Even if they cannot talk, a Telesma and its owner always have a sense of where the other is – as long as they're in the same realm.

In the spirit world, Telesmae can talk among themselves telepathically when they're within line of sight. This allows characters to send mental messages to each other without speaking, using their Telesmae to pass the message on.

Spirit Senses: The Telesma is a spirit, and even bound into a gem it can sense the spirit world, hear what's going on and see everything around it. By contrast, it's aware of physical beings in the same way that physical beings see spirits – as ghostly forms. This is a passive power, and costs no Pulse.

Control Portal: This is the bit that allows a Telesma to help the character get back and forth through the Veil around the Maelstrom, and through portals to different times and places in the mortal realms. The Telesma can find and manipulate portals which allow travel through the Veil between the mortal realms and the realm of the gods, the Maelstrom.

Telesmae can sense portals within 1km, and have a vague idea of where others within 100km are, enough to find them with a bit of searching. Once within 10m of a portal the character will be able to see through it, but the other side will be frustratingly distorted. He can pay 1 Pulse to share his sight of a portal with other characters, as long as they're within a Large Burst Template of him.

To activate a portal, the character touches it and concentrates for one minute, expending 2 Pulse in the process, though some portals are harder to open than others, requiring greater Pulse expenditure or Spirit checks to ease open. Oddly enough, these are the portals that characters tend to find while being pursued across featureless plains, armies of troll legionaries on their heels. Once the portal is open, the character can see the swirling milky barrier of the

Veil through it and can pass across to the Maelstrom. Your GM has information on what happens then. A portal stays open for 24 hours, useable by anyone who has a strong enough soul not to get bounced or utterly destroyed by the forces of the Maelstrom, before it closes once more.

Localization: When characters arrive in a new realm, they're unfamiliar with it. Normally, a clueless first-time visitor wouldn't be able to make common Knowledge rolls about that world, but the Telesma helps out by tapping into the great subconscious of the realm, allowing rolls at -2. Once the character has been around a realm for long enough, that penalty disappears. Your GM will decide what "long enough" means.

Another benefit is that the Telesma picks up on the way local people talk, allowing its owner to communicate as per the Power Speak Languages. It takes a couple of minutes to kick in when first arriving in a new place, after which the telepathic link to the Telesma keeps the translation pretty smooth while in that realm. It costs no Pulse and it's always on.

Even better, the Telesma can also make the character look like a person native to his new realm. Again, this is a Pulse-free automatic action that takes a few seconds to manifest. Then his face and body change slightly to give him a thicker or more slender frame, darker or lighter skin, local facial features, etc. This won't change his race or make him more than 10% taller or shorter, and it won't make him look like a different person. The effect is subtle enough that most people won't even notice it – subconsciously they simply treat him as a local when he's using this ability.

This process is called "masking" and even clothes and equipment can be masked to blend in, a rifle holding the illusion of being a bow in the eyes of the local of a fantasy realm, for instance. Masking costs nothing, and it's one of the most important functions of a Telesma.

Telesma Growth

Telesmae evolve along with their owners – indeed, many believe it is that constant contact with a Hero that allows the Telesma to change and grow and improve in the first place. However it happens, Telesmae can become smarter and more powerful, exhibiting new abilities and fine-tuning old ones.

This growth happens even before the character is aware of the true nature of the gemstone he never seems to lose. Every time a character gains a new rank, starting at Seasoned, his Telesma also gains an advance, which takes the form of an Edge from the following list:

Allure

Your character's Telesma is sexy, convincing or some combination of the two. This benefit is shared telepathically, granting your character +1 Charisma.

Assistant

Your character's Telesma can concentrate on maintaining his magic Powers for him, reducing the concentration penalty by 1 per Telesma rank. It also grants +2 to checks made to keep Powers going when your character suffers damage.

Attribute Synergy

Your character's Telesma is particularly adept in one of the five core Attributes and able to guide and influence the same Attribute in your character, increasing his Wild Die one step when rolling that Attribute. This option can be taken multiple times, applying to a new Attribute each time.

Balm

Your character's Telesma can soothe his Fatigue, reducing the Fatigue track by a single level once per day.

Forced Manifestation

Your character's Telesma can trick, tear, or finagle spirits into the physical world. This causes the targeted spirit to become dual-aligned (see page 11). Doing so costs your character 5 Pulse. This effect lasts for five Rounds, and can be extended another 5 Rounds by paying an extra 5 Pulse.

Karma Bank

Your character may store 1 unspent Karma at the end of a session. This may be used in later sessions. The bank can hold only 1 Karma at any given time.

Protective

Your character's Telesma emits a protective field of Pulse around his physical body shielding him from harm. This grants your character +1 Toughness.

Psychically Aggressive

Your character's Taunt and Intimidation checks can Incapacitate opponents thanks to the assistance of his Telesma in the spirit world.

Pulse Battery

Your character's Telesma acts as a battery containing 1 Pulse per rank of the Telesma. This replenishes every 24 hours. This option may be taken multiple times, each time increasing the Pulse per rank by 1.

Spirit Interaction

Your character can pay 1 Pulse as a free action to become dual-aligned for 1 Round so he affects both the spirit world and physical world simultaneously.

Telesma Radio

Your character's Telesma is capable of sending telepathic messages to other Telesmae in the same group as long as they're in the same realm, without the need for line of sight. Note: If one Telesma gets this Edge, every Telesma in the group should get it!

Touch Link

In the spirit world, the spirit in your character's Telesma can move up to 10 inches from the gemstone. It can now touch things for him, such as to deliver a touch spell effect.

Unbounded Adjustment

Your character's Telesma knows a lot of things, which can help with quick adjustment to new realms. Your character ignores the Common Knowledge penalty when first arriving in a new realm, and the language/masking effects are instant.

Vigorous Spirit

When your character enters the spirit world, his Spirit and Vigor are not reversed. His Telesma prevents the change, keeping things 'right way round' for him.

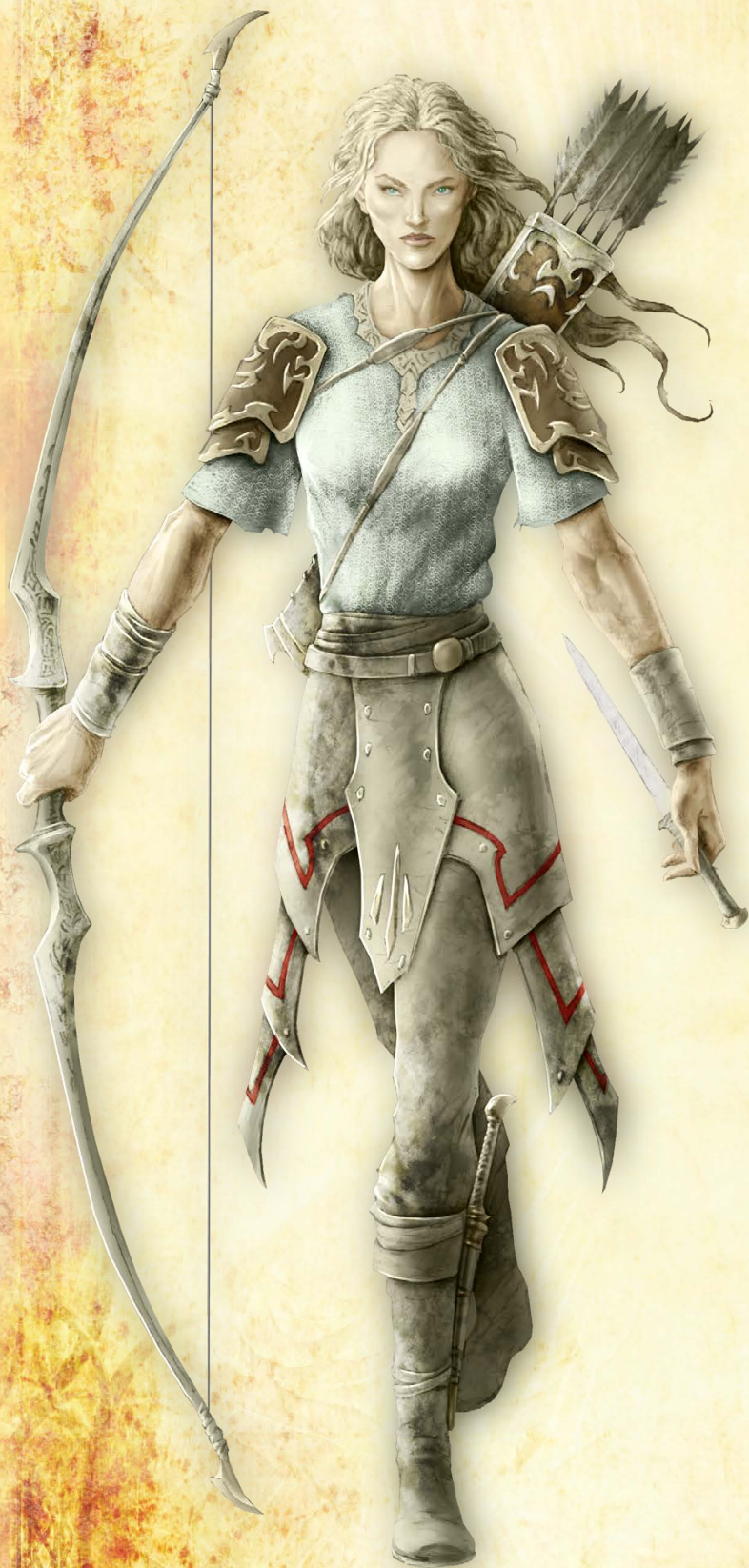
Character Growth

Characters should never be static. They have new experiences constantly, after all – going new places, meeting new people, seeing new things, facing new challenges. And all of that forces characters to grow.

Characters who go on adventures are going to grow more than typical folks because they see and experience far more. Their ideals are tested on a grand scale, with many precious people at stake. This is especially true for those who pass through portals into other worlds. Imagine spending your whole childhood believing your neighborhood was the entire world, and that certain habits and traditions were universal. Then you grow up and get to see the rest of the city, and discover that some of those traditions make no sense anywhere else and actually get in the way of appreciating the wider world. That's exactly how it is for experienced travelers. A superhero from a crime-ridden world might think that fistfights and long declamations are the way to solve every problem, only to go to a world where fights are considered savage and quiet diplomatic conversations are used to sort out any conflicts.

The really important thing when growing your Suzerain character is not to let yourself be limited by anyone else, and this is important so listen up. Some games give characters a 'class' or 'clan' or whatever that squeezes them into archetypes. 'Fighter', 'leader', or 'sneaky guy', for instance. Things that limit what that they can do. Suzerain doesn't work that way. It's nice to know where your characters strengths are, but don't let your initial character concept serve as a straitjacket for what he will become. We are all shaped by our experiences, even if the effects are hidden.

When you advance your character at the end of a session, travel in the direction that feels right to you – and to him. Did your character discover that magic is real and that he has a talent for it? He might settle in some place and become a classic wizard. Maybe he'll just learn a few handy spells to enhance his detective



skills and brawling techniques, making him more effective at both. It's all about who your character is and who he's becoming. The two should fit together, even if there's a sudden drastic lifestyle change (and what could be more dramatic than, say, a fantasy wizard appearing in cyberpunk world?).

Suzerain gives your character the freedom to travel every genre and every setting. Revel in it. Play the sneaky-fighting-leader guy if you want. He won't be as good at any one of those things as a specialist, but he'll be using his skills much more often and will be hugely flexible. Action heroes, legends, and those-who-are-as-gods aren't constrained to being one thing, and neither is your character.

Relic, Yr208

There is no default Suzerain realm where everything works exactly as described in the preceding pages. In order to demonstrate these concepts more concretely, here's a quick look at Relic, our realm of sword-and-sorcery.

Relic has centaur tribes, dragon-men who evolve to be full dragons over their lives, sea elves with an Egyptian-style society, wizards and alchemists rubbing shoulders with the Church and her questing knights, a huge Greco-Roman civilization of intrigue and organized combat, shamans, warlocks, priests of a dozen flavors, elemental humanoids, barbarians, charging monsters the size of mountains, gremlins who have metal pass right through them, dwarves that pass right through stone, and much more. It is a proving ground for heroes, and a great first stop for the career-focused would-be god. The Lich Queen from our *Dungeonlands* books started her life here. In fact, an uncommon number of the most powerful Suzerain gods started their ascent to power here, so it has a well-earned reputation in the upper circles.

That's getting too epic, too fast, though. For now it's enough to say Relic is your realm if you're looking for high adventure and deep intrigue. If you don't have any other characters you want to use for your Suzerain campaign, this is a good place to start one.

The Past And Present

Past and present are interesting terms in Suzerain since characters can come from anywhere and anywhen. There are certain points in the history of each realm that simply resonate as junctions of the time stream. Called nexuses, these times and places tend to be incubators for potential heroes, and Relic has a couple of good ones in the first three Ages of existence. The biggest nexus forms in the 208th year of the Third Age, but it's worth knowing a bit about the rest of history too:

In the Second Age, the Trader Imperium built great walled cities and fortress-markets across the center of the grand continent of Austeria. The excesses of these metropolises have been relegated to folktales, but rare is the historian who doesn't express nostalgia for the misted corridors of the past. Iron-shod caravans connected the land, spreading peace and culture across a network of wide, paved roads, some stretching over a thousand kilometers.

The Traders were the dominant civilization of their age, their ziggurat temples towering over the landscape. Then the Warlocks came, destroying everything in their path with earth and fire, bringing about the War of the Wild. They called the earth to swallow entire towns, and all that now remains are buried ruins and overgrown stretches of the imperial road.

If that sounds interesting, check out our *Caladon Falls* book, which focuses on the first year of the War of the Wild.



Now fast forward 200 years into the Third Age when the days of jumping at shadows and starving from spell-tainted wheat are at an end. Scavengers mine the land for Trader relics and sell them in bustling, if lopsided cities protected by knights who can trace their lineage back to old Caladon. Wizards tear into the fabric of reality, providing luxuries for the burgeoning nobility, earning new riches for their moldering universities. Across the Great Expanse where the Imperium once flourished, nomadic tribes no longer disappear without a trace on account of demonic predators. Life is still harsh, but for the first time in generations, there is a peaceful calm and hopefulness. Where there is hope, there are heroes, and that's why we'll focus on that nexus for a while. The War of the Wild is a pretty big nexus too, though....

Characters In Relic

The following are just a few of the new Edges available in the fantasy realm of Relic, a little taste of the sorts of things you can expect to see in our meaty realm books. If your character grew up in that realm, or spent a chunk of time there, he's eligible for these goodies.

Aurora

Type: Background, Racial

Requirements: Spirit d8+, Strength d8+

Following the War of the Wild, the shattered nations experienced a great number of dark days. Aurora tradition claims that they appeared during these years to drive back the worst excesses of the night. The way their skin and hair shine in the light lends credibility to the tale. However, auroras are as comfortable in darkness and shadows as they are underneath the sun-catchers that adorn the halls of Hela, the sun goddess. Indeed, in shadow the same skin and hair turns to midnight black, making them fine sneaks and assassins. Apart from the skin and hair thing, auroras tend to be tall and wiry people, strong yet lean.

Enhanced Vision: The character can see much better than normal in dark, dim, and extremely bright conditions – he only receives half penalties from them. If light levels change particularly extremely or suddenly, he takes one Round to adjust.

Channel Light: The character can manipulate light using one of two effects, each an action requiring a Spirit check. The first effect is light as per the Power Light, but the range is altered to 'self only' and the character can choose to decrease or increase the intensity of the light. The options are puny (Small Burst Template), dim (Medium Burst Template), and illuminating (Large Burst Template). The second function is to create darkness around the character as per the Power Obscure where the range is 'self only' and the aurora may choose to use a Medium Burst Template instead of the large one. The character sees normally through the obscured area. Light and Obscure are found in the Savage Worlds rules.

Shadow Walking: Shadow walking functions as per the Power Teleport in the Savage Worlds rules with the following exceptions: the character must be able to walk into a natural shadow or area of darkness big enough to cover his whole body, and emerges from another such shadow in his line of sight within Notice x2 inches. This is an action requiring a Spirit check, and costs 1 Pulse (rather than the usual cost of Teleport). The aurora affects only himself, and may not carry passengers.

Aurora: Improved

Type: Racial

Requirements: Heroic, Aurora, Spirit d10+, Strength d10+

The character's Racial Edge is improved in three ways:

The duration of the character's Obscure ability is extended to minutes, as per Light. The range of shadow walking is extended to Notice x3 inches. His enhanced vision works in any conditions, from total darkness to searing sunlight – he ignores all penalties for such conditions.

Aurora: Mastery

Type: Demigod, Racial

Requirements: Demigod, Aurora: Improved, Spirit d12+, Strength d12+

The character's Racial Edge is improved in three ways:

The character adjusts to changes in light

conditions instantly, no matter how extreme and sudden they are. His Channel Light ability no longer requires a check. He can take passengers when shadow walking by paying 2 additional Pulse per passenger (each passenger must hold the hand of at least one other passenger or the aurora himself).

Child Of The Arrow

Type: Background

Requirements: Agility d8+, Shooting d8+

Thirteen great constellations mark the months in Relic, each with its own myths and earthly resonance. The Arrow is swift and purposeful, constantly moving toward the object of its desires. It is the star sign of subtlety, not raw brawn or muscle-bound machismo. Children who are marked by these stars tend to become hunters, decisive leaders, and monomaniacs.

When your character's attack hits with a Raise he may increase the die type of the bonus damage die by spending 2 Pulse per step of improvement. The bonus die cannot exceed d12.

Child Of The Arrow: Improved

Type: Weird

Requirements: Heroic, Child of the Arrow, Shooting d10+

The stars have called to your character, and he has answered. The Arrow has a greater influence on your character's life, bolstering his greatest desires with celestial energy.

When your character's attack hits with a Raise he may increase the die type of the bonus damage die by spending 2 Pulse per two steps of improvement. Each step beyond d12 adds +1 to the d12. The bonus die cannot exceed d12+3.

Child Of The Arrow: Mastery

Type: Weird

Requirements: Demigod, Child of the Arrow, Improved, Shooting d12+

Your character's connection to the Arrow is complete. His purpose is evident, and the silent sky points the way.

When your character's attack hits with a Raise he

may increase the die type of the bonus damage die by spending 2 Pulse per three steps of improvement. Each step beyond d12 adds +1 to the d12. The bonus die cannot exceed d12+6.

Dwarf

Type: Background, Racial

Requirements: Vigor d10+

For many years after the Warlocks were defeated, popular opinion was they took all the dwarves with them. The Warlocks' foul magic had corrupted the earth, turning farmlands to ash and tainting stone with corrosive impurities. Although scattered bands of dwarves fought back, the assault was too pervasive for anything but heroic last stands. True, many dwarves died during the War of the Wild, but a few families survived and as time passed, their numbers slowly rose again.

Dwarves are walking rocks, the elemental race of earth. Their stony nature means they are resilient to some attacks. Blunt weapons deal damage normally, but dwarves get +1 Toughness against slashing and piercing weapons. Being made of solid rock comes with a price, though; they just can't cover ground quite as quickly as other races and suffer -1 Pace.

Manipulate Earth: Your character can manipulate stone and rock as per the Power Elemental Manipulation (Earth) from the Savage Worlds rules.

Transmute: Your character can pay Pulse to take on the spiritual signature of stone. He merges with the earth without it moving aside in any way. They simply become one. He can use his senses as if the earth around him was air for the duration, and breathe the earth like air (though he better get out before he stops paying the upkeep or it'll be the end of him). This allows him to move through stone and earth as per the Power Burrow from the Savage Worlds rules with the following modifications: His travel speed is his base Pace (he may run), and the effect costs 3 Pulse and lasts 1 Round, then 1 Pulse each Round to maintain.

Dwarf: Improved

Type: Racial

Requirements: Heroic, Dwarf, Vigor d12+

The character's Racial Edge is improved in three ways:

The cost to transmute is lowered to 2 Pulse. The amount of earth your character can manipulate with Manipulate Earth is doubled. His Toughness bonus against slashing and piercing weapons rises to +2.

Dwarf: Mastery

Type: Demigod, Racial

Requirements: Demigod, Dwarf: Improved, Professional (affected Trait: Vigor)

The character's Racial Edge is improved in three ways:

The cost to transmute is lowered to 1 Pulse, then 1 Pulse every two Rounds to maintain. The amount of earth your character can manipulate with Manipulate Earth is quadrupled (rather than doubled). His Toughness bonus against slashing and piercing weapons rises to +4.



Fury

Type: Background, Racial

Requirements: Vigor d6+, Strength d6+

Furies are a shifter race from Relic, a race of half-men half-wolves who can shift into human form for a while. Tall and feral humans paired with a beast's spirit, they are strong, fast, quick to anger, and possess impressive natural weaponry. In human form they tend to be taller, darker, and hairier than the average person. They also tend to be leaner; a fat fury is a rarity and most are sleekly muscled. Their hybrid animal form is a tall man-wolf combination much like the classic 'werewolf' with grey, black or white fur though some reddish varieties are known among the barbarian clans of the mighty Lehr Peaks.

Transformation: This is an automatic action costing 3 Pulse and lasts 1 hour which can be maintained by paying 2 Pulse to extend the duration for an additional hour. Transformation inflicts a level of Fatigue – as does transformation back. Furies in wolf-man form suffer a -1 Charisma penalty with non-furies because... well they're a bit scary to deal with. A fury in his human form suffers no charisma penalty.

Regenerate: Furies can regenerate wounds while in their wolf-man form. Five minutes after having sustained an injury, a fury can make a natural healing check. In the case of multiple wounds inflicted close

together, such as during combat, make a single check five minutes after the fracas. Before you ask, this effect cannot bring a fury back from the dead.

Claws: Furies in wolf-man form also have claws. These count as a weapon and deal Str+d4 Damage. Unfortunately they tend to get in the way of fine manipulation, and any action requiring manual dexterity (including wielding other weapons) is at -2.

Fury: Improved

Type: Racial

Requirements: Heroic, Fury, Vigor d8+, Strength d8+

The character's Racial Edge is improved in three ways:

The initial cost to transform is lowered to 2 Pulse and only 1 Pulse per hour thereafter. While the initial transformation still inflicts a point of Fatigue, the transformation back no longer does.

When making a natural healing check for his regeneration effect he ignores Wound penalties.

His claws gain Armor Penetration 1 and he is more used to using his clawed hands – the penalty for manual dexterity actions is reduced to -1.

Fury: Mastery

Type: Demigod, Racial

Requirements: Demigod, Fury: Improved, Vigor d10+, Str d10+

The character's Racial Edge is improved in three ways:

The initial cost to transform is lowered to 1 Pulse and only 1 Pulse per hour thereafter. Neither the initial transformation nor the transformation back inflict Fatigue.

As an action the character may pay 5 Pulse to trigger and accelerate his regeneration, making a natural healing check immediately (instead of five minutes later).

The Armor Penetration of his claws improves to 2 and he is completely used to using his clawed hands – the penalty for manual dexterity actions is removed altogether.



Patron God: Zanua

Type: Weird

Requirements: Heroic

This is an example of how a specific patron god might cross the boundary from the standard faceless archetypes like Patron God: Fertility or Patron God: War. There are thousands of patron gods out there. As long as you and your GM agree on what special abilities the Patron God Edge might give, feel free to make up your own. We'll certainly have more for you in individual realm books as we release them.

As the goddess of deep thinking, strategic cunning, and righteous honesty in the Valon empire, Zanua is rarely without her symbol – a round hoplite shield with a chess board pattern on it (complete with chess pieces set up for the start of a game). She is the helper of heroes and, as such, a perfect patron for a character. In exchange for devotion, your character is granted a choice from the following supernatural abilities. He picks one at Heroic rank and a second when he reaches Demigod (or two immediately if he takes this Edge once he's already at Demigod rank).

Aura Of Truth: By spending 1 Pulse as an automatic action, people get -2 to checks to spot the character lying, whether by natural or supernatural means. This effect lasts 5 minutes.

Resilient In Battle: By spending 2 Pulse as an automatic action, the character gives allies under a Large Burst Template centered on him a +1 bonus to Parry and Toughness, lasting for 2 Rounds and extendable by paying another 1 Pulse per Round.

Divine Understanding: By spending 2 Pulse as an automatic action, the character gains the equivalent of Knowledge (some broad type) d6. For instance, this may be Knowledge (World Geography), Knowledge (Arts And Crafts), or Knowledge (Science) rather than Knowledge of a particular town, of a particular craft, or of a particular science. This effect lasts 5 minutes.

Talk With Animals

Type: Weird

Requirements: Novice, Smarts d6+

A small proportion of animals in the world of Relic are capable of structured communication, being more intelligent than their brethren. Characters with this Edge are able to talk with the various intelligent animals they might meet along the way.

New Wizardry

Every realm has its way of tapping into Pulse to do 'magic'. In some realms it even changes from country to country. In Relic, for example, the Caladon Kingdom is the hub of all wizardry, centered around its universities and cities, where lore can be gathered and the gift explored to its full potential. Caladon is also a place of guilds; there seems to be a guild for everything, including guilds of wizards. We'll look at the anatomists, those spell-using doctors who heal the rich and occasionally become top class villains when their medical experimenting goes too far!

We've also got a couple of new general wizard spells developed at the Mages Guild at Garris, available to any wizard who lives in Caladon and registers with the guild (and woe betide any wizard who doesn't!).

Anatomist

Type: Pulse Path (Specialist)

Requirements: Gifted, Healing d6+

Body specialists extraordinaire, what they can't do to organic matter probably isn't worth doing. A talented anatomist can heal the most grievous injuries and ailments. They can also animate the dead and curse the living. Anatomists are the best of friends and the worst of enemies, neatly wrapped up in one bundle. This is a specialized school of wizardry practiced in the Caladon Kingdom, and is an example of how special schools of magic work, whether they're wizardry or shamanism, fantasy or science fiction. On taking this Edge your character gains:

Anatomist (Sma) d4

He also gets two spells from the following list: Body Boost, Digits Experts, Greater Healing, Healing,



Infestus Minor, Max Energis, Restoration, Sensory Limitation, Zombie.

Body Boost

Type: Spell

Requirements: Seasoned, Anatomist

Pulse: 2

Range: Smarts

Duration: 3 (1/Round)

With their detailed knowledge and experience in the realm of body manipulation, anatomists have found they can milk greater effect from the common Boost/Lower Trait spell by focusing its effect. The target of the spell increases the die type of one physical Attribute (Agility, Strength or Vigor) and one physical Skill (any Skill linked to a physical Attribute) by one step, or two with a Raise. Once the caster is Heroic rank or above the spell may boost a second physical Skill as well, but not the same one twice, by paying 3 Pulse during the initial casting instead of 2.

Digits Experts

Type: Spell

Requirements: Novice, Anatomist

Pulse: 2

Range: Self

Duration: 10 minutes (1/10 minutes)

This novel incantation turns the caster's fingers into implements suitable for surgery. The amount of control this gives the user is exceptional and grants a bonus to Healing rolls based on the character's rank. The bonus starts at +1 for a Novice character and rises one point at each rank, from +2 at Seasoned to +6 at Demigod. Surgical implements can hurt as well as heal – if used as a weapon in melee they deal Str+d4 Damage, but the caster is still considered unarmed.



Infestus Minor

Type: Spell

Requirements: Novice, Anatomist

Pulse: 2

Range: 12/24/48

Duration: Instant

Anatomists generally don't like to talk about it, but their treatments can also curse their adversaries with ailments. This particular curse infects the target with an infestation of hungry slimy grubs. Any Fatigue levels inflicted by this Power will not heal naturally. Instead, a Healing check (as if curing Wounds) is required. Magical healing will also do the trick.

The character makes an opposed Anatomist check against the target's Vigor. Success starts the infestation and the target is Shaken. Each Raise causes a level of Fatigue which can lead to incapacitation and even death. The anatomist may get a bonus on the roll based on his rank. There is no bonus for less than heroic rank anatomists. The bonus starts at +2 for a Heroic character and rises to +4 at Demigod.

Manifest Object

Type: Spell

Requirements: Novice, Gifted

Pulse: Special

Range: Self

Duration: Special

For some wizards, useful tools are only a thought away. This spell allows the character to transform his Pulse into physical form. This may be a sword for a legionary or a small set of lock picks for a thief. The object lasts until the end of the scene/fight and costs 1 Pulse per 2 points of 'bonus' the object grants, or 1 Pulse per 3 points of bonus on a Raise.

What's a 'bonus'? Since picking a lock without picks (or with inappropriate tools) would get a -2, using this spell to create the picks would require 2 points of bonus. Each point of Armor the created item has counts as 2 points of bonus. A weapon that deals d4 Damage also counts as 2 points of bonus, and each increase of die type would be an additional

2 points. Additions such as a +1 to Parry or Reach and so forth count as 1 point of bonus. The item can be dual-aligned, thus influencing the physical world and the spirit world, at the cost of 2 points of bonus. Mechanically or chemically complex items such as war machines and explosives are beyond the scope of this spell.

Max Energis

Type: Spell

Requirements: Novice, Anatomist

Pulse: Special

Range: Smarts

Duration: Instant

The caster may transfer Pulse to one willing target. The cost to initiate the transfer is 3 Pulse, which drops to 2 Pulse when the caster reaches Heroic rank and 1 Pulse at Demigod. Once initiated, the caster can transfer any amount of Pulse from his own pool into the targets Pulse pool so long as doing so would not cause the target to exceed his maximum Pulse or the anatomist to drop below 0 – you can't transfer what you haven't got. A noteworthy side effect of this process is an increasing feeling of euphoria. For every 5 Pulse transferred the caster can remove a level of Fatigue. Heroic anatomists get this benefit for every 4 Pulse transferred and Demigod anatomists for every 3 Pulse.

Restoration

Type: Spell

Requirements: Novice, Anatomist

Pulse: 2

Range: Touch

Duration: Instant

A daily infusion of healing energies and general purgatives is what anatomists recommend for their patients (and their bank balance). There isn't much an anatomist can't heal in a person, and this treatment is the final tool in their considerable toolkit. The anatomist takes a penalty on his anatomist check equal to the Fatigue penalties the target is suffering, but gets a bonus on the roll based on his rank. The bonus starts at +1 for a Novice character and rises

one point at each rank, from +2 at Seasoned to +6 at Demigod. On a success, and for each Raise, the target is healed one Fatigue level.

Sensory Limitation

Type: Spell

Requirements: Novice, Anatomist

Pulse: 4/10

Range: 6/12/24

Duration: Instant

The Anatomists Guild charges a significant fee for their services and while few are foolish enough to even think about trying to con a wizard or attempt to skip out on payment, this curse is an excellent motivator against such behavior. The anatomist makes an opposed anatomist vs. Smarts check, and may receive a bonus on his check depending on his rank. The bonus starts at +2 for a Heroic character and rises to +4 for a Demigod. On a success he inflicts the Hindrance Hard Of Hearing (major) for 4 Pulse or Blind for 10 Pulse (chosen when the curse is cast). The effect is permanent, though it can be removed by another use of this curse to reverse the effect, or through an application of the power Greater Healing.

Shatter

Type: Spell

Requirements: Seasoned, Gifted

Pulse: 3

Range: Touch

Duration: Special

This spell is usually cast on a weapon or round of ammunition but may be cast on a person if an unarmed attack is the 'weapon'. The next time the enhanced object is used to attack, it counts as a Heavy Weapon. More importantly, if the attack was an attempt to break an object your damage dice can Ace and the Toughness of the object is halved – quartered if there was a Raise when casting the spell! The enhancement is good for only one attack but lasts until used or 5 minutes have passed, whichever occurs first.

UPGRADE THIS CONTINUUM GUIDE TO
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Name : _____ Gender : _____

Race : _____ Age : _____ Player : _____

Agility : Strength : Parry :

Smarts : Vigor : Toughness :

Spirit : Pace : Charisma :



Boating
(Agi)

Climbing
(Str)

Driving
(Agi)

Fighting
(Agi)

Gambling
(Agi)

Healing
(Sma)

Intimidation
(Spi)

Investigation
(Sma)

Knowledge
(Sma)

Lockpicking
(Agi)

Notice
(Sma)

Persuasion
(Spi)

Piloting
(Agi)

Repair
(Sma)

Riding
(Agi)

Shooting
(Agi)

Stealth
(Agi)

Streetwise
(Sma)

Survival
(Sma)

Swimming
(Agi)

Taunt
(Sma)

Throwing
(Agi)

Tracking
(Sma)

Wounds inc! Fatigue

-1 to trait checks for each wound & fatigue level, -1 pace per wound

Pulse

X.P.

Hindrances

Armor

Bonus

Notes

Head

Torso

Arms

Legs

Weapons

Range

Damage

Notes

Possessions

Encumbrance Penalty Total Weight :

Power

Cost

Range

Duration

Effect

Telesma

S 20

V 40

H 60

L 80

D 120

character-description-/illustration

Edges

5

10

15

S 20

25

30

35

V 40

45

50

55

H 60

65

70

75

L 80

90

100

110

D 120

130

140

150

160

170

180

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