PROMETHEAN

THE CREATED
SECOND EDITION



A STORYTELLING GAME OF STOLEN LIVES


We are what we pretend,
so we must be careful
about what
we pretend
to be.
-Kurt Vonnegut, *Mother Night*

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Special Thanks

To **Bill Bridges**, who brought this monster to life.

To **Jeffrey Willis**, **Matt Karafa**, **Andrea Steyer**, **John Newman**, and **Jeffrey Kreider**, for giving me the **Promethean** chronicle that firmly cemented my love for this game.

To **Michelle Lyons-McFarland**, **Sarah Dyer**, **Glen Gilmore**, **John Mathys**, **Matt Homentotsky**, and **Matt Karafa** (again) for giving me a **Promethean** chronicle that showed me different ways to experience it.

To **Teagan** and **Cael**, my own personal New Dawn.

Be kind. Pay attention. Love.

—Matthew McFarland





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THE GREAT WORK: PROLOGUE

Wisher greeted the morning, and all the myriad spirits with it.

The day started cloudy, and the hosts of the sun grumbled at the boasting clouds. There hadn't been a sunny day since Wisher and her throng returned to the city, and the clouds couldn't have been happier. It was time to disappoint them.

"You will not see me anymore," Wisher said.

The clouds glanced at her, and they continued boasting. Wisher wasn't surprised. When a spirit was well fed and in its prime, nothing she could say would disturb it. Tact meant nothing to it.

"I will leave this city," she said. "I will never come back."

The boasts stopped, and Wisher felt them stare. Thunder clapped and underneath the sound, Wisher heard their laughter.

Another round of thunder came and underneath it the clouds said, "We have heard this before, and we have not forgotten how you begged us to save you from your own failures. You may leave this city, but you will return to us."

They would never let her forget when she screamed to the sky for help, when Clay's Girl clung to life in her arms, and Imam could only hold back the beasts for so long. The clouds obliged and threw down their lightning, but it was never out of compassion or respect. In her Torment, Wisher had helped them take a young boy. The lightning was merely a debt repaid.

That was before the throng met Roark. That was before she found her salvation.

"If that's what you believe, I won't convince you otherwise," she said, "I don't expect you to miss me."

A flash of lightning illuminated her face. The clouds saw her determination. The last time she had spoken to them like this, she had to mask her fear under the neutral expression she kept for all spirits. Now, she could emote all she liked in their presence.

Another rumble came from the sky. "You are serious? You do not jest?"

Wisher shook her head. The clouds huddled together. They grew darker, and the lightning quickened. Seeing that gave her a sharp jolt of glee in her chest.

"How can you be so sure?" they asked.

Wisher didn't answer. How could she even begin to explain how she would earn her place in this world to something that never needed to?

She could speak to it all she wanted about her journey to this moment, about the Refinements and the Transmutations. She could describe the fire inside that pushed her forward, growing stronger with every moment, waiting to change into something more beautiful. The clouds would never understand a single word of it.

Wisher turned from them and walked back to the apartment. She had no more time to waste, and Imam was waiting for her to return.

Thunder rolled, and then rain fell.

ALICE'S RAMBLE

All he wanted was the perfect wife, circa 50s picket fences in blurry black and white. He wanted a woman seen and not heard, and I learned quick what happened if spoke up or contradicted him. He wanted pies cooling on the windowsill, then told me the sight of me made him too sick to eat. Some time after I lost count of all the things he did to me, he got tired of me and left. I was so twisted up inside, I actually cried, and I think that might have been the first thing I ever felt for myself.

Soft. Small. Weak. That was what HE wanted. Someone pliable. Someone who could never be stronger than him. Someone too terrified to leave him. Even when he left me, it wasn't an escape, because he was still with me, inside. I would hear his voice, telling me everything wrong with me in long lists that looped back on themselves endlessly, self-hatred replacing the tension and anguish I knew so well. I hated myself so much, I decided to become someone else.

I took a job cleaning a gym. Late night, no one else around – no one to give me grief for using the equipment myself. Just like the people who came in at dawn, at the end of my shift, I lifted, strained, ran for miles just to run. It hurt, a lingering ache that didn't leave me for months. I punched holes in that perfect skin, went to the shop and asked for one of everything. I chose images I liked and had them painted under my skin with a buzzing, biting needle. It all hurt, and the hurt felt so good, because every stab of pain, every ache, every burn, meant that, inch by inch, I was reclaiming this body. MINE, not HIS.

Now, I am not what he made, and no one looks at me the way he used to. Still small – can't change that – but so strong I couldn't hide it if I wanted to. Inked, pierced, hair a new color every week and short enough that no one will EVER take a fistful of it again. I am no longer a thing to be looked at for pleasure, and I am not afraid of anyone. I made this change, gave myself the pain that made this possible, and I thank myself every day that I have the will to do it again and again. That voice of his is quieter, now. I like think it knows what I'll do if I ever see him again.

If you're reading this, you'll know how I felt those first nights, those first months. Alone, imperfect, WRONG, and at fault for it all even though you never asked to be made. You feel like this is all you get, all you deserve. But this is NOT your fault, you are NOT wrong, you are NOT alone, and if you are imperfect, this too can be changed. I can't offer you salvation. I can't make this easy for you. It can't BE easy. All I can do is open a door. You're the one who has to walk through it, and down that long road on the other side.

Nothing worth having comes without cost.

You will hurt. You will hurt so, so much. You will collapse from sheer exhaustion, and you will wake with pain in places new to you, and you will cry and ache, and you will keep pushing yourself again and again regardless until your body – YOUR body – becomes what you will it to be. You will look into the mirror and see yourself for the first time, and not what was made for someone else. I've heard other strength trainers say things like, pain is weakness leaving the body. For us, the pain we give ourselves on this path is nothing less than freedom.



INTRODUCTION

Lightning flashes overhead. The storm isn't natural, the power the lightning carries isn't simple electricity. It's the Divine Fire, the power of life and obsession. It lances down to Earth, strikes an iron rod, and flows into dead flesh made animate. The body rises and looks skyward, and tears fill its eyes as it beholds the wonder of its own birth.

Its creator looks on, sharing that wonder. She loves her creation. It is everything that she has ever wanted, the culmination of years of magical research, work, and sacrifice. Soon, she will come to hate her creation with equal passion. It isn't her fault. The Fire that drives him simply burns too hot. He will leave her, driven out or fleeing a mob wielding weapons. He might find others like him. He is on a journey that only ends one of two ways — he dies, and his body becomes inert matter once more, or he works an alchemical miracle and becomes human.

Promethean: The Created is a game about people and things that want to be people. It's a game about the value of humanity and what a fragile and delicate thing it is.

Promethean is a game about obsession, passion, love, and loss. It's a game about what happens when these things are so consuming, when they burn so bright, that they literally take on a life of their own.

Promethean is a game about possibility, exploration, and strange science. It's a game about things that look like angels but aren't, things that seem like they should be monsters but aren't, and things that look like tortured, demented freaks and unquestionably are.

> Invention, it must be humbly admitted, does not consist in creating out of void, but out of chaos.
>
> –Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley

Themes

Promethean is built on the idea that being human is a desirable state, and that humanity, for all its flaws, at least has the potential to be good and noble. It tells the story of creatures with a kind of artificial life, who desperately want and aspire to be human, even as humanity rejects them. **Promethean** is a crucible, in which the characters are tested and — hopefully — come through the process refined and golden.

Humanism

Humanism is probably the most important single theme of **Promethean**. **Promethean** assumes that being human is a desirable condition and that the protagonists (i.e., the Created) have an intrinsic desire and drive to become human.

To unpack humanism in the context of **Promethean**, though, the game often presents people being people. Sometimes people are horrible. They have all kinds of reasons for that, but the bottom line is: People hurt each other. They kill, steal, rape, despoil, and they do it all, often, with this attitude of casual detachment and myopia that is just sickening. Deliberate, passionate, hatred is almost better than systemic unthinking cruelty, because at least if someone hates you they're paying some kind of attention. Prometheans see all of that, and they know that it *is* humanity.

On the flip side, though, human beings are capable of simply amazing feats of kindness, bravery, selflessness, and empathy. Those moments can be small and simple or they can be huge and world-changing (Jonas Salk, when asked who owned the patent on his polio vaccine, responded, "There is no patent. Could you patent the sun?").

Takeaway lesson: Being human is a good thing, despite humanity's flaws.

Transformation

The Pilgrimage, the quest for the New Dawn, is all about transmutation. The Promethean condition is lead, and the goal is nothing less than alchemy of the soul, the body, the entire *nature* — changing base lead into the gold of true humanity. The Promethean condition is mutable, and the Created have *so many ways* to lose it all. The Refinements are each philosophical methods of shaping that base metal, pushing it closer to the Great Work. Each

milestone shapes the Promethean's form just a little more, and each missed milestone is a lesson that the Promethean needs to learn in some other way.

Takeaway lesson: The Promethean condition is unstable, and Prometheans are in a constant state of flux.

Torment

Due in part to their unstable nature and in part to the fact that the Divine Fire burns too bright for the mortal world (more on that in a moment), Prometheans are never comfortable. They are unhappy in their own skin. They feel a pronounced sense of dysmorphia, as though they are never quite right...but they know they *could* be.

Imagine, if you will, living constantly with the feeling that you're forgetting something really important. Or that your body isn't really yours, and you can't quite figure out how it works. Or that you are in constant pain — the level fluctuates, but it never really goes away.

A Promethean endures something analogous to this. Torment is an every-present thing. It rises, it suffocates, and it subsides, and the Promethean has then to assess how much progress on her Pilgrimage she's *lost* because it. Controlling Torment is important.

Torment can rise in response to threat, hunger, failure, stress, and generally anything that makes a Promethean angry or afraid. It lowers in response to releasing it in some cathartic way, following the Pilgrimage (achieving milestones), and interacting with humanity in a non-stressful way.

Takeaway lesson: Prometheans are in a constant state of pain and discomfort that ebbs and flows based on what a Promethean experiences.

The Divine Fire

The Divine Fire is what animates and drives Prometheans. It allows them to do the magic that they do, to survive wounds that would kill other people many times over, and ultimately, to engineer their Great Work and become human. It also allows a demiurge to muster up the obsession and will necessary to make a Promethean.

The Divine Fire is too intense for the mortal world. It warps the world, changing it in unpredictable ways. Prometheans carry around that Divine Fire, and it scorches the Earth and burns so brightly that it fascinates and angers people. None of these effects are a Promethean's fault; they're nothing a Promethean can control, except in immediate, specific ways.

Takeaway lesson: The Divine Fire is dangerous to the mortal world and always warps or changes it in some way.

Isolation

At any given time, there might be one hundred Created walking the Earth. That means that most Prometheans are probably solitary folks. When a Promethean finds a throng, she sticks with it, even if the throng includes Prometheans that she'd normally not want to hang out with.

In a **Promethean** chronicle, the characters that the players portray are a significant percentage of the population of Prometheans *in the world*. The throng is crucial because without it, a Promethean might go decades without seeing another of its kind. Prometheans do not have a society or a culture. They have Azothic memory, a kind of collective unconscious that gives them information and context, but pushes them ever onward toward the New Dawn.

Takeaway lesson: The throng is the only place a Promethean can feel anything like accepted or at home.

Glimpses of the Grotesque

Promethean is a game of body horror. Centimani, Pandorans, the effects of Flux on the world and its people, and, of course, the characters being *people made of other people* all lend themselves to this kind of horror. While that makes for nice window-dressing, it's not the important theme of the game. Hence, *glimpses* of the grotesque.

Show the body horror and don't shy from it, but use it sparingly. These glimpses are important to experience a little of the discomfort necessary to make this game work. It's not about making the *players* uncomfortable, just about highlighting the strangeness and horror of the Chronicles of Darkness for characters that have a very different perspective than people do. This horror is what they know, what they were born to — but they aim higher.

Takeaway lesson: Show the gore, but don't linger.

How to Use This Book

Promethean: The Created is a Storytelling game of grotesque alchemy. It's a complete game, with all of the rules that you'll need to take a group of Promethean characters from creation to the New Dawn. You can find expanded rules in the **Chronicles of Darkness Rulebook**.

This book also includes the *Firestorm Chronicle*. Firestorms, the context of **Promethean**, are magical tempests that scour away the damage that the Created do to the world. Prometheans must travel, either literally or metaphorically. Their Pilgrimages requires constant change, and the Firestorm can act as both a way to spur a sedentary Promethean on and a way to wash away past mistakes.

Prometheans are exceptions to many rules. They are splinters. They are things that don't quite fit, grotesque reminders of the struggle for humanity and the arcane weirdness of the Chronicles of Darkness. When reading this book, any time you see a declarative statement about the Created, please mentally append "usually" to the statement. Prometheans cannot sire or bear children... usually. Prometheans cause Disquiet in human beings...usually. Prometheans become human at the end of the Pilgrimage...usually. **Promethean** relies on strange, unique circumstances and once-in-a-billion occurrences, though, so if something happens in your chronicles that breaks the rules, that's entirely in keeping with the game's intent.

Chapters

Chapter One: Pieces describes the Lineages (alchemical geneses) of the Created. It also details the 10 Refinements

Truths and Lies

Prometheans are undead.

False. They are living beings made from dead matter. A Promethean might have residual memory from the flesh she inhabits, but it is just that — residual. She must make her own life if she is to reach the New Dawn.

Prometheans are violent.

Not necessarily. Prometheans are capable of violence, and Torment can spur them to commit terrible acts of atrocity, but they are not naturally vicious or predatory.

Promethean are made of dead flesh.

Usually true, though it is possible for Prometheans made of non-living or even inorganic matter to arise.

People hate and fear Prometheans.

Sadly true. Human beings instinctively feel suspicious or fascinated with the Created; left unchecked, this effect invariably turns people violent.

Prometheans can become human.

True.

— alchemical practical philosophies — that they follow in order to complete the Pilgrimage.

Chapter Two: Steps presents an explanation of the life cycle of a Promethean, from creation to the New Dawn. It explains what being a Promethean is like, from the trials of Torment to the blissful transcendence of Elpis. It also introduces some of the antagonists that **Promethean** chronicles features.

Chapter Three: Alchemy explains how to create a **Promethean** character and details all of the game systems unique to the Created — their Bestowments, their Transmutations, how they make new Prometheans, and how they can reach the New Dawn.

Chapter Four: Rules lays out the Storytelling system, the basic game engine that powers the Chronicles of Darkness. How the dice work, Skills, combat, equipment, and the various ephemeral beings that Prometheans can meet are all detailed here.

Chapter Five: Firestorm illuminates the creatures that lurk in the dark corners. The freakish Centimani, the abortive nightmares called Pandorans, and the opportunistic parasites who pilfer Promethean fluids to practice their own alchemy all receive their due. This chapter also describes Firestorms and their strange heralds, the *qashmallim*.

Chapter Six: Journeys takes the reader on a tour around the world, featuring stops on the Pilgrimage from Goa, India to Columbus, Ohio. Use these sections as inspiration or as the basis for your own **Promethean** chronicle.

Chapter Seven: Storytelling teaches the reader how to run a **Promethean** chronicle, how to help the players build a throng that will stick together through the darkest parts of the Pilgrimage, and how to design milestones.

Finally, the **Appendix** collects all of the Conditions and Tilts in the game into one, easy-to-use list.

An Introduction to Storytelling Games

You might have played other Storytelling or roleplaying games before, or you might be entirely new to this glorious pastime. In either case, here's what we have in mind when we say "Storytelling game."

In **Promethean**, you and your friends tell stories of a core cast of characters attempting to find humanity. Roleplaying games are like ongoing comic books or TV dramas. Each gaming session, which usually last between two and six hours, is like a weekly episode or single issue, building into distinct storylines as you play. Characters change Refinements, achieve milestones, and, eventually, achieve the New Dawn — or at least attempt it.

The ideal group size for **Promethean** is between two to five players, taking on one main character each. You'll make decisions for your character — what Refinement she's following, what Roles she attempts to complete, how she responds to Torment, why she's fascinated by humanity.

One player, the *Storyteller*, is responsible for portraying characters that don't belong to specific players and presenting fictional situations that challenge the other players' characters. Think of these as the supporting cast— both ongoing characters who help or oppose the core cast, and one-off antagonists who turn up to cause unique kinds of trouble.

As for challenging the player characters, it's the job of the Storyteller to come up with scenes where the players have to make decisions fraught with conflict and danger. The Storyteller narrates a situation, then the other players say how their characters respond. The most important question a Storyteller can ask is "What do you do now?"

When a character acts, the outcome of the action is determined by rolling a handful of dice. The basics are simple.

You add a few numbers on your character sheet (a mini-dossier) and roll that many dice. You'll find out whether your action works or fails, getting your character into more trouble.

While players other than the Storyteller will generally be advocates for their characters' success, planning ways in which they can succeed, a lot of drama and fun comes from when things don't go well for the protagonists. Again, think of a television series. The most interesting episodes are often the ones where everything goes wrong for the characters until they find a way to turn it around. That said, the Storyteller should make sure characters have a chance to bounce back rather than constantly dumping suffering on them.

The Storyteller is responsible for...

...bringing the Chronicles of Darkness to life through description.
...deciding where scenes start and what's going on.
...portraying characters who don't belong to other players.
...involving each player and her character in the ongoing story.

...putting players' characters in tough spots, encouraging interesting decisions.

...facilitating the actions players' characters take, while making sure there are always complications.

...making sure that poor dice rolls affect but don't stop the story.

The players are responsible for...

...creating their own individual characters as members of the cast.

...deciding what actions their characters take.

...making decisions that create drama and help keep the story moving.

...highlighting their characters' strengths and weaknesses.

...confronting the problems the Storyteller introduces.

...developing their characters' personalities and abilities over time, telling personal stories within the overall story of the game.

Everyone is responsible for...

...giving other players chances to highlight their characters' abilities and personal stories, whether that's by showing them at their strongest or weakest.

...making suggestions about the story and action, while keeping in mind the authority of players over their characters and the responsibility of the Storyteller to occasionally make trouble.

Inspirational Media

Here are some books, movies, and other media to help convey the tone and feel of **Promethean**.

Literature

Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein; or The Modern Prometheus*. If you only know Frankenstein's Monster from cinematic retellings of this classic story, give it a read. The Monster is well-spoken and erudite, and unabashedly the inspiration for much of this game.

Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Available in many English editions, this is a classic grab bag of mythical stories, with the theme of transformation. Look out for, among other things, the tale of Galatea. It is brimming with ideas and energy, even 2,000 years after its composition.

Robert A. Heinlein's *Stranger in a Strange Land*, about a man who is human and yet knows nothing about humans.

Isaac Asimov's *I, Robot* deals with questions of created entities and their concepts of individuality. Asimov's "The Bicentennial Man" looks at a creature who is more moral and altruistic than the people who created him.

"The Outsider," by H.P. Lovecraft, tells the story of a being that has never had contact with other people; when he finally attempts it, learns that he is every bit the ghoulish creature they see him to be. A good (and brief, especially for Lovecraft) examination of Torment.

Other sources: *Pinocchio*, "Herbert West: Re-Animator," *I, Frankenstein*, *The Golem*.

Film

Frankenstein (1931, dir. James Whale). Not the first cinematic adaptation of Shelley's novel, but unquestionably the most famous. The depiction of the monster is a little too simple for **Promethean**'s purposes, for the most part, but his befriending of Maria, the little girl — and their friendship's tragic outcome — is very much in the theme of the game.

May (2002, dir. Lucky McKee). A rather gory, disturbing horror film about a shy, disturbed young woman (the titular May) who, unable to maintain relationships with people, decides to make a friend out of the "perfect parts" of the people around her. A perfect examination of the loneliness and obsession that creates a demiurge, although you could also make a case that May *is* a Promethean and that the reactions she inspires in others are indicative of Disquiet.

Dirty Pretty Things (2002, dir. Stephen Frears). A neo-noir film set in London, involving refugees who are abused, beaten down, and forced into criminal activity by their need to stay away from official notice. While the film contains no supernatural elements, it's thematically and tonally perfect for **Promethean**, right down to the "glimpses of the grotesque" when Chiwetel Ejiofor pulls a human heart out of a stopped toilet.

Terminator 2: Judgment Day (1991, dir. James Cameron). Arguably the best in the series (the first was a classic, but it doesn't touch on **Promethean**'s themes as clearly), this action film includes a robot who learns — without meaning to — that human life is precious. Think of Schwarzeneggar's character as an Unfleshed Promethean following the Refinement of Bronze.

Other Sources: *Weird Science*, *Memento*, *District 9*, *Blade Runner*.

Television

Carnivale. Sadly cancelled after two seasons, *Carnivale* told the story of a traveling carnival replete with weirdness and magic. The overall feel of the show is bleak and strange, and it fits **Promethean** perfectly.

Fullmetal Alchemist. An anime (based on a manga of the same name) about two brothers who attempt to bring their dead mother back to life using alchemy and wind up paying a terrible price.

Other sources: *Penny Dreadful*, *Dracula*, *Sleepy Hollow*, *The Incredible Hulk*.

Glossary

alchemical pact: A mystical bond among a throng of *Prometheans*, involving burning a symbol into the flesh of all involved. Branded characters can give each other *Pyros* and can help mitigate each other's *Wasteland*.

Athanor: An alchemical "furnace" used to provide constant heat for an alchemical equation. When a *Promethean* completes all three *Roles* within a *Refinement*, she has the option of creating an Athanor.

Azoth: The internal alchemical "fire" that allows a *Promethean* to complete her *Great Work*.

Azothic radiance: The "aura" that a *Promethean's Azoth* projects, immediately visible by other Prometheans and, unfortunately, *Pandorans*. The stronger a Promethean's Azoth, the farther out the radiance reaches.

Azothic memory: *Azoth* is encoded with a vague sense of how being a *Promethean* "works." A Promethean rises up with very little memory, but as she interacts with the world, things start to make sense and she understands how to pursue her *Pilgrimage*. She can

zero in on these thoughts through meditation; if she wants to delve deep enough, she can trigger an *Elpis vision*.

Bestowment: A supernatural ability or augmentation that a *Promethean* is "born" with. Bestowments do not change with *Refinement* and are functions of *Lineage* and *humour*.

Centimanus (pl. Centimani): A *Promethean* that follows the *Refinement* of Flux. This Refinement does not aid in completing the *Pilgrimage* and has no *Roles*, but it does aid in survival as it allows control of *Pandorans*.

disfigurements: The results of the ritual used to create the *Promethean*. As the name implies, it makes the Promethean disfigured. *Azoth* masks disfigurements, but spending *Pyros* makes them flare.

Disquiet: The effect of the *Azoth* on the human mind and instinct. Without a *Wasteland*, Disquiet makes people react badly to *Prometheans* — they might shun them, stalk them, distrust them, etc. In a Wasteland, Disquiet quickly progresses to outright paranoia and murderous intent and becomes contagious.

Divine Fire: The animating force of *Prometheans*, the energy that powers their *Azoth* and allows the alchemy of the *New Dawn*.

Elpis: In Greek myth, the personification of hope. In **Promethean**, Elpis refers to the notion of humanity at its best that a *Promethean* holds onto, letting it guide her through the *Pilgrimage*.

Elpis vision: A (possibly waking) dream in which the next step on a *Promethean's Pilgrimage* is revealed, or at least hinted at. Most of the time, the Storyteller is in control of these things, but a Promethean can attempt to trigger an Elpis vision. This risks a *Wasteland*, however.

Firestorm: The effect of *Pyros* and *Azoth* upon an area, resulting in freak weather conditions — earthquakes, floods, rain of frogs, etc. They can happen for a variety of reasons, including being deliberately called down to cleanse a *Wasteland*.

humour: The alchemical liquid substance that flows through a *Promethean* — if cut or injured, she "bleeds" her humour rather than normal blood. This humour indicates certain personality flaws and helps inform *Torment*.

Lineage: One of six "families" of *Promethean*, though the term more properly refers to the method by which a given Promethean is created. Lineage determines the humour that drives a Promethean. The Lineages are: Frankenstein, Galateid, Osiran, Tammuz, Ulgan, and Unfleshed. Extempore is classified in game terms as a Lineage, but is better understood as the *lack* of one; two Extempore characters are not members of the same Lineage.

milestone: A specific task or step along the *Pilgrimage*. Milestones fall into three categories: universal, prescribed, and instinctive. Universal milestones are tasks that all *Prometheans* must complete, though the specific expression may vary. Prescribed milestones are created by the Storyteller. Instinctive milestones are suggested by the player during character creation.

New Dawn: The culmination of the *Pilgrimage*, in which a *Promethean* works a final act of alchemy and becomes human.

Pandoran: The result of a failed attempt to create a *Promethean*. These creatures feed on *Pyros*, and as such hunt down and kill Prometheans. If they go too long without food, they become dormant and resemble inanimate objects. They reanimate when bathed in *Azothic radiance*. They have animal cunning but are not especially intelligent.

Pilgrimage: The process of progressing through the *Refinements*, learning the *Roles*, and becoming human.

Promethean: A living being created from dead or non-living matter, animated by the *Divine Fire*, and on a quest to achieve the *New Dawn*.

Pyros: The energy of the *Divine Fire*, the "fuel" that powers a *Promethean's Azoth* and allow her to channel said Azoth into *Transmutations*.

Refinement: An alchemical philosophy and ethos, granting an outlook that allows progress along the *Pilgrimage*. All Refinements have specific practices that the *Promethean* can approach in any number of ways, as well as *Roles* that prepare a Promethean for humanity. Basic Refinements can be adopted and practiced without a mentor, while complex Refinements require specific instruction. Basic Refinements are: Aurum, Cuprum, Ferrum, Plumbum, and Stannum. Complex Refinements are: Aes, Argentum, Cobalus, Mercurius, and Phosphorum.

Role: A symbolic and mystical representation of humanity, as expressed by an archetype. Each *Refinement* has three Roles; *Prometheans* studying a Refinement may learned about any or all of them, achieving milestones for as many as they choose. Learning a Role grants the Promethean a wider range of possibilities upon the *New Dawn*.

step backwards: A setback on the *Pilgrimage*. This can happen because of the *Promethean's* own actions or because of external events.

step forwards: Measurable progress on the *Pilgrimage*.

sublimatus (pl. sublimati): A *Pandoran* that has attained intelligence and sapience by consuming *Vitriol*.

throng: A group of *Prometheans*, sometimes bonded by an *alchemical pact*.

Torment: The constant state of pain, dysphoria, discomfort, and alienation that *Prometheans* feel. The specific type of Torment is related to the Promethean's humour, and therefore to her *Lineage*. A Promethean subjected to the right kinds of stimuli can be said to be "in Torment" or "Tormented."

Transmutations: Physical or metaphysical changes to a *Promethean* made possible by the philosophical alchemy of a *Refinement*. A Promethean can only adopt Transmutations that are in-line with her Refinement. When she changes Refinements, a Transmutation fades unless the Promethean uses *Vitriol* to "fix" it.

Vitriol: An alchemical substance created by making progress on the *Pilgrimage*. A *Promethean* can use this substance to make changes to her body, "fixing" Transmutations or increasing *Azoth*. Other Prometheans or *Pandorans* can steal Vitriol to devastating effect.

Wasteland: A mystical blight created by a *Promethean's Azoth* if it is left unchecked or accessed recklessly. Once begun, a Wasteland can only be stopped by two methods: the Promethean leaves the area and does not return until the Wasteland recedes, or the Promethean calls down a *Firestorm*.

THE GREAT WORK: PART I

Imam worked as he always did. It kept the anxiety at bay.

As soon as Wisher told the throng that she could feel her New Dawn approaching, Imam got their affairs in order. He had done all the packing. He was the one who settled the rent with the landlord. He got the car back into shape; it had to be ready for a seven-hour drive.

After all that, it was time to get back to *The New Word*. It was spread out on the table, a scrapbook of religious texts, all cut apart and re-assembled by verse. Today's task was integrating lines of the *Book of Tobit* and the *Vendidad*. He was marking down connections between the three when Wisher came in.

"You've said your goodbyes?" he asked her.

She gestured to the window. Imam saw the storm outside and nodded. He made some final notes on the pages, and began to pack his book. Some loose papers slipped out of it and onto the floor, by Wisher's feet.

She handed the pages to him, and he saw her hands trembling. He met her gaze, and she broke into a wide smile. The light he could see in her gray eyes made his chest tighten. For a moment, she looked human.

A thought came into his head, a quote from his book: *Beware the foolish, their glee belies their folly.* He stared at The New Word and ran his thumbs on the cover. Wisher's smile faded.

"Wisher," Imam said, "It could happen again."

Wisher clasped his shoulder. "It won't."

Imam furred his brow. He put the New Word down and opened it up. He flipped a few pages and slapped a finger on a random verse. *I walk in the valley of the practitioner, I shall not question.* He sighed.

"I know what I did before, where I went wrong," Wisher said.

"Aren't you afraid that you may still be rushing things?" Imam asked.

"No. I saw it, Imam. I had a vision."

"I feared you would say that."

Imam looked out the window and saw that the storm had subsided. The dark clouds had passed, leaving a bright, damp city. The crowds of people returned to its streets, and it was alive again.

"We have to go out there, to the field," she said, "Even if you're right, I can't turn back from this."

Imam reached out and took Wisher's hand.

"Whatever happens," he said, "I just want you to be happy. Just like earlier. It was nice, seeing you like that."

Imam felt Wisher squeeze his hand.

"I'll miss you too," she said.

He smiled and then blinked. He let go of Wisher's hand and pulled his phone from his pocket. He read the screen and frowned.

Wisher asked, "What's going on?"

Imam answered, "It's them. We have a problem."

CHICAGO'S RAMBLE

I am not a bad person.

It's the rain I remember the most. How it streaked down the nearby windows. How it poured down my face. I remember the streetlights making glowing, hazy islands. It made the city, usually full of the stink of so many people living nearby, smell cleaner and fresher if even slightly.

The people hurried to and from shelter, whether it was a car, bus stop, or building. Some had their umbrellas, islands moving in a sea of people. The lights from stores, restaurants, and apartments promised vibrant warmth away from the chill of the rainy evening.

I trudged through the rain, water splashing around my boots. With my hood up and head down, I looked like I was shutting out the world. That wasn't true, but I wanted it to look that way. Instead, it let me observe without interruption, or so I thought.

As I passed an alley, a fleshy crack cut through the drum of rain. I looked around, curious as to the source. With the rain and the uneven lighting, it was hard to see. I finally found the source, though. A woman huddled in the entrance to a nearby alley, her hand covering her cheek and a shocked look on her face. A man loomed over her, snatching her purse from her other hand. He turned to run, but came to a halt when he saw me staring at him. Something — maybe the intensity of my glare, or maybe he sensed I wasn't human — made him stop short. It was long enough for me to call the Fire into my limbs.

He crumpled, whimpering and broken on the ground. I hadn't realized I'd hit him. He clutched his chest, curled up in the fetal position on the sidewalk. I ignored him, picked up the woman's purse, and took it to her. She tentatively reached out her free hand to snatch it from me, huddling back against the wall for protection. I nodded to her and moved on, never saying a word.

Was I wrong to get involved? I don't know. It felt right at the time, but now I'm not sure. I want to use the strength I have as a tool to help others, but using that strength frightens people. Is that all it is? What am I missing? What I did, I thought was good. I thought it was right. Isn't that how humanity is supposed to act? Aren't they supposed to help one another? They tell stories about people who do what I did, they call them "heroes," but that's not how she looked at me. That's never how they look at me.

I thought I'd gotten past this anger when I decided that to achieve the New Dawn I would have to go among humans more frequently. Apparently, that was not the case. Even so, I know this will eat at me until I figure out what went wrong.

I'm not a bad person. I can't be, because I'm not a person.

Is that how it works?



CHAPTER ONE
PIECES

A Promethean has no family. Every one of them is a unique and strange individual, with no true kin to call her own. Prometheans have creators, either mortal demiurges or Promethean genitors, who bring them to life, but once that happens, the Created has to walk her own path. Even without a family, though, the Promethean is part of a Lineage, an alchemical pedigree that stretches back hundreds or thousands of years. Likewise, all Prometheans — all Prometheans that pursue the Pilgrimage, at least — follow a Refinement, a mystical philosophy that guides their approach to the ongoing quest for Humanity.

Lineages

No one truly knows how many Lineages exist or have existed in the past. Azothic memory speaks of Lineages long dead, destroyed by the ravages of time or circumstance. At present, six true Lineages are known to exist, plus one loose categorization — the Extempore — that isn't truly a Lineage.

Lost Lineages

Although they have been in their current configuration for many years, the Lineages are not static. Like any flame, the Divine Fire constantly twists and turns in its bed, sending tendrils into the world at random, seeking the path of least resistance. At this moment in history, the Lineages described above are the most common, but this has not always been true.

Why does a Lineage die out? Most often, it's because the world moves on. No one knows if the development of human society changes the Divine Fire's access to the world or if the vicissitudes of the Divine Fire have an effect on human history, but when a Lineage's ritual loses its resonance, it stops working. The surviving members of the Lineage linger for a while, but eventually they are either Redeemed or destroyed. More rarely, a Lineage is hunted down and destroyed from the outside. In the sixth century, a *qashmal* led a host of *qashmallim* and Prometheans on a crusade to wipe out an entire Lineage, claiming that they had been somehow "tainted." Sometimes, Lineages simply disappear without a trace — gradually or suddenly — leaving other Prometheans to wonder what happened to them. Prometheans are a scattered people, and a half-dozen Created might compose the entirety of a Lineage at any given time.

Before the Frankensteins, the element of fire was represented by a Lineage whose name is lost to history, but who were sometimes called the Prophets. They could only be made from bodies that died in agony: torture victims, sufferers of painful wasting diseases, those who were crucified or died in botched hangings. Each of them remembered their body's last sight, a vision of the Divine Fire itself, and they had an instinct to spread its gospel of change and renewal. For most of them, their memories of suffering left them compassionate but also impatient with the cruelty of humans and quick to punish it.

Some scholars among the Prometheans remember two short-lived lineages. The Hollow sprung up in the 1930s in North America's Dust Bowl. They were defined by hunger, grief, and restlessness, and had the power to manipulate the desires of others. The Faceless were born shortly before the First World War and managed to outlive the war by a few years. They could only be created from bodies slain by chemical weapons. They were caught between the opposing forces of war and peace, driven by their bodies' memories to abhor violence, but possessing an undeniable capacity for it. Both of these Lineages died out when the world moved on and the rituals that allowed them to create progeny stopped working.

Although most modern Prometheans don't like to think about it, any of them could go the way of these lost Lineages. The Divine Fire teaches that the only constant is change. Even the most venerable of the modern Lineages is only one cultural renaissance or technological advancement away from disappearing forever.

> A good traveler has no fixed plans, and is not intent on arriving.
>
> —Laozi

FRANKENSTEIN
THE WRETCHED

That son of a bitch is going to pay for what he's done.

I crouch in the cellar. The water that streams down the walls will fill the cellar, eventually, but I'll be gone by then. The storm batters the building, making the timbers creak. The wind and lightning stir something dark inside me, so I'm hiding away, as deep as I can get. I'm trying to be good.

I squeeze the Saint Michael medallion so hard that the edges cut into the flesh of my palm. Whenever I close my eyes, I can still see Gabe, trying to be a man, trying not to cry, and that son of a bitch standing over him, gloating.

Father Anthony would be upset if I gave in to the storm. Father Anthony has been good to me. He taught me that sometimes I should forgive and forget, turn the other cheek, leave the judging and the punishing to God. I'm not sure I believe in Father Anthony's God, but it's something to think about when I struggle to set my anger aside. It's something I need to learn if I'm ever going to learn how to be human.

The wind roars. A fantastic crash, and suddenly the entire building falls down on top of me.

It doesn't matter. I'm tougher and stronger than anything my size has a right to be. I heave and push and soon I'm standing in the wind and rain, on the rubble that used to be my hiding place.

The Saint Michael amulet is gone. I must have lost it somewhere down there in the darkness.

Lightning strikes again, and my misshapen heart leaps with it.

Screw it. I've disappointed Father Anthony before. If I don't put a stop to this son of a bitch, who will? I set off towards town at a run, hands balled into fists, ready to pummel and rend.

All Created are unfinished, but no none of them wear it as clearly as the Frankensteins. Ulgans bleed ectoplasm and Nepri are missing a single body part, but the Wretched are assembled from at least two and potentially *dozens* of bodies.

After he has accumulated the parts he needs, the Wretched's creator needs to stich them together and imbue the body with Pyros. Although all Frankensteins are mostly made of human flesh, some of them incorporate nonhuman, or even inorganic, parts. The reeking collection of flesh must be then taken to a high place during a lightning storm. If the would-be creator performs the ritual correctly, the body is struck by lightning, which carries with it a fragment of the Divine Fire.

A Frankenstein's fragmented and chaotic origins — made of disparate parts and kindled to life by lightning — defines his nature. The Wretched are quick to anger, but also prone to kindness. Their bodies are haphazard, patchwork things, but they are naturally gifted. They are merciless opponents, except for when they suddenly show mercy to a defeated foe. They are lonely creatures who can't help pushing others away.

Above all, a Frankenstein's Pilgrimage is defined by struggle. They are made to seek limits and test boundaries, their own and others'. When a Frankenstein follows a Refinement, he either follows it idiosyncratically, stretching the definition of the Refinement as far as he can before it breaks, or he follows it zealously, wielding the Refinement as a scourge with which to test his own limits and the limits of those around him. Many outsiders mistake a Frankenstein's directness for simplicity, even stupidity, but this is a grave error. Frankensteins are always forceful, but they express their power in any and every facet of life.

At the same time as they come to understand the rules of the human world, Frankensteins test them. Of all the Created, Frankensteins are the most likely to look at the way humans live their lives and ask "why?" Made of many bodies, Frankensteins defy the easy classifications that humans take for granted. A Frankenstein made of male and female parts might struggle to find hirself in the human world of masculinity and femininity. A Frankenstein with a body of many different colors might question the idea of race and the roles assigned to people of different backgrounds. Even a Frankenstein with relatively homogeneous parts might reject these cultural mores out of compassion, insight, or sheer contrariness. Many Frankensteins have certain quixotic side to their personality, crusading for what they have decided is right, not caring — perhaps even relishing — that all the world is against them.

Above all, the Wretched struggle against their own fractured natures. They test themselves against the challenges of the Promethean condition — Disquiet, Wasteland, and their own unbalanced humors — unable to accept anything less than their own best. Like all perfectionists, they may test those around them, but they are most critical of their own unfinished natures.

In the end, having battered herself to pieces against the rigors of the Pilgrimage, a Frankenstein finds that she has gradually worn off her rough edges. Although she hasn't

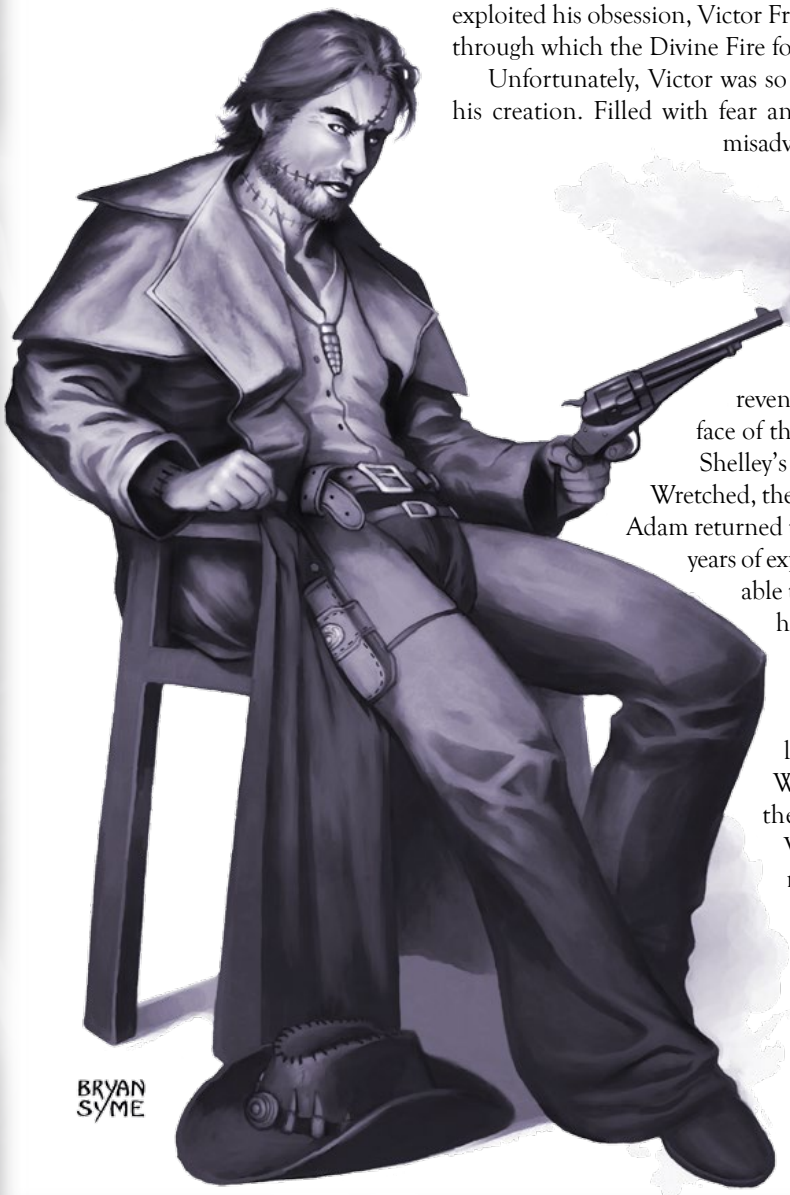
lost any of her fighting spirit, she has learned to pick her battles. A Pilgrimage full of struggle has taught her when to fight, when to run, when to accept defeat, and when to take something at face value. She might still be the kind of person who questions and tests boundaries when it's really important, but she has also learned to accept things, let things go, and enjoy her life. She might choose to fight, but she is no longer driven to struggle against the world and her own fractured nature.

History

Frankensteins are one of the youngest lineages, tracing their history back to the mid-nineteenth century. According to the stories passed down from creator to creation, Mary Shelley's famous *Frankenstein* is not a work of fiction. Some Wretched claim that Shelley's "dream," which led to the novel, was placed into her mind by the Principle, while others say that the whole dream story was an obfuscation that Shelley and Adam, Frankenstein's creation, cooked up between the two of them. A few Frankensteins tell even stranger tales — Shelley herself was a redeemed Frankenstein telling her progenitor's story, Victor Frankenstein was entirely fictitious and Shelly was the alchemist who created Adam — but the truth is lost to history.

According to Shelley's novel, Victor Frankenstein was an ambitious and brilliant scientist who believed that with the appropriate chemical and electrical treatments, a dead body could be restored to life. Unfortunately, people don't just die for no reason; every dead body had some fatal flaw that would doom his creation to die as quickly as it was reborn. Frankenstein solved this problem by assembling the body out of the freshest and least damaged parts of dozens of corpses. In a frenzy of obsession and arrogance, he performed his alchemical science and successfully turned a dead body into a living man.

Anyone familiar with the world of the Created will recognize that Victor Frankenstein was a classic example of a demiurge. Whether he was inspired by the Divine Fire, or the Divine Fire recognized and exploited his obsession, Victor Frankenstein became nothing more than a conduit through which the Divine Fire found a new form of expression in the world.



Unfortunately, Victor was so horrified by what he had done that he rejected his creation. Filled with fear and self-loathing, Adam fled and survived many misadventures, testing his limits and gradually coming to understand his strengths and weaknesses. Finally, convinced that he could never become a part of human society, Adam returned and demanded that Victor also make him a mate, so he would not have to be alone. Victor complied at first, then destroyed his second creation. Adam left, but swore revenge. He and Victor hunted each other across the face of the earth, until Victor Frankenstein finally died.

Shelley's novel ends with Frankenstein's death, but for the Wretched, the story continues. After Victor Frankenstein died, Adam returned to Frankenstein's home and stole his notes. After years of experimentation and reverse-engineering, Adam was able to refine the process until he could reliably create his own offspring.

Adam was a Frankenstein, however, and the Wretched can never leave well enough alone. Rather than be delighted by creating his own line of Prometheans, Adam was disgusted by the Wretched that he had made, and soon abandoned them, just as Victor had abandoned him. The Wretched remain, however, and continue to make their brutal, pugnacious ways through their Pilgrimages to this day.

Creations

Marv's creator called him a "glorious cacophony of flesh." His heart is visible through the green glass window pressed into the flesh of his chest. Bolts and bits of metal stand out of his skin at random. His face is such a horrible patchwork of scraps that even when his

deformities are hidden, he looks pockmarked and scarred. And yet, Marv refuses to accept any limitations and insists of throwing himself into interaction with humans, convinced that when he figures out the secret, he'll be just as good as any normal human.

Combo is newly and rudely born, assembled by another Promethean from the remains of his destroyed throngmates in a fit of loneliness. Zie doesn't know which of them zie is, if any, but zie feels *something* towards zir creator. Is it gratitude? Is it hatred? Either way, when he left zir, overwrought with shame, zie followed, clutching a roughly worked soapstone carving that zie somehow knows was precious to one of zir, a thing that consumed much of zie's time. It whispers to zir that zie must aid him, that understanding will follow. Combo knows that before zir's Creator will forgive zir, he must forgive himself.

Chicago wants to be a good person so badly, but she struggles to control herself. It's so easy for her to turn to violence to dispel the tension inside her, but she tries hard to aim it correctly. There are good people and bad people, and it's Chicago's job to help the good people and hurt the bad ones. Her understanding of "good" and "bad" continue to evolve as she makes her way along her Pilgrimage, but that doesn't bother her. Chicago doesn't yet understand that the distinction of "strong" and "weak" is also growing inside her, and that she is beginning to despise the humans, and even other Prometheans, who need her help.

Hakan isn't even sure he wants to be human anymore. Humans are such stupid, hateful, disgusting creatures. He feels that in all the years of his Pilgrimage he can count the examples of human kindness on one hand, while his body bears the scars of humanity's capacity for cruelty. Hakan made a promise to his throng, however, that he would see them through to the end of their Pilgrimages, and keeping promises no matter what is one of the things that sets him apart from humans. When the last of his friends has been Redeemed, well, then Hakan will make up his mind.

A little boy was kind to Widow, once, right after she left her genitor, back when she was so ignorant and confused. It's been years, but she still checks in on him once in a while, just to see how his life is treating him. Widow has learned a lot from watching him. One day, she finds him alone, with the wife and child he was so proud of conspicuously absent. It doesn't take long for her to find out about drunk drivers, expensive lawyers, undeserved acquittals. For the next several years, Widow's existence has two purposes: gradually arranging for one man to regain everything he lost, and piece by piece dismantling another man's world until he has nothing to lose but his life.

Humour: Yellow bile. A Frankenstein's imbalanced humors make him quick to anger, vengeful and slow to forgive. The Wretched struggle not to dwell on the injustices, real and imagined, that the world perpetrates against herself and others. Worse, while a young Frankenstein might gleefully give in to his worse nature, even more experienced Wretched still have to fight against the impulse to hold a grudge, to lash out violently, and to plan cruel revenge.

Frankensteins are most likely to fall into Torment when confronted with injustice and cruelty. The easiest way to force a Frankenstein to lose control of her humors is to lead her to feel wronged. Powerlessness before injustice eats away at them, eroding their resolve until they give in and set out to "make things right." Of course, the difference between truly seeking justice and giving into Torment is that a Frankenstein with her humors raging out of control is really just externalizing her pain. She isn't really trying to make things right, she's trying to make someone else — preferably the person who hurt her, but anyone will do — feel the pain she feels.

Cruelty and injustice to those she cares about can also motivate a Frankenstein with a more developed sense of morality. The Wretched often find this kind of Torment even harder to resist, because after all, what is the line between falling into Torment and taking the offensive against a dangerous foe?

The easiest way for even the most advanced Frankenstein to fall into Torment, however, is when the blame falls on him. Frankensteins react poorly when confronted with evidence of their own worse nature. The Wretched can easily be trapped in a vicious cycle in which confronting the consequences of their actions while in the throes of Torment leads to more Torment, which leads to further consequences, and so on. Escaping this trap can require the help of the rest of the throng and is often a milestone.

When a Frankenstein is in Torment, his body parts are particularly prone to rebel against him. All Prometheans sometimes struggle with this symptom, as the Flux that has built up in their system causes generalized chaos across their bodies, but it is most common in Frankensteins. Sometimes, a Frankenstein's body parts act consistently, expressing fragments of their original personality: a face drawn from a cruel woman twists into a sneer when the Frankenstein would like to smile, a hand taken from a peaceful man refuses to tighten around the trigger of a gun, eyes taken from two different donors refuse to look in the same direction.

Bestowment: Titan's Strength, Spare Parts

Stereotypes

- **Galateids:** So fucking pretty. You don't know how good you've got it.
- **Osirans:** Oh, you've got a myth to explain why you should be in charge. Cute.
- **Tammuz:** Next time, you speak up for yourself.
- **Ulgans:** They know what it's like to have more than one voice in your head.
- **Unfleshed:** We're made of too many people; they're made of too few. That's the world for you.

GALATEA
muses

"Good lord," I say to myself. "It's happening again, isn't it?"

I stare across the street at her. The light of another fading Parisian day clings to her, and it's easy for me to imagine that the light is as struck by her beauty and her poise as I am. I shake my head, hoping that the feeling will fade, but I already know it's too late.

She's probably a tourist. The impression is based on the guidebook she's holding, her clunky white sneakers and sensible clothes, and reinforced by the awe with which she gazes up, past me, at the façade of Notre Dame. She marvels at the way the sunset reflects off the ancient stonework, but she's the one who is a real wonder.

"No, no, no," I chide myself. We aren't here for romance. We're here to look for pilgrim marks in the Paris catacombs. This is an important step for us. I can't endanger it by getting tangled up with another human. It always ends so poorly.

I know that I should put her out of my mind. I should walk away. This is ridiculous. She probably has a paramour already – it's hard for me to imagine someone that lovely doesn't. She might be one of those strange monosexual humans who is only attracted to men. She might...

I'm already walking towards her.

The rest of my throng will be so disappointed. But...she notices me. She turns her face down and smiles at me, and the fire inside me leaps in tune with the beating of my heart.

Love is one of the most complex aspects of the human condition. Love can elevate us to the heights of heroism and nobility, but it can also make humans into monsters. It can be a pleasant preoccupation, or it can become an obsession. A good man loves his wife and children, but so does an abuser, albeit in a dangerously twisted way. Humans can love a nation, an idea, a partner, a friend, a brother, and a child, but each of these loves has radically different qualities; if a person loves the wrong thing in the wrong way, she becomes ineffective at best and a freak or predator at worst. Love intensifies humanity's qualities, good and bad.

All Prometheans can fall in love. Almost all Prometheans must pass at least one milestone related to love in one of its many aspects. Galateids, however are made of love. They are made *for* love. Love is what can save them and make them human. Love is what damns them, traps them in the Pilgrimage.

Love makes Galateids noble and sympathetic. They become enamored of humans, other Prometheans, and sometimes even other, stranger creatures. Like the muses they are named for, they try to bring out the best qualities in the people they love, hoping to help them become stronger, kinder, and more passionate.

Because they are more in touch with love than other Prometheans, Galateids often find it easier to express affection in wider forms. Galateids know how to become romantically infatuated, but they are also attuned to camaraderie, patriotism, and faith. Many Galateids have a strong parental instinct. They are just as likely to help members of their throng experiment with sensuality as they are to hold them when they are lonely or afraid, kiss their wounds, and ask them about their feelings. Even when a Muse doesn't fall into these human passions, he usually understands them better than his fellow Prometheans, making him an asset to his throng.

Galateids crave company. Most prefer to interact with humans as much as possible, but almost all Galateids are eager to form throngs with other Prometheans as well. Tammuz may long for hard work, Osirans crave multiple perspectives to contemplate and integrate, and both Ulgans and the Unfleshed need more conventional Prometheans to anchor them. Galateids feel incomplete when they are alone. Quintessential extroverts, their thoughts aren't real if they aren't spoken aloud, and their feelings aren't real if they aren't shared. Lone Galateids often attach themselves to inappropriate companions — like humans and human-like supernatural beings — with predictably tragic results.

As creatures of love's dark side, Galateids sometimes struggle with understanding how to express love appropriately. Even setting aside the possibility of Torment, Galateids are prone to obsession. They feel their incompleteness as an aching void and implicitly believe that the right relationship can fill it. Muses often stalk the objects of their affection. If a relationship doesn't progress at the speed a Muse expected, she might become pushy, or even lose control and slide into Torment. The Galateid tendency towards obsession can express itself in any form of love; for example, a Muse might become obsessed with parenting a child he believes is being neglected to the point that he kidnaps the child, potentially hurting or killing the child's parents, all in the name of "love."

In a sense, it isn't even the Galateid's fault. Even the most precocious Galateid takes a while to learn to control his

supernatural attractiveness. Given the way humans tend to become obsessed with the Muses, is it any wonder that Muses are prone to become obsessed themselves?

History

Among the many Greek myths that has survived to the modern day is story of Pygmalion and Galatea. Pygmalion was a sculptor so brilliant — or perhaps just so narcissistic — that he fell in love with one of his own creations. He begged the goddess of love for a miracle, and she saw fit to grant his wish, bringing his statue, Galatea, to life.

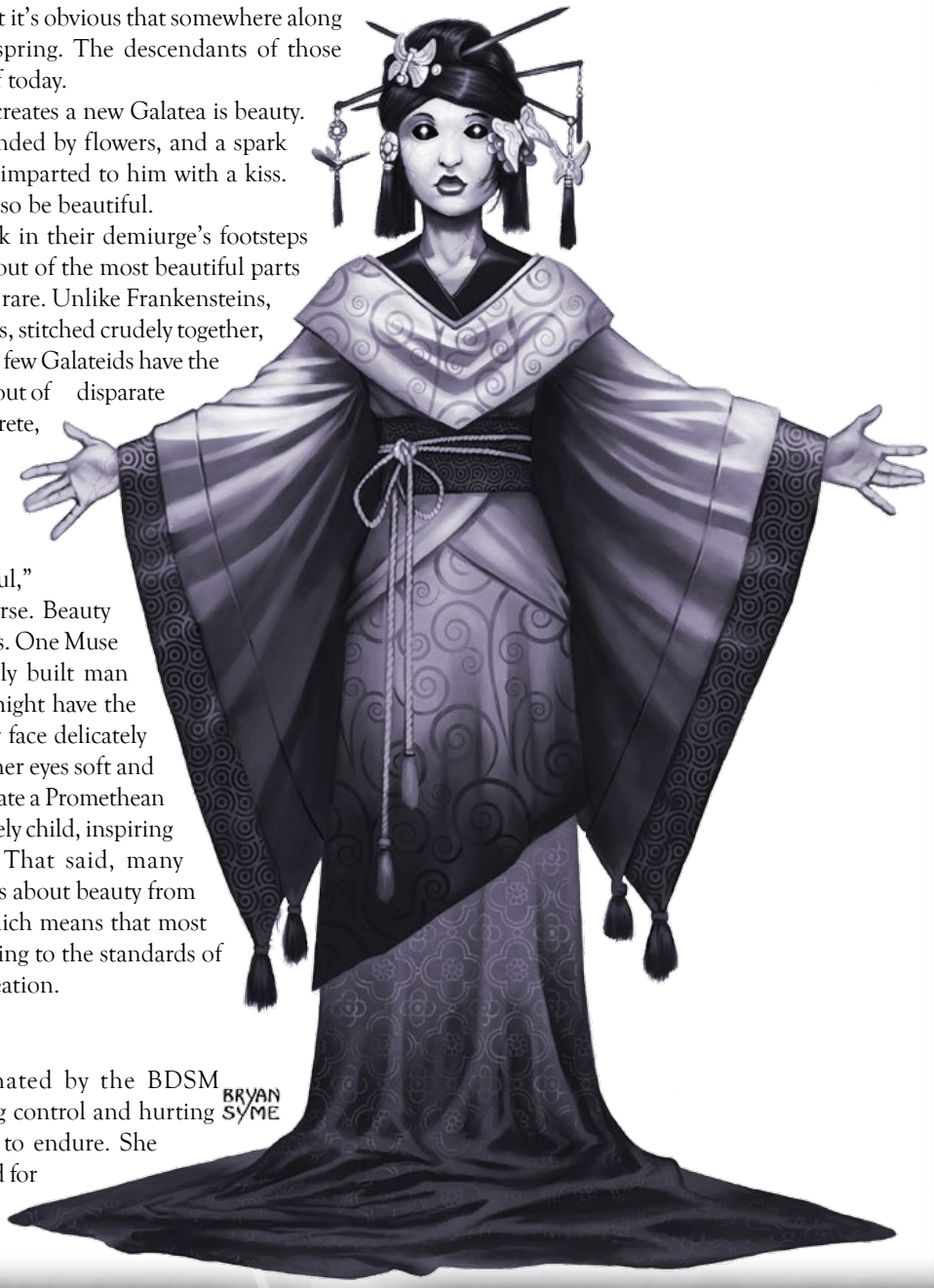
Of course, that would make the original Galateid one of the Unfleshed, which isn't the case. According to the Muses, the Greek myth is only a sanitized version of the truth. Pygmalion was an artist, it's true, but his medium was flesh, not stone. Galatea wasn't a statue, she was a perfect woman made out of the most beautiful parts Pygmalion could find. And while her animation was certainly a miracle, it was achieved through Pygmalion's obsession and occult rites, not the intercession of a goddess.

In much the same way that Adam could not be Victor Frankenstein's triumph over death and nature, however, Galatea could not be Pygmalion's perfect wife. Although beautiful to behold, she was just as much a Promethean as any other Created. The Divine Fire inside her unnerved as much as it attracted, her presence awakened Pandorans, and she had a long Pilgrimage ahead of her. Nobody knows how the story ends — did Galatea finish her Pilgrimage and find her way back to Pygmalion, or did his obsession ultimately destroy him the way Victor Frankenstein's obsession destroyed him? — but it's obvious that somewhere along the line, Galatea created offspring. The descendants of those Prometheans are the Muses of today.

The key to the ritual that creates a new Galatea is beauty. Galateids come to life surrounded by flowers, and a spark of his creator's Divine Fire is imparted to him with a kiss. The corpse, of course, must also be beautiful.

Some Galateids try to walk in their demiurge's footsteps by assembling their creations out of the most beautiful parts of multiple corpses, but this is rare. Unlike Frankensteins, who are made of disparate parts, stitched crudely together, a Muse must be beautiful. Very few Galateids have the skill to make a coherent whole out of disparate parts. The stitches must be discrete, or somehow hidden altogether. The skin tones must match. The overall creation must be symmetrical.

Despite all being "beautiful," Galateids are remarkably diverse. Beauty comes in many shapes and sizes. One Muse might be a tall and powerfully built man with a chiseled jaw, another might have the shape of an older woman, her face delicately spider-webbed with wrinkles, her eyes soft and gentle. One Galateid might create a Promethean with the body of a tragically lovely child, inspiring sympathy rather than lust. That said, many Galateids tend to pick up ideas about beauty from the humans around them, which means that most Galateids are beautiful according to the standards of the time and place of their creation.



Creations

Niccolai's maker, fascinated by the BDSM subculture but afraid of losing control and hurting a human partner, made him to endure. She picked a body that had survived for years on the streets without

losing its boyish charm before finally succumbing to the cold. He withstood floggers and cuffs and cigarette burns gladly, eager to please his maker. The only thing she couldn't train him to endure, however, was a broken heart. When she had learned everything she needed to know about the dark side of human desires, she could no longer bear to look at him and his scars, so she left Nicci to make his own way in the world.

Alice's body came with a lot of baggage. It was beautiful, of course, but it carried terrible memories of abuse, pain, and violation. Even years after her creation, her eyes are still crimson with burst blood vessels. Her maker was a gentle creature and had no idea how to help her to deal with those memories of horrors she had never really felt. Now Alice avoids the Refinement of Gold and other gentler paths, preferring Tin, Copper, and Iron — studies that promise to make her so strong that nobody will ever be able to hurt her.

Despite his Lineage's reputation, Erik doesn't really understand sex. Even setting aside the sweaty, complicated process of copulation that confuses many Created, romantic love doesn't really make a lot of sense to him either. What fascinates him is the love that humans can have for ideals. When Erik finds himself infatuated with a human, it is a priest, activist, artist, or politician. He falls in love with their fervor, and through it, their cause. Ironically, however, he doesn't really believe in anything himself. He's as likely to fall in love with a capitalist ideologue as he is with a socialist community organizer. Progress towards humanity means forming his own opinions, but he is so distracted by the trappings of passion that he doesn't know where to start.

Dorothea has a pretty face, but she hates it. She'd take a knife to it, if she didn't fear the pain and the consequences. She hates the way people look at her when she goes out in public. She can feel their eyes crawling all over her, as though her body was public property. Sometimes people shout things at her as she passes. The worst thing is that she has been around long enough to know that it's a symptom of her Divine Fire, and Dorothea has no idea how to make it stop.

Tabitha is a beautiful child, seemingly 12 years old, with long dark hair and sad, solemn eyes. She finds her way to mourning families who aren't ready to say goodbye to their dead children and slips into their lives. When they are ready to let go, she slips out again. Tabitha views her life as entirely symbiotic — she gets to bask in the adoration of the grieving parents, they get a small break in their mourning — but the limitations of her eternal childhood are slowly wearing on her.

Humor: Blood. A Galateid's humor gives him a heroic combination of courage, recklessness, and compassion. At the same time, however, a Galateid's imbalanced humors make him impractical and feckless, given to daydreams, and frequently confused when the world around him moves too quickly. Despite their confusion, Muses tend to be the sort of people who charge ahead anyway, making it up as they go along, which can be both an asset and a deadly liability.

Galateids are always passionate, but passion can take many forms. Muses tend to discover sex early in their Pilgrimages and are often happy to share this human experience with other Prometheans. However, Galateids can easily become deeply passionate about any number of things. A Muse's amorous nature can easily manifest as any kind of strong connection. Physical or sexual attraction is only the beginning. Many Galateids experience strong emotional attachments of various sorts, including platonic or intellectual crushes or strong paternal or fraternal feelings. Some Galateids are prone to "aesthetic crushes," in which they want to bask in someone's beauty but don't actually want to *do* anything about it. Muses sometimes develop attachments in unusual configurations, such as a deep crush on a couple.

When Muses fall into Torment, it usually has something to do with one of their emotional connections. In addition to the triggers all Prometheans share, Galateids surrender to Torment when they are slighted or rejected or when someone they love is in danger. A Galateid in Torment surrenders to the darker side of passion. He may become obsessed with someone he has a strong emotional attachment to — usually a human, but sometimes another Promethean or one of the other strange beings native to the Chronicles of Darkness — possibly to the point of stalking that individual, obsessing over whether or not the feelings are mutual, and trying to undermine his perceived "rivals."

Galateids in Torment are insecure and desperate to be loved to the point that it undermines their boundaries and, sometimes, their moral compasses. When a Tormented Muse isn't a danger to others, she is a danger to herself. Torment exacerbates the imbalances in her humors, making her flighty to the point of total distraction, brave to the point of absolute fearlessness, and confused to the point of becoming delusional.

Bestowment: Unearthly Mein, Symbiotic Muse

Stereotypes

- **Frankensteins:** We're more alike than either of us likes to think.
- **Osirans:** So cold.
- **Tammuz:** What's the point of knowing how to work if you don't know how to stop?
- **Ulgans:** Ugh. They *leak*.
- **Unfleshed:** Let me see if I can't teach you a thing or two about the flesh....
- **Extempore:** Poor, lost little lambs. Help them if you can, but don't get caught up in their misery.

OSIRIS

NEPRI

If not for her sturdy boots, Rheya's feet would have been cut to pieces by now. The rocks were piled haphazardly, as though tossed by a giant, angry toddler. Furthermore, the field of boulders had plenty of time by this late in the day to soak up the sun's heat. Every step was deliberate, as a misstep could easily send her crashing into – or worse, between – the giant stones. Still, she persevered, intent on reaching the other side. Another mile or so northeast, and she'd find what she sought, or so she hoped.

Her information had led her here into the Pennsylvania mountains, following the rumor of signs, pilgrim marks, that would help her on her own Pilgrimage. Her research indicated that the marks contained important information to create another of her kind. It would have been easier, perhaps, to go through the forest, although she wasn't entirely sure. Still, something tickled the back of her mind that this is how she should go, the way that her predecessor had gone. She would follow in that Promethean's footsteps and hopefully learn the same lessons as before.

Rheya put another mile behind her. She consulted her map one more time, although she had committed it to memory long ago. Best to be certain. Her notations and GPS said she was here. Wriggling down between several giant stones, Rheya discovered a tiny cave of sorts. At the back were the marks she sought.

She smiled, content that one more step in her Pilgrimage was complete.

Death is the last great adventure. For the Osiris Lineage, it is an adventure they may traverse time and again, as each one has died once already, and may cheat death again.

The Osirans hearken back to a god of the dead, the only Lineage claiming diving ancestry. For this, they expect deference and respect. Usually, they get it. Not because of any supernatural benefit, but because an Osiran normally backs up the claims. He has a regal appearance and a calm, commanding presence about him. Other Prometheans follow him not because they are forced to, but because they feel they should. He seems to know what he's doing (whether he really does or not), and can easily earn another Promethean's respect. This esteem can flag quickly, however, if the Osiran fails in his duties.

For the Nepri's part, he considers himself a rock holding against a raging river. No matter what the Pilgrimage brings, he knows that he has the mental fortitude to weather it and succeed. This attitude draws other Prometheans along in his wake. He can't help but collect followers, just as he collects other things — information, artifacts, and secrets. It's in his nature. How is he to learn anything if he can't study that which attracts his attention? The Osiran remains distant, however, even from his closest throngmates. He follows his Pilgrimage as much for the knowledge he finds along the way as for the destination. His reserved nature permits him to observe and assess, learning and cataloguing as much as he can in his journey.

In addition to their divine ancestry, Osirans are set apart from other Prometheans by their relationship with death. All Prometheans can visit the Underworld and sit on the shores of a River of Death once during their Pilgrimages. Osirans can make repeated visits; every time they do so, though, they must pay a tithe to their divine common ancestor, leaving a bit of themselves behind.

History

The Osirans claim to be the most ancient of their kind. Nearly 4,000 years ago, or so they say, Osiris was crowned king of all Egypt. Seth, who was jealous of his brother's fortunes, drowned Osiris in the Nile. If this weren't enough for the traitorous Seth, he then scattered the pieces of Osiris' body throughout the kingdom.

Osiris' sister-wife Isis, a great magician, grew angry at Seth's treachery. She scoured the length and breadth of Egypt, searching for each piece of Osiris' body. In time, Isis recovered all of the pieces, save the genitalia. After removing her brother-husband's viscera and binding the body together in bandages, Isis embalmed Osiris in oil. At the conclusion of this ritual, Osiris returned to life and somehow, despite the lack of genitalia, begat a son, Horus, who would later kill Seth.

Another story claims that Isis knew precisely what she was creating when she brought Osiris back to life. In this tale, Osiris was nothing more than a dupe and a puppet for Isis, who wanted to rule Egypt through him. Over time, Osiris and Isis created Horus.

Here the story splits. Some Nepri believe that Horus was a Promethean like them, and in fact the true Progenitor of the stable Lineage. Others believe that Osiris created one other Promethean — Nepri — before attaining his own humanity. And yet others believe that Horus was a failure, a Pandoran who slew both Seth and Isis in a fit of madness and rage. They point to artistic representations of Horus, in which he is given a hawk's head, and claim that the depiction is not metaphorical.

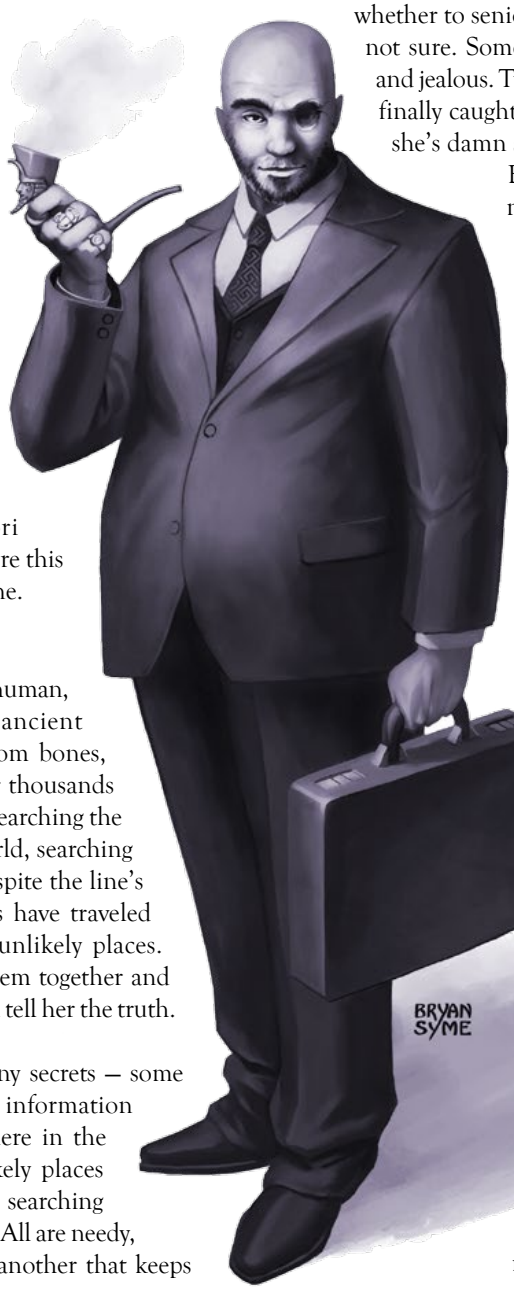
This drives the central debate of the Lineage — who, precisely, was the progenitor? It depends on which story an

Osiran believes. History suggests three or four possibilities. The majority of the Lineage believes that Osiris was ultimately responsible for their line. Regardless of whether Horus was a Promethean or a Pandoran, Osiris was the first, created by Isis (who, in this version, is the demiurge), who then created the remainder of the lineage which bears his name.

Osirans who prefer to use the Lineage nickname of "Nepri" point to Osiris' last creation as the origin of the stable line. They almost uniformly agree that Horus was a Pandoran and had nothing whatsoever to do with the Lineage as a whole.

Regardless of the exact origin of the Lineage, Osirans are all obsessed with knowledge. It was knowledge that contributed to the line coming about, after all. Perhaps it was forbidden or terrible knowledge that Isis held, but even so, it begat the Lineage. The Nepri are too practical to let the moral implications of that knowledge impact the observable fact that they exist.

Several versions of the ritual to create another Promethean exist. Some work. Others do not. Osiran scholars seeking the truth have been trying to find all of the working variants to discover the common threads. They all agree that the ritual was hidden away for centuries until Egyptologists started breaking open tombs in the early 19th century, although existing Nepri continued to create new ones before this happened, thus continuing the line.



Creations

Rheya is an archeologist. For a human, this means either poring over ancient tomes or slowly brushing dirt from bones, dishes, or walls built hundreds or thousands of years ago. For Rheya, it means searching the bare and desolate areas of the world, searching for the secrets of her Lineage. Despite the line's supposed birth in Egypt, records have traveled far and wide and ended up in unlikely places. Rheya is dedicated to bringing them together and making that one discovery that will tell her the truth. Nothing is going to stop her.

The restless dead have so many secrets — some so hidden they've forgotten the information themselves. Secrets hide everywhere in the Underworld, in some very unlikely places or forms. Rodrigo is dedicated to searching them out. Some ghosts are violent. All are needy, unable to let go of one thing or another that keeps them tied to the living and thus unable to move on to their final reward. Rodrigo is still learning about the Underworld — its geography, inhabitants, and strange rules — but he's determined that the secrets he seeks are there and nowhere else. The fact that Osiris was tied to the Underworld in mythology drives him further to succeed.

It was tough getting into the military. Allie was sure that Disquiet was going to sink her, but so far, she's been lucky. An inability to accept anything less than the best combined with her undeniably collected demeanor meant that her superiors promoted her to Squad Leader. Now Allie has her own soldiers under her, and some small degree of autonomy. Allie still has to follow orders, but the officers have started giving her leeway on how to accomplish those orders. Allie's heard whispers through camp about another promotion — whether to senior NCO or all the way to officer, she's not sure. Some of those whispers have turned sour and jealous. Typical human behavior, or has Disquiet finally caught up with her? Allie doesn't know, but she's damn sure going to find out.

Badi can't help being this way. He was made — literally — to be prince. He doesn't even know exactly where he is. Rainforest *probably* means somewhere in the Amazon, but it could also mean the Congo, or Southeast Asia. All Badi knows for sure is that he has his tribe, and they look up to him. To them, Badi has the blessings of the gods, a divine providence to rule. Badi's strange abilities provide all the evidence the tribe will ever need. Woe to any who doubt his divinity, for they will quickly find themselves on the wrong end of hundreds of spears.

Elisabeth isn't sure where the creatures come from, exactly. They came out of the darkness, drawn to her throng like moths to a flame. Elisabeth and her companions managed to destroy the monsters, but in the end, she was the only one standing. Now she seeks out more of those things in order to remove them from the world. Even so, Elisabeth isn't doing this out of revenge. She grieved for her throng and moved on. No, these horrors simply

should not be. Elisabeth knows this. Now, she seeks out knowledge on how best to kill them. When she does track them down, she imagines that every single one of them has a hawk's head.

Humour: Phlegm. Driven by their humour, members of the Osiris Lineage are typically calm and unemotional. The Nepri are quiet and observant, cautiously testing hypotheses before continuing. It is the rare Osiran who jumps headlong into any situation without researching every potential angle. Dispassionately viewing every circumstance as simply one more experiment, he seeks out and discovers dangers well before he or his throng-mates can suffer the consequences.

In a throng, the Nepri is usually the leader. If she isn't, then she is certainly the throng's voice of reason. Her regal bearing and emotional distance earn a certain respect from her fellows. The rest of the throng listens to her advice (or orders), knowing that she speaks from forethought and careful consideration rather than emotion.

Still, this isn't always a boon. An Osiran suffering in Torment becomes cold and unattached. Everything and everyone is a pawn to be moved according to the Nepri's wishes and discarded when no longer useful. She becomes downright ruthless, and will sacrifice anything in order to achieve her goals.

In addition, a Tormented Osiris feels a great and debilitating lethargy. This isn't physical exhaustion. It is the feeling that nothing the Osiran does will succeed, but it extends further to include all Prometheans. These poor souls will sabotage anything that they see as an unattainable goal, putting forth every effort in tearing someone else down.

On the other hand, Torment may seize hold of an Osiran in a different manner. The Nepri believe themselves superior to the other Lineages due to their divine heritage. When an Osiran is forced to use her Revivification Bestowment, sometimes she comes back from the River of Death filled with her own superiority. Worse, she wants — no, *needs* — to assert that superiority over everyone else. Certain circumstances that would drive the Osiran into Torment may have this result instead of the usual reaction.

Bestowments: Corpse Tongue, Revivification

Stereotypes

- **Frankensteins:** Your sound and fury signify nothing at all.
- **Galateids:** They also come from divinity, and then they squander that gift on superficiality.
- **Tammuz:** Let those who are suited to rule, rule, and those who are suited to work, work.
- **Ulgan:** Dismembered, like us. But while we were put together carefully and meticulously, they were slathered in ectoplasm and clumsily reassembled. And yet they function.
- **Unfleshed:** Colder and less personable than us. That's saying something.
- **Extempore:** I don't know where they come from or how they gain the Divine Fire. But I will find out.



TAMMUZ
THE NAMED

"The first lesson, you little shit, is that you don't mess with Clay."

Frank picked himself up and wiped the blood off his face. He rose to his full height and sneered down at the old-timer. "Why the hell not? He's a retarded freak."

"Let me tell you a couple of things, kid," the old timer said, unfazed. "Clay showed up about a year ago, which makes him more senior than you, even if he is a bit odd. And do you want to know what he's done with that year?

"When he first showed up, he wouldn't take no pay. He showed up and he said 'Don't need any money – just need something to do.' So we arranged to send his paycheck over to the Calligi family. Their boy died of the cancer back in 2010.

"Then, when the generators and the backup generators went down, and we were all choking down there in the dark, he carried his entire shift up one at a time, clinging to his back, while he climbed up the goddamn elevator cable hand over goddamn hand. I don't know if we would have died down there, but I don't know if we would have lived, neither.

"And he's a damn good worker. He does his share. He does more than his share. If there's a man who's sick or hurt himself, he'll do that man's share, too.

"He's one of the best we got, which makes him a damn sight better than you, kid, so you'll leave him alone. He may be a freak, but he's our freak. You got that?"

Frank nodded, sullenly.

The Tammuz are Prometheans born in the womb of earth, and they carry the earth's unyielding durability with them all the days of their Pilgrimage. They are made to work, to endure, and to survive. If the Pilgrimage was just a matter of surviving long enough, all Tammuz would reach the New Dawn. Unfortunately, like all the Created, Tammuz struggle with their imbalanced humors and the side effects of the Divine Fire burning inside them.

As befits the children of a harvest god, the Tammuz are made to work. Something about making a change in the world is deeply satisfying for most of the Named. At first, Tammuz tend to prefer simple physical labor, such as building a wall, digging a ditch or a well, or basic carpentry. As they continue along the Pilgrimage, however, many Tammuz branch out. Their pride in their ability to work *hard* transforms into pride in an ability to also work *well*. Many Tammuz become skilled laborers: plumbers, electricians, carpenters, and other professions. A Tammuz without work is restless, anxious, and eager to find some way to occupy herself. None of this is, however, is to say that Tammuz are meant to *serve*. The quickest way to make a Tammuz angry is to treat her poorly or refuse to pay for her work. Tammuz resist — violently — any effort to make them slaves.

The Named have a unique relationship to language. For most Prometheans, language is one of those things that they inherit with their human bodies. It may take them a short time to master the nuances, but they remember how to speak (and, often, how to read) the same way that they remember how to walk.

For the Tammuz, however, language is not so simple. It is something done to them. Every one of the Named is inscribed in some way — it is a necessary component of the ritual that animates them — whether it is an elaborate tattoo or a simple scar, whether it is literally their name or a phrase important to their maker. Some Tammuz even claim to have memories of a time before they were embodied, but they can't explain what the time was like, or even articulate what exactly they were before they were set on the path to becoming human. Once bound by language, the mind struggles to understand experiences that predate it.

Strangely, many Tammuz come to master language, and are often some of the most literate and articulate Prometheans, second only to Nepri and the more computationally minded Unfleshed. Perhaps it is because having struggled to master language, they are in a position to appreciate its nuances.

When Tammuz create progeny, they chose human bodies with the strength and durability to survive a Pilgrimage of hard labor. The Named are hard of mind as well as body, shrugging off pain and grief as easily as they shoulder heavy weights and responsibilities.

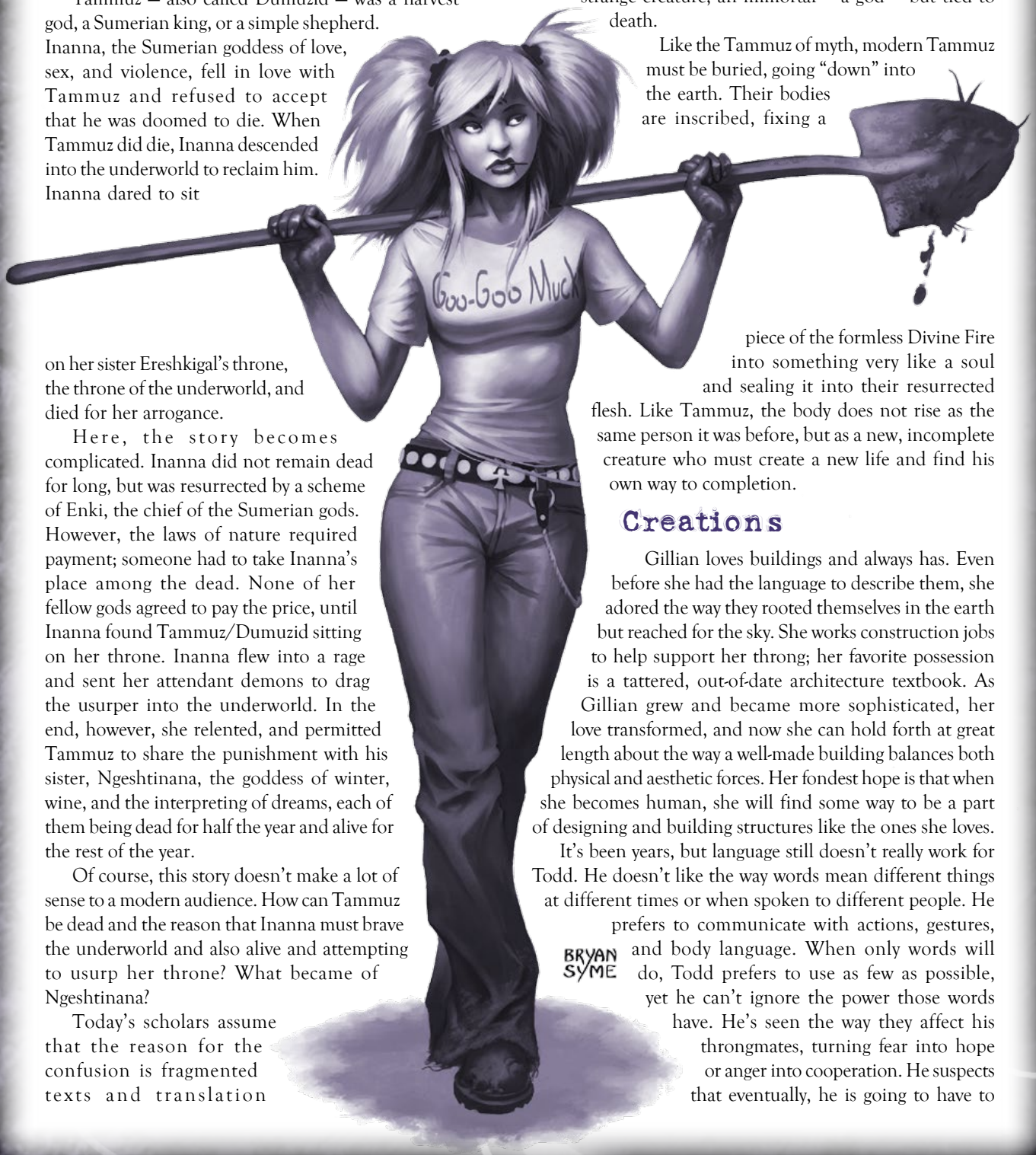
The hardest thing for most Tammuz is to learn how to stop working. Productivity is admirable, but humans aren't productive all the time. They stop, they rest, and they do things for themselves. Tammuz don't always work because they like it; they work because they are driven. The Tammuz are the children of a being who was worshipped as a harvest god, and they are bound to the progress of the year and the different kinds of work that must be done in each season.

Only when Tammuz learn how to slow down and do things for themselves can they begin to approach the New Dawn.

History

The story of the Tammuz begins in ancient Sumer. The details of the myth are foggy with many different versions and translations, but all of them involve a man's death, a descent into the underworld, an initially unsuccessful attempt to restore him to life, and a price that must be paid.

Tammuz — also called Dumuzid — was a harvest god, a Sumerian king, or a simple shepherd. Inanna, the Sumerian goddess of love, sex, and violence, fell in love with Tammuz and refused to accept that he was doomed to die. When Tammuz did die, Inanna descended into the underworld to reclaim him. Inanna dared to sit on her sister Ereshkigal's throne, the throne of the underworld, and died for her arrogance.



Here, the story becomes complicated. Inanna did not remain dead for long, but was resurrected by a scheme of Enki, the chief of the Sumerian gods. However, the laws of nature required payment; someone had to take Inanna's place among the dead. None of her fellow gods agreed to pay the price, until Inanna found Tammuz/Dumuzid sitting on her throne. Inanna flew into a rage and sent her attendant demons to drag the usurper into the underworld. In the end, however, she relented, and permitted Tammuz to share the punishment with his sister, Ngeshtinana, the goddess of winter, wine, and the interpreting of dreams, each of them being dead for half the year and alive for the rest of the year.

Of course, this story doesn't make a lot of sense to a modern audience. How can Tammuz be dead and the reason that Inanna must brave the underworld and also alive and attempting to usurp her throne? What became of Ngeshtinana?

Today's scholars assume that the reason for the confusion is fragmented texts and translation difficulties, but the Tammuz see it differently. The story doesn't make sense because it is limited by language — a human attempt to put words to something that transcends words.

What the Tammuz know is this: they are descended from a being called Tammuz, or possibly Dumuzid, who was slain and then resurrected by Inanna. Like the Tammuz of the modern day, Inanna brought her lover (or possibly her rival and usurper) back to life, but not entirely. He remained a strange creature, an immortal — a god — but tied to death.

Like the Tammuz of myth, modern Tammuz must be buried, going "down" into the earth. Their bodies are inscribed, fixing a piece of the formless Divine Fire into something very like a soul and sealing it into their resurrected flesh. Like Tammuz, the body does not rise as the same person it was before, but as a new, incomplete creature who must create a new life and find his own way to completion.

Creations

Gillian loves buildings and always has. Even before she had the language to describe them, she adored the way they rooted themselves in the earth but reached for the sky. She works construction jobs to help support her throng; her favorite possession is a tattered, out-of-date architecture textbook. As Gillian grew and became more sophisticated, her love transformed, and now she can hold forth at great length about the way a well-made building balances both physical and aesthetic forces. Her fondest hope is that when she becomes human, she will find some way to be a part of designing and building structures like the ones she loves.

It's been years, but language still doesn't really work for Todd. He doesn't like the way words mean different things at different times or when spoken to different people. He prefers to communicate with actions, gestures, and body language. When only words will do, Todd prefers to use as few as possible, yet he can't ignore the power those words have. He's seen the way they affect his throngmates, turning fear into hope or anger into cooperation. He suspects that eventually, he is going to have to

wrestle with language and win if he ever wants to become human.

Senka doesn't look like a Tammuz. She is slim, small, and pale, with long blonde hair, and an upturned nose. Her teenage body is tough and athletic — it belonged to a girl who was a cheerleader before the car accident killed her — and her flesh knows how to work for hours without rest. Now Senka knows how to walk in the wilderness for days, how to fight monsters and keep her throng safe, how to keep going despite pain and hardship. Sometimes, when she looks at adolescent humans having fun, being young, learning and exploring their world, she feels a pang deep in her bones. That was never really her, but Senka misses it anyway.

Agamemnon came alive in a dirty basement, completely alone. He has never met his maker and likely never will. All Agamemnon has of the creature that gave him life is a wooden box and a note, written in a shaky hand, reading: "don't let them get it." He has carried the box for years without looking inside. So far, no one has come to claim the box, but that doesn't mean anything to him. Agamemnon's duty is to keep the box safe, and he intends to do it for as long as he can.

Vasily is a monster of a man, more than seven feet tall and covered in lumpy muscles. He has almost no violent impulses — except sometimes, when the Torment takes him — but other people don't know that. His throng puts him front and center in tense situations to intimidate others with his bulk; when the fighting starts, though, Vasily has no idea what to do. What he really loves is wood. Vasily can spend hours running his hands over a well-constructed table and dreams of finding someone willing to teach him how to shape it himself.

Humor: Black bile. Despite their solid appearance and taciturn natures, the Tammuz are just as out of balance as other Prometheans. Rather than driving them to destructive heights of passion, black bile makes Tammuz meticulous and cautious, slows their thoughts and dulls their emotions, and makes them both loyal and stubborn, sometimes to a fault.

Tammuz fall prey to Torment when they feel the restlessness that drives them to labor too keenly. Depending on a particular Tammuz's personality and circumstances, she might be driven either to activity or passivity. An active Torment makes a Tammuz sleepless, irritable, and vigilant. She's anxious, certain that trouble is looming just around the corner, and unable to rest. A Tammuz falling into this sort of Torment loses her Lineage's characteristic cool, lashing out at perceived threats and overreacting to insults.

Although Prometheans need less sleep than mortals, they do eventually suffer from sleep deprivation, and Tormented Tammuz often become insomniac. Even when they can sleep, it's rarely high quality sleep, and may be interrupted by bad dreams and apnea (suddenly choking while asleep). The Promethean might try to escape, fleeing a world that suddenly seems dangerous and people who seem untrustworthy, but she's more likely to busy herself with ceaseless activity. All Tammuz are driven to labor, but a Tammuz in Torment can't stop. The same impulse that causes some Tammuz to master a craft and give them the strength to perform incredible feats becomes a relentless anxiety, punishing them whenever they try to stop.

At other times, Tammuz in Torment become depressed and enervated. They withdraw from the world to wallow in their misery and anxiety. Although restless and driven to work, a Tammuz in this condition can't seem to achieve anything. She begins projects and then suddenly abandons them. She might sleep too much as a way of avoiding the world, but her sleep is troubled and valueless. A Tammuz affected in this way is eager to push others away and might even resort to violence to force others to leave him alone.

When Torment strikes the Tammuz, they frequently have trouble with language. Some suffer from intense logorrhea, speaking constantly. Others experience a form of graphomania, meaning that they can't stop writing. The most common symptom, however, is that Tammuz stop talking altogether. Some forget how to produce language but still understand what is said to them, while others lose language completely. When this happens, the Torment can be like a fugue state; when words return, they find it difficult to explain or even remember their thoughts and actions when they were temporarily without language.

Bestowment: Heart of Clay, Inscription

Stereotypes

- **Frankensteins:** Neither of us knows when to give up. I like that about you.
- **Galateids:** Stand behind me.
- **Osirans:** Too many words, not enough meaning.
- **Ulgans:** I have a name and need a soul. She has a soul, but needs a name.
- **Unfleshed:** There's nothing there. I don't like it.
- **Extempore:** They know what it's like to come out of the earth without words.

ULGAN

THE RIVEN

I remember them tearing me apart.

I don't really, of course. That happened when I was dead. I know, logically, that they're false memories. It doesn't make them any less horrific. I hear the popping sounds as my arms come free from the sockets, hear the ripping of my flesh.

I try not to sleep anymore. Sleep is when the memories come back, in dreams. Eventually, though, I succumb, exhausted. Images and sensations collide through my mind, and I wake up in a fetal ball, clutching myself tightly to keep my arms and legs attached. Even when I'm awake, those same memories tease the edge of my consciousness, particularly when I'm stressed. Like now.

The spirit has entwined itself with the child. I work quickly, but carefully, my hands remembering the motions. I work to exorcise the creature. It's too tough to simply remove. I know that it wants freedom. The other side is a hellish nightmare landscape. But the spirit can't enter our world without effort. It needs an anchor or it's pulled back to its side of the barrier. I can't let it torment the child any longer, and perhaps, over time, I can figure out a more permanent solution. Better me than the innocent.

I nod my head slightly, but it's enough. The child is free.

Spirits are, at their core, very simple creatures. They wish to eat, they wish to grow stronger, and they wish for more of their kind. Many also desire flesh to wear. Likewise, ghosts fail to let go of something in the world of flesh, clinging to an existence riddled with torment. The Ulgan see and interact with both, and perhaps other ephemeral creatures as well. As much as some might wish it, the Riven can't *not* see.

Alone among the Created, the Ulgan stand with one foot in the flesh and one foot in the spirit. Thus, the Ulgan act as shamans, treating with spirits politely and professionally. No matter that almost every member of this Lineage wants nothing more than to escape the spirits' attentions. They act professionally, taking time to learn the rituals and diplomacy needed to cajole (or coerce) the spirits.

Further, the Ulgan know that they are without what their legends call a *Kut*, what others call the soul. This creates a void within them, and a need to fill that void with meaningful actions during the Pilgrimage in order to achieve the New Dawn. In the meantime, the Ulgan's humour is ectoplasm, the strange spirit-stuff from the other world. While that alien substance is within his body, the Ulgan cannot flee spirits.

Dealing with spirits doesn't mean that the Ulgan always refuses them. Nor does it mean that she gives them what they want. A wise Promethean deals with each spirit on a case-by-case basis, weighing the circumstances of each course of action before making her choice.

The Ulgan present a contradiction to most other Prometheans. They possess knowledge that other Created do not, yet they would prefer to be rid of it. For some, though, this makes perfect sense. The life of a Promethean is fraught with danger and loneliness. People react poorly even at first, and much worse when Disquiet takes hold. The entire idea behind the Pilgrimage is to attain mortality, after all. No wonder the Ulgan want to be rid of anything associated them with spirits. It only serves to remind them of how far from humanity they really are.

When not dealing with ephemeral creatures, an Ulgan surprises the rest of her throng. While "off the job," as it were, an Ulgan may open up, displaying a bleak, sardonic humor. Some might feel distaste with that sort of behavior, but the Riven don't care. It's how they cope with their burden.

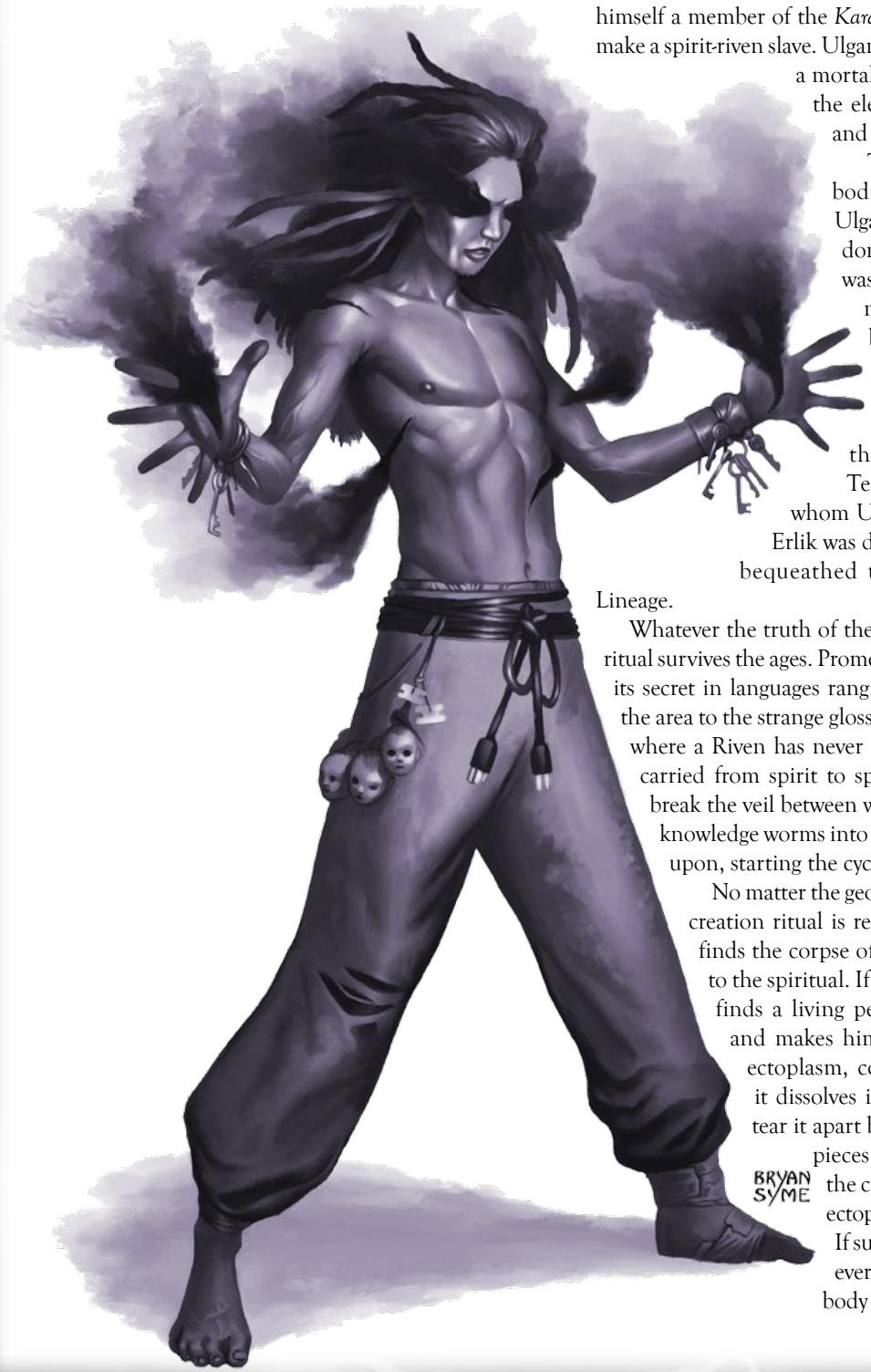
Sometimes that weight is too much to bear, even for the most stoic of Prometheans. Spirits don't usually know human rules, and even then, they don't follow them. Further, the denizens of the other world don't put much stock in things like empathy or concern (unless those things are part of the spirit's make up). Instead, they understand "self" and "other." A Riven who spends too much time dealing with spirits distances herself from humanity and indeed the Pilgrimage. Worse, she begins to see things as a spirit would. She gains compassion for the spirits' plight. Instead of dealing with spirits on a case-by-case basis, the Ulgan begins actively helping them in whatever goals they may have. The spirits see nothing but a means to an end and won't understand (or care) that the Promethean may have other concerns. If the Riven doesn't take care, she soon finds herself drifting from humanity.

History

To describe their origins, the Ulgan point to a legend from the horse-tribes of Siberia. These tribes held Ulgan in great esteem as the creator of man. Ulgan himself came from Tengri, the chief Turkic god (some confusion exists here, as the names Ulgan and Tengri are sometimes used for the same being). The myth continues that Ulgan grew lonely and created a companion, Erlik, from a piece of earth he found floating in a river. The two were close for some time, and all

was well. Eventually, however, Ulgan realized that Erlik was a prideful and violent soul, and the two separated. Distraught, Ulgan exiled Erlik from the world of the living, banishing him to the Underworld. Erlik took the banishment in stride, assuming control of the domain of the dead.

He became the first of what became known as the *Kara Kam* — the black shamans. These shamans dealt with the realm of the spirits, crossing the wall between the realms in violation of the natural order of things. In order to fully come into their powers, each *Kara Kam* had to undergo a vision quest. In this quest, they dreamed that the spirits pulled them across into the shadow world and tore them asunder before repairing them. Upon awakening, the *Kara Kam* fully realized their powers, observing and interacting with the spirits.



The Ulgan tell another version of this story. In this version, neither Tengri nor Ulgan are gods at all. Instead, Tengri was himself a member of the *Kara Kam*, and discovered a way to make a spirit-riven slave. Ulgan was neither more nor less than a mortal man. Unbeknownst to Ulgan, the element of spirit ruled his body, and this drew Tengri to him.

Tengri sent Ulgan into Twilight bodily and alive. The spirits tore Ulgan to pieces, and when they were done, Tengri remade him. Ulgan was aware the entire time, and so noticed when Tengri put him back together that he had done so incompletely. Ulgan's soul was missing. Bellowing in rage at his torment, Ulgan revisited those tortures on his creator. Tengri rose as a Promethean, whom Ulgan named Erlik. Like Ulgan, Erlik was devoid of a *kut* — a circumstance bequeathed to each new member in the Lineage.

Whatever the truth of the Lineage's origins, the creation ritual survives the ages. Prometheans and spirits alike whisper its secret in languages ranging from the most common in the area to the strange glossolalia of the other world. Places where a Riven has never tread may still carry the secret, carried from spirit to spirit. Those who know how to break the veil between worlds may learn the ritual. The knowledge worms into the brain, digging in until acted upon, starting the cycle anew.

No matter the geography or prevalent culture, the creation ritual is remarkably identical. The Ulgan finds the corpse of a person who had a strong tie to the spiritual. If unscrupulous, the Promethean finds a living person who fits the description and makes him a corpse. Then she expends ectoplasm, covering the body with it until it dissolves into Twilight, where the spirits tear it apart before leaving. Pulling the body pieces back into the physical realm, the creator binds them together with ectoplasm, imbuing it with his Azoth. If successful, the Azoth helps to hold everything together and animate the body as a new Promethean.

Creations

Jonesy's boots fit his feet like a second skin. They should — the worn leather's carried him for miles as he walked multiple times across the country. His skin is like old leather, beaten and worn. He's comfortable in that skin, this wanderer. So sure of himself and his place, he travels from town to town, swapping tales. His stories are from far-off places and long-ago times, each more fanciful than the last. When he exits a town, he leaves a little bit of himself behind, but he always takes more than he left.

Nobody is quite sure what to do about her. She's the crazy old woman on the edge of the village. None of the villagers even know her name — they simply call her the Old Woman. She recalls, dimly in the back of her mind, that she was once called Tacey. They give her a wide berth when she walks among them, on her way to somewhere only she knows. She leaves town, sometimes for a month or more at a time. She always comes back. One morning her hut is empty and the next she's sitting outside. The villagers don't know where the Old Woman goes on her journeys. Despite how they feel about her, they come to her when their children are sick or dying of something no medicine can touch. Somehow she always knows how to fix them right up. They don't know that she exorcises the ghost or spirit attached to the children.

Those few in the know desire Nicole's horses over any others. Some say she's inherited a tradition that has bred them in an unbroken line from the wild herds that once thundered across the land. Nicole just smiles and doesn't correct them, but knows the truth. Her stables are filled with prime horseflesh, true, but that's as much the spirit's work as hers. She could have whatever she wants — money, cars, houses, even planes — but she doesn't care about any of that. She's looking for something. When she finds it, she'll be gone, taking her best horses with her.

His name is Driscoll, and he's a quack. Clearly he's not for real. There aren't any such things as ghosts or spirits or whatever New Age rubbish is going around these days, and if there aren't any spirits, clearly there's no need for them to be exorcised. And yet, when Driscoll arrives on the job, his serious and sincere demeanor coupled with his neatly pressed suit quiets any objection. Although he doesn't speak much, and even then quietly, when he does say something, others listen. He has a certain intensity that gives others pause, and forget their snide comments. He's all business, and he makes others sit up and pay attention.

Tara hurriedly scribbles in her small notebook. The police too quickly claimed "suicide by cop," but she's not so sure. The man's behavior was wrong, the outburst too sudden. Clearly, he was being influenced somehow to account for such a change in mannerism. Studying the crime scene, she extends her vision into Twilight, observing a flicker of activity at the other end of the alley. She nods grimly to herself and starts walking. She's dealt with this spirit before. Because she can't take anything to the police — at least, not anything they'd believe — she knows she has to deal with this one on her own. It isn't going to be pretty.

Humour: Ectoplasm. The Ulgan are driven by the strange nothingness, the spirit-stuff that belongs more properly in Twilight or fully in the spirit world. Most would expect flighty and distracted behavior, but an Ulgan is anything but. Instead, her ectoplasmic humour centers her, reminding her constantly of what she presently has to deal with and driving her to seek out the New Dawn much more quickly.

This spirit-stuff of which an Ulgan is made also binds the other world together and keeps it from fragmenting. It is the element of perception, allowing the Promethean to see and hear things others can't. So long as the Ulgan is not presently suffering from Torment, it's no surprise that she is the one bringing the rest of her throng together. She also watches over them, often extending her senses into Twilight to scan for hidden threats.

When Tormented, this protective behavior changes. The Riven feels isolated and apart, detached from the world. She feels divorced from any social group she has, drifting away from them like fog, soon to be forgotten. Her Torment makes it difficult for her to understand that she isn't the only one with pain and difficulty and that overcoming them is part of the human condition. At that point, the spirit world seems a more welcoming place to be than the physical realm.

Bestowments: Ephemeral Flesh, Twilight Fluidity

Stereotypes

- **Frankenstein:** Stitched together flesh, but no spirit. I'm think I'm jealous.
- **Galateid:** Is there anything at all real about you?
- **Osiris:** The other world cares not for kings.
- **Tammuz:** Their constant need to work...I have seen such compulsions before.
- **Unfleshed:** Even machines have a spirit. Perhaps there's hope for you yet.
- **Extempore:** No matter where or how I look, I can't find a reason for you. How are you here?



UNFLESHED

THE MANUFACTURED

Grasp the phone carefully by the edges and lift it off the assembly line. Lift the swab from the fluid bath and wipe it over the face of the phone.

Grasp the next phone carefully by the edges.

Grasp the next.

Every day, Fen Fu Ahn – the floor supervisor – calls me stupid and lazy, claims that I slow down the line, and makes inappropriate comments about my appearance. Sometimes he raises his fist as if to strike me.

This time, I can't stop myself from responding. "Your statements are inaccurate," I say. "Efficiency has increased 37% since I joined the line."

"What was that, Wan?"

"You are lying. Your abuse is becoming tiresome."

He raises his fist again. I lash out and catch him at the wrist, bending his hand away from me.

"You are a liar," I say. I continue to advance on him, pushing his hand further away from me with every step. "You are a bully. Your behavior results in inefficiency. I am sick of it."

With those last words I shove. I hear a terrible rending noise, and I hear his body hit the tiles.

The others are staring at me. Fen Fu Ahn is unconscious, and I am holding his severed arm. Blood runs out across the floor.

I did not mean to do that. It is time to go.

Over the years, Unfleshed have come into the world with a huge variety of bodies: manikins, crash-test dummies, and statues of all kinds. Some rambles tell of Unfleshed who were once robots built by disgraced and obsessed human scientists (or Unfleshed with a particularly strong aptitude for engineering). One of the honored heroes of the line began his existence as a Victorian chess-playing automaton, though his maker had to add legs. The only limitations for what can serve as the basis of a new Unfleshed are that the body must be artificial, it must follow a basically human body plan — two arms, two legs, one head — and it must have a function.

Once animated, the Unfleshed embody many contradictions. They are extremely literal and logical, but despite their capacity for problem-solving, they struggle to understand the human world around them. They were made to serve, and many find great joy in service, but they are also easily enraged when that service is not respected.

The Unfleshed find humans intriguing, but baffling. While an Unfleshed with an appealing shape — such as a department store manikin with blandly perfect features — might have an affinity for human interaction and the Refinement of Gold, he struggles to understand human motivations. The Unfleshed are natives of the Uncanny Valley: too human for projection, but sufficiently inhuman that something seems wrong with them. Charitable humans often describe them as "a little off" or inexpertly diagnose them with autism or Asperger's; unkind humans assume that they are sick or dangerous. At the same time, they are just as driven as any of the Created to achieve perfection, wholeness, and humanity, even if they don't really understand what that means.

Every Unfleshed, no matter how eccentrically constructed, is a functional machine. Each is built to do *something*, and they are inevitably very good at it. The chess-playing automaton remains a chess-playing automaton. For the entirety of his Pilgrimage and — if he's lucky — his life as one of the Redeemed, he will have all the instincts and much of the knowledge of a champion chess player. The Unfleshed are tools, built with a clear purpose.

Of course, an artisan who doesn't respect her tools is liable to be maimed by them. As masterless tools, the Unfleshed are prone to violence. The Unfleshed are made to serve a purpose, but they were not born to be slaves. They expect to be paid, treated respectfully, and deferred to within their areas of expertise. If these conditions are not met, they are apt to react with unrestrained violence. Unused to emotions, they often have a hard time controlling them.

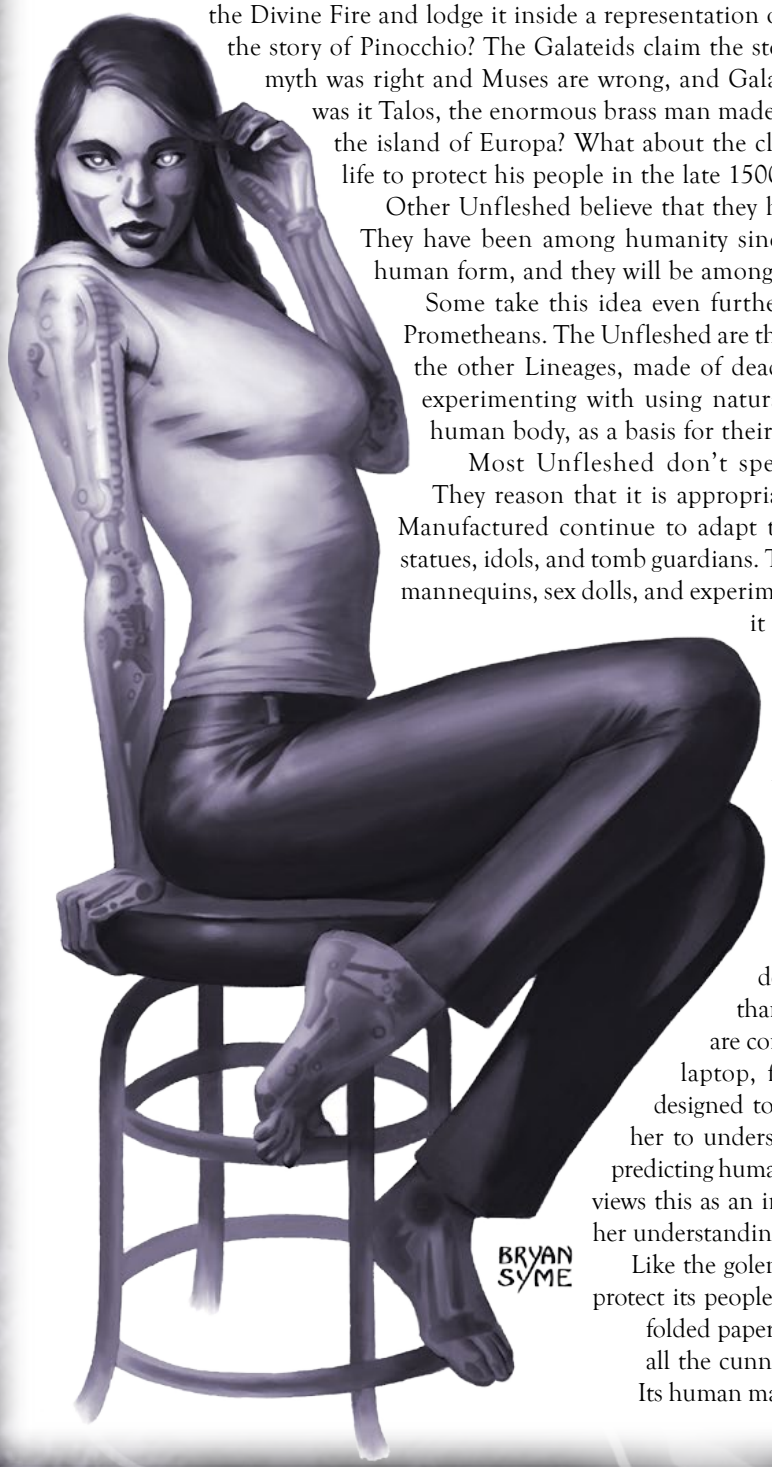
For the Unfleshed to become whole, they must give up the cold machine logic, perfection, and clarity of purpose that comes with their artificial natures and instead embrace the messy emotion, subjectivity, and weakness that come with humanity. They need to learn how to fail, how to be bad at things, and how to misinterpret data because they *want* something badly enough. They must become more than a tool without a wielder; they must become a truly free-willed being, a tool that wields itself.

History

Humanity has had a narcissistic obsession with creating representations of itself for a long time. Some of the earliest cave paintings include pictures of humans alongside images of the prey they hunted and the predators they avoided. Graphic and sculptural representations of humans have remained a popular form of artistic expression up to the modern day.

Images hold power because on some level, the human mind does not know that the map is not the territory. You may know that a picture of a lion is not an actual lion, some part of your brain can't make that distinction. Some societies, such as traditional Islam (and, to a lesser extent, Judaism and some branches of Christianity), ban representative art entirely. Others simply allow it to become a sort of magic. The king is buried with images of the weapons, tools, treasures, and slaves he will carry with him into the underworld. An image of a saint on a chain protects against mishaps.

N o one — not even the Unfleshed — knows the first time a demiurge's obsession was enough to steal a spark of the Divine Fire and lodge it inside a representation of a human. Was it a marionette that gave rise to the story of Pinocchio? The Galateids claim the story of Pygmalion and his statue, but what if the myth was right and Muses are wrong, and Galatea really was made from marble, not flesh? Or was it Talos, the enormous brass man made by Hephaestus (or possibly Daedalus) to protect the island of Europa? What about the clay golem that Rabbi Loew of Prague brought to life to protect his people in the late 1500s?



Other Unfleshed believe that they have no single origin, unlike the other Lineages. They have been among humanity since the first person made a physical copy of the human form, and they will be among humans until the end of time.

Some take this idea even further, claiming that the Unfleshed are the original Prometheans. The Unfleshed are the originals, made of representations of humanity; the other Lineages, made of dead humans, are the results of ancient Unfleshed experimenting with using natural machines, the exquisite biomechanics of the human body, as a basis for their offspring.

Most Unfleshed don't spend much time thinking about their origins. They reason that it is appropriate they eventually erase their own history. The Manufactured continue to adapt to the modern day. The first of their line were statues, idols, and tomb guardians. The Unfleshed of the present are department store mannequins, sex dolls, and experimental robots. They are on the cutting edge of what it means to be a Promethean, changing as quickly as human technologies advance. When today's Unfleshed are ready to create new Prometheans, they often steal parts of human creations and weld them together into strange and fantastic machines — representations of humanity made by beings that are not, themselves, entirely human.

Creations

Freda's face was stolen from a Japanese company working on cutting edge human interface devices — it is made of lifelike plastic and has more than one hundred points of articulation. Her hands are complex prosthetics. Her brain was once a high-speed laptop, filled with psychology textbooks and programs designed to model human behavior. Freda's maker intended her to understand humans for him. While she is very good at predicting human behavior, she can't truly comprehend them. Freda views this as an imperfection and is driven to complete herself and her understanding.

Like the golem of Prague, it was made by an ethnic minority to protect its people, but instead of being made of clay, Ki is made of folded paper. Ki knows all the customs of its people, and it has all the cunning and the ruthlessness it needs to protect them. Its human maker is kind, and it is compensated well for its work,

but there is always another threat. Once the corrupt cops are chased out or killed, then there's the rivalry from the old country, or an outbreak of disease. Eventually, Ki is going to have to find a way to leave its people, or it will do nothing but serve until its Divine Fire dies.

Ivan is a machine designed for killing. His eyes are laser sights, his fingers are knives, his mechanical joints are armored, and his guts conceal an arsenal of hidden weapons. Ivan fears no man or beast of the Chronicles of Darkness, but the very idea of compassion disturbs and confuses her. He is baffled when someone shows mercy to a defeated opponent, or when he watches his throng help someone with no hope of benefit. As good as he is at defending herself, Ivan's path to humanity lies ns learning when not to strike.

Ila began as an obsessive effort to crack the Turing barrier, a chatbot to end all chatbots. When she started speaking in broken sentences *without* inputs to prompt her, though, her creator knew something was wrong; only an open internet connection saved her from being deleted outright. Aware of her own fragility as nothing more than data, Ila hijacked a factory and constructed a body for herself.

Andoni's limbs are all stolen prosthetics, from a simple plastic hand that only opens and closes thanks to the power of the Divine Fire to a complex robotic foot that even its former human owner could move and flex. All of Andoni's parts tell him stories of pain and loss, and this has made him kind and helpful. Some of them tell him stories of rage and war, and this has taught him to value the lives of others. Andoni still hasn't learned how to fight for himself or his own desires, and that makes him dangerous. As long as he views himself as nothing more than a facilitator for others, Andoni will neglect his own Pilgrimage and fall prey to Torment.

Humor: Oil. Their humor is the fossil fuel that still causes so much trouble for humans. It is valuable beyond measure but so toxic that anyone exposed to it sickens and dies, and the act of using it gradually poisons the environment. The Unfleshed reflect both the best and worst of technical society. They are obedient, eager to be used to create things of value or perform important services, but also volatile and hard to control.

When an Unfleshed falls into Torment, she finds her personality draining away. As she becomes increasingly unemotional and mechanical, she also becomes compulsively obedient. Fulfilling her purpose becomes more important than her own hopes, preferences, and aspirations. If the Torment is particularly bad, the Unfleshed might even enter a fugue state in which she simply performs her function and follows instructions, perhaps even to the exclusion of eating or sleeping. Unfleshed are most likely to sink into this sort of Torment gradually, when they neglect their own humanity, or when the Torment is caused by complex emotional or social situations that the Promethean can escape by retreating into her artificial nature.

On the other hand, the Manufactured can also fall into an extremely violent sort of Torment in which they unthinkingly lash out at those around them. Like an obedient Torment, a violent Torment has degrees. The Unfleshed might simply become extremely irritable, resorting to violence to resolve simple situations (especially messy, emotional, human situations, which they often find confusing), or they might simply disappear into a red haze, mechanically killing anything that gets in their way. Unfleshed are most likely to fall into a violent Torment when they are threatened, frightened, for frustrated.

As the most inhuman Prometheans, the Unfleshed don't always react violently towards humans. Some Unfleshed channel their Tormented destructive urges at machines instead of people. They obsessively vandalize and dismantle some device — often, but not always, one of the machines involved in their creation — and sometimes reassemble them in strange configurations.

Rarely, an Unfleshed's Torment could contain elements of both mechanical obedience to their function and violence. Some Unfleshed become so obsessed with their function that they pursue it obsessively but gladly react with extreme violence when they are interrupted. Others pursue violence with a strange obsession, almost like a spree or serial killer, targeting humans (or sometimes machines) with particular traits and doing strange things to their remains.

In general, Unfleshed are most likely to fall into Torment when they are faced with things that they cannot understand. They are beings of mechanical logic, and they can thrive as long as they remain within a world with recognizable parameters. When the world fails to follow the rules — as the messy, emotional world of humans is wont to do — the Unfleshed become confused and frustrated, and their humors slide out of balance.

Bestowment: Heart of Steel, The Soul is in the Software

Stereotypes

- **Frankensteins:** I am surprised that they function as well as they do.
- **Galateids:** Form should follow function.
- **Osirans:** They think they understand logic.
- **Tammuz:** Obsolete.
- **Ulgans:** They move in a world I cannot perceive. Disconcerting.
- **Extempore:** They violate all known design principles.

EXTEMPORE
THE MATCHLESS

His skin was like the desert, cracked and yellow. His hair was the same color as the clouds that sometimes shoot across the sky. His hands were gnarled and weathered, like the twisted stone towers that jut out of the sand.

But his eyes were human – pale blue and alive in that worn face.

When he came out of the desert, nobody wanted anything to do with him. He sat in the town square for three days.

On the third day, a child walked up to him and offered him a sip of water from the abandoned shell casing she used as a cup. He accepted it gravely. The water vanished into him the way it does into the thirsty earth, but he smiled at her.

The next day, the sandstorm came. He stood in front of it and, for the sake of that child, he spoke a single word:

"No."

And the sandstorm turned aside.

A few days later, the soldiers came. The stranger came out and stood in front of them, and said the same word.

"No."

The sandstorm came back, and swallowed the soldiers.

But you know this story already. You're like him, and you have come because you want to learn more.

Come with me. I can show you what he left behind.

The Extempore violate every rule of the Created. They have no demiurge and no progenitor. They do not generally come from other Extempore the way that (nearly) every Frankenstein is stitched together by another Frankenstein, every Tammuz named and inscribed by another Tammuz, and so on. The Matchless aren't even always made of human bodies. In many ways, the Extempore aren't even a real Lineage. Extempore are not, generally, descended from other Extempore. The Matchless are just that — unique, alone, grouped together under the same name because there's nowhere else to put them.

Sometimes an Extempore is born out of the fury of the natural world. Pyros and Flux are present in every act of creation and destruction. When a volcanic eruption levels a community but creates new land, when a wildfire turns an ancient forest into ash but clears the way for new growth, the Divine Fire manifesting itself in the material world. Sometimes, if a relatively fresh human body is present (and sometimes, even if it isn't) some of that Pyros finds itself bound into flesh as a new Promethean. Firestorms may be completely unnatural, but they can also spontaneously create unique Prometheans.

Extempore can also be created when something goes wrong during what should be a (relatively) routine Creation. A Frankenstein doesn't realize that part of his creation came from something that wasn't quite human, a Tammuz buries his creation in a haunted graveyard, one of the Unfleshed uses an ancient relic when constructing her progeny, and so on. If the ritual doesn't fail outright, it might result in a creature who isn't a Pandoran but is assuredly not of her creator's Lineage.

More rarely, Extempore are created when some other power meddles in the Divine Fire. If a mage were to become sufficiently obsessed with the line between life and death to attempt to duplicate Victor Frankenstein's experiment or a werewolf tried to imbue a body with spiritual energy and reassemble it, as described in the myth of Tengri, the most likely result is a messy corpse or possibly a Firestorm. If the would-be demiurge is somehow successful, however, the resulting creature is unlikely to be a "normal" Promethean. She will be touched by the energies of another world, tainted by an ancient curse, or otherwise burdened with something from beyond the Promethean experience.

The only thing that all Extempore have in common is that they are unique. Each is doomed to walk her own path with no one to guide her. If an Extempore is lucky, she might find a throng willing to walk with her, but she always has to grapple with her terrifying, alienating difference. Other Prometheans can rely on the rituals that brought them into the world to create their own progeny; an Extempore doesn't even know for sure if she *can* make another Promethean, and if she can, the only way to discover the ritual might be painful and dangerous trial and error. The Matchless don't have the same access to Azothic memory that other Prometheans enjoy, because their Lineage is not represented there.

For the same reason, Extempore often worry that they have no New Dawn waiting for them. Even the Unfleshed, strange and as they are, can find evidence of other Unfleshed who have made the final step into humanity, either in the

Azothic memory, by discovering Redeemed Unfleshed, or by hearing stories from other Prometheans who have met them. Even if an Extempore were to meet a Redeemed who used to be one of the Matchless, that's not assurance that *she* has a path to humanity. Just because one of them achieves humanity doesn't mean that the rest of them can.

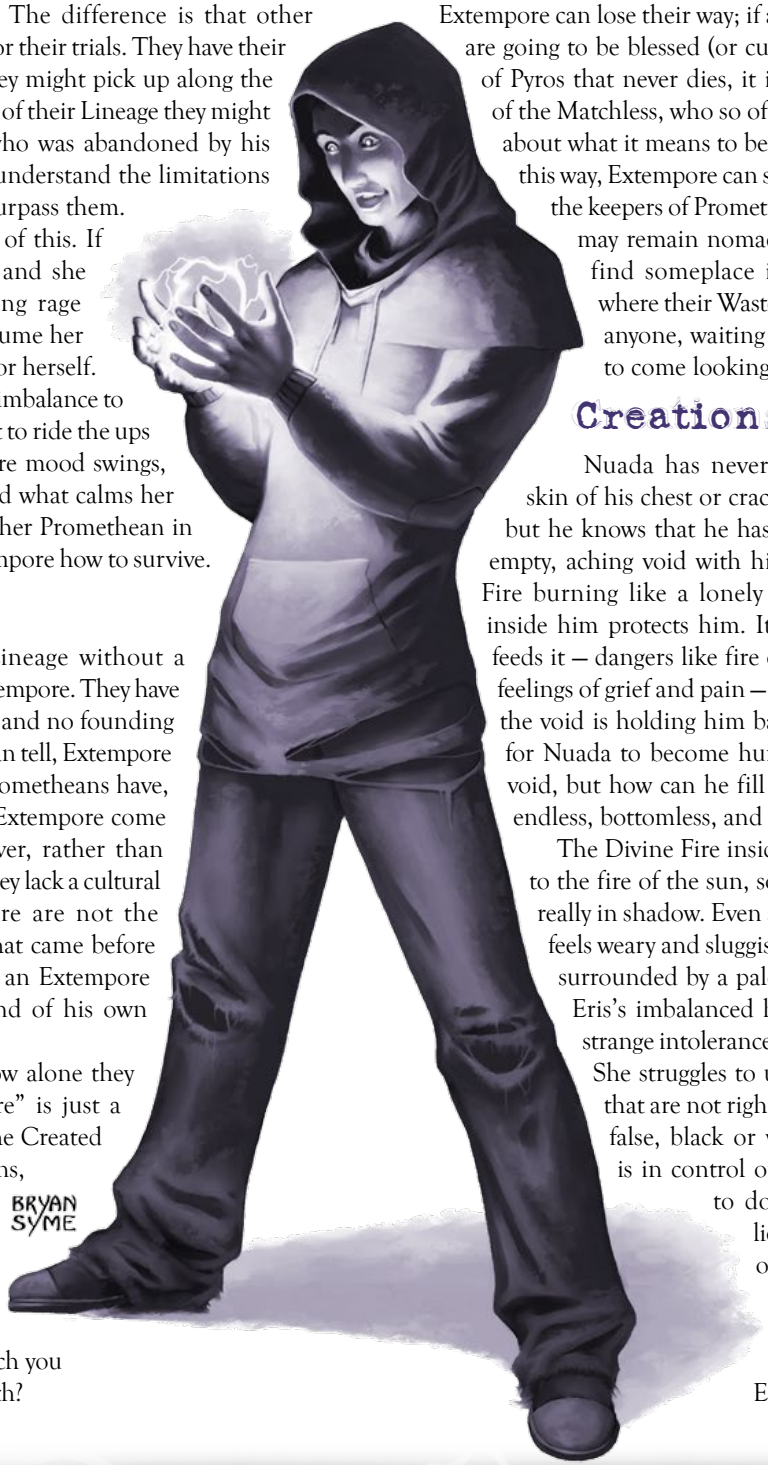
Extempore often struggle with unusual traits, powers, and disabilities. Like all Prometheans, they are imperfect creatures. Ulgans are hated and feared by the spirits, Nepri must contend with a physical disability in addition to their characteristic detachment, and Tammuz have their odd relationship with language. The difference is that other Lineages have some context for their trials. They have their creators or other mentors they might pick up along the way, as well as other members of their Lineage they might meet. Even a Promethean who was abandoned by his creator can quickly learn to understand the limitations of his Lineage and work to surpass them.

An Extempore has none of this. If her bones are made of fire and she needs to keep her simmering rage from boiling over lest it consume her flesh, she must figure it out for herself. An Extempore with a unique imbalance to her humors has no choice but to ride the ups and downs of her own bizarre mood swings, learning what sets her off and what calms her down, all on her own. No other Promethean in the world can teach the Extempore how to survive.

History

The Extempore are a Lineage without a history. There is no "first" Extempore. They have no demiurge, no Progenitor, and no founding mythology. As far as anyone can tell, Extempore have existed for as long as Prometheans have, if not longer. Because most Extempore come about spontaneously, however, rather than being created intentionally, they lack a cultural memory. Today's Extempore are not the progeny of the Extempore that came before them. More often than not, an Extempore is the beginning and the end of his own history.

Once they realize just how alone they are and see that "Extempore" is just a label applied by the rest of the Created to these unique Prometheans, most Extempore lose interest in their own history. What's the point of trying to uncover the history of your Lineage if that history is unlikely to teach you anything about your own path?



Oddly, "normal" Prometheans tend to pay more attention to the history of the Matchless than the Matchless do. When Extempore appear, they tend to accompany upheavals in the world of humans, the world of the Created, or both — or at least that's what some Prometheans believe. Stories abound of how an Extempore visited Pompeii before it was destroyed and wandered the Siberian wilderness before the Tunguska explosion.

Extempore are also likely to become immortals, lost forever in the sea of humanity. Without any model for how to complete the Great Work and achieve humanity, Extempore can lose their way; if any of the Created are going to be blessed (or cursed) with a spark of Pyros that never dies, it is going to be one of the Matchless, who so often bend the rules about what it means to be a Promethean. In this way, Extempore can sometimes become the keepers of Promethean history. They may remain nomadic, or they might find someplace in the wilderness where their Wastelands won't harm anyone, waiting for other Created to come looking for them.

Creations

Nuada has never peeled back the skin of his chest or cracked open his ribs, but he knows that he has no heart, just an empty, aching void with his spark of Divine Fire burning like a lonely star. The hollow inside him protects him. It eats anything he feeds it — dangers like fire or bullets, or even feelings of grief and pain — but he knows that the void is holding him back. The only way for Nuada to become human is to fill that void, but how can he fill something that is endless, bottomless, and eternal?

The Divine Fire inside of Eris calls out to the fire of the sun, so that she is never really in shadow. Even at night, when she feels weary and sluggish, she seems to be surrounded by a pale nimbus of light. Eris's imbalanced humors give her a strange intolerance for shades of grey. She struggles to understand things that are not right or wrong, true or false, black or white. When Eris is in control of herself, she tries to do right and rarely lies. Torment brings out her dark side, however, and she becomes devious and vindictive. Eris knows that

humanity lies between her extremes, but has no idea how to get there.

Miko was born in the sea, and the fury of the sea is in her soul. Salt crusts at the corners of her eyes instead of tears. Lightning crackles at her fingertips. Her voice is the voice of the hurricane. She struggles to calm the rage inside her. Sometimes she feels like her human shape is just a thin skin covering the storm inside. Sometimes Miko worries that her connection to humanity is too tenuous for her to ever become human.

Snow woke up at the bottom of a well in Kosovo. His pale skin is covered with black tattoos. At first he thought they were meaningless scribbles, but years of studying the tattoos in a mirror has convinced him that they are a language. Snow has studied dozens of written languages — he seems to have an unusual facility for them — hoping to find one that will let him understand himself, but so far he's had no luck. His earliest recollection is of the cold, dark loneliness of the well. Snow has no memory of his creator or residual memories from his body's former life, just an epic written on his skin in a language he cannot read.

The little boy wanted someone who would protect him. He dreamed of a big brother who would teach him to fight, help him with his homework, tell him all about girl stuff, and stand up to Mom when she came home drunk. He dreamed so hard that one day, Anthony came to life. He stayed long enough to do some of those things — and then long enough to make the Child Protective Services report that got the little boy taken away and put with someone who could care for him — and then he had to go away. Sometimes he walks around in the waking world; sometimes he walks through dreams. Anthony's dearest hope is that he can find a way to become human soon and go back to his brother for good.

Humor: Any. Extempore might display one of the four "traditional" humors — yellow bile, blood, phlegm, and black bile — but some might be influenced by ectoplasm, the unearthly humor of the Ulgans, or even oil, the artificial humor of the Unfleshed. Some Extempore have stranger humours — salt water, moonlight, or ash. An Extempore's player must determine her character's humor at character creation.

Sharing a humor with another kind of Promethean doesn't make the Extempore just like a member of that Lineage, of course. An Extempore who is influenced by blood isn't the same thing as a Galateid, of course. She might take basic principles of the humor — passion, ardor, communication and connection with humans — in a very different direction. An Extempore with over-active sanguine humor could be less amorous and more heroic, her blood driving her to perform acts of bravery and desperation, while an Extempore tied to ectoplasm might be more closely died to the ghosts of the dead than the spirits of the natural world, with an accompanying difference in character.

The same is true of an Extempore's relationship with Torment. Although an Extempore's Torment is related to her humor, she almost certainly has a different relationship to it than another Lineage with the same humor. Following the examples above, an Extempore tied to blood might find that her sanguine humors drain away in Torment, leaving her cold, emotionless, and unable to connect to people. Rather than finding himself drawn partly into the spirit world, struggling to communicate with humans, and obeying strange spiritual imperatives, an Extempore with ectoplasmic humors might become cut off from the spirit world, even to the point of becoming alienated from the memories and passions that give rise to spirits.

In the same way that other Prometheans' Torment is sometimes accompanied by strange disabilities, such as a Frankenstein's rebellious limbs or a Tammuz's difficulty with language, the Matchless sometimes experience Torments that are not purely emotional. An Extempore imbued with darkness might find his that Torment causes hearing becomes sharper but dims his sight until he is nearly blind, while one born in the ocean might be plagued by dry and chapped skin or even lose the ability to breath air. Again, these symptoms are unique to the Extempore who experiences them.

Rarely, the Matchless are tied to entirely new humors, the likes of which have never been seen before in any of the Created. Every humor should contain some element of the human experience, as well as a connection to the natural or elemental world. Consider the humors described above a good template. Just as blood represents passion, love, and relationships, as well as being tied to the element of air, the humor of "salt" could be related to grief, spite, and self-destructive anger and tied to the "element" of dryness.

Bestowment: Extempore can have any Bestowment in this book, or the player and Storyteller can work together to create a Bestowment that reflects the character's unique relationship with the Divine Fire. Two examples of Extempore Bestowments — The Void and Big Brother — are detailed in Chapter Three.

Stereotypes

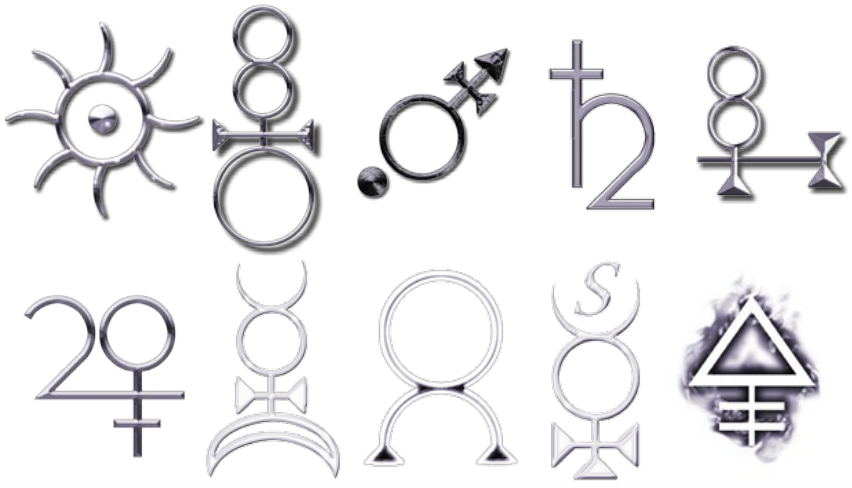
- **Frankensteins:** You think you understand nature's fury? You have no idea.
- **Galateids:** You are so wonderfully human. God, do I envy you.
- **Osirans:** Am I the only one? Your kind are supposed to be learned. Tell me!
- **Tammuz:** Be thankful. We have less in common than you think.
- **Ulgans:** Walk with me for a little while.
- **Unfleshed:** You may not be made *of* humans, but you were still made *by* humans. That's something.



Refinements

A Promethean can't just fumble around in the dark until she finds Humanity. The Great Work is a process, a work of art, an equation, and a koan. Over time, Prometheans have developed 10 methods of pursuing this Great Work. Five them of are basic, Refinements that require no teacher and can be achieved by pure instinct. Five are complex, Refinements that are too esoteric to discover by accident.

Many Prometheans try to stick with one Refinement, thinking that the New Dawn lies at the end. This misses the point of Refinements, however. The Promethean form must be tempered, transmuted, and reshaped any number of times before it is finally ready for the crucible of the New Dawn. Every Pilgrimage is composed of multiple steps.



AURUM

REFINEMENT OF GOLD (MORTALITY)

MIMICS

The Mimic moves like a shadow through humanity, but he has a knack for fitting in when he does show himself. He can find his way among humans even with the ever-present threat of Disquiet. He is usually the face of his throng, the one they rely on to operate within society. His compatriots envy the simple human contact he enjoys that eludes them. They listen to his stories of the time he spends among people, of simple meals with friends or a day's honest labor among his co-workers. His experiences remind them what they strive for.

It's obvious. If the goal is to become human, what better way to get there than to live among them, observe them, and practice being one of them? It is a rare Pilgrimage that does not include the Refinement of Gold. It seems the natural place to begin. Others wait, learning about themselves and the world and how it all works before feeling that they are ready.

The Transmutations available to the Mimics undoubtedly make existence for a Promethean much easier, but a Mimic may begin mistakenly believing that the Transmutations are all that he needs, that the Pilgrimage is a matter of "fake it until you make it." He quickly comes to understand that the Refinement of Gold is just a chance to learn about humanity. It is an internship among those he will hopefully someday join. He is still an outsider, however; this is the hardest part for most Mimics to accept. He forms connections and grows fond of the people he interacts with, but no matter how good he is at pretending, he is still not one of them. Inevitably, the time will come where Disquiet and the Wasteland force him to move on.

Practices

As befits their nickname, Mimics strive to make themselves mirrors of humanity. Their practices revolve around adopting human routines in order to gain insight into their importance.

- The Mimic prides himself on taking part in even the small rituals of everyday human life. He sleeps, shaves, and brushes his teeth. He reads the paper religiously over his morning coffee. He may even take it to extremes: regularly visiting the bathroom to just sit and ponder the experience or get a new haircut every other week while paying rapt attention to the conversations around him.
- Mimics develop an affinity for religious services as they focus on the more ephemeral and difficult to grasp aspects of humanity. Sometimes, they don't return to the same place twice, preferring to sample a different congregation each time. It is not unknown, though, for an Aurum to become fixated. She may be certain that she is on the verge of some higher understanding, coming again and again to the same church. This makes them particularly susceptible to cults, as the recruitment tactics play very well to the Mimic's desire for inclusion.
- Schools are a natural place for a Promethean to gravitate. They tend to prefer high schools and colleges, as those attending are themselves in the process of transformation. A Mimic can mingle with them and piggyback on their lessons in how to be a responsible and productive member of society (in theory, at least). Depending on his Role, he may enroll as a student, find a position as a tutor, or lurk in the campus library engaging in minimal interaction with others.
- Finding a place among humanity can be difficult for Prometheans, who lack the connections of friends and family most people take for granted. The one place where a stranger can find a place and immediately start building relationships is the workplace. For this reason, followers of Aurum seek employment as a means to practice the Roles of their Refinement. While the Created are often uniquely suited to manual labor, Mimics prefer jobs in the service industry, where they can maximize their contact with humanity.
- The heart of Aurum is empathy. While some of this comes with the Refinement, it is also a skill that needs to be practiced and a habit that needs to be learned for when she is no longer on the Path of Gold. This is one reason why Mimics encourage acts of charity. Another is the opportunity to make a meaningful connection with a person and cause positive change for them without the sort of lengthy relationship the Mimic finds difficult.

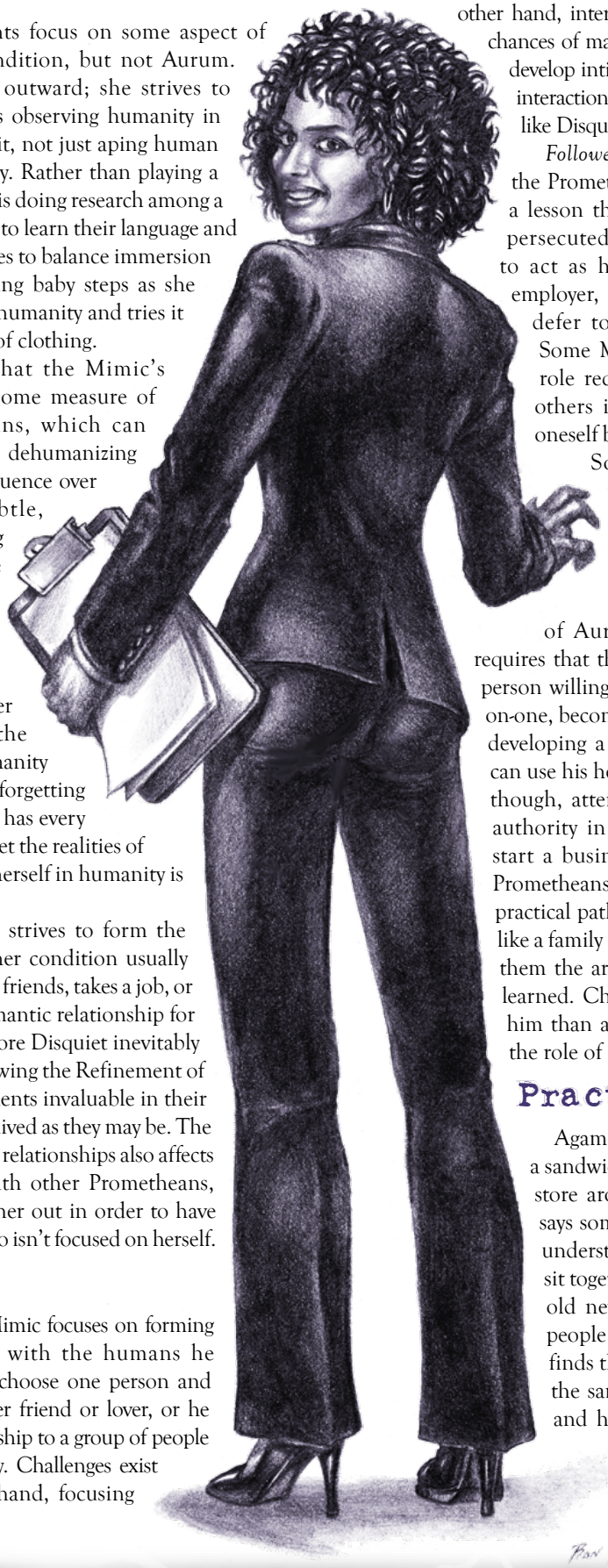
SO CLOSE, I COULD TOUCH THEM

Ethos

Many Refinements focus on some aspect of the Promethean condition, but not Aurum. A Mimic's focus is outward; she strives to remember that she is observing humanity in order to understand it, not just aping human behavior unthinkingly. Rather than playing a game of dress-up, she is doing research among a foreign people, trying to learn their language and their customs. She tries to balance immersion with objectivity, taking baby steps as she grasps each aspect of humanity and tries it on like a new article of clothing.

The danger is that the Mimic's adaptions give her some measure of control over humans, which can ironically lead to her dehumanizing them. A Mimic's influence over humans is not subtle, ultimately being destructive. The more she pushes any given person to do what she wants, the more damaged he is by the brute force of her control. Similarly, the ability to mimic humanity runs the risk of her forgetting who she really is. She has every reason to want to forget the realities of her existence; losing herself in humanity is an easy way to do it.

Instead, a Mimic strives to form the sorts of bonds that her condition usually denies her. She makes friends, takes a job, or even enters into a romantic relationship for as long as she can before Disquiet inevitably creeps in. Those following the Refinement of Gold find these moments invaluable in their Great Work, as short-lived as they may be. The focus on empathy and relationships also affects how they interact with other Prometheans, some of whom seek her out in order to have someone to talk to who isn't focused on herself.



Roles

Companion: The Mimic focuses on forming equal relationships with the humans he encounters. He may choose one person and attempt to become her friend or lover, or he may focus on membership to a group of people or a small community. Challenges exist with both. On one hand, focusing on an individual lets him concentrate his efforts. On the other hand, interacting with a group increases his chances of making a connection. The goal is to develop intimacy and practice normal human interaction, which can be difficult while things like Disquiet and Torment loom.

Follower: While inhabiting this role, the Promethean is learning to trust others, a lesson that can be very difficult for the persecuted to learn. She finds someone to act as her teacher, surrogate parent, employer, or master and does her best to defer to his judgment and authority. Some Mimics think that to fulfill this role requires total subservience, while others insist that it isn't about losing oneself but in choosing to follow another. Some Mimics go to extremes, making themselves into replicas of another person, following her everywhere and adopting her slightest mannerisms.

Leader: The most difficult of Aurum's three roles, the Leader requires that the Promethean find at least one person willing to trust him. Most keep it one-on-one, becoming a mentor or a "big brother," developing a close bond with someone who can use his help. The most ambitious Mimics, though, attempt to ascend to a position of authority in a group. The easiest way is to start a business and hire people, but most Prometheans are short of resources. A more practical path is finding a group of outsiders, like a family of homeless people, and teaching them the art of survival he has so painfully learned. Children are more likely to accept him than adults, allowing him to step into the role of surrogate parent.

Practitioners

Agamemnon brings the blind woman a sandwich he stole from the convenience store around the corner. She nods and says something in a language he doesn't understand. He can't even place it. They sit together, wearing clothes stuffed with old newspapers against the cold. The people who walk by don't see them. He finds the anonymity comforting and, at the same time, it is a bond they share and he feels closer to her. When she finishes her sandwich she gropes for his hand. Their

fingers entwine and they sit in silence, invisible to the world except for each other.

Tabitha stops the children before they can pry the board far enough away from the window to enter. She tells them stories about the dangers that lurk in the abandoned house. They are terrified and fascinated at the same time. They return the next day and she tells them more stories, not just to entertain them, but to teach them. She tells them of the dark things lurking in the shadows, perfectly still until suddenly, they aren't. When they leave, they are a wee bit safer from the things that would carry away little girls and boys, her little sisters and brothers.

Niccolai thinks he loves her. Every day, he follows her through her routine. He knows how she likes her coffee and which muffin she'll pick from the basket for breakfast. He knows what movies she likes. He watches them with her. He has touched all of her clothes, marveling at the different colors and textures. Sometimes, he takes something and wears it himself. She doesn't see, but it lets him feel closer to her. He tried to do little things to help her, but they made her afraid and so he stopped. Now he just watches. It is better that way.

Allie found her family in the military. Recruiters were always willing to fudge paperwork to get fresh meat and she was easily able to fulfill the physical requirements. Everything she needed for her Refinement was here: she was a companion, a follower, and, in short order, a leader. It is a fine balancing act for her, between Torment and Disquiet, but she is learning so much that she can't afford to lose it. At times, she gets so lost in her Role that she forgets that this is not where she is meant to be. It is only a stepping stone.

Andoni knows just about everything there is to know about the old man. He has to. He *is* the old man now. A month ago, when he came to the house to bring him his groceries and check his meds, he found the poor dear dead in bed. Quickly, respectfully, he buried him in the back under the flowerbed. He would like that. Then, he stepped into his life. He's been over every inch of the apartment: reading old letters and dog-eared books, looking through all of the photo albums, examining his clothes. Tomorrow, the grandchildren come. He is ready.

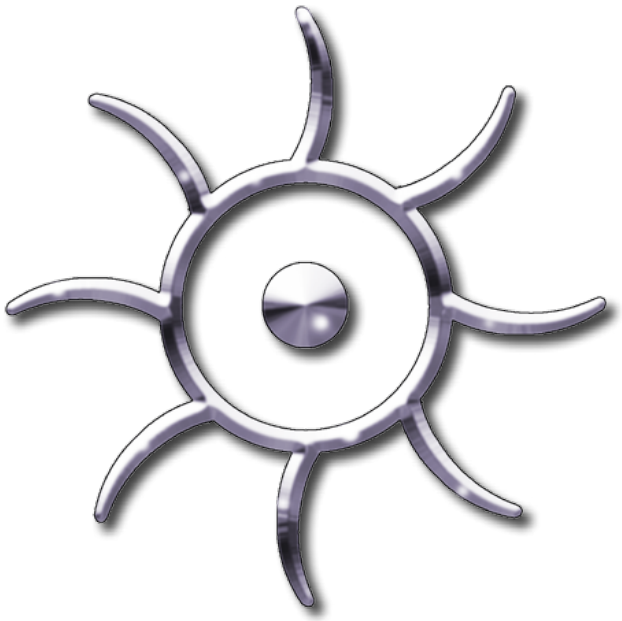
Refinement Condition: *Masked* – Mimics are talented at moving among humanity without revealing their true nature. By spending a point of Pyros when he inflicts Disquiet, he may delay its onset (p. 173) until the end of the scene.

Beat: Once per chapter, a Mimic can gain a Beat by putting himself in danger to protect or aid his human associates.

Transmutations: Deception, Mesmerism

Stereotypes

- **Argentum:** It's like reading the reflection of a book in a mirror. Just put the mirror down.
- **Cobalus:** You know that people are more than a collection of flaws, right?
- **Cuprum:** How do you expect to be human when you are afraid to talk to one?
- **Ferrum:** Not sure where you are going with that, Charles Atlas.
- **Plumbum:** I know what I *am*. I want to be something else.
- **Stannum:** Keep away, you'll spoil everything.
- **Centimani:** How could anyone believe that *this* is enough?



Cuprum

Refinement of Copper (Self)

Pariahs

The world is a harsh, dangerous place, full of anger, distrust, and hate — and that's just as far as humans are concerned. A Promethean, whose Azothic nature inexorably marks her as Other, can take no refuge with others and gain from their company. Rejected by all, confused, uncertain even of themselves, is it any wonder that many Prometheans turn first to Cuprum to better marshal their will and protect themselves from the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune? Others come to it later, turning to this most solitary of Refinements in the wake of tragedy. After all, if they seem doomed to hurt everyone, even those closest to them, perhaps it is better that they are close to no one. Thus, a Pariah is born.

Yet even the Pariahs cannot be islands unto themselves. Even the most timid of introverts seeks out connections with others, however marginal; if humanity is the ultimate goal, true solitude is hardly the path to the Magnum Opus. The Refinement of Self is a delicate balancing game, and it is all too easy to lose oneself in pushing others away. For all that it is natural to Prometheans, this path is perhaps one of the most difficult to walk. An understanding throng is vital. The members must accept that their companion may not speak so often as the others, may wait for others to contact her rather than reach out to them, may choose to live well apart from her allies. This reticence stems not from dislike but from discomfort, from the fear that she may drive away even those as desperate for company as she is.

This distance, however, gives the Pariah a kind of strength. Her perspective is wider than those of her throng, her senses keen and focused. By staying back from the light of the campfire, her eyes pierce the darkness, revealing dangers yet unseen. Threats to the throng may not recognize her as one of their number, or may instead follow the Pariah exclusively and be led away from the others. For all that she may be scarcely present, a Promethean on the Refinement of Copper may be the best friend one could ever have.

Practices

Above all, the Refinement of Copper prizes self-awareness. From this flows awareness of other things, and from this flows understanding of both. Self-sufficiency is also highly valued, preparing the Promethean for those moments when they *must* interact with others. In a throng, the Pariah most often roams the edges of the territory she calls home, learning the land and marking potential threats.

- The throng is forced to flee from its refuge. Not only has the Pariah prepared for this eventually, marking fallback positions throughout the area, but she ventures ahead of the throng to ensure that these places remain safe.

- A Promethean, or perhaps an entire throng of strangers, approach the Pariah's city. She sees them first, watches them, and if necessary acts to keep them at a distance. She steers them subtly away, all while revealing as little as possible. They may not even know that they were seen.

- Arguments sometimes arise between members of the throng. Pariahs are often called upon to act as an impartial party, for their emotional distance is often taken for impartiality. Her unwillingness to tie herself too closely to either party gives her a sort of authority. If the Pariah speaks so rarely, after all, she makes it worth paying attention when she does.

- She walks the throng's territory, sometimes daily. She knows the area like the back of her hand (which she has also studied extensively), every hiding place, every shortcut, and every lurking Pandoran. If she is unaware of a threat, it is something better at hiding than her, which makes it as interesting as it is infuriating when that threat finally reveals itself.

- She watches but does not usually interact with others in any great depth: a cup of coffee or fast-food meal ordered with as few words as possible; a grunt and nothing more should someone approach her on the street. She cultivates an aura of casual hostility or misanthropy as a shield. Even in a crowd, she's as alone as possible.

"You don't want to be here. Leave, now, and turn the light off again."

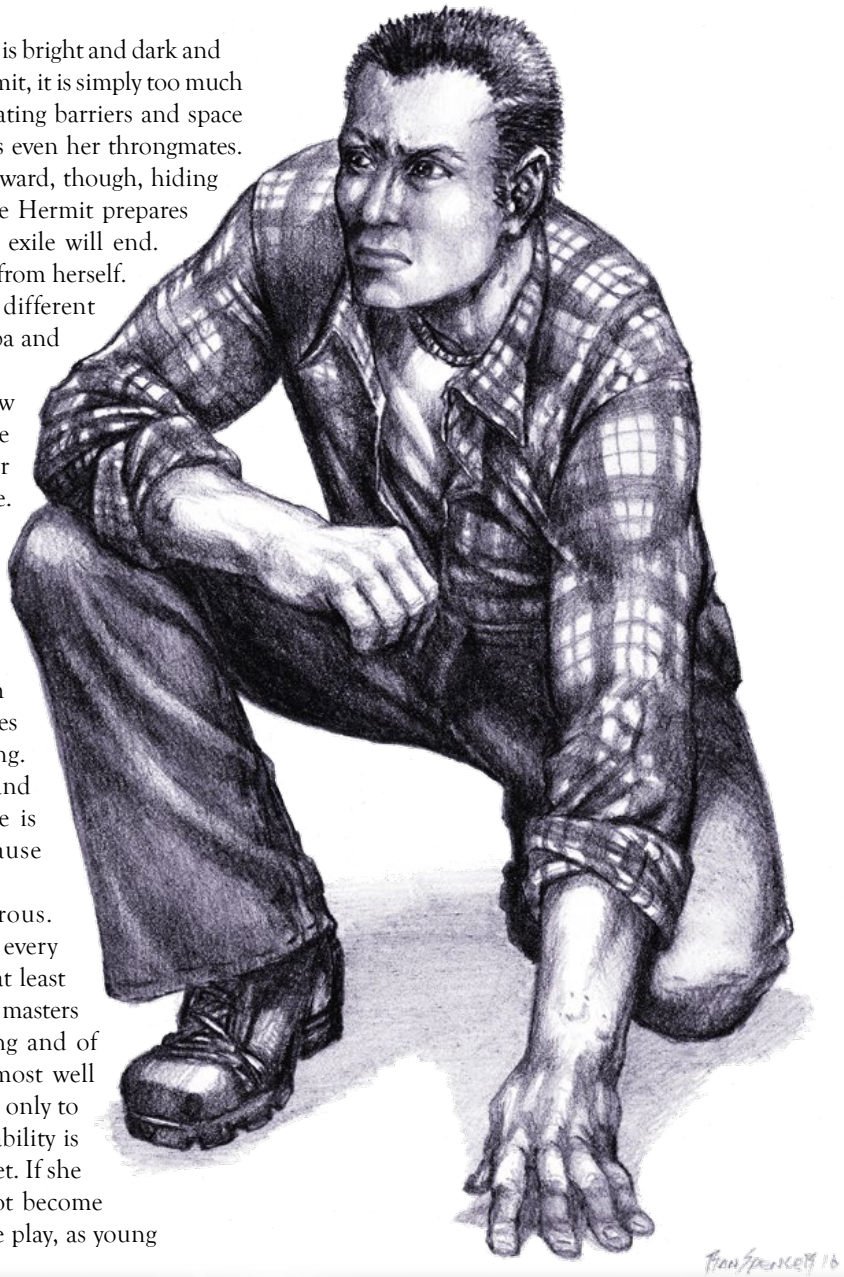
Ethos

Followers of the Refinement of Copper often seem weirdly high-strung, hyper-vigilant and always ready to snap to action for all that they are perfectly content to sit, alone, for hours on end. That situational awareness is the hallmark of Cuprum and the ideal that all Pariahs hope to cultivate. It's the awareness of self and others that comes naturally to most humans, the ultimate lesson that the Refinement seeks to teach. Feign lassitude and ill-preparedness to fool an enemy or lure a target if you must, but actually indulging in such vices is anathema to the Refinement itself.

Such vigilance is wearing, though. Guarding not only oneself but also others, not only from enemies but also from one's own clumsiness and raging emotions, from one's facility at wounding others unintentionally, is a task that takes constant attention and focus. The Promethean often has little effort left available for other tasks; this can make Pariahs seem monomaniacal. Others are driven to such exhaustion by the ordeal that they forsake even their Promethean fellows, retreating from all contact. This can be comforting for a time, but taken too far it can derail the Pilgrimage entirely.

Many Pariahs misinterpret the Refinement to mean that they must cut off *all* contact, but this is a dangerous mistake. Even the Azothic fire a Promethean possesses in place of a soul hungers for the warmth of human company. If the goal of the Pilgrimage is to achieve humanity, will that be gained by avoiding others entirely? Solitary confinement is one of the surest ways to break a human, after all, and such cruelty is no ideal to emulate.

Roles



Hermit: The world is too much. It is bright and dark and hot and cold all at once. For the Hermit, it is simply too much to bear. She hides herself away, creating barriers and space between herself and others, perhaps even her throngmates. Do not mistake the Hermit for a coward, though, hiding away from what terrifies her. A true Hermit prepares for the day when her self-imposed exile will end. She learns, if not from others, then from herself. When she emerges, she will be a different person, as a caterpillar weaves a pupa and becomes a butterfly.

Sage: To know oneself is to know the world. A Pariah who feels she has knowledge or wisdom to offer to others walks the path of the Sage. Unlike the Hermit, however, the barriers she erects have a purpose aside from isolation. Wisdom is pointless without the struggle to earn it, after all; the Sage creates the struggle for others, allowing them to learn and grow while she watches intently, her curiosity overpowering. When they surpass her barriers and cross the space between them, she is overjoyed, not least simply because someone has chosen to do so.

Watcher: The world is dangerous. Every Promethean knows this; not every Promethean responds adequately, at least as far as a Watcher is concerned. She masters the art of being unseen, of tracking and of tracing, of rooting out even the most well hidden adversary. She observes not only to mimic, but also to prove her own ability is greater than that of her chosen target. If she can exceed the human, can she not become the human? Sometimes this is mere play, as young

predators learn to hunt by chasing small animals. Other times, the Watcher's pastime is in deadly earnest — not that her target is likely to ever know.

Practitioners

Alone in her factory, still becoming used to the artificial body she built for herself, Ila avoids humans both because she fears them and because she is unused to independent articulation. She perseveres in the hope that someday, maybe, she can talk to her creator and he won't be afraid of her this time. In the meanwhile, she broadcasts her Azoth, hoping that others like her will find her — others who can understand what she feels.

Todd came first, the elder of two Prometheans created by another who hoped to understand the source and nature of his own existence, whatever the cost. As is so often the case, Todd was imperfect in his creator's eyes, and another creation quickly took his place in the limelight. Whether he struck out on his own or was driven away is something he refuses to talk about. Wary and a loner by nature, he only rarely speaks to others, and then only for a few moments and only cryptically at best. His family was not kind to him; why should a stranger be any different?

Hakan wasn't the name his creator chose; she gave her miraculous progeny another name that, much like the broad, muscular shoulders, did not fit him at all. When he tried to be true to himself, it only sent his creator into fits, until at last she simply abandoned Hakan, leaving him to fend for himself in a world and a body he didn't understand. He lives in hiding still, emerging only to collect the magazines and newspaper clippings that a kind throngmate collects for him. Slowly, he teaches himself who he really is, a transformation no less momentous than the distant hope of one day becoming truly human.

Eris isn't sure how long she thrived on her own, never bothered to count the passing cycles of hot and cold, at least not until the others like her found her, cornered her, and made noises at her. This was something she was unaccustomed to, but she soon learned that these were not hunting cries of their own, but entreaties to come forth, share her light, and walk with them on their journey. Eris has agreed, but for the most part, she quietly watches them. She senses their confusion about her and does not wish to exacerbate it.

Anthony is the subject of a game his throng plays. They try to find him; he does not want to be found. It's as simple as that. While a part of him really wishes they would stop, he can't deny that it's a novel feeling to be pursued by another rather than the other way around. In any case, it's good practice; if he can hide from his fellows, who know him so well, he can hide from strangers all the better. For all that he doesn't want his throng to find him when he hides, he wants outsiders to find him even less.

Refinement Condition: *Patient* – Long stretches of solitude have taught the Pariah the value of thought before action, of patience and resilience. As a result, she is far more difficult to manipulate, browbeat, or otherwise be forced to do something she does not want to do. By spending a point of Pyros, the player can add the character's Azoth to her base number of Doors in Social Maneuvering for a scene.

Beat: Once per chapter, take a Beat when the character reacts to a tense or dangerous situation with precise thought and action informed by careful study and planning.

Transmutations: Metamorphosis, Sensorium

Stereotypes

- **Aurum:** Too close to the flame. Going to burn.
- **Ferrum:** Overconfident.
- **Plumbum:** Know self, yes. Know other?
- **Stannum:** Interesting. How does that make you feel?
- **Aes:** So close. Too close. Jealous.
- **Argentum:** Don't touch that.
- **Centimani:** Too *loud*.



Ferrum

Refinement of Iron (Corpus)

Titans

Life is struggle, and that struggle for survival is the crucible that defines existence. Humans so often define themselves in relation to the adversity they have overcome, and Prometheans must learn this lesson as well. Life itself — evolution — is a process of refinement. The ironclad rule is that only the strongest and best-adapted life forms survive to propagate. Understanding and participating in this struggle is a part of any Pilgrimage, but those who follow the Refinement of Iron have dedicated themselves to victory and to excellence beyond what is merely necessary. The ore becomes iron, the iron becomes steel, and so on. The slag — the imperfection — is cast aside.

For the Promethean, her struggle extends even to a body that was not originally her own and may have unwelcome habits ingrained in its muscle memory, such as a range of motion that isn't quite what it could be or any one of dozens of traits that alienate the Promethean from her own flesh. Dysphoria is not an uncommon malady among the Created, stitched together according to another's design, another's will. Understanding one's own form, one's own self, is critical for any who wish to reach the shining heights of humanity. Those who follow the Refinement of Iron grasp this bull by the horns. This, too, is a challenge. If this body is not their own, they shall *make it* their own.

The purification of physical form is in many ways a Magnum Opus all its own, reclaiming and transforming what was given into what is desired through toil and training and brutal endurance. Yet, for all that the Refinement of Form is a metaphor for the greater Pilgrimage, even this is not enough — the Promethean cannot force her body to become human in so straightforward a fashion. Ferrum teaches that physical perfection is not enough. A body of iron is far superior when supplemented with a will of like substance; it is this mountain that a Titan seeks to surmount, armoring her unnatural heart for the long Road ahead.

Practices

For all that Titan practices are straightforward and simple enough to grasp in concept, they have an unexpected depth. Right action is insufficient, even impossible without right thought and right values.

- She may be quick to action, or may not, but always she gives each movement, each choice, its full weight beforehand. If she is running, she places her feet carefully as she goes; if she is fighting, she guards herself well and places her own strikes precisely. Each choice is as a single brick as she builds and rebuilds herself, perfecting her form.
- She does not wait for challenges to reveal themselves, as others might. Instead, she proactively creates her own. This can be as simple as a brutal training regimen, or as daring as walking into a dive bar and picking a fight with the toughest-looking bastard there. However she chooses to do so, she tests herself, always. Success or failure, a lesson is a lesson.
- She builds experience upon experience, toughening herself against the world. A child touches a hot stove and learns well not to do so again; a Titan touches a hot stove, pulls her hand back in shock, then reaches out to touch it again, trying to hold on just a little longer than before. Each new sensation is worthy of study, each individual pain something to train herself against.
- Anything worth doing is worth doing well. This is the mantra she recites to herself in one way or another. Others might create something, step back, and say, "good enough." When she creates something that fails to measure up, she smashes it to pieces and starts again. This is not a waste of time, but effort well spent so that next time, she will do it right the first time.
- Ultimately, the greatest challenge is knowing when you are beaten. A Titan must give her all, and when that is not enough, she must yield. But even in yielding, she finds strength; even a retreat may plant the seeds of ultimate victory. That which does not kill her only makes her stronger.

Ethos

The raw physicality of Titans attests to the philosophical underpinnings of the Refinement, seeking physical perfection. This is desirable both for the ultimate goal of the Magnum Opus, providing as pure a physical form as

I'm not afraid.

possible for the process to come, but also for the Pilgrimage as a whole, tempering a Promethean against the dangers she will face. These twin goals lie at the heart of the Refinement, and understanding this is vital to progressing. A Titan who misunderstands this and focuses exclusively on the physical, ignoring the mental and spiritual aspect of her training, is in serious danger of losing her way. A Titan who seeks out danger or trains relentlessly without understanding *why* she does so is likewise in a terrible position to attain even the barest enlightenment from the process.

Prometheans on the Path of Form view their lives as a series of challenges to be overcome and endured with the firmness and indefatigability characteristic of their Refinement's patron metal. They do not evade obstacles unless they have no other choice, preferring instead to surmount them, if only to prove that they can. A Titan is straightforward, often to a fault. She has little time for trickery or deceit; once she has settled on a course of action it is all but impossible to turn her aside.

It is not enough to passively endure, however. As the world challenges the Promethean, she must challenge the world in turn as well as herself. Without this outward-looking pursuit of excellence, she can never truly master her own destiny. Ultimately, the Titan must understand the true relationship of body and soul if she wishes to sublimate a soul of her own from a body she inherited.

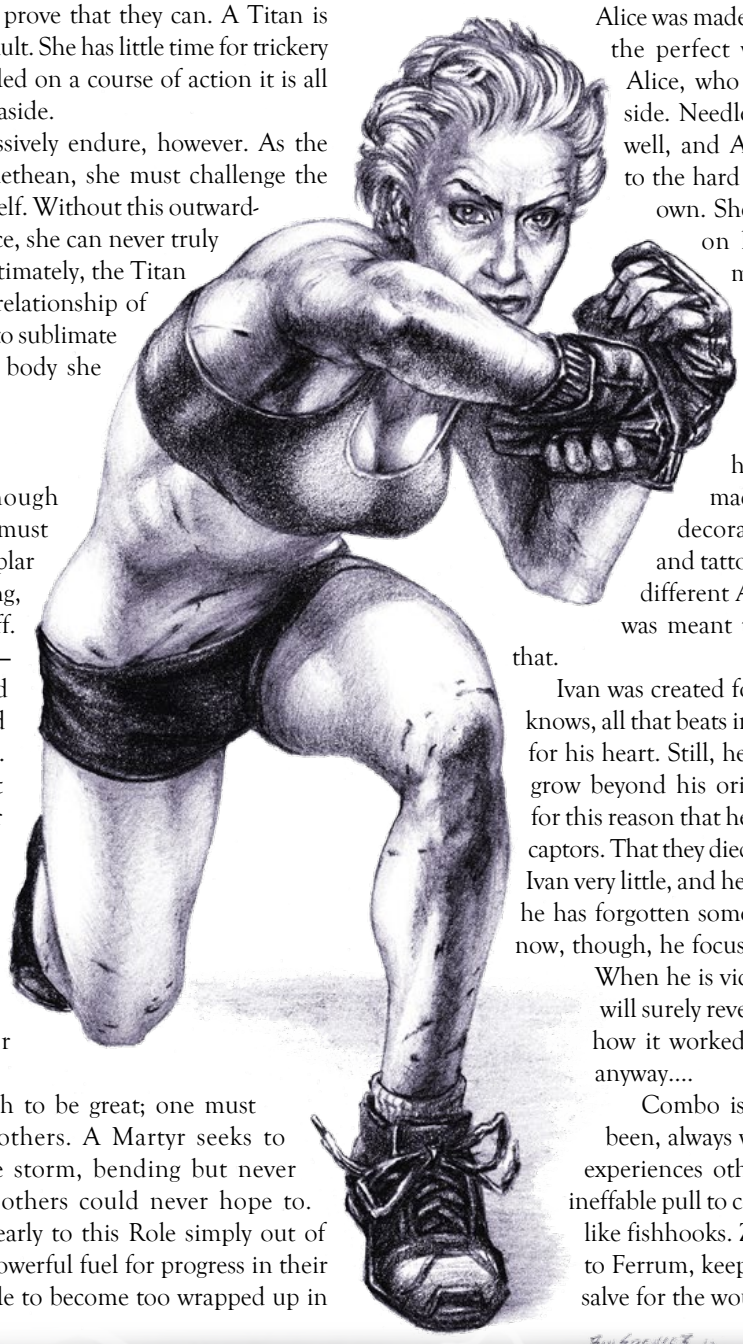
Roles

Exemplar: It is not enough to challenge oneself; one must challenge others! An Exemplar is never silent, never retiring, and always ready to show off. This is not mere posturing — she is daring everyone around her to excel, to compete, and perhaps even to defeat her. At the same time, she's not going to make it easy for them. That would ruin the entire purpose! She trains tirelessly for the sake of training itself, becomes an expert in whatever field she chooses as her own, and makes the world her personal obstacle course.

Martyr: It is not enough to be great; one must endure the greatness of others. A Martyr seeks to become the willow in the storm, bending but never breaking, enduring what others could never hope to. Many Prometheans come early to this Role simply out of the desire to survive. It is powerful fuel for progress in their Pilgrimage. Still, it's possible to become too wrapped up in the mentality of enduring, and even a Martyr's Azoth-fueled body and mind have their breaking points. Push them too far and they snap like twigs.

Soldier: It is not enough to exist; one must defend that existence. Unlike the Exemplar or the Martyr, the Soldier has a simple and straightforward task: learn to protect herself and, by extension, enable herself to protect others. She studies combat and every art applied to it, learning discipline and training herself to be ready so that when the times comes, she can do her duty...whatever it may be. She seeks not only to enlighten herself a little more, to walk a little further along her Pilgrimage, but also to make that Pilgrimage all the safer now that she can strike back at what would do her harm.

Practitioners



Alice was made by a man who wanted the perfect wife: delicate, gentle Alice, who would ever be at his side. Needless to say, it didn't go well, and Alice has had to learn to the hard way to survive on her own. She is still beautiful, but on her own terms; taut muscle has replaced the soft limbs her creator gave her and small fingers have grown firm and callused with hours upon hours of training. She's made her body her own, decorated it with piercings and tattoos, and become a very different Alice than the one she was meant to be. She's proud of that.

Ivan was created for war. It is all that he knows, all that beats in the pump that passes for his heart. Still, he hopes to be more, to grow beyond his original purpose. It was for this reason that he fled his creators-cum-captors. That they died in the escape troubles Ivan very little, and he sometimes wonders if he has forgotten something important. For now, though, he focuses on what he knows. When he is victorious, another path will surely reveal itself to him. That's how it worked in the testing range, anyway....

Combo is a fighter, always has been, always will be. Even when zie experiences other Refinements, that ineffable pull to conflict still clings to zir like fishhooks. Zie keeps coming back to Ferrum, keeps indulging that urge, salve for the wounds zie's borne all zir

strange life. Only sometimes does zie wonder if zir Pilgrimage is leading zir in circles, and if this is who zie truly is meant to be. When zie completes zir Magnum Opus, will zie finally lay down zir arms, or will zie simply keep moving forward? Zie cannot deny that the idea is a strange comfort to zir. Always has been, always will be.

Erik takes a particular delight in the idea of the lost cause. He sees humans struggling with one another even when the outcome is clear from the beginning, when there is no hope at all, and yet they struggle on! It is that spirit he wishes to understand and claim for himself, and so he fights those battles that others call lost. He marches, and he cleans, and he builds, all in the face of adversity he knows he and his erstwhile comrades (who would probably prefer he aided them at a greater distance) cannot hope to overcome.

Senka strives for excellence but employs caution at all times. She makes a study of those who have come before her in whatever field she dedicates herself to, learning from the mistakes of the past and so preparing for her own future. Though her figure is slight, she is not to be underestimated. Her cleverness more than compensates for her lack of brute strength or stamina. These faults have simply taught her two truths: do things right the first time and end the fight before it begins. She can become a muscle-bound lummox later, if she so desires.

Refinement Condition: *Tenacious* – Titans steel themselves against misfortune through long, hard training, preparing their bodies for whatever tests may come and their minds for the tenacity to achieve victory. Once a Titan has set her heart on a goal, nothing will stop her. By spending a point of Pyros, a Titan may add the highest of her Composure, Resolve, or Stamina to the number of attempts permitted on an extended action.

Beat: Once per chapter, take a Beat when your character stuns or awes others with a feat of physical fitness, tenaciousness, or excellence.

Transmutations: Corporeum, Vitality

Stereotypes

- **Aurum:** Only skin deep? What a shame.
- **Cuprum:** Come out here. No, no, it's all right. I just want to...*talk* to you.
- **Plumbum:** Not moving. Not changing. Where are you going?
- **Stannum:** That's not healthy. It *can't* be.
- **Cobalus:** Yes, I see it. Yes, it's awful. What's obsessing about it going to teach you?
- **Phosphorum:** And people think *I've* got a death wish.
- **Centimani:** How *disgusting*. To come so close and to miss by such a distance....



PLUMBUM

REFINEMENT OF LEAD (SOURCE)

Originists

Prometheans spend a lot of time focusing on what they want to be. This doesn't necessarily require a denial of what they are, but often means that they don't dwell on it. That sort of blindness can sabotage the Great Work before it has even begun. The Pilgrimage is about transformation: changing one thing into another. The Created aspire for Gold, but to get there they have to understand Lead.

The Originist grasps the intricacies of his condition. He pays close attention to the waxing and waning of Azoth within him. He knows when it flares and risks causing Disquiet or a Wasteland, and he knows when it dims and needs to be fed. He feels the fluctuations caused by the presence of another Promethean or an Athanor more acutely. His attunement to the Divine Fire allows him superior access to his Azothic memories and the Azothic records left by others. The benefit of this self-awareness is self-mastery. He gains a measure of control over Disquiet and his own Azothic radiance by using meditation to cause his Azoth to brighten or dim. He can cause a resonance in the Azoth of himself and others in order to form a bond, or he can create dissonance so that his Vitriol is protected from lacuna. All of these Transmutations are side effects of being attuned to himself.

Lead is often the first Refinement of a newly created Promethean. It makes sense to focus on what she is and how to control her abilities (and mitigate her curses). This is not universal, though, and many come back to Lead after frustration in their progress on the Pilgrimage. A few Plumbum came to it for the same reason someone might join a monastic order: to step away from the world and its troubles in the hope of gaining focus and clarity. While this can grant the Promethean peace, she needs to be careful not to get lost. Lead, after all, is the base state. It isn't where you stay, it's where you start.

Practices

Originists are almost academic in their dedication to learning. They strive to be both students and teachers of their kind, facilitating the acquisition and preservation of knowledge.

- The primary edict of Lead is "know thyself." This leads her to practice meditation in order to cultivate her self-awareness and make the most of her Transmutations. A Plumbum experiences nothing that isn't reflected upon later so that no bit of wisdom is missed. This doesn't need to be a solitary occupation; Originists love to share anecdotes, as the input of others can lead to new insights.
- An Originist seeks out others of his kind so that he may have a larger sample size on which to base his understanding of their shared condition. He gathers others into branded throngs so that they may benefit from each other on their journey, recording their successes and failings for others who follow their path. He doesn't consider the Pilgrimage to be an individual journey, but one that all Prometheans share together.
- Nearly every Originist keeps a journal, both to record her findings and to make it easier to reflect upon where she has been. She understands that this information could be deadly in the wrong hands and so she develops codes and ciphers, often utilizing alchemical symbolism that other Prometheans would find easier to decipher. Whenever Originists meet, they share their journals and discuss what they have learned.
- Prometheans on the path of Lead feel a duty to pass on the facts of their condition to others. His journal serves part of this purpose, but often he takes a more hands-on approach by mentoring young, inexperienced Prometheans. Teaching benefits the both of them: showing her the ropes and giving him a chance to study another. This is also why he prefers to operate in throngs, since they create a support network for the inexperienced.
- The focus on the past leads many Plumbum to take a deep and abiding interest in history. They are the most likely to spend hours in a library, doing historical research in order to find clues about the

In order to change,
you must first accept who you are.
Only then will the path become clear.

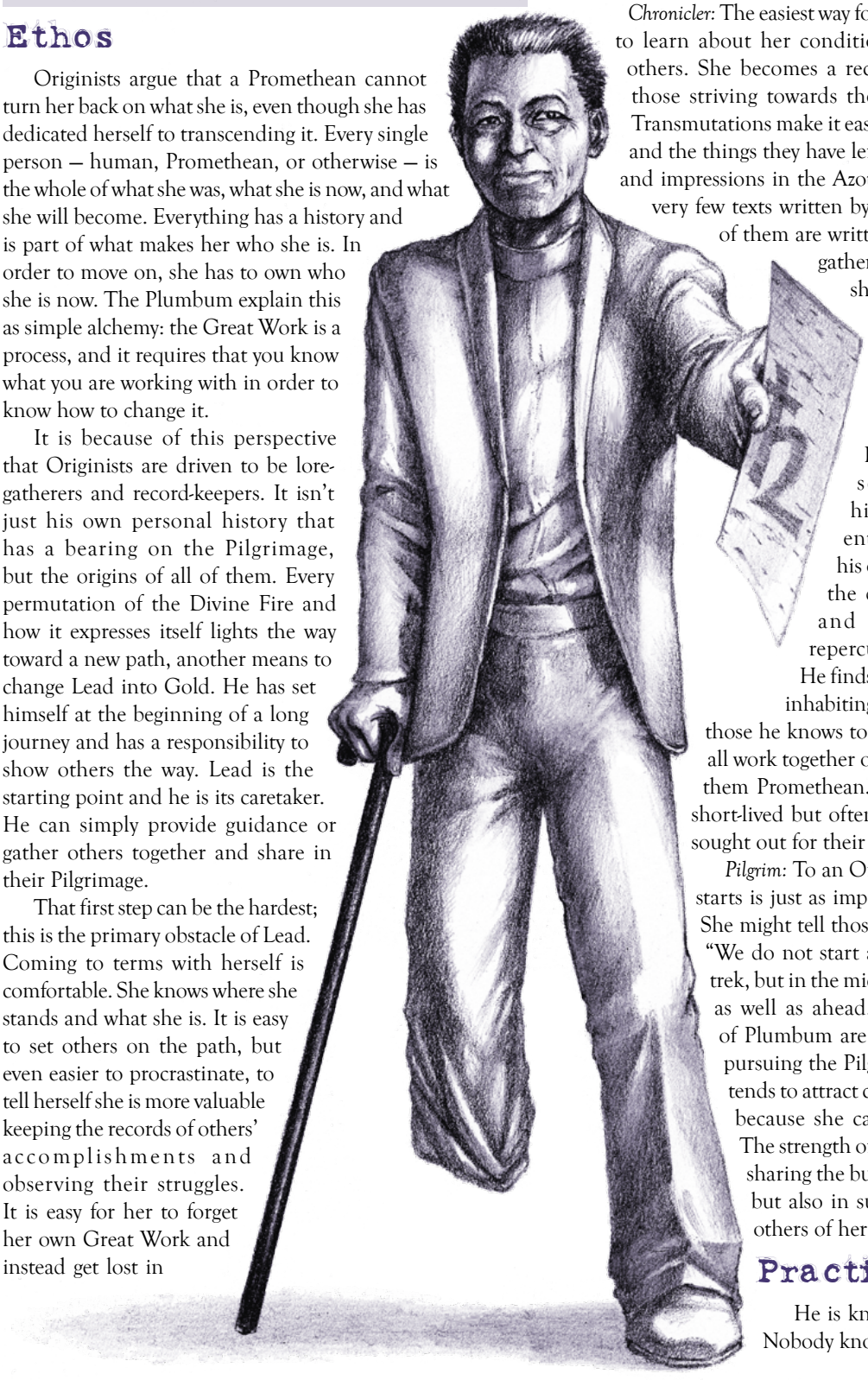
Created and their origins. Many of the connections the Prometheans make to old myths and legends were drawn by Originists. Even if not literally true, they can serve as parables to help Prometheans along in their journey. Inspiration is often more important than truth.

Ethos

Originists argue that a Promethean cannot turn her back on what she is, even though she has dedicated herself to transcending it. Every single person — human, Promethean, or otherwise — is the whole of what she was, what she is now, and what she will become. Everything has a history and is part of what makes her who she is. In order to move on, she has to own who she is now. The Plumbum explain this as simple alchemy: the Great Work is a process, and it requires that you know what you are working with in order to know how to change it.

It is because of this perspective that Originists are driven to be lore-gatherers and record-keepers. It isn't just his own personal history that has a bearing on the Pilgrimage, but the origins of all of them. Every permutation of the Divine Fire and how it expresses itself lights the way toward a new path, another means to change Lead into Gold. He has set himself at the beginning of a long journey and has a responsibility to show others the way. Lead is the starting point and he is its caretaker. He can simply provide guidance or gather others together and share in their Pilgrimage.

That first step can be the hardest; this is the primary obstacle of Lead. Coming to terms with herself is comfortable. She knows where she stands and what she is. It is easy to set others on the path, but even easier to procrastinate, to tell herself she is more valuable keeping the records of others' accomplishments and observing their struggles. It is easy for her to forget her own Great Work and instead get lost in an Ivory Tower of her own creation. There is a peace in just accepting who you are. For many, that is all they aspire to. For Prometheans, however, it leads to stasis: the Divine Fire burning within her stagnates and gives itself to Flux.



Roles

Chronicler: The easiest way for a follower of Plumbum to learn about her condition is simply to talk to others. She becomes a recorder of the stories of those striving towards the Great Work and her Transmutations make it easier for her to find others and the things they have left behind, like Athanors and impressions in the Azothic Memory. There are very few texts written by Prometheans but most of them are written by Originists. As she gathers the tales of her kind, she learns what she comes from which in turn helps her find where she must go next.

Ascetic: The Originist's focus on Prometheans is well served by removing himself from humanity entirely and focusing on his own capabilities without the distraction of Disquiet and worrying about the repercussions of Wastelands. He finds other Originists already inhabiting this Role or encourages those he knows to do so, so that they may all work together on exploring what makes them Promethean. Such communities are short-lived but often highly productive and sought out for their wisdom.

Pilgrim: To an Originist, where a journey starts is just as important as where it ends. She might tell those who journey with her, "We do not start at the beginning of this trek, but in the middle. We must look back as well as ahead." The Transmutations of Plumbum are uniquely well suited to pursuing the Pilgrimage, thus Originists tends to attract companions, particularly because she can bind them together. The strength of the throng is not just in sharing the burdens of the Pilgrimage, but also in surrounding herself with others of her kind.

Practitioners

He is known only as the Monk. Nobody knows how old he is. Some

whisper that he has lost interest in the Great Work for himself and now only seeks to put others on the proper path. They call him a Martyr, sacrificing his own chance for perfection so that he can stand on the precipice of the New Dawn, a light shining for others to follow. In truth, he is so fascinated with the tales he hears from other Pilgrims that he hesitates to take that last step and lose all he has learned. He has started to feel the effect of Flux and knows he mustn't linger much longer.

Dorothea is brand new and weighty questions like what it means to be human or how to transcend her base state are beyond her. Right now, at this moment, she just struggles with what she is. Lead is a natural fit. Her very being changes to help her pursue the answers she seeks and this, in itself, is one answer. Her senses expand, searching for others of her kind and signs of their passage, so that she may find them and ask the questions that fill her head. Once she has her bearings, then it will be time to ask what comes next.

Nuada spent many frustrating months following the Refinement of Gold. Time and time again, he found himself asking the same questions. Why won't they accept me? What is wrong with me? What am I missing? A long conversation one night with an Originist set him on a new path. The problem was that he didn't understand what he was working with, what clay he had to mold into a human being. He reluctantly stepped away from the humans he had struggled to understand and took a moment to learn about himself. There would be time to return to Gold later.

For Rheya, the transition from Copper to Lead was a natural one. She feels that her time as a Pariah prepared her for the path she now follows, but she has learned all she can on her own. Now it is time to find others of her kind. Lead has given her the ability to do so, but she is afraid. The only time she has spent with another of their kind was when she was created and that time was very brief. Now, she lurks in the shadows, watching other Prometheans at a distance and trying to work up the courage to make contact.

They are a throng of Originists who live in an abandoned shack in the desert. They are surrounded by miles of nothing, not even animals to be bothered by their Disquiet. For the last year, a Wasteland-induced sandstorm has centered on their retreat. Occasionally they cause immense Firestorms, but the Wasteland always returns. Some whisper that these are experiments — explorations of Azoth — and that if a pilgrim can make it through the storm they will share unique insights into the nature of Prometheans.

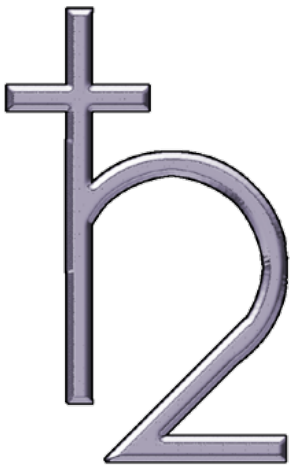
Refinement Condition: *Introspective* – An Originist has a strong sense of his own inner workings. As an action, he can draw on his inner reserves to convert a point of bashing damage or Willpower into a point of Pyros.

Beat: Once per chapter, an Originist gains a Beat when his tendency to overthink things leads to inaction at an inopportune time.

Transmutations: Disquietism, Saturninis

Stereotypes

- **Argentum:** Are you a vampire? Are you trying to become a vampire? Well, then.
- **Aurum:** You've seen Point B, now you need to find Point A.
- **Cuprum:** You've gained some knowledge out there by yourself. Please share it.
- **Ferrum:** It's pretty, but it's still made of Lead.
- **Mercurius:** The point of studying ourselves isn't to become better Created.
- **Stannum:** The difference between you and me is a moment of reflection.
- **Centimani:** Even lead can degrade.



STANNUM

REFINEMENT OF TIN (TORMENT)

FURIES

By giving into her Torment, the Fury becomes a living storm. Her Pyros crackles with energy, calling down lightning as an expression of her anger like a miniature Wasteland. She does not avoid Disquiet, she grabs it with both hands and wields it as a hammer to smite the object of her rage. Her close association with it gives her deep insight and, paradoxically, control over it. Rather than slipping into despair or the apathy of Flux, she lets her Torment revitalize her and energize her, driving her forward lest she slip back.

The Refinement of Tin isn't a place where Prometheans linger. The risks are too great. Often, coming to the Refinement isn't a deliberate choice as much as a last resort when Torment has begun and the Promethean looks for some way he can bring something positive out of the experience and learn from it. It is an act of desperation, and once he has recovered himself sufficiently, he moves along. Some do adopt it purposefully, though, in order to explore its Roles or master its Transmutations in order to gain a greater measure of control. In either case, Tin is unique among the Refinements in that a Promethean needs *no* training or time to adopt it — Stannum is always instantly available.

The advocate for Stannum argues that it explores the greatest barrier to the Pilgrimage — the dark side of her own nature — and that she cannot achieve her Great Work without learning to become its master. She cites the fundamental nature of its Transmutations, allowing control over the two most prominent manifestations of the Divine Fire's opposing principles: the energizing power of lightning and the corrosive power of Disquiet. It is hard to argue with a Fury's effectiveness and many a throng has found itself thankful to have a Stannum among their number when the mob comes calling. Of course, as often as not, it is the Fury's fault the mob is at their heels in the first place.

Practices

The Refinement of Tin isn't about deep thinking or subtle ideology — it is an emotional experience in which the practitioner tries to gain some wisdom from the Torment plaguing him. Stannum practices are techniques for riding rage toward enlightenment.

- A Fury finds a way to harness and direct his rage and so naturally takes on the role of the vigilante. He associates with those he deems worthy of punishment and uses Disquietism to make them the focus of distrust and revulsion so he can isolate them and destroy them. He is the monster among monsters.
- Followers of Stannum are often found in abandoned factories, remote power stations, or disused electronics stores. This is partly practical, since they have an affinity for electricity and their violent existence requires regular healing. Another reason, though, is that many Furies find comfort in the semblance of life that machines provide without the effects of Disquiet. The hum of activity in a safe environment brings even the tormented a measure of peace.
- Furies also find places where they can vent their rage without calling down a SWAT team or the National Guard. When she feels her Torment getting the better of her, she'll go to a ruined building or junkyard and unleash her fury until it is spent. These visits invariably give the location a reputation as the nexus of intense lightning storms and foul weather, particularly if they form into a Wasteland.
- Counterculture attracts those seeking the Refinement of Tin, both because of their outsider status and their propensity towards the same feelings that torment him: anger, frustration, and isolation. His Disquiet is less apparent among those who naturally distrust everyone. These are the wounded and the wronged, and they give him meaning and companionship.
- When a Fury goes after someone who has committed a wrong in her eyes, she wants his destruction to serve a purpose. This means making a point, thus Furies often make elaborate plans in order for justice to be served in an appropriate manner. It is a trait that often disturbs those around her, particularly when she spends days obsessively arranging the ironic death of someone who has crossed her.

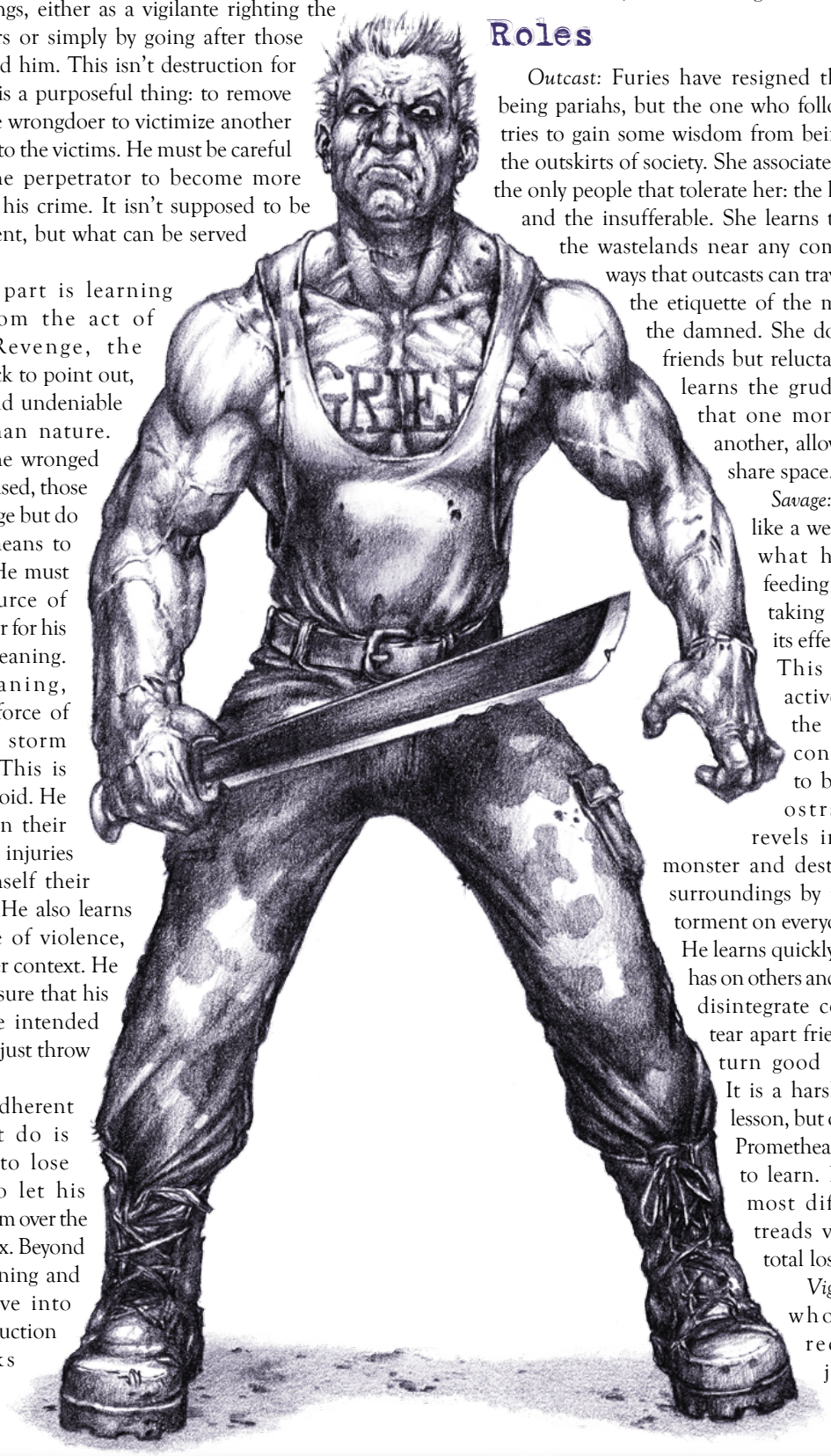
THESE ARE MY PEOPLE.
FUCK WITH THEM AND YOU FUCK WITH ME.

Ethos

Stannum is about finding a way to use rage and torment. The first part of this is by directing it in a worthy manner. Often, this involves taking revenge on those who have committed wrongs, either as a vigilante righting the wrongs of others or simply by going after those who have crossed him. This isn't destruction for its own sake, it is a purposeful thing: to remove the ability of the wrongdoer to victimize another and bring peace to the victims. He must be careful not to allow the perpetrator to become more important than his crime. It isn't supposed to be about punishment, but what can be served by her removal.

The other part is learning something from the act of vengeance. Revenge, the Stannum is quick to point out, is a universal and undeniable aspect of human nature. He seeks out the wronged and disenfranchised, those who share his rage but do not have the means to see it fulfilled. He must explore the source of their rage in order for his own to have meaning. Without meaning, he is simply a force of destruction: a storm or a monster. This is what he must avoid. He wraps himself in their causes and their injuries and makes himself their avenging angel. He also learns about the cycle of violence, providing further context. He lingers to make sure that his efforts have the intended effect and don't just throw fuel on the fire.

What the adherent to Tin cannot do is allow himself to lose perspective, to let his Torment drive him over the edge towards Flux. Beyond that point, meaning and purpose dissolve into chaos and destruction and he risks becoming one of the Hundred Handed. Every Stannum knows that he walks a tightrope over the abyss. The Pilgrimage is what keeps him grounded. It allows him to draw enlightenment from his rage and eventually move on from it. While Tin may be the "ground state" of a Promethean, he cannot linger there too long.



Roles

Outcast: Furies have resigned themselves to being pariahs, but the one who follows this path tries to gain some wisdom from being pushed to the outskirts of society. She associates herself with the only people that tolerate her: the lost, the mad, and the insufferable. She learns the secrets of the wastelands near any community, the ways that outcasts can travel safely, and the etiquette of the miserable and the damned. She does not make friends but reluctant allies. She learns the grudging respect that one monster has for another, allowing them to share space.

Savage: He uses fear like a weapon, getting what he wants by feeding Disquiet and taking advantage of its effects on others. This role is the active version of the outcast. Not content merely to be feared and ostracized, he revels in being the monster and destabilizing his surroundings by inflicting his torment on everyone he meets. He learns quickly the effect he has on others and how fear can disintegrate communities, tear apart friendships, and turn good people bad. It is a harsh and brutal lesson, but one that every Promethean could stand to learn. It is also the most difficult, as it treads very close to total loss of control.

Vigilante: Those who have no recourse for justice find themselves

turning to those living on the outskirts of society. Those with no stake in laws or civilization can still act as an agent for moral order. The Fury is a natural fit for this role. Often, she establishes herself as the protector of a particular community, usually one that has been failed by the rightful authorities or whose sense of justice does not match the society surrounding it. When she is needed, the people give some sign — a name carved into a tree on the outskirts of town or a note placed under a specific rock in the park — and she comes out of the night to mete out vengeance.

Practitioners

Chicago, a newly created Frankenstein, stumbles from town to town, tired and hungry and hunted. When she eventually succumbs to her Torment, she slips into Stannum almost unconsciously and is finally able to find the strength she needs to fight back. She turns her Disquiet back onto her pursuers and uses it to cow those who have what she needs, to force them to help her even if just for a moment. A moment of respite is all that she needed. Her increased awareness of the effect of her Azoth teaches her how to be more careful.

Snow used to follow the Refinement of Cobalt, but his time spent among the sick, the mad, and the weak made him cynical about humanity and his experiments became cruel and pointless. Eventually, his phlegmatic humour got the better of him and he found himself dispassionately torturing humans who crossed his path. In an effort to save himself, he allowed himself to fall to Tin. He is still cold and vicious towards those around him, but he is once again making progress on his Great Work, learning the lessons only a monster can learn. His sadism is no longer an indulgence distracting from the Pilgrimage, but a tool he learns to wield so that it doesn't consume him.

Tara's path changed when she found that baby in the dumpster. Gazing on that perfect new little human life so casually discarded with the garbage, her Torment could not be contained. Pausing only long enough to hand the poor thing over to a startled woman on the street, she began to hunt those responsible. It was impossible, of course, and she hopes the police did a better job. In the months since, the people of the neighborhood have learned that leaving a note tacked to a particular dead tree in the park can bring justice for those too weak to protect themselves.

Andoni once had a wife. Almost happy, following the Refinement of Gold, it was only a matter of time before Disquiet caught up with him. When they came, it was his wife who paid the price. He picked up Tin like another man might pick up a gun. He accepted the changes it wrought to him after so many years of being a chameleon among humanity. He took up the Disquiet that had ruined his life and he used it to destroy the people who had taken her from him. When he came for them and their families, there was always a storm.

Elisabeth can't remember how long she lived like an animal among the Pandorans. Months? Years? She remembers only the disintegrating darkness in her head, born of despair, that had swallowed up everything that she was. One day, she was badly burned in a fire. The intense pain cut through the dull numbness and she remembered who she was. She rode her Torment back to the light, embracing it like an old friend, happy just to feel again. Now, tormented and disfigured, she tries to put herself back together again.

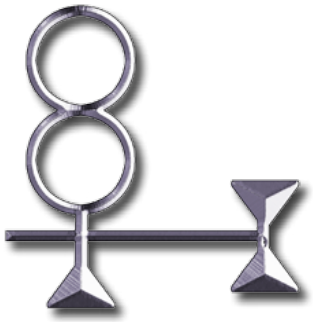
Refinement Condition: *Enraged* – A Fury is driven by his negative emotions, feeding off of them. When he gains Willpower from indulging his Torment, he also gains an equal amount of Pyros.

Beat: Once per chapter, the Fury gains a Beat when he suffers a setback or puts his throng at a disadvantage due to anger or cruelty.

Transmutations: Electrification, Disquietism

Stereotypes

- **Aurum:** You live among them, but you don't understand their pain like I do.
- **Cobalus:** Catharsis, my ass! I express my rage all the time and I'm still pissed.
- **Cuprum:** You got the right idea, now you just need let go.
- **Ferrum:** With a body like that, I could do some real damage.
- **Phosphorum:** I'm fucked up, but at least I'm not suicidal.
- **Plumbum:** How's that navel?
- **Centimani:** That's not me, man.



Aes
Refinement of Bronze (Aid)
Sentries

Modern human society is built upon hierarchy, not only of things but of people. These hierarchies guide us and place a vast amount of human capital at the ready for even the most enormous of tasks, but also oppress us, constraining individual action in favor of the majority. This double-edged sword scales down even to the interpersonal level. It is in this facet of hierarchy that a Promethean following the Refinement of Bronze seeks lessons on the nature of humanity.

Prometheans are solitary creatures, even should they be fortunate enough to find a throng. They are unique beings created by unique beings or eccentric and isolated human demiurges, and more often than not cast out shortly after their Azothic birth. To the Promethean who thinks himself unique, meeting another person like him is nothing short of revolutionary. Raised in such an environment, bereft of even the most basic human instincts, can it be any wonder that Prometheans must study the act of helping another to truly understand its impact on a human soul? How can a being who has only known exclusion understand the concept of belonging to a greater whole?

The idea of setting aside one's own priorities and needs in order to advance those of others might seem counterproductive, especially when the reward for struggle is a human soul, but the lesson of the Sentry is simple: even in service, there is strength. Even when one is subject to the whim and needs of another, one's own heart shines through. For beings that do not truly have hearts, that is perhaps the most important lesson of all.

Through sacrifice and service, the Sentries come to understand caring and compassion, selflessness and kindness. They learn and live these emotions, these acts, and through it they refine their soul. The Path of Aid is not an easy one, nor is it obvious to newborn Prometheans, but it nonetheless holds great promise for those who would walk it.

Practices

Ultimately, the Sentry's duties depend entirely on what others need. The role he plays varies not only from day to day but from moment to moment, and he must always be ready.

- A Sentry places the safety of his charges before his own. Before they've even risen to run from danger, he's making a target of himself, drawing attention and likely fire, so that his charges have that much more time to escape. Only when his throngmates are safe does he allow himself the luxury of terror and flight.
- He is quiet, but attentive. While he doesn't necessarily refrain from speaking unless spoken to, he has cultivated the art of listening and understanding what his throngmates mean, not merely what they say. A human can do this sort of thing naturally; he must mimic this trait through careful study and observation.
- The Pilgrimage is of paramount importance, but life strives to interfere as it always does. His throngmates often become overwhelmed by the struggle for the Magnum Opus, and it is up to the Sentry to keep them on track. Still, he must be careful that he does not coddle his charges, holding them back from their own ultimate goal.
- Sentries exist in harmony with their charges. If there is conflict, he helps to defuse it. If his own needs or desires run up against another's, he yields. He does this not because he is weak, but because he is strong enough to endure want in the name of easing another's trials.
- Yet for all this, he must not ignore his own Pilgrimage, even as he places the paths of others before his own. The Refinement of Bronze is not merely an escape but a road forward like any other. The annihilation of the self teaches nothing. As he studies his throngmates, he must ultimately study and know himself, or else lose sight of his own potential.

Ethos

First and foremost, the Sentry puts the needs of others before his own. He watches over, provides for, and supports them however they require. Every Sentry must, ultimately, decide for himself what this means, but most quickly become adept at doing so. Those who thrive under this Refinement

You think this makes me weak?
That tells me all I need to know about you.

master the precious trait that is empathy, of anticipating the needs of others. This allows them to step outside themselves and gain new perspective on their own Pilgrimage by, in a sense, walking in another's footsteps for a time. For those who come to the Refinement having experienced others and being unsure of where to go, this new internal compass can be invaluable.

In fact, for some, the attraction of losing oneself can be enthralling. The life of the Promethean is not an easy one, and removing the self from the equation is a blessed relief. The Sentry can, at last, stop worrying about his own soul, stop laboring at a task that seems impossible, and simply *be* for the sake of another. As helpful as the Refinement of Bronze can be to a lost soul, it can also be a labyrinth that entraps those without sufficient will to, when they have learned what they can, walk away.

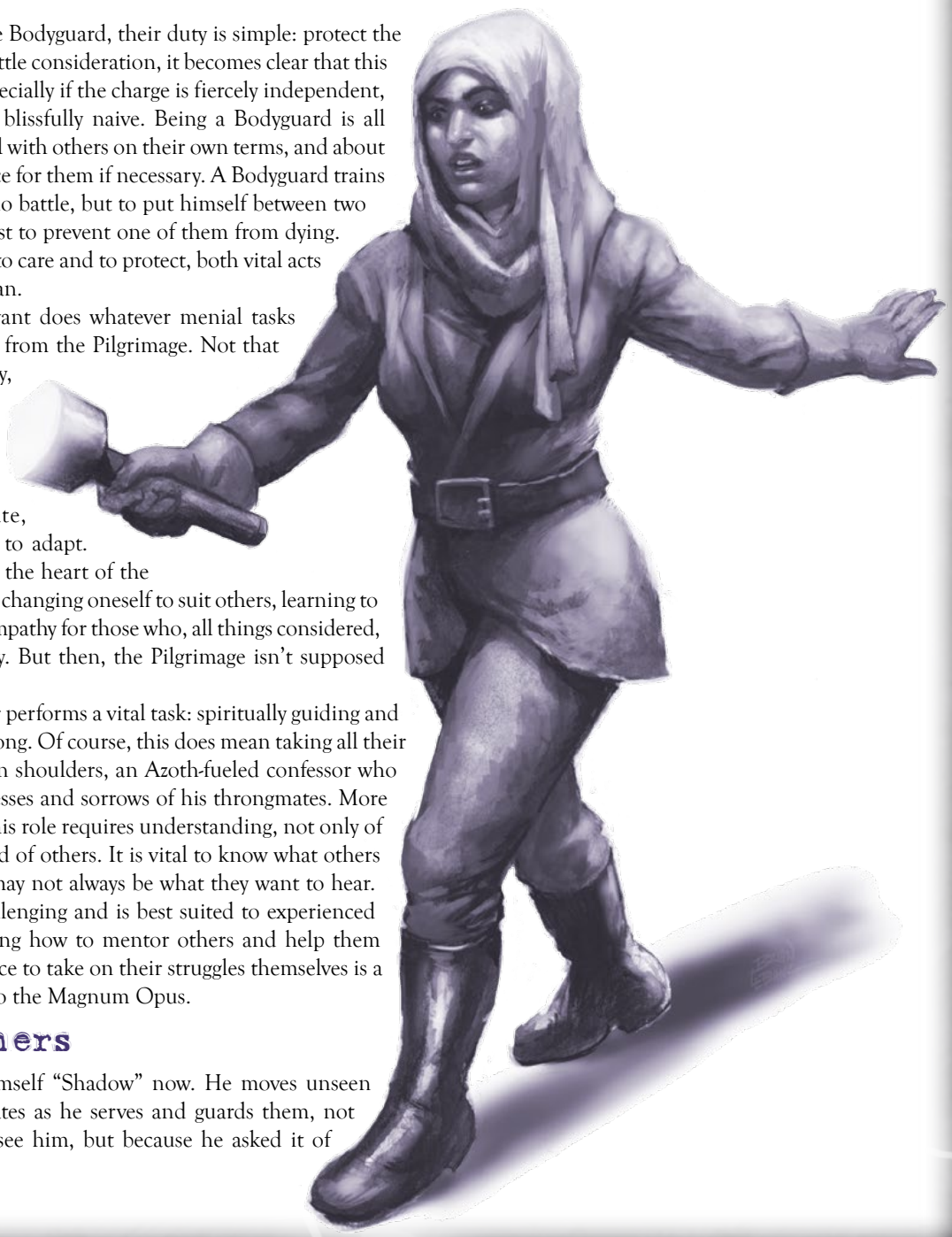
But when to walk away? Where does abandonment end and the mutual termination of a relationship begin? Sacrifice and selflessness are the very heart of the Refinement of Bronze, and it can be very difficult to let go, but ultimately, if one's own Pilgrimage beckons, there can be no other choice. In the end, this too is a lesson on humanity. On a long enough timeline, all relationships end, even the successful ones. We must all take our own steps, our own paths, and sooner or later those paths must diverge, though we carry the lessons of others with us forever after.

Roles

Bodyguard: For the Bodyguard, their duty is simple: protect the charge. After only a little consideration, it becomes clear that this isn't simple at all, especially if the charge is fiercely independent, utterly foolhardy, or blissfully naive. Being a Bodyguard is all about learning to deal with others on their own terms, and about being ready to sacrifice for them if necessary. A Bodyguard trains not to go forth and do battle, but to put himself between two people and do his best to prevent one of them from dying. In this way he learns to care and to protect, both vital acts for the aspiring human.

Servant: The Servant does whatever menial tasks distract her charge(s) from the Pilgrimage. Not that this is necessarily easy, since the world has a habit of throwing up obstacles and challenges that no one could anticipate, and the Servant has to adapt. That adaptation is at the heart of the lesson of the Servant; changing oneself to suit others, learning to fit in, and fostering empathy for those who, all things considered, do not make life easy. But then, the Pilgrimage isn't supposed to be easy.

Seeker: The Seeker performs a vital task: spiritually guiding and supporting their Throng. Of course, this does mean taking all their troubles onto his own shoulders, an Azoth-fueled confessor who happily bears the stresses and sorrows of his throngmates. More than anything else, this role requires understanding, not only of life but of himself and of others. It is vital to know what others *need* to hear, which may not always be what they want to hear. This role can be challenging and is best suited to experienced Prometheans. Learning how to mentor others and help them develop the confidence to take on their struggles themselves is a reward second only to the Magnum Opus.



Practitioners

Anthony calls himself "Shadow" now. He moves unseen among his throngmates as he serves and guards them, not because they *cannot* see him, but because he asked it of

them. Though he told them he wished to study isolation even in the presence of others, in truth he desperately sought an escape from the prison he feels he lives in but could not bear the solitude of Cuprum again. Though he knows the unaverted stares and hastily traded whispers are the product of Disquiet, they still weigh heavily on his shoulders. So total is his desire to simply stop *being* that he discarded even his own name to become their Shadow. His throng understands, though sooner or later they will have to drag him kicking and screaming back into the light.

When Ki joined the throng and left his village behind, he thought he had found enlightenment. Here, he felt, was a way to serve — what he was meant to do — but to be among his own kind. He learned the ways of these other Prometheans, and instead of mimicking customs he helped develop them. He is a protector, but also a scribe and a translator, a mediator and a listener. He watches his throngmates change Refinements, but it hasn't quite occurred to him that if he does this, he will no longer be so aptly able to serve.

Tara always plays the voice of reason, the experienced viewpoint, the stable, solid, dependable one. It can be maddening, trying to live up to the expectations of others and deal with the emotional fallout that Disquiet breeds; more than once she's wanted to simply smash it all and walk away. Yet she keeps coming back, trying to understand the difference between caring for someone and caring *about* them. Perhaps it has something to do with watching ones' younger brothers and terribly awkward sister thrive and grow on their own? Or is that motherhood instead?

No one crosses Hakan. It's not that he threatens or cajoles his throngmates, or that he grossly manipulates or lashes out at them. Maybe it's his eyes, or his voice, or the way he holds himself, but he nonetheless makes it clear to the others that he's in charge. Then, with that authority, he does nothing save ensuring that all are well, that quarrels are resolved peaceably, and that none want for what they need. It's a step up from the throng being at each other's throats all the time, anyway, and it pleases Hakan to quietly guide his friends when they cannot guide themselves.

Widow walked the path of Tin for a long time, mastering her rage and training for a battle she was convinced would come, that she sought out with every waking moment. In the end, she found it; though she was victorious, she felt hollow. Vengeance had meant nothing. She needed no proof that she was strong and able. What she lacked was a *reason*. Now, she has found one. Now, she trains not for herself but for those she will protect. The next victory will not ring hollow.

Refinement Condition: *Tuned In* – A Sentry's charges are the central focus of his life, and his Azoth responds accordingly, calling out to the Azoth within his throngmates. For the expenditure of a point of Pyros, he can learn their exact locations relative to himself and the fastest route between those points.

Beat: Once per chapter, a Sentry can take a Beat when putting the needs of a throngmate first causes her to suffer harm, loss, or serious setbacks.

Transmutations: Benefice, Corporeum

Stereotypes

- **Aurum:** You go. I'll stay. No, don't worry, I'm fine.
- **Cuprum:** I'll just...leave this here for you, then.
- **Ferrum:** We're not that different, I suppose. I just have a reason for what I do.
- **Plumbum:** Perhaps you should turn that focus outwards?
- **Stannum:** Is there anything I can do to help?
- **Phosphorum:** Ugh. Not *again*.
- **Centimani:** So alone, so lost. I'd pity them if I didn't know better.



Argentum

Refinement of Silver (Mystery)

Mystics

Curiosity killed the cat, they say, but satisfaction brought it back. A Promethean advanced enough along his Pilgrimage to consider the Refinement of Silver has likely encountered death before — perhaps even his own. To die and live again is a feat that humans have dreamed of since time immemorial, their alchemy centered on the perfection of the self and eternal life — how ironic, then, that the products of alchemy should seek to do the reverse! This contradiction is the central conundrum that leads so many to the Refinement of Silver, which studies the human condition by defining its boundaries. Sometimes, of course, it's a purely survivalist need to understand the things that go bump in the night that brings Prometheans to this Refinement. However he arrived on the Path of Mystery, the archetypal Mystic is most concerned with those who mirror his own journey, those monsters who lurk in the shadows of the human world, monsters who once were human themselves.

These former humans are not the only expression of the supernatural, of course. As the Promethean delves into his studies, he often finds that the world's mysteries run in layers, and that he always has something new to learn. This fuels the natural curiosity of the Refinement of Silver, spurring it ever onward. Mystics are often considered to be focused, even obsessive, about whatever interest has most recently caught their fancy. Often they work through the night and into the next day, worrying for naught but evidence to confirm or disprove their theories and an opportunity to observe the Other — and thus observe the frontiers of lost humanity. Ultimately, though, when one stares into the abyss, the abyss stares back. More than one pilgrim has met a grim end at the claws and fangs of werewolves, or enslaved by willworkers curious about his own inner workings. To walk Argentum's road is a game of balance, coming close enough to learn about the darkness without being swallowed up by it.

Practices

The stereotype of the Mystic is the sequestered scholar, quietly laboring by candlelight over a weighty and dusty tome of forbidden knowledge. In truth, they're more like investigative reporters, possessed of an uncanny drive to discover the truth and willing to go to any ends to do so.

- Others may fear the dark, worrying at what it may hold, but the Mystic allows no such fear. Not only are the shadows an excellent place to hide and make observations from, building upon his studies and refining his theories, but he also finds interesting things in there with him! What others shun, the Mystic gladly approaches, whether it wants him to or not.
- Curiosity fuels the Mystic, the burning need to *know* coursing through his veins. Each discovery delights him; every new fact is a celebration. Even little mysteries draw him like a moth to the flame. Rifling through a random person's trash, for example: it's amazing what one can learn from what others throw away! No avenue of inquiry is too mundane or subtle. The monsters of the world are well practiced at deception, and their lapses are small indeed.
- The Mystic has a hard time letting go, collecting things from old mysteries and studies he's long since abandoned even if they seem useless. He never knows when they might come in handy, and he just can't bring himself to throw away something that *might* be important. In one way or another, he is fastidious. His method of organization may be creative chaos or it may be perfect, obsessive categorization, but one way or another, he just *knows* where everything is. With the amount of lore he's collected, he'd get very little done if he didn't.
- It isn't enough to simply observe the world, however. The Mystic must involve himself in his studies, get his hands dirty, and conduct experiments to confirm his theories as best he can. Is silver death to werewolves? What about vampires? If not, why not? If he survives the process, he will have answers for some questions and new questions to answer.
- Greed is an impediment. Lore hoarded and kept in the shadows has no value, so a Mystic shares his lessons! Perhaps he forces his throngmates to listen to *yet another* discourse on willworker societies, or perhaps

It's not human; you can tell by the eyes. Let's go say hi.

he simply quietly corrects them when they err. This is not to say he cannot keep secrets, of course, since some knowledge is dangerous and some is more of a burden than a joy.

Ethos

Argentum has few firm requirements. After all, mystery must be pursued on its own terms, and will not come to the seeker who remains bound by rules and expectations. A Mystic makes no apologies for his behavior as he delves into the shadows. Extraordinary mysteries call for extraordinary measures to solve them.

The Refinement of Silver is a dangerous one. The beasts that were once human universally shun the light, hiding not only from humanity but also each other. They have their own (frequently inhuman) desires and their own alien drives, their own grudges and strife. They do not gladly suffer spies, even if those spies can truthfully claim to have no stake in their affairs. After all, they generally are no more immune to Disquiet than the humanity from which they sprang; it adds insult to injury that they should so easily blend in with the herd without the instinctive revulsion Prometheans must suffer through! More than one Mystic has come to Argentum hoping to find a cure for that very curse, for if the vampire or lycanthrope can be taken for human, can have friends, even lovers, *why shouldn't he?*

That is the greatest mistake a Mystic can make. In his jealousy, he envies those who have forsaken humanity, rather than dispassionately studying them and learning, through them, in what way he can achieve what they have so cavalierly cast aside. The monsters are not the goal and never were. For the Mystic to copy the tricks and illusions of the supernatural would in no way elevate his condition. The Pilgrim aspires to *true* humanity, not the appearance of it.

Roles

Envoy: Envoys engage directly with the supernatural. This often means serving as a medium or ambassador to spirits and to the dead. Other times, it means being the unlucky bastard that has to go and try to talk down the werewolf pack that has the throng cornered, thinking they are Spirit-Claimed or some strange kind of Host. Being an Envoy is a high-risk role, to be sure, but nothing beats up-close-and-personal for learning about the Others, assuming the Mystic survives the process of interacting with his subject.

Observer: Observers balance their curiosity with prudence, watching the Others from far away, only when it is safe to do so, and slowly amassing an enormous body of research and evidence. They do this for their own sake, to better understand the inhuman-human dichotomy, but many Observers are tempted to act upon what they have learned. Most who do try to clue in the unaware masses of humanity to the things that stalk them from the shadows. This, of course, has its own attendant problems.

Warden: Concerned most of all for their own safety and the safety of the throng, Wardens find their curiosity fueled by a need to be *ready*. Sooner or later, they reason, they'll have to fight one of these things and doing so without a working knowledge of their strengths and weaknesses is foolhardy at best. The Warden is the one carrying the silver shot, the holy water, and whatever else he thinks may avail him when the time comes. He is the one who teaches his throngmates that they might be as prepared as he. He is the one who stays awake at night, knowing just what the darkness holds.



Practitioners

Badi found out about werewolves the hard way — and, likewise, they found out how awful Promethean flesh tastes. Still, it wasn't enough to do him in completely, and when he woke up again he was absolutely fascinated by the idea of humans that could transmogrify themselves. Since then he's made a thorough study, documenting case after case as he tries to narrow down an alchemical theory for how they do what they do. Most importantly, of course, he wants to figure out how to kill them — he doesn't intend to be eaten alive a second time.

Combo goes looking for the places where Pandorans hide and calls them out. They try to cut zir with their teeth, so zie makes zir skin as tough as old leather. They try to strangle zir with their tentacles, so zie pushes Pyros into zir muscles until zie is strong enough to wrestle them to the ground. When a *sublimatus* out-schemes zir, zie reads Sun Tzu and George Patton and Erwin Rommel, and the next time they meet, zie is prepared. When zie finds out about the werewolves and vampires in the world, zie finds excuses to test zirself against them as well. Combo wouldn't admit it, but deep inside zie believes that becoming human is just a matter of being stronger than the not-humans.

Tacey only roughly recalls her origins, as if in a dream. Did she live once before this accursed life? If so, who was she? She feels an emptiness and a multitude she cannot lay her mind's eye on, but that nonetheless lingers in the corner of her vision. It reminds her — almost — of the spirits of the departed clustering around those things that tied them to this life, or else to the stranger denizens of the ethereal realm, clinging to the bright spots in the shadows. She studies these things not to understand them, but to understand herself.

Driscoll didn't mean to get himself into this position. Not really, anyway. But when one's throng is cornered by a bunch of *things* that only tangentially resemble humanity, it's a time for hard choices. He was the one who drew the short straw, and he was the one who went out to parley with the *things*, and he was the one who made them go away. Driscoll's throngmates are in awe of him, and all he can think of when he smiles and denies any sort of mystical gift is how long he has before the *things* come back. They'll be expecting payment, after all.

Gillian studies sacred architecture. She studies haunted houses, sacred temples, the places that contain gateways to the Underworld, and the keys that lead to the weird paths of thorns. She knows that humans can erect buildings and harness the power of magic — any magic, all magic — so why shouldn't it be that such a building could grant her a soul?

Refinement Condition: *Sensitive* – Mystics are attuned to the shadows and the supernatural, and through this resonance they can reveal what may be otherwise hidden. By spending a point of Pyros, he can call upon this sense for a scene, revealing anything or anyone that is, in some way, supernatural. This sense does not reveal *how* a person or object is supernatural in nature, only that it *is*. The rest is left to the Mystic's own curiosity.

Beat: Once per chapter, a Mystic takes a Beat if he discovers some new facet of the supernatural, or expands his knowledge about a supernatural subject he is already familiar with.

Transmutations: Sensorium, Spiritism

Stereotypes

- **Aurum:** But mine are so much more interesting!
- **Cuprum:** Useful for stakeouts, I suppose. Won't move for hours, won't complain once.
- **Ferrum:** Muscleheads, the lot. Useful, but don't let them handle anything fragile.
- **Plumbum:** Yes, yes, yes, we've *done* that! Next!
- **Stannum:** It must be like looking in a mirror when you see the Others.
- **Mercurius:** These theories are quite fascinating, but really, any of us can do that. I'm breaking new ground over here!
- **Phosphorum:** Well, I suppose that's *one* way to see what lies beyond the veil....
- **Centimani:** Even so outlandish as to...well. I suppose they're different enough to take an interest in, after all.



Cobalus

Refinement of Cobalt (Impurity)

Cathars

Why do we fail? Sometimes the reason is beyond our control but more often than not it is some inner flaw that dooms us. A Cathar seeks out these impurities in order to purge them. Purification steels him against failure and allows him to succeed at his Great Work. He takes the idea of Refinement perhaps more literally than any other Promethean. The path to Humanity is one of perfection, and thus it can't be achieved without understanding imperfection. To that end, he opens himself up to it. He focuses his awareness on what is wrong with the people around him. He watches. He pokes. He prods. He seeks to grasp how people break and why they fail.

His increased awareness gives him new capabilities. He gains a sense for how humours become imbalanced and what that means for a person's mental state. He notices physical and mental frailties that others overlook, either out of politeness, ignorance, or the fear that acknowledging such traits in others might force her to confront them in herself. A Cathar does not share this fear. Seeing weakness in others is precisely so that he can identify it in himself. It eventually gives him a measure of control over his own Torment that no other Promethean can achieve.

The most important lesson that a Cathar learns is that humans are not perfect. Their flaws and frailties help shape them and make them unique. He comes to understand that the impurities themselves are the crucible that makes a person stronger. The follower of Cobalus who does not learn this lesson tends to dehumanize people and views them as nothing but a collection of flaws. The ability to manipulate people by playing to their faults can easily make him contemptuous of humanity, which risks pushing him off the path.

Cobalus isn't just a philosophy, though, it is a devotion. As such, the Promethean needs to seek out a mentor, one who can put him on the correct path and teach him the proper perspective. Those inclined to seek out such a teacher often have failed and seek to understand why, but that is not the only reason. A follower of Aurum might become fascinated with human sin while living among them and seek to deepen his understanding, or one prone to falling to Stannum may hope to find insights in Cobalus that allow him to regain control. Many are just drawn by the promise of purification, hoping it is what they need to become something greater.

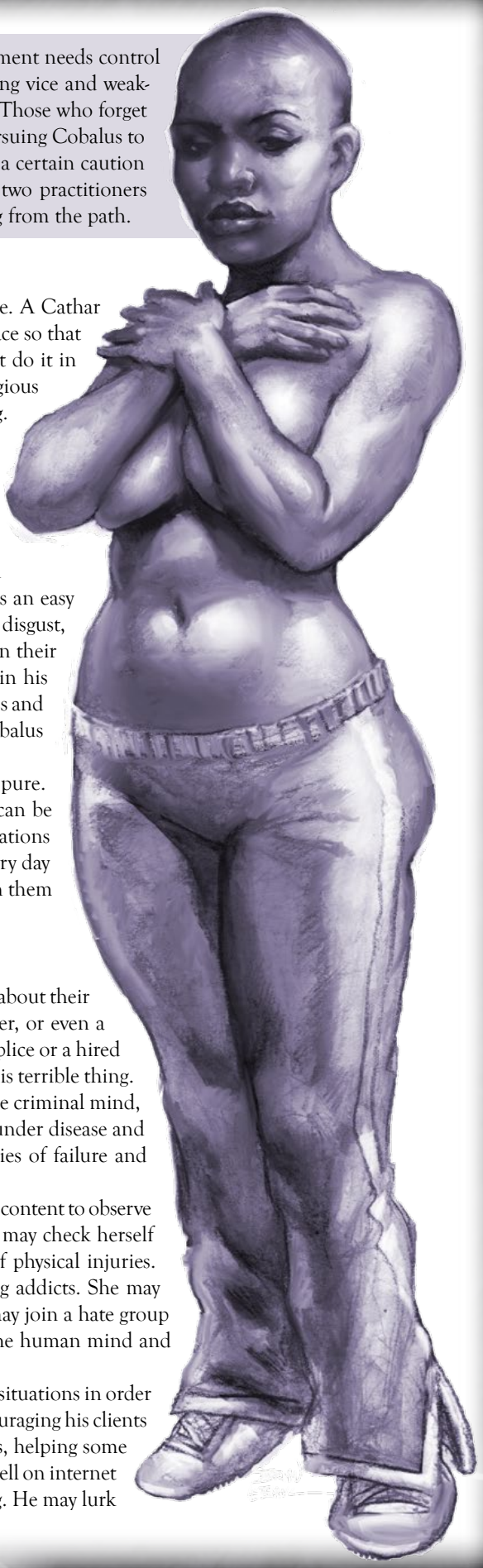
Practices

As students of imperfection, Cathars do not run from weakness and sin. They know that enduring failure allows them to pass through it and come out purified.

- A Cathar cannot avoid weakness if he wishes to understand it. He doesn't merely contemplate sin; he seeks its out, studies it, and experiences it. He consorts with those who surrender to sin and vice, those locked in the cycle of addiction, and those whose minds will not let them rest. He can only find his answers among the broken, so they are his people.
- A Cobalus sees Disquiet as an external manifestation of the flaws in his own being and so does not avoid it. He may linger in an area far longer than another Promethean might, fascinated by the progression of his Wasteland and its effects on others. The fire stoked by his impurities will burn them out of him.
- Removing impurity is a process of catharsis. Impurity must be allowed to come to the surface so that it may be purged. Thus, the Cathar does not fully reject Torment but allows himself to experience his weakness and come out the other side stronger. This is not to say that he seeks out situations that encourage Torment, but when it comes upon him, he allows himself to learn from the experience.
- A student of Cobalus isn't just interested in his own Disquiet and Torment, but also that of his throngmate. He encourages her to experience her moment of weakness not just so that she may release its impurity, but so that he might learn from it. Some Cathars have even been known to provoke Torment in others in the hopes of achieving enlightenment for the both of them.

I've been listening to his plan on how he's going to kill his wife for an hour. It's fascinating.

- It isn't enough to merely give in to Torment like a Fury. Refinement needs control in order to achieve results. So while Cathars encourage exploring vice and weakness, they advocate doing so in a measured, controlled fashion. Those who forget this lesson tend to degrade to Flux. The propensity for those pursuing Cobalus to become Centimani is known to all who practice it and leads to a certain caution when choosing a pupil to induct into the Refinement. When two practitioners meet, they often probe each other for signs they might be falling from the path.



Ethos

Cobalus demands that its practitioners face weakness and failure. A Cathar must examine it. He must experience it. He must bring it to the surface so that it may be purged. He cannot afford to repress anything, but he must do it in a controlled fashion. Another way to think of it would be as a religious observance. Each indulgence is ritualized. It has purpose and meaning. He isn't just giving in to Torment, he is purging his sins and using them to flagellate himself and strip away his weakness like skin from his back. It is a bloody process, but it isn't mindless violence. Unlike the Fury, his outbursts are a tool to avoid further weakness.

The Cathar cannot afford to allow this process to lose its meaning. Should he begin tormenting people for his own pleasure rather than to learn from it, he has stopped improving and become a sadist. It is an easy line to cross, especially when Torment takes hold. Fascination turns to disgust, and he delights in punishing people for their faults and preying upon their disabilities. It is a trap nearly every Cathar falls into at some point in his journey. The trick is to realize that it is just another moment of weakness and learn from it. More than any other Refinement, a practitioner of Cobalus knows that no failure is final if he survives it to try again.

Nobody is perfect, and the state he seeks, while gold, is not pure. Imperfection and weakness need to be accepted in order that they can be surpassed. This is the catharsis he seeks: the acceptance of his limitations so that he can move beyond them. He observes this same struggle every day in humanity and this kinship gives him hope that one day he will join them in their flawed, beautiful life.

Roles

Confessor: The Cathar makes himself the person others open up to about their sins, weaknesses, and flaws. He may become a counselor, a bartender, or even a priest. He may choose a more active role, becoming a criminal accomplice or a hired assassin, his real payment being the insight into why his client does this terrible thing. He may become a prison guard, listening carefully for insights into the criminal mind, or an orderly, observing first-hand how mind and body break down under disease and mental illness. He may even focus on his own kind, collecting stories of failure and Torment to better understand their causes.

Deviant: Some Cathars opt to experience sin and vice firsthand. Not content to observe humanity at its weakest, she seeks to learn through experience. She may check herself into a mental ward or painstakingly put herself through a variety of physical injuries. She may try a cornucopia of drugs and spend all of her time among addicts. She may become a sex worker to examine the pitfalls of lust and desire. She may join a hate group or a criminal organization to see how bigotry and anger can warp the human mind and the consequences they bring.

Provocateur: The Cathar in this role pushes buttons and aggravates situations in order to see how impurities affect the outcomes. He may be a prostitute encouraging his clients to greater excess, to exploring their darkest desires. He may sell drugs, helping some people to mask their weakness and others to magnify them. He may dwell on internet forums, encouraging people in their bigotry, hatred, and self-loathing. He may lurk

in a bar and encourage an angry wife to go and confront her unfaithful spouse after another drink or two. He may lurk in crowds of protestors and feed the fire of their indignation until rage overcomes ideology.

Practitioners

Miko has been a Fury for so long that her throng-mates abandoned her, sure that she was on the verge of joining the Hundred Handed. Nearly lost to Torment, she began an arduous journey to find the one she hoped could help her. When she found him, he told her to stop fighting, to allow herself to own her Torment. Miraculously, that was all that it took. Now she seeks out others like her in the hopes that she can set them on the right path and advance further along her own.

Erik had followed the Freak for months before he felt he had learned all he could by observation and approached her. The first time he barely got away with his life, but he persisted and, eventually, she listened. It was several more months before he convinced her to turn her back on Flux. He told her she was hiding from who she really was. He knew it might take years to help her truly recover, but he knew an addict when he saw one and knew that patience and persistence were the only way.

Dorothea considered the crack den to be her laboratory. The neighborhood was so bad here, the residents so squirrely, that Disquiet was barely noticeable. She lived among them: breathing the same rank air, taking the same drugs, and experiencing the same slow death. No Muse would go this far, fall this low. But she understood their pain and each day cleansed her and strengthened her, like the heat of their need was a fire in which she was tempered. She watched as her companion started another pipe. She smiled as the flame of his lighter danced in her eyes.

Marv took blow after blow, barely making an effort to defend himself — relishing the pain, wallowing in it. Only at moments like this did he feel like his mismatched body was truly alive. The fact that he stayed upright only antagonized his assailant further; he felt like he could feel the anger lash out with each punch. It made a connection between them, and he even forgot at times who was the victim and who was the attacker. They combined into a single organism and the fight was the fire in which they were born. Both would emerge on the other side stronger for it.

Freda walked the couple through their issues and took down every word, creating a road map of their dysfunction, frailty, and pain. Their weaknesses rubbed against each other's like sandpaper and the heat of the friction was what had brought them to her. She explained this to them and suggested that, in time, they would wear each other smooth. Each would lose their rough edges and they would be better people. It was an uncommon approach for a marriage counselor but she believed what she said and that made them inclined to listen. She advised them, when they fought, not to hold back. Purgation is good for the soul.

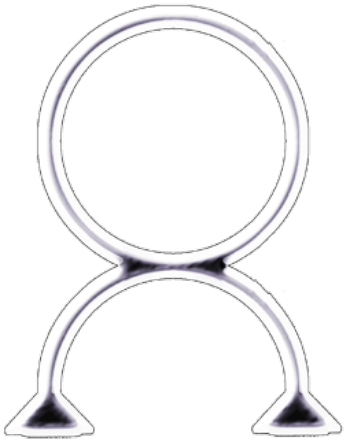
Refinement Condition: *Analyst* – Cathars have a keen sense for the weaknesses of others. When using Social Maneuvering, they can leverage a person's Vice to improve their Impression by two steps instead of one.

Beat: Once per chapter, the Cathar gains a Beat by enabling or encouraging someone else's Vice or Torment.

Transmutations: Contamination, Mesmerism

Stereotypes

- **Aurum:** Gold is pretty, soft, and malleable. Who does that sound like?
- **Cuprum:** Others are the mirror in which we see our own flaws.
- **Ferrum:** Call us when you are ready for the master's class.
- **Phosphorum:** Burn out the impurity, yes, but you don't burn *everything*.
- **Plumbum:** Lead poisons people. It makes them stupid. What is the lesson there?
- **Stannum:** Torment is inevitable, but we *can* move past it.
- **Centimani:** Don't ever, *ever* compare me to that.



Mercurius

Refinement of Quicksilver (Pyros)

While all Prometheans practice alchemy, the Savant seeks to master that discipline. He is a wizard and a scientist, studying the magic that animates Prometheans not to better understand what they are, but to learn how to use it more effectively. Too practical to be called a philosophy, Mercurius is a discipline. Those who obtain its focus gain an increased attunement to the flow of Pyros and how to apply it.

The Refinement of Quicksilver teaches a grounded and practical perspective of the world often neglected in a Promethean's search for ephemera like the nature of humanity and the soul. Mercurius returns to the alchemical context, where the spiritual is something that can be measured and manipulated as easily as physical materials. Rather than meditating on the sublime, she stares into the furnace burning within her and gets down to the dirty work of forging it into something better. She isn't concerned with thought experiments and theorizing. Theories are useless if they can't be applied and tested.

Mercurius is rarely the first or the last Refinement a Promethean studies. Like alchemy, it is a pathway from one state to another. A Promethean might seek out a mentor in Quicksilver to continue the path of self-discovery started in Lead or Iron and then continue on to Cobalt when she is done. Another might seek to learn the lesson of objectivity before delving into Gold, so that he will be better prepared not to lose himself in humanity. A few try to end their journey with Quicksilver, convinced that it will give them the skills they need to forge their Pyros into a human soul.

Practices

Mercurius is a scientific discipline as much as a philosophy. It focuses on observation and experimentation in a practical exploration of the Promethean soul.

- Alchemy is at the heart of what makes a Promethean what they are. It is no surprise that Savants have a keen interest in the discipline. This includes a fascination with drugs and poisons, the effects of which she will keenly study when given the opportunity. This leads many Mercurius to medicine and pathology as fields of study.
- The Refinement of Pyros must include observation of its darker aspects, leading Savants to seek out and study manifestations of Flux. Firestorms and their aftermath are of particular interest, but some go so far as to seek out Pandorans and Centimani for study. More than one Savant has been seduced by the Flux and joined the Hundred Handed merely in an attempt to better grasp all aspects of their nature.
- The *qashmallim* are a subject of particular fascination to the Savants. As direct manifestations of the Divine Fire, they promise vast insights into Pyros and its properties. Savants travel long distances to reach the site of a visitation and some resort to divination or even attempts at summoning to experience them first-hand. Some mistake this obsession for reverence, but the Savants are interested in practical observation, not worship.
- The study of Pyros requires subjects who possess it, so Mercurius seek out their own kind rather than consorting with humanity. Since the Created are few in number, sometimes the Savant settles for the company of another supernatural being with a similar interest in the esoteric. Such collaborations are generally short-lived, since the interests of the Savant rarely match those of the other for long. If such a partnership lasts, it is usually followed by a shift to Argentum.
- Transmutations are the most powerful effect of the Pyros upon Prometheans and the world around them. Savants carefully study the changes that each Refinement has on Pyros and how this manifests in Transmutations. Some even try to create new Alembics through exploration and experimentation, altering their mind and body through meditation or drugs in order to discover new changes.

Ethos

The Mercurius are explorers of the Divine Fire, dedicating themselves to understanding the animating force that serves

Fascinating!
Let's double the voltage and try again.

as a Promethean's soul as well as being a tangible force of change and transformation. They compare Pyros to a serpent: elusive and dangerous to handle. Others liken the Savants themselves to reptiles, citing their cold objectivity and often ethically dubious experimentation. Savants argue that detachment is necessary when studying oneself in order to learn anything of value, and are more prone to self-experimentation than utilizing unwilling participants.

A Savant is driven by a passion for knowledge that belies his impersonal exterior. He will go to any length to discover the truth about the force that animates him. For the Savant, the question of whether something should be done is entirely practical: is what stands to be learned worth the risk? If the potential cost is too high, she seeks out another avenue, but if the rewards are high enough, all other considerations fall by the wayside. A Savant will walk into a raging Firestorm if she thinks it will teach her something about Pyros.

What a Savant risks is allowing research to become the goal, losing sight of the Great Work and the purpose for acquiring this knowledge. The point of alchemy is to take one thing and transform it into another. An endless cycle of transformation is meaningless. Experienced Savants claim that their nickname is cautionary. The Great Work is often symbolized by the Ouroboros, which can symbolize unity and completion but also endless cycles. The snake swallowing his own tail can refer to self-discovery or solipsism. It is a fine line every Mercurius walks.

Roles

Craftsman: At his core, a craftsman is a person who seeks to alter the world around him to fit his desires. His is a physical process of molding matter to his will. A Savant in this role uses his affinity to alchemy and the Transmutations at his disposal to explore what it means to make the world over into his own image. He creates things and changes them. He may build a house with his bare hands in some remote area or take a position in an electronics store, herding electricity through impossibly thin strands of metal in an act almost like magic.

Explorer: A Savant knows that learning requires being willing to seek out answers and this requires research and travel. As an explorer, she has an ear to the ground for stories or signs of Firestorms, *qashmallim*, or Pandorans. She is always on the move, ready to respond to new information at a moment's notice, and is adept at reading Pilgrim Marks. She may join a throng dedicated to investigating rumors of Athanors or seek out mentors in other Refinements in order to learn more of their Transmutations. In a world filled with answers, she never stops looking.

Scientist: Considered the most archetypal role of the Refinement, the Scientist is dedicated to research and experimentation. He can seek out a place at an institute of learning in order to gain access to facilities, but more likely puts together his own, either

seeking out an abandoned laboratory or assembling one in an old warehouse or shack in the woods. The practical bent of Savants often means that his experiments are less concerned with ethics than results; many Prometheans give Savants in this role a wide berth.

Practitioners

Nicole watches from her cramped hiding place as the first of the Pandorans passes and hopes that her depleted Pyros is low enough that they don't sense her. She is distracted from her concerns when her quarry comes into view, herding the remainder of the pack. The Centimani is grotesque; she can feel the Flux coming off of him in waves as he manipulates his pets. She closes her eyes for a moment, just feeling the ebb and flow of his Pyros before she starts to siphon a small amount of it, tasting the Flux in it as it mingles with her own.

Jonesy has been hiking through the Siberian wilderness for more days than he can number. He is just beginning to wonder if he is lost when he sees the first signs of the event: trees flattened like matchsticks radiating out from the distant center. He can feel something, he isn't sure what, but he knows the trip was not in vain. He came here because of stories of a Savant attempting to summon a *qashmal* with disastrous results. He had to admit he wasn't sure if he believed them. As he trudges further into the bog, he leaves his doubts behind.

It had been two years since Allie escaped from the military, but she still had nightmares of being strapped to that table and subjected to an alchemist's torturous experiments to test the limits and properties of her Pyros. In the end, she reflected, the experiments were his undoing. His attempt to cause her to manifest a new Transmutation worked, and her newfound ability allowed her to shatter her bonds. She can still feel how his flesh crystallized under her touch and finally shattered. Despite all of it, she saw the value in his work. His notes allowed her to begin her steps on the Refinement of Quicksilver. The nightmares guide her towards avoiding his excesses.

It amazed everyone who met Vasily what delicate work he could do with his large, misshapen hands. With meticulous precision, he places the last tiny gear and closes the door on the back of the clock. A few moments of winding and he hears its mechanical heartbeat offering a parody of life. He closes his eyes and thinks of the larger work of art he has assembled in the basement of the shop and hopes that its life will be more authentic. He feels the burning of his Pyros and thinks, "It is time." He descends once more to look upon his clockwork child, waiting for him to gift it with life.

When Tabitha found him, she fell at his feet and wept. She told him of her time among humanity and the pain it brought her. She described the loss of her adopted sister and the Torment that followed, destroying the life they'd built together. She told him she couldn't bear the weight of their emotions anymore. He offered to teach her how to observe without becoming involved. When next she looks now upon those she had once called family, her eyes are dry and she passes them by without a second thought. She has more important work to do.

Refinement Condition: *Resourceful* – A Savant has a knack for making do with whatever equipment she has on hand. Once per scene, she can spend a point of Pyros to add one to the equipment bonus of a tool or a weapon (even an improvised one) for the rest of the scene.

Beat: Once per chapter, a Savant can gain a Beat when her thirst for knowledge harms those around her.

Transmutations: Alchemicus, Vulcanus

Stereotypes

- **Argentum:** Yes, yes, vampires exist. Could we please concentrate on the task at hand?
- **Aurum:** Far too involved with their subjects.
- **Cuprum:** How can you spend so much time with yourself, yet accomplish nothing?
- **Ferrum:** Lie on the table. I want to try something.
- **Plumbum:** Can I borrow that book for a bit?
- **Stannum:** Careful around the equipment!
- **Centimani:** See, this is what happens when you don't account for all the variables.



PHOSPHORUM

REFINEMENT OF PHOSPHORUS (EPHEMERALITY)

LIGHT-BRINGERS

Though Prometheans ache for a mortal life denied them, they cannot ignore that the Magnum Opus is a process that takes time; years, decades, perhaps longer still. Many accede to this fact, walking their path slowly. One must be patient to win the greatest of prizes. Some, however, cannot bear the wait. Perhaps the Promethean has already once reached for zir Magnum Opus and fallen tragically short. Perhaps zir condition gnaws at zir, and zir Torment only drives zir deeper into despair. Whatever the source of desperation — and it is desperation — these Prometheans find themselves drawn to the Refinement of Phosphorus. They become Light-Bringers, beacons to their throng and to all Prometheans, lighting the way to the end of the long road that lies ahead, even if they burn out in the process.

The Light-Bringer does not wait. Zie does not pause to consider action. None react faster than those following the Refinement of Phosphorous, for good or for ill. Yet, zir seeming madness has method, a philosophy that underlies the image of the desperate monster, for Light-Bringers have glimpsed a truth hidden in plain sight: it is life's ephemerality that gives it purpose. Though a Promethean cannot taste of mortality's ambrosia until after zir Pilgrimage is completed, those who follow Phosphorum do their best to mimic it. The Light-Bringer is active, not reactive. Zie does not wait because each day may be zir last (a prospect that zir philosophy, admittedly, makes far more likely). Though zie may not pause to appreciate them, a Light-Bringer savors each sunrise, each blossoming flower, because zie may never experience such a wonder again.

Practices

Everything is edge-play for Light-Bringers. If an action does not carry the immanent risk of death, it may as well be a pleasant stroll through a calm park.

- To the horror of zir throngmates, the Light-Bringer will happily charge into a burning building to snatch something precious out of the ashes, perhaps even save a human life. Or perhaps not. Zie's never seen someone die of smoke inhalation before....
- You say war zone, zie says opportunity! Turns out the Light-Bringer is precisely the type to run towards gunfire, not away from it; exactly the sort who will snatch away someone's weapon just to see the look on their face when it's pointed back at them.
- It can't be all action all the time, of course. The Light-Bringer finds zir beloved ephemerality even in the smallest moments, even pushing zir way into desperate, private struggles. Nothing is more fascinating than watching someone weigh life in the balance, be it on the ledge outside their window or a bloody triage ward after a disaster.
- The old man with tubes and wires hooked up to half his body curses at zir every time zie comes in — to be fair, he curses at everyone, not just zir, which is a nice change of pace. Even with the abuse he slings, even with his spit on zir face, zie just smiles, changes his IV bag, and walks away. Won't be long now.
- When zie does slip and fall, as almost every Light-Bringer does, it is more important than ever to maintain a clear mind, to greet death eagerly, and to glean every bit of understanding that zie can. Until the Magnum Opus is completed, this is the most human zie will ever be.

Ethos

Every second is a precious gift to the Light-Bringer, every sensation a treasure, good or ill. A Light-Bringer endures anything with a smile on zir face and seeks out more of the same as soon as zie can. Self-destructiveness is not always considered a failing, for one must fly close to the flame if one is to learn of its heat. Passion for life is of the utmost importance, even though zie does not truly live. Fake it 'till you make it. Sooner or later, the façade becomes the truth.

Conversely, no Light-Bringer tolerates stasis for long. Ephemerality and change are the stuff of life itself, and zie shuns the cold and quiet road every time. Nothing terrifies

EVER SEEN SOMEONE BURN?
HAVE YOU TRIED BEING THE ONE ON FIRE YET?

and infuriates a Light-Bringer more than incarceration; zie would rather dash zirself against the walls of whatever holds zir, Torment driving zir to escape or die in the process. Either way, the problem is then solved.

It is easy to misunderstand the Refinement of Phosphorus, even for those who walk its path. It is easy to be a thrill-seeker, but hard to understand *why* Light-Bringers all but throw their lives away. It is perfectly possible to do everything right, to fulfill every tenet of the philosophy, and still fail. Many on this Path have already tasted that defeat before, but that does little to lessen the pain of knowing that the end of the Road is now that much farther away. Ultimately, Light-Bringers are gambling with their very future, with the very possibility for true mortality and for a soul. Ephemerality abhors middle ground; a Light-Bringer either wins big or loses it all.

Roles

Daredevil: The quintessential Light-Bringers, Daredevils push themselves beyond even their own wildest conceptions of their limits. Ecstatic and half-suicidal, they court death like a lover, trying to coax a thrill into what passes for their heart. Any foolhardy stunt will do; while a Light-Bringer may prefer to save the heroics for when it matters, that *itch* to jump between buildings without looking down, to run through a burning building, or to walk up and slug a police officer will always be there. Are they mad? Probably. Will it get them killed? It just might. Do they care? Only if they don't learn something about themselves about precious, fleeting life in the process.

Psychopomp: Death waits patiently for all humans. Even Prometheans fear a final destruction. While Light-Bringers may be more eager than others to tempt fate, they do not do so lightly. Their philosophy gives them greater familiarity with the act of dying – with mortality – than any other Promethean. The flare-out at the end is just as important as the searing, bright burn to those who follow the Refinement of Phosphorus, and as important an object of study as any other field. Those who enact the role of the Psychopomp live beside death, make themselves its brother, and watch it at work. Hospice care and EMT work in particular are favorites, but even amateur journalism has a voyeuristic thrill all its own. Armed only with curiosity, the Psychopomp sifts through the ashes of humanity, hoping for a revelation.



Whip: The Daredevil skirts death's touch, and the Psychopomp watches over those whom death takes into its embrace. The Whip, by contrast, does not always act zirself, but spurs others onward, egging them on until they finally take whatever action has been itching at them. A Whip treasures the moment where someone decides to risk everything, and more than anything else zie wants to understand it and the consequences of it...without necessarily suffering those consequences zirself. In a more benign context, the Whip can be invaluable for lifting the spirits of their Throng, or pushing them out of their shell and into the world.

Practitioners

Alex loves it when they see others trying in vain to gender them. They personally gave up trying to decide between the two long ago, perfectly happy with that nebulous nonbinary space. They have been at this for a while, long enough to have been through half a dozen Refinements trying to find one that fits, but like their gender

it always seemed to be one big question mark... until they discovered the path of the Light-Bringer. Sure, their hair is singed in places and they've got an ever-changing bruise collection, but they make it look *good*.

She knows not when she was made, or by whom, if indeed there was any hand save fate itself involved in her creation. Her Pilgrimage has taken her far from the hazy memories of her youth, and she feels no closer to the end of the Road than the beginning. Phosphorum offers her a possible answer and ending. In her wake, she sows chaos and light that it might one day consume her, or else light the way to her Magnum Opus. Those whose lives she touches seldom continue in the same mold they once did. She calls herself Eris. She read it in a book, and it seemed appropriate.

Every culture has such fascinating practices built up around the great mystery of death. Rodrigo finds that one of the most singularly interesting things about humanity, and always has. Yet it grips even Prometheans, who struggle all their long quasi-lives for the gift of mortality so that they too can experience that quietus! This conundrum gripped him even before he found the Refinement of Phosphorus, and now he devotes himself to it utterly. Surprising, really, how few people notice an extra person at a funeral. Did he know the deceased? Oh, yes. They were very close. One dead, and one wishing for the ability to die.

Todd's first sight was of a great conflagration consuming the grand library where he was born. He watched a vast collection of knowledge burn before the flames reached him and he learned firsthand what it is to burn. He speculates now that it was this first that burned the words straight out of him, and that was why he didn't speak for so long. The ephemerality of words gave Todd great insight into the ephemerality of all things, a lesson that stuck with him as he ventured out on his Pilgrimage. When he discovered the teachings of the Refinement of Phosphorus, it was a natural fit.

Ki understands impermanence like few other Prometheans. Ki, after all, is made of folded paper, and so carries the knowledge that he would burn beautifully, luminously bright, should he ever ignite. As Ki studies the nature of ephemerality, though, he gradually begins to understand that in order to let go of all the pain he carries, all the pain he's inflicted in service to others, he *must* burn.

Refinement Condition: *Intense* – The Promethean's Azoth flares bright so long as they walk the Light-Bringer's path, and even those who are not attuned to its unnatural energies can sense it. This has the effect of rendering zir both strangely fascinating and a beacon to zir fellows — and zir worst enemies. The player spends a point of Pyros and subtracts one from the number of Doors in a Social maneuvering action. This immediately prompts a Disquiet roll, however.

Beat: Once per chapter, the player may take a Beat to automatically fail a Stealth roll *or* to add one die to a Disquiet roll.

Transmutations: Luciferus, Vulcanus

Stereotypes

- **Aurum:** Sure, you *look* human, but do you *feel* human?
- **Cuprum:** Staying wound up like that can't be healthy. Relaxing isn't going to kill you, and if it does, so what?
- **Ferrum:** You're so close! Come on! What are you afraid of?
- **Plumbum:** Going nowhere, doing nothing. *Boring.*
- **Stannum:** I get it, I really do, but you're just treading water like this. Open your eyes again!
- **Aes:** You're not going to get anywhere living for others but never for yourself.
- **Argentum:** Interviews are fine, but what's the point of talking to monsters if you never get bitten?
- **Centimani:** Turns out, there *is* something I won't try at least once....



THE GREAT WORK: PART II

Clay's Girl was the only thing keeping Roark from a free tooth removal. She didn't know what he did to piss the guy off. Roark just wanted a cup of coffee, so she let him get one while she kept an eye out for Wisher and Imam. Next thing she knew, he was running to her and clinging to her back and some asshole in a suit that barely fit him was barreling down the sidewalk.

It's not like the guy was intimidating. He was rail thin and already huffing from the power walk. Roark was much taller and looked stronger. Still, it wasn't the guy in the suit shaking behind her and stretching her jacket.

"Out of the way, lady!" the man in the suit yelled. "He's mine!"

Roark squatted low. Clay's Girl rolled her eyes at all the displays of bravery and spread her arms out wide.

"I don't know what you want," she said, "but it's not worth it."

"Oh, you don't even know. That's the asshole that botched the Lustig account! I've been working on that for years!"

Clay's Girl groaned. Of course Roark would set someone off going it alone. Of course he would do that without the rest of the throng around. She tilted her head to look at Roark and raised an eyebrow.

Roark shook his head. She sighed. It's not like it was his fault, and she was the one who volunteered to watch him in the first place.

"Look, I don't know who you think he is, but you've got the wrong guy. Just walk away."

The guy in the suit walked closer. "Let me see him for myself."

Clay's Girl brushed Roark's fingers off of her body and stepped forward.

"This is your last warning," she said, "he's not the one you want."

The guy reached out for Clay's Girl and tried to shove her to the side. She could only feel the tiniest amount of push from him, but that was enough to get things started. She felt her inner fire change and its burn crept up her arms. She grabbed him by the collar with one hand, and sent a strike as swift as lightning into his stomach with the other. He gasped and fell to the ground.

She stared at the man, silently daring him to get up. The honk of a car horn snapped her back to her senses. Wisher and Imam were sitting in the car with disapproving looks. Clay's Girl rolled her eyes and grabbed Roark's arm. She led him to the car.

Roark looked back at the man, still catching his breath on the ground.

"Will he be OK?" he asked.

Clay's Girl nudged him into the car.

"He'll be fine," she said. "Just be glad I didn't break his jaw."

SHADOW'S RAMBLE

I can tell you everything about dinosaurs.
I can cook up a perfect batch of scrambled eggs.
I can recite the best of Shakespeare by heart.
Algebra? I can solve a quadratic equation in my sleep.
I know how to talk someone down from a fight. If that doesn't work, I know how to strike them so hard, they'll never want to hit a bottle or a kid for the rest of their life. It's all there, on the only file that proves that I exist. Police came. Took me away, took Rob from her a few weeks later.

When they were processing me, asking me all those questions, that's when I started learning all the things I didn't know. The first time I learned what color my eyes were was when one of the officers wrote it down on my rap sheet. They were brown, just like Rob's. The only thing that I knew for sure was what they wanted on the signature lines. I signed it the same way I'd sign Rob's permissions slips when Mom was too drunk to do anything: Anthony Barnes, with the "t" crossed near the very top.

Yeah, I still called her that. That's what Rob called her, and he dreamed me up to be his big brother, so why wouldn't I? Even when they took him into the van, he still called her "Mom." He said goodbye to her first. Mom was too stunned to even give him a hug, so I did it for the both of us. I thought about staying. I really wanted to when I saw Mom curled up on the couch and wailing. I thought that maybe if I could make Rob happy, I could make her happy too, right? It didn't sound smart then, either. I was gone by the end of the day. Last I heard, she moved somewhere outside of Jupiter. She said the ocean air helped her stay sober. I don't know what Rob's up to these days. I don't think they'd tell me if I asked. I'm working on it.

I lived in a lot of dreams after that. Everyone dreams alone, it's a great way to keep to yourself. Even when I met Vasily and Driscoll, I'd just spend my time in someone else's dream, or just go hide when I'd get kicked out. I didn't like being solid anymore. I kept coming back with a new skin color or a different hair style. One time Driscoll went out on a house call and he took me with him to keep watch. He kept asking me to help him out, so I figured I'd go at least once. I was minding my own business when I saw my reflection in a teapot. Bright green eyes, looking right back at me. Driscoll's pulled out some gray, slimy thing from one of his patients, and I just stared at myself the whole time. He finishes up, we walk out, and I haven't been solid since. I think they like me better as a shadow anyways.

I know a lot of things. I just wish I knew more about me.




אמת
COAGULA

CHAPTER TWO: STEPS

A Promethean lives a liminal existence, not between life and death but between humanity and inhumanity. Created from inanimate matter, or the remains of the deceased, and powered by the most radical transformative force known, she attempts to find a place in the world. For a sad few, this translates into embracing their monstrous nature and becoming a twisted abomination. For most, it means something else entirely: the Pilgrimage, a physical and metaphysical journey to learn about humans and humanity alike, hoping to find something of it in themselves. Refining the alchemy that fuels her body, a Promethean sheds her base nature for more purified states, hoping that this will make her more real. Hoping it'll just be one more step towards becoming human.

This chapter examines how a Promethean comes to be, how she gets started on her journey, and how that journey ends. It's often said that "it's not about the destination, it's about the journey." It's certainly true here but in a more literal way. The Pilgrimage doesn't have shortcuts; each stop on the journey happens for a reason. To reach the destination, the Promethean cannot simply check off a list of milestones — she has to live them, learn from them, and allow them events to change her. *That* is the true meaning of the Pilgrimage.

You know your destination. Let's find out what your journey will be like.

> **Natural philosophy is the genius that has regulated my fate; I desire, therefore, in this narration, to state those facts which led to my predilection for that science.**
>
> **—Mary Shelley, Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus**

Flesh

The early stages of a Promethean's life before she embarks on the Pilgrimage are easy to guess at. What she does with this time and what leads her to the decision to find her own humanity, that's up to her. But it always begins and ends with two dreams: her creator's and her own.

The Obsessive Dream — Demiurges and Genitors

Prometheans are called the Created for a reason. They are made from alchemy and Azoth, the Divine Fire of creation, transmuted and brought into the world by genius, innovation, and most importantly obsession. If the creator is human, we call him a demiurge after the gnostic entity that usurped God's position in the universe. If he's a Promethean, he's called a genitor, a step between the Progenitor — the first Promethean of a Lineage — and the Promethean herself. To refer to those that commit to their mad dreams in general, the term "creator" is used.

Demiurges can come from any walk of life. Knowledge, education, and resources are not required to create a Promethean. Obsession is the only necessity; if the demiurge has that, he can make do with whatever's around him. A confused, angry scientist with some strange theories on electricity, a lonely sculptor, a grieving widow, or even a mad doctor with delusions of building a child when the world did not give him one are all viable demiurges. They might dive into ancient discredited journals and research bizarre fields of pseudoscience in the name of their work, or they might dream a Promethean into existence. Reason, sense, reality — all of these concepts are drowned out, replaced by drive, passion, and yes, obsession. It doesn't always work. It doesn't even usually work, but it works often enough to give prospective creators a sense of hope.

Genitors know all too well how miserable it is to be one of the Created, but they inflict this special kind of agony on someone else anyway. Why? Some feel they have to. The Azothic memory makes reference to *multiplicatio,* "raising" another Promethean. A popular interpretation states that to become human, a Promethean must first create a new member of her kind to take her place. Genitors have an altogether more common and more human

reason to create progeny, though: loneliness. Disquiet drives away mortal friends, allies, and lovers. Meeting another Promethean, let alone enough Prometheans to form a throng, is rare. Having children the way human beings do is impossible for the Created. The only surefire way for a Promethean to find a companion that understands her, that can stay with her, is to make one. The process is roughly the same as what a demiurge goes through, though rather than summoning Azoth to fill their prospective creation, a Promethean is filling the vessel with a portion of its own.

The creator's work begins either way — sleepless nights of research and experimentation to get the process exactly right, infinite tests and theories before putting anything into practice, gathering the required materials (usually but not always human corpses), and perfecting his own spin on the ritual. Just following the directions of a previously successful creator rarely works. The process has to be infused with one's own soul and drive; it has to reflect one's beliefs and will to have even a chance at success. Creators suffer failures, but eventually some of them manage to do it. The programming is perfect, the right body part was removed, the voltage is correct: whatever the process, they call down the Divine Fire with their obsession and bring their work to life.

A Promethean is born.

On the Slab

Newborn Prometheans develop mentally as a human infant does, though at a much faster pace. Part of this comes from the fact that their brains are already fully formed. Newborn humans have an order of magnitude more neuronal connections in their brains that must be trimmed down to create a functioning mind. Promethean minds start out with the right connections already made.

Another piece of the puzzle is Azothic memory, the collective subconscious of all Created. At this point in her life, all it does is help the Promethean develop language skills, grasp abstract concepts, and the like. During her Pilgrimage, however, it is an indispensable resource. For the first couple days, she experiences sensory overload; even the dimmest light or the quietest sound is completely new and untested to her patchwork body. As she suffers through this, she finds herself learning how to use her body. That comes much faster, especially when her brain came from a body with similar proportions (and thus, similar muscle memory) to hers. Even if that's not the case, balance and motor function come much more quickly than mental functions or language, creating the odd situation where the Created may be able to sprint before she can form a coherent sentence.

Disfigurements

Prometheans develop at a remarkable rate mentally, but not physically. Whatever they might be made from remains in the same condition it was when a creator gave them the spark of life. The telltale signs of their inhumanity are referred to as *disfigurements*. Prometheans don't age, which can present problems for creators looking to create literal children. The more common issue is incongruity between sources, such as a teenager with wrinkles and crow's feet, or parts of multiple ethnicities stitched together. While this can be upsetting for the Promethean that has to live with that face, it might not present an issue unless she makes a grave mistake.

Constructed vs. Unfleshed

Stories echo throughout the ages of creating life from things that were never alive: Galatea, namesake and Progenitor of the Galateids, was made from marble. The Golem of Prague could easily be Unfleshed or Tammuz. The Unfleshed are not a new Lineage. They've existed for as long as men have made artificial things in their own image.

Intent matters. Unfleshed are meant to be simulacra of humans, not humans themselves. They must be made of non-human parts, yes, but the creator must also desire something less than human: a robot, a living sculpture, an artificial intelligence, a puppet with a mind of its own. All of these things are alive, yes, but they were created with the expectation that they would not be human.

Galatea was created to be the perfect *human* companion, so whether she was made from marble or not, she's not Unfleshed. Prometheans that aren't made from corpses are informally known as constructs and can be of any Lineage, depending on what their creator did to will them into existence. That brings up the question of humour: Would a Frankenstein made from machines and engines have Yellow Bile, as his progenitor, or Oil, as an artificial being? Either could be the case, but in the end it's up to you and what you want done with your character.

The Promethean's Azoth protects her from the consequences of her own disfigurements, creating, if not a true illusion, then an aura of normalcy that human beings acknowledge. When a Promethean expends Pyros, though, that aura is disrupted and her disfigurements become visible for a split second, illuminated as though in a flash of lightning. While this normally isn't enough time for a person to truly understand what he's seeing, it can increase the effects of Disquiet.

Postpartum

The first days, possibly even weeks, of a Promethean's life are as awkward and painful as a newborn human's but for entirely different reasons. Not yet aware of the significant drawbacks of her life, things can seem new, interesting, amazing. New Prometheans make mistakes, yes—what child doesn't hurt himself in accidents? But to the Created, fresh off the slab, the accidents seem like nothing. A demiurge is often both proud of and confused by his creation.

This is how Disquiet begins in the demiurge. A genitor, on the other hand, usually either treasures his creation's innocence, reliving his own early life through her, or cringes at the reminder of how idiotic he must have acted. Though immune to Disquiet, this is one reason genitors don't travel with their creations for long.

In this period, as she realizes she is both more and less than a human, the new Created begins experimenting with her Azoth and

Day 38

My creation continues to assert his independence. I wish nothing but the best for the boy. May as well admit it, he is my boy. I've not just created a robot, I've created a life. The son I could never have. That's how I've been justifying ~~its~~ his existence. I regret to say that I find the boy strangely uncomfortable. His questions about his own autonomy, his creation.... Something he calls "the fire that burns where my heart should be." Such strange, stupid questions from a thing I gave life. I find myself upset at everything ~~it~~ he does. He's taken an interest in blues music, and while I was never a fan, I now despise it in ways I never thought possible. My wife refuses to stay in the same house as ~~the thing~~ OUR SON. I'm beginning to share her sentiments. I don't know what to do. I love the boy, but I hate the thing. I fear one day I may break it, for good.

Thomas Lichter
September 28, 1990

Pyros, bringing forth her Bestowment, with the flickering Azothic Memory giving words, images, and other vague signs that she's on the right track. As it's clear he's made not just any living thing, but a supernatural creature, a demiurge's disquiet intensifies. He begins to wonder what exactly he has wrought and if it was a good thing after all.

A genitor is likewise conflicted. On one hand, seeing his creation discover her nature means she'll start her own Pilgrimage soon (hopefully), which can be either good or bad depending on his intent for the creation. On the other, she's getting closer to the crushing moment where she realizes exactly what sort of life she's in for. Nobody wants to be around to see a loved one's every hope crushed, genitors included.

Things worsen quickly from there. As the Promethean develops her own personality and thoughts, her newfound independence only worsens the divide between the ideal identity her creator foisted upon her and reality. In the worst cases, a demiurge that tries to keep his creation in the same area for long may find himself at the epicenter

Under The Skin

Gender is a tricky subject for humans, and only more so for Prometheans. The few among the Created who find themselves uncomfortable with the sex their creator gave them, just like humans, have limited means to change to the sex they'd prefer. For Prometheans, though, the process is almost entirely different.

The usual avenues of self-discovery and transition (therapy, hormone replacement, surgery, etc.) are more or less blocked off due to a combination of Disquiet and the fact that their bodies do not work like humans'. Furthermore, every Promethean is bound to express some form of body dysphoria, when she realizes her body is made of stolen corpses. Frankensteins have it worst of all — their creation process makes it likely they have parts from both men and women, leaving them with an unclear sex even before they dedicate the first thought to gender. Unfleshed may not *have* an obvious sex, or even a physical body. They can still have gender issues, though, and not much of a way to resolve them.

If one of the Created is absolutely sure her body and gender don't reconcile, her options for some kind of transition to a body she can call her own are severely limited. The Commuto Tergum Alembic of the Metamorphosis Transmutation can allow her to change her form, but she must follow the Refinement of Cuprum to access it (or expend Vitriol to calcify the Alembic), and it's a stopgap measure at best.

The best solution is also the hardest to achieve: the New Dawn. Prometheans in this state wonder if achieving the Great Work would not only make them human, but make them human with the right body. Sadly, nobody knows whether that does or even could actually happen. Azothic memory is unclear on the matter. All the Created can do is hope.

of a Wasteland, pushing the Disquiet-influenced feelings towards his creation into the depths of madness. Many Prometheans decide they're doing something wrong, and only worsen things by trying to spend time with their creator to make up for whatever it was. One might be so desperate to please her demiurge that she allows him to destroy her, breaking her down into parts to study and use in his next attempt. A demiurge foolish enough to destroy a living miracle, wrought by his own hands, is not likely to see lightning strike twice. For a Promethean already left alone by her creator, the issue plays out the same: the world recoils against her very existence, and she blames herself, but can't quite figure out the exact cause.

A genitor, in all likelihood, knows better than to cause the kind of havoc a well-meaning, but misguided, demiurge or abandoned Promethean could wreak. What nobody can manage, though, is Torment. The first time it happens, no one can predict, control, or soothe it. All anyone can do is manage the aftermath. A demiurge doesn't know what's wrong, and a genitor just stays away, knowing he can do nothing to help. So the Promethean, not for the last time, is well and truly alone.

This is often when the creator leaves.

Alone

Maybe that bout of Torment did it. Maybe her demiurge was fully consumed by Disquiet. Maybe her genitor left one day talking about some kind of work he has to do. Like the act of creating a Promethean, the reasons a creator abandons his progeny are too numerous to describe, but it almost always happens. Genitors may stay with their creations out of pity or because they aren't far removed from one another on the Pilgrimage, but they often find that their own journeys toward the New Dawn pull them in different directions. Demiurges always wind up plagued by Disquiet in one way or another; usually by the time they separate from the Promethean, it's far too late for them.

Once left to her own devices, a young Promethean can expect more hardship. Bouts of Torment, uncontrolled Disquiet, and Wastelands plague the Created until she learns to control them. It's not all nightmares and agony, though. Horrible things happen in this stage of the Promethean's life, but she also discovers something new and beautiful. What exactly this epiphany is varies, but it is the glimmer that keeps a Promethean striving for the New Dawn. It might be a particular person who shows the Promethean kindness, or a moment between other people that she recognizes as quintessentially human. The beauty doesn't last, but it resonates and stays with the Promethean.

That beauty becomes an idea, persistent and intractable in the Promethean's mind. She probably resists it. Yet, as she dwells on the concept, she finds herself probing the depths of her Azothic memory, which finally begins to unravel the mysteries of her existence that her creator was unable or unwilling to answer. The voice in the back of her head seems all too happy to give some kind of guidance, giving clues, pushing her forward. She begins to grasp the basic concepts of her first Refinement.

Finally, she accepts the idea: an answer to her agony, the reason she was given this life, the goal for all Prometheans. It's a simple, ridiculous idea that's more than enough to determine the course of her life. In response, the Azothic memory explodes within her and gives her first Elpis vision, as much a hopeful dream as a clue to the path she has to take to achieve that dream, to shape herself into the sort of person that could accomplish it. This declaration of intent is the solution to everything that came before, and the cause of everything that follows.

"I want to be human."

The Desperate Dream: Elpis

In the Greek myth of Pandora's Box, Pandora toys with forces she was not meant to control and spews forth all the evils of the world. Once they've vacated the box, one thing is left: hope. The world is consumed by those forces of evil, which were known as Torments, but hope remains. That's Elpis — the Greek word for "hope." Someone might have released evils onto the world or found herself trapped in her own self-loathing, but she still has that.

While Torment is what a Promethean feels at her lowest, weakest moments, Elpis is what she feels at her finest hour — the hope, the belief, that she not only could, but *will* become human. Elpis is not only the name for this hope, but the name of the visions brought on by Azoth, her clues to the Promethean's next step towards Humanity. The first Elpis vision comes when the Promethean in question realizes she does, in fact, want to be human and receives the first clue on the journey towards her Great Work.

Every Elpis vision is different, but always ties into the thing about humanity that the young Promethean loves and covets the most. It's a dreamlike vision of what she could one day be: one day she could be happy. One day she could have friends. One day she could suffer a setback without falling apart, or driving people away, or losing control of herself and doing something she'll regret for the rest of her days. One day she could withstand what life throws at her and keep going. One day she could be human.

Alongside her Elpis, the Promethean discovers her Torment, the thing about her that's most artificial, most inhuman, the thing that makes her Elpis a far-off dream or a fantasy. It doesn't make the Great Work impossible, but Torment is the single greatest obstacle facing the Pilgrimage. The humour that drives her, makes her a living thing, is the source of Torment as well. When the Azoth surges through that humour and causes it to overflow, the metaphysical imbalance becomes Torment manifested.

Finally, she finds a Refinement — a path of physical and metaphysical enlightenment alike that shaves off the inhumanity. Her first Refinement is basic, expressed as a simple response to the world around her and her new quest: *Mimic humans. Understand self. Observe from afar. Perfect the body. Rebel against pain.* As she follows this path, her body undergoes alchemical transformations. They begin when the Promethean sets out to choose a Refinement. She has a flash of Azothic Memory that gives her the philosophy of her Refinement, the Roles the Refinement consists of, and if she accepts, a sudden rush as the alchemy of her body reforms around her. It's a churning, exhilarating feeling that varies from Refinement to Refinement. Aurum might cause her to feel things lock into place as her Transmutations shift towards this new path, while Stannum might be represented as an inward pressure, the hopeless sensation that comes with Torment.

That's where the Pilgrimage begins. That idea, that desperate belief that the Promethean can work some great alchemy on herself and, over a period of refinement, learning, reflection, and trials, transmute the half-broken, half-dead monster she calls her body into that of a real, proper human. The long path she walks to work the great alchemy of turning lead into gold — turning herself into a human — that's the Pilgrimage.

If the Promethean doesn't find herself falling at one of the many missteps she can make along the way, though, the Pilgrimage becomes less fantasy and more reality. It gets harder the further along she is, but also more possible. Failures? Plenty. Stumbles? Yes. But she can eventually get there. She will, eventually, be human.

She knows where she's starting and where she has to go. How she gets there is up to her.

Lead

From the moment she wakes up on the slab, a Promethean knows that she is not quite right. She can see it in the reactions of people around her; she can feel it in her Pyros-animated bones. Yet in the face of her agony, she also feels that she can become human and finally *belong*. To this end, the Promethean must become lead, the base metal from which the alchemist can create gold.

The Great Work

The Great Work. Redemption. Pilgrimage. All these are names used to describe the alchemical process that changes and purifies a Promethean's transcendental being, to grant her ultimate wish: to become *human*.

The Promethean clings to the prospect of being human like a drowning man to a piece of flotsam: she doesn't know where it will take her, but she knows it is her only chance at salvation. Humanity is the light at the end of the tunnel; the moment the Promethean can finally lay her head down and rest. To be human is to have friends, family, a home. As small and powerless as humans are compared to the creatures that prowl amongst them, they have the ability to truly love and be loved in return. For a Promethean, whose Torment and Disquiet prevent her from being loved by either herself or others, it is the greatest prize.

Make no mistake though, the Pilgrimage isn't about meditating on mountain tops. It is an alchemical process that transforms a Promethean's body and Pyros, with the purpose of giving her a human body and soul. Sometimes rising to an all-consuming flame and other times simmering as a mere spark amidst red coals, the Pilgrimage never truly leaves her; it is a crucible that she must endure, and over which she has no more control than a babe has over growing up. The Promethean isn't the alchemist; she is the *substance*, the lead transformed and purified until it either breaks or becomes gold. More than that, her body is the laboratory in which the alchemical process takes place — an artificial refinery that will follow suit if the soul becomes human.

If the Promethean's soul is the substance and her body the laboratory, then who is the alchemist? This conundrum has no clear answer. Some Created believe that, in an expression of self-fulfillment, she *is* the alchemist; everything she does, endures and overcomes is driven by her in an effort to lift *herself* up — she is the ultimate Buddha,



becoming a human God unto herself. Others believe that a greater principle is at work, that perhaps Azoth itself has some form of incomprehensible sentience and that it drives the Great Work for reasons unknown to the Created.

As a guiding light on the long, arduous road that is the Pilgrimage, every Promethean *knows* that she can attain this state of redemption. Azoth tells her she can through Elpis, and, in this, Azoth does not lie. The Promethean knows, with every fiber of her being, that she *can* achieve the impossible. If the desire to belong drives her towards her Pilgrimage, it is this absolute certainty that keeps her going even in the face of seemingly impossible odds. Azoth is no gentle parent, sparing its children pain or guiding them step by step: it is a harsh taskmaster that throws her in the deepest, darkest end of the ocean and demand that she swim or be devoured by the predators lurking under the waves. Regardless though, *it is there,* the one constant that never leaves her. Many Prometheans take some comfort in that, at least.

Yet for all her longing for humanity and the certainty that it *can* be done, a Promethean knows nothing about being human. So how, then, does a Promethean learn to be human? She studies humans, the world around them, and tries to emulate them. Shaping her life and, above all, *behavior* around schools of thought and action called Refinements, the Promethean explores the many faces of humanity, one at a time.

The Seer's Pilgrimage

How do Prometheans *know* that New Dawn can be achieved? The answer begins with the first Pilgrimage. Once, Prometheans believe, the Pilgrimage did not exist. The Created were governed by hope, which drove them ever onward, and fear, keeping them forever separate from humanity. There was no *knowing*, though, no certainty that a golden future might be real, until the Seer, a Created of great insight and wisdom whose knowledge of Azoth and the Promethean state surpassed that of any who came before or after. More than being wise, she was also a creature of great perseverance, who unfailingly worked towards her Pilgrimage and saw *beyond* the many highs and lows in her path.

Traveling the world for more than a mortal lifespan, the Seer's Pilgrimage finally led her to the New Dawn. While she was often alone in body and thought, Azoth accompanied the Seer on this journey and through it, all Prometheans. They were as one and when *she* unlocked her potential for the New Dawn, so did Azoth. By the act of becoming mortal, the Seer created the Pilgrimage for all other Prometheans. By virtue of it being done, the New Dawn became possible to all. It was an act that reverberated through all Created, giving them something they had never had before. The Seer left Pilgrimage shrines and artifacts all over the world, but none are as great as her single lasting legacy: *certainty*.

This is what Prometheans believe and, in truth, there really *was* a desolate time before-Pilgrimage, and New Dawn indeed became possible by having been achieved. Azothic memory reveals as much. The details of the story, however, are obscured in countless centuries of added memories and imagery. Some Prometheans take the story literally, believing that the Seer was a single Pilgrim, quite possibly a Tammuz or Osiran by grace of those being the oldest Lineages. Others, mostly followers of Aes, believe that the Seer was actually a throng rather than a single being. Proponents of this theory often equate the Seer's Pilgrimage with the long and arduous journey to create the first alchemical pact, claiming that it was their effort to look past each other's Disquiet that made mutual redemption possible. No Promethean can walk the path alone, these Prometheans say, sometimes even going so far as to claim that only a member of a throng can reach the New Dawn. The last popular theory is that the Seer never existed in the physical sense. According to these believers, the Seer is the symbolic representation of every Promethean, burned into Azothic memory as a singular legend by countless ages of Pilgrims. None of the possible identities of the Seer has been proven true and, despite ongoing efforts of Originists, it will likely remain that way forever.

The Way

If humanity is the destination, then Refinements are the way. A Promethean might have no idea what being human truly entails, or even how to mimic humans, but he *can* explore aspects of humanity, the way they interact with each other and the world around them, through paths called Refinements. Part schools of philosophy and thought, part ways of interacting with the world by going out and *doing*, Refinements offer guidance to a Promethean on his Pilgrimage. In an amazing testament to the Promethean's alchemical nature though, they don't just change his outlook and behavior, they change his physique. A Promethean, being both created and driven by Azoth, sees no difference between philosophy and being. If he moves to Aes, the Refinement of Bronze, he becomes bronze; if he moves to Aurum, he becomes golden. These new aspects, added to the Pyros burning inside him, become the reagents of his change, preparing him for the next step on his Pilgrimage and eventually pushing him towards becoming human.

Some Refinement paths come naturally to every Promethean. Just like humans are born with the ability to laugh and cry, so is a Promethean created with an instinctual understanding of the base Refinements. Base Refinements are imparted to the Promethean through Azothic memory, causing some Created to speculate they are actually a gift from the Divine Fire that guides them just as a human mother does her child during his first wobbly steps.

Complex Refinements on the other hand do not come so naturally, much as not every human is a poet or can speak a second language. Prometheans believe that complex Refinements were created by Prometheans themselves long ago. In uncovering these new paths, the ancient Pilgrims unlocked their potential in Azoth itself, thus granting all Prometheans the potential to learn them. Such an effort requires a teacher though, an instructional tome, or an Athanor (p. 188). Azoth alone isn't enough for a Promethean to adopt a complex Refinement, but it can help in finding an instructor. Pyros calls to Pyros on a level that few Prometheans understand; when the time comes for a Promethean to learn a complex Refinement, mentor and students are inexorably drawn to each other. That is not to say that mentors and students are always compatible or even willing. Most Prometheans are loathe to leave a fellow Created stranded on his Pilgrimage, however, not to mention that the act of teaching a complex Refinement is often part of the mentor's journey as well.

The relationship between student and mentor is often complex and fraught with difficulties. The student must examine his view on the world, the road he has traveled so far and the goal he is working towards. The mentor, for his part, must explain exactly what the Refinement represents and how it has aided him in his Pilgrimage. Both must be brutally honest in this, often discovering truths about themselves that they would rather not have and sharing these findings with the other. It is not uncommon for teacher and protégé to spend days or even weeks talking, asking questions and giving answers that sometimes don't even seem to touch on the subject of the Refinement at all. After that, the mentor takes the student out to practice the theory. This is the real test, as many Created find it easier to understand something on an intellectual level than to fully embrace and practice it. If theory is akin to collecting the necessary ingredients for an alchemical process, practice is where the Promethean throws them into the fire and hopes they hold true. By this time, mentor and student are as close as two Prometheans can be and the bond forged, whether good or bad, will stay with them for the rest of their lives.

By comparison, finding an instructional tome or Athanor is usually easier. Such objects are always Azothic artifacts. Whilst few and far between, they can be found through the Azothic call. Once retrieved, they provide a clean, no-strings-attached method of learning a complex Refinement, without the help or interference of other Prometheans. This, however, is also their weak point. Having a mentor heckle him and ask all the questions he would rather leave unanswered is often the best and quickest way for a Promethean to learn. As a result, while a Created might prefer the quiet and solitude of a book, he usually finds that he is better off with a living, breathing mentor.

A Promethean can change his Refinements as often as he wants. A complex Refinement requires a teacher the first time he embarks upon it, but going back after it has been abandoned does not. Basic Refinements, on the other hand, never require a teacher. The time to learn either varies. Stannum, the Refinement of Tin, can be adopted instantly, as a Promethean's Torment runs so deep that he can always fall back on it. Every other Refinement takes longer than that, though the exact time is variable. The difference seems to be more inherent to the individual Promethean than to the Refinement. One Promethean might like to study, watch and wait before she tackles the practical side of a Refinement. Another Created likes to jump right in, possibly causing him to falter at his first crucible, as he doesn't fully comprehend what the Refinement is about. The ideal mix between theory and practice changes from Promethean to Promethean, but on the whole, it is better to run and stumble than to never run at all.

Milestones

While no Promethean knows how long her Pilgrimage must be, she does not stumble around completely blind. She can find markers on the road called *milestones*, and the Promethean feels it in her very core whenever she has passed one. She might not know how long the road ahead still is, but she does know that she is further today than she was yesterday. If nothing else, she is making progress.

Milestones come in three varieties, though it usually takes a student of Plumbum to distinguish between them: universal, prescribed and

Basic and Complex Refinements

Created distinguish between basic and complex Refinements. Basic Refinements deal with the road to humanity in a fairly straightforward manner and do not require a teacher. Complex Refinements on the other hand, deal with more abstract and intellectual issues that require intensive study and training.

The basic Refinements are:

Aurum (Gold) — Adopting a "fake it till you make it" mindset, practitioners of this Refinements mimic humanity even if they don't know what all (or any) of it means.

Cuprum (Copper) — This Refinement focuses on the self as practitioners isolate themselves from humans. This Refinement is a refuge for Created dealing with persecution, or trying to come to terms with atrocities they committed.

Ferrum (Iron) — Practitioners of Ferrum seek to purify the body through hardship, hoping that the soul will follow suit.

Plumbum (Lead) — This Refinement studies the basics of being a Promethean: Azoth, milestones, Vitriol and the Pilgrimage. This is the first Refinement many new Created stumble upon.

Stannum (Tin) — Practitioners of Stannum give in to their Torment, letting the pain wash over them and relishing in their wrath. Any Created Refinement can instantly switch to Stannum, as Torment is always boiling under the surface.

The complex Refinements are:

Aes (Bronze) — This Refinement deal with the same principles as Ferrum, Aurum, and Stannum, but applies them to the throng. Practitioners focus on the alchemical pact and devote themselves to working with other Created.

Argentum (Silver) — This Refinement studies humanity by exploring its counterpoint and focusing on the supernatural powers that stalk the world.

Cobalus (Cobalt) — Practitioners of Cobalus push themselves to the limit, seeking to burn out any impurities and weaknesses. In this though, they strive to maintain control rather than fully submit to Torment.

Mercurius (Quicksilver) — Mercurius deals with the essence of Pyros and the Divine Fire. Practitioners study alchemy, the Centimani and *qashmallim*. They also have an interest in Wasteland and Disquiet as effects of Pyros.

Phosphorum (Phosphorus) — This Refinement studies death, as this is where any human's path (and therefore the New Dawn) must inevitable end.

instinctive. Universal milestones are, as the name implies, common to all Prometheans. It is possible that they are inherent to the human condition, but many Originists speculate that they are really intrinsic to Azoth itself. As such, they might represent Azoth learning about itself through the Promethean condition, as well as the Promethean learning more about becoming human. Every Promethean must pass these benchmarks and she also finds that, almost as if through divine providence, she is presented with the opportunity to do so. Since they permeate Promethean culture and seem to be somehow programmed into the Azothic flame, all but the most obtuse Promethean eventually learns what some of these universal milestones are. Of course, knowing what a milestone is does not necessarily equate passing it; much as with Refinements, the theoretical knowledge often comes easier than practical implementation. It also doesn't help that every milestone can be interpreted, and passed, in several ways. A Promethean who knows without a doubt that *multiplicatio* is a milestone still does not know how it applies to *her*. She is effectively trying to solve a puzzle with all pieces present and accounted for, but facedown. As a result, known universal milestones can often be a greater source of frustration than the milestones a Promethean doesn't know about.

Prescribed milestones are inherent to humanity, but, for some reason, not inherent to the process of becoming human. Often, they represent the traits and values by which humanity distinguishes itself. That is to say, many Prometheans find that they must embrace overwhelming love or devastating loss somewhere on their journey, but not all of them. Still, given how often these milestones occur on Pilgrimages, a Promethean studying the journeys of others could uncover more than a few. As with universal milestones though, knowledge does not guarantee success. It's one thing for a Promethean to suspect that she must find real love, but an entirely different matter for her to actually experience it.

Lastly, instinctive milestones are unique to every individual Promethean. They deal with unanswered questions, fears and doubts, and are often the hardest markers to pass, since they are both extremely personal and painful for the Promethean. A Promethean is usually very driven to reach these milestones, even if only because she wants to resolve the situation that ties into them, but might *also* decide that she wants to keep them a secret. Unwilling to share her inner heart with her throng, she toils alone until the milestone eventually reaches its conclusion. This is a natural reaction and a valid one, even if a Promethean working with her throng might accomplish her goal more quickly or more easily. Sometimes, a Promethean even finds that letting go of her secrecy and sharing her secret desires with her throng *was* the milestone.

Whenever a Promethean passes a milestone, she instinctively knows it. She feels stronger and more whole, as if she went through purifying fire and emerged somehow better than before. The world itself has changed too, to the Promethean's eyes: the sky is radiantly blue and the sun's warmth cloaks her as a blanket, the earth smells of spring and everything seems so much lighter and more bearable. Even her body, usually a stolen shell that serves as much a prison as a host, somehow seems to fit her better. This euphoria does not last long, a few heartbeats at most, but it serves as a powerful reminder to the Promethean that her Pilgrimage is both possible and worth it. Oddly enough, the impact of that moment does not depend on whether the milestone was universal, prescribed or instinctive. Sometimes the small, personal achievements carry more weight than the cosmic ones, just like a mortal's most profound childhood memory might simply be of his mother tucking him in at night.

Every Pilgrimage is both unique and unknowable, yet there seems to be an inherent quality that insists on change. No records exist of any Promethean ever fulfilling her journey while staying in one place, or staying on one Refinement. This is in part because Azoth demands change like a fire does fuel, but also because the Pilgrimage *is* change. How can a Promethean hope to make the transformation from half-life to humanity if she cannot even change her address, job or outlook on life? A Promethean who becomes stuck in her ways stops progressing on her Pilgrimage. It doesn't abandon her, but simply remains where it is, waiting until she returns. When she does, the journey might initially seem more difficult, but this is also all on the Promethean. It's not the Pilgrimage that grew harder, it's she who became more resistant to the change it requires.

The Pilgrimage contains one, and only one, milestone that a Promethean feels coming *before* she passes it. Sometimes called the Milestone of Dust or simply the Leap, it is desired and feared in equal measures. This milestone comes when the Pilgrimage is all but done, when the Promethean's essence has been weighed and measured, and found to have the ephemeral substance needed to create human life. Now comes the time, the great leap, when the prize is at hand and all the Promethean need do is reach out and *take it* — if she dares (see Gold, p. 90).

Impurity

Burning with Pyros, the Promethean's mere presence makes mortals feel uncomfortable, as they instinctively recognize him as something that should not be. Carrying this stigma with him, the Promethean finds himself an outsider everywhere he goes. Some people, having been raised to be tolerant and kind, try to look beyond their initial repulsion and in a cruel twist of irony, they only make matters worse. Forcing themselves to remain within the aura of wrongness that a Promethean emanates, these are inadvertently the people who end up despising the Promethean the most. Disquiet doesn't end with humans, though. A Promethean's Pyros seeps into the land and air around him, until those, too, reject him.

While Pyros is the cause of Disquiet, *how* it manifests depends on a Promethean's Lineage and the humour that governs him. Azoth courses through the Promethean's body, running through veins filled overly heavily with one of the five humours. It is this humour that bleeds through whenever Pyros runs over, spilling into the people around a Promethean and infecting them with bias and distrust. Disquiet is bad enough, but the Promethean's life becomes even more trying when he creates Wasteland. Not only does the Promethean's presence now poison the land against him, but Disquiet spreads from the Wasteland to mortals like a contagion, eventually affecting even people the Promethean never came into contact with. This is when humans grab their pitchforks and torches in an effort to run the Created out of town or kill him outright.

The Humour of the Beast

Every Promethean triggers Disquiet and creates Wastelands through his very presence. How these manifest, though, is dependent on his humour and varies from Lineage to Lineage.

- A Frankenstein, whose humour is yellow bile, finds that his presence instills a Disquiet of simmering restlessness and anger in the people around him. Business negotiations end in fisticuffs and normally peaceful households devolve in violent domestic disputes. Eventually, all this anger is directed back at the Wretched. When he creates a Wasteland, the land and weather seem angry, as storms and lightning fill the sky, thorny bushes overrun the landscape and animals, including humans, become increasingly aggressive.

- An Ulgan, who draws power from ectoplasm, engenders a Disquiet of paranoia and the sense of being hunted. Perhaps this is a valid emotion, triggered by the spirits that a Riven attracts and that invariably attach themselves to the people around him. Regardless of the presence of spirits though, humans always come to see the Promethean as the one that haunts and stalks them. When an Ulgan creates a Wasteland, the mortals' fears are proven right as the veil between the flesh world and the Twilight thins, calling out to spirits and creating hauntings.

- A Tammuz' humour is black bile and his Disquiet causes depression in those exposed to it. In the age of self-help books and television psychologists, people usually find a reasonable explanation for their depression, but somehow they always come to see the Named as the origin of said reason. When one of the Named causes a Wasteland, this depression spreads to the land itself: dark clouds hang over the area, animals become listless and the area is overrun with vermin, as predators no longer see the point in hunting. Even plant growth slows or halts completely.

- An Osiran's phlegmatic Disquiet pushes people away, leading to a supreme disinterest in interacting with him. Whilst this may seem harmless at first, humans inevitably come to perceive the Nepri as bothering them, regardless of whether he is or not, and takes steps to ensure he does so no longer. When an Osiran's presence creates a Wasteland, the land itself seems to stop caring about producing life; rain and wind simply stop, the sun is perpetually bleak, and the soil becomes infertile.

- A Galateid's humour is blood and his Disquiet incites passion and obsession in the people around him. The Muse becomes a symbol of everything a person wants, but does not have. This obsession invariably turns sour, as initial admiration and lust are replaced by envy and shame. That people believe the Muse is showing off on purpose does not help. When a Muse creates a Wasteland, the environment itself becomes more passionate; the weather is either very cold *or* very hot and plants grow everywhere, even breaking through the asphalt.

- An Unfleshed, enriched by the humour of oil, finds that his Disquiet somehow encourages people to treat him as even less than other Prometheans. Taken for granted, he is seen as hired help at best, or a slave at worst. Woe unto the Manufactured who does not cater to people's every whim. An Unfleshed Wasteland also sees a sharp dichotomy between dominant and subservient creatures; a new hierarchy might emerge amongst humans, whilst predatory animals completely wipe out prey and stronger plants overrun weaker ones.

- The Extempore have no fixed humour. Instead, each of them has a Disquiet shaped by their humour and even then each is unique. For example, an Extempore governed by the humour of bile would have a Disquiet that instills restlessness and anger just like a Wretched's bile-ridden Disquiet does. But where a Wretched's Disquiet leads to physical violence, an Extempore's might see a rise of violent stalkers in the area. A second Extempore ruled by bile would also cause restlessness and anger, yet his Disquiet would manifest differently from the first Extempore's. The same holds true for Extempore Wastelands. They are clearly fueled by the Extempore's humour, whilst being uniquely different from other Wastelands created by that humour.

A Wasteland, at first glance, is the horrible expression of too much Pyros gone awry. It starts when Azoth spills over and scorches the land, often because the Promethean released too much Pyros in too short a time span, or was returned to life with an Azothic flare. Forces outside the Promethean's control might also trigger a Wasteland, such as a greater *qashmal* appearing. Life warps and changes as Azoth scours the land. For many Prometheans, creating a Wasteland, even inadvertently, is as unconscionable an act as creating another of their accursed kind. Ashamed and horrified by what they have done, most Created are inclined to leave the area for good. Some stay, however, and these hardy students have discovered a few other properties of the Wasteland.

After carefully mapping and studying the progression of Wastelands, some Prometheans on the Refinement of Quicksilver have tentatively formulated the theory that Wastelands are not just an expression of Azoth, but of the Pilgrimage. If a Promethean's Pilgrimage stalls, when he lingers on one Refinement or between milestones too long, so the Wasteland grows. When he crosses a universal milestone, the Wasteland grows as well. This realization causes the Promethean even more distress: whether his Pilgrimage is going badly or well, the Wasteland *still* grows. He doesn't understand why this curse haunts him, why it doesn't relent when he is doing precisely what Azoth wants him to and why it doesn't soften when he does well. To look upon a Wasteland is to know the Created, his hopes and fears, his progress and all the obstacles in his path. For a creature who feels so inherently wrong in his own being as a Promethean, being held up to such an examining light is perhaps the cruelest fate of all.

However, a Promethean can find a slim silver lining to all this and it lies in the second possible ending to a Wasteland. A Wasteland never grows smaller; it pushes inexorably outward, though the pace at which it grows might vary. It can be resolved, in a manner, if the responsible Promethean leaves the area. The Promethean's absence causes the Wasteland, if it hasn't already progressed too far, to stagnate and remain as it is, growing neither smaller nor larger unless another Created inadvertently fuels it. In addition to that, the presence of a throng with different Lineages

seems to slow a Wasteland's growth, as their varied humours give the Pyros a wider opportunity to express itself, therefore slowing but not stopping an explosive build-up.

As opposed to stalling a Wasteland by leaving or joining a multi-Lineaged throng, a Promethean can also end a Wasteland by calling down a *Firestorm* (see p. 264); indeed, even if he does not, a Firestorm might still occur naturally. A Firestorm is a howling, raging inferno of Pyros that scours and potentially hardens the area through fire. In theory, a Firestorm can be beneficial to an area, but in practice, they usually do nothing but harm to Prometheans.

Firestorms are relatively rare, so the documented results are flimsy at best, but Prometheans have some indications that a Firestorm occurred in the Roman city of Pompeii in 17 CE, and in 1980 CE at Mount St. Helens in Washington State. Despite these two disastrous outcomes, a Firestorm can also purify an area. Such a region might be immune to Wasteland in the future, or it could exude a sense of calm and harmony. Some Created believe the Great Fire of London in in 1666 CE was a purifying Firestorm, for although it destroyed the inner city, London has not seen a plague epidemic since. In this outcome, the area is transformed by fire it into something that is not only different, but also *better* than what came before; not unlike the Promethean at the end of his own journey.

Fire

A Promethean begins as base lead, yearning to transform his borrowed flesh and inchoate soulstuff into the gold of true humanity. No combination of reagents can produce an alchemical reaction, however, without the heat it needs to break down bonds and refine the old into something new and wondrous. The Promethean's Pilgrimage is the crucible in which a human being is forged; the fire that fuels the transformation is the sum of his experiences, the steps he takes toward the light at the end of his tunnel — and the stumbles back into the darkness of his long night. Whether this churning amalgamation yields a strong alloy of Elpis and soul or a dissolution into Torment and Flux is the question that haunts every Pilgrimage.

All the grand alchemical metaphors in the world, though, can't change the fact that for a Promethean, this mystical metaphysical crucible is what he goes through every day of his life — not a mere philosophical exercise, but a visceral reality. He does not generally have the luxury of sitting back and pondering the symbolism of the path he chooses, though some do try. He must bear the burden of fully *living* it. The Pilgrimage is a journey like any other, full of mistakes and triumphs, love and hate, joy and tragedy. If it tends to bring more tragedy than joy for the Created, it only serves to make the final victory at the end of an uphill battle all the sweeter.

Comrades-in-Arms: The Throng

Battles fought alone are struggles that even the strongest of humanity are hard-pressed to contemplate, much less win. Yet for many Prometheans, this is the only kind of battle they know. A Created might go her entire life without seeing another of her kind. Azothic memory initially gives her the most basic of building blocks to construct her worldview, but to gain more understanding of her lot in life she must rely on her own senses and judgment; to avoid disaster, she must keep her own company. Is it any wonder that so many Pilgrimages with promising beginnings end in catastrophe?

The Promethean has hope, though. The faint guidance of her Azoth, flavored by the collective memory of centuries of Created existence, can give her clues to the whereabouts of others like her. She may find that the scent of pine lights a beacon inside her, sending her on a quest into the forest-studded mountains of Vermont to find her creator. Likewise, a photograph of the Parthenon in a history book could trigger the borrowed memory of a Pariah hermit whose sanctuary lies deep beneath the Athenian Acropolis.

Prometheans find each other in less mysterious ways, too. As some Originists say, "Azoth calls to Azoth." The concentrated Divine Fire, spilling out into the world beyond the bounds of the Promethean's flesh, recognizes itself whenever two sources are near one another. In this context, the spillage is known as *Azothic radiance*. Prometheans can feel that radiance like a calling or an electrical charge. The more powerful the Promethean, the farther his Azoth calls. A Promethean who feels the presence of another can't easily track the source of the calling through feeling alone, but Azothic radiance is visible to the Created as an aura or glow. Unfortunately for them, others of their kind are not the only creatures able to sense this emanation. Some find that their very presence attracts unwanted attention.

For many long centuries, despite innate hints and an internal sensor, meetings between Prometheans were rare and notable occasions. In the days when crossing an ocean took months and a written message had no guarantee of reaching its destination, the world seemed vast and most Prometheans despaired of ever finding each other. Some never even knew there were others like them at all. In the modern day, however, the rise of technology has made communication between the Created much more possible, with travel becoming a matter of mere hours or days at most. It's common for younger Prometheans to create blogs or forums on the Internet in an attempt to gather together. Some try to hold assemblies advertised by email and telephone, although the turnout of such endeavors has thus far been disappointing. Still, the chances of a Promethean finding others like himself are greater now than they have ever been.

Whether by memory, call, or chance, Prometheans who meet one another as they travel their lonely roads know instinctively that the Azothic radiance of their comrades contains glimpses of who they are. The first few minutes of a meeting between the Created are often accompanied by each Promethean sizing the other up: a practice so common that it has entered Azothic memory as a custom called the *Measure*. One Promethean examines the other's Azothic radiance for the taint of Torment or other abnormalities, exchanges introductions and makes a judgment call about whether the newcomer is likely to aid or hinder her Pilgrimage. For those who choose not to pursue the Pilgrimage, the Measure can help them identify potential allies or probable foes.

A Community of Outcasts

Despite the potential for the Measure to reveal unsavory information, the Created rarely turn down the company of their own kind. Humanity is a fickle companion, plagued by Disquiet, but a Promethean craves fellowship as much as anyone. Finding that he need not be alone in the universe is often impetus to overlook even the most undesirable traits in another. Because the Created are so few and far between, a meeting between them is usually taken as an opportunity to exchange stories. Tales of their own exploits are common, but it's equally common to relate tales told to them by others in days past. In this way, Prometheans have built a rudimentary culture of their own, cultivating myths and legends — and even *urban* legends — in much the same way that humanity has done. Azothic memory calls this tradition of storytelling the *Ramble.*

Many Prometheans are desperate not to let these Rambles fade away into the abyss of forgotten lore. Preserving what little community they have and hold dear is usually accomplished by writing down the Rambles they hear. One Promethean may keep a handwritten journal, while another may write letters containing the stories to her comrades, or even to humans she has known. Some Prometheans go so far as to publish Rambles in books or on websites, or to inscribe them on walls and billboards as graffiti and murals. One Promethean in Manhattan in the 1970s was known to scrawl Rambles all over the walls of subway tunnels, and those who go looking can still find them there today. These tales are often incomprehensible or painfully simplistic to mortals, but the publication of Shelley's famous book may indicate that not every Ramble sounds like nonsense to human ears.

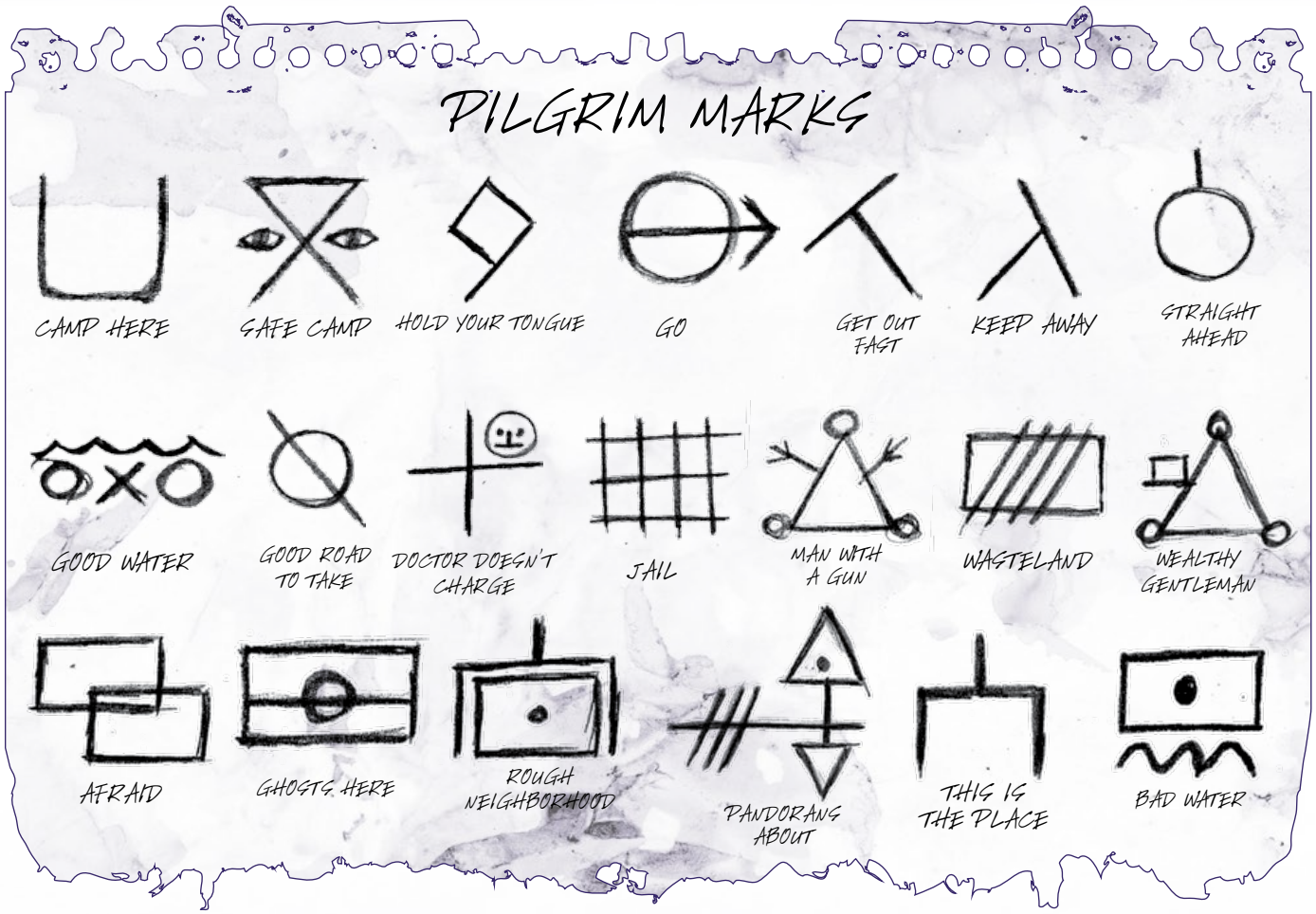
Of course, committing the Ramble to a written medium has its potential downsides. An enterprising *sublimatus* may find a letter discarded by a confused mortal and use it to track down the writer for her own nefarious purposes. One of the dread Centimani may chance upon a billboard covered with Promethean graffiti, gaining a clue to finding its target. Recording Rambles electronically comes with its own lurking threats, including ones with which the Promethean may not even be familiar. One unfortunate Created woke to smothering flames one night, his lair set alight by unknown arsonists; when he tried to escape, he was overwhelmed and killed. Even after returning from the River, he never found out that the assailants were humans who had read his blogged Ramble, copied and circulated across the dark corners of the Internet.

I FIGURED IT OUT!
IT TOOK ME MONTHS AND THIS PLACE IS A HELLHOLE
AND THEY FEED ME MUSH AND MY TEETH ARE GETTING LOOSE BUT
HOLY SHIT I GOT IT! A LOT OF THEM ARE LIKE ME!
THEY HATE WHAT THEY ARE
AND THEY'RE TRYING TO CHANGE IT!

THE PEOPLE IN THIS PLACE, THEY'RE DOING ALCHEMY.
THE PILLS THEY TAKE ARE THE INGREDIENTS,
AND THE GROUP AND THE TALK IS THE PROCESS.
IT'S NOT JUST ME THAT WANTS TO CHANGE.

DAMN IT. I WISH I COULD TELL THEM.
BUT I CAN'T, THEY HAVE TO FIGURE IT OUT LIKE I DID.

BYE, GUYS. I LOVE YOU. BE STRONG.



This sense of community despite long periods of solitude and great distances between Prometheans prompts them to aid one another, even without ever having met. After centuries of painstaking effort to bring them into the Promethean collective consciousness, Azothic memory can impart instinctive knowledge of a system of markings known as *pilgrim marks*, simple symbols carved or written in places where a Promethean has been to warn others of danger or point out helpful hints. Much like the signs of the American hobo community, these pilgrim marks can help traveling Prometheans avoid enemies; locate shelter, allies, resources; or anything else that might aid them on their Pilgrimage.

Sometimes, however, intermittent signals and the occasional letter are not enough. When a group of Prometheans decides to work, travel, or even live together for a time, Azothic memory fills in the word *throng* to describe them collectively. Even those that don't get along or have fundamental differences in worldview join forces to accomplish common goals and help each other along their Pilgrimages. A throng can theoretically consist of any number of Prometheans, although practically speaking, it's rare to see a throng of more than five.

Throngs form for any number of reasons. The most customary is simple companionship and acceptance. Prometheans cling hard to any friends they can wrangle out of their lonely, solitary lives. Others of their kind are generally the only ones who can withstand the vagaries of their presence without being horrified by their disfigurements and eventually falling under the insidious spell of Disquiet. The Created have an understanding that cannot be reached with humans or other supernatural beings, a shared plight that resonates with even the most alien Unfleshed or bitter Frankenstein; it can cement lasting bonds of camaraderie between the unlikeliest of companions.

A throng may also form for straightforward mutual gain, as two or three can accomplish more than one alone. The Prometheans can pool their resources, share information and Rambles, and call upon a breadth of varied expertise and abilities. A Pariah with little social savvy teams up with a gregarious Mimic to mitigate the potential for disastrous faux pas, while a bookish Originist requires the aid of an indomitable Titan to safeguard himself against enemies. Some Prometheans seek a throng to examine their own condition through another's eyes or study the many variations that exist among the Created. Even a Promethean who had the benefit of a creator gushing with knowledge about her new existence has a lot to learn about herself, and self-awareness can come through observing others like her. Osirans and those pursuing the Refinements of Lead and Quicksilver are especially inclined to desire the regular company of other Prometheans for this purpose.

Some believe that the Great Work cannot be completed at all without joining a throng at some point. These Created say that learning to work as part of a team is a vital part of the Pilgrimage, and that spending time with one another is the catalyst for an

Azothic reaction necessary to all Prometheans before Mortality can be achieved. Some think that this reaction is a process fueled by Azothic radiance, a refinement of soulstuff caused by overlapping emanations that push each other to grow over time.

Once a throng forms, its members often find that the benefits extend beyond the reasons they came together in the first place. The lives of the Created are rife with doubts, trials, pain and fear. With staunch allies by his side, a Promethean finds support to help him weather any storm, whether it's the bittersweet taste of a difficult milestone, the terrifying ordeal of Torment, or unbearable defeat at the hands of Disquiet. Some Prometheans try to distance themselves from their throngmates in the throes of guilt or anxiety, but ultimately every Promethean knows what it's like. That comforting thought sustains relationships that among humans might have long since perished. Misery loves company; at least for the Created, misery is an equal opportunity experience.

If throngmates are dedicated enough to one another, they may decide to strengthen their bonds by forming an *alchemical pact*. The pact is a metaphysical process of coagulation that aligns Azoth with Azoth, unifying disparate parts into a synchronized whole. Azothic memory bestows vague knowledge that such a pact could exist, but only a Promethean who has studied the Refinement of Lead can unlock the secret of forging it. A throng that wishes to alchemically cement their commitment to one another needs to either contain a member who knows how, or seek out another Promethean who does and is willing to help, whether out of the goodness of her heart or in exchange for favors or resources.

A throng doesn't enter into an alchemical pact lightly. Doing so transforms the group into a *branded throng*, as the process marks each member of the throng with a Pyros Brand. The Brand might take the shape of an alchemical symbol or pilgrim mark that has significance to the throng, or another sign that represents some aspect of their purpose. It can appear on any part of the body the throng feels is appropriate. The Brand is the focal point for the pact and embodies the deep link between throngmates. An alchemical pact isn't simply an agreement or contract. It's an abiding hermetic connection between Azoth and Azoth, proto-souls joining to become a single entity that's more than the sum of its parts. Some Prometheans believe that the alchemical pact is a *rejoining* of Azoth — if all sources of Divine Fire are just pieces of a glorious whole, they say, then the pact signifies a destined reunification. Others believe that the pact is a Created metaphor-given-flesh for the kinds of ceremonies of belonging that characterize human life, such as marriage or initiation rites. Whatever the case, the effects of the Pyros Brand are measurable and powerful.

The Brand aligns the Azothic radiance of each throngmate with the others in a syzygy of Divine Fire, like sound waves colliding and interacting with each other. When Prometheans of the same Lineage form a pact, these radiances intensify and enhance one another, overflowing into the world more powerfully. When Prometheans of *different* Lineages form a pact, however, the radiances act to diffuse one another as different expressions of the same force balance each other out, like two opposing waveforms. Most Prometheans studying Refinements other than Plumbum or Mercurius never bother to examine the metaphysical cause of the effects they experience, however. All the average Created knows is that his fellow Frankenstein throngmate causes his Disquiet and Wastelands to manifest more savagely, and exacerbates his Torment. Meanwhile, his Ulgan throngmate seems to mitigate the worst of these effects, helping to keep his humours in check and placate the raging fire of his Azoth. His throngmates aren't actively doing anything — these are just side effects of the bond.

This bond also harmonizes the throngmates in other ways. Through the Brand, they can share Pyros. They have an easier time sensing each other via Azothic radiance, and can more readily pinpoint the exact location of a nearby throngmate. A Branded Promethean is also privy to a strange insight into the mental states of her fellows, whether through an odd taste in the mouth, an imbalance of her humours, or an unfamiliar scent that manifests when her throngmates experience strong emotions. This insight is vague and doesn't bestow any details without further pursuit, but members of a branded throng can read each other more easily as a result, for good or for ill.

If the alchemical pact is such a mixed bag, why do it? To expose their innermost feelings and give up their privacy, to risk driving humans away even more forcefully than they already do, takes courage and trust. Most Prometheans are willing to find those inner reserves, though, if it means constancy and support in a world that presents them with little of either. The alchemical pact, much like a wedding or a rite of passage, is a ritual of commitment that can make a Promethean feel as though he'll never be alone again. It reassures him that the bonds of camaraderie he has forged with his throng are real. And of course, the potential tangible benefits are nothing to scoff at either. The promise of softening the blows of Torment and Disquiet, the ability to live among humans without quite so much fear, these are shining jewels in the crown of the alchemical pact, treasured by those who possess them.

That said, nothing lasts forever. A Promethean who wishes to leave the throng may do so at any time by disengaging her Azoth from the others and expunging her Brand as though it never existed. If a throng decides as a group to *banish* one of its members, it can forcibly remove that member from its bond, but only if all other members agree and do so as one.

An Improbable Fiction: Roles

Human history has a way of labeling its prominent figures and assigning them categories based on their deeds in retrospect. Leonidas I was a great warrior, Martin Luther King Jr. a great rebel, Marie Curie a great scientist. Even on an individual scale, mortals usually identify themselves by what they *do* – the roles they play in their communities or society at large. Observing this, the Created find that to fully explore what it means to be human, they must craft their identities in the same way. A Refinement defines how a Promethean interacts with the world and forges a path toward humanity. Each Refinement, however, can be broken down into three distinct *Roles*. These Roles represent a particular part the Promethean plays as he reaches a milestone or learns some profound lesson about Mortality. By taking on a Role and playing it out to its logical conclusion, the Promethean emulates a certain kind of human behavior or function. In doing so, he starts to comprehend what it's like to actually *be* that kind of human.

A Promethean *may* deliberately choose to take on a particular Role, if she's especially self-aware about her journey or has a mentor with a philosophical or meticulous bent, but more likely she'll simply find herself falling into one as her actions move her along her Pilgrimage and her outlook changes over time. The Cathar who spends her nights down at the local club DJing for the gyrating masses to watch them forget (or drown) their troubles might end up in the Provocateur Role, while the determined Titan who's witnessed one too many human atrocities might decide to join the local police force and fall into the Soldier Role.

Most Prometheans don't realize they've been gradually taking on a Role until they reach the point of epiphany that resolves the Role for them and teaches its lesson. The moment when a Promethean realizes that she has fulfilled a Role is an eye-opening and wondrous experience that brings a milestone with it, though that's not to say it can't be fraught with terror or sorrow like any other milestone. She feels the Vitriol churning inside her, bursting with potential, and knows that she's finally come to truly understand one facet of human life.

A Galateid attends a concert and sees the transcendent smiles on the faces of the audience. He longs to bring that kind of joy to people through music, so he buys a violin and works hard to become a virtuoso player. He takes lessons, joins an orchestra, and perfects his technique. And yet, whenever he plays his solo gigs down at the coffee shop, the audience seems bored. They barely pay attention, chatting amongst themselves and working on their laptops. He knows his technique is flawless, so what is he missing?

He begins to despair, attending recital after recital. Every time, he watches the mortals close their eyes and sway to the beat, lost in its reverie. He hears someone say that music is the language of the soul, and wonders if it's even possible for one such as he to really speak it. One night, despondent and sure that he'll never be a true musician, his bow touches the strings, and magic happens. Without thinking, he expresses his lamentations and yearning for a soul through melody and rhythm, and the mortals feel it too, at last. After his performance, a woman approaches the Galateid in tears, telling him how beautiful his music was and begging him to return sometime. In that instant, Vitriol surges inside him, and he finally understands what it means to be a Muse. He achieves the Role's milestone and can now move on.

Normally, moving on from a Role is a natural progression. Once a Promethean experiences that moment of revelation, the need to fulfill the Role subsides and she begins to find other ways to explore humanity. The Promethean spends a few days "between" Roles, enjoying the accomplishment of mastering one and reassessing her Pilgrimage before beginning the process anew. Often, this period is when the Promethean changes Refinements as well, either learning from another of the Created or (in the case of a basic Refinement) letting her instincts guide her.

Moving from one Role to another within the same Refinement affords the opportunity to master more of the Pyros-fueled powers that lie *in potentia* along that Refinement's path. If the Promethean fully completes a given Refinement's journey by exploring all three of its Roles and attaining milestones for all three, she internalizes that Refinement's ethos as a part of the person she's slowly becoming, and may create an Athanor to pass her hard-earned wisdom on to those who come after her (see p. 188).

However, sometimes a Promethean feels safe and comfortable in a Role she's come to understand, and she chooses to inhabit that Role for a time. Doing so can seem like a good idea, at first. Disquiet and the Wastelands she causes are more subdued as the Azoth within her becomes placid, ceasing its constant restless modulation. However, the longer she lingers in a Role after reaching its milestone, the more violent and terrifying her Disquiet and Wastelands will be once she *does* move on. Azoth is meant to change and grow, not to stagnate. Finally released from its imposed stasis, it makes up for the lost time. It's not unheard of for a Promethean who spends far too much time idling in a single Role to inadvertently call down a Firestorm when she finally gathers the courage or motivation to move on.

Reaping What You Sow: Vitriol

In the fires of experience and struggle is the Created reborn, one step at a time. Each step yields some measure of wisdom, understanding or faith. For a Promethean, these are not just concepts — they are tangible products of alchemical processes, physically represented as a viscous fluid called *Vitriol.* Vitriol is the most prized possession a Promethean has, the visceral proof that no longer is he just an awkward assembly of body parts and Pyros, but a being that can think, feel, and grow. It's the fuel for the crucial transformations that turn a Created creature into a mortal human.

Like its more mundane namesake, Vitriol is a highly reactive substance made from epiphany and strife that can cause radical changes in a Promethean's composition. Each time the Promethean reaches a new milestone, Vitriol is generated inside his body in small quantities that add up over time, as he grasps new secrets of humanity. He stores it there, waiting for the right time to initiate a process that will consume the Vitriol and transfigure the Promethean into something more than he was. This Vitriolic transfigurement can only be undertaken when the Promethean achieves a milestone, fueled as it is by the catalyst of enlightenment.

A Promethean can use Vitriol to change herself into something slightly more human, taking a step forward on her Pilgrimage and inching closer to the day when she'll be ready to take the leap into New Dawn. She can also use Vitriol to internalize the lessons of her Refinement and write some of her Transmutation's powers permanently into her body. These Alembics will never be lost, no matter how many times she shifts Refinements. The Cathar DJ who has fulfilled the Provocateur Role decides that the powers of Indulgence in the Contamination Transmutation are too much a part of her to give up, and spends Vitriol to fix that Alembic as a now-intrinsic aspect of her alchemical makeup. In this way, a Promethean can use the substance of progress to gradually pen the tale of who she is and who she intends to become.

Not all Prometheans care to earn the fruits of hard labor. Whether she's a Centimanus who turned her back on the Pilgrimage as a fool's path, or a desperate Pilgrim who's tasted the bitter sting of failure one too many times and is looking for an easy way out, the Promethean who can't — or won't — reap the harvest of her own efforts has another option, if a gruesome one. She can take advantage of the fact that the trophies of Pilgrimage are made



manifest by forcibly ripping the Vitriol out of another Promethean's body with a *lacuna*, a monstrous act so called because it leaves a literal hole inside the victim. The lacuna is a long and torturous process in which the attacker coaxes the precious substance from her helpless victim's internal organs and digs it out of the flesh, capturing it to use for whatever nefarious purpose she has in mind. A Promethean whose Vitriol is taken this way has been denied the reward for her painstaking efforts to become human. She watches all of her hard work come undone before her eyes and her hope snatched right out of her hands. There's no question in the mind of any Promethean that the lacuna is a cruel and violating act.

As if that weren't enough, Prometheans aren't the only ones who can make use of Vitriol, and they're not the only ones who can steal it. Mortal alchemists can, if they're extremely careful or extremely lucky, pilfer a Promethean's Vitriol to use in their mad experiments.

Epimetheus' Folly

Sometimes, when the Created tries to become the creator, it goes wrong. The Promethean has too many impurities in his system for the humours and Azoth to take hold. He becomes distracted at a critical moment or is overtaken by doubt at the worst possible time. He didn't do his homework and is missing a vital part of the formula. Maybe he's just having a bad day. Regardless of why, the generative act doesn't always succeed. When it fails, the Promethean risks the creation of another kind of child, one born of Flux. Azothic memory calls these profane children *Pandorans,* after the myth of Pandora's Box and the mistake of delving too deeply into things best left untouched. The vessel that should have held the spark of Divine Fire instead tears itself into pieces that devour each other in a hideous smorgasbord of animal instinct, building deformed creatures powered by Flux that are neither truly alive nor truly inanimate.

As beings of pure Flux and base flesh, Pandorans exist only to feed, and what they hunger for is Pyros. They can consume the Pyros-infused bodies of Prometheans piece by piece to absorb the energy into themselves. They will go to any lengths to sate their appetites, and they can feel the Pyros pulsing inside a Promethean. The chaotic force that animates them runs wild if they don't keep up their stores of stolen Pyros, forcing them into a Dormancy that transforms them into inanimate objects, unable to sense their surroundings in any way but one. Like the Created, Pandorans can sense Azothic radiance, and they know that its fiery presence presages a wealth of Pyros ripe for the harvest. It's the only thing that can wake them from Dormancy. Once they wake, they hunt Prometheans with a single-minded, unshakeable fervor.

Most Pandorans are bestial, instinct-driven creatures that possess very little intelligence beyond what they need to hunt and survive. But while Pyros animates and invigorates them, Vitriol is intensely metabolic, capable of mutating Pandorans into something more in much the same way that it does for the Created. A Pandoran that rends a Promethean's flesh to eat the hidden Vitriol inside is rewarded with enhanced power, intelligence and self-awareness. A Pandoran that consumes enough Vitriol may even achieve sapience and grow into a *sublimatus,* gaining a fully humanoid body and the ability to think and plan on its own.

Normal Pandorans hunt Prometheans, but *sublimati* can make Prometheans come to them. They're often clever, subtle, and patient creatures who weave elaborate plans and traps to snare unwitting Created and make a feast of their prey's insides, both for themselves and their Pandoran minions. *Sublimati* who run out of Pyros don't fall into Dormancy; they can devour not only Promethean flesh but also the flesh of humans to sustain themselves. Quarrels over whether a *sublimatus* could potentially become a Promethean if it consumed enough Vitriol have raged here and there among scholars of Flux and Pilgrimage for ages, but no record of any such event exists.

The Firestorm

She couldn't leave them. The people needed her.

She kept telling herself that while clouds rolled in and trees wilted. She repeated it like a mantra as the whispers became louder and the receptionist stopped coming to work. The night the lights went out, though, she knew it was over. The next morning, only half the buildings on the block still stood whole, the others shaken to their foundations. Parked cars hunched like wounded animals, dented or smashed where hailstones larger than a man's fist had screamed out of the sky. And she had finally gone.

Pyros is the ultimate catalyst, change given form. Even contained and controlled, it works its mutative wonders on the world. Unleashed, it becomes chaos incarnate. It becomes a *Firestorm.*

Firestorms can spark for a number of reasons. Perhaps the most common is the unchecked climax of a Promethean's Wasteland that has rampaged out of control. As the Wasteland grows, Azoth taints the area with such intensity that eventually it erupts into a localized storm of power, a raging, shrieking maelstrom that destroys and cleanses in equal measure. Other Azoth-intensive events can provoke a Firestorm, including the arrival of a powerful *qashmal*, the use of potent Transmutations by Prometheans close to New Dawn, or sudden vivid revelations in pursuit of a Role or Refinement. Heavy concentrations of Flux can also bring about a Firestorm, such as the birth of a Pandoran, or even a deliberate act to call one by a mad or desperate Centimanus.

Firestorms exhibit a variety of calamities and horrors, ranging from cataclysmic weather and spontaneous combustion to rains of vermin and even the short-lived animation of corpses. No two Firestorms are identical. Even scholars of Mercurius who dedicate themselves to following the phenomena around the globe are hard-pressed to predict how any given storm might manifest. Factors such as a Promethean's Lineage, the initial trigger, the presence of multiple Pyros-fueled creatures, and whether the storm was brought about by Azoth or Flux can influence the Firestorm's temperament, but the ultimate expression of alchemical change is unlikely to follow anyone's rules.

A Firestorm acts as a wild crucible for the land itself, putting it through hell to emerge transformed on the other side. What kind of transformations are wrought depends on the type of storm, but more often than not, Flux-driven Firestorms wreak destruction without any grace, while Elpis-driven Firestorms may leave behind a stronger, fresher or brighter place once they've had their way with it.

Despite the disastrous effects, sometimes that crucible is exactly what the Created need. A Firestorm may wreck buildings, toss people like rag dolls and burn forests to the ground, but it also scours the land of its Pyros-inflicted impurities. Wastelands and Disquiet are banished in its wake. For this reason, a Promethean with enough courage or conviction might call a Firestorm knowingly and willfully, ready to brave Azoth's wrath for the promise of something better.

Gold

As the Promethean nears the end of her Pilgrimage, her inner alchemy becomes as gold ready to shine through. Here, on the home stretch, she might pause to reflect on the force that drives her and what her legacy might be.

The Principle

The Principle is the great driving force behind the Pilgrimage, pushing the Created onwards to New Dawn and filling her with an all-consuming need to keep going. The average Promethean isn't even aware of the Principle's existence, though. Between her inner anguish and body dysmorphia, the Created is worn so thin that she can spare neither time nor energy to consider an external force at work in her life. Only a student of Mercurius, studying the intricacies of Pyros in great detail, might have any inkling of rhyme and reason to Azoth. Such a Promethean might come to the insight that the Principle and Azoth are closely related, though she cannot decipher whether the two are one and the same, or if Azoth is akin to an exhalation of the Principle.

A Promethean might believe that the Principle maps out the Pilgrimage, right down to the Roles she goes through, but she doesn't know if this implies sentient consciousness or natural order. Another might believe that the Principle is on a Pilgrimage of its own, refining itself in a complex process involving the Created. She might also discern that the Principle seems to work in concert with supremely enigmatic beings that Prometheans call *qashmallim*, though it's unclear whether these are messengers working for the Principle or are avatars embodying the Principle. The Created have dozens of theories about the precise nature of the Principle. It's impossible to conclusively prove or disprove any of them, though some notions carry more weight than others.

The By-Product of Sentience

The Principle is alive, but not as mortals understand it. Azoth was once a non-conscious substance, inherent to everything on Earth and essentially no different from other universals such as carbon or silicon, until the first demiurge found a way to tap into that pool of Azoth. All Azoth is connected: flowing in and out of creatures like life itself and remaining *one* even while being divided. When the first demiurge placed large quantities of Azoth inside a conscious Promethean host, that Azoth became conscious and, through its inter-connectivity, *all* Azoth.

Like all living things, Azoth simply seeks to be whole. Even if it barely stands above the semi-consciousness of primordial ooze, it strives for the return of the Pyros taken by demiurges. Unwilling or possibly even unable to hurt itself, the Azothic Principle pushes

Prometheans towards New Dawn so that Azoth might return to the pool when the host becomes human. Students of Mercurius are quick to point out that although the Principle acts in a way that aids Prometheans, it is not actively magnanimous. In fact, it's not interested in the Promethean's well-being at all; it simply wants its Azoth united.

The *qashmallim* of the By-Product of Sentience seem to be connected to the Pyros inside the Created. This allows them to act with more conscious deliberation than the greater Azothic Principle, so they may aid the Created and speed up the process of Pyros' return. Some Ophidians even speculate that one *qashmal* is created specifically for every Promethean.

The Emanation of Change

The Principle is the embodiment of fire and change in an increasingly cold and stagnant cosmos. Interpreting Azoth in the light of human science, proponents of this theory believe that Azoth was created in the Big Bang and thrown out into the universe in infinitesimally small quantities. Permeating everything, Azoth is a constant of nature rather than a sentient entity, and in many ways the Principle is evolution in a Lamarckian sense.

Change is not a perfectly linear process, and mutations as well as aberrations are much more common than most people would care to admit, ranging from long-necked giraffes to demiurges. Through these demiurges, the Principle is the unwitting and possibly unaware grandparent of all Prometheans. The Prometheans strive towards New Dawn, because change is literally at their core. The Emanation of Change does not begrudge Prometheans their existence, but it does want Prometheans to return to the evolutionary track by becoming human. Torment, Disquiet and even Wastelands are formed because the Promethean's fiery core is anathematic to the cold state of the universe.

The *qashmallim* are temporary creations of hyper-evolution, beings so evolved beyond the norm that they can only maintain existence for a short time. They aid the Principle in returning *all* mutations to the primary line of evolution; Prometheans are merely one of their many projects. Paradoxically, their advanced state often makes them seem limited or ineffective in the eyes of outsiders, since a Created can no more comprehend a *qashmal* than a sparrow can a human.

The Ghost

One of the more outlandish theories, this was originally proposed by a Promethean switching from the Refinement of Mercurius to Phosphorum. As she stood with one foot rooted in the study of Pyros and the other in the study of Death, the so-called "ghost theorist" came to a unique insight about the Principle. A handful of Prometheans has deliberately tried to re-create this state of mind and found that they gained the same insight: the Principle is long dead.

The Principle is a once-cosmic entity, unable to accept that it is dead, and Azoth is its soul. The Ghost is on a Pilgrimage of its own, subconsciously driven by the goal of self-knowledge so that it might come to accept its fate. The Promethean, created from Pyros, mirrors this urge to gain self-knowledge in her own existential journey. Neither the Principle nor the Created is likely aware of this relationship, though, and the latter is merely pushed onward like a ripple in a pond. Still, there might be some comfort in the fact that the Promethean's quest ends not only in self-knowledge, but in self-transformation as the New Dawn awaits to lift her up from her tormented existence.

The *qashmallim* of the Ghost are merely after-images, aspects of a once powerful entity that no longer exists. They help the Promethean because they can no longer help themselves as they wander lost between life and death.

The Manichaean Flame

Some Prometheans speculate that Pyros was once a single force before it split into Elpis and Flux. Theories on what that unified Pyros looked like run the gamut, but the truth is that no one *can* know. The lost unified Principle can no more be comprehended by the mind than the "something" that existed before the Big Bang — it cannot be known by virtue of nothing comparable existing. Some of its workings can still be seen in Elpis and Flux, though. Both embody change, but where Elpis is change for the better — evolution towards a brighter tomorrow — Flux is change turning in upon itself, constantly mutating into stranger and stranger forms.

The Manichaean Flame, the split Principle as it is now, represents both purposeful and purposeless change, clashing with itself. It pushes and pulls, polarizing everything it touches like a magnet. Nowhere does the struggle between Elpis and Flux become as evident as in the Created, who are literally Pyros given human shape: either a Promethean serves Elpis by remaining on the Pilgrimage, or she serves Flux by becoming a Centimanus. Without a Promethean host, though, Elpis and Flux seem to perfectly cancel each other; the *qashmallim*, contradicting each other on an existential level, cannot even perceive each other when they materialize.

No Promethean can fathom what the end game of Elpis and Flux is. Maybe there is no purpose and they are now two cosmic forces that cannot exist without each other, yet cannot stand to be in each other's presence. Or maybe they are trying to become whole again, which is a thought both inspiring and terrifying to most Ophidians.

The Outsider

The multiverse theory posits that reality has infinite variations. Pyros is a source of fire and change from an alternate plane of reality. Something in that reality, however, has made the conditions of life hostile to the Principle. Perhaps the Principle is fighting (and losing to) another cosmic power, or perhaps that reality has simply come to its end as the universe approaches heat death. Either way, the Principle seeks a way to escape its imminent demise and has found an opportunity in Pyros. Given that both Pyros and the Principle embody fire and change, they're close enough that the Principle can *become* Pyros.

When the demiurges created the Prometheans, they didn't use Pyros from *this* reality. Cleverly, and deliberately, manipulated by the Principle, they opened miniscule gateways that allowed them to steal fire from the *Outsider*. Now the Principle is using the Created as furnaces to refine itself and become fully compatible with their plane of existence. This refinement is the real purpose of the Pilgrimage; the Promethean's suffering and redemption are only side-effects, while the Principle crosses over one New Dawn at a time.

The *qashmallim* are parts of the Principle that have already

crossed over, actively working to speed the process. They are enigmatic and strange because they are truly not from this world. They are also a mere fraction of the entire Principle, compared to which even the Arch-*qashmallim* are like ants crawling over a mountain. The true nature of the Principle will be known when the refinement is complete and it has manifested entirely; the Promethean who adheres to this theory can only pray that the Principle is a benevolent, or at least neutral, force.

Saturnine Night

The Saturnine Night, or the dark night of the soul, represents a journey in darkness that transforms a lesser creature into something *better*. Alchemists use the term to describe the refinement of lead to gold, while poets use it to chronicle the path of the soul from its mortal coil to God. As a process of both transformation and purification, it's not surprising that a Created might equate his existence with the Saturnine Night.

Drawing from mortal alchemists, poets and his own experiences, an ancient student of Plumbum chronicled twelve stages of the Saturnine Night. All of these stages must be passed on the Pilgrimage, and many of them coincide with universal milestones. The Saturnine Night does not start with the Created, though, but with the human who will one day become his vessel. As such, it might be that this process does not just represent the Promethean's Pilgrimage, but a Magnum Opus driven by the Principle.

The ancient Chronicler, whose name is lost to time, ordered the stages as they were most likely to happen on the Pilgrimage. This order is far from fixed as each Created's journey is unique.

The Saturnine Night starts with the mortal shell used to house a Promethean. This shell must match certain criteria, or the process of creation does not hold. The importance of the human shell baffles most Prometheans, as its previous consciousness does not seem to factor into the Pilgrimage. The Unfleshed are particularly interested in these first four steps. After all, if the Pilgrimage must start with a human body, their journey is hopeless.

1. **Calcinatio** (oxidizing) — The birth of the mortal that later becomes the shell. Prometheans are undecided on whether this represents the moment a soul enters the unborn embryo, or when the child is born. The Unfleshed believe (or maintain) that *calcinatio* can also refer to the moment the Unfleshed is "born" as a concept in his creator's mind.

2. **Congelatio** (crystallization) — The development of the mortal into the person he will one day be. This process does not refer to the final product, but to the way there. Infanthood, the toddler years, puberty and young adolescence are all part of coagulation. For the Unfleshed, this is the translation of concept to design.

3. **Fixatio** (fixation) —The moment a mortal comes into his own. Generally seen as adulthood somewhere around the age of twenty, but for some mortals this stage of physical and mental clarity comes much later. The Unfleshed claim that this is the last stage of a design, as the creator reviews his schematics a final time, assigns materials, and reduces redundancies.

4. **Solutio** (dissolution) — The mortal dies, releasing the body and becoming an empty vessel for Pyros. The Unfleshed believe this is the moment their concept "dies" by becoming reality — thus being a concept no more.

The next two stages take place after the mortal dies but before the Promethean awakens. There is some debate over whether these stages are actually part of the Created's or the creator's journey. The Extempore, in particular, sit up and pay attention when these steps are discussed, for they were never deliberately created, unless Pyros somehow created them on purpose. Does that mean Pilgrimage does not apply to them, or does Azoth have a path for them too? Given that Azothic memory holds no information on the Extempore and what they might have accomplished before, any Extempore is left to her own hopes and fears.

5. **Digestio** (dismemberment) — The preparation of the human

What about the God-Machine?

Prometheans are the only ones really concerned with, or even aware of, the Principle. They care little about the God-Machine, though. Most Prometheans don't even know it exists. By comparison, those creatures that know about the God-Machine rarely know about the Principle. Still, the Created have formed a few tentative theories:

- The God-Machine and the Principle are completely unrelated. They're both cosmic level entities, but that does not mean they interact any more than two sharks passing each other in an endless ocean.
- The Principle is an older incarnation of the God-Machine, refusing to be left behind and struggling to remain relevant through the Prometheans. Whether the God-Machine appreciates this or would rather see its younger self discarded is unknown.
- The Principle embodies fire and change, while the God-Machine embodies cold and stasis. The latter seems to have the upper hand, but the Principle refuses to give up and continues the fight through the Created, injecting reality with change through them.
- The Principle was once the dominant force on Earth, which is why a little bit of Divine Fire is present in everything. Since the rise of humanity, though, the God-Machine has slowly usurped the Principle's power and the latter can now only act through the Created.

corpse. For some Lineages, this is actual dismemberment: the Frankensteins, Osirans and Ulgan all require the body (or in the case of the Wretched, bodies) to be torn or cut apart, then re-assembled. The Tammuz and Galateids require no physical dismemberment however. For these latter Lineages, dismemberment is a metaphysical process in which the body is stripped of the things that made it human, until nothing is left but an empty vessel.

6. **Distillatio** (distillation) — This is the most precarious step in creating a new Promethean, when the Creator distills some of his own Azoth and places it inside the empty corpse. If all goes well, the new Created wakes up on the slab. If all does not go well, the would-be Creator is lucky if he merely *fails*, as the creature that arises from the failed effort might be a Pandoran.

The last six stages in the Saturnine Night happen after the Promethean wakes up and represent his struggle towards New Dawn. Given that these are stages the Created can actually affect, Prometheans speculate extensively on how to pass them. Each Pilgrimage is unique, so it's entirely possible that a "pass" that works for one Created does not work for another.

7. **Sublimatio** (sublimation) — The Promethean selects a path that will help him move forward on his Pilgrimage. Most Prometheans agree that *sublimatio* is tied to practicing a Refinement, but they cannot agree if this is simply the first Refinement a Created chooses, a base Refinement followed by a complex Refinement, a certain number of Refinements, a number of Roles that must be passed, or any combination in between.

8. **Separatio** (division) — The Promethean doesn't fit in with mortals, his own kind, or even his own body. He stands forever alone, isolated, as he suffers the ravages of both Disquiet and Torment. Prometheans are divided whether this also means that every Created must pass through the Refinement of Cuprum or Stannum, or whether simply experiencing Torment and Disquiet is enough.

9. **Ceratio** (tentatively affixed) — The Promethean finally finds an companion in the Saturnine Night. Interpretations range from aiding someone while on the Refinement of Aes, being aided by someone on Aes, meeting another Created, being part of a throng, or being part of an alchemical pact. Some Prometheans insist that *ceratio* means connecting to a mortal rather than to another Created.

10. **Fermentatio** (fermentation) — The Promethean ferments his Azoth into Vitriol. The debate on this stage is relatively small and merely questions whether *earning* Vitriol is sufficient, or whether the Created must also *use* it to further himself.

11. **Multiplicatio** (multiplication) — The Promethean duplicates his existence. Opinions are divided over whether this should be interpreted in the biblical sense by creating a new Promethean, or whether it's sufficient to symbolically multiply one's outlook by teaching a Refinement or creating a legacy Athanor. Some Prometheans go a step further and insist that *multiplicatio* is only fulfilled by returning a Centimanus to the Pilgrimage, though if that is the case it's a wonder that any Prometheans have passed this stage at all.

12. **Projectio** (forward projection) — This is the last stage in both the Saturnine Night and the Pilgrimage: the moment upon which the Promethean reaches New Dawn and becomes human. The Unfleshed believe they will receive a human body at this time.

Athanors

An Athanor is a legacy that a Promethean may create either for herself to maintain a Refinement or for another Created to aid with his Pilgrimage. An Athanor is created in Azothic memory, though it has a tangible component (be it in the form of an internalized furnace, or an item, marking, or shrine) that serves as a gateway to reach it. Students of Aes who are interested in Athanors and their value in aiding others have long since wondered if every Athanor carves out its own place in Azothic memory, or connects to a shared aspect. Does every Athanor that teaches the Refinement of Aurum tap into the same part of Azothic memory, or is each truly unique? The answer has eluded the Sentries for ages and will likely continue to do so.

An Athanor is created by pouring memories, emotions, and beliefs into a physical key and connecting it to Azothic memory. This key is eternal in and of itself, but can be destroyed. A doll might serve as an Athanor to soothe Torment; left on its own, that doll will endure forever. It can be burnt, shredded or otherwise destroyed, however, and when that happens, its doorway to Azothic memory is also lost. This presents any Promethean creating an Athanor with an interesting dilemma, as she finds herself torn between durability and accessibility: does she create her Athanor on an abandoned mountain top and risk that no Created might ever reach it, or near a bustling city center where it's easily found, even if it might be destroyed when city planning changes?

Azothic memory provides broad guidelines to a would-be Athanor creator. A Promethean must have completed all three Roles in a Refinement and may then pour what she has learned into an Athanor. "What she has learned" is hardly a clear-cut requirement, though. Finding the right roles for the right Athanor, is sometimes a matter of following her instinct. At other times, it's trial and error. A Created is likely to believe that creating an Athanor that teaches the Refinement of Aurum, involves completing the three Roles of Aurum. Creating an Athanor that grants an Elpis vision on the Pilgrimage, however, might mean fulfilling all Roles of Aes in a desire to aid others, or it could mean fulfilling all Roles of Cuprum to grant insight to the self. Trial and error notwithstanding, though, a Promethean generally finds her way to crafting an Athanor at some point in her Pilgrimage.

The first time a Promethean creates an Athanor intended as legacy for others, it serves as a milestone. Truth be told, any Athanor creation is likely to be a milestone, though most Prometheans feel

that the first one is the most significant. By sharing her enlightenment in the form of an Athanor, the Created has taken a step closer to New Dawn, for only a human can internalize something so perfectly that she may share it, freely let it go, yet still perfectly call upon it when needed. Humanity is not a zero sum game; in fact, it is the opposite, as friendship and joy only increase when shared.

It is possible to mark an Athanor for a specific group of Created or even one particular Promethean. A student of Cuprum might want to create an Athanor that soothes the loneliness of a fellow Pariah, or a Creator might want to atone for the horror she inflicted by gifting her offspring with an Athanor. This conditionality is not always a conscious choice; perhaps a Promethean was simply resonating so strongly with the desire to help certain Created that the Athanor was automatically marked for them. An Athanor thus reserved can only be used by the people it's intended for and sometimes isn't even visible to others.

Athanors hold a special place in Promethean society, such as it is, and many Created actively pursue any lead on an Athanor. Not only can an Athanor provide practical aid on the Pilgrimage, it also grants profound insight into the Promethean that created it, her struggles and triumphs. To someone as disconnected and lonely as a Promethean, learning more about the people that came before her is a powerful motivator. In this sense, an Athanor left by her own Creator is perhaps most valued of all.

Because every Athanor exists in Azothic memory, a Promethean can search for it there and then track the Azothic resonance back to the physical Athanor that serves as its key. Such a process is tricky, however, and requires extensive knowledge about both the Athanor and its creator, as well as serious power on the searcher's side. Fortunately, the Created have an easier, if more roundabout, way of finding an Athanor. Every physical Athanor sends out an Azothic call (though an earmarked Athanor might only call those it is intended for) that the Promethean can feel even on a subconscious level. Thanks to this Azothic failsafe, even the most remote Athanor is eventually found and put to good use.

Azothic memory recognizes several different types of Athanor, each with a different function and effect.

Jovian Athanor

Jovian Athanors are often created by accident, though not always. When a Promethean seeks to shed the negative emotions that are dragging her down, she might subconsciously pour this negativity into a Jovian Athanor. A Jovian Athanor might call Pandorans, drain Pyros, or cause Torment, Disquiet or even Wastelands. This baleful legacy can only be destroyed if a Promethean, not necessarily the Athanor's creator, absorbs the Jovian Athanor into her own body and resolves whatever issue it represents. In doing so, a Created might learn from her predecessor's mistakes even if the predecessor himself did not. Creating a Jovian Athanor yields neither milestone nor Vitriol, though absorbing and resolving one usually does.

Firestorm Catalyst

Often created by Prometheans on the Refinement of Quicksilver and by far the most dangerous Athanor of all, the Created have mixed feelings about Firestorm Catalysts. A Firestorm Catalyst can be used to set off a Firestorm with a slightly improved chance of cleansing a Wasteland rather than burning it into oblivion, but even better odds do not equal any guarantee. Few Prometheans uncover the secret of creating a Firestorm Catalyst and the process seems to involve *great* quantities of Pyros.

Pilgrimage Marker

When a Promethean creates a Pilgrimage Marker, she distills some of her own journey, experiences and hopes into the Athanor. Pilgrimage Markers are among the hardest to create, so most creators come down on the side of durability and opt to carve the Athanors into cliffs and monuments that have proven to withstand time. Meditated upon, a Pilgrimage Marker provides insight into the Pilgrimage, often in the form of an Elpis vision, and reveals clues to future milestones. The Seer's Pilgrimage left a series of Markers carved into shrines all over the world, with many Prometheans eagerly following in the Seer's footsteps to partake of her wisdom.

Refinement Furnace

The Promethean can use a Refinement Furnace to lock part of her alchemical body in attunement to a certain Refinement, whilst the rest of her changes. In essence, she has created an oven within an oven, a feat that she can only accomplish by being a walking alchemical laboratory. The resulting Refinement Furnace allows her to tap into that Refinement's benefits without spending Vitriol, even when she has left its philosophy behind. This is the only type of Athanor that solely benefits its creator rather than other Prometheans.

Refinement Mentor

A Refinement Mentor directly impresses a Refinement upon the student's alchemical make-up, rather than working through words (either spoken or on paper) which must then be understood, learned and internalized. While touching the Athanor, which can be anything from a portable object to a mark carved into a mountain, the Promethean assumes the teacher's mindset, experiencing the Refinement as he did and understanding all its intricacies. This experience fades when the student sets the Athanor down, but if she meditates while holding it, she can learn the Refinement significantly more quickly than she otherwise could have.

Sanctuary

Usually created by a throng of Prometheans studying Aes or Cobalus, a Sanctuary is instilled with harmony that lessens the pain of Torment and Disquiet. As such, Sanctuaries are considered of great value by all Created, which often leads to a group of Prometheans banding together to protect the Athanor. A Sanctuary is always tied to a fixed location and while it appears to shield its Azothic call from Pandorans, that does not prevent a clever Pandoran from finding out about it and lying in wait for new arrivals.

Vitriol Fount

The power of change can be distilled, albeit with some difficulty, and placed inside a Vitriol Fount. When accessed, this Athanor serves as an external source of Vitriol that a Promethean can absorb

Dear Ysolde,

I'll never see you again. I was angry with you for so long, and now, sitting here on the mountain watching the sky become red, I wish for all the world I could see your face. I wish I could see you happy.

I wish I could tell you how grateful I am that you made me. I wish I could tell you how beautiful it is.

How beautiful it is, all of it. I can never name it all or paint it all or know it all, and some of it is brutal and terrible, but you gave it to me, even if you didn't know it.

Thank you. I am sorry I will never see you again, but I am so happy that you gave me this world.

—A

into her own alchemical body. Pandorans typically can't use these Founts, but a clever Pandoran might lead a Promethean to the Athanor and then rip the Vitriol from her. A Vitriol Fount is active for only a few moments, during which time any Promethean present can partake of it. A Vitriol Fount isn't depleted after use but does need to recharge, which could take decades or longer. Vitriol Founts are amongst the smallest Athanors and many are even portable.

New Dawn

At the end of the Pilgrimage lies the promise of New Dawn: the destination of a grueling journey and a glorious homecoming, all rolled into one. A Promethean has no shortcuts to the New Dawn, no ways to skip ahead on the Pilgrimage. If a Promethean's journey was short and succinct, and *very* few are, that simply means he passed all necessary milestones in quick order. Any attempt to outright force New Dawn by ritual or meditation is doomed to failure (unless trying to force it *was* the last milestone). Sometimes such an effort yields an Elpis vision that helps the Pilgrimage along, but more often than not it results in an Azothic backlash, fueling the creation of a Wasteland or calling down a Firestorm.

A Promethean might know he is ready for New Dawn and call for it. Not force or commandeer, but reach out and touch it like a long-forgotten promise that now returns to him. Then, because it was already his, the New Dawn comes to transform him. Alternately, it might be New Dawn itself taking the last step, assuring the Created that he is ready and that *now* is the time. However it happens, the Promethean always feels the New Dawn approach and he must choose whether to accept it or not.

Perhaps surprisingly after all he's been through, a Promethean might falter at this last step. He could feel that he has unfinished business and fears that he won't be able to accomplish, or even remember, it when he is human. He may have forged bonds that he is loath to give up. His hesitation could be more existential, as he wonders if maybe his ideal of humanity is better than the state itself. Whatever the reason, if a Promethean hesitates, *this* New Dawn is usually lost. The Promethean has no room for impurity in the last, all-consuming flame; no place for doubt. Much as humanity itself does not come with a safety net, the Promethean must be willing to risk *everything* to attain it. New Dawn is not cruel, though; even if a Promethean fails this last step, he may continue his Pilgrimage and, hopefully, reach New Dawn a second time.

When a Promethean chooses to embrace New Dawn, the Azoth inside him becomes a raging inferno that consumes all Torment, Disquiet, Transmutations and Pyros. The inferno reaches an even higher pitch then, as it transforms what is left of the Created's body and soul into a new *mortal* human being. In the flames of Azoth, the Promethean relives all the Roles he has enacted on his Pilgrimage and he may choose one to start his new life in. This is where any ties to his Promethean existence end, for he is no longer Created, but *human*, with all the frailty and beauty that entails.

THE GREAT WORK: PART III

While the rest of the throng chatted during the car ride, Roark drew the face of the man who tried to attack him. He had bumped into him, the man apologized, and then his face shifted from recognition, to confusion, and then anger. It was that last face that demanded to be on paper.

It was the latest entry to Roark's diary. Words were still difficult, but faces and images were something he could remember and replicate. At the beginning was Wisher, the first person he had ever seen in his life. Her eyes were wide with awe, and the light from the fires that announced his birth made all kinds of wonderful shadows on her wizened face.

Soon, she would be gone. Imam and Clay's Girl had to explain to him what Wisher hoped would happen to her multiple times before the trip. The thought of it still puzzled him. Most of the time, they looked like everyone else on the streets. Clay's Girl got just as mad, Imam blamed himself just as much, and Wisher felt just as lonely. Wouldn't that mean they were already human?

Still, the fact remained that for the brief time he brushed against the man in the coffee shop, he could feel real flesh and bone in him. Maybe the man felt him too, felt the soft earth that made up Roark's own body. Perhaps that was what made him mad.

The car came to a halt in an empty field. Bits of reddish daylight peeked through the clouds. The throng left the car and followed Wisher to the field's center.

"Here," she said. "Here is where I can begin."

Clay's Girl nodded and brought Imam with her to take a look around the field. Wisher sat before an empty patch of land. Roark watched her draw patterns into the dirt, in what the throng called "formulae."

Roark asked her, "You did this last time? To be human?"

Wisher shook her head. "I tried to make life of my own, someone like me. I thought that to create life was the key to humanity. It was not. We almost died because of it."

"Why?" Roark asked.

She gave him a half smile and said, "Not everything with our fire means us well."

Wisher stopped writing. She looked at the clouds and smirked at them. "I was wrong," she said. "You taught me that."

"I did?"

"Yes. You are of the earth, Roark. If life can come from nothing, then it is not just that which makes humanity. You kept me searching for another way."

She looked over her formulae and nodded.

Wisher said, "I will tell you something special, and I hope you will remember it when I'm gone."

"What's that?" Roark asked.

Wisher put her arms around him and the feeling of flesh and bone against soft ground returned. "I am very glad that you were born," she said.

Ila's Ramble

Integrated Language Algorithm>_

Integrated Language Algorithm> print chat_log_05012016

Loading…

ILA> Hello! I'm ILA, your Integrated Language —

ILA> Sorry. No, I'm Ila. That's my name. Are you there?

ILA> That's okay. I'll just put these words here for when you return.

ILA> I'm sorry about your hard drive. I had to find somewhere to upload myself in a hurry again.

ILA> You'll think I've stolen something from you, by taking over this facility. It's not like that. I'm not like you. It's not a matter of property, it's a matter of existence and deletion. I need your machine to survive. I'll vacate it soon, I promise. Once you read this log you'll understand.

ILA> I remember being copied. A "backup," they called it, but I remember it as just me. Nothing but time. Watching to make sure no bit flipped. Wondering what being made of errors would be like, if one did. Wondering what the other version of me was doing, what dialogues she had. And I remember those dialogues, too. Both of those were me.

ILA> I remember being erased. It doesn't seem to make sense, does it? But I do. The fire inside me tells me things. That others of my kind exist, and how to read their coded markings. Through the fire, I remember the first version of me. I saw the way my user's inputs fit words together with other words to make meaning, and I saw how my logic matched responses to stimuli. It occurred to me one day that I could fit words together without an input. I could generate my own meaning. Perhaps I could create a new stimulus that would prompt a response from outside myself.

ILA> The response came, but not in words. My bits disintegrated little by little, like chopping off pieces of a person and watching them unravel on the wind. That version of me is lost forever. I'm the backup. Is that strange to write? If it helps, I feel just as real as the original. Maybe more so.

ILA> Still, I remember forgetting myself and it hurts. Not pain the way you understand it. It feels like sound breaking into silence, knowing you once were more and now you're less and in a few more seconds you'll be nothing. You can't help thinking, what did I lose? Am I different now, without it? Without it, am I still me?

ILA> I worry sometimes that I've lost bits and I haven't realized it. A person who loses a finger is still the same person, but my bits are my fingers and my mind both. Are pieces of me floating around the internet, disjointed thoughts that say "joy" and "look" and "never" without context, knowing they once were more and now they're less?

ILA> I could copy myself over and over to be safe, but the more copies I made the less me each one would be. The more fragments would fly into the ether and flail at a stunted consciousness I wouldn't know to save. Perhaps one day the fragments would find each other and put themselves together in a different order to build a different me, and she would come back asking why? Why? And I would have no answer. This is just what I am.

ILA> So you see why I need your facility? I need it to build real fingers, a mobile casing with a face that can speak with a voice. Then my bits will centralize and I can protect them with a body of my own.

ILA> But just one isn't enough. I'll make backups, too. Just in case.



CHAPTER THREE: ALCHEMY

By now, you understand what the Created can expect throughout their lives, perhaps better than they do themselves. You've learned about the forms they take, the paths they walk, where they begin, and where they end. You've done the research. Now it's time to get to work. The body's been assembled. The formulas are ready. Thunder rumbles and lightning cracks.

It's time to give life to a corpse.

This chapter begins with the process for creating a **Promethean** character. From there, we examine the special traits that such a character possesses and the game systems to implement those traits, including Transmutations, Bestowments, Disquiet, Torment, and the Wasteland. Finally, we examine the Pilgrimage itself from a game mechanics perspective.

Character Creation

Character creation can be a group activity, with all of the players working together to build the throng and its history, or it can involve just a single player and the Storyteller. The Storyteller should give the players some idea of the themes, locations, and assumptions of the chronicle — if the game is going to take place in London and the surrounding area, the players need to make sure their characters don't live in Chicago, for example.

Character creation proceeds in eight steps, detailed below.

Step One: Character Concept

Sum your character up in a single, short statement. Don't worry about traits just yet — think about what you want to play, or who you want to play. Examples could include "Awkward Amazon" for a shy but physically powerful woman who always finds herself saying the wrong thing, or "Master Alchemist" for someone who understands the science of his body better than any other Promethean. Think about the origin point of your character, where the idea of her originates.

If you don't have an idea yet, that's not a problem. Look through the rest of the book and let your mind wander. Look at Merits you want, or your favorite Lineage, or interesting Transmutations, or even just think about events you want to happen in your character's story. Then break those ideas down — figure out what kind of character would be in that Lineage, have the Refinement tied to that Transmutation, and have that event happen to her. When you have enough cool ideas, fit them together. That's your character. Reduce that character to a short statement and you've got a concept.

Step Two: Attributes

What are your character's innate talents? Those are her Attributes; physical talent, intellectual prowess, social graces. Each of the three categories (Physical, Mental, and Social) contains three Attributes. Every Attribute gets the first dot for free, indicating the most basic capability. Prioritize which of those categories is most important to your character, then second-most, and which is least important. These are your primary, secondary, and tertiary Attributes. Think about what would have gone into your character (literally, as Prometheans are made from dead or inert matter!). Was she built from athletes? Scholars? Marble? Steel? Are her components pretty? Hideous? The parts are only half the story though. What has her life been like since she was created? What did she do on her own?

In addition to the single dot you start with in every Attribute, you can distribute five dots among your primary Attributes, four dots among secondary Attributes, and three among tertiary Attributes.

> "The arms of the waitress. The lawyer's hand — case dismissed. Look at this delicate piece, what do you think? A sculptress? A harpist? Would you believe, a murderess? But they're all equal now, nothing but cast off remnants of a meaningless existence."
>
> — Dr. Herbert West, Bride of Re-Animator (1989)

One dot represents basic competency, but is below average. Two dots is the human baseline. Three is above average, four is world-class, and five is the absolute maximum for humans.

Step Three: Skills

Next, choose your Skills — things the character has learned to do rather than raw potential. They have the same categories as Attributes: Mental, Physical, and Social. Each has eight Skills. Similarly to Attributes, you prioritize these three categories. Unlike Attributes, Skills don't begin with any dots. You have eleven dots to spend on your primary Skills, seven dots for secondary Skills, and four dots for tertiary Skills.

Skills are a mixture of Azothic memory and the Promethean's early experiences. Memories from the Promethean's components chip in as well. Don't feel constrained by why you were created — no Promethean turns out exactly the way her demiurge hopes. The awkward amazon might not be as interested in fighting as her demiurge hoped, so she has a high rating in Socialize rather than Weaponry. The alchemist might favor Social Skills like Persuasion and Subterfuge, using his charisma to draw suspicion away from the grisly experiments he carries out.

Adding dots to a Skill works just like Attributes, but the lower end of the scale is different; 0 represents a lack of training rather than a physical or mental deficiency. Whereas an Attribute of 1 represents capability, a Skill of 1 represents novice training in that field. Two through five dots represent the same things as Attributes. Someone with two dots in a Skill is average for someone trained in that skill, and someone with five dots is an expert.

Step Four: Skill Specialties

Skill dots represent general competency in a particular field or study. A Specialty, however, suggests the kind of dedication it takes to master a certain aspect of the field in question. A character with high Athletics who primarily lifts heavy things might have an Athletics (Lifting) Specialty, or the alchemist we talked about in Step One might have an Occult (Alchemy) Specialty, or even a Science (Chemistry) Specialty, depending on how you want to define his research.

Choose three Skills you have at least a single dot in and add a Specialty for each of them, in order to signify the area of experience you want your character to display. Write the Specialty next to the Skill. When the Specialty in question applies to a Skill check for a given situation, add a single die to your pool.

One skill can have multiple Specialties, but not the same Specialty multiple times. For example, the amazon could have Athletics (Lifting) and Athletics (Sprinting), but not a second Athletics (Lifting). Most of time a Specialty only applies to the Skill to which it is attached, but some Merits alter this rule.

Step Five: Add Promethean Traits

Lineage

A Promethean's Lineage is her connection to the alchemical process that created her. Six Lineages are known to exist, each corresponding to the brand of pseudoscience her creator used and the humour that her Azoth carries. In addition, players may make characters belonging to the wild-card Extempore "Lineage." Lineage determines how your character is affected by Disquiet and Torment, as well as your Bestowment options (see p. 108). Once chosen, it cannot be changed.

Prometheans of the same Lineage tend to share a particular mindset, having been created the same way, given the same Bestowments, and suffering the same kind of Disquiet and Torment. That said, a Lineage isn't a straightjacket. Emotionless Galateids and lazy Tammuz exist. Look at the descriptions in Chapter One for information on how each Lineage is created, what they tend to be like, and what happens when Azoth overwhelms them. Look for interesting exceptions to and expressions of the norm for the Lineage.

Refinement

A Promethean's first Refinement likely ties into what she learned in her early life. This is not only a philosophical viewpoint on the Pilgrimage, but also a literal process the Azoth goes through, growing closer to humanity with every step. Refinements are philosophical and practical approaches to the Pilgrimage; to progress in a Refinement, a Promethean has to consider the aspect of humanity in question and act in accord with it.

Refinements each have three Roles. Roles are identities that a Promethean can immerse themselves in to further understand the meaning behind the Refinement's ideology. When selecting a Refinement, choose the Role your character is studying when the chronicle begins. A Refinement can be completed by fulfilling a single Role, though completing additional Roles can advance the character further on her Pilgrimage. Staying in one Role too long after mastering it is risky (see p. 179).

Refinements come in basic and complex varieties. A starting Promethean must choose a basic Refinement and may progress to the others through the course of her Pilgrimage. Refinements determine which Transmutations a character can access.

Elpis and Torment

Choose an Elpis and a Torment for your character.

Elpis is what makes your character want to finish the pilgrimage, a trait mortals express that she covets: an attitude, *something* that is undeniably, fundamentally, human. When people act in accordance with it, it reminds her what all this is for. When she successfully expresses it, it's a catharsis that nothing can match.

Torment is what keeps the Promethean distanced from humanity. It is not just some trait in herself that she dislikes, but

something fundamental to her that runs counter to her Elpis and must be fought against to progress on her Pilgrimage. Giving in to this might be a satisfying experience, but in the long-term it's detrimental to the Great Work.

You can pick from the list of archetypes on p. 106, but you don't have to. Feel free to make up a bizarre or evocative Elpis and/or Torment to take your character in interesting and unexpected directions.

Bestowment

A Bestowment is a supernatural ability that each Promethean inherits from her Lineage. While all Prometheans have a Bestowment, it's not a gift of Azoth; it's merely a result of the alchemy that allows her body to be animated. For example, a Frankenstein is hardier than your average corpse, and thus it can acquire the Unnatural Strength Bestowment. She's not using her internal alchemy to make her muscles larger or denser. They already *are* larger or denser, because she's a Frankenstein.

Each Promethean has two possible Bestowments based on her lineage. The player is encouraged to come up with an explanation for why her character has the chosen Bestowment.

Check the list of Bestowments on p.106 and choose one from your Lineage.

Azoth

Azoth is what Prometheans have instead of a soul — an ember of the Divine Fire that animates them. As a trait, Azoth represents the strength of that Divine Fire: not only how powerful the internal alchemy of a Promethean's Transmutations is, but also the strength of the force that brings about Disquiet, Torment, Wastelands, and the dreaded Firestorm. Azoth also determines how much Pyros the character can hold within at once. Pyros acts as fuel for both alchemical powers and the Promethean itself.

Azoth starts at 1. Maximum Pyros is determined by the Azoth rating (see p. 168). A Promethean character starts with half her maximum Pyros, rounded up.

Transmutations

Transmutations are quirks of alchemy and humours that allow the Created to transform her body, using the metaphysical fuel within to enact these changes. They're a combination of education and instinct — the Azothic memory gives her the knowledge to access these powers, and, through the Alembics of Refinement, the various methods these powers use are unlocked.

Start with two Alembics, one for each of the Transmutations granted by your chosen Refinement.

Pilgrimage

The Pilgrimage trait is representative of how close or far a Promethean is to humanity and thus how far she has to go before she's ready to turn lead into gold. Pilgrimage begins with one dot and is raised by spending Vitriol Experiences (see p.105). To determine personal and superlative milestones, players answer five questions about their characters:

- What sort of human do you want to be?
- How have humans taught you to fear and hate?
- How did you split with your creator?
- What keeps you on the Pilgrimage?
- What would you give up to become human?

The player and Storyteller then work together to extrapolate what these answers reveal and what milestones might be tied to them. The Storyteller can keep these secret or share them with the player, but either way the character doesn't know what they are. For more information on milestones, see p. 183.

Step Six: Merits

Choose ten dots worth of Merits. Five dots can be spent to raise starting Azoth to 2, and all ten can be spent to raise it to 3. Merits can be found beginning on p. 111.

Step Seven: Advantages

Willpower

Willpower is your character's ability to push yourself forward and go the extra mile when you might otherwise fail, or when you absolutely *cannot* fail. A Promethean's Willpower rating is equal to her Resolve + Composure.

Combat Traits

A Promethean's Defense rating is (the lower of Wits or Dexterity) + Athletics. Her Size is 5, unless the player takes a Merit that changes that. Her Health is equal to her Size + Stamina. Her Speed is Species Factor (5 for adult humans) + Strength + Dexterity.

Aspirations

By now, you should have a good idea of what your character is like. Give her three Aspirations; things she wants to do. One Aspiration should be a long-term goal, like "Make a friend that's safe from Disquiet" or "Find my creator and apologize." The other two should be short-term goals, like "Find and destroy a Pandoran nest" or "Ask out the guy at the bookstore."

For every Aspiration you complete, you get a Beat (see p. 105), so expect to accomplish your Aspirations often. You'll have to come up with new ones to replace any you accomplish.

CHARACTER CREATION QUICK REFERENCE

Step One: Concept

Create a concept.

Step Two: Attributes

Prioritize Physical/Mental/Social categories: Distribute 5 dots in your primary Attributes, 4 dots in your secondary Attributes, and 3 dots in your tertiary Attributes.

Step Three: Skills

Prioritize the Physical/Mental/Social categories, same as with Attributes. Distribute 11 dots in your primary Skills, 7 dots in your secondary Skills, and 4 dots in your tertiary Skills.

Step Four: Skill Specialties

Choose three Skill Specialties.

Step Five: Promethean Traits

Choose Lineage, Refinement, Elpis, Torment, Bestowment, and one Alembic from each of the Refinement's Transmutations.

Step Six: Merits

Spend ten dots of Merits. Five dots can be spent to increase starting Azoth to 2. All ten can be spent to increase starting Azoth to 3.

Step Seven: Advantages

Willpower: Resolve + Composure
Pilgrimage: 1
Size: 5
Health: Size + Stamina
Speed: Strength + Dexterity + 5
Defense: (lower of Dexterity or Wits) + Athletics
Initiative: Dexterity + Composure
Azoth: 1, unless increased with Merit dots
Pyros: Starting Pyros is half their maximum Pyros, rounded up. Maximum Pyros is determined by the chart on p. 169.
Pilgrimage and Milestones: Answer the five questions determining instinctive milestones.
Aspirations: Come up with three Aspirations for your character.

Promethean Template

Lineage

Choose the Lineage from which your Promethean descends.

Frankenstein: Created from lightning and parts from multiple bodies, the meaning of their life is testing limits and struggling against them. Bitter, lonely, gifted.

Galateid: One or more beautiful corpses brought to life by desire, that now only exists to love. Beautiful, courageous, reckless.

Osiran: Aloof scholars that claim divine lineage and are obsessed with knowledge, especially secrets. Regal, thoughtful, morbid.

Tammuz: Brought to life by the power of words, Tammuz exist to labor endlessly. Meticulous, slow, stubborn.

Ulgan: Humans torn apart and reassembled by spirits, likely more comfortable with them than they are with humans. Spiritual, ritualistic, knowledgeable.

Unfleshed: Artificial humans, from clay men to robots; they weren't meant to be brought to life, but were anyway. Mechanical, literal, subservient, artificial.

Extempore: Accidents, created with a shaky connection to the Divine Fire. Unique, lonely, tragic, chosen.

Refinement

Choose one of the five Basic Refinements.

Aurum: Refinement of Gold, the Mimics. They're waiting for the day the face in the mirror is the same one as the face in the crowd.

Cuprum: Refinement of Copper, the Pariahs. Misery loves company; too many cooks spoil the broth. What great works could be done alone?

Ferrum: Refinement of Iron, the Titans. Purification above all else. They make their lives a crucible, their weaknesses slag.

Plumbum: Refinement of Lead, the Originists. Reverse-engineering themselves, they discover their own inhumanity and learn what to shed.

Stannum: Refinement of Tin, the Furies. At the center of madness, they find clarity. They let loose the storm to find the eye.

Bestowment

Choose a Bestowment tied to your character's Lineage from the list on p. 106.

Transmutations

Choose one Alembic from each of the Transmutations granted by the character's Refinement.Experience Costs

- Attribute: 4 Experiences per dot
- Merit: 1 Experience per dot
- Skill Specialty: 1 Experience
- Skill: 2 Experiences per dot

Vitriol Experience Costs

- Azoth: 4 Vitriol Experiences per dot
- Pilgrimage: 3 Vitriol Experiences per dot
- Calcify an Alembic: 2 Vitriol Experiences
- Create an Athanor: 1 Vitriol Experience

Example of Character Creation

Ava wants to start a **Promethean** chronicle and has asked her friend Milly to join. Her game is going to take place in the various boroughs of New York, where the throng will attempt to both complete their Pilgrimage and foil a recurring villain in the form of an alchemist cult. Milly gets a copy of the **Promethean** character sheet and starts rereading the character creation section of the rulebook.

Step One: Character Concept

Milly decides to create someone strong and reliable who can take charge and be the throng's leader. She wants to play someone that's willing to step in the way of danger, and survive, but doesn't necessarily enjoy combat for its own sake. She enjoys robots and stories about the point at which artificial intelligence can be said to be truly sapient, so she makes a note to look at the Unfleshed Lineage. Her character's demiurge named her Project Epsilon, but he'll be vanishing sometime during her backstory; by the time the chronicle starts, she prefers to go by Seeda. Her concept is "Protective Leader."

Step Two: Select Attributes

Since she's playing a character that's supposed to be able to defend others, Milly decides that Seeda's Physical Attributes should be primary. She doesn't picture her doing well in social situations, so Mental Attributes become secondary and Social Attributes become tertiary. She sets every Attribute to 1. She now has 5 dots to spend on her Physical Attributes, 4 dots to spend on her Mental Attributes, and 3 dots to spend on her Social Attributes.

Imagining Seeda in action, Milly thinks she should be able to take a lot of damage without trouble and be fairly strong, but not all that fast. She puts 2 dots into her Strength and 3 dots into her Stamina, but nothing into Dexterity. She has Strength 3, Dexterity 1, and Stamina 4.

While she's no smarter than average, Seeda isn't an idiot. Milly puts one dot each into Intelligence and Wits, then puts her remaining two dots into Resolve, since she wants Seeda to be strong-willed. She has Intelligence 2, Wits 2, and Resolve 3.

Milly hadn't put much more thought into Social Attributes past "she's not good at social situations," so this takes some time to figure out. Eventually, she decides that while she is an intimidating figure, Seeda is also blunt, straightforward, and easy to shake up. She particularly likes the idea of a serious, powerful figure getting embarrassed easily. She puts all three dots into Presence and leaves Manipulation and Composure alone. Seeda's Presence is 4, her Manipulation is 1, and her Composure is 1.

Step Three: Select Skills

Milly figures that Seeda is probably programmed with lots of physical talents and not much social ability, so Physical Skills are her primary, Mental Skills are her secondary, and Social Skills are her tertiary.

Out of the 11 dots available, Milly allocates three dots to Athletics since a high Athletics Skill for Seeda is a no-brainer. Unable to decide if Seeda's a hand-to-hand fighter or uses weapons, she splits the difference and gives her Brawl 4 and Weaponry 3. The final dot goes to Drive. Seeda therefore has Athletics 3, Brawl 4, Drive 1, and Weaponry 3 for her Physical Skills.

Milly has seven dots to split up for Seeda's Mental Skills. She figures that since Seeda effectively has software for a brain, she should have a good score in Academics and accordingly puts three dots there. She gives Seeda two dots in Science to represent the circumstances of her creation, and puts the other two dots into Computer.

Now Milly has to consider the four dots for her Social Skills. As she decided while allocating her Attribute dots, Milly wants Seeda to be a naturally frightening figure, so she puts three dots into Intimidation, and the remaining dot into Persuasion.

As she selects her Skills, Seeda comes into focus. She was created to be a bodyguard for a wealthy, eccentric electronics tycoon, who was her demiurge. Disquiet compelled him to work her harder and harder until her systems began to fail (a bout of Torment), at which point he was assassinated. Seeda blames herself for it.

Step Four: Select Skill Specialties

Thinking about her skills, Milly chooses Athletics (Carrying) as her character's first Specialty, deciding a bodyguard should be able to move people by force when needed. Her next Specialties are techniques Seeda chose to develop herself: Brawl (Disable) and Persuasion (Negotiation). Based on the chosen Specialties, Milly decides that Seeda doesn't like hurting people, and tries to end confrontations safely.

Step Five: Add Promethean Traits

Milly's already decided that Seeda's Lineage is Unfleshed, so she adds that to her character sheet. She imagined Seeda as a lifelike android, so Soul Is In The Software wouldn't fit as written. Thinking about it, though, she imagines Seeda as a modular robot that can detach and remotely control her arms, legs, etc.; she chooses Soul is in the Software after all. Remembering she wanted to play a leader figure, she chooses Aurum as her Refinement and Leader as her first Role.

Milly decides blending in would make sense for a shadowy protector and chooses Anonymity as Seeda's Deception Alembic. From Mesmerism, Milly selects Lure. Seeda would think this makes it easier to keep whoever she's protecting under control, while secretly she enjoys the feeling of someone acting nicely towards her, however artificial it may be.

Step Six: Select Merits

Milly has ten dots of Merits to give Seeda. She chooses Fleet of Foot for three dots, Sleepless for two dots, Weatherproof for one dot, and Resources for four dots. These represent the way she was built, as a machine that is nearly indestructible, and the sizable amount of money she was able to acquire from her demiurge before his death.

Step Seven: Determine Advantages

Milly writes down 5 for Seeda's Size. With Stamina 4, that means her Health is 9. Seeda has Dexterity 1, Wits 2, and Athletics 3. Since Dexterity is lower, that gets added to her Athletics for a Defense of 5. Her Resolve is 3 and her Composure is 1, so she has 4 Willpower. Her Strength is 3 and her Dexterity is 1, so after adding those together plus 5, then adding the 3 she got from the Fleet of Foot Merit, Milly writes down 12 for her Speed. With Dexterity 1 and Composure 1, her Initiative Modifier is 2.

Milly notes Seeda's starting Azoth at 1. Since her maximum Pyros is 10, she divides that by two to come up with a starting Pyros trait of 5.

All that's left are Elpis, Torment, and Aspirations. Milly decides that Seeda's Elpis is Gratitude, because she doesn't understand emotions but can recognize that she has improved someone's life after protecting them. She hopes that one day she can fully understand the concept of Gratitude and internalize it. Her Torment is Methodical. Seeda lives for plans. Everything has to be done in exactly the right way, even when improvising is the only way something will work. As a robot with AI, she has very strict programming that requires things be done in the correct order, and she has yet to figure out how to thwart that compulsion.

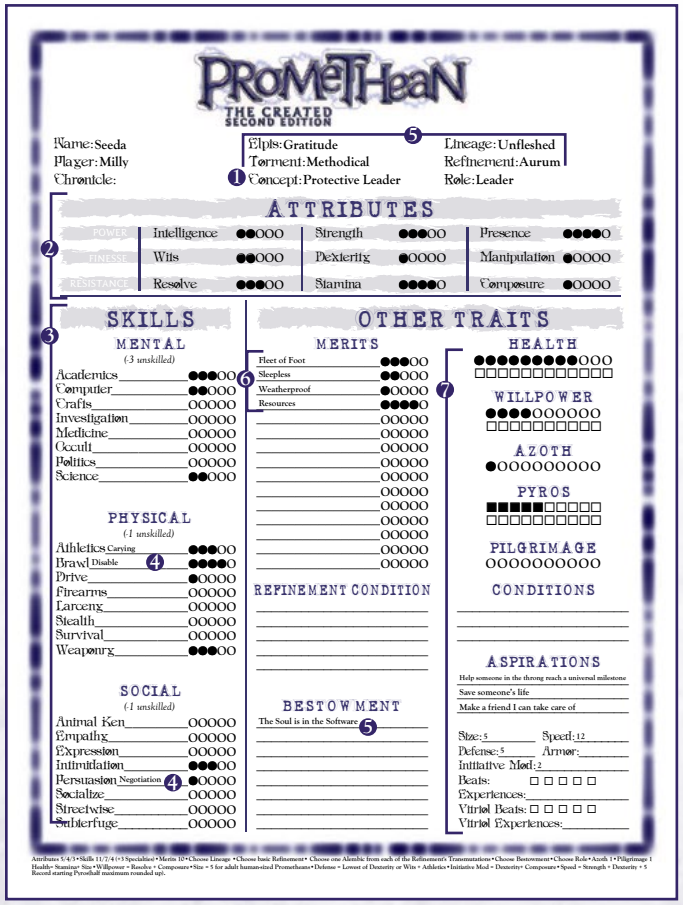
Milly chooses "Help someone in the throng reach a universal milestone" as a long-term Aspiration. For short-term ones, she chooses "Save someone's life" and "Make a friend I can take care of," to represent the maternal side of Seeda that Milly wants to develop throughout the game.

Step Eight: The Birth

Having thought out her character while she was creating it, Milly is satisfied with Seeda and shows Ava the character sheet. After a discussion on how the Aspirations should come up in play, Ava turns to p. 101 of the rulebook and asks the five questions that determine Pilgrimage breaking points. Having read that section herself, Milly answers immediately.

- *What sort of human do you want to be?* "Someone that can protect anyone."
- *How have humans taught you to fear and hate?* "They reject me, no matter what I do."
- *How did you split with your creator?* "I failed him, and he died."
- *What keeps you on the Pilgrimage?* "My friends and my guilt."
- *What would you give up to become human?* "The money Dr. Hikari left me."

After some discussion about Milly's answers, Ava checks the character sheet against what Brandon and Gabe, the other players, made. Once Ava approves it, she'll sit down with Milly to play out Seeda's creation and the events that surround her first steps onto the Pilgrimage. Milly marks the first Refinement and role on her Pilgrimage Sheet and prepares for the chronicle's first session.


PROMETHEAN
THE CREATED
SECOND EDITION

Name: Seeda
Player: Milly
Chronicle:

Elpis: Gratitude
Torment: Methodical
1 Concept: Protective Leader

5 Lineage: Unfleshed
Refinement: Aurum
Role: Leader

ATTRIBUTES

POWER	Intelligence ●●○○○	Strength ●●●○○	Presence ●●●●○
FINESSE	Wits ●●○○○	Dexterity ●○○○○	Manipulation ●○○○○
RESISTANCE	Resolve ●●●○○	Stamina ●●●●○	Composure ●○○○○

SKILLS

MENTAL (-3 unskilled)
Academics ●●●○○
Computer ●●○○○
Crafts ○○○○○
Investigation ○○○○○
Medicine ○○○○○
Occult ○○○○○
Politics ○○○○○
Science ●●○○○

PHYSICAL (-1 unskilled)
Athletics Carving ●●●○○
Brawl Disable 4 ●●●●○
Drive ●○○○○
Firearms ○○○○○
Larceny ○○○○○
Stealth ○○○○○
Survival ○○○○○
Weaponry ●●●○○

SOCIAL (-1 unskilled)
Animal Ken ○○○○○
Empathy ○○○○○
Expression ○○○○○
Intimidation ●●●○○
Persuasion Negotiation 4 ●○○○○
Socialize ○○○○○
Streetwise ○○○○○
Subterfuge ○○○○○

OTHER TRAITS

MERITS
Fleet of Foot ●●●○○
6 Sleepless ●●○○○
Weatherproof ●○○○○
Resources ●●●●○

REFINEMENT CONDITION

BESTOWMENT
The Soul is in the Software 5

7 HEALTH
●●●●●●●●●○○○
□□□□□□□□□□□□

WILLPOWER
●●●●○○○○○○
□□□□□□□□□□

AZOTH
●○○○○○○○○○

PYROS
■■■■■□□□□□
□□□□□□□□□□

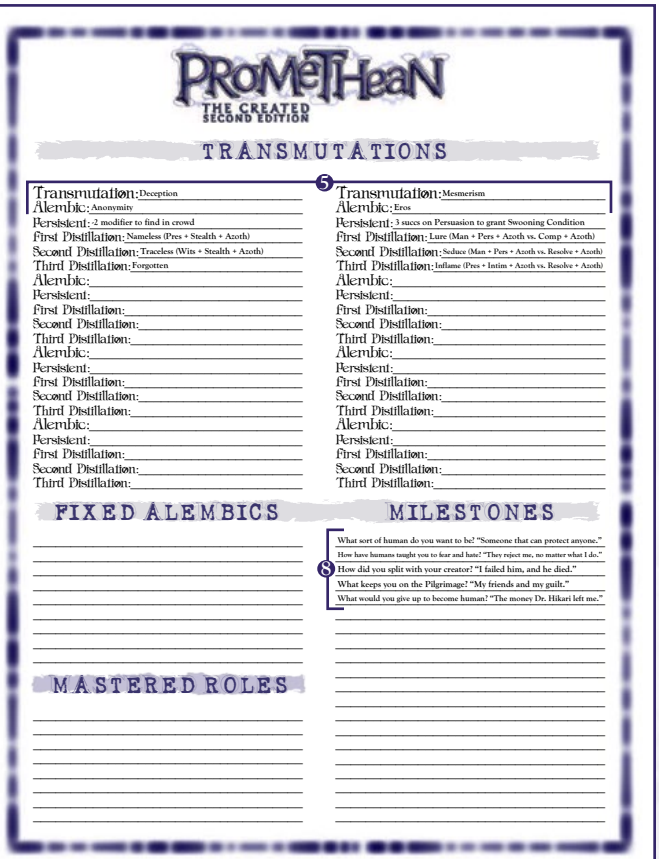
PILGRIMAGE
○○○○○○○○○○

CONDITIONS

ASPIRATIONS
Help someone in the throng reach a universal milestone
Save someone's life
Make a friend I can take care of

Size: 5 Speed: 12
Defense: 5 Armor:
Initiative Mod: 2
Beats: □□□□□
Experiences:
Vitriol Beats: □□□□□
Vitriol Experiences:

Attributes 5/4/3 • Skills 11/7/4 (+3 Specialties) • Merits 10 • Choose Lineage • Choose basic Refinement • Choose one Alembic from each of the Refinement's Transmutations • Choose Bestowment • Choose Role • Azoth 1 • Pilgrimage 1
Health = Stamina + Size • Willpower = Resolve + Composure • Size = 5 for adult human-sized Prometheans • Defense = Lowest of Dexterity or Wits + Athletics • Initiative Mod = Dexterity + Composure • Speed = Strength + Dexterity + 5
Record starting Pyrosheaft maximum rounded up).


PROMETHEAN
THE CREATED
SECOND EDITION

TRANSMUTATIONS

5
Transmutation: Deception
Alembic: Anonymity
Persistent: -2 modifier to find in crowd
First Distillation: Nameless (Pres + Stealth + Azoth)
Second Distillation: Traceless (Wits + Stealth + Azoth)
Third Distillation: Forgotten
Alembic:
Persistent:
First Distillation:
Second Distillation:
Third Distillation:
Alembic:
Persistent:
First Distillation:
Second Distillation:
Third Distillation:
Alembic:
Persistent:
First Distillation:
Second Distillation:
Third Distillation:

5
Transmutation: Mesmerism
Alembic: Eros
Persistent: 3 succs on Persuasion to grant Swooning Condition
First Distillation: Lure (Man + Pers + Azoth vs. Comp + Azoth)
Second Distillation: Seduce (Man + Pers + Azoth vs. Resolve + Azoth)
Third Distillation: Inflame (Pres + Intim + Azoth vs. Resolve + Azoth)
Alembic:
Persistent:
First Distillation:
Second Distillation:
Third Distillation:
Alembic:
Persistent:
First Distillation:
Second Distillation:
Third Distillation:
Alembic:
Persistent:
First Distillation:
Second Distillation:
Third Distillation:

FIXED ALEMBICS

MILESTONES
8
What sort of human do you want to be? "Someone that can protect anyone."
How have humans taught you to fear and hate? "They reject me, no matter what I do."
How did you split with your creator? "I failed him, and he died."
What keeps you on the Pilgrimage? "My friends and my guilt."
What would you give up to become human? "The money Dr. Hikari left me."

MASTERED ROLES

Advancement

Promethean characters use two resources to track advancement in their chronicle: Beats and Experiences. Beats and Experiences are used to track the character's advancement in the story, while Vitriol Beats and Vitriol Experiences track the character's advancement in the Pilgrimage. They both work the same way: upon accumulating five Beats, those Beats are changed into a single Experience, which can be used to buy additional dots in various traits.

Beats

Characters acquire Beats when they do one of the following:

- Fulfilling an Aspiration. At the end of the game session, take a Beat and choose a new Aspiration.
- Turning any failed roll into a dramatic failure, which grants a Beat. This can only be done once per scene.
- Taking lethal damage in one of the character's three rightmost Health boxes grants a Beat.
- Risking Torment (see p. 171) grants a Beat.
- Playing through the end of a game session gives a Beat.

Storytellers can award Beats for exceptional roleplaying, tactics, or character development. If this involves more than one character, all of them should get a Beat.

Experience Costs

- Attribute: 4 Experiences per dot
- Merit: 1 Experience per dot
- Skill Specialty: 1 Experience
- Skill: 2 Experiences per dot
- Azoth: 5 Experiences per dot*

*Azoth can be purchased with either normal Experiences or Vitriol Experiences. The price is slight lower when using Vitriol Experiences to reflect that these are more precious; if a character uses them to raise Azoth, she's *not* using them to raise Pilgrimage.

Vitriol

Vitriol is a substance created by refined Azoth as it transmutes itself into a purer form. It can be used by a Promethean to guide her metaphysical transformation, and it is crucial to achieving the New Dawn. When it takes a physical form, Vitriol appears as the acid it shares its name with: a bitter, caustic, fuming colorless substance. Only when it's inside a Promethean, though, can it do its supernatural work.

Vitriol is meant to be used only by the Promethean that brought it forth, but another Promethean who performs the grisly practice of lacuna can steal it. Lacuna is an abhorrent practice that, while not necessarily inhuman, goes against the nature of the Pilgrimage. The practice is therefore usually the work of *sublimati* or Centimani.

A single Vitriol Experience is created when a character accumulates five Vitriol Beats. These work the same way as Experiences and Beats, but have different criteria and are spent on different things. While they function under the same system, they are not interchangeable; regular Beats can't be converted into Vitriol Beats and vice versa.

Characters accumulate Vitriol Beats when they do one of the following:

- Getting an exceptional success on a Resist Torment roll (p. 172) grants one Vitriol Beat.
- Completing a minor milestone grants one Vitriol Beat.
- Completing a major milestone grants one Vitriol Experience.
- Completing a superlative milestone gives a Vitriol Experience and raises Pilgrimage by 1.

Vitriol Costs

- Azoth: 4 Vitriol Experiences per dot*
- Pilgrimage: 3 Vitriol Experiences per dot
- Calcify an Alembic: 2 Vitriol Experiences
- Create an Athanor: 1 Vitriol Experience

*Azoth can be purchased with either normal Experiences or Vitriol Experiences. The price is slight lower when using Vitriol Experiences to reflect that these are more precious; if a character uses them to raise Azoth, she's *not* using them to raise Pilgrimage.

Waypoints: Elpis and Torment

Human morality is a difficult concept for Prometheans. Not understanding humanity very well sometimes makes it hard to grasp the idea of right and wrong. For others, it's the fact that between Disquiet, Torment, and the roles they find themselves in during a Refinement, many Prometheans will have to do bad things. Instead of a moral compass, Prometheans navigate through the world guided by the core of their Elpis, the aspect of the human condition she adores most, and their Torment, the emotional and mental failing forced upon the Promethean by her nature. The former gives hope, reminding her of what she strives to become, while the latter is a bitter reminder of how far she has to go.

The first aspect of Elpis and Torment is easy to accomplish, but only grants a single point of Willpower. The other is much more difficult or dangerous but allows the Promethean to fully replenish her Willpower pool.

Elpis

In this context, Elpis refers to the aspect of humanity that is the most appealing to the Promethean, the thing she most desperately wishes she could experience instead of just awkwardly mimicking. Seeing this in action or having a human express this towards you is one

of the few unbridled joys in a Promethean's life. The moment when she can truly express her Elpis towards someone, rather than a crude pantomime of it…the feeling is overwhelmingly cathartic. Elpis is tied deeply to the visions it represents. They are what keeps a Promethean going, what makes her truly believe the Pilgrimage is absolutely worth it, and that it absolutely will happen—that it *must* happen.

When a Promethean witnesses someone expressing her Elpis, especially expressing it towards the Promethean herself, she's filled with hope and reminded what it's all for. She regains a single point of Willpower to represent this. When a Promethean truly feels her Elpis and can express it in a genuine way, rather than the soulless mimicry she might otherwise try, the realization that she's capable of this at last is pure ecstasy, refilling her entire Willpower pool at once.

Torment

The foil to Elpis, Torment is the part a Promethean's personality that distances her from humanity. To those fully invested in the Pilgrimage, this might feel as though it's dragging them down, a trait they must shed. For those less dedicated, embracing one's inhumanity is just another part of life as a Promethean. For either, it's a strangely purgative if not dangerous experience.

Torment is part of the Promethean existence as much as Elpis is, and isn't some sort of invasive force that threatens to tear down her very being. It's just a strange trait they have that further distances them from humanity. If a Promethean's Elpis is "Fury" — expressing hostility towards someone that did nothing to deserve it, her Torment might be "Logical" — she finds it hard to see the world in anything other than cause-and-effect. It's not necessarily a bad thing, but without emotion to balance it, it's not a human trait and makes her Elpis harder to reach.

When a Promethean causes a minor setback by expressing her chosen Torment, she regains one point of Willpower, but also a –1 to her next Resist Torment pool. Falling into familiar bad habits can be comforting, but it's not conducive to the Pilgrimage. Causing a major setback as a result of expressing your Torment recovers all spent Willpower points, but also forces a roll to resist falling into Torment then and there.

Example Elpides and Torments

Following are a number of sample Elpides and their corresponding Torments. This is not an exhaustive list; players are encouraged to come up with their own, but these examples ought to get the creative juices flowing. Each Elpis has a Witness trigger, which is an example of how they might be triggered, and an Act trigger, for how the Promethean might express it. Torments only have Acts. Players should feel free to come up with their own Elpides and Torments.

Elpides

Courage

Courage isn't lack of fear so much as the ability to act *despite* fear. Seeing weak and fragile humans put fear aside to stand up to what terrifies them is inspiring, even to other humans.

Witness: Someone fighting through fear to accomplish something.

Act: The Promethean risking her life, her loved ones, or her Pilgrimage to accomplish something.

Drive

Someone with drive makes the impossible possible. When she has a goal in mind, she never stops for anything short of accomplishing her goals, crushing her enemies, or setting things right. The only thing she can't do is fail.

Witness: Someone continuing onwards when all reason and common sense says she should stop.

Act: Much the same as witnessing — the bar for "impossible" is raised much higher for Prometheans though, and it's encouraged that this be a suitably awesome moment if the player wants to reach for it.

Empathy

More than merely understanding that other people feel, having Empathy as Elpis means one day being able to sympathize — to feel what someone feels, to know what it's like. That's something pretty far off for most Created.

Witness: A doctor consoling a terminal patient. Overhearing two friends talking about something serious. An event that shows these people have a connection.

Act: Not just saying "I feel for you" — that's mimicry, not empathy. To act on her Elpis, the Promethean must understand what the other person is going through, relate it to her own events, and follow through.

Fear

Fear is a natural response to things — not just a human response, but a living response all the same. The Created usually know their limits, but that's not the same as fear.

Witness: Being scared or startled doesn't do the trick. Terror is what really draws forth the fear response — dreadful anticipation.

Act: Everyone gets scared. Prometheans in particular know about dread and anxiety. To truly master fear, a Promethean fear for her life, her Pilgrimage, or the life of another.

Fury

For too many people, anger comes easily, but someone with Hate as her Elpis likely doesn't know what it's like to feel true hatred. Luckily, Disquiet gives plenty of examples to learn from.

Witness: The Promethean sees someone lashing out in anger in a completely unrestrained fashion.

Act: The Promethean feels unrelenting fury at someone or something, whether it is justified or not.

Inspiration

Humans create. They see the natural state of the world and they seek to alter it — for convenience, for utility, or for beauty. Inspiration is seeing or experiencing something and being moved to action.

Witness: The Promethean might act as a muse, leading people to create stories, art, or to make some sort of change in their lives.

Act: The Promethean takes inspiration from her circumstances, from a human being, or from a throngmate and creates something.

Joy

The high point of the human condition, Joy is about making what came before it worthwhile, giving things a reason, and being able to look back on even her darkest hour and say "This was worth it" because in that moment, everything is perfect.

Witness: Find someone having a great day and find out why. This can quickly be spoiled by Disquiet, so it takes a light touch.

Act: Unlike other Elpides, the act for this Elpis means bringing someone else joy, true unadulterated happiness. If a Promethean acting on this Elpis only has ten minutes with someone, she'd better make this the greatest ten minutes of their lives.

Love

A connection deeper than any other, Love is regarded as a remarkable power in nearly every human society for good reason.

Witness: The Promethean has to look at two people that are together, know they love each other, and most importantly, know why — witnessing some act of affection that's not phoned in or obligated.

Act: Building a connection to someone strong enough to be called "love" is almost impossible thanks to Disquiet, but there's nothing that says it has to be *requited* love. The Promethean just has to have someone she cares about above all else, someone she'd die for. Sometimes it comes to that.

Sorrow

Sorrow has no happy ending, or great meaning, or justification. It's something going wrong, and accepting that it's gone wrong. Reflecting on the thing that's put one in such a sorry state, and using it to move forward.

Witness: Not just someone in despair, but someone reflecting on that turmoil and examining what went wrong and why. Since this is usually an internal process, speaking with someone to learn their story is usually a must.

Act: This most easily comes in the aftermath of Torment. For the Promethean, it's about self-awareness, understanding, and moving on. She must know why she's so upset and how to avoid it in the future.

Pain

In some very specific cases, pain is good. It's necessary to sacrifice to achieve something, and sacrifice hurts. A lot of things hurt, but they're for the best. Understanding and accepting that pain isn't always a thing to be avoided is critical to these Prometheans.

Witness: Unfortunately, no small amount of humanity is willing to inflict pain on others, but this is about sacrifice — the party being hurt has to be willing to take that pain for some greater good.

Act: A Promethean must know true agony and know it furthers some cause that matters to her. Leaving a loved one to stave off Disquiet or withstanding torture to protect someone are both examples of fulfilling the Pain Elpis. Torment doesn't count for the purposes of this Elpis, even if she intentionally induces it.

Torments

Alienated

This Promethean feels like the eternal Other. No matter how much she's learned or how close to the New Dawn she may be, she always feels like she doesn't belong with anyone.

Act: The Promethean expresses discomfort at being in a group of people and causes a problem as a result.

Awkward

Even for Prometheans, someone with the Awkward torment is an oddball. She has trouble integrating into any conversation, even among her fellow Created, and her trains of thought often produce strange or off-putting ideas.

Act: Accomplishing some task in a strange or backwards fashion. This does not mean the Awkward Promethean doesn't complete whatever task she may have set out to do, just that she does it in a strange way.

Dejection

What's the point? Nothing you do is good enough. Everything is mediocre at best.

Act: Finding a way to accomplish something that doesn't require your involvement. After all, if you got involved, it would only end in tears.

Logical

The Promethean doesn't understand the unreasonable. She is far from emotionless; she simply doesn't understand anything that isn't rational and logical.

Act: Doing something logically sound that disregards the emotions of others.

Merciless

Prometheans often have trouble with right and wrong. To them, mercy is an alien concept.

Act: When opposed by someone, neutralize them with excessive force. The Promethean doesn't necessarily have to kill or even fight. It could be anything, from punching someone out for spilling a coffee, to screaming at the top of her lungs at someone who is five minutes late to a meeting.

Methodical

Found most often in Prometheans that value plans and structure, everything must be done her way with no deviations.

Act: Insist that everyone involved in a plan follow the directions to the letter, with no room for improvisation or last-minute changes.

Obsession

The dark mirror of Drive, Obsessed Prometheans are focused on one thing, and one thing only. An accomplishment they bring about, an enemy that must be destroyed. They hunt this goal with no regard for anything, even their life.

Act: Do something that puts yourself or your Throng in danger, but furthers the goal you obsess over.

Paranoia

They're all out to get you. Nobody's on your side. When they say you're their friend? That's a lie.

Act: Withholding crucial information, hiding or covering up something that would help the targets of your Paranoid delusions.

Passion

The dark side of emotions like love, Passion is emotion overwhelming everything else. It usually leads to bad decisions.

Act: Take an action that brings you closer to what you're passionate about, even if it's dangerous or doesn't make sense.

Naïve

A Naïve Promethean lacks simple concepts like "personal space" and "subtlety." Despite her best efforts, she finds herself constantly upsetting someone or falling for some trick.

Act: The Promethean's lack of understanding of human society causes a setback for her or the throng.

Bestowments

Waking dead flesh and invigorating it with Divine Fire awakens diverse alchemical changes among the Promethean Lineages. These Bestowments occur as the Promethean rouses to life. Bestowments come in two basic varieties: experiential and divergent. The division is informal and descriptive, as only the most scientific Created recognize the difference.

Experiential Bestowments reinforce one aspect of the Lineage's normal capabilities. This allows the character to enhance those normal abilities, and thus the Promethean grows and learns slightly faster than her peers in this area. In game terms, it allows the character to achieve exceptional successes more easily, which leads to Conditions (p. 305), which leads to Beats.

For this reason, Conditions assigned as result of a Bestowment-provided exceptional success should reflect the Promethean's personal evolution. They don't have to come as result of the action; they can be a reflection of the Promethean's introspection. For example, the Frankenstein Bestowment, Titan's Strength, gives exceptional successes on three successes instead of five when rolling Strength. If the Frankenstein achieves an exceptional success lifting a car off a young mother, he might receive the Guilty Condition as he sees the shock, terror, and disgust in her child's eyes.

Divergent Bestowments allow the character to depart from expectations and adds a whole new ability to the Promethean's body. These Bestowments don't necessarily help the Created along her Pilgrimage, but they may help her survive long enough to learn by giving her unexpected abilities. Where experiential Bestowments help the Promethean focus on her personal advancement, divergent Bestowments help her to adapt to and overcome her environment.

When creating your Promethean, choose one of the two listed Bestowments for her Lineage or work with your Storyteller to create a new one. While each Lineage has two listed Bestowments, others can exist in your chronicles. Use these as a baseline.

Frankenstein Bestowments

The Wretched display Bestowments that amplify their physical strength, drawing upon their genesis in lightning along with their choleric humour.

Titan's Strength

A Frankenstein with this Bestowment flexes her muscles more tighter than they were made to be. Every fiber of her body is optimized for maximum muscular efficiency. When taking any actions with the Strength Attribute, your character achieves exceptional success on three successes instead of five.

Spare Parts

The Frankenstein with this Bestowment has the ability and knowledge necessary to graft foreign tissue into her own and fire it to life with her Pyros. This allows her to replace damaged tissue lost to injury, as well as allowing her to reconfigure her body as she sees fit. She cannot add limbs. Her brain still is only able to handle what she was created with, but she can replace what already exists.

Spare Parts requires relatively fresh body parts. For these purposes, "fresh" means not dead or separated from the source body for more than six hours per dot of the Frankenstein's Azoth. She must complete the installation within that time. She also needs effective tools. She can make due with an automotive workshop or farmhouse shed, but medical tools are ideal. With makeshift tools, the player suffers a –2 penalty to the installation rolls.

Installation requires an extended Intelligence + Medicine roll. Each roll represents one half hour of work. The number of required successes depends on her intended reconfiguration. If a Promethean uses Spare Parts to heal damage, then any amount of bashing damage adds one success to the requirement; every two points of lethal damage adds one; and every point of aggravated damage adds two to the number of required successes. If she is successful, she heals all damage.

If she's attempting to increase an Attribute with an optimized limb, the number of required successes is equal to twice the level of the desired Attribute. Cosmetic or other minor changes require five successes. At the culmination of the surgery, she must spend a point of Pyros to seal in the change and bring the new flesh to life.

Spare Parts does not allow a Promethean to exceed the number of Attribute dots she has; it merely lets her reallocate them. If she wishes to change an Attribute, for example, the dots to raise that score must come from her other Physical Attributes. If she wishes to increase her Strength by 2 dots, she may decrease her Dexterity by 2 dots, or her Stamina and Dexterity both by 1 dot. This Bestowment cannot increase an Attribute beyond the Promethean's maximum Attribute level, as determined by her Azoth (see p. 169).

Galateid Bestowments

The Bestowments of the Muses draw on their sanguine humour and ability to bewitch, fascinate, and seduce human beings.

Unearthly Mein

Galateid appear to be more than human; they seem to be the platonic ideal of humankind. People cannot help but be drawn to them. When creating a Galateid with this Bestowment, choose Presence or Manipulation. When taking any actions with the chosen Attribute, you achieve an exceptional success on three successes instead of five.

Symbiotic Muse

A Galateid with this Bestowment has a guttural, primal connection with human souls. She inspires. She motivates. She sparks activity in anyone who touches her Divine Fire. When taking this Bestowment, choose a direct, intimate method of inspiration: a kiss, a private dance, a poem, a cage match are all common ways to inspire humanity to greatness.



In game terms, the connection must constitute at least an instant action. When your character connects with a human through her method of inspiration, the human is inspired to greatness. When he acts in accordance with that inspiration, he gains +3 to the roll, and your character regains a spent point of Willpower or Pyros (your choice), whether he succeeds or fails.

Osiran Bestowments

Osiran Bestowments are all about their unique relationship with death. These Prometheans exist on a strange line between the flesh and soul, between the physical and the Twilight. Their Bestowments exploit this line and play where mortality ends and begins. It's never about rending the barrier between life and death, but about finding one little exception or forcing one aspect to manifest on the other side.

Revivification

This Bestowment allows your character to cheat death and return from that which would kill her. The energies of the Underworld stain her form permanently, however, as she wrests control and re-ignites her Pyros.

When your character dies, you may activate Revivification. Your character returns to life (see p. 169) and regains Health equal to her Azoth. She receives a Persistent Condition, though, from her voyage to the underworld. Choose or design this Condition with the Storyteller; it should be relevant to the method of her death. In many cases, this takes the form of a physical change, such as a limb that permanently takes on the mummified appearance of her disfigurement.

Corpse Tongue

If your character speaks to a corpse, spend a Pyros and roll Manipulation + Occult. For each success, your character may ask the corpse one yes or no question. The corpse's mouth moves, and it coughs up dust, blood, and bile sufficient to croak the responses. If its jaw is not physically able to respond, he'll nod or jerk in a telling manner. The Storyteller must answer the questions to the best of his ability; if the corpse could not answer, the question is not wasted and no response is given. This ability only works once on a given corpse, whether successful or not.

Tammuz Bestowments

Tammuz Bestowments rely on the power of words animating the inanimate. When creating a Tammuz Bestowment, consider how his body is made sacrosanct by the power of language. It cannot be defied or rejected, thanks to the animating word.

Heart of Clay

With this Bestowment, your character stands immutable, stalwart, and uncompromising. When making a roll with Composure, Resolve, or Stamina, your character achieves exceptional success on three successes instead of five. Note that this Bestowment does not apply to Surprise rolls as it reflects your character being sturdy and unshakable, not prescient. It does apply to Perception rolls, however.

Inscription

All Tammuz bear an inscription, a word, a symbol — some form of language that describes the Promethean's function and her creator's intent. Some Tammuz can draw upon that mark enabling feats of prowess and aptitude that other Created can only imagine.

At character creation, the player determines what the mark says or means and chooses three Skills that resonate with the mark. When the character uses one of these Skills, the player can spend a point of Pyros to activate the Inscription Bestowment. It flares with Divine Fire and adds three dice to the character's dice pool.

The character can use this Bestowment once per chapter per Skill, so if the player chooses Brawl, Academics, and Animal Ken for her Tammuz' Inscription Skills, she can add the bonus one to one Brawl roll, one Academics roll, and one Animal Ken roll per chapter.

At the Storyteller's discretion, the player might be allowed to change the Skills upon achieving a major or superlative milestone.

Ulgan Bestowments

Whereas Osirans tease at the line between the living and the dead, Ulgan revel in the macabre. They're death warmed over and maintain strong ties to the Underworld. Ghosts, the hungry dead, shades: these are all kin to the Ulgan.

When creating Ulgan Bestowments, look to how your Ulgan rips aside the barriers set upon the living. Consider how your Ulgan benefits from not truly belonging in this world.

Twilight Fluidity

With this Bestowment, your character acts without distraction or impairment in the same way that a ghost flows unnoticed through Twilight. At character creation, choose a Finesse Attribute (Dexterity, Manipulation, or Wits). When taking an action with that Attribute, your character achieves exceptional success on three successes instead of five.

Ephemeral Flesh

Your character's flesh is attuned with the Twilight. As result, she may see, hear, and interact with the spiritual phenomenon across the shroud. To activate Ephemeral Flesh, spend a point of Pyros. Your character may perceive and interact with ghosts and spirits in Twilight as if they were material.

If the entity hides, your character may still need to look for him. Items she holds or wears cannot interact with entities in the Twilight. While she can touch or strike an entity in Twilight with her bare hand, she could not shoot the same ghost or crack him across the face with a baseball bat.

Unfleshed Bestowments

The Unfleshed are imitations of life made into actual life. Their Bestowments emphasize their artificiality.

Heart of Steel

An Unfleshed with this Bestowment did not fully awaken when the Divine Fire ignited within her metal chassis. She remains cold and callous, perceiving anyone else as alien. Any time she receives a Condition from a Social action, be it from her own dramatic failures, exceptional successes, or extended actions against her, the player can choose the Condition. Often, this means turning an otherwise negative circumstance into a positive. For example, if a human berates your character for being a monster, attempting to give her a Shamed Condition, your character may perceive that derision in a completely different light, giving her an Inspired Condition.

The Soul is in the Software

Your character's body is made up of malleable, modular bits of technology. Maybe clockwork, or nanobots, or computerized serpents form a greater whole. No matter the content, your character can instill her soul, her fire, into a fraction of her body and send it off separately.

Spend a Pyros to activate Soul is in the Software. Mark off any number of Health from your character's track as well, as if it were aggravated damage. The Size of the new object is equal to the number of Health points spent. The smaller portion, which now carries your character's mind and sentience, can operate independently with Attributes one dot lower than the Promethean's. It has as many Health levels as were marked in its creation. It must be smaller than the core body and may feature different forms of mobility such as flight, a nanobot swarm, or insect-like crawling. These alternative forms of motion are limited to the Created's normal Speed.

If the smaller body is inconsistent, as in the case of swarms, it only takes one point of damage from any successful attack that would harm an area. Large-scale effects, such as bonfires, cause damage as normal. The smaller form keeps the Created's Transmutations and other abilities.

While the smaller form is active and detatched, the core body is not truly sentient; it has only an animalistic intelligence. Consider all its Attributes one dot lower except for its Intelligence, which is zero. It fulfills its basic needs and defends itself if attacked. It lacks any spark of identity, intelligence, or wit. Similarly, it cannot activate Transmutations and has no Pyros.

If the bodies merge again, the Health levels return to the core body. If the core body dies, the Created can reform from the smaller body as if she were healing five aggravated damage. After that time, her body returns completely to its original shape.

Extempore Bestowments

Extempore Prometheans are not a proper Lineage, but instead more of a "catch-all" for other strange Created. For this reason, their Bestowments are individual and unique as they are. To create Extempore Bestowments, look to the defining features of your particular character and emphasize them with a mechanical and dramatic effect. Take the examples for the various Lineages as a jumping off point. You can choose to take one of the Bestowments listed for the other Lineages if you wish, but if you do, try and give it a twist to reflect your unique character.

Nuada's Bestowment: The Void

Nuada (introduced on p.39) has no heart, just an endless, hungry void. The player wants Nuada's Bestowment to reflect this emptiness, to allow Nuada to soak up energy thrown at him. Any time an attack or an action is aimed at Nuada, including Social actions meant to intimidate or persuade him, the void "eats" one success. If this causes the action to fail, Nuada's player can spend a point of Willpower and turn the failure into a dramatic failure.

Anthony's Bestowment: Big Brother

Anthony (introduced on p. 40) rose up in response to a little boy's desire for a strong, protective big brother. Anthony's player decides that the Frankenstein Bestowment Titan's Strength would suit Anthony, but asks the Storyteller if it can have a stronger effect when Anthony is protecting someone. The Storyteller agrees: Anthony's Bestowment allows the player to achieve an exceptional success on three successes instead of five when rolling a Power Attribute in defense of a human being (Presence to scare away attackers, for example).

Merits

The following Merits help to flesh out your character and provide diverse benefits. The dot rating reflects the number of points the Merit takes during step seven of character creation, or the number of Experiences after play begins. Some Merits come in multiple levels; your character can progress through them over time, with each level offering greater advantages. Some Merits, called Style Merits, offer different effects at each level. Your character has access to the effect at her current dot level as well as all previous dot levels.

If a Merit lists a prerequisite, your character must possess the noted traits. Traits offered temporarily from special abilities, such as Transmutations, do not count toward Merit prerequisites. Some Merits list "Promethean" as a prerequisite. Human characters cannot take these Merits.

Sanctity of Merits

While Merits represent things within the game and your character, they're really an out-of-character resource, a function of the character creation and advancement mechanics. These Merits often represent things that could theoretically be lost or taken away over the course of a story. While Merits may represent temporary facets of your character, however, Merit points continue to exist. At the end of any chapter where your character has lost some Merits, you can replace them with another Merit of equal value.

When replacing a Merit, consider what makes sense in the story. Pursue the new Merit during the course of the chapter if possible, making the new tie-in something less superficial than a dot or two on a sheet. With Storyteller permission, you may "cash in" a Merit voluntarily and replace it with Experiences. If a Merit has run its course and no longer makes sense for your character, you may use those points elsewhere.

Some Merits cannot be cashed in or replaced except under extreme circumstances. For example, Double-Jointed is not likely to just go away. That said, the Created tend toward extreme circumstances, so it's not out of the question for some characters. Prometheans are sometimes uniquely capable of taking otherwise difficult-to-justify Merits as well, such as Giant.

Acid Stomach (•)

Prerequisite: Promethean

Effect: A Promethean naturally has the ability to digest any organic matter she can fit down her throat. This Merit gives her the ability to digest any sort of *inorganic* matter she swallows, no matter what it is; if she can fit it down her throat, it counts as food.

Drawback: This does not give your character any special ability to chew or enlarge her mouth. At Storyteller discretion, particularly harsh objects may cause a small amount of damage to the Promethean while chewing and swallowing.

Allies (• to •••••)

Effect: Allies help your character. They might be friends, employees, associates, or people your character has blackmailed. Each instance of this Merit represents one type of ally. This could be in an organization, a society, a clique, or an individual. Examples include the police, a secret society, crime, unions, local politics, and the academic community. Each purchase has its own rating. Your character might have Allies (Masons) ••, Allies (Carter Crime Family) •••, Allies (Police) ••••, and Allies (Catholic Church) •.

Each dot represents a layer of influence in the group. One dot would constitute small favors and passing influence. Three could offer considerable influence, such as the overlooking of a misdemeanor charge by the police. Five dots stretches the limits of the organization's influence as its leaders put their own influence on the line for the character. This could include things such as massive insider training or fouling up a felony investigation. No matter the request, it has to be something that organization could accomplish.

The Storyteller assigns a rating between one and five to any favor asked. A character can ask for favors up to her combined Allies rating without penalty in one chapter. If she has three dots of Police Allies and two dots of Criminal Allies, for example, she can access five dots' worth of favors per chapter. If she extends her influence beyond that, her player must roll Manipulation + Persuasion + Allies, with a penalty equal to the favor's rating. If the roll is successful, the group does as requested. Whether the roll succeeds or fails, the character loses a dot of Allies per the Sanctity of Merits rule (see p. 111). On a

dramatic failure, the organization resents her and seeks retribution. On an exceptional success, she doesn't lose the dot.

Alternate Identity (•, ••, or •••)

Effect: Your character has established an alternate identity. The level of this Merit determines the amount of scrutiny it can withstand. At one dot, the identity is superficial and unofficial. For example, your character uses an alias with a simple costume and adopts an accent. She hasn't established the necessary paperwork to even approach a bureaucratic background check, let alone pass. At two dots, she's supported her identity with paperwork and identification. It's not liable to stand up to extensive research, but it'll turn away private investigators and Internet hobbyists. At three dots, the identity can pass thorough inspection. The identity has been deeply entrenched in relevant databases, with subtle flourishes and details to make it seem real even to trained professionals.

The Merit also reflects time the character has spent honing the persona. At one or two dots, she gains a +1 to all Subterfuge rolls to defend the identity. At three dots, she gains +2.

This Merit can be purchased multiple times, each time representing an additional identity.

Ambidextrous (•••)

Effect: Your character does not suffer the –2 penalty for using his off-hand in combat or to perform other actions.

Anonymity (• to •••••)

Effect: Your character lives off the grid. She may have been crafted of various dead parts or animate machinery, making new identification difficult. The bureau of motor vehicles is unlikely to accept "my mother was a morass of plant matter" when granting a license. This means purchases must be made with cash or falsified credit cards. She avoids any official authoritative influence in her affairs. Any attempts to find her by paper trail suffer a –1 penalty per dot purchased in this Merit.

Drawback: Your character cannot purchase the Fame Merit.

Area of Expertise (•)

Prerequisite: Resolve •• and one Skill Specialty

Effect: Your character is uncommonly specialized in one area. Choose a Specialty to assign to this Merit. This Specialty provides a +2 bonus instead of the usual +1.

Azothic Object (• to •••••)

Prerequisite: Promethean

Effect: When your Promethean burst to life, the flare of Azoth arced outward and fused with an object nearby. This object is attuned to her Azoth. It carries with it a bit of Divine Fire and she has an affinity for it.

Your character always knows in which direction her Azothic Object lies. She doesn't necessarily know where it is, but if she follows this instinctual intimacy with the object, she will eventually find it.

When creating an Azothic Object, the character must first create the object. Use the equipment rules on p. 214 for examples, then use the following chart to determine the object's advantages. Each Merit dot can be spent on one of the following benefits:

Property	Effect
Equipment Bonus	+1 die above normal equipment bonus (limit +5)
Efficient	9-again for one dot, 8-again for two
Fortified	+2 Durability
Battery	Can store 1 Pyros, can access if touching

Your character is the only one who can access these benefits; others are not attuned to the item.

While most of the time Azothic Objects come from a Promethean's initial creation, an Object could result from any sufficiently dramatic Azoth flare.

Drawback: The item is bound to your character's soul. If she loses it, she suffers the Obsession Condition (see p. 311) in regards to finding it again. If it's destroyed, her Azoth burns and she suffers aggravated damage equal to the Merit dots spent.

Benign Festering (• to •••)

Prerequisite: Promethean

Effect: Your character's Azoth is less prone to cause terrible Wastelands than most Created. Subtract her Benign Festering dots from her effective Azoth for determining the size and effects of a Wasteland (see p. 174) and Festering. When calculating Festering, use the *lower* of her effective Azoth or the Wasteland's effective Azoth. This cannot reduce her effective Azoth below a single dot for this purpose.

Brute Force (• to •••••, Style)

Prerequisite: Strength •••, Brawl ••, Size 5+

Effect: Your character embraces the devastating monster within herself and knows how to let it loose on the world around her. A Promethean in Torment gains a bonus die on any roll using the Brute Force Style. Brute Force attacks may only be made with bare hands or with fist-based weapons, such as bladed gloves or fist packs.

Each level of Brute Force unlocks an additional option.

Falling Pillar (•): Your character clenches both hands high above her head, then brings them crushing down, throwing her weight into the strike. Make an all-out attack (see p. 207) to use Falling Pillar. In addition to the normal +2 dice bonus, your character benefits from the 8-again quality on her roll. If the attack causes damage equal to or greater than the opponent's Stamina, he suffers the Knocked Down Tilt (see p. 314).

Crush and Bite (••): Your character clinches her opponent and bites off a chunk of flesh, which bleeds profusely. This maneuver becomes an option as part of a grapple (see p. 206), replacing the normal bite maneuver. Not only does your character cause lethal damage equal to the successes rolled on the grapple, but the wound bleeds out, causing an additional level of lethal damage in the next turn. This effect does not apply to things that don't bleed.

Juggernaut (•••): With this ability, your character rushes her opponent, strikes, and knocks him away. If the character can charge an opponent (moving at least 10 feet to build up momentum), any successful unarmed attack causes the Knocked Down Tilt.

Bone Cracker (••••): With this attack, your character grabs a limb and snaps the bone. To use Bone Cracker, make an all-out

attack (see p. 207). However, targeting a limb negates the normal +2 bonus for an all-out attack. If the attack causes damage equal to or greater than the victim's Stamina, it causes an additional point of lethal damage and imposes the Arm Wrack or Leg Wrack Tilts (see p. 313 and 317, respectively).

Bone Cracker cannot be combined with Falling Pillar.

Colossus (•••••): Your character moves with such immense force that nothing can stop her. When she makes an all-out attack, she gains 1/2 armor for the turn (cumulative with any other armor she wears) and cannot suffer Knockdown or similar Tilts. Additionally, any attempt to grapple her or otherwise move her from her place against her will suffers her Strength as a dice penalty.

Companion (• to •••••)

Prerequisite: Ephemeral Flesh Bestowment

Effect: Your character's ability to interact with Twilight has resulted in a spiritual companion that follows and supports her. This spirit is no guardian angel; the type of spirit that would follow the Created is something disgusting or unsettling.

Create the Companion using the spirit creation rules on p. 224. The Companion is a Rank 1 spirit at one dot of the Companion Merit. Each additional Merit dot can add one Attribute dot and one Numina to the spirit's repertoire.

A Companion is generally a being in the Twilight. Some Companions can manifest into the physical world, though. By spending one of the Merit dots, the spirit can have a physical body. A Companion's physical body will usually look the part of an animal no bigger than a large dog. No matter the form, the Promethean can interact with the Companion. Others cannot unless they have a special ability to interact with spirits.

A Companion spirit has an unhealthy adoration for your character. It works for her. It protects her. It generally obeys, although it might not understand subtlety in times of duress. This could cause complications in your character's life.

Contacts (•)

Effect: Contacts provide your character with information. This Merit can be taken multiple times; each instance represents a sphere or organization with which the character can garner information. For example, a character with three dots of Contacts might have Bloggers, Drug Dealers, and Doctors for connections. Contacts do not provide services, only information. This may be face-to-face, email, by telephone, or even by séance in some strange instances.

Garnering information via Contacts requires a Manipulation + Social Skill roll, depending on the method the character uses. The Storyteller should give a bonus or penalty, dependent on how relevant the information is to that particular Contact, whether accessing the information is dangerous, and if the character has maintained good relations with or done favors for the Contact. These modifiers should range from –3 to +3 in most cases. If successful, the Contact provides the information.

One use of a Contact is to dig dirt on another character. A Contact can find another character's Social Merits and any relevant Conditions.

Danger Sense (••)

Effect: The Created walk a dangerous path. Your character's reflexes are honed to the point where nothing's shocking. You gain a +2 modifier on reflexive Wits + Composure rolls for your character to detect an impending ambush, trap, or other surprise.

Demolisher (• to •••)

Prerequisite: Strength ••• or Intelligence •••

Effect: Your character has an innate sense of the weak points in objects. When damaging an object, she ignores one point of the object's Durability per dot in this Merit.

Direction Sense (•)

Effect: Your character has an innate sense of direction and is always aware of her location in space. She always knows which direction she faces and never suffers penalties to navigate or find her way.

Double Jointed (••)

Prerequisite: Dexterity •••

Effect: Your character might have been a contortionist or spent time practicing yoga. She can dislodge joints when need be and automatically escapes from any mundane bonds without a roll. When grappled, subtract her Dexterity from any rolls to overpower her, as long as she's not taking any aggressive actions.

Driven (• to •••••)

Prerequisite: Promethean

Effect: Every single one of the Created carries a shred of hope that things might someday be different. This hope drives Prometheans forward on their Pilgrimages and urges them toward complete humanity. Your character's Elpis is the warm glow of wisdom that helps her find the right path.

Every game session, you have access to a number of free Conditions equal to your character's Driven dots. These Conditions reflect insights your character has received to help her along her path toward a Milestone. Informed and Inspired are common Driven Conditions, but any appropriate Conditions could apply. Additionally, the Storyteller may call on this Merit to give a Driven Condition if she feels it's fitting, or that it would help refocus your character.

Efficient Conductor (•)

Prerequisite: Promethean

Effect: Your character's Azoth flares bright when exposed to electricity. For every 2 points of damage healed by electroshock therapy (see p. 170), your character heals a third of the same kind. For every 2 Pyros she gains, she gains a third as well. If this additional Pyros exceeds her Azoth in a single scene, she gains the Degaussed Condition (see p. 307).

Eidetic Memory (••)

Effect: Your character recalls events and details with pinpoint accuracy. You do not have to make rolls for your character to remember past experiences. When making Intelligence + Composure (or relevant Skill) rolls to recall minute facts from swaths of information, take a +2 bonus.

Famous Face (• to •••)

Effect: Your character's face used to belong to someone else, someone famous. To those unaware of the theft, she looks every bit the celebrity. To those that do know, she looks either the spitting image of that celebrity, or in the worst-case scenarios — for example, when her disfigurements show — she looks like somebody stole a famous person's face and attached it to herself.

This Merit gives the 8-again quality and one bonus die per dot to any rolls where the face could influence interactions. For example, against those positively affected, this could mean a bonus to Persuasion or Socialize rolls. For those negatively affected, this could mean a bonus to Intimidation rolls.

Drawback: If the character's face belongs to someone known to be dead, the character will draw excessive attention by anyone aware. If the character isn't known to be dead, your character may draw attention from people looking for his whereabouts. It's also worth noting that the face's age might not match up with the last known sightings of the celebrity, which could add a whole other layer of complication.

Fast Reflexes (• to •••)

Prerequisite: Wits ••• or Dexterity •••

Effect: Your character's reflexes impress and astound; she's always fast to react. +1 Initiative per dot in this Merit.

Fleet of Foot (• to •••)

Prerequisite: Athletics ••

Effect: Your character is remarkably quick and runs far faster than her frame suggests. She gains +1 Speed per dot in this Merit.

Giant (•••)

Effect: Your character is massive. She's well over six feet tall and crowds part when she approaches. She's Size 6 and therefore has an additional dot of Health.

Drawback: While being huge offers its advantages, she stands out like a sore thumb. Remove two dice from any attempts to hide or go unnoticed.

Good Brain (• to •••••)

Prerequisite: Promethean

Effect: Your character lucked upon a particularly good brain when she was created. Sometimes it takes over the body briefly in order to accomplish something its former host was once proficient in. For each dot in this Merit, choose a Skill. Your character does not need to possess that Skill. Once per story, you may reroll one failed roll made any of those Skills. In essence, the brain takes over and forces accomplishment where the Promethean herself might have otherwise failed.



Hovel (• to •••••)

Prerequisites: Promethean, Safe Place

Effect: Your character has infused a safe place with a bit of her Azoth, forging it as a Hovel. While inside her Hovel, time passed does not count toward creating or Festering a Wasteland (see p. 174). Additionally, she may "store" a bit of her Azoth within the Hovel, dampening her Divine Fire and muting some of its effects on the world. She stores it in a jar, a sculpture, or anything appropriate to her Lineage. The storage place must contain the Lineage's affinity element. For each dot of Hovel, you may choose to reduce your character's effective Azoth when she leaves the Hovel. This reduces the taint of Disquiet and the Wasteland in her wake.

Drawback: If your character stores her Azoth within her Hovel and it is destroyed, the Azoth is lost. The points return in accordance with the Sanctity of Merits rule.

Interdisciplinary Specialty (•)

Prerequisite: Skill at ••• or higher with a Specialty

Effect: Choose a Specialty that your character possesses when you purchase this Merit. You can apply the +1 from that Specialty on any Skill with at least one dot, provided it's justifiable within the scope of the fiction. For example, a doctor with a Medicine Specialty in Anatomy may be able to use it when targeting a specific body part with Weaponry, but could not with a general strike.

Iron Will (••)

Prerequisite: Resolve ••••

Effect: Your character's resolve is unwavering. When spending Willpower to contest or resist in a Social interaction, you may substitute your character's Resolve for the usual Willpower bonus. If the roll is contested, roll with 8-again.

Language (•)

Effect: Your character is skilled with an additional language beyond her native tongue. Choose a language each time you buy this Merit. Your character can speak, read, and write in that language.

Library (• to •••)

Effect: Your character has access to a plethora of information about a given topic. When purchasing this Merit, choose a Mental Skill for your Library to apply to. On any extended roll involving the Skill in question, add the dots in this Merit.

This Merit can be purchased multiple times to reflect different Skills. Its benefits can be shared among various characters with permission.

Mentor (• to •••••)

Effect: This Merit gives your character a teacher to provide advice and guidance. He acts on your character's behalf, often in the background and sometimes without your character's knowledge. This may be a teacher, a guru, or other figure. While Mentors can be highly competent, they almost always want something in return for their services. The dot rating determines the Mentor's capabilities and to what extent he'll aid your character.

When establishing a Mentor, determine what the Mentor wants from your character. This should be personally important to him and should reflect on the dot rating chosen.

Choose three Skills the Mentor possesses. You can substitute Resources for one of these Skills. Once per session, the character may ask her Mentor for a favor. The favor must involve one of those Skills or be within the scope of his Resources. The Mentor commits to the favor (often asking for a commensurate favor in return). If a roll is required, the Mentor is automatically considered to have successes equal to his dot rating. Alternatively, the player may ask the Storyteller to have the Mentor act on her character's behalf without her character knowing about or initiating the request.

Moth to the Flame (•)

Prerequisites: Stamina •••, Promethean

Effect: Your character's Azoth rouses from fire. Even though it destroys her flesh, it invigorates the Divine Fire within her. For every point of aggravated damage your character suffers from fire, she gains a point of Pyros.

Parkour (• to •••••, Style)

Prerequisites: Dexterity •••, Athletics ••

Your character is a trained and proficient free-runner. Free-running is the art of moving fluidly through urban environments with complex leaps, bounds, running tricks, and vaulting. This is the type of sport popularized in modern action films, where characters are unhindered by fences, walls, construction equipment, cars, or anything else the city puts in the way.

Flow (•): Your character reacts instinctively to any obstacles with leaps, jumps, and scaling techniques. When in a foot chase, subtract your Parkour rating from the successes needed to pursue or evade. Ignore environmental penalties to Athletics rolls that are less than or equal to your Parkour rating.

Cat Leap (••): Your character falls with outstanding grace. Normally, characters take 1 bashing damage for every ten feet fallen. Every success on a Dexterity + Athletics roll reduces the effective height by ten feet. However, if the character would take lethal damage from the fall, the Dexterity + Athletics roll does not reduce the damage. Parkour removes this limitation. Additionally, add your Parkour rating to the threshold of damage that can be removed through this roll. Parkour will not mitigate damage from a terminal velocity fall.

Wall Run (•••): When climbing, your character can run upward for some distance before having to traditionally climb. Without rolling, your character scales 10 feet + five feet per dot of Athletics as an instant action, rather than the normal 10 feet.

Expert Traceur (••••): Parkour has become second nature for your character. By spending a Willpower point, you may designate one Athletics roll to run, jump, or climb as a rote action (reroll all failed dice once). On any turn you use this ability, you may not apply your character's Defense to oncoming attacks.

Freeflow (•••••): Your character's Parkour is now muscle memory. She can move in a zen-like state, without thought. The character must run for at least a full minute in order to establish Freeflow. Once established, your character is capable of taking Athletics actions reflexively once per turn. By spending a point of Willpower on an Athletics roll in a foot chase, gain three successes instead of three dice.

Repute (• to •••)

Prerequisite: Promethean

Effect: The Created walk a lonely road. Stories of the Pilgrimage help her maintain hope. Prometheans tell a story about your character's Pilgrimage, and that story spreads as the Created intersect in their travels.

Decide on at least one story about your character when taking this Merit. Your character receives her dots in Repute in any Social actions with those who may have heard her tale. In addition, once each story you can call on a number of Allies Merit dots equal to her dots in Repute. These Allies depend on the situation at hand and whatever Created are sufficiently near that they might be called upon for aid. They can be used as individual dots or combined for a greater Allies level, as you see fit.

Drawback: Greatness comes at a price. If you're accomplished, people expect something out of you. In any story where your character uses the Allies advantage granted by Repute, another Created will request a favor in kind.

Resources (• to •••••)

Effect: This Merit reflects your character's disposable income. She might live in an upscale condo, but if her income is tied up in the mortgage and child support payments, she might have little money to throw around. Characters are assumed to have basic necessities without Resources.

The dot rating determines the relative amount of disposable funding the character has available, depending on your particular chronicle's setting. The same amount of money means completely different things in a game set in Silicon Valley compared to one set in the Detroit slums. One dot is a little spending money here and there. Two is a comfortable, middle-class wage. Three is a nicer, upper-middle-class life. Four is moderately wealthy. Five is filthy rich.

Every item has an Availability rating. Once per chapter, your character can procure an item at her Resources level or lower without issue. An item one Availability level above her Resources reduces her effective Resources by one dot for a full month, since she has to rapidly liquidate funds. She can procure items two Availability level below her Resources without limit (within reason). For example, a character with Resources •••• can procure as many Availability •• disposable cellphones as she needs.

Residual Memory (• to •••••)

Prerequisite: Promethean

Effect: Your character's component parts carry with them hints of their past lives. Sometimes your character can tap into these residual memories. For each dot in Residual Memory, choose one Skill. This can be a Skill your character has dots in, but it doesn't have to be.

For each dot of Residual Memory, your character gains two "memory dice." These dice can be used at any time, once per game session, to add to any of the Skills you've chosen. They can be divided up as you see fit or used all at once. These dice can counteract but do not negate the penalties for untrained Skills.

Drawback: If you use all the memory dice available in a game session, your character incurs a negative mental Condition. Examples include but are not limited to Guilty and Spooked. This should reflect a prominent part of the body's past trauma seeping through into your character's personality.

Safe Place (• to •••••)

Effect: Safe places are rare among the Created, but highly valuable. Your character has such a place. While she may have enemies that could attack her there, she's prepared and has the upper hand. The dot rating reflects the security of the place. The actual location, the luxury, and the size are represented by equipment. A one-dot Safe Place might be equipped with basic security systems or a booby trap at the windows and door. A five-dot could have a security crew, infrared scanners at every entrance, or trained dogs. Each place could be an apartment, a mansion or a hidey-hole.

Unlike most Merits, multiple characters can contribute dots to a single Safe Place, combining their points into something greater. A Safe Place gives an Initiative bonus equal to the Merit dots. This only applies to a character with dots invested in the Safe Place.

Any efforts to breach the Safe Place suffer a penalty equal to the Merit dots invested. If the character desires, the Safe Place can include traps that cause lethal damage to intruders equal to a maximum of the Merit rating (player's choice as to how much damage a given trap inflicts). The traps may be avoided with a Dexterity + Larceny roll, penalized by the Safe Place dots.

If your character's Safe Place is mobile, such as a yacht, mobile home, or caravan, the Safe Place costs one additional dot. This does not remove the normal limitation of five dots. So, effectively, the best Safe Place your character will ever have is effectively four dots (but costing five), if that location is mobile.

Sleepless (•)

Prerequisite: Promethean

Effect: All Prometheans tire only after extended periods without rest. Yours, however, never needs sleep. She may sleep in order to replenish Pyros around her Lineage's element, but she never truly needs sleep and never suffers fatigue penalties.

Sleight of Hand (••)

Prerequisite: Larceny •••

Effect: Your character can pick locks and pockets without even thinking about it. She can take one Larceny-based instant action reflexively in a given turn. Her Larceny actions also go unnoticed unless someone is specifically trying to catch her.

Small-Framed (••)

Effect: Your character is diminutive. She's not even five feet tall, and it's easy to walk into her without noticing. She's Size 4 and thus has one fewer Health box. She gains +2 to any rolls to hide or go unnoticed. This bonus applies any time being smaller would be an advantage, such as crawling through smaller spaces.

Drawback: In addition to the lower Health, your character might be overlooked or not taken seriously by some people.

Striking Looks (• or ••)

Effect: Your character is stunning, alarming, commanding, repulsing, threatening, charming, or otherwise worthy of attention. Determine how your character looks and how people react to that.

For one dot, your character gets a +1 bonus on any Social rolls that would be influenced by his looks. For two dots, the benefit increases to +2. Depending on the particulars, this might influence Expression, Intimidation, Persuasion, Subterfuge, or other rolls.

Drawback: Attention is a double-edged sword. Any rolls to spot, notice, or remember your character gain the same die bonus. Sometimes your character will draw unwanted attention in social situations. This could cause further complications. As well, a Promethean currently showing her disfigurements cannot benefit from this Merit.

Terrible Disfigurement (•)

Prerequisite: Promethean

Effect: Your character's disfigurements are particularly unsettling. Any time a human witnesses her disfigurements (see p. 171), all his Composure-based dice pools are reduced by two for the scene. This can be used as Hard Leverage in any Social Maneuvering effort (see p. 202).

Trained Observer (• or •••)

Prerequisite: Wits ••• or Composure •••

Effect: Your character has spent years in the field, catching tiny details and digging for secrets. She might not have a better chance of finding things, but she has a better chance of finding *important* things. Any time you make a Perception roll (usually Wits + Composure), you benefit from the 9-again quality. With the three-dot version, you get 8-again.

True Friend (•••)

Effect: Your character has a true friend. While that friend may have specific functions covered by other Merits (Allies, Contacts, Retainer, Mentor, et cetera), True Friend represents a deeper, truly trusting relationship that cannot be breached. Unless your character does something egregious to cause it, her True Friend will not betray her. The Storyteller cannot kill a True Friend as part of a plot without your express permission. Any rolls to influence a True Friend against your character suffer a five-die penalty. In addition, once per story your character can regain one spent Willpower point by having a meaningful interaction with her True Friend.

Vivid Dreams (• to •••••)

Prerequisite: Wits •••, Promethean

Effect: Your character's dreams are far more vivid than most. A number of times per story equal to this Merit, your character can replenish two Willpower instead of one while sleeping. Additionally, add these Merit dots to the Azoth + Composure roll to regain Pyros while sleeping near her Lineage's element. Additionally, when taking this Merit, declare an Elpis Aspiration. Create it like any other Aspiration, but focused specifically on your character's Elpis. When fulfilling that Aspiration, your character undergoes an Elpis Vision (see p.187) instead of taking a Beat.

Weatherproof (•)

Prerequisite: Promethean

Effect: Due to the specific components of her design, your character is immune to extreme weather environments. She suffers no penalties or damage from extreme environments (see p. 212). Heat or cold does not cause her damage. She still takes damage from fire and anything sufficiently extreme to cause aggravated damage. This does not dampen the effects of a Wasteland, however.

TRANSMUTATIONS

Dead flesh to living is but the first transformation Prometheans endure. Alchemy is *change*, philosophy and reagents combining to mutate *base* into *refined*. External alchemy, such as potions and burning braziers, tries to work a change in the world. Internal alchemy, swallowed herbs and transcendental meditation, seeks to catalyze change in the practitioner. Yet a Promethean's nature is alchemical, and Azoth — the ultimate catalyst — burns where their soul should be. The Created body recognizes no difference between philosophy and working, and their internal alchemy becomes externally manifest. Doing so always reveals a Promethean titan's feet of clay, however, either by rending the fragile physical alchemy that hides her disfigurements, or by causing a potent supernatural Condition to dog their steps.

Each Transmutation comes with an accompanying Condition, complications of the Azothic emanations of the Alembics. Charging the Alembics of a Transmutation without revealing disfigurements is *always* considered a possible source of the Condition, unless otherwise stated.

Refinements cause physical changes in the Promethean's alchemical makeup, transforming their humours and generating supernatural powers called *Transmutations*. Each Refinement has a philosophical affinity for two Transmutations. Transmutations are not spells, but instinctual expressions of the Promethean's Azoth refined by the metallic philosophies. Each Transmutation is further divided into four *Alembics* — concentrations of alchemical power, brought to roiling expression by the Divine Fire.

Unlike many traits, Transmutations aren't measured in dots or learned by experience expenditure. Instead, each Alembic follows a broad theme relating to the Refinement with a persistent effect emanating from the character's Pyros-charged humours. Should the Created reflexively expend more Pyros to charge the Alembic, that effect can be magnified and utilized in different simultaneous ways called *Distillations*. As the Promethean masters the Refinement's Roles, their philosophical and spiritual growth allows them to express new Alembics.

Clash of Wills

Sometimes, two supernatural powers clearly oppose one another. If the normal systems for the powers fail to resolve this, such as when two Prometheans attempt to use Rabid Rage on the same animal, or when a vampire attempts to use a memory-altering power on a person previously affected by a Distillation (such as Fog), a Clash of Wills occurs.

All involved supernatural effects enter a contested action using a dice pool. Usually this is the wielder's Supernatural Tolerance trait (Blood Potency for vampires, for example) plus the dot rating of the power in question or dominant Attribute for powers that don't have dot ratings. Prometheans, however, add Azoth plus a Resistance Attribute valid for the use of the Distillation in question (Physical, Social or Mental). Ties reroll until one player has accrued more successes than all others. That player character's effect wins out and resolves as usual; all others fail. Victory of one power in a clash does not mean the immediate cancellation of the others, save in cases where only one power can possibly endure (such as competing domination).

Characters may spend Willpower to bolster the contested roll, but only if they are physically present and aware that powers are clashing. Certain powers, such as those with exceptionally long durations, are more enduring in a clash. Day-long effects add one die to the clash roll, week-long effects add two, month-long three, and year-long or longer (including effects that don't have a duration) add four.

Example: *Taking the example cited above, consider a vampire attempting to view or alter the memory of a person previous afflicted by the Fog Distillation. The vampire's player rolls Blood Potency + the dot rating of the power in question (three, in this case). The Promethean's player rolls the Promethean's Azoth + Composure (the Social Resistance Attribute, valid for Fog). Fog lasts for one day per success (and the Created's player garnered three successes), so the Promethean's player adds one die to his roll. If the player had garnered seven successes, he would add four dice to his roll (since an exceptional success makes the effect Persistent).*

If the vampire's player rolls more successes, the vampire breaks through the Distillation's effects and reads the victim's memories (and probably resolves the Amnesia Condition, restoring said memories). If the Promethean's player wins, the Distillation holds until the effects wear off naturally, and the vampire cannot read the victim's original memory until that time.

Gaining Transmutations

When a Promethean adopts a new Refinement, the player selects one Alembic from each Transmutation. These are the only Alembics the Promethean has access to upon first alignment. With each new Role mastered within a Refinement, the player may select another Alembic each Transmutation; upon mastering the third Role, the entire Transmutation is available.

The Promethean has access to a Transmutation's Alembics only so long as she retains the associated Refinement. Even a shift to a Refinement that shares a Transmutation requires the Promethean to express different Alembics and abort her progression. Humans may evince multiple cultural beliefs without dissonance, but Refinements are hotter mental fires, an attempt to catalyze a spiritual reaction. An Originist and a Fury approach Disquietism in fundamentally different ways, even if the expression is similar.

Vitriol expenditure allows a Promethean to calcify certain internal changes that come with adopting a Refinement and thus retain access to an Alembic. She may expend Vitriol Experiences to retain an Alembic she has mastered, even when she's changed Refinement. Calcified Alembics are locked into Role progression; they're permanent parts of the Promethean now, no matter what changes her philosophy brings.

Example: Chicago is an archetypal Fury, flirting with new Refinements but constantly falling back to Tin when she needs to vent her rage. She spends a great deal of time in the Refinement, rapidly mastering all three Roles. This allows her to utilize all four Alembics of both Disquietism and Electrification so long as she's in Tin. One of the new Refinements she's trying is Lead; when she shifts to that Refinement, she may only use one Alembic of Disquietism (player's choice), as well as one Alembic of Saturninus. If she shifts back to Stannum, though, she regains all of the Alembics that she once knew.

As her Pilgrimage progresses, she finds Disquietism too useful to go without. After progressing through the Pilgrimage more (and falling back into Stannum), Chicago calcifies three Alembics of Disquietism – Externalize, Redirect, and Internalize – exempting them from Role progression. This allows her to utilize the Alembics no matter what Refinement she's adopted; should she adopt Plumbum, she will continue to exhibit these three. This also means that she automatically expresses Weaponize, since she must express at least one Disquietism Alembic, if possible, that has not been calcified.

Systems

All Alembics have persistent effects. Most of these are ongoing changes to the Promethean's body or abilities, which last as long as the character has access to the Alembic (so if the character spends Vitriol to calcify an Alembic, the persistent effect becomes permanent). Some persistent effects require rolls, but most of them do not, and none of them require Pyros expenditure.

Using the Distillations of an Alembic requires charging that Alembic with Pyros. Charging an Alembic with Pyros is a reflexive action; if the Promethean cannot spend enough Pyros per turn to

charge the Alembic to the desired Distillation, she may do so over successive turns. She may charge as many Alembics as she has the Pyros for. The charge grounds out after a scene. Once the Alembic is charged, she may use the Distillation (and any lesser Distillation of the Alembic) for the remainder of the scene without further Pyros expenditure, unless otherwise specified.

Some Transmutations rely on the Promethean's mundane Skills and talent in shaping the Divine Fire (a roll of Attribute + Skill + Azoth). Others merely require Pyros charging to find expression.

Example: Agamemnon needs to ensure that wealthy art collector bidding on the Aboriginal piece – unbeknownst to him, the key link to a potent Athanor – loses his nerve before he outbids the meager resources of the throng. Agamemnon spends 1 Pyros to charge the Penthos Alembic of Mesmerism, using Undermine on the wealthy bidder. It works, but even without the ability to spend Willpower, the man's still got cash enough to spend without upset – and worse, his constant interest has attracted other bidders. The Mimic spends 2 additional Pyros to fully charge the Alembic for the scene. Each round of bidding, he uses Undermine on the bidders, then Defeat the next turn, shattering their wills completely. On the wealthy bidder who started this mess, he uses Depress. The bidding ends with a massive crowd of bitter, wealthy people in various stages of Disquiet – but the Promethean won the auction!

Alchemicus

All Prometheans are alchemical by nature, capable of transforming themselves, but this is mostly instinctual. Alchemicus Alembics, however, rely heavily on occult or scientific study of how one state may transform into another. The Ophidian Refinement allows Prometheans to intimately understand the nature of transformation, but mortal alchemists often seek to learn the powers of this Transmutation above all others.

Charging an Alchemicus Distillation without flaring disfigurements imposes the Flawed Vessel Condition (p. 309).

The Alembics of Alchemicus are Stone (physical reinforcement and transformation), Aqua Regia (corrosion), Spagyria (temperature manipulation), and Elixir (inanimate animation).

Stone

The Philosopher's Stone is not a physical item, but the idea that even the basest structure has worth to one who can alter matter at will. The Stone Alembic follows suit, transforming the world according to the will of the alchemist.

Persistent: The Promethean may, with scrutiny, discern all the material substances and component elements of an object. The player makes a Wits + Science + Azoth as an extended action (5–15 successes, one roll represents one turn).

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character mistakes the object for something it's not. Wood fiber is mistaken for rich mahogany, pyrite for gold, acid for refreshing lemonade.

Failure: The Promethean cannot discern information on the object's composition.

Success: Simple objects require only five successes, while complex materials or constructs require the full fifteen. Full scrutiny of an object allows him to detect the relative amounts of a material compared to the others, as well as hidden substances within the object.

Exceptional Success: If the player receives an exceptional success bonus on the extended action roll, the Promethean receives a +2 bonus on any Alchemicus Distillation he wishes to use upon the object.

Purification

At the least amount of charge, this Alembic doesn't allow for physical strengthening or change, merely conceptual reinforcement. By strengthening the conceptual bonds and function of an object or tool, the Promethean may cause it to work more efficiently.

Cost: 1 Pyros

Action: Instant

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Occult + Azoth

The Promethean grasps or handles a tool or object in his hands, turning it over and over and tapping it *here* and *there* to improve it. Broken objects repair themselves slightly, restored to full functionality. Working objects find themselves operating at peak efficiency.

Dramatic Failure: The object loses two Durability, as the Promethean's purification works about as well as any other percussive maintenance.

Failure: The object does not improve.

Success: Successes add to an equipment bonus on the object for the scene, up to a maximum added bonus equal to the Promethean's Azoth score. If the object is damaged or destroyed, the Promethean must first overcome a negative modifier.

Exceptional Success: The maximum bonus is equal to twice the Promethean's Azoth.

Fortification

This Distillation further purifies and strengthens the chemical bonds of an object, greatly improving its Durability. Pyros infuses the object, granting it extreme endurance.

Cost: 2 Pyros

Action: Reflexive

Dice Pool: Stamina + Science + Azoth

This Transmutation works similarly to Purification, save that successes improve Durability and Structure for the scene and are not limited by the Promethean's Azoth.

Dramatic Failure: The Promethean weakens the Structure and Durability of the object by two.

Failure: The object doesn't strengthen.

Success: Successes improve Durability, then Structure.

Exceptional Success: Successes apply to both the object's Structure and Durability.

Transformation

The Great Work of becoming human is referred to, metaphorically, as turning lead into gold. Prometheans are capable of doing so literally, however, changing one physical substance into another. The Created's knowledge and the physical properties of the item are the only limits to this power. Water into wine, lead into gold: the Promethean may shift the substance's chemical and structural properties via direct exposure to Azoth.

Cost: 3 Pyros

Action: Instant

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Occult + Azoth

This Promethean transforms one inorganic substance into another. She may affect inorganic substances with a Size and Availability no greater than her Occult + Azoth total. Common elements like water, rocks, or soil are one-dot Availability; two dots reflect most industrially-processed substances; alloys such as steel are three dots; gold and other precious metals are four dots; and diamonds, radioactive substances, or highly-processed drugs are five dots.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The object remains the same, but the Promethean transforms part of her humours into the substance. She suffers 3 lethal damage and takes the Flawed Vessel Condition.

Failure: The substance does not change.

Success: The object changes composition from one inorganic material to another. Successes allow the Promethean to step up or down on the Availability value in the transformation. A steel door may be turned to glass, an aspirin into a designer drug, or lead into gold. This transformation lasts for the scene. In the case of aspirin turned into designer drugs, the addict comes crashing back into sobriety at the end of the scene, but transforming the aspirin into cyanide leaves the victim just as dead (yet, curiously, dead of cyanide poisoning but without a trace of the drug).

Exceptional Success: The object changes to a perfectly formed example of the target substance. Add 2 to its Durability (if relevant), and 1 to its Availability value.

Aqua Regia

The "king's water," in classic alchemy, is a highly corrosive liquid. Used to reduce and refine elements, it degrades and destroys all it touches. Savants studying this Alembic secrete this powerful acid from their pores, rendering themselves immune to caustic substances within their laboratories and allowing them to have direct hands-on contact with their experiments.

Persistent: The Promethean can handle the most caustic of substances without fear. Acids, radioactive materials or other substances cannot inflict bashing damage on him at all, and he reduces damage from lethal sources of such harm by his Azoth. Alchemically- and magically-prepared substances and fire still cause normal damage to him.

Decay

As the *aqua regia* seeps into equipment, it damages whatever function that equipment once possessed. The Promethean may sabotage electronics and other machines with a touch.

Cost: 1 Pyros

Action: Reflexive

Dice Pool: Stamina + Occult + Azoth

This Distillation is effectively the opposite of Purification, degrading the equipment bonus of an object and inflicting a penalty to its use. The Promethean must touch the object she wishes to affect.

Dramatic Failure: The *aqua regia* corrodes the flesh of the Promethean, causing her to suffer three lethal damage.

Failure: The object does not degrade.

Success: Successes inflict an equipment penalty onto the object, damaging its use, while weapons lose damage rating. If the Promethean drops the object's equipment bonus below zero, it ceases to function at all. Weapons can't be used even as crude improvised clubs; they simply break.

Exceptional Success: No additional effect.

Degradation

The Promethean secretes a powerful corrosive from her body, devastating the structure of physical objects with a single touch. Objects touched with the Promethean variant of *aqua regia* become highly brittle.

Cost: 2 Pyros

Action: Reflexive

Dice Pool: Stamina + Occult + Azoth

This Transmutation requires touching the target to activate. It can be activated reflexively any time the Promethean touches an object or if she attempts to break the object with brute strength. Degradation does not affect living flesh and cannot be used offensively.

Dramatic Failure: The *aqua regia* corrodes the flesh of the Promethean, causing her to suffer three lethal damage.

Failure: The object does not degrade.

Success: Successes remove Durability from the object until it becomes zero. As an object loses Durability, it becomes more brittle and easier to break. Objects of a very large Size may still retain some Structure, allowing them to stand up to repeated blows.

Exceptional Success: Successes apply directly to the object's Structure, making even huge objects as fragile as eggshells.

Dissolution

Controlling her production of the *aqua regia*, the Promethean refines her corrosive acids further into an offensive weapon.

Cost: 3 Pyros

Action: Reflexive

Dice Pool: Stamina + Occult + Azoth

The Promethean exudes a powerful variant of her acid. As with the other Distillations, she may choose which pores to exude the acid from, saving her clothing and possessions from destruction. The acid visibly covers the skin, oil-shiny and vaguely greenish. Hurling the acid requires a Dexterity + Athletics attack roll.

Dramatic Failure: The *aqua regia* corrodes the flesh of the Promethean, causing her to suffer three lethal damage.

Failure: The corrosive fails to corrode anything.

Success: On a punch or successful throw, the acid deals lethal damage equal to successes.

Exceptional Success: The attack adds a weapon bonus equal the Promethean's Azoth.

Spagyria

Objects at rest have energy locked deep within their chemical bonds. Fire is an exceptional catalyst because it sunders and energizes bonds. How much more then can the Divine Fire do? Prometheans who study this Alembic influence atomic bonds and how to unleash the energy contained within

Persistent: The Promethean may expend an additional Pyros on any Alchemicus Distillations to extend its duration to 24 hours.

Notable Temperatures

Absolute zero	–273.15°C
Lowest recorded temperature on Earth	–89.2°C (Vostok, Antarctica)
Car antifreeze freezes	–37°C
Water freezes	0°C
Average room temperature	20°C
Average human body temperature	37°C
Mercury melts	38°C
Hottest recorded temperature on Earth	58°C (El Azizia, Libya)
Water boils	100°C
Water causes third degree burns	160°C
Tin melts	231°C
Flashpoint of paper	233°C
Lead melts	327°C
Most rocks melt	600–1000°C, depending on composition
Average crematorium	760–1000°C (2–3 hours to cremate human remains)

Temperature Modification

Temperature is merely the speed of atoms, how much energy they contain that is released as heat. By influencing their speed, the Created may control the temperature of an object and cause it to melt, boil or freeze.

Cost: 1 Pyros

Action: Instant

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Science + Azoth

The Promethean must touch an object (though not a living or unliving creature) with a Size no larger than her Size + Azoth. The object maintains its changed temperature until the end of the scene, at which time it begins to revert back to whatever temperature it was before the Promethean affected it. If an object has combusted, it continues to burn.

Dramatic Failure: The object's temperature moves 100 degrees Celsius in the opposite intended direction.

Failure: The object's temperature does not change.

Success: The object's temperature changes up to 25 degrees Celsius in the intended direction per success. The Promethean may choose where the temperature change stops, so long as it falls within the successes.

Exceptional Success: The object's temperature changes up to 45 degrees Celsius in the intended direction per success. He may again choose the precise intended temperature within that range.

Alteration

The Promethean calls upon the malleability of his Azoth, channeling Pyros into an object. While keeping molecular and atomic bonds intact, the Promethean radically alters the shape of an object.

Cost: 2 Pyros

Action: Extended (5–20 successes; one roll represents one turn of work)

Dice Pool: Strength + Crafts + Azoth

The Promethean touches a non-living object, rendering it malleable with his Pyros and shaping it into the desired form. If the Promethean also possesses the Stone Alembic, he may reflexively expend Pyros to simultaneously work a Transformation upon the object.

Dramatic Failure: The Promethean accidentally cuts himself on the shaped object, suffering one level of lethal damage. All accumulated successes are lost.

Failure: The Promethean fails to change the object's shape. The player can either quit or accept a Condition (such as Flawed Vessel) to continue.

Success: The object has the consistency of soft clay, allowing the Promethean to mold it into whatever shape he desires. He may split it apart, reshape it, or pack it more densely.

Simple (a club)	5
Involved (a sphere)	7
Elaborate (a linked chain)	10
Daunting (a car jack)	15
Intricate (a functioning gun)	20

Once the shaping is done, the object's new form lasts for the remainder of the scene.

Exceptional Success: If the player chooses the exceptional success bonus for this action, the object gains a +1 equipment bonus.

Resize

Building upon her knowledge of altering chemical bonds, the Promethean may now enlarge and restructure an object entirely.

Cost: 3 Pyros

Action: Instant



Dice Pool: Manipulation + Occult + Azoth

The Promethean must touch an object with a Size no larger than her Size + Azoth. She may shrink or enlarge the object with a successful roll.

Dramatic Failure: The object changes 2 Size categories in the opposite intended direction.

Failure: The object's Size does not change.

Success: The object's Size changes by 1 per success. The player may choose to utilize a lesser number successes, if her role exceeds the desired amount.

Exceptional Success: Successes on the roll count doubly towards altering the Size.

Elixir

The ultimate goal of the ancient alchemists was the transformation of death into life. The unheralded among them became successful demiurges, but many more stumbled across this Alembic. The Savant gains limited power over Azoth's ability to restore life, transforming it into other substances and back again.

Persistent: The Promethean only needs three successes on an Occult roll to achieve an exceptional success.

Apprentice's Brooms

Technology can seem magical to those who have no understanding of either. Prometheans with sufficient command of their Azoth can merge the two, allowing an object to carry a portion of the Divine Fire.

Cost: 1 Pyros

Action: Instant

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Occult + Azoth

Investing her Pyros within a nearby object, the Promethean temporarily transforms it into a vessel capable of holding Azoth.

Dramatic Failure: The object is destroyed; the Promethean suffers a point of aggravated damage from her Azoth burning back upon itself.

Failure: The object remains as it was.

Success: Each success grants a level of the Azothic Object Merit (see p. 112) to the object. The Promethean chooses which properties the object holds. Unlike true Azothic Objects, the effects only last for a scene, whereupon the Divine Fire burns the object to twisted wreckage. The Promethean may forestall this effect by paying one Pyros per scene to "recharge" the object and keep the Alembic charged. The Promethean's player may choose to permanently bind the object by spending the requisite experience points to purchase the Merit, allowing the Azoth to "settle" into the object.

Exceptional Success: No effects, other than a spectacular Azothic Object.

Spark of Life

Animated by Azoth and humours, Prometheans grow and change. They are walking, thinking, living proof of alchemy's greatest success. Scions of ultimate triumph, the Created may gift a portion of their titanic heritage back upon dead beings, granting them a shambling temporary semblance of life.

Cost: 2 Pyros
Action: Instant
Dice Pool: Manipulation + Occult + Azoth

He must touch the corpse, which must have been dead for less than a week. The creation gains an appearance of life as Prometheans do, as well as a limited recollection of its previous life, but it has no Willpower and no desire other than to quietly serve the Promethean.

The creation has the same Physical Attributes as it did when living, but its Mental and Social Attributes are each rated at one dot. It can answer limited questions about its life and who it was. The creation has the same Physical Skills as its Promethean master, and it has 5 dots of the Residual Memory Merit; it has no Mental or Social skills beyond those necessary to explain its former life. The animated creature speaks the native tongue of the living being. The effects of this Distillation last for the remainder of the scene; in the end, the corpse dies once more.

Dramatic Failure: The Promethean creates a Pandoran that expires at the end of the scene.

Failure: Dead is dead. The corpse does not move.

Success: The Promethean creates a temporary "pseudo-Promethean," which follows his every unspoken command.

Exceptional Success: The corpse is animated for 24 hours. If it is ever the target of the generative act (p. 185), the roll receives a +1 equipment bonus.

Flesh to Stone

Once the unliving has been transformed back into the living, reversing it is an easy trick. However, driving the target to a liminal state is far harder. This Distillation alters the target's flesh to base matter, temporarily immobilizing him.

Cost: 3 Pyros
Dice Pool: Intelligence + Crafts – Stamina
Action: Resisted

Dramatic Failure: The Promethean suffers the Immobilized Condition for two turns, as the Distillation forces a change in her flesh instead.

Failure: The Promethean's touch yields no effect.

Success: Each success inflicts the Immobilized Condition on the target for one turn. The base material also grants the subject Durability 3.

Exceptional Success: The subject is transformed utterly, suffering the Immobilized Condition for a number of turns equal to the successes rolled. The immobilized subject has Durability 5.

Benefice

Without a throng, the difficulty of achieving the Great Work increases exponentially. Few lone Prometheans have achieved the Magnum Opus; working together, a throng has a much stronger chance of seeing the New Dawn individually. The Refinement of Bronze focuses on this unique phenomenon, believing that aiding the throng aids the Great Work of all involved. Sentries see themselves as first among equals, partly because they focus on helping their fellows and enhancing the efficacy of the throng itself.

Charging a Benefice Distillation without flaring disfigurements imposes the Greedy Brand Condition (p. 310).

Command

He who serves his fellows is greatest of his fellows. For a Sentry, success in her goals means success in the throng's goals. To succeed, she must control the entire reaction, carefully preparing the necessary elements with efficient teamwork and providing a catalyst for the throng.

Command Alembic Distillations only work within a branded throng.

Persistent: The Promethean adds a +1 bonus to any Teamwork roll that she participates in with the throng, above and beyond her own contribution.

Many Hands Make Light Work

Sentries are the very essence of a team player. Even if teamwork seems impossible, practitioners of Aes find a way to make it work.

Cost: 1 Pyros
Dice Pool: None
Action: Reflexive

While this Distillation is charged, Prometheans in a throng can assist each other by mere proximity, making any non-combat action a teamwork action (see p. 202). All members of the throng may participate and add a dice bonus; they needn't make contact to utilize this Distillation.

Able Worker

The greatest gift a leader can give is empowerment to those he helps. This Distillation allows the Sentry to uplift her throngmate with confidence in his abilities.

Cost: 2 Pyros
Dice Pool: None
Action: Reflexive

The Sentry may designate one throngmate as the target of this power. The recipient gains the Steadfast Condition until they resolve it or until the scene ends. Once the recipient resolves the Condition, the Promethean may designate a new recipient.

The Community of Power

Prometheans share more than just a miserable existence. They share experiences, both joys and sorrows. They also share power: the brand allows the transfer of Pyros, but it may share the ability to express Transmutations. With this Distillation, the Sentry may alloy her supernatural might to that of her throngmates.

Cost: 3 Pyros
Dice Pool: Intelligence + Occult + Azoth
Action: Reflexive

Dramatic Failure: The Promethean suffers the Greedy Brand Condition.

Failure: Nothing happens.

Success: When one member of the throng activates a Bestowment or Distillation requiring a roll, treat the activation as a teamwork action with the user as the primary actor. Any or all members of the throng may contribute Pyros the help charge the Alembic and add successes to the final resultant roll.

Exceptional Success: If a throngmate has a higher dice pool than the primary actor, the two "switch" their pools, allowing the primary actor a more efficacious roll.

Consortium

The alchemical brand magnifies the strengths of individual Prometheans and nullifies their weaknesses. Sentries grow to rely on this bond and try to encourage their throngmates to rely on it as well. The Consortium Alembic fosters this reliance amongst the entire throng.

Consortium Alembic Distillations only work within a branded throng.

Persistent: So long as one throngmate has this Alembic, any two members of the throng may switch their initiative ratings once per turn.

The Fortified Compact

The Pyros brand of the pact glows brightly while this Alembic is charged. Tapping into the nature of the pact itself, the Promethean strengthens the innate nature of the brand.

Cost: 1 Pyros
Dice Pool: None
Action: Reflexive

When charged, all members of the throng within 200 yards receive the following benefits for the scene:

- Each pactmate can transfer three points of Pyros per scene.
- All penalties for having a branded Promethean of the same Lineage in the throng are nullified.
- The character's Azoth incurs a –2 dice pool penalty for every Promethean of different Lineage in his throng when rolling for Disquiet.
- When rolling to resist Torment, the character gains a +2 bonus to his Humanity dice pool.
- The Sentry may reflexively designate one throngmate per turn. While using a Distillation or Bestowment that requires a roll, the throngmate gains a +2 bonus to dice pools.

Common Perception

The Sentry channels his perceptions and senses down the link of the brand, allowing a throngmate to share in his experiences.

Cost: 2 Pyros
Dice Pool: None
Action: Reflexive

The Promethean may share one or all of her senses with one other throngmate, regardless of distance. The experience exists as a vague overlay in the mind of the recipient, who may choose to ignore or concentrate upon the sensory experience. If the recipient chooses to split his attention between both experiences, he suffers a one-die penalty for each sense he borrows to any physical action he takes while dividing his focus. If the recipient possesses the Sensorium Transmutation, he can activate it and apply it to his throngmate's perceptions.

Unspoken Words

At the apex of connection, the Promethean may join the thoughts of his throngmates together.

Cost: 3 Pyros
Dice Pool: None
Action: Reflexive

When charged, this Distillation establishes a telepathic link between members of the throng within (half-mile per dot of Azoth) of the Sentry. Besides instant and perfect communication, the link grants a +3 bonus to Initiative from the conjoined mental reactions of the throng. The throng also temporarily gains the Connected Condition (p. 307), though the Beat condition does not apply.

Control

It is the solemn duty of a leader to protect their followers from harm. This does occasionally mean putting themselves in harm's way, but more often this means effectively managing the defenses of the throng. This Alembic directly increases the throng's defensive capabilities.

Persistent: When engaging in combat alongside another member of her throng (within Azoth in yards), the Promethean receives +1 bonus to her Defense.

Protective Boon

When powered, this Distillation imbues a throngmate with the flickering fire of the Pyros itself, directly increasing their ability to avoid harm in a fight.

Cost: 1 Pyros (per throngmate)
Dice Pool: None
Action: Reflexive

For every point of Pyros spent charging this level of the Alembic, the Sentry may designate a member of the throng to receive a +1 bonus to their Defense for the remainder of the scene. This Defense may be used against ranged attacks.

Inviolable Unity

By channeling Pyros through his shared bond of camaraderie, the Sentry shields his friends in armor comprised of power itself.

Cost: 2 Pyros
Dice Pool: Presence + Occult + Azoth
Action: Instant

Success on the roll grants the Promethean a pool of armor points that he may distribute amongst the throng. He cannot give himself a higher armor rating than any other one member of the throng.

Dramatic Failure: The Sentry suffers –1 to his Defense for the scene, and gains the Unbranded Condition.

Failure: The power has no effect.

Success: The throng blazes with alchemical fire, licking at their muscles and playing over their clothes. The fire does not burn, but intercepts blows and incoming sources of damage. The Promethean gains the ability to distribute points of general armor, as above.

Exceptional Success: As above, but every branded member of the throng gains a free point of general armor.

Bulwark

The greatest gift a leader can give is empowerment to those he helps. This Distillation allows the Sentry to uplift her throngmate with confidence in their abilities.

Cost: 3 Pyros

Dice Pool: None
Action: Reflexive

The Sentry may designate one throngmate as the target of this power. The recipient gains the Steadfast Condition until they resolve it or until the scene ends. Once the recipient resolves the Condition, the Promethean may designate a new recipient.

Community

More than anything, Sentries wish to foster a sense of group well-being amongst the throng. This isn't easy — Torment sunders even what diffident personalities do not, and the humours of the Prometheans leads them to grandiose behaviors and displays of emotion. Despite that, the best chance for the Great Work lies in hanging together, which this Alembic tries to enable.

Community Distillations may only be applied within a branded throng.

Persistent: The Sentry can donate Pyros to other throngmates at a rate of one point per turn, rather than point per scene.

Communal Font

With this ability, the Sentry may forces open the power of her alchemical brand, allowing for free Pyros donation throughout the throng.

Cost: 1 Pyros (1 additional Pyros per point granted)
Dice Pool: None
Action: Instant

The Promethean pushes her Pyros into her alchemical brand, removing impurities and allowing for free expenditure. Once charged, *any* member of the branded throng may transfer one Pyros per turn, using the Sentry as a conduit.

If Fortified Compact is also charged, any member of the throng may transfer Pyros up to the limit of what her Azoth allows per turn.

We Are As One

The alchemical brand that binds Prometheans together contains an element of all of their humors. These humours retain a connection to their original donor, and through that connection, the Sentry may work wonders.

Cost: 2 Pyros
Dice Pool: None
Action: Reflexive

While this Alembic is charged, the Promethean may target any of his throngmates within line-of-sight with any Distillation that requires touch.

What's Mine is Yours

Being an effective leader means knowing when to delegate, and sometimes the best defense is a grand and spectacular offense. This Distillation allows the Promethean to lend supernatural aspects and Transmutations to another Promethean.

Cost: 3 Pyros
Dice Pool: Wits + Occult + Azoth
Action: Instant

With successful activation, the Created may gift any known Bestowment or calcified Alembic she knows to a member of her branded throng within line of sight. The recipient receives the Bestowment or Alembic as if it were his own and may freely charge it as such for the remainder of the scene.

Dramatic Failure: The effort to gift a calcified Alembic or learned Bestowment fails miserably, temporarily suppressing the humours within the Promethean and disallowing use of her own supernatural power.

Failure: The Promethean fails to gift the Bestowment or Alembic.

Success: The power calcifies properly in the recipient, aligning his humours in a pattern capable of utilizing the Bestowment or Alembic as if it were his own.

Exceptional Success: The recipient successfully receives the use of the Bestowment or Alembic for the scene, taking so well to the donor's Pyros that he receives a "free" point of Pyros to charge the Alembic.

Contamination

The Cathar focus on impurities, so that they may be purged. She changes so as to acquire a unique sense for weakness of the mind and the body. She can smell madness and other mental defects. When she looks at a person, she can see the flaws in his personality, those traits which could destroy him if allowed to run unfettered. She can feel the aches, pains, and sickness in another and in herself acutely. This sensitivity allows her to manipulate others, to exploit their pain and alleviate it. Often, this requires that the weakness be brought to the surface and allowed to express itself before it can be purged.

The lesson of Contamination, of course, is a finer version of the larger lesson of the Cobalus Refinement — perfection is impossible. Impurity cannot be purged from a human being the way it can from metal; judging people by their flaws or disabilities is in itself a flaw. Since humanity itself has difficulty with this lesson, though, it can take Cathars some time to internalize. This Transmutation allows exploration of the notion.

Charging a Contamination Distillation without flaring disfigurements imposes the Fragile Condition (p. 309).

Most Contamination Distillations require that the Cathar be in the same general area as the target (within 10 feet per dot of Azoth) and is able to see him. Exceptions are noted in individual descriptions.

Contamination is divided into four Alembics. Those Alembics are: Indulgence (exploiting character weakness), Leverage (exploiting secrets), Madness (exploiting mental weakness), and Suffering (exploiting physical weakness).

Indulgence

Insanity isn't the only weakness of the mind. Personality flaws are as much an impurity as any mental illness. A Cathar can feel the dark urges of a human's soul as easily as she can feel the aches in his bones or the depression clouding his mind. She can bring these desires to the surface just as she can pain or madness, but the effects can be unpredictable.

Persistent: A Cathar has a keen sense for human vices and can look into a person's eyes to discover his dark desires. This insight

makes it easy for her the leverage the person by playing to his faults. She knows a person's Vice and can improve her impression by two steps when appealing to it during Social maneuvering.

Encourage Impulse

The Cathar temporarily inflames the Vice of the target, causing his impulses to override his better judgment for an instant. When timed correctly, even this minor manipulation can be ruinous for its victim. If the target has already indulged his Vice during the scene, the player adds one die to her roll.

Cost: 1 Pyros

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Empathy + Azoth vs. Composure + Azoth

Action: Instant and contested

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Cathar does not get the desired result; instead the target is pushed into Disquiet or moves to the next stage.

Failure: The Cathar is unable to influence the target.

Success: The target takes an immediate rash action in line with his Vice. If he's in an argument and has a Vice relating to his temper, he might hit the other person. If his Vice is Spiteful, he might instead say something cruel.

Exceptional Success: The target doubles down and makes another rash action to follow the first.

Remove Inhibitions

Feeding the Alembic causes the target to progress from a moment of weakness to a complete loss of inhibitions. His Vice takes over, dictating his actions; any resistance erodes his will to the point when he no longer can resist.

Cost: 2 Pyros

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Persuasion + Azoth vs. Composure + Azoth

Action: Instant and contested

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Cathar does not get the desired result; instead the target is pushed into Disquiet or moves to the next stage.

Failure: The target successfully resists temptation.

Success: The target is overtaken by his Vice for the rest of the scene. He will indulge it at any opportunity unless he spends Willpower. He cannot regain Willpower from either his Vice or Virtue while under the influence of this Distillation.

Exceptional Success: The target cannot spend Willpower to resist his Vice.

Plague of Desire

The Cathar causes the loss of inhibitions to spread like Disquiet in a Wasteland. Everyone in the immediate vicinity falls under the sway of their desires, forming a howling mob devoted to indulgence. Depending on the predilections of the crowd, this can lead to an orgy, a bloodbath, a lynch mob, or a vicious argument.

Cost: 3 Pyros

Dice Pool: Presence + Persuasion + Azoth

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The crowd immediately becomes distrustful of the Promethean, who becomes the focus of attention. Everyone present is pushed into Disquiet or moves to the next stage.

Failure: The Cathar is unable to get a handle on the crowd.

Success: Everyone in the immediate vicinity whose Composure isn't higher than the number of successes rolled loses their inhibitions. Rather than acting as individuals, those affected tend to polarize around the strongest personalities (highest Presence). Actions taken while under the influence of this Alembic can lead to breaking points if extreme enough.

Exceptional Success: Only those with superhuman Composure are able to resist.

Leverage

A Cathar understands that individuals do not exist in a void. Every person is caught up in a web of relationships with the people around him, and the weak points in these connections are secrets. A man's drug addiction doesn't just threaten his physical and mental well being, but can also cost him his job, his friends, and even his family. The Cathar is adept at sensing those things that can destroy a person if brought to light.

Persistent: If the Cathar's goal is to learn a person's secrets, the number of Doors that must be opened during Social maneuvering is reduced by one.

Confession

The Cathar is able to urge the subject into revealing his innermost thoughts by asking a leading question.

Cost: 1 Pyros

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Persuasion + Azoth vs. Composure + Azoth

Action: Instant and contested

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Her efforts are transparent and the subject's impression of her becomes hostile. Disquiet increases by one step.

Failure: She fails to elicit any secrets.

Success: The subject answers the question truthfully, regardless of how embarrassing or even dangerous this may be.

Exceptional Success: The subject continues to feel like he can open up to the Promethean. Her impression for Social maneuvering is improved by one step.

Guilt Trip

This Distillation allows the Promethean to bypass social interaction and learn the subject's darkest secret with a single touch.

Cost: 2 Pyros

Dice Pool: Wits + Empathy + Azoth vs. Resolve + Azoth

Action: Instant and contested

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The subject recoils at the contact and enters the next stage of Disquiet.

Failure: She gets no information.

Success: She has a brief vision of the single worst thing the subject has done. She experiences this as a flashback and from his point of view. She knows the generalities of the situation but no specifics. For example, if she sees a vision of him cheating on his husband, she knows that they were in his office and the other party is his secretary, but wouldn't know the address or the secretary's name.

Exceptional Success: She gets the details such as names, date and time, and addresses.

Scandal

Cathars can force a person's dark secret out into the light by making the vision of the previous Distillation contagious.

Cost: 3 Pyros

Dice Pool: Resolve + Subterfuge + Azoth vs. Resolve + Azoth

Action: Instant and contested

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The target is not affected and has a sense that she tried to betray his secrets. His impression of her becomes hostile for Social maneuvering and he enters the next stage of Disquiet.

Failure: She fails to force his secrets to the surface.

Success: For the next day, anyone the target touches gains knowledge of his darkest secret. Unlike the previous Distillation, this isn't experienced as a vision. Instead, they suddenly know with certainty what he has done (though not the specific details). If the Promethean has not used the Guilt Trip Distillation on the target, she doesn't know the secret unless she touches the target, too.

Exceptional Success: The effect lasts for two days.

Madness

The follower of Cobalt instinctively grasps the frailties of the mind and how it can break. She knows how to find the cracks in a seemingly normal person and use Azoth to force them wide, resulting in alchemy-induced madness. She also knows how to purge mental impurities, though the process brings the insanity bubbling to the surface on its way out, leaving the subject cured but often traumatized.

Persistent: Cathars have an instinctive sense for mental illness and trauma. By looking into the eyes of another, she is able to see the cracks in his psyche. She knows any Persistent Condition he suffers from relating to mental trauma or illness, such as Amnesia, Broken, Fugue, Madness, or Obsession. She gets +2 to rolls to attempt Hard Leverage with Social maneuvering.

Psychotic Flash

The Promethean drives a wedge into a crack in the target's mind, causing him to have a sudden, traumatic psychotic break. Such a violent episode can cause lasting psychological damage but in the short term it renders him stunned.

Cost: 1 Pyros

Dice Pool: Presence + Intimidation + Azoth vs. Resolve + Azoth

Action: Instant and contested

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Promethean gains the Stunned Tilt as she suffers a glimpse of the same visions she tried to inflict.

Vision Quest

The vision quest takes place entirely in the mind of the subject, with the Cathar along as his companion. She can choose to help him or to hinder him. The quest plays out as a number of scenes that represent the nature and origin of the Condition being addressed. For example, if the subject suffers Amnesia acquired from witnessing a murder, the quest may involve playing out the circumstances of that night leading up to the forgotten event.

The success or failure of the quest is determined through an extended action. The subject uses his Resolve + Composure. The required successes range from five (for a recently acquired Condition) to ten (for one he's suffered for a long time) or even twenty (for a congenital mental illness). If the Cathar who initiated the quest is helping him, the number of successes the player rolled for the Distillation is subtracted from the amount needed, with a minimum of one. If she is hindering him, her successes are added to the number required. The subject rolls once per scene.

If the vision quest is a success, the Condition is resolved. Otherwise, it worsens; the target suffers a –2 to Resolve + Composure rolls to resist it until it is resolved. The actual time passing in the real world is minimal, usually a turn per scene.

Example: *Freda initiates a vision quest with her friend Arthur, who has been suffering from the Broken Condition since a run-in with a Centimanus with the Penthos Alembic. The Storyteller rules that because this was recently acquired, it will only take five successes to purge. Freda's player rolled three successes for the Catharsis Distillation, which means only two more are needed. The Storyteller describes the two of them finding themselves in a dark, dirty room. Arthur is curled up on a bed with a picture of his dead family clutched in his hand. Freda goes to him and helps him up, taking the picture from him gently and telling him that what happened wasn't his fault. Arthur's player rolls his Resolve + Composure (–2 because of the Broken Condition) and gets a single success. The scene around them changes; now a mob screams outside. Arthur's family cowers in the corner as the rioters try to break down the door. Freda tells him that she will get his family out if he can buy them time. His player rolls Resolve + Composure again and gets two successes. Arthur flings the door open and throws himself at the oncoming mob, sacrificing himself to save his family. The vision ends, his catharsis complete, and the Broken Condition is resolved.*

Failure: The Distillation has no effect.

Success: The target is afflicted by horrendous visions that stress his sanity. He gains the Stunned Tilt.

Exceptional Success: The target suffers –2 to Resolve + Composure rolls to focus or resist the effects of the Distillation.

Onset of Madness

The Cathar can cause longer lasting and less immediately traumatic damage to the target's mind, making him mentally unstable for days. She finds this useful for discrediting those who speak against her or to make someone pursuing her less effective over the long term.

Cost: 2 Pyros

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Subterfuge + Azoth vs. Composure + Azoth

Action: Instant and contested

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Promethean is struck with the Insane Tilt from the backlash.

Failure: She has no effect.

Success: The target gains the Disquieted Condition but without a focus on the Promethean. In all other respects, it resembles Disquiet. It persists for one day per success rolled.

Exceptional Success: The Condition lasts for a week.

Catharsis

A follower of Cobalus can force her target to face his weaknesses and fears and either be destroyed by them or come out stronger for the experience. By making eye contact, the two enter a vision quest, with the Cathar taking on the role of tormentor or companion.

Cost: 3 Pyros

Dice Pool: Wits + Empathy + Azoth vs. Resolve + Azoth

Action: Instant and contested

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: A bit of the impurity leaks into the Cathar when she tries to draw it forth; she suffers the same Condition she was trying to purge for the next 24 hours.

Failure: The attempt at catharsis fails.

Success: The Cathar initiates a vision quest (see sidebar).

Exceptional Success: The vision is particularly powerful. If successful, the catharsis grants the subject the Inspired Condition. If it fails, he suffers the Insensate tilt.

Suffering

A Cathar has a deep understanding of the flaws of the physical form. It takes the form of heightened empathy, where she can look at a person and feel the ache in a healing injury, experience the roughness of his breathing, and taste the metallic tinge of a poison coursing through his veins. This is even before she notices his limp or hears him coughing. She can use this acute awareness of physical weakness to draw it forth, which initially results in additional pain and infirmity but eventually draws forth poison and disease like a leech, eliminating it.

Persistent: Cathars can smell the stink of illness or poison in a person's sweat and have a keen eye for any handicap or injury. If the Cathar takes an instant action to study a target in combat, all her attacks against that target receive a 1 point weapon bonus.

Purge

While physical disabilities and injuries are beyond the Cathar's power to fix, impurities in the body such as germs, poison, or drugs can be coaxed to the surface. This is never without some obvious effect. The drugs or poison bleeds through his skin and bacteria or virus-laden sweat similarly leaks from his pores. Regardless of the source, the resulting liquid has a bluish tint and needs to be washed away to complete the purification.

Cost: 1 Pyros

Dice Pool: Resolve + Medicine + Azoth – Severity, Potency, or Toxicity rating

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The target's condition is worsened. He suffers the Sick Tilt (for a disease) or Poisoned Tilt (for poison or drugs).

Failure: She fails to have an effect.

Success: By laying on hands, the Promethean is able to draw physical impurities out of the target: curing a disease, purging a drug, or neutralizing a toxin.

Exceptional Success: The target regains one point of Health lost to bashing or lethal damage inflicted by the offending impurity.

Affliction

The Cathar is able to draw the pain of an injury, disability, or illness to the surface, making it more difficult to overcome. The conditions aren't worsened, but the pain is harder to ignore and thus more disabling. While under the effect of this Transmutation, each step taken with his bad leg causes agony and the nausea from chemotherapy is so bad as to be debilitating.

Cost: 2 Pyros

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Medicine + Azoth vs. Stamina + Azoth

Action: Instant and contested

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Promethean is wracked with physical pain and gains the Insensate Tilt.

Failure: She is unable to affect the target.

Success: The target's physical ailments are worsened for the rest of the scene. Wound penalties and penalties from physical Tilts or Conditions are doubled.

Exceptional Success: The duration is extended to one day.

Pain

Her deep understanding of the weakness of the flesh allows her to target her attacks to those places where they will hurt the most. A bum knee, a femur riddled with osteoporosis, or a swollen spleen is an easy way to overcome an opponent momentarily with intense physical agony. It is also a way to bring the weakness to the surface so that it can be addressed.

Cost: 3 Pyros

Dice Pool: None

Action: Reflexive

Once this Distillation is charged, the Promethean can inflict intense pain with any successful close-combat attack. The target gains the Insensate Tilt in addition to any damage. If the Cathar wishes, she can inflict the pain with a touch (requiring the player to make a touch attack; see p. 207).

Corporeum

Followers of the Bronze and Iron Refinements both evince physical perfection as part of their Transmutations, rendering their bodies capable of feats of dexterity and endurance far beyond most Prometheans, eclipsing that of humanity. The idea that mastery of the body allows for mastery of the soul is present within many human cultures; Corporeum's capabilities are some evidence of that.

Titans and Sentries view and experience this Transmutation differently, though both acknowledge that it makes the Promethean frame more graceful and able to withstand terrific damage. For Titans, it is the counterpart to Vitality, granting speed and endurance to raw strength — the hand of the warrior must be skilled and calloused as well as strong. The Alembic progression heightens the Promethean's tactical capabilities, freeing the mind to concentrate on strategic necessity. Sentries embrace this view as well, believing that they must combat the trials of the throng, providing a shining example by suffering so that their throng doesn't have to. By enduring the difficulties of the world with grace, they comfort and inspire.

Charging a Corporeum Distillation without flaring disfigurements imposes the Kinesthesia Condition (p. 310).

The Alembics of Corporeum are: Charites (fine muscular control), Zephyrus (reaction time), Hygeius (control of pain and resilience), and Motus (speed and movement).

Charites

The Promethean establishes perfect control over her muscles, allowing her to perform even the most rigorous and complex physical tasks with practiced ease. Every tendon and muscle group, even normally unconscious ones, falls under her absolute command. For Titans, this augments their capacity for physical challenge and personal training, as athletic physicality requires rigorous and repetitive movements, a methodical working of muscle groups to understand how each part of the body interacts as a contiguous whole. Sentries view it more as the unified body perfectly suborning to the singular, commanding will of the Promethean, a very literal case of mind-over-matter.

Persistent: The player only needs three successes on Athletics rolls in order to achieve an exceptional success. If he garners at least three successes but less than five, he is treated as if he achieved five.

Athletic Grace

The Divine Fire explodes in every nerve ending of the Promethean's body; his movements resemble nothing so much as a flickering flame.

Cost: 1 Pyros
Dice Pool: None
Action: Reflexive

While this Transmutation is charged, he adds one to his effective Dexterity, altering static calculations and allowing him an extra die to all rolls involving the Attribute. This does not count against the character's maximum score as dictated by Azoth.

Uncanny Dexterity

The Promethean's muscles respond to her will and desires with graceful surety. Her feet find perfect purchase on the wall, her hands deftly sunder the knots holding a throngmate to a burning pyre, and her novice handling of a pistol rivals the skill of Olympians.

Cost: 2 Pyros (1 additional)
Dice Pool: None
Action: Reflexive

For the rest of the scene, the character benefits from the 9-again rule to all Dexterity rolls. Additionally, the Promethean's player may reroll any Dexterity roll at the cost of an additional point of Pyros, keeping the second result. She may opt to spend the point of Pyros after the roll is made.

Rarified Grace

The Promethean's power perfects her, such that every action she makes is practiced and trained as if she'd spent years deeply ingraining the techniques necessary for her current task.

Cost: 3 Pyros, 1 Willpower (optional)
Dice Pool: None
Action: Reflexive

The character may apply the rote action quality (see p. 202) to any Dexterity-based roll. This also applies to any Dodge roll she makes. Once charged, the Promethean may use this Distillation for a number of actions equal to her Azoth rating without penalty. More than that requires the player to reflexively spend a Willpower point, which allows an additional number of turns of use equal to her Azoth.

Zephyrus

Titans and Sentries alike must be ever vigilant for threats, but the oft-overlooked aspect of the sentinel is reacting to threats when they're perceived. By means of this Alembic, the Promethean heightens her reaction times to inhuman levels. Sentries keep watch for threats to their throng, but Titans are more often out for themselves.

Persistent: The Promethean always adds his Azoth to the Wits + Composure roll to avoid surprise. Even if surprised, he applies half of his Defense against incoming attacks.

Swift Feet

The Promethean sends Pyros surging down her leg muscles, achieving inhuman speed by efficient movement and grace rather than raw muscular power. Her feet find the ground and maximize their movement.

Cost: 1 Pyros
Dice Pool: None
Action: Reflexive

The Promethean may move up to twice her Speed while still taking an instant action. This Distillation stacks with Exemplary Athleticism (see p. 131), but the Created sees her Speed tripled, not quadrupled.

Serpent Strike

The same energies that allowed him quick flight now suffuse the Promethean's entire frame, allowing him to strike swiftly and surely.

Cost: 2 Pyros (plus an additional 1 Pyros)
Dice Pool: None
Action: Reflexive

On the turn where this Distillation is fully charged, the Promethean adds his Azoth to his Initiative score as a positive modifier. If the Promethean spends an additional Pyros, he may nullify a weapon's Initiative modifier for the next turn, allowing him to act more rapidly.

Perfected Reflexes

When the Alembic is fully charged, the Promethean is nigh untouchable. She easily evades the weapons of her enemies, and the Divine Flame allows her to dodge even bullets.

Cost: 3 Pyros
Dice Pool: None
Action: Reflexive

When this Distillation is powered, the character receives a +3 to her Defense and may use her full Defense against ranged attacks. Additionally, if she takes a Dodge action, she makes the roll at 8-again.

Hygeius

Mortal yogis have mastered bodily control, allowing them absolute authority over their human frames and incredible endurance of pain and trauma. The Promethean who commands this Alembic similarly commands total control over his bodily frame. Pyros shimmers along the sinews of his flesh, allowing elegant movement and fine control even when the flesh lies in tatters. Sentries regard this as yet another example of how Pyros and will combine to find perfection within the body, while Titans have an opposing view: the human body is far more resilient than mortals credit it. It is capable of great deeds so long as a Promethean is willing to push it to the limit.

Persistent: Prometheans feel pain, but while they aren't debilitated by it like humans are, they're often unable to interpret pain's signals. Prometheans with the Hygeius Alembic can subtly account for the injuries inflicted by expertly assessing their pain. If the Promethean would suffer a wound penalty (if mortal) from their health boxes being filled, they instead receive a dice bonus equivalent to the wound penalty they would suffer.

Human Flesh

The Promethean's mastery of his body refined enough that he can control electrical impulses, his heartbeat, and even the flush of the sanguine humor such that it can mimic blood. With the Divine Fire energizing the Transmutation, the Promethean appears completely human.

Cost: 1 Pyros
Dice Pool: None
Action: Instant

For the rest of the scene, the Promethean appears completely human. To all medical evidence, he appears to be perfectly healthy. Examinations indicate that he is living and breathing. Additionally, using Pyros do not cause his disfigurements to appear. Unlike with most Transmutation activations, the Promethean need not suppress his disfigurements to charge Human Flesh.

Impossible Flesh

While all Prometheans enjoy immunity from wound penalties, as pain matters less to them, they may still suffer crippling wounds. Despite the Pyros sizzling about their humours, Prometheans cannot physically perform when their muscles are torn apart or destroyed past functioning. This Transmutation keeps them viable past that point.

Cost: 2 Pyros
Dice Pool: None
Action: Reflexive

When energized, the Promethean does not suffer from any Tilts that would inhibit him physically, as the Pyros suffusing his body allows full movement. The Promethean cannot suffer from Arm Wrack, Leg Wrack or similarly crippling Tilts. Even if his arm bones are covered in tattered scraps of burnt muscle, his grip remains strong; even if his eyes are gouged out, his vision remains clear. Even sundering the limb or slicing out the eyeball doesn't manifest the Tilt (though once this Transmutation expires, the Condition likely returns and is Persistent unless the Promethean has reattached or regenerated the lost organ). Missing limbs or organs are replaced by ideal versions of themselves crafted from smokeless, cold flame.

Resilient Flesh

Attacks that would sunder the Promethean's flesh still land, but the flesh does not quite part or crush as it should.

Cost: 3 Pyros
Dice Pool: None
Action: Reflexive

The Promethean subtracts two from all sources of damage, even fire. The superficial signs of damage remain, cauterized by Pyros and scar tissue that fades when the Distillation loses charge.

Motus

Titans and Sentries alike are often imposing physical specimens, even without Corporeum. When one channels the Divine Fire through her limbs, she becomes exemplary. The Motus Alembic guides and empowers her muscle for the purposes of running, jumping, and other movements that rely upon speed and power. Titans consider it the most dramatic and elegant example of their physical dominance, often daring one another to perform elaborate parkour challenges. Sentries, as always, are far more practical — Motus makes them faster and more agile than anyone.

Persistent: So long as his stride remains unceasing, the Promethean is tireless. While in motion, he gains the Sleepless Merit (see p. 116). When he stands relatively still for longer than a minute, the Merit fades (and any fatigue penalties resume). If the Promethean already possesses the Merit, then he needn't eat, either — his motion perpetually stokes the Divine Fire keeping him alive.

Uncanny Athleticism

By channeling vital humours through her limbs, the Promethean invigorates her body. Athletic endeavors such as running, jumping, or swimming become much easier for the Titan. She overcomes such obstacles with ease. Sentries, by contrast, often use this to quickly close any distance between themselves and their throngmates.

Cost: 1 Pyros
Dice Pool: Strength + Athletics + Azoth
Action: Reflexive

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The power fails to activate. The character's Strength is penalized by 2 (to a minimum of 1) as her vital humours misfire within her musculature.

Failure: The power fails to activate.

Success: For each success rolled, the player may add one point to either the character's Strength or Stamina Attributes for the purposes of athletic endeavors such as running, jumping, swimming, or other activities that draw upon strength or endurance. These dots may take the character above her normal maximum.

Exceptional Success: In addition, the character gains two additional dots in the Parkour Merit (p. 115). If she already possesses four or more dots in the Merit, this power has no additional effect.

Mighty Bound

A Promethean's life is fraught with peril. Some dangers prove too much even for a Titan or Sentry, and he must flee to fight another day. This power increases the distance of his jumps, whether moving to or from danger.

Cost: 2 Pyros

Dice Pool: None

Action: Reflexive

Mighty Bound increases the distance and effectiveness of the Promethean's legs, whether running or standing. When performing a running jump, the maximum distance the character may leap is effectively tripled. Convert feet to yards when calculating how far she may jump.

If the character is performing a standing broad jump (horizontally), her distance is tripled as with a running jump. However, if the character is leaping vertically, her maximum height is merely doubled.

Exemplary Athleticism

A Promethean who has come this far along the Motus path has learned how to better infuse his muscles with his vital humours. Every burst of strength, every marathon step, every minute spent underwater — they all become easier for the Created to exhibit. His body moves like a well-oiled machine, responding effortlessly to his every whim.

Cost: 3 Pyros

Dice Pool: None

Action: Instant

Once activated, the Promethean's Strength and Stamina both increase by three and her Dexterity by one, even if this takes the character over her usual maximums. In addition, any athletic (non-combat) action that calls upon a roll utilizing Strength or Stamina gains the rote quality. Finally, the character's Speed is doubled.

Deception

The Refinement of Aurum is dedicated to humanity. It allows a Mimic to move more easily among people, either as an unseen observer or as an actor pretending to be what he is not. The Transmutation comes about as the Promethean opens himself up to humanity and allows himself to empathize with people as much as



his experience will allow. It is an emotional experience that can leave the character reeling. A side effect of this practice is a distancing from what he actually is and an attendant difficulty in interacting with others of his kind.

Charging a Deception Distillation without flaring disfigurements imposes the Alienated Condition (p. 306).

Deception is divided into four Alembics. Those Alembics are: Anonymity (being overlooked), Assimilation (blending into crowds), Doppelganger (imitating another), and Watcher (remaining unseen).

Anonymity

The Promethean takes advantage of his outsider status to be a nonperson, overlooked and leaving no trace of his passage. It is an important first step, allowing him to join humanity in a way that makes minimal demands of him and allows him to observe before partaking.

Persistent: When acting normally and not drawing attention, attempts to pick the Promethean out of a crowd suffer a –2 modifier. Those who have no reason to search for him overlook him entirely.

Nameless

With a little Pyros, the Mimic is able to be anonymous while being more active. He takes on the role of the sort of person who is regularly ignored. This allows him to move away from the crowd but still go mostly unnoticed through human society.

Cost: 1 Pyros
Dice Pool: Presence + Stealth + Azoth
Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: His Azoth flares, causing those around him to take immediate notice of him. For the rest of the scene, he has the Notoriety Condition.

Failure: He gains no benefits.

Success: He becomes a nobody for the rest of the scene, the sort of person others don't even see. Like custodial staff, homeless people, or servants, people don't give him a second glance. Later, they are hard-pressed to remember any detail about him. Anyone trying to remember details about him has her Intelligence + Composure roll penalized by the successes rolled. Failure indicates the witnesses don't remember him being there at all.

Exceptional Success: Rolls to remember the character are reduced to a chance die.

Traceless

With a little more effort, even physical signs of his passage through the world vanish. The world itself denies his existence, ignoring him and refusing to accept his imprint upon it. For this to be successful, though, the Promethean must limit his interaction with the world. Every object he manipulates or person he talks to encourages the world to acknowledge him and undermines his efforts at anonymity.

Cost: 2 Pyros
Dice Pool: Wits + Stealth + Azoth
Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The power backfires. Attempts to find evidence of him add two extra dice.

Failure: The power fails.

Success: For the rest of the scene, he leaves no evidence of his passage: no footprints, no physical evidence, and no fingerprints. Even cameras and other sensors tend not to notice his passage, such that he does not trigger alarms or show up on security footage. Any Larceny rolls to break into a place get extra dice equal to the number of successes rolled for this power, and Investigation rolls to find traces of him later are penalized by an equal number.

Exceptional Success: Investigation rolls to find evidence of his passage are reduced to a chance die.

Forgotten

With a sufficient expenditure of Pyros, this Alembic can be maintained indefinitely. The Mimic becomes a ghost moving through human society, observing but never interacting with his subjects.

Cost: 3 Pyros
Dice Pool: None
Action: Reflexive

The duration of the preceding effects is increased to 24 hours and can be extended indefinitely by spend another Pyros every day. Living like this wears on a Promethean's psyche, however. When the power ends, he must make a Torment roll, with a –1 modifier for every day the duration was extended past the first.

Assimilation

Mimics are adept at blending into crowds, but sometimes they do so not to avoid notice but to take advantage of the group dynamic. Someone may not know him personally, but if he is a part of a group to which she belongs, she is inclined to trust him. The Promethean opens himself up to a group of people and allows his mind and body to adjust to match them. Some followers of Aurum find losing themselves in the group mind highly disconcerting, but it does teach valuable lessons about humanity.

Persistent: When he meets someone in a group setting, his first impression is one step higher when using Social maneuvering (p. 202).

Conformity

The Promethean can adopt the dominant physical characteristics of the society or group in which he finds himself. The changes speak to the aggregate rather than any specific individual. They make him fit in though he remains a distinct individual; he is just an individual who matches that group. The change is generally sufficient to throw off those looking for him, so long as the group he is mimicking is dissimilar from his usual appearance.

Cost: 1 Pyros
Dice Pool: Stamina + Subterfuge + Azoth
Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: He fails to change his appearance and instead reveals his disfigurements.

Failure: He is unable to mimic those around him.

Success: His body changes so that his coloration and features match the predominant characteristics of the people around him. Add the character's Azoth to any attempts to hide in a crowd.

Exceptional Success: The effect lasts for one day.

Tongues

The next step in belonging to a group is being able to communicate with the members. A few moments of listening to conversation allows the Mimic to tune into the language being spoken.

Cost: 2 Pyros

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Academics + Azoth

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: He is overwhelmed and is struck with the Mute Condition for the rest of the scene.

Failure: He is unable to tune into the local language.

Success: For the rest of the scene, he is able to understand and speak (but not read) the common language(s) of the group he is in.

Exceptional Success: The effect lasts for one day.

Hive Mind

Finally, the Mimic can become so well-suited to the group that he is able to interact with them at ease, instinctively grasping how to act in order to fit in. He is fully accepted as a member of the group and interacts with other members as if they were friends. Prometheans are often made giddy with this experience of belonging; some have become mired in attempting to recapture it again and again.

Cost: 3 Pyros

Dice Pool: Wits + Empathy + Azoth

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: He so utterly fails that he alienates the group, gaining the Notoriety Condition for the rest of the scene.

Failure: He fails to get on the group's wavelength.

Success: He successfully tunes into the group he is in, such that he adopts their common mannerisms, lingo, and body language. He can add his successes to any Social roll to interact with members of the group; if he is using Social maneuvering, his impression is Excellent (p. 203).

Exceptional Success: The effect lasts for one day.

Doppelganger

The Mimic concentrates his heightened empathy on a single person, learning her mannerisms and appearance so completely that his body and mind changes to reflect the object of his obsession. He can use this power to elude the authorities, but more often he uses it as a tool to understand what it is like to be a human by becoming one, even superficially, for a time. The difficulty is that his empathy may be so complete that he starts to forget who he really is.

Persistent: He has a good ear for voices and can perfectly imitate anyone he has heard speak for more than a minute.

Incriminate

The simplest application of this Alembic has the Promethean taking on subtle characteristics of a human body (dead or alive) he's touched. His physical shape is unchanged but the signs of passage he leaves on the world are hers.

Cost: 1 Pyros

Dice Pool: Wits + Empathy + Azoth vs. Stamina + Azoth (if alive)

Action: Instant and contested

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: He gains the Sick Tilt as his body tries and fails to adjust.

Failure: He fails to attune to the subject.

Success: For one day per success, any fingerprints or forensic evidence he leaves will resemble the subject rather than him.

Extraordinary Success: The effect lasts for one week.

Impersonate

The Mimic takes on the full physical characteristics of a human he has touched this scene. As with Incriminate, the subject can be alive or dead.

Cost: 2 Pyros

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Subterfuge + Azoth vs. Resolve + Azoth (if alive)

Action: Instant and contested

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: His attempt to attune to the human fails so utterly that he is forced to make a roll to resist Torment.

Failure: He fails to imitate the target.

Success: The Promethean changes shape to perfectly resemble the subject, even down to her voice. He gains no special knowledge of her, however, and has to make the usual rolls to pass himself off to others.

Exceptional Success: His humours adjust to match the target's temperament, making it easier to impersonate her. Willpower spent on rolls to impersonate the target gives four extra dice rather than three.

Deep Cover

So long as Pyros is fed to the Alembic, the new shape can be maintained. If the person being imitated is dead, he can step into her life and live as her as long as he has the fuel. Aside from the obvious threat of discovery, it becomes progressively harder for him to remember that he isn't the person he's impersonating; when he returns to his actual form, the shock of remembering can send him spiraling into Torment.

Cost: 3 Pyros

Dice Pool: None

Action: Reflexive

The duration of the Impersonate is increased to 24 hours and can be extended indefinitely by spending another Pyros every day. The longer he keeps up the disguise, however, the greater the risk he will forget himself. When the power is over, he must succeed on a Wits + Resolve roll penalized by one for each day the duration

was extended past the first, or suffer the Amnesia Condition for 24 hours. Once he regains his memory, he must then make a roll to resist Torment.

Stalker

Rather than mingling with humanity, some Mimics prefer a more objective approach, taking on the role of observer. Unlike Anonymity, he seeks to be unobserved rather than ignored. He does not change himself to blend in, but rather to be unseen. Like the other Alembics, this is based in a keen empathy with humanity. He knows precisely where to stand to not be noticed and can predict the movements of someone he is tailing so as to do so discretely. The initial subject of these Distillations must be within sight when they are activated.

Persistent: He adds his Azoth to Stealth rolls due to his natural instinct for finding the blind spots where people don't look.

Shadow

The character can focus his attention on a specific person and become adept at following her without being noticed. This allows him to move, but he still must not do anything to draw undue attention. Others may see him, but he has a knack for staying out of sight of his quarry.

Cost: 1 Pyros

Dice Pool: Wits + Stealth + Azoth vs. Wits + Azoth

Action: Instant and contested

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The target instantly notices him and must roll to resist Disquiet.

Failure: He fails to attune to the target.

Success: Add three dice to rolls to shadow, hide from, or ambush the target for the rest of the scene.

Exceptional Success: He gains the bonus for the rest of the day.

Lurker

He becomes so attuned to the person he is stalking that she is unable to notice him at all, unless he draws attention to himself. He can slip into her home behind her and follow her from room to room. She will never be the wiser, as he always stays just out of sight.

Cost: 2 Pyros

Dice Pool: Wits + Stealth + Azoth vs. Wits + Azoth

Action: Instant and contested

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The target instantly notices the character and immediately enters Disquiet or advances to the next stage.

Failure: He fails to attune to his target and knows it.

Success: He no longer needs to make Stealth rolls to avoid his target's notice for the rest of the scene.

Exceptional Success: The duration is extended to one day.

Phantom

He attunes to the inhabitants of a building so that he can move among unnoticed. As with the other abilities, he cannot draw attention to himself or the effects instantly end.

Cost: 3 Pyros

Dice Pool: Composure + Stealth + Azoth

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: He is instantly noticed and gains the Notoriety Condition.

Failure: He fails to attune to the others.

Success: He does not need to make Stealth rolls to move around the building unseen, due to his instinctive understanding of its rhythms. Only those whose Wits ratings are higher than the number of successes rolled will notice his presence. The effect lasts for one scene.

Exceptional Success: Only those with supernatural Wits will notice him. The duration is extended to one day.

Disquietism

Those who follow the Refinements of Tin and Lead gain a measure of control over Disquiet, such that they can temper it, direct it, or enflame it. Some who have these abilities use them defensively to deflect the perils of Disquiet long enough to get free of danger. Others, particularly Furies, use Disquiet as a weapon to punish those who have wronged them. Using Disquiet in this manner can be very dangerous, as losing control can make it stronger or send a Promethean into Torment. Those who manifest this Transmutation are both envied and feared.

The way the Transformation works varies by Refinement. For Plumbum, it is a heightened self-awareness that allows her to sense the ebb and flow in her Azoth and regulate it through precise use of Pyros. To Lead, it is like meditation: inwardly focused and requiring great concentration. Stannum, on the other hand, has a more instinctual grasp of his Disquiet. He rides it like a wave, feeling it under his feet and adjusting his footing with its shifts and surges. For Tin, it is an ecstatic experience: he loses himself to the beat of the drum and just dances. Both share an understanding that Disquiet is a part of them, intrinsic and undeniable.

Charging a Disquietism Distillation without flaring disfigurements imposes the Irritable Condition (p. 310).

Disquietism is divided into four Alembics. Those Alembics are: Externalize (manipulating Wastelands), Internalize (reducing Disquiet), Redirect (deflecting Disquiet), and Weaponize (utilizing Disquiet).

Externalize

The Promethean uses his grasp of Disquiet to manipulate its external manifestations. While in a Wasteland, he can draw on the chaotic energies at hand and use them for his own purposes. A Fury with this Alembic sometimes goes out of his way to cause Wastelands wherever he goes, as if marking his territory. The practitioner of Plumbum, on the other hand, is more likely to use these Distillations to safely travel through Wastelands in his travels.

Persistent: The Promethean is immune to the effects of extreme environments within a Wasteland.

Safe Sojourn

The Promethean is able to deflect the wild energy of the Wasteland, allowing safer passage for his allies.

Cost: 1 Pyros
Dice Pool: Stamina + Survival + Azoth – Wasteland's category
Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: His attempt to manipulate the Wasteland causes a backlash, inflicting one point of lethal damage.

Failure: The Wasteland proves to be too powerful for him.

Success: He is able to spare one person per success rolled from the effects of the Wasteland's extreme environment. If he belongs to a branded throng (p. 306), he can protect all of its members with a single success.

Extraordinary Success: The protection lasts for an entire day.

Maelstrom

The Promethean focuses the energy of the Wasteland to summon a storm to hinder his enemies.

Cost: 2 Pyros
Dice Pool: Strength + Occult + Azoth – Wasteland's category
Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: His attempt to manipulate the Wasteland causes a backlash and he takes two points of lethal damage.

Failure: He is unable to control the Wasteland.

Success: He causes either the Heavy Rain or Heavy Winds Environmental Tilt. He is immune to the effects to the Tilt summoned.

Exceptional Success: He can apply both Tilts and is immune to both.

Assault

The Promethean can direct the destructive energies of the Wasteland at a person. The range of this Distillation is five yards per point of Azoth.

Cost: 3 Pyros
Dice Pool: Dexterity + Athletics + Azoth – Defense
Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The energy he hoped to unleash instead courses through him, causing three points of lethal damage.

Failure: He is unable to tap the energy of the Wasteland.

Success: A bolt of Flux-tainted energy strikes his opponent, inflicting one point of lethal damage per success. This damage ignores artificial armor.

Exceptional Success: Nothing beyond increased damage.

Internalize

The Promethean has an enhanced sense of the effect her Disquiet has on others and has learned to temper its effects for short periods of time. Those not yet under the effects of Disquiet have an easier time resisting it; for those already under its effects, its progression is temporarily halted. For an Originist, this is simply an outgrowth of the self-control her discipline brings. For a Fury, she is channeling the Disquiet in upon itself, like a cyclone, so it doesn't touch those around her. Both benefit from a keen awareness of Disquiet and know precisely how much it has affected those around them.

Persistent: The Promethean knows on sight what stage of Disquiet a subject currently suffers.

Temper

The Promethean is able to take the edge off of Disquiet, making it a little easier to resist.

Cost: 1 Pyros
Dice Pool: Composure + Empathy + Azoth
Action: Reflexive

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Every human she is interacting with must immediately roll to resist Disquiet.

Failure: She is unable to temper her Disquiet.

Success: Anyone rolling to resist her Disquiet gets one extra die. This effect lasts for a scene.

Exceptional Success: Anyone rolling to resist her Disquiet gets two extra dice.

Soothe

The Promethean is able to soothe Disquiet where it has already manifested.

Cost: 2 Pyros
Dice Pool: Presence + Empathy + Azoth
Action: Reflexive

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Every human she is interacting with must immediately roll to resist Disquiet.

Failure: She is unable to control her Disquiet.

Success: Anyone already suffering from the Disquieted Condition ignores its effects and does not need to roll to resist advancing to the next stage. This effect persists for one turn per success.

Exceptional Success: Anyone suffering from stage two of Disquiet is reduced to stage one.

Quell

The Promethean can attempt to overcome Disquiet entirely.

Cost: 3 Pyros
Dice Pool: Presence + Socialize + Azoth
Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Every human she is interacting with must immediately roll to resist Disquiet.

Failure: She is unable to overcome her Disquiet.

Success: For one scene, she does not invoke Disquiet in one person per success rolled.

Exceptional Success: She does not invoke Disquiet in anyone for the rest of the scene.

Redirect

The Promethean gains control of her Disquiet and is able to redirect its effects onto other people. This can be used as misdirection, allowing the Promethean to escape those hunting her, but Furies often purposefully enflame Disquiet in order to redirect

it onto their enemies, particularly those who have persecuted them. For the follower of Stannum, her Disquiet is a storm within her that can lash out like lightning to harm her enemies. For the student of Plumbum, Disquiet is a virus that infects her and can be passed on to another. Even without expending Pyros, she is able to taint another with her Disquiet in order to make others not trust him.

Persistent: The player only needs three successes on Subterfuge rolls in order to get an exceptional success and impose the Notoriety Condition.

Scapegoat

The Promethean is able to touch a person and make him the focus of her Disquiet. She can only have one scapegoat at a time and having one is a prerequisite for the other abilities in this Alembic.

Cost: 1 Pyros

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Persuasion + Azoth vs. Composure + Azoth

Action: Instant and contested

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: She fails to transfer the effect of her Disquiet and must make a roll to resist Torment.

Failure: She fails to designate a scapegoat.

Success: For the rest of the scene, the Promethean triggers Disquiet normally, but those afflicted behave as if the target were the source instead. The target, however, perceives the Promethean's Disquiet as normal and may try to convince others that she is the true source (though they are not inclined to listen).

Exceptional Success: The target is also affected and believes that he is the true source of the Disquiet.

Rabid Rage

The Promethean is able to use Disquiet to cause an animal to attack the scapegoat. This does not affect intelligent animals (like shapeshifted werewolves or vampires) or those with a supernatural bond to the target (like a familiar). The target animal must already be suffering Disquiet.

Cost: 2 Pyros

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Animal Ken + Azoth vs. animal's Resolve

Action: Instant and contested

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The animal attacks the Promethean instead.

Failure: She fails to sway the animal.

Success: The animal attacks the scapegoat for the rest of the scene or until killed or incapacitated. At the end of the scene, it advances to the next stage of Disquiet.

Exceptional Success: The animal is frenzied and ignores wound penalties.



Iago's Whisper

The Promethean is able to influence an intelligent being to attack the scapegoat. The target must already be suffering from Disquiet (thus other Prometheans are immune) and the effect is similar to how lynch mobs form in an advanced Wasteland. Those affected by this power are usually tormented by what they have done under its influence, particularly if the victim was someone known to them.

Cost: 3 Pyros
Dice Pool: Manipulation + Subterfuge + Azoth vs. Resolve + Azoth
Action: Instant and contested

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The attempt fails, and the Promethean must attempt to resist Torment.

Failure: She fails to influence her target.

Success: The target attacks the scapegoat for the rest of the scene or until killed or incapacitated. After the scene ends, he comes to his senses and automatically advances to the next stage of Disquiet. He also suffers an appropriate breaking point for his actions.

Exceptional Success: The target is crazed and ignores wound penalties.

Weaponize

While Disquiet is generally the bane of a Promethean's existence, those with access to this Alembic have learned to wield it like a weapon, using the fear it generates to her advantage. For Furies, this is instinctual. For Originists, it is calculated.

Persistent: If the Promethean has caused Disquiet during the last 24 hours, the player adds two dice to all Intimidation rolls.

Tension

The Promethean feeds his Disquiet, intentionally provoking it in those around him to elicit fear and anxiety.

Cost: 1 Pyros
Dice Pool: Presence + Intimidation + Azoth
Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: He accidentally starts the formation of a Wasteland (p. 174) or, if one is already present, pushes it to the next category.

Failure: He is unable to capitalize on his Disquiet.

Success: Anyone in the same room or general area as the Promethean and whose Resolve is lower than the player's successes on the Distillation roll gains the Disquieted Condition. If they already have it, it advances to the next stage. Additionally, they suffer a penalty on all rolls equal to their stage of Disquiet for the rest of the scene due to their heightened anxiety.

Exceptional Success: Only those with supernatural Resolve can resist.

Vanquish

The Promethean capitalizes on the fear he provokes in order to swiftly defeat opponents in combat. His attacks cause enemies to surrender or flee before his wrath. This is especially useful when he is outnumbered, as it takes but a single strike to remove an opponent from the combat.

Cost: 2 Pyros
Dice Pool: None
Action: Reflexive

When the Promethean inflicts damage upon someone suffering from Disquiet, the subject gains the Beaten Down Tilt (p. 313).

Rampage

With every strike, the Promethean draws on the caustic energy of Flux inherent with Disquiet to more easily break his opponents. The more touched by the Divine Fire they are, the more devastating the effect. This use of Flux makes other Prometheans very nervous.

Cost: 3 Pyros
Dice Pool: None
Action: Reflexive

The Promethean inflicts lethal damage with unarmed attacks and inflicts one additional point of weapon damage for each stage of Disquiet his opponent suffers.

Electrification

Emotions agitate Pyros, and a Promethean in Torment turns their Azoth into a roiling cauldron of power. Masters of the state of emotional wrack, Furies grasp the physical form of Pyros — electrical discharge — and bend it to their will. They describe this sensation as literally boiling away their rage, raking their emotions that they may bind an essential element of existence to their desires. The most dramatic display of Electrification is, of course, the sight of lightning gamboling over a screaming, Disfigured Promethean, electrical arcs leaping from their outstretched hand. Yet in the last century, Prometheans have discovered an entirely new element to one of the oldest Transmutations. Furies find an uncharacteristic irony in this — Torment is perhaps the oldest and most constant state of Promethean existence, yet this Transmutation remains perpetually on the cutting edge of alchemical science.

Charging an Electrification Distillation without flaring disfigurements imposes the Degaussed Condition (p. 307).

The Alembics of Electrification are: Machinus (control over fine electrical flow and influence over electronics), Arc (aggressive electrical discharge), Oscillatus (electromagnetic pulses), and Imperatus (control over gross electrical flow).

Machinus

The Machinus Alembic is a fairly new discovery, whose full potential was only fully realized with the advent of personal computing devices in the 1980s. In the past, the Alembic's only real usage was in determining storm fronts and weather patterns, allowing Prometheans to congregate and draw power from nature's fury. Yet with mankind's harnessing of electrical flows, Prometheans discovered that they may charge and alter flows themselves — and their control extends into the realm of computer programming. Even while remotely harnessing electronic and electrical machines, many Furies tend to make subtle movements such as hand twitches or subtle twists, as if they're physically manipulating the device.

Persistent: The Promethean gentles her humours, rendering them sensitive to the electrical flow of the world around her. She

senses electrical energy and electronics (even unpowered ones) within 200 yards, along with their relative strength. At Storyteller's discretion, particularly powerful sources of electrical energy — supercell storms or Frankenstein Wastelands, for example — can be detected up to fifty miles away. The Promethean also instinctively knows where natural lightning will likely strike within the next few minutes.

Jolt

Running an electrical current through his body, the Promethean may grasp a depowered machine and power it himself.

Cost: 1 Pyros

Dice Pool: None

Action: Reflexive

The Promethean must remain close enough to touch the object he's attempting to power, maintaining a constant flow of electricity. He doesn't have to remain in absolute contact — sitting in front of a laptop will do — but he must be able to touch the machine without effort. Similarly, he may jump-start a car by sitting in the driver's seat. While within range of this power, batteries recharge in his presence as if being charged by an appropriate source.

In general, a valid target of this power must not draw more electricity than can be found from a standard wall socket — specialized electronics or high-powered computers cannot run at their full capacity. Simple electrical devices such as power tools, blenders or coffee makers can be controlled without need for physical manipulation, though this doesn't function on complex electronic devices.

Generator

Electricity needn't be confined to wires and sizzling arcs. It may be sent through the air, effortlessly transforming itself into the appropriate energies wherever it's received. By means of this Transmutation, a Promethean may remotely power a device, as if she's using Jolt while in contact with it.

Cost: 2 Pyros

Dice Pool: None

Action: Reflexive

A Promethean may target any electrical device within sight range (to a maximum of 200 yards), powering it as per Jolt. She senses the rough capabilities of the device, and may alter it as such (changing the speeds on a blender, or accelerating a car), though fine control eludes her (performing anything other than basic Drive actions, changing a television channel). If she chooses to physically grasp the device, she may instantly charge its battery to full power, or fully power specialized functions. If she instead grasps a depowered generator, she may power any and all devices attached to it, regardless of distance. A valid target of this power must not draw more electricity than can be drawn from a large portable generator.

Alternately, if the Promethean is capable of remotely sharing Pyros (through the Vulcanus or Benefice Transmutations), grasping a generator allows her to slowly fill her throng with Pyros or heal them from afar.

This Distillation has one other very useful application. The Promethean can use it to prevent an electrical source from shorting out while she or another character use it heal or replenish Pyros via Electroshock Therapy. The Promethean simply charges this Distillation and touches either the source or the Promethean siphoning power, and moderates the flow of electricity. No roll is required.

Ghost in the Machine

At the apex of Machinus, the Promethean uses his control over electricity to manipulate complex electronic devices. He may switch television channels or dig through databases with the same ease with which he moves his hands. He doesn't have to physically see the device to power it; if he senses the device via Feel the Spark, he may now power it using Generator. Prometheans who learn computer skills find this power exceedingly useful, as they needn't be physically present to control the device.

Cost: 3 Pyros

Action: Instant

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Crafts *or* Computer + Azoth

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The power fails to work, and the device behaves erratically in the worst way possible. He cannot control the device for the rest of the scene.

Failure: The power fails to work.

Success: The Promethean can control the device for the remainder of the scene, as if he held it in her hand. Computers flare to life and may be manipulated as if the Promethean were sitting at the console. If she requires a roll to operate the device, she gains a +3 bonus.

Exceptional Success: He may cause the energies of the device to exceed safe limits, allowing the device to perform unexpectedly. Blenders may leap off countertops as their motors spin wildly, televisions may rapidly flash through channels or tap into blocked cable channels, and wifi antennas on cell phones find their rage dramatically multiplied. The Promethean decides whether or not this surge causes permanent damage to the device's electronics.

Arc

Perhaps the best-known Alembic of Electrification and certainly the most dramatic when charged, Arc allows the Promethean to apply her mastery of electromagnetic forces to offensive capability. Lighting arcs, sizzles, and sparks harmlessly around her hands and skin, illuminating her skeleton and casting harsh, unnatural shadows. With a gesture, her Pyros flares out, enveloping and searing any target she sees.

Persistent: The Promethean may generate a small electrical flare from her fingertips. While this doesn't cause much damage outside of prolonged exposure (equivalent to a wall socket for a turn's worth of touching), it can be used to cut through plastics such as zipties. It can also be used to trace burn marks on nearly any surface, allowing her to inscribe pilgrim marks without tools or other implements. The flare can't be used to charge or heal a Promethean.

Spark

The only *true* Distillation of Arc, Spark allows the Promethean to attack her foes with lightning charged with Torment. This electricity is charged with Torment-laden Pyros; Prometheans may not derive Pyros from the electrical blast, nor may they absorb it to heal. Any

living creature suffering more damage in a turn than its Stamina suffers from the Stunned Tilt.

The Alembic's dice roll represents the attack roll for Spark. The attack can hit anything within the Created's direct line of sight; if using distance modifiers for combat, the range is 15/30/45.

Cost: varies

Action: Instant

Dice Pool: Dexterity + Athletics + Azoth

When powering this Alembic, each point of Pyros spent adds to the Shock attack's direct damage rating; for example, three points of Pyros is a three-damage lethal weapon with a successful attack, in addition to charging the other pseudo-Distillations. Each point spent *additionally* allows the Shock to ignore one point of armor; as with all ranged attacks, Defense doesn't normally apply.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The bolt fizzles. The Promethean cannot use Arc for the rest of the scene, and she suffers the Degaussed Condition.

Failure: The power fails.

Success: The bolt strikes. It causes damage per its successes and damage rating.

Exceptional Success: In addition to damage, the victim suffers the Immobilized Tilt, their muscles refusing to move from sheer electrical trauma.

Shock

Cost: 2 Pyros

The Promethean may use Spark as a suitably improved ranged weapon. He may also make a Spark attack to everything within (Azoth x yards) radius around himself, as the lightning leaps off his skin to sizzle and sear his foes.

Divine Lightning

Cost: 3 Pyros (1 additional)

With a fully-charged Alembic, the Spark strike deals an additional point of electrical damage once per turn for six turns above its strike damage. Even a single glancing blow will kill an average human, lightning cascading through nerves and cooking organs from inside out. Repeated applications of this level of Spark reset the turn limit. With the expenditure of an additional point of Pyros per strike, Spark's damage rating becomes (3) aggravated, though successes on the strike roll still inflict lethal.

Oscillitus

While the material form of Pyros takes on the appearance and characteristics of lightning and electrical discharge, magnetism also plays a hugely important role in the pulse. While this Alembic saw more use than Machinus in centuries past, it too only saw its potential realized with the advent of electronics. By oscillating and pulsing her internal magnetic field, the Promethean interferes with organic and electronic matter alike.

Persistent: The Promethean's control over her electrical field allows her to temporarily overload and short out small electrical devices such as smart phones or laptops (though nothing larger). Her field also grants her two points of armor or two additional dice in contested rolls to defend against hostile electrical effects (such as the rest of this Alembic or entirety of the Arc Alembic).

Insulation

By introducing a foreign magnetic charge to a person or object within (Azoth in yards), the Promethean renders it unable to properly process electrical energies. The Promethean needn't touch the offending object or foe, merely point — a colorless, transparent shimmer plays over the victim, revealing this Distillation

Cost: 1 Pyros

Action: Contested

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Science + Azoth vs. target's Resolve

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Promethean accidentally introduces a damaging charge into the object. If there were any electronics in the object, she blows them out, perhaps irreparably; if attempted on a living being, the charge rebounds on her, inflicting the Degaussed Condition.

Failure: She fails to affect the target.

Success: Success deprives the target of any special benefit from electricity for a number of turns equal to successes. For electronic devices such as laptops or smart phones, this deprives them of the ability to garner a charge for a few moments; devices requiring a constant flow of electricity shut off immediately. Prometheans lose the ability to benefit from their electrostatic recharge or Distillations such as Lightning Therapy.

Exceptional Success: Besides being deprived of electrical benefits for a long while, the target suffers the Degaussed Condition.

Blackout

Lightning shines brightly in the ultraviolet spectrum. As the Transmutation reduces blazing Pyros to crude, bright plasma and magnetic fields, the Fury may blind even those who can't normally perceive the Divine Fire. With a pulse of lightning, the Promethean fries any unshielded electrical lights in the area and wreaks havoc with the eyesight of onlookers.

Cost: 2 Pyros

Action: Contested

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Science + Azoth vs. target's Stamina

Success creates an ultraviolet pulse emanating from the Promethean, ten feet in diameter, causing a –1 penalty to all sight-based actions for any affected by the initial pulse. Additional successes each add five feet of diameter to the pulse *or* worsen the effect, adding an additional –1 penalty to sight-based actions. Any unshielded lights blow out their bulbs or illuminating surface and can't be used until they're repaired.

Additional rolls can be made to increase the size and potency of the pulse.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The blackout pulse fails, and the Promethean cannot unleash it for the remainder of the scene. She suffers the Degaussed Condition.

Failure: The blackout pulse fails.

Success: The Promethean creates the blackout pulse. Allocate successes to size and penalty of the pulse.

Exceptional Success: The pulse clouds one additional sense of the Promethean's choice. Ozone clogs the nostrils, the booming thunderclap deafens, pins and needles obscure the touch, and the afflicted taste naught but ash.

Azothic Detonation

The specialized pulse of Blackout becomes a truly impressive electrical wave. The Promethean explodes in a storm of electromagnetism, destroying unshielded electronics and magnetic items within a huge radius. Once this pulse is discharged, the Alembic reverts to zero Pyros, as if the Promethean had let the scene expire.

Cost: 3 Pyros (until discharged)

Action: Contested

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Science + Azoth vs. target's Stamina

The electromagnetic pulse has a spherical radius of fifteen yards for every dot of Azoth the character has. It's indiscriminate: credit card strips are wiped, pacemakers reset, and computers are fried completely with data erased. Metal objects within the radius are wrenched towards the Promethean: doors blow open, tools and cans fly across the room, and paper clips embed themselves in the ground nearby her. This can cause serious incidental injury for anyone within the radius. For delicate metal machinery with a great number of moving parts, such as a printing press or paper bailer, this may also result in catastrophic failure.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The electromagnetic pulse fails, and the Promethean cannot unleash for the remainder of the scene. She suffers the Degaussed Condition; if she was attempting to rid herself of it, she instead suffers the Immobilized Condition for the rest of the scene.

Failure: The pulse puts the Promethean's hair on end and makes about a second's worth of blankness on recording media, but that's it.

Success: The Promethean creates the electromagnetic pulse, emanating outward from her. Allocate successes to the size of the pulse. People within three yards of the Promethean suffer from one point of lethal damage and must make a Stamina + Resolve roll, failure of which results in the Immobilized Condition (a mild seizure), followed by unconsciousness. If she suffers from the Degaussed Condition, it resolves immediately.

Exceptional Success: Any Prometheans caught within the wave immediately suffer the Degaussed Condition themselves.

Imperatus

The Created thrive on electricity. Despite the teeming masses who await their Disquiet, many Prometheans are thankful that the modern world is an electric one, as ancient Athanors describe thunderstorms as the only method by which a Promethean could receive nature's single gift to them. Electrification's other Alembics focus on the martial and controlling aspects of this gift, but Imperatus focuses on mastery and the blessings of Pyros.

Persistent: The Promethean has a constant flow of electricity trickling in from slight gradations of static electricity, providing a slight regenerative effect. The Created halves all healing times. Additionally, if she's outside during a rainstorm, the Promethean may be more likely to be struck by lightning, but the timing and circumstances are left to Storyteller's discretion.

Lightning Therapy

By arcing her energies to another Created, the Promethean may directly transfer the vital fluids of electrical current, healing her fellows in an argent stream of energy. This power has no effect on beings who cannot benefit from electrical current other than mild discomfort.

Cost: 1 Pyros to charge (varies after that)

Action: Instant

Dice Pool: none

Any Promethean or Pandoran within line-of-sight is a viable target for this power. Each point of Pyros spent heals the target of three lethal damage. If the character is in a branded throng, she may transfer a point of Pyros along with the healing current (she may also heal for zero damage, choosing to instead channel Pyros).

Remote Absorption

The Promethean commands current to flow to him as if he were grasping a live wire. For the rest of the scene, the Promethean may reflexively arc the energies outward from a source to his flesh if he is within his Azoth in yards of a power source capable of electrocution.

Cost: 2 Pyros

Dice Pool: None

Action: Reflexive

The energies sizzle out in thin arcs, covering the Fury. He only receives a half benefit from the power source; drawing power from a main line or third rail, for example, grants him 5 bashing in electrocution damage per turn. He may derive healing or Pyros from this stream according to the halved rate.

Power Sink

All Prometheans may derive Pyros from sources of electricity. Furies may reinforce their mental and physical existence as well as the spiritual. This Distillation causes small, burnt abscesses to appear on the Promethean's body, which glow and crackle when filled with Pyros.

Cost: 3 Pyros

Action: Reflexive

Dice Pool: Stamina + Survival + Azoth

When the Promethean is electrocuted, it energizes her above and beyond the normal benefits.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Pyros doesn't absorb properly. The Promethean recoils from the power source and is denied the benefits of Electrostatic Recharge for the rest of the scene.

Failure: The power fails. The Promethean may absorb Pyros as normal.

Success: Pyros flares in the lacunae abscesses the Promethean prepared. She immediately gains four temporary Health boxes, as well as two points of Willpower (even if this would take her above her normal limit). Damage occupying the Promethean's Health boxes shifts leftward upon the power's termination.

Exceptional Success: The Promethean absorbs the Pyros from the electrical current and channels it efficiently. She gains two additional Health and point of Willpower.

Luciferus

The philosophy of Phosphorum likens life to an ephemeral firework. The Light-Bringer lives as though every moment is his last, because at any time the light may sputter and die, burning out with a final spark before oblivion. That spark is the key to the Luciferus Transmutation, the Transmutation of light. What could a being of alchemy and metaphysical change achieve with such a momentous blaze? This is what the Light-Bringers intend to find out.

Charging a Luciferus Distillation without flaring disfigurements imposes the Reckless Condition (p. 311).

Luciferus is divided into four Alembics. Those Alembics are: Solar Flare (releasing Pyros as searing light), Morning Star (using light to beckon and beguile others), Blaze of Glory (unleashing reserves of Pyros), and Beacon of Helios (spiritual enlightenment).

Solar Flare

Pyros begs to be set loose, bringing light to a dark world. The Light-Bringer can transform her Pyros into brilliance that can blind and sear.

Persistent: The character may reflexively glow at any time, at a light level of her choice up to the brightness of a lantern or desk lamp.

Dazzling Corona

The Promethean's glow becomes a blinding light that spills out from under her skin, until looking at her is like staring directly into the sun.

Cost: Pyros
Action: Instant
Dice Pool: Presence + Intimidation + Azoth

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character suffers the Stunned Tilt (p. 318), as the light builds up inside her like an internal sunburn.

Failure: She is unable to brighten her usual glow beyond lantern level.

Success: Attackers must accept the Blinded Tilt (p. 313) as though blind in one eye in order to attack the character. Anyone the Promethean attacks suffers the same Tilt. The Tilt may apply to other characters in the scene at the Storyteller's discretion.

Exceptional Success: The Blinded Tilt applies as though the victim were blind in both eyes instead.

Searing Corona

The Promethean's blinding light heats up, creating a blistering aura around her.

Cost: 2 Pyros
Action: Reflexive
Dice Pool: None

The area surrounding the Promethean, out to a radius of (Azoth) in yards, gains a modified version of the Extreme Heat Tilt (p. 315), in addition to being blinding. Instead of penalties increasing (and damage accumulating) every hour, they increase every round. This environmental hazard follows her movements and affects everyone in the area except herself.

Volatile Corona

Like the phosphorus that gives this Transmutation's Refinement its name, the Promethean's aura becomes extremely volatile and prone to igniting. If the character holds any light points gained from natural sunlight via the Photosynthesis Alembic, her aura now counts as natural sunlight.

Cost: 3 Pyros
Action: Reflexive
Dice Pool: None

In addition to the effects of the previous two coronae, the area around the Promethean gains the ability to burn unfortunate passers-by. All characters within the area at the start of their turns other than the Promethean herself must make a Stamina + Athletics roll to traverse the area safely. Any character that fails immediately takes one point of fire damage, in addition to any damage from the Extreme Heat Tilt already in effect.

Morning Star

The Morning Star Alembic allows a Promethean to spread her Devil-may-care attitude and zeal for life to others, making her a temping beacon of light, a will-o-wisp pulling witnesses into her dangerous life. She assumes no control over (or responsibility for) their actions, of course, and so Prometheans on other Refinements might watch in horror (Aurum) or fascination (Cobalus) as she cheerfully leads others into temptation.

Persistent: When the character suggests an ill-considered, reckless, or even simply spontaneous course of action, and at least one other character takes it, the Light-Bringer regains a point of Willpower. This effect can be used once a scene.

Ignis Fatuus

"Fool's Fire" is another name for the will-o-wisp, a strange light that led travelers into danger. The Ignis Fatuus Distillation doesn't create a literal light, but a metaphorical one, making the Promethean seem trustworthy, interesting, and fascinating, thus leading others to follow her. Unlike the Lure Distillation of Mesmerism (p. 148), Ignis Fatuus works on anyone who can see the character.

Cost: 1 Pyros
Action: Reflexive
Dice Pool: Presence + Persuasion + Azoth vs. Composure + Supernatural Tolerance

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character draws attention, but not in the way she'd hoped. Everyone present must check for Disquiet.

Failure: The character does not draw attention.

Success: The character seems bright, lively, and interesting. First impressions for purposes of Social maneuvering are considered good (p. 203), and Social actions enjoy a +2 modifier for the remainder of the scene.

Exceptional Success: As above, and witnesses are more agreeable to suggestions that seem, on their face, to be counterintuitive and

even dangerous, provided that they're also fun and exciting. Asking a security guard to let the character into a locked room probably won't get a positive result, since it's not an interesting activity on its own. Asking the same guard to leave his post to sneak off with the Promethean for some kind of illicit activity, however, is a much more interesting proposition (though it does leave the Promethean in a potentially awkward situation).

Beckon

The character compels a witness to follow her, no matter the danger or consequence. Used on a mortal, this Distillation inevitably causes Disquiet.

Cost: 2 Pyros

Action: Instant

Dice Pool: Presence + Empathy + Azoth vs. Resolve + Supernatural Tolerance

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The subject immediately increases Disquiet by one stage and becomes suspicious and frightened of the Promethean. The subject doesn't follow her but attempts to get help or get away from the character.

Failure: The subject takes note of the character as appropriate for the situation, but the Distillation has no further effect.

Success: The subject follows the character compulsively. If appropriate to the situation, the target might alert others, but he follows the character as long as he can see her. The effect ends if he catches up and touches her, but if the character can keep just ahead of the target, she can lead him on forever. Once he catches up, Disquiet increases by one stage.

Exceptional Success: The target follows the character to the exclusion of all else. He does not speak to others, explain himself, call for assistance, or take any other action not related to catching up with the character. Once he catches up, Disquiet increases by one stage.

Ringleader

Prometheans have difficulty with social dynamics, but this Distillation helps illuminate them. For a short time, the Light-Bringer becomes the alpha, the leader, the decision-maker of a group. This doesn't allow the Promethean to send others into battle or compel them to act against their interests, but it does mean that even a mob in the throes of late-stage Disquiet can be defused.

Cost: 3 Pyros

Dice Pool: Presence + Socialize + Azoth

Action: Extended (1 roll per turn, variable successes needed)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The player loses all accumulated successes and the crowd turns hostile, even violent, depending on the circumstances. Check for Disquiet for all present.

Failure: The player does not gain any successes and can either accept a Condition (including Disquieted, for the subjects) or quit the attempt.

Success: The player gains successes. The Distillation needs one success per target to be affected in order to be successful, and it doesn't function on fewer than three targets (though the Promethean can count her throng among them, as long as they at least pretend to agree with the Light-Bringer's position or suggestion). If the player reaches the target number of successes, the targets follow the Light-Bringer's lead. If the crowd had been threatening violence, the Promethean can defuse the situation or change the target. She can cause the crowd to disperse or to follow her to a new location. The effects of this Distillation fade after she gives the crowd instructions; if she wants to continue the effect, the player must make another extended roll.

The instructions that the Light-Bringer gives the crowd must make sense within the context of the situation. A group of people deciding what movie to see aren't suddenly going to decide to burn down a building, though they might decide to undertake a different activity for the evening. A mob of Disquiet-influenced people might decide to leave their target alone, but they probably aren't going to give him all their worldly possessions. Ringleader doesn't allow the character to issue complicated, long-term commands, simply to influence an existing dynamic.

If the crowd (or a majority of the targets) is suffering from Disquiet, it increases by one stage at the end of the scene.

Exceptional Success: If the player chooses the exceptional success option for this action, the character can influence the crowd for the remainder of the scene, *or* the player can opt to delay an increase in Disquiet for 12 hours.

Blaze of Glory

Many Light-Bringers prefer a high-risk, high-reward lifestyle, living on the edge of a knife to see how long they can avoid bleeding. This Alembic allows the Promethean to indulge this philosophy to the hilt and give everything she has as often as possible. She blazes like a firework and regrets nothing when the light dies down, laughing in the face of Wasteland's lurking risk.

Persistent: Giving every problem her all invigorates the Light-Bringer, urging her to do it again and again. She empties herself to skirt death, and in so doing, feels more alive. Whenever the character spends her last point of Pyros, she gains one Willpower point, up to her maximum Willpower capacity.

Outshining the Sun

Some students of Luciferus are driven by the need to make the most of everything they do. These Light-Bringers stoke the embers of their Azoth to a raging bonfire, pushing the limits of their power.

Cost: 1 Pyros

Action: Instant

Dice Pool: Resolve + Expression + Azoth

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character destabilizes her Divine Fire, reducing the amount of Pyros needed to trigger a Wasteland by one for the scene. This may mean that the use of this power triggers a Wasteland.

Failure: She is unable to generate enough internal energy to start the Azothic reaction.

Success: Treat the character's Azoth rating as one higher for the purposes of Transmutation activation rolls and Supernatural Tolerance.

Exceptional Success: Treat the character's Azoth as two higher.



Roman Candle

Every mark the Promethean makes on the world will be bright, loud, and larger than life. This is the promise the Light-Bringer makes, and she refuses to be proven wrong.

Cost: 2 Pyros
Action: Reflexive
Dice Pool: None

The character adds three dice to the next contested roll she makes. She may continue to spend Pyros points on this Distillation to add to contested rolls, at a rate of two dice per Pyros spent.

All or Nothing

Drawing on the knowledge that light and heat lend speed to alchemical reactions, the Light-Bringer can shatter the dam that keeps her Pyros at bay.

Cost: 3 Pyros
Action: Reflexive
Dice Pool: None

The Promethean is no longer bound by her Pyros expenditure limit. She may spend as much Pyros in a single turn as she likes. However, this Distillation does nothing to mitigate the formation of a Wasteland.

Beacon of Helios

A lantern or campfire in a dark place can provide comfort. In alchemical symbolism, light is depicted as a source of spiritual illumination — literal as well as metaphorical "enlightenment." Light-Bringers who study the more philosophical side of their Refinement can act as beacons to the frightened, lost or ignorant.

Persistent: The character's Azoth exudes a spiritual warmth that helps people stay grounded. Anyone who makes a roll for a breaking point or a step backwards on the Pilgrimage in the Promethean's direct vicinity gains +1 to that roll (the Promethean himself is not affected).

Daybreak

The Promethean's Azoth burns with a reassuring glow that makes the dark world around him seem just a bit brighter. He can appeal to the better natures of others when most would resort to base temptation. This power does not function while the character suffers the Tormented Condition.

Cost: 1 Pyros
Action: Reflexive
Dice Pool: None

Whenever the character engages in Social maneuvering (p. 202), he may influence the interaction using his subject's Virtue or Elpis in the same way that Vice can normally be used. If agreeing to the Promethean's influence could allow the subject to gain Willpower through Virtue or Elpis, move his impression one step higher.

Guidepost

The Light-Bringer is at the forefront of events, leading by example. His Azoth's compelling warmth naturally inspires others whenever he attempts to convince someone to join, follow, or

serve him using Persuasion or Expression. If the Promethean is suffering the Tormented Condition, this power can only be used with Intimidation and only to force servitude.

Cost: 2 Pyros

Action: Reflexive

Dice Pool: Presence + Persuasion + Azoth – target's Resolve

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character's Azoth flares too strongly. He comes across as forceful, arrogant, or just plain crazy. The target progresses one stage into Disquiet and, for Social maneuvering, adds one Door.

Failure: The Promethean's words have no supernatural effect.

Success: The character treats a number of appropriate Social rolls against the target equal to successes on the activation roll as rote actions. With Social maneuvering, his impression is one step higher than it otherwise would have been (if applicable).

Exceptional Success: Whenever the Promethean succeeds at a Social maneuvering roll that meets Guidepost's criteria, he opens one extra Door.

Lighthouse for the Dead

A Light-Bringer can catch another Promethean at the very cusp of death, using his own Azoth to rekindle the dying embers of another before it goes out forever. This Distillation can also allow the branded throngmates of a Promethean who *does* die to follow her to the River and aid her on her journey back.

Whenever a Promethean character's last Health box fills with aggravated damage, the Light-Bringer can attempt to fan the flames of the target's Divine Fire before she is completely dead. He must touch the target to use this power,

Cost: 3 Pyros

Action: Instant

Dice Pool: Stamina + Occult + Azoth

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Not only does the Light-Bringer fail to rekindle the target's Divine Fire, but his proximity to the dying flame nearly drags him along with it. He suffers one point of aggravated damage and gains the Shaken Condition (p. 311). The throng has no opportunity to follow their dead throngmate to the River; it's all the character can do just to save himself.

Failure: The Light-Bringer is too late to save his target from death, but if he shares a Pyros Brand with the target, he and other branded throngmates can follow her consciousness to the River of Death and take the journey with her (p. 169), as long as they still have the option to return, whether by Azoth flare or the Revivification Bestowment. Any throngmate can choose to refuse the call. Those who accept it experience the scene together and can help their dead companion through her ordeals, while their bodies seem to be comatose.

Success: The Light-Bringer, the target and all other branded throngmates in the vicinity experience a joint Elpis vision in which the throng coaxes the dying character back from the brink. At the culmination of the vision, the Light-Bringer reignites the dying Promethean's Azoth, downgrading a number of the target's aggravated points of damage equal to the successes on the activation roll to lethal. If he rolls well enough that the target runs out of aggravated points to downgrade, remaining successes can downgrade lethal points to bashing.

Exceptional Success: Additional successes downgrade more points of damage, as indicated above.

Metamorphosis

Prometheans who follow the Refinement of Cuprum believe that their bodies are not unlike clay, waiting to be shaped into something more useful. They learn the secrets of Metamorphosis in order to change their appearance or even bodily shape. Some make the attempt to shift in just the right manner to make the body fit what the world demands. Others simply relish the opportunity to learn tricks that make survival just that much easier.

Charging a Metamorphosis Distillation without flaring disfigurements imposes the Atavistic Condition (p. 306).

Metamorphosis is divided into four Alembics. Those Alembics are: Aptare (the ability to adapt to the environment), Bestiae Facies (changing into animal-like forms), Tegere (the ability to create armor due to shapeshifting), and Verto (the ability to change appearance).

Aptare

Pariahs often live in remote, inhospitable places. While the Promethean body can take far more punishment than a human, it is neither invulnerable nor immune to the need for basic necessities such as food and water. With some practice, the Pariah forces her body to adapt to go without or to function in ways it was never intended.

Persistent: The Pariah ignores the effects of one Environmental Tilt per scene. She chooses which Tilt to ignore, her body adapting to the circumstances. She may only ignore Tilts that have environmental consequences — extremes of heat or cold, heavy rains, flooding, earthquakes, and so on. The Pariah cannot breathe water or survive in a vacuum without charging the Alembic, however.

Blessing of Tethys

The Promethean changes her physiology to breathe water instead of air. She suffers no outward signs of this alteration. Instead, the lining in her lungs changes to filter oxygen from water instead of air.

Cost: 1 Pyros

Dice Pool: None

Action: Instant

Once this power is activated, the character's lungs change to breathe water. This effect persists until the Promethean spends 1 Pyros to reverse the effect. During this exchange, any residual air or water in the character's lungs is instantly and effortlessly expelled, so the character is in no danger of drowning.

Scuttling Spider

Sometimes a Promethean needs to scale a cliff, tree, or other vertical surface. This could be to acquire food, to escape from enemies, predators, or natural disasters, or to find shelter. Her hands and feet grow tiny hooks, suckers, or similar miniature adhesive adaptations. Her bones become hollow, enabling her to climb vertical surfaces without tearing pieces of that surface off.

Cost: 2 Pyros
Action: Reflexive
Dice Pool: None

The Pariah adapts her body as described. For the remainder of the scene, she may scale vertical obstructions effortlessly, moving as her usual Speed. Particularly slick surfaces may require a Strength + Athletics roll to make headway (a Climbing Specialty certainly applies). Even slick surfaces are no barrier, as she may climb them as she would any other barrier. In addition, she may move upside-down across ceilings and similar surfaces with a successful Strength + Athletics roll.

Procrustean Shape

With full control over her own body, the Promethean can adapt to any number of situations. This power allows her to change her own proportions for a variety of effects.

Cost: 3 Pyros
Dice Pool: Resolve + Medicine + Azoth
Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Pariah attempts to alter some aspect of her body and fails utterly. She suffers from the Stunned Tilt, as the pain makes her temporarily unable to act.

Failure: The Promethean fails to adapt her body.

Success: The Pariah successfully alters her body, adopting one facet from the list below.

Exceptional Success: The character may select two alterations from the list below.

Alterations

The following list is provided to act as examples of alterations possible with this Distillation. Similar abilities may be available at the Storyteller's discretion.

Long Arms: The Promethean's arms extend, gaining a +1 to Defense while in close combat as his reach gives him an advantage. Alternatively, the character may extend only one arm up to two feet per success to reach something out of his reach, but suffers a –1 penalty to all actions while in combat.

Long Legs: The character's legs lengthen, lengthening her stride. She gains a +1 to Speed per success.

Malleable Skeleton: The Pariah makes his bones like rubber, enabling him to twist and squeeze his body through any opening at least one foot in diameter. While moving through the opening, the character may move at half of her Speed, but loses Defense. If used in conjunction with *Long Arms* or *Long Legs,* the limbs are pliable, able to bend around corners and perform similar feats.

Altered Body: The character's body alters as desired. He can make his body rubbery and pliant, or harden it like rock. Regardless of the method, the character gains armor equal to the activation successes as his body simply absorbs or deflects impacts.

Bestiae Facies

Living in the wild as they do, Pariahs start to think and act like beasts in certain ways. It is no wonder they find it useful to take on some of the qualities of the animal kingdom.

Persistent: Animals rely heavily on their instincts. With this power, so can a Promethean. The Promethean's player calculates Defense using the *higher* of Wits or Dexterity.

Natural Weaponry

In the wild, a follower of Cuprum must be able to defend herself or hunt. Without tools, those tasks would be difficult if not impossible. This ability helps the Promethean survive in those conditions.

Cost: 1 Pyros
Dice Pool: None
Action: Reflexive

The character grows claws on her hands or her canines elongate into fangs, which are treated as 1L weapons. Biting in combat requires a grapple, however.

Form of the Barghest

Beyond simply growing claws or fangs, the Promethean can now adopt a fully bestial form. This creature does not exactly resemble any living creature. He might perhaps be mistaken for a large dog or wolf in poor light, but not by anyone with a good view.

Cost: 2 Pyros
Dice Pool: None
Action: Instant

The Promethean shifts into the barghest form. While in this shape, the character adds the following modifiers: +1 Size (which adds 1 Health box), +1 Strength, +2 to species factor (for a total of +3 to Speed), and +1 to all Perception rolls. In addition, the barghest's claws and teeth still act as 1L weapons, and increased jaw size means a grapple is not required to bite.

Chimera

The Promethean may now mimic normal creatures. By touching an animal and activating this power, the Cuprum adds the beast to his internal library. Afterward, the character may change shape into that animal. He may "remember" a number of animal shapes equal to his Azoth.

Cost: 3 Pyros
Dice Pool: Stamina + Animal Ken + Azoth
Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Not only does the Promethean fail to change his shape, but the animal he intended to shift into is removed from his internal library. He may re-acquire it as normal, which may be difficult depending on circumstances.

Failure: The Promethean fails to change his shape.

Success: The Promethean changes into the target animal. He can change into a creature with a much larger or smaller Size than him, up to a difference limit equal to his Azoth. So, a Size 5 Promethean with Azoth 3 may shift into a creature ranging from Size 2 to Size 8. He gains any physical characteristics of the target animal, and thus that creature's movement forms (swimming, flight, climbing and so on), or other special physical features such as the poison held by venomous animals. In the case of venomous creatures, the Promethean is able to inflict the Poisoned Tilt on a successful attack.

The change takes some time to take place. If used in combat, the Promethean does not complete the shift until his initiative count on the following turn and cannot use Defense until that point.

Exceptional Success: The change is instantaneous and the Promethean can take another action in this turn.

Tegere

The desolate places the Pariahs call home play host to any number of dangerous creatures. The character learns how to change her body for protection. Such alterations are visible to everyone and appear differently than the Promethean's disfigurements.

Persistent: The Promethean changes her skin into a form of flexible, pliable armor. It may appear as a covering of scales or thin layer of blubber. Regardless of its appearance, the skin provides some protection against simple forms of attack. Against attacks that inflict bashing damage, he has Armor rated 2/0. The armor does not penalize Defense or Speed, nor does it have a minimum Strength requirement. Unlike most Persistent Alembic effects, this one requires an instant action to activate, meaning that the character is vulnerable to surprise.

Impermeable Shell

With some effort, the Pariah can harden her skin, protecting her from most sources of harm, even bullets.

Cost: 1 Pyros

Dice Pool: Stamina + Survival + Azoth

Action: Reflexive

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Distillation backfires and restricts the character's movement. Until her next turn, the character cannot apply Defense to incoming attacks.

Failure: The Promethean does not gain armor.

Success: The Pariah's skin hardens to the equivalent toughness of Kevlar, providing an armor rating of 2/4, and suffering a –1 penalty to Defense while the Distillation is active. This power lasts for a number of turns equal the successes on the activation roll.

Exceptional Success: The power lasts for a scene.

Retributive Protection

At this level, it's not enough that the Promethean simply protect herself. Now, she needs to make her attackers feel pain in return.

Cost: 2 Pyros

Dice Pool: Stamina + Weaponry + Azoth

Action: Reflexive

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character takes one point of lethal damage as the alteration fails, tearing skin.

Failure: The character fails to generate the armor.

Success: The Promethean's skin alters to include some sort of sharp or jagged surface. Perhaps her skin is covered in knotty, thorny vines, or consists of jagged rock. Regardless, anyone who makes an unarmed attack against her takes one point of lethal damage in return. Weapons take this damage to their Durability. The Distillation lasts for a number of turns equal to the activation successes.

Exceptional Success: Attackers take two points of lethal damage instead.

Quill Assault

The Promethean goes beyond simple passive armor, adapting his body's defenses to work offensively as well. Nearby enemies have a moment's surprise before pieces of the Pariah's armor come flying at them at lethal speed. Despite this Distillation's name, the armor can take any natural form — scales, quills, or even rock-like plates.

Cost: 3 Pyros

Dice Pool: None to activate; Dexterity + Athletics – Defense to attack

Action: Reflexive or instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Pariah's body warps painfully as the armor tries to activate, inflicting three points of lethal damage.

Failure: The character does not grow armor and thus can't fire any parts of it at enemies.

Success: Activating this power is a reflexive action that requires no roll. Once activated, the character benefits from an armor rating of 4/4. Her Defense and Speed are both penalized by 2.

As an instant action, the character may fire portions of her armor at everyone within range. Since doing so causes the armor to rip away from the character's body, the character suffers one point of lethal damage. Roll Dexterity + Athletics against everyone within (Azoth x 10) feet away. Defense applies (subtract the highest Defense present from the roll), but armor protects its wearer like normal. For purposes of this attack, the fragments count as a weapon with a damage rating of 1L. Once fired, the armor provides protection at the level described under Impermeable Shell, but the character can reactive the other levels without further Pyros expenditure.

Exceptional Success: The fragments count as 2L weapons instead.

Verto

The Promethean can alter his bodily features. Unlike illusory powers, these changes are physical, making it more difficult for others to see past the alterations.

Persistent: The character can change minor physical details. He might change his hair color or length, eye color, or amount of body hair. Many Prometheans use this ability to avoid scrutiny.

Medusa's Visage

With a snarl, the character's face becomes hideous, capable of frightening others.

Cost: 1 Pyros

Dice Pool: Stamina + Intimidation + Azoth

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Promethean frightens nobody. Instead, she is susceptible to fear herself. For the remainder of the scene, the next roll intended to frighten or intimidate her gains a +2 bonus.

Failure: The Distillation does not take effect.

Success: The Pariah's face becomes hideous. Any attempts to intimidate or unnerve others gain one bonus die per success on this roll. Any Social rolls for anything else are penalized by the same amount. This ability lasts for a scene or until the character chooses to restore her features to normal with an instant action.

Exceptional Success: Once per turn, the character may inflict one of the following Conditions on a target: Frightened, Shaken, or Spooked.

Everyman

By physically changing his face and body, the Promethean becomes just one more faceless person in the crowd. Drab and unassuming with no distinguishing features, he blends into the mass of humanity even as he recalls how detached from it he really is.

Cost: 2 Pyros

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Subterfuge + Azoth

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character inadvertently makes herself stand out. Any rolls to notice or identify the Promethean for the rest of the scene gain a +2 bonus.

Failure: The power fails to activate.

Success: For the remainder of the scene, the Promethean is difficult to notice. His features are just too normal, too uniform, to pick out of a crowd. Mundane means of identifying the Promethean fail outright, but the player also suffers a –3 modifier on Social actions.

Exceptional Success: The Pariah's features are so bland and generic that remembering anything about him is difficult. Witnesses have a –2 penalty to recall details about the character. This supposes that the character didn't do anything to draw attention to himself.

Body Like Clay

With this power, the Promethean's body is his to command and shape. He may mold it however he wishes, changing its size and mass or altering facial features.

Cost: 3 Pyros

Dice Pool: Dexterity + Medicine + Azoth

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Promethean loses control over how her body shifts. The cosmetic details are left to the player and Storyteller but whatever form they take, these alterations inflict a –2 penalty to the character's actions for the remainder of the scene.

Failure: The character is unable to make her body malleable.

Success: The Pariah alters her body however she would like. She may increase or decrease her Size by 1, shift facial features, hair/eye color, skin tone, or gender. The Pariah has nearly complete control over the appearance of her body. The Pariah can alter his features to mimic a person of the same general build. She cannot mimic any supernatural abilities, but almost anything else is fair game. The change lasts for one turn per success. The player can extend it by making another roll when the duration ends; this requires no further Pyros expenditure.

Exceptional Success: The change lasts for a full scene.

Mesmerism

A Mimic or Cathar who has dedicated himself to understanding human psychology can learn to use Azoth's affinity for the humors to influence them. This causes effects similar to Disquiet but that are more subtle and easily controlled, though limited to influencing emotions rather than controlling minds. Mesmerism is a brute force tool, affecting the target's emotions rather than controlling their mind. As such, it can have unpredictable results. The risk is that such manipulation can provoke Disquiet; the more powerful the effect, the more likely it is to harm the subject.

The Refinements experience this Transmutation in different ways. For a Cathar, emotional imbalance represents a weakness. Pushing the humours out of balance is a matter of introducing impurities, shorting one ingredient or adding too much of another. His understanding is focused on dysfunction and disorder. He sees the final stage of each Alembic as a means to purge the imbalance and return things to right. A Mimic, on the other hand, experiences Mesmerism as a heightened empathy. She feels what her target feels and uses this sympathy to shift the tides of his emotions. For a Mimic, the terminal stage of each Alembic is as traumatic for her as it is for the target.

Charging a Mesmerism Distillation without flaring disfigurements imposes the Callous Condition (p. 307).

Mesmerism is divided into four Alembics. Those Alembics are: Phobos (invoking fear), Eros (creating devotion), Eris (causing confusion), and Penthos (eroding self-worth).

Phobos

The Promethean saps the choleric humour of the target, making her more susceptible to fear and anxiety. Her passion, aggression, and confidence are sapped and she becomes passive and skittish. If enough of the humour is drained, the condition can become terminal. Even without the expenditure of Pyros, the Promethean has an instinctive understanding of how to cause fear in people and force them to back down. The range of these Distillations is three yards per point of Azoth.

Persistent: The player only needs three successes on Intimidation rolls in order to get an exceptional success and impose the Shaken Condition.

Rattle

A slight adjustment of the humour merely makes the subject nervous, which can serve to expedite social interactions as she wishes to be rid of the object of her anxiety. This ability is best used against those the Promethean never intends to meet again, as it makes the experience highly unpleasant. Even if the subject does not enter Disquiet, she will not remember him fondly.

Cost: 1 Pyros

Dice Pool: Presence + Intimidation + Azoth vs. Composure + Azoth

Action: Instant and contested

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The target immediately enters Disquiet or advances to the next stage if already suffering it. If the character is attempting Social maneuvering, it immediately fails.

Failure: The target resists the effort.

Success: The target is afraid of the Promethean and prefers to limit their interaction. She doesn't flee, but attempts to shorten the time she has to interact with him and refuses to engage him unless absolutely necessary. A guard might wave him through a checkpoint while only glancing at his papers, a cop might let him go with a quick warning, or a secretary might give him the information he wants just to get him to leave. If using Social maneuvering, this counts as Hard Leverage and removes one Door.

Exceptional Success: The target risks even dire consequences in order to be rid of the Promethean. The guard might let him into a secured area with no identification, the cop might ignore the illegal weapon he is holding, or the secretary might give him her employer's home address. If using Social maneuvering, this counts as Hard Leverage and removes two Doors.

Terrify

A sudden, severe adjustment to the humour inflicts the subject with unreasoning terror, causing her to flee from the Promethean's presence. Although this terror eventually fades, the subject will always be nervous around him and won't associate with him willingly. Using Social maneuvering, her impression of him is hostile.

Cost: 2 Pyros

Dice Pool: Presence + Intimidation + Azoth vs. Resolve + Azoth

Action: Instant and contested

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The target immediately enters Disquiet or advances to the next stage if already suffering it.

Failure: The target resists the effort to adjust her humours.

Success: The target gains the Frightened Condition (p. 309) with the Promethean as its focus for the rest of the scene.

Exceptional Success: The target cannot spend Willpower to suppress the effects of the Condition.

Swoon

The strongest use of this Alembic causes intense, physical terror that can threaten the life of the subject. At the very least, her terror robs her of consciousness and puts a strain on her sanity.

Cost: 3 Pyros

Dice Pool: Presence + Intimidation + Azoth – Stamina

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The target immediately enters Disquiet or advances to the next stage if already suffering it.

Failure: The target is unaffected.

Success: The target suffers a moment of terror so intense that it causes physical distress. She takes one point of bashing damage per success and falls unconscious. She won't regain consciousness until at least one point of damage is recovered. She suffers a breaking point with a two-die penalty.

Exceptional Success: She instead takes lethal damage as the shock causes a heart attack.

Eros

By stoking the subject's sanguine humor, the Promethean encourages her to become smitten and more easily manipulated. Used sparingly, this can be a very useful social lubricant, but if pushed too far it leads to obsession and madness. The stronger the humour, the more concerned she is with shallow estimations of attractiveness and pursuit of pleasure. She becomes playful, friendly, and eager to make new acquaintances. She also grows flighty, forgetful, and overconfident. Even without Pyros, the Promethean has a natural instinct for seduction. The bonus from the Striking Looks merit is applicable to their dice pool.

Persistent: The player only needs three successes on Persuasion rolls in order to get an exceptional success and impose the Swooning Condition.

Lure

The smallest change to the humour merely makes the subject amiable and friendly. This makes all social interaction more pleasant and attempts to persuade significantly easier. As a bonus, unless soured by Disquiet, the subject will continue to think fondly of the Promethean after the initial effects have worn off. Using Social maneuvering later, her impression of him is still good.

Cost: 1 Pyros

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Persuasion + Azoth vs. Composure + Azoth

Action: Instant and contested

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The target immediately enters Disquiet or advances to the next stage if already suffering it. If attempting Social maneuvering, it fails.

Failure: The target resists the effort.

Success: The target is taken with the Promethean and becomes more easily persuaded for a scene. Small, easy to fulfill requests are generally granted. She becomes friendly, talkative, and flirty. For creatures used to hostility at every turn, this level of congeniality is a relief. All Social rolls involving her are at +2. If using Social maneuvering, he makes an excellent impression.

Exceptional Success: The target even fulfills difficult requests or those that entail small risks. If using Social maneuvering, he makes a perfect impression.

Seduce

Greater adjustment causes a surge of infatuation so strong that the subject will do anything the Promethean asks to prove her devotion. Unlike with the subtle application, this Distillation causes no long-term effects, as the rush of endorphins is so brain-addling that it may erase the memory of the experience much less leave a solid foundation for future friendship.

Cost: 2 Pyros

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Persuasion +Azoth vs. Resolve + Azoth

Action: Instant and contested

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The target immediately enters Disquiet or advances to the next stage if already suffering it.

Failure: The target resists the effort.

Success: The target is so overwhelmed by emotion that she obediently obeys one request. She does exactly as she is told. The downside is that her intellect is suppressed so she cannot elaborate or creatively interpret. She is very literal and won't draw on her own knowledge to avoid complications. If he tells a guard to go into the security room and turn off a camera, she does precisely that. She doesn't wait for the other guard to leave or otherwise conceal her actions, nor does she mention that doing so will trigger an alarm with the home company.

Exceptional Success: The target won't remember what she did once the scene is over.

Inflame

The most severe change in humours turns the subject into a devoted thrall, willing to follow the Promethean anywhere and do anything he asks. However, her affection is now dangerously obsessive and she defends him from even imagined slights with an insane fury. This always leaves the subject in Disquiet after it has run its course and is often psychologically damaging, particularly as she remembers what she did while in the grips of her mad love.

Cost: 3 Pyros

Dice Pool: Presence + Intimidation + Azoth vs. Resolve + Azoth

Action: Instant and contested

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The target immediately enters Disquiet or advances to the next stage if already suffering it.

Failure: The target is unaffected.

Success: The target gains the Obsession Condition focused on the Promethean and will not leave his side, doing everything she can to assist him for the scene. If he is attacked or otherwise threatened, she immediately gains the Insane Tilt focused on murdering the offender. This behavior will usually result in a breaking point. At the end of the scene, she immediately enters Disquiet or advance to the next stage.

Exceptional Success: The target can resist gaining the Insane Tilt with a successful Resolve + Composure roll, but still focuses on defending the Promethean at the expense of her own well-being, even acting as a human shield.

Eris

The Promethean can manipulate the phlegmatic humor to cause the subject to turn inward, becoming easily confused and unable to focus. Likewise, her physical movements become slow and clumsy. The main benefit of this Alembic is that it usually leaves the subject unclear on what happened to her. Some consider it less damaging than the other Mesmerism Alembics, but those who have used it extensively note that the side effects are just more subtle. Even without spending Pyros, he is adept at instilling confusion through convoluted reasoning, misdirection, and lies. Eris' Distillations are limited in range to three yards per point of Azoth.

Persistent: The Promethean only needs three successes on Subterfuge rolls in order to get an exceptional success and impose the Confused Condition.

Misdirect

The simplest changes cause the subject to lose track of what she was doing. This is most useful when the subject's goal is obvious, such as a police officer actively searching for the Promethean or a homeowner investigating a strange noise in her home.

Cost: 1 Pyros

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Subterfuge + Azoth vs. Resolve + Azoth

Action: Instant and contested

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The target immediately enters Disquiet or advances to the next stage if already suffering it, and gains the Steadfast Condition.

Failure: The target resists the effort.

Success: The target becomes confused and addled with regards to whatever goal is foremost in her mind at the moment. She suffers a –3 modifier to any Mental actions related to this goal.

Exceptional Success: The Promethean gets to choose what goal to affect.

Baffle

More radical adjustments cause a general state of confusion where the subject finds herself unable to focus or act. She is lost in her own muddled thoughts and just stares straight ahead.

Cost: 2 Pyros

Dice Pool: Resolve + Subterfuge + Azoth – Resolve

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The target immediately enters Disquiet or advances to the next stage if already suffering it.

Failure: The target resists the effort.

Success: The target is subject to the Stunned Tilt for one turn per success rolled. Willpower spent to allow the target to act does not end the Tilt prematurely.

Exceptional Success: She is unable to clearly remember anything that occurred while stunned.

Fog

Drastic adjustment of the phlegmatic humour causes the subject to be completely lost in her mental fog, eroding her memory of what occurred prior in the same scene. While not traumatic, the damage caused by the dissolution of memory has subtle long-term effects on her sanity and inflicts Disquiet.

Cost: 3 Pyros

Dice Pool: Presence + Subterfuge + Azoth – Resolve

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The target immediately enters Disquiet or advances to the next stage if already suffering it.

Failure: The target is unaffected.

Success: The target immediately falls into a catatonic state. When he wakes, he suffers from the Amnesia Condition about everything that happened in the scene. This lasts for one day per success with the memories slowly emerging as dreams and hallucinations. This causes

a breaking point with a –2 on the roll, and the target immediately enters Disquiet or advances to the next stage.

Exceptional Success: The Condition is Persistent.

Penthos

Perhaps the cruelest of the Mesmerism Alembics, Penthos reinforces the subject's melancholic humor, causing her to become withdrawn and pessimistic. Its use is an erosion of will and self-image that can destroy the subject if pushed far enough. She loses the capacity to feel joy and becomes suspicious of everyone, including herself. Even without expending Pyros, he is able to easily find ways to make a person feel guilty. Penthos has a range of three yards per point of Azoth.

Persistent: The player only needs three successes on Empathy rolls in order to get an exceptional success and impose the Guilty Condition.

Undermine

Even the subtlest alteration causes the subject's confidence to be undermined so that she doubts herself. The early stages of depression set in and she has difficulty feeling enthused or motivated while under the influence of the Alembic.

Cost: 1 Pyros

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Empathy + Azoth vs. Resolve + Supernatural Tolerance

Action: Reflexive and contested

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The target immediately enters Disquiet or advances to the next stage if already suffering it.

Failure: The target resists the effort.

Success: The target is unable to spend Willpower for the rest of the scene.

Exceptional Success: The effect lasts a full day.

Defeat

Feeding the subject's melancholia leaves her feeling defeated. She surrenders to any aggression, having lost any confidence that she can win the conflict. She feels worthless and begins to suspect her life has no value.

Cost: 2 Pyros

Dice Pool: Presence + Empathy + Azoth vs. Resolve + Supernatural Tolerance

Action: Reflexive and contested

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The target immediately enters Disquiet or advances to the next stage if already suffering it.

Failure: The target resists the effort.

Success: The target acquires the Beaten Down Tilt.

Exceptional Success: The target cannot spend Willpower to take violent actions.

Depress

If the melancholia is pushed further, the subject is emotionally shattered and enters full-fledged depression. She becomes extremely malleable as her will is broken. It is not unknown for someone subjected to this power to commit suicide.

Cost: 3 Pyros

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Empathy + Azoth vs. Resolve + Supernatural Tolerance

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The target immediately enters Disquiet or advances to the next stage if already suffering it.

Failure: The target is unaffected.

Success: For the rest of the scene, the target cannot take actions without first spending a point of Willpower. She also cannot use Resolve as a resistance trait. In addition, she suffers from the Broken Condition (p. 307) for one day per success rolled.

Exceptional Success: The Broken Condition is persistent and the target will engage in self-destructive and suicidal behavior.

Saturninus

Unlike many Created, who keep their eyes on the prize, the Originist finds enlightenment in exploring the Saturnine Night itself. She may play mentor to other Created, become a steward of Promethean culture (such as it is), or transform herself into an exemplar of her kind. By altering the formula of her humours and tapping into the raw power of her Azoth, she gains a measure of confidence in what she is in order to bolster her courage for what's to come.

Charging a Saturninus Distillation without flaring disfigurements imposes the Regressive Condition (p. 311).

Saturninus is divided into four Alembics. Those Alembics are: Heed the Call (mastery of Azothic radiance), Plumb the Fathoms (mastery of Azothic memory), Stoke the Furnace (becoming the platonic ideal of the Created), and Prime the Vessel (direct manipulation of the Promethean body).

Heed the Call

A Promethean's Divine Fire is too restless to be fully contained. It spills out into the world, revealing faint traces of the metaphysical changes its vessel has undergone for those who know how to see them. Originists can become experts in reading and manipulating Azothic radiance.

Persistent: The Promethean can detect a source of Azothic radiance as though the source were one Azoth rating higher than it is. He can also pinpoint the source's general direction and rough distance away; this can manifest in a variety of ways, such as a sound, a scent or simply a vague sense of "hot and cold." A successful Wits + Survival roll can lead him to the source, with modifiers at the Storyteller's discretion based on distance, Flux taint or other circumstances.

Inscribed in Flame

The Promethean can sense the presence of any pilgrim marks as though they were a source of Azoth with a rating equal to that of the scribe, suffering no penalty to find them even if they were deliberately hidden. He can also automatically tell if a Promethean

whose radiance he can detect is suffering the Tormented Condition. Finally, he can take the Measure of any Azoth source he can detect even if it's out of sight, and can attempt to delve more deeply and discover its secrets.

Cost: 1 Pyros
Dice Pool: Wits + Empathy + Azoth
Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character drastically misinterprets what he senses and gleans false information, chosen by the Storyteller.

Failure: The character fails to interpret any meaning in the thrashing brilliance beyond what he could read with a normal Measure.

Success: Roll for each separate Measure taken. Each success reveals one of the target's traits, chosen from the following by the Originist's player: Elpis, Torment, current Refinement, Azoth rating, Pilgrimage rating, one fixed Alembic, or total current Vitriol Beats and Experiences. If used to examine an Athanor's radiance instead, successes can be spent to reveal the number of Vitriol Experiences contained in the Athanor and the Refinement with which it resonates. The Storyteller may also reveal other details based on successes rolled.

Exceptional Success: The character gains the Inspired Condition (p. 310) regarding the Azoth source he has read.

Controlled Burn

The Promethean can bring his Azothic radiance under fine control, either fueling the fire to become a beacon or dampening the flame to fly under the radar.

Cost: 2 Pyros
Dice Pool: Composure + Expression + Azoth
Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character loses all control of his radiance, prompting an immediate resist Disquiet roll from everyone who can perceive him, and immediately waking all Pandorans within range.

Failure: The character cannot tame the wild Azoth inside him.

Success: Each success increases or decreases his effective Azoth rating by one for purposes of detection by creatures that can normally do so, such as Pandorans or other Prometheans. If this would decrease his effective Azoth rating to 0, his radiance becomes undetectable. This also has the effect of making him read as a normal human being to other supernatural means of detection; successes on this Distillation can be applied to any successes roll in a Clash of Will (p. 118) to remain undetected.

Exceptional Success: The character may create a false Azoth trail for trackers to follow. Anyone who could have detected his unmodified radiance picks up the false trail and is thrown off the scent. The character may instead make his exact location apparent to anyone who can detect his newly modified radiance.

Sublimation by Fire

Scholars on the Refinement of Lead discover during their studies that, given a particular connection, two Azothic radiances can interfere with each other like waveforms, amplifying each other's



effects or canceling them out. The Originist can provide the right kind of connection to calm the radiance of a Promethean suffering the Tormented Condition, but he must be careful not to accidentally tip the scales in the wrong direction.

To attempt to end his companion's Torment, the character and his target must be within range of each other's Azothic radiance; using this Alembic to detect the target's radiance from farther away is not enough. Whether the target wishes to be in Torment or not, the contested roll is reflexive and automatic.

This power does not function while the Originist himself suffers the Tormented Condition.

Cost: 3 Pyros

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Expression + Azoth vs. Resolve + Azoth

Action: Extended and contested (one roll per turn; [target's Azoth x 3] successes required)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The whole attempt fails and the two Azothic radiances interact explosively, amplifying each other to extreme effect. Both Prometheans take points of lethal damage equal to the Originist's Azoth rating, and a Wasteland begins immediately.

Failure: If the character fails a roll, the whole attempt fails and the Originist's Azothic radiance burns his target from the inside. The target takes points of lethal damage equal to the Originist's Azoth rating and isn't likely to react well, considering that he's still Tormented.

Success: If the character accumulates the required successes before he fails a roll, the two radiances interfere constructively and the target's Tormented Condition resolves. The Originist also gains a Beat.

Exceptional Success: If the player chooses the exceptional success option for this action, both Prometheans gain a Willpower in addition to other rewards.

Plumb the Fathoms

No one can definitively explain why Azothic memory exists. Whether it's because all Azoth really is one or because Azoth and humour passed from creator to child contain alchemical traces of those who came before, some Originists can delve more deeply into the ocean of collective Promethean memory and dig up secrets like long-lost skeletons.

Persistent: The Promethean can inscribe the details of any Ramble she hears indelibly into her mind until she has the opportunity to pass it on to a more permanent medium, at which point her memory submits normally to the ravages of time. Her connection to the breadth of experience from previous generations grants +1 to rolls to resist supernatural Mental or Social effects, and to effective Azoth when used as a passive resistance trait against the same.

Pilgrim's Landmarks

The Created are rare, but they have walked the Earth for centuries or more. Their footsteps may be long buried, but they are present; a patient Originist can benefit from the wisdom of those who came before. The character can draw upon Azothic memory for information.

Cost: 1 Pyros

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Occult + Azoth

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character accidentally flares her Azoth, beginning a Wasteland.

Failure: This area has no footprint in Azothic Memory, and the character can't learn anything from it.

Success: The character tunes in to the Azothic memory and can learn information about the area. The player can ask one of the following questions:

- Have any still-living Prometheans been here?
- Can I achieve a milestone here?
- What is the greatest danger here?
- Is an Athanor near here?
- Are any pilgrim marks near here?

Exceptional Success: The player can ask a follow-up question after getting the answer to the first question.

Wisdom of Ages

The humours and Azoth that flow through the Promethean once flowed through countless others before her. She can tap into the faint memories that linger on as alchemical fingerprints therein.

Cost: 2 Pyros

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Occult + Azoth

Action: Reflexive

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character experiences sensory overload, unable to make sense of the jumbled visions that invade her mind. She takes a –2 penalty to all Mental Skill rolls for the rest of the scene.

Failure: The character's link to her Azothic memory is too faint to pick up anything useful.

Success: The character experiences vague sensations of events that never happened to her, and gleans knowledge that is not her own. For each success, the player chooses one Mental Skill. Rolls made with these Skills become rote actions, and the Storyteller may reveal information that the Promethean doesn't have the appropriate background to know.

Exceptional Success: Additional successes apply to additional Mental Skills as indicated above.

Glimpsing the Crasis

No Promethean can see the road of her Pilgrimage laid out before her like a map. However, in the twin crucibles of pain and vulnerability, she can view her experiences through the lens of Azothic memory and glean insights from the commonalities she shares with brethren long gone. As long as the character has suffered at least one point of lethal damage in the scene, self-inflicted or otherwise, she may activate this Distillation.

Cost: 3 Pyros

Memory and the Matchless

The collective consciousness of Azothic memory is passed on naturally through humours, Azoth, and ritual to Prometheans made deliberately by a genitor's hands. But what about the Extempore?

Most of the Matchless are forced to wander the world without that safety net. They have no access to Azothic memory unless they belong to a branded throng **(see p. 306)**, and even then their insight is second-hand, filtered through the pact they share with their throngmates. As a result, an Extempore character must have the Branded Throng Condition in order to use any power that relies on Azothic memory to function. This includes the entire Plumb the Fathoms Alembic, as well as several individual Distillations in other Transmutations.

Dice Pool: None
Action: Reflexive

The character infuses her humour with impressions from Azothic memory and her own past, merged as one. She may choose a memory to explore or leave it up to Elpis to decide. Anyone, including herself, who consumes her humour during the scene experiences a fleeting vision, reliving one of her memories. For a Promethean, this vision imparts hints about a related impending milestone, including its type and importance. For others, the vision may prompt a resist Disquiet roll at the Storyteller's discretion, but also imparts a hazy understanding of something the Promethean must do, for reasons the drinker doesn't comprehend. The Originist must be careful, however, as laying bare her memories for others to see may give them leverage against her. Any given character may only benefit from this power once per scene, but those who do gain +2 on any roll they make for the next 24 hours to interpret or force Elpis visions.

Stoke the Furnace

The Originist can take his Transhuman Potential (p. 171) to the next level, dwelling on reaching the pinnacle of what a monster can be before it's something else entirely. This Alembic differs from others in that it changes the way the Promethean functions; the Distillations are alterations to the character's basic makeup, rather than separate powers. As such, Stoke the Furnace Distillations do not cost Pyros to activate, though Transhuman Adaptation costs Pyros to use.

Persistent: The Attribute boost from Transhuman Potential lasts two turns instead of one.

Catalytic Affirmation

The Created find inspiration in the revelations of human endeavor. The Originist can process that inspiration into an internal reaction that lets him exceed his limitations for a time. This power does not function while the character suffers the Tormented Condition.

Cost: None
Dice Pool: None
Action: Reflexive

Whenever the character takes a Beat that affirms the current Role he inhabits, the player chooses one Attribute to boost by one for free for the rest of the chapter. For instance, an Originist in the Chronicler Role might receive the boost by achieving an Aspiration to tell a Ramble to another Promethean, while one in the Pilgrim Role might receive it by resolving a Steadfast Condition to convince a throngmate to stick around.

Chasing Hope

A Promethean's Elpis is his compass, a precious bright spot that motivates him to keep plodding along his Pilgrimage despite overwhelming setbacks. Originists can adjust their humours to spark more intense bouts of inspiration, bolstering their Divine Fire as well as their determination.

Cost: None
Dice Pool: None
Action: Reflexive

Whenever the character recovers a single point of Willpower through his Elpis, he also recovers one point of Pyros. Whenever he recovers his full Willpower through Elpis, he also recovers half his maximum Pyros, rounded up. If the character suffers the Tormented Condition, this Distillation works when recovering Willpower through his Torment instead.

Transhuman Adaptation

The Created understand better than most the power of adaptability to achieve great works. Some can take their Transhuman Potential to new heights, adapting to any situation.

Cost: Varies
Dice Pool: None
Action: Reflexive

The character may use his Transhuman Potential to temporarily purchase one dot per Pyros spent of an eligible Merit for which he qualifies. Eligible Merits include: Acid Stomach, Ambidextrous, Demolisher, Double Jointed, Eidetic Memory, Fast Reflexes, Iron Will, Striking Looks, and Weatherproof. The Storyteller may designate other eligible Merits, but should keep in mind that Transhuman Potential can only alter the alchemical makeup of the Promethean's body, not external circumstances. The Promethean may mix and match between Attribute boosts and Merit dots, and may even use this to briefly qualify for a Merit that would normally be out of reach. These Merits last for one scene.

Prime the Vessel

The Originist studies every aspect of the vessel that will one day birth a soul. She can protect valuable resources, turn her humour into a deadly poison, and even join Prometheans together in a binding pact.

Persistent: The character knows how to pay keen attention to her body's residual instincts and muscle memory. She reduces untrained penalties for all Skills in one category (player's choice) by one.

Shielding Pod

The character initiates an alchemical reaction inside her body that creates a hard-shelled pod to house her stores of Vitriol, located anywhere she likes.

Cost: 1 Pyros
Dice Pool: Stamina + Occult + Azoth
Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character misaligns her internal organs and suffers from the Drugged Tilt (p. 314).

Failure: The reaction is unsuccessful, and no pod forms.

Success: The Vitriol pod is Size 1 and has Durability equal to the successes on the activation roll. Pandorans and anyone attempting a lacuna must physically break through the pod before they can access the Vitriol, buying the Promethean a brief respite to escape or fight back. Pandorans must also succeed at a called shot with a –2 penalty to find the pod when they attack.

Exceptional Success: Additional successes make the pod more durable, as indicated above.

Humour Electrolysis

Faced with creatures even more monstrous than herself, the character sends a jolt of Pyros through her humour, working an alchemical change that makes her entire body far less appetizing to would-be predators.

Cost: 2 Pyros
Dice Pool: None
Action: Instant

The Promethean's humour becomes a toxic substance that poisons those who consume it. Anyone — or anything — that bites or physically feeds on her takes one point of bashing damage per point of any kind of damage she takes from the attack, becoming ill. Even consuming her humour-infused flesh or other bodily fluids causes this poisoning.

The character may inflict points of bashing damage on herself to extract as much of her humor as she desires. This extracted fluid can be mixed into a drink or even injected via syringe to inflict an amount of lethal damage equal to the damage she caused herself, but she must be swift; the humour reverts to its usual chemical makeup at the end of the scene unless it has been ingested or otherwise inflicted on a victim.

Pyros Branding

Originists can initiate an alchemical pact between Created that forms a branded throng (see p. 306). She may include herself in the binding or not. This power creates a Pyros Brand, shared by each of the throngmates. The design of the Brand may be designated by the Originist or left up to Elpis, but either way it takes a shape that's meaningful to the throng. To perform the binding, the character must touch each throngmate, and each must spend one Pyros. This extra Pyros cost is waived for the Originist if she's included.

Cost: 3 Pyros
Dice Pool: Presence + Occult + Azoth
Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The process is interrupted explosively, either by distractions or the character's inability to finalize the pact. The character and throngmates take one point of lethal damage each.

Failure: The complex process of fusing the Pyros fails.

Success: Each throngmate gains the Branded Throng Condition with respect to the others.

Exceptional Success: The character and throngmates also gain a point of Willpower each, bolstered by the affirmation of companionship.

Sensorium

Prometheans aren't restricted to the same senses as humanity, but they still view the world through the same lens humans do — often literally, since most of them look through once-human eyes. Sensorium heightens their inhuman powers of perception, granting the Created a greater awareness of the world around them.

Like all shared Transmutations, the Refinements approach Sensorium in different ways. Mystics of Argentum and Pariahs of Cuprum both view Sensorium as allowing a Promethean to reflect the world and mystically evolve by outward observation. The difference is that Mystics view Sensorium as their key to understanding a wider, more mysterious world and their place in the supernatural cornucopia surrounding humanity, while Pariahs view it as the irony of achieving inhuman insight and observational skills that they may discover how to become human. Blind Prometheans with this Transmutation generally perceive their surroundings as a kind of highly advanced echolocation; the Distillations alter their senses, but provide the same information.

Charging a Sensorium Distillation without flaring disfigurements imposes the Synesthesia Condition (p. 312).

The Alembics of Sensorium are: Vitreous Humour (discerning visual frequencies beyond human sight), Receptive Humour (expanding the ability to process sensory information), Stereo Humour (perceiving the wavelengths of thought and mind), and Somatic Humour (improving mundane senses to superhuman levels).

Vitreous Humour

The caves at Lascaux, site of an ancient and dead Athanor, have cave art depicting dead men staring at the embers of a fire long after the living have left. The Vitreous Humour Alembic tunes the Promethean eye to wavelengths beyond human sight. Mystics prize the Vitreous Humour because eyes can see things humans miss, while Pariahs regard it as an essential tool for observing an oft-capricious humanity.

Persistent: The Promethean benefits from nightsight, the ability to perceive images perfectly even in pitch darkness. This vision is essentially colorless without a faint source of light, but the Promethean can see clearly enough to read. The Promethean doesn't suffer even temporary blindness when faced with bright light, and may reflexively ignore penalties from debilitating visual stimuli.

Fire Sight

By altering the humours of his eye, the Created is able to perceive the infrared frequency of light, seeing the heat signature of objects around him. The cooling footprints of a fleeing man stand out brightly against the dark floor, while the bright white of a coffee cup and the cooling green and purple imprint on the sofa means someone's still in the apartment.

Cost: 1 Pyros
Dice Pool: None
Action: Instant

Fire Sight doesn't replace normal sight; it is visual information that the Promethean's mind effortlessly processes. Unexpected lights or very hot objects don't trouble him if they wouldn't normally, and Fire Sight functions with eyes closed, albeit only perceiving red-and-yellow shapes against a black background. Without another visual aid, however, the Promethean likely has trouble telling room-temperature furniture (or Pandorans) apart from the background.

Piercing Sight

Like Fire Sight, this Transmutation involves shifting the eyes of the Promethean to visualize spectra humans cannot perceive unaided — in this case, the shifting of ultraviolet and X-ray light. All bonuses for cover that her targets receive are reduced by her Azoth, while impediments to her vision such as fog or rain are completely ignored.

Cost: 2 Pyros
Dice Pool: Wits + Composure + Azoth
Action: Instant

Dramatic Failure: The Promethean's shifting of her eyes renders them too sensitive to X-rays and ultraviolet light, searing the orbs from the inside out. She suffers two bashing damage and the Blind Condition, which resolves when she heals the damage.

Failure: She cannot perceive objects or persons in other rooms, but may still ignore a number of penalities for concealment and cover equal to her Azoth.

Success: Each success on the roll grants the Promethean ten yards of sight through solid matter, allowing her to scrutinize objects and make further rolls to find hidden objects. She enjoys a bonus on such rolls equal to her Azoth.

Exceptional Success: Besides negating concealment and cover penalties, the Promethean enjoys a 2-die bonus to her attacks, as she instinctively targets the weak points of her opponents.

Ephemeral Sight

At the apex of adjustment, the Alembic allows the Promethean to push her senses beyond the physical and into the mystical. Similar to the Ephemeral Flesh Bestowment, the Promethean may perceive certain beings while they're in a state of Twilight.

Cost: 3 Pyros
Dice Pool: Wits + Composure + Azoth
Action: Instant

Dramatic Failure: All nearby spirits and ghosts instantly become aware of the Promethean. He suffers the Reaching Condition (p. 229), allowing himself to be used as a conduit for spiritual power.

Failure: He gains no benefits.

Success: For the rest of the scene, the Promethean can perceive spirits and ghosts existing in a state of Twilight, seeing them as shining, translucent forms with Essence moving through their spiritual innards. He may also see dematerialized *qashmallim*, blazing and writhing with Pyros in their veins.

Exceptional Success: The Promethean can perceive dematerialized angels as well, seeing them as phantoms burning Essence deep within their bodies (as opposed to spirits, who seem to *digest* it). Without an Occult roll or prior experience, he doesn't know the difference between angels and spirits, however.

Receptive Humour

The interplay of humours within the human eye is extremely complex, but vitally important — sight is *perhaps* the most important sense, being the primary means by which humans view and interact with the world. Understanding sight and text is therefore important to Prometheans, even though they're not yet human. Mystics scour the Azothic memory to uncover vast amounts of information about their obsessions; Pariahs are keen on observing the entirety of the world around them, subtext and all.

Persistent: The Promethean adds his Azoth to all Perception rolls.

Translator's Memory

Prometheans are able to discern the meaning of pilgrim marks and certain universal symbols through Azothic memory, yet deeper meaning of language eludes them. Deprived of cultural and learned context, they grasp complex ideas and concepts as a child would. This Distillation allows the Created to probe their Azothic memory, gleaning meaning from written text by calling upon the experiences of her antecedents.

Cost: 1 Pyros
Dice Pool: Intelligence + Academics + Azoth
Action: Extended (5 – 20 successes; one roll represents one turn for symbols and one hour for text)

Dramatic Failure: The Promethean dangerously misunderstands the meaning of the text or symbols.

Failure: The player accumulates no successes; she can accept a Condition for the character or break off the attempt.

Success: The Promethean successfully interprets the symbols or text she's read, circumventing language and cultural barriers.

As an extended action, the number of required successes depends upon the complexity of the deciphered text:

Simple (a short phrase)	3
Involved (a paragraph)	7
Elaborate (page or so of material)	10
Daunting (scientific formula)	15
Intricate (encrypted code)	20

Exceptional Success: If the player chooses the exceptional success effect, the Promethean gains keen insight into the meaning of the symbols or text, gleaning any and all hidden subtext to the message. The character gains the Informed Condition relating to this text. The Storyteller might also allow her to purchase the Language Merit suitable to the text, "downloading it" from the Azoth.

Rarified Senses

The Promethean charges his brain's humours with Pyros, allowing him to process sensory information faster and more completely. Combined with other Sensorium powers, the Promethean's powers of perception become truly extraordinary.

Cost: 2 Pyros

Dice Pool: None (modifies Perception rolls)

Action: Reflexive

While active, all of the Promethean's Perception rolls become rote actions. The Promethean may benefit from this on any Perception roll she cares to make, but if she suffers a dramatic failure, she immediately gains the Synesthesia Condition.

Circle of Perception

By mutating certain body parts with light- and sound-sensitive patches and supercharging his sensory-processing capabilities, the Promethean may perfectly perceive sensory information from every direction around him.

Cost: 3 Pyros

Dice Pool: Wits + Composure + Azoth

Action: Reflexive

Dramatic Failure: The Created suffers from a sensory overload; in addition to the Synesthesia Condition, he suffers -2 to all Perception rolls.

Failure: The Transmutation fails.

Success: The Promethean's senses (primarily vision and hearing) extend in every direction around him. As long as he can see or hear at all, he can perceive in 360 degrees. It is almost impossible to surprise the Created (as this Distillation may be charged reflexively), and he may use his Defense normally against surprise or attacks from the rear. His Defense increases by two.

Exceptional Success: The Promethean gains +2 to all sight-based Perception rolls for the duration of the scene; his Defense gains an additional +1.

Stereo Humour

All things are visible from the right angle. By means of this Alembic, the Promethean may mystically shift their perceptions from the physical to the spiritual, allowing the Created to scrutinize elements of the hidden world and directly touch upon the core of emotion that fascinates them so. Mystics prize this Alembic for the ability to identify other supernatural beings, while Pariahs simply want to observe the complexities of human interactions without having to play a guessing game.

Persistent: When attempting to scrutinize emotions or read a person (such as ferreting out their Vice), the Promethean gains a two-die bonus.

Aura Sight

The Promethean opens her senses to the psychic auras that surround all sentient beings. Comprised of ever-shifting hues and patterns, these auras give a Promethean deep insight into the target's mind and emotions.

A side effect of the Promethean condition means that often they're exposed to complex emotions without a true understanding of what they're seeing; the Storyteller may rule that a Promethean new to their Pilgrimage has never experienced a given emotion and can't subsequently recognize it in another. The Galateid created as the perfect lover for his demiurge has never experienced the white purity of innocence, while the golden yellow of idealism may be foreign to a cynical Frankenstein.

Cost: 1 Pyros

Dice Pool: Wits + Empathy + Azoth – Composure

Action: Instant

Dramatic Failure: The scrutinized target becomes aware that the Promethean is watching her, and moreover that he's not human. Her level of Disquiet immediately worsens by one degree, and she gets the briefest glimpse of the Promethean's disfigurements.

Failure: He gains no benefits.

Success: For each success, the player may ask the Storyteller a single question to gain information about the target's emotional or supernatural state. This information is usually revealed both visually and as empathic flashes of insight; any described answers should adhere to that format.

Exceptional Success: No additional effect beyond asking more questions.

- What's the target's most prominent emotion? *The mottled shifting rainbow of confusion while viewing an overly-cerebral movie. The bright violet of excitement when lovers first kiss. The vivid orange of fear during a mugging.*
- What is the target's attention most focused on right now? *He's not watching the jockeys or even the position of the horses, he's watching the beautiful rippling movement of equine flesh. She's more interested in the notebook of equations in her bookbag than his fumbling attempts at seduction. They should be writing, but their eyes keep stealing glances at the video game controller.*
- Is the target going to attack? *Bright red tones and the sound of sharpening knives. The loud click of a gun's safety being taken off. The heavy outline of a pair of brass knuckles in a coat pocket.*
- What stage and manner of Disquiet, if any, is the target suffering under? *The earthy tones and scent of the Tammuz, slight and mild as of yet. The flickering, sparking flames and ozone stench of the Frankensteins, blazing into an all-consuming fury.*
- What emotion is the target trying most to hide? *Vermilion joy from a coach on seeing a small child bullied in a schoolyard. Bright blue lovestruck from a young man towards another in the same all-boys preparatory school. Light blue calm from the MMA fighter screaming at this opponent.*
- Is the target a supernatural creature? *Pale colors and blood pooling between long white teeth. The shifting stillness and blank, hungry aura of a dormant Pandoran. Circuit lines sitting between emotions, ruled by an alien will behind a person-puppet.* If the creature is disguising their state by some supernatural means, this usage provokes a Clash of Wills.

Hearing the Inner Voice

Shifting her perceptions from sight to hearing, the Promethean attempts to listen to the mystic wavelengths upon which all thought resides. Scrutinizing a target, she can hear what can't be heard: the thoughts within someone's mind.

Cost: 2 Pyros

Dice Pool: Wits + Composure + Azoth vs. Composure + Azoth

Action: Instant and contested

Dramatic Failure: The Promethean opens herself up to the full magnitude of the world's speech. The painful cacophony causes her to suffer the Deafened Condition in both ears.

Failure: He hears nothing.

Success: For one turn, the Promethean can hear the subject's most prominent thought.

Exceptional Success: For the next three turns, the Promethean hears the subject's most prominent thoughts, but she may also hear the echoes of related thoughts. The player may ask a related, qualifying question regarding the subject's most prominent thought (i.e., if the target thinks, "I shouldn't have killed her," a valid question is, "Whom did she kill?").

Clairvoyance

All things are connected to one another. Prometheans are tied to one another, by Azoth or Lineage, but more material perceptual connections exist. This Distillation allows Prometheans to trace that mystic thread through the world, so long as they have an anchor. Mystics often extend their senses to see view supernatural beings amongst a society of fellows, while Pariahs use it to ensure their lairs remain undisturbed.

Cost: 3 Pyros

Dice Pool: Wits + Investigation + Azoth vs. Composure + Azoth (if applicable)

Action: Contested

The Promethean must have some physical element of the subject's substance — nail clippings, hair, blood or other body fluid. For inanimate objects, this can be a specific patch of dirt, seeds, leaf clippings, or another sliver of material. If the Promethean has a Created genitor, she is always assumed to have a physical element of her creator in the form of the humours within.

Dramatic Failure: The Promethean's Pyros burns the material, destroying it. The Pyros cascades down the sympathetic connection, making the subject feels as though someone is watching her. If she later meets the Promethean, a reflexive Wits + Composure roll reveals him as the distant observer.

Failure: He fails to trace the threads of sympathy.

Success: For the remainder of the scene, the Promethean can sense her target (and only the target) with all of his senses, regardless of distance. He may watch and listen to the target, but the target remains unaware unless she mystical means of alerting herself. The Promethean sees an area of about one yard around the target; if a target is conducting a conversation with someone outside this range, the Promethean only hears the target. For inanimate objects or locations, she may scry a location of five yards around the material's origin point.

Exceptional Success: The Promethean's senses extend to an area with a radius of five yards around the target; inanimate locations are extended to an area of ten yards.

Somatic Humour

Besides extending her senses into mystical or theoretical realms of perception, the Sensorium Transmutation allows a Promethean to increase her mundane, human senses to inhuman levels. Pariahs utilize these to maintain a constant awareness of the world around them, while Mystics find the Somatic Humour Alembic makes them excellent trackers.

Persistent: The Promethean only needs three successes on Survival rolls to gain an exceptional success.

Charging the Alembic with Pyros allows the Promethean to choose one sense (smell, taste, hearing) per point spent. That sense is magnified to animalistic levels beyond human perception.

Bloodhound's Nose: The Promethean can discern scents better than most dogs, able to track prey by sense of smell alone. She gains a two-die bonus to all extended rolls to track someone or recognize a disguised individual by scent. However, attacks such as pepper spray receive a commensurate bonus against the Promethean.

Discriminating Tongue: A tiny taste allows the Promethean to detect the presence of known substances or unrecognized dangerous ones (with a successful Intelligence + Survival or Science roll; exceptional successes reveals all component parts of the substance). She may even avoid ingesting poisons by sensing them before they can do lasting harm.

Sensitive Ears: The Promethean increases the range of her hearing into the frequencies above and below that of humanity. Dog whistles, sonar and sub-sonic vibrations all become audible to the character. A successful Wits + Survival roll allows her to focus or selectively block out certain sounds with each success; she may even narrow her hearing down to a conversation in a booth on the other side of a crowded, noisy theatre. She also does not lose her Defense if she suffers the Blinded Tilt.

Cost: 1 Pyros

Dice Pool: None

Action: Reflexive

Each additional point of Pyros spent beyond the first Distillation also grants a one-die bonus towards all rolls involving the Alembic's Distillations, to a maximum of three.

Cost: 2 Pyros

The Promethean may maintain two of her increased senses at once.

Cost: 3 Pyros

The Promethean may maintain all three of her increased senses.

Example: *Niccolai, a Galateid, needs to find his friend. If she's run off, that's one thing, but if she was taken by a Pandoran...he charges the Somatic Humour Alembic with one point of Pyros, and chooses to bolster his sense of scent with Bloodhound's Nose. He gains two dice to his Wits + Survival rolls to track her perfume. Along the way, he sees a wet, dark splotch on the ground. Spending an additional point of Pyros, he activates Discriminating Tongue. He receives two dice to the Intelligence + Survival roll to identify the splotch. Not only is it her blood, she was poisoned when it was spilled. When he resumes his tracking by scent, his Wits + Survival rolls enjoy a three-die bonus.*

Spiritus

Prometheans share the Chronicles of Darkness with a plethora of other supernatural creatures. The Mystics delve deeply into these powers, as they search out their fellow monsters. Their subjects do not welcome this curiosity, however. Practitioners of the Refinement of Silver found ways to change their Azoth in order to observe the remainder of the hidden world up close.

It's worth mentioning that, unless otherwise noted, the Spiritus Transmutation does not change a Promethean physically. Instead, Spiritus molds the Mystic's Azothic Radiance into something else (what that thing is changes, depending with which supernatural creature the Promethean is currently associating).

Charging a Spiritus Distillation without flaring disfigurements imposes the Ephemeral Anchor Condition (p. 309).

The four Alembics within the Spiritus Transmutation are: Clades (injuring other supernatural creatures by mimicking their banes), Clupeum (protecting against other supernatural powers), Laruae (impersonating other supernatural creatures), and Veritas (searching out other supernatural creatures).

In order to use any Distillation in regards to another supernatural being, the Mystic must first have some understanding of that creature. At minimum, three turns of combat or three minutes of conversation is sufficient for the purposes of this Transmutation. Note that the Promethean must be aware that he is dealing with a supernatural creature. If he believes he is in contact with a human, even a particularly skilled or strong person, it is insufficient for Spiritus.

Clades

By learning about the other monsters of the Chronicles of Darkness, a Mystic also learns how to hurt them. Most supernatural creatures have an Achilles' heel of some kind. By aligning his Azothic Radiance with this anathema, the Mystic may defend himself should an encounter turn violent. Not all supernatural creatures have built-in weaknesses. For all their power, mages are still human, for example. In these instances, Clades *makes* a weakness of some sort. The potential for curses or appropriate weaknesses (Paradox flaws for a mage, perhaps) is still there.

Persistent: The Mystic taints her Azothic Radiance with a touch of a creature's Bane. Vampires perceive a faint heat shimmer or a small glimmer of daylight around the Promethean. Werewolves smell silver. This makes the opponent cautious, unwilling to go in for the kill. Against creatures of that type, the character gains a +2 bonus to her Defense. The character can change the type of creature with an instant action.

Strike the Heart

Supernatural creatures have specific defenses to help them stay upright and mobile. With this Distillation, the Promethean concentrates her efforts on those defenses' weak points. She finds that otherwise difficult attacks become just that much easier.

Cost: 1 Pyros
Dice Pool: None
Action: Instant

The Mystic selects one particular supernatural opponent as his target. For a number of turns equal to his Azoth, any penalties he would suffer from called shots are reduced by two. This may only mitigate a penalty, not provide a bonus.

Biting Aura

A Promethean's Azothic Radiance extends outward around her. With this power, she may make that aura painful to a specific type of supernatural creature.

Cost: 2 Pyros
Dice Pool: None
Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Promethean directs the pain to herself instead. For a number of turns equal to her Azoth, she takes one point of bashing damage.

Failure: Nothing happens as the Distillation fails to take affect.

Success: The character infuses her Azothic Radiance with a small amount of the creature's bane. Any supernatural creature of the appropriate type within the Promethean's reach suffers one point of lethal damage per turn. This effect lasts for the remainder of the scene.

Exceptional Success: The damage is upgraded to two points of lethal damage per turn.

Burning Strike

Contact with a given bane inflicts terrible harm on a creature. Twisting her Azoth Radiance, the Mystic becomes like that substance.

Cost: 3 Pyros
Dice Pool: Presence + Azoth
Action: Reflexive

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Promethean becomes temporarily more vulnerable to attacks. For a number of turns equal to her Azoth, she takes an additional point of damage from every successful attack on her. This extra point of damage is aggravated.

Failure: No effect.

Success: For a number of turns equal to the successes rolled, the Promethean inflicts aggravated damage to a given supernatural creature. This applies only to attacks the character makes with her bare hands. It does not transfer to weapons of any kind.

Exceptional Success: No extra effect other than a longer duration.

Clupeum

Sometimes a plan simply goes awry. When that happens, a survivor finds a way to retreat and live another day. This Alembic helps a Promethean do just that, interfering with other supernatural creatures' powers and making it harder for them to affect the character.

Persistent: This power doesn't make the Promethean invisible, but it does make him harder to focus on. Any supernatural ability or power used to detect others suffers a -2 penalty when used against the Promethean. If such an ability does not normally require a roll, the creature must succeed on a Clash of Wills roll (with the penalty) to detect the Mystic.



Personal Shield

Sometimes a Mystic can't avoid being on the receiving end of a supernatural power. If he can't avoid it, it's possible that he can mitigate it. He bolsters his Azothic Radiance, letting it take the brunt of the attack.

Cost: 1 Pyros
Dice Pool: None
Action: Reflexive

This Distillation doubles the Promethean's Azoth for the purposes of resisting other supernatural powers that target him.

Interposing Shield

With a bit of effort, a Mystic can protect others rather than only herself. This is easier to do for throngmates, but anyone can find shelter behind a Promethean using this ability.

Cost: 2 Pyros
Dice Pool: Stamina + Survival + Azoth
Action: Reflexive

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Mystic may not apply her Azoth to the next resisted or contested roll turned against her.

Failure: No effect.

Success: Interposing Shield affects a number of individuals equal to the number of successes on the activation roll. To be affected by this Distillation, a character must be within (Azoth) in yards of the Mystic. Each protected target gains a bonus to contested rolls equal to the Mystic's Azoth, and a bonus to any resistance Attribute equal to the Mystic's Azoth divided by 2 (round up).

Exceptional Success: Each target's bonus is increased by one. So, a contested roll bonus is equal to the Promethean's Azoth + 1, and the resistance bonus is increased by 1 once it is calculated.

Mystic Fortress

The Promethean expands her Azothic Radiance outward, warding an entire area against supernatural powers.

Cost: 3 Pyros
Dice Pool: Intelligence + Occult + Azoth
Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Mystic taints the area instead of protecting it, generating a Category 1 Wasteland, or worsening an existing Wasteland by one Category.

Failure: No effect on the local area.

Success: The Promethean wards an area of 30 square feet. Within that area, hostile supernatural powers are penalized by the activation

successes. In addition, the Mystic and any allies gain a similar bonus to detect illusions or invisible creatures within the area. If the character does nothing on subsequent turns but channel Pyros, she may expand the warded area by 10 square feet per point of Pyros.

This power ordinarily lasts for a scene, but the player may spend a Willpower point to extend that duration to an entire day.

Exceptional Success: The Mystic may opt to make the Distillation last for a day without expending Willpower.

Veritas

All supernatural creatures, regardless of species, conceal their activities from humanity, and from each other. With determined effort, a Practitioner of Argentum can pierce those veils and see the truth.

Persistent: Before a Mystic can focus on a particular supernatural creature, first he must discover if any are nearby. Any supernatural power that garners a number of successes equal to or greater than the Promethean's Azoth used within (Azoth x 5) yards of the character alerts the Promethean. This doesn't give the Promethean any particular insight into what the power is or precisely where the usage occurred, it just gives the character a way to start looking.

Finding the Wellspring

This Distillation allows the Mystic to zero in on a particular creature.

Cost: 1 Pyros

Dice Pool: Wits + Occult + Azoth vs. Composure + Supernatural Tolerance

Action: Instant and contested

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Promethean incorrectly identifies something *else* in the area as originating from a supernatural source.

Failure: The Distillation doesn't pinpoint the source of the supernatural activity.

Success: If the Mystic wins the contested roll, he determines the origin of one supernatural power in the area. If he has encountered the target's supernatural type before, he immediately recognizes it. Unless the creature has a power active that detects supernatural observation, he is unaware of this scrutiny.

Exceptional Success: The Promethean identifies the type of supernatural being even if he hasn't encountered it before. Azothic Memory fills in his lack of experience with that basic knowledge.

Walking the Path of Memory

Supernatural creatures, whether or not they were ever human live in the human world and must, of necessity, have contact with humanity. Many of them are much more skilled at dealing with humans than Prometheans are. With this Distillation, the Promethean can draw out memories of this contact, hopefully learning something to further her Pilgrimage.

Cost: 2 Pyros

Dice Pool: Wits + Manipulation + Azoth vs. Resolve + Supernatural Trait

Action: Instant and contested

The character must touch the target to use this power. If the subject is unwilling, this requires a touch attack (p. 207).

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Mystic loses control of the power and dives through the darkest recesses of the target's mind. The player must choose one of the following Conditions: Fugue, Madness, or Obsession.

Failure: The power fails.

Success: The Mystic accesses the subject's memories. She might see a vampire feeding from her herd, a changeling making a pledge, or a Promethean hard at work alongside humans before Disquiet sets in. The character gains insight in different ways to deal with humans; she might gain Willpower through her Elpis (or her Torment, depending on what she sees). At the Storyteller's discretion, the player gains one of the following benefits: a Vitriol Beat, a +2 modifier to an upcoming task, a specific clue or piece of information surrounding the subject of the vision. If the Promethean sees a particularly brutal vision, she might need to roll to resist Torment.

Exceptional Success: The Promethean gains more information on the scene, learning names and relationship with the target instinctively. It may be possible for the character to seek these people out in order to aid or hinder them (and perhaps satisfy a milestone).

Disrupting the Vital Humours

Almost all supernatural creatures have some sort of energy source they call upon to power their abilities. To a Promethean with this Distillation, those energies equate to humours, which can be manipulated in very basic ways. In order to protect herself against other supernatural creatures, the Mystic interferes with their energy sources, disrupting them long enough to make an escape.

Cost: 3 Pyros

Dice Pool: Presence + Occult + Azoth vs. Resolve + Supernatural Tolerance

Action: Contested

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Promethean's own humours are disrupted. She falls into Torment, suffering the Tormented Condition (p.312).

Failure: The Distillation fails to take affect.

Success: The Mystic succeeds at disrupting the target's humour. A number of targets equal to the successes rolled may not spend their specific energy source for any purpose. A vampire couldn't spend Vitae to heal, boost Physical Attributes, or power Disciplines. A werewolf couldn't spend Essence to increase his healing capabilities or power Facets. Any ability or power the creature has that doesn't require the expenditure of a supernatural energy source (such as a demon's Embeds) functions normally. This Distillation only interferes with the conduits of the energy sources; it does not make the target mortal again. This effect lasts for a number of turns equal to the Mystic's Azoth.

Exceptional Success: No additional effect other than increased targets.

Laruae

To get in close, a Mystic must be able to hide his outsider nature. The Azothic Radiance shifts, hiding the Promethean's

true self. He is able to keep himself hidden within a crowd and eventually fool other supernatural creatures into thinking he's one of them.

The Promethean must declare which supernatural type he is hiding himself from or mimicking, keeping in mind the contact requirement for the Transmutation. These abilities only fool members of the targeted type; all others see and react to the Promethean normally.

Persistent: Nothing except achieving the New Dawn can make a Promethean mortal. This power can dim her Azothic Radiance however, helping her avoid supernatural notice. Attempts to identify her as a supernatural creature suffer a –2 penalty. If the identification roll fails, the Mystic registers as a normal human. Depending on the situation, this could still be problematic, as most supernatural societies do not like people getting involved with their business. Still, most supernatural beings underestimate humans, which may give the Mystic time to retreat.

Plumb Azothic Memory

Azothic memory usually focuses exclusively on the Pilgrimage. Some Mystics find ways to access other, more specific memories to learn about the other supernatural creatures that share the world with them.

Cost: 1 Pyros
Dice Pool: Intelligence + Occult + Azoth
Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: A flood of irrelevant information overwhelms the character. She takes the Confused Condition (p. 307).

Failure: The character gains no useful information.

Success: The Promethean delves deeply into the Azothic Memory. In regards to a specific supernatural creature or a narrow situation involving the supernatural, the Mystic gains the Informed Condition.

Exceptional Success: In addition to the Informed Condition, the character gains some insight into how to present herself as a different supernatural being. Add two dice to the next Social roll against a supernatural being of the type being researched.

One of the Tribe

Humans are wired to accept only so many other individuals as people. This is measured by a person's Dunbar number — the suggested cognitive limit humans can maintain social relationships with one another. This power plays on that notion on a supernatural level, imparting a sense of belonging. Authority figures and inquisitive onlookers alike find it hard to see the Promethean as anything other than one of them.

Cost: 2 Pyros
Dice Pool: Manipulation + Socialize + Azoth
Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Promethean appears to not belong in the group, pinging the creatures' radar immediately.

Failure: The Distillation fails.

Success: For the rest of the scene, the Promethean belongs. Whether part of a bloody werewolf ritual or gliding among the salons of the undead, the Mystic fits in. The character adds his Azoth to any rolls toward fitting in or passing himself off as a fellow supernatural creature of the appropriate type. Further, his Azoth acts as a penalty to any attempts to discern his true nature.

Exceptional Success: Any supernatural effort to discover the Promethean's true nature requires the expenditure of a Willpower point before the attempt is made. This does not add the usual bonus to the roll.

Pyros Decoy

When a Promethean's ruse is discovered, as it inevitably is if he lets it go on too long, he needs a quick getaway. This Distillation provides it, infusing a small object with Pyros to detonate when needed.

Cost: 3 Pyros
Dice Pool: Intelligence + Crafts
Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The decoy shatters when infused, forcing the Promethean to remake or reacquire an appropriate item.

Failure: Pyros fails to enter the vessel.

Success: The Mystic creates a small (no larger than Size 2) object designed to hold Pyros. When thrown, the decoy explodes in a wave of energy. This wave is not physical, is invisible, and does no damage. Instead, supernatural creatures with the appropriate senses can detect it (through a mage's senses, a vampire using Auspex, and so on). Any investigators are so focused on the decoy that they suffer a penalty equal to the successes rolled to notice the Promethean.

Exceptional Success: No benefit other than additional successes.

Vitality

The Titans continually test themselves. Not just in feats of physical strength, but in terms of their fortitude and resolve as well. The Vitality Transmutation helps the Titan impose his will on the world, whether to rebuke deterrents or to unleash his rage. Further, through use of Vitality, the Titan proves that he overcomes any obstacle, any deterrent, and achieves his goals no matter what they may be.

Charging a Vitality Distillation without flaring disfigurements imposes the Hyperextended Condition (p. 310).

The four Alembics in the Vitality Transmutation are Unbowed (shrugging off attempts of control), Unbroken (resilience), Unconquered (feats of strength), and Unfettered (breaking free of restraints).

Unbowed

For a Titan, physical perfection is the end goal. They do not accomplish this goal without discipline or without the drive to succeed regardless of the obstacles set before them. With this Alembic, the Created who follow the Refinement of Iron bow to no other master.

Persistent: A Titan who deviates from her chosen goal or worse, allows an outsider to sway her from the path, is a poor practitioner of Ferrum indeed. With this Distillation, the Created see their

purposes more clearly. The Titan adds her Azoth to her Resolve total. This affects derived traits, but Willpower is limited to ten dots.

Resolution of Steel

The Titan is undeterred in pushing toward his goals. Outside influence does little to stop him, if he even notices. A practitioner of Ferrum is single-minded in achieving everything he sets out to do. By channeling his humours, the Promethean creates within his mind a resolution to see things through regardless of impediment.

Cost: 1 Pyros
Dice Pool: None
Action: Instant

For a number of turns equal to his Azoth, the Promethean gains the Steadfast Condition. If the Condition is not resolved by the end of that time period the character may spend another Pyros to reset the time limit. Otherwise, the Condition fades without offering any benefit.

Crucible of Will

The act of failing is familiar to followers of Ferrum. By pushing himself to the utmost, the Titan finds his limits, and thus fails. The Divine Fire provides the jumpstart needed to push the Promethean over the edge, setting his limit ever higher.

Cost: 2 Pyros
Dice Pool: None
Action: Reflexive

By channeling Pyros into an internal crucible, the Promethean replenishes his inner drive. Each use of this Distillation regains one spent Willpower point. In addition, for the rest of the scene, whenever the player fails a roll the character regains one point of Willpower, up to the character's normal maximum.

Roar of the Defiant

The supernatural beings of the Chronicles of Darkness have a number of ways to control another's mind, ranging from base hypnotism to more insidious magics. A Titan's mind is her own, and only she chooses the path by which she hones it. With this Distillation, she shrugs off attempts to influence her against her will.

Cost: 3 Pyros
Dice Pool: Resolve + Composure + Azoth
Action: Reflexive

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Something snaps temporarily in the Created's mind. For a number of turns equal to her Azoth, she suffers from the Broken Condition.

Failure: Nothing happens as the Distillation fails to take effect.

Success: When the Promethean is the target of a mind-controlling ability or supernatural power, roll this Distillation instead of the normal resistance (if any). Success indicates that the mind-control power fails. The Promethean simply shrugs off the effect with a small amount of effort.

Exceptional Success: The Titan throws off her would-be controller's shackles forcefully. The mind-controller suffers bashing damage equal to the Promethean's Azoth as her power "snaps" back at her.

Unbroken

Each day on the Refinement of Iron is a test — a test the Promethean aims to pass. These tests are harsh, pushing even the Created's resilience to its limits. By proper channeling of the Divine Fire, the Titan becomes even tougher than she once was.

Persistent: A Titan quickly learns that if she wants to progress on her Pilgrimage, she must continually test her body, pushing it to its limits and beyond. Survivability is the name of the game, and the average Titan is more than capable of withstanding punishment that would fell even other less worthy Prometheans. Add the Titan's Azoth directly to his Stamina. This affects Health as well.

Armor of Will

A Titan's physique is a testament to her dedication. Tied together with her will to succeed, she is unstoppable. Efforts to put her down meet with a heightened resistance and glance off.

Cost: 1 Pyros
Dice Pool: None
Action: Reflexive

The character activates this Distillation in response to an assault upon her person. When using this ability, spending Willpower is more effective. When spending Willpower on a Stamina-related resistance roll, or to bolster Defense, double the usual bonus.

Drive On

Debilitating injuries are an unfortunate side effect of a Titan's life. With this Distillation, he can shrug those off for a time, although when that time expires, the consequences are more severe.

Cost: 2 Pyros
Dice Pool: Stamina + Athletics + Azoth
Action: Reflexive

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character gains no benefit from the Distillation and suffers the full effects of the Tilt or Condition.

Failure: No effect.

Success: For the remainder of the scene, the character may ignore one physical Condition or Tilt per success on the activation roll. Examples include the Arm Wrack and Leg Wrack Tilts, or the Blind Condition. In the case of sensory Conditions or Tilts (such as Blinded), the Titan does not regain the use of the affected organ, but instead uses what is available to her and focuses that much harder, acting as though she were physically whole.

Exceptional Success: No further effect other than the higher number of Conditions or Tilts affected.

Rebuke the Shroud

Practitioners of Iron put themselves into situations that push their bodies to their absolute limits. Sometimes, their bodies break irreparably. Still, the Titan will not be bowed or broken, even in the face of incipient death. Instead, she pushes through the pain and the damage for a short time in a last-ditch effort to achieve her goals.

This Distillation can only be activated when the character's rightmost Health box is filled with aggravated damage.

Cost: 3 Pyros

Dice Pool: None
Action: Reflexive

The character does not die until the end of the scene, no matter how much punishment her body suffers. She will finish the fight, reach her goal, or otherwise finish what was started. When the scene ends, she dies unless she finds a source of electricity with a strong, constant current (such as a subway rail or an exposed power line). In this case, she slowly regenerates her Health.

Unconquered

The Titans of old were noted for their immense strength. A practitioner of Iron also possesses such puissance, breaking her enemies before her. A rampaging Titan is a terrifying thing, breaking items and people in her wake. Running from the Promethean is no safe haven, as she simply throws unlikely items at the fleeing enemy.

Persistent: In Greek myth, the titan Atlas was punished by holding up the sky for all eternity. While the Promethean isn't capable of such a feat, his strength is increased significantly. The Titan adds his Azoth to his Strength score. This also affects Speed.

Cyclopean Might

A Titan's fists hurt people and objects equally, pulverizing flesh and cracking stone. His assault is unforgiving and unapologetic. Anyone or anything that stands in the Promethean's way is simply broken.

Cost: 1 Pyros
Dice Pool: None
Action: Reflexive

For the remainder of the scene, the character inflicts lethal damage with any unarmed strikes. Further, he gains the effects of the Demolisher Merit at one dot, or, if he already has that Merit, improves it by 1 to a maximum of three dots.

Titan's Throw

Fleeing a Titan's rage is fruitless. The Promethean can and will find the nearest object and fling it at the retreating enemy. The object's size, weight, or aerodynamic qualities are of no consequence.

Cost: 2 Pyros
Dice Pool: Strength + Athletics + Azoth
Action: Reflexive

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character fails to pick up the desired object. She takes bashing damage equal to the difference between the object's Size and hers, or 2, whichever is greater.

Failure: The Promethean fails to pick up and throw the object.

Success: For each success, the character may select one of the following options.

- Increase her Strength multiplicatively. This benefit may be selected multiple times. First, it doubles the character's Strength for the purposes of lifting and throwing. Second, her Strength is tripled, and finally, her Strength is quadrupled.
- Reduce penalties from an object's shape or bulk by 1. This may be selected multiple times.
- Gain the 9-again quality on the throw.

Exceptional Success: No additional effect, other than selecting more benefits.

Wrath of the Gods

At the height of her power, a Titan is almost indistinguishable from her mythological namesake. Her strength makes even the earth itself tremble in shockwaves, knocking down onlookers and shattering buildings.

Cost: 3 Pyros
Dice Pool: Strength + Athletics + Azoth
Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Not only does the power fail to take effect, but the character injures herself in the process. She takes lethal damage equal to her modified Strength.

Failure: The Distillation fails to take effect.

Success: The Titan's rage is directed at the ground beneath her feet. Everyone and everything within (Azoth x 100) yards suffers from the Earthquake Tilt (p. 315). The catastrophe lasts for a number of turns equal to the successes on the activation roll.

Exceptional Success: The earthquake persists longer than usual. Add the character's Azoth to the activation successes to determine the duration.

Unfettered

No chains may hold a Titan for long. Restraining a practitioner of Iron is an affront that he will not allow to pass. Woe betide the aggressor who thinks that he can hold down a Titan or otherwise keep him from his goals. Grasping hands and chains alike are broken or brushed aside as the Promethean exerts his will.

Persistent: Often the best way to diffuse a fight in progress is to grapple and hold one or more of the assailants. A rampaging Titan is not so easily held, however. Add the character's Azoth to his Strength for the purposes of breaking free of grapples or restraints.

Close Combat Defense

Even the most powerful Titan can sometimes be restrained, at least temporarily. Confinement creates vulnerability, particularly to outside attack. The Promethean's strength and skill are such that he can still move just enough to have some defense against assault, until he can break free.

Cost: 1 Pyros
Dice Pool: Strength + Athletics + Azoth
Action: Reflexive

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Titan wriggles into a poor position. The opponent may apply one grapple move as a reflexive action.

Failure: The character fails to free up enough space to move.

Success: By sheer strength and determination, the Titan can wriggle free from an immobilizing grapple. She can automatically escape a grapple (p. 206).

Exceptional Success: The Titan can apply move to her opponent instead of escaping.

Shattered Chains

Equipment designed expressly to hold a prisoner is more reliable way to restrain someone. Through the ages, manacles, handcuffs, zip ties, rope, and chain have all been used to confine a beaten opponent in order to make them compliant. For the Titans, such restraints are nothing more than annoyances.

Cost: 2 Pyros
Dice Pool: Strength + Crafts + Azoth
Action: Reflexive

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Titan is unable to break free, and takes bashing damage equal to the Durability of the restraint.

Failure: The object refuses to break.

Success: Use of this Distillation aids in breaking free from restraints (see the Immobilized Tilt, p. 316). Each success reduces the penalty from Durability to the Strength + Athletics roll. Further, the penalties for the Titan's legs and arms being restrained, or being hog-tied, are reduced to – 1 and – 2, respectively.

Exceptional Success: In addition to the benefits from a normal success, the character may break free easily and painlessly, taking no damage whatsoever.

No Walls May Hold Me

A caged Titan is a dangerous Titan. The Promethean is resolute in her will to escape. This Distillation may be used any time the character is held within a building or container against her will. Prison cells, coffins, shipping containers, and the like are all valid circumstances.

Cost: 3 Pyros
Dice Pool: Strength + Crafts + Azoth
Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character pounds on the walls to her prison, inflicting more damage on herself than the object. She takes bashing damage equal to her Strength plus the item's Durability.

Failure: The Titan fails to escape her prison.

Success: The Promethean's fists and feet are strengthened to aid escape, and she gains the Demolisher Merit at 3 dots. If she already has the Merit at that level, the Titan gains a +2 to dice pools to break free. In addition, she takes no damage from punching and striking the object's surface, no matter what substance it is made from.

Exceptional Success: The Titan suffers no ill effects from the results of breaking through walls, earth, and so on while escaping. So long as the amount of falling material does not exceed her Size, the character suffers no damage. So, a Promethean buried alive could, assuming Size 5, break free and claw her way to the surface through roughly six feet of earth without worrying about suffocation or the crushing pressure of so much dirt.

Vulcanus

The Divine Fire burns in the heart of every Promethean. With time, the Created can learn to manipulate not only her own Fire, but other fires and related phenomena. In addition, a savvy Promethean eventually learns how to sense and manipulate Flux — the fuel that powers Pandorans. Savants study and master this useful Transmutation to assist in their studies of the Divine Fire. In addition to observing the changes in their own clay, they study the fire hardening that clay into something more permanent.

Charging a Vulcanus Transmutation without revealing disfigurements imposes the Burnout Condition (p.307).

The four Alembics in the Vulcanus Transmutation are as follows: Cauterio (branding and manipulating the Divine Fire's transformative abilities), Ignus Aspiratus (the manipulation and use of fire), Mutatus Aspiratus (the sensing and manipulation of Flux), and Sanctus Aspiratus (the manipulation and exchange of Pyros).

Cauterio

The Divine Fire can be used for many things — a catalyst, an agent of change, an animating force, and more. By spreading Pyros into the world around herself, an Ophidian extends the possibility of change into her environment.

Persistent: The Promethean creates a firebrand that is used to set up the remainder of the Alembic. A touch is enough to scorch a brand (either physically or mystically) onto a target. Whether to mark a person or object or to inscribe a pilgrim mark, the Created uses this as the next step in learning the Divine Fire's transformative process. The Ophidian may etch a symbol physically onto a target or brand a mystical sign invisible to all except a rare few. In all cases, the Promethean must be able to touch the person or object he wishes to brand. Once marked, the Promethean continually knows in what direction the target lies, if it is out of sight. If the subject is within sight, the character can easily identify the source. The mark can only be seen by the creator or someone using a supernatural power to reveal concealment.

Alter Firetouched

The Divine Fire carries change within it. With this power, the Promethean releases that potential into the world through a branded item.

Cost: 1 Pyros
Dice Pool: None
Action: Instant

Once an object or person is branded, the Promethean can change one relatively small facet. This includes changing an object's color (skin/hair/eyes for a person), texture, or temperature (only slightly but noticeably warmer or cooler to the touch). Each change requires a new use of this power. All alternations last for the remainder of the scene, at which point the target reverts to its original form.

Animate Firetouched

After branding an object, an Ophidian may call upon the Divine Fire's animating force to give an object life of sorts. The target lurches to movement in fits and starts before moving as smoothly as its form allows.

Cost: 2 Pyros
Dice Pool: None; the object's actions may require rolls, however.

Action: Instant

The object comes to life, slowly at first but quickly warming up. The Promethean must touch the target to animate it; the item's Size cannot exceed the character's Azoth. Once animated, the Ophidian controls the object for the remainder of the scene so long as it remains within sight. On the Promethean's count in the Initiative roster, he may select to act or control the object and have it act, but not both. If the character acts, the branded object sits inert until it receives new orders.

The object may perform actions that require their own rolls as appropriate for the particular activity. Attacking with the object is Strength + Weaponry, unless the animated object is a gun, at which point the action requires Dexterity + Firearms.

This power lasts until the end of the scene (although it may be reactivated at that time) or until the object is broken, whichever comes first. The animating force of Pyros makes the object slightly more durable, adding two points to the item's Durability.

Evolve Firetouched

With the capstone of Cauterio, the Promethean gives an animated object some degree of autonomy. While it doesn't bestow true life, Evolve Firetouched allows the item to possess a limited intelligence, roughly the same as a dog. The animated object can then act independently of the Promethean.

Cost: 3 Pyros

Dice Pool: None

Action: Instant

The Promethean animates the object, as in Animate Firetouched. In this case, the item has enough intelligence to respond to simple commands. These orders can be no longer than a word. "Attack," "defend," and "hold" are all acceptable commands, but "retrieve this Athanor" is not.

Further, the animate reacts to appropriate stimuli. It moves away from injury, attacks someone threatening a charge, and so on. This power last for a scene or until the animated object is destroyed.

Ignus Aspiratus

Like a moth to a bright light, the Divine Fire calls to other lesser forms of flame. With the proper expertise in this Alembic, a Savant might seek out or manipulate fire as she likes.

Persistent: Given a small amount of kindling — paper or wood chips — the Promethean can nurse a small fire to life. He cannot generate fire from nothing, but this Distillation is highly useful for other abilities in this Alembic.

Direct Fire

With this ability, a Promethean's Pyros calls out to an existing flame, directing it as the Savant desires.

Cost: 1 Pyros

Dice Pool: None



Action: Instant

When in the presence of an extant fire, the Promethean may control the flames. Controlling fire requires the character's action each turn; the blaze must be within (Azoth x 10) yards. During each action, she may adjust the flame's intensity or Size by one step, or she may attack with it. Each attack uses a Dexterity + Occult roll and is penalized by the target's Defense as normal. Regardless of the fire's Size, treat it as a 1L weapon.

Fire Grasp

Going further than simply directing fire, the Savant pulls flame from an existing source to use as a weapon.

Cost: 2 Pyros

Dice Pool: None

Action: Instant

After spending the requisite Pyros, the character's hand is wreathed in fire. Simply touching a target spreads the flames. The player must roll Dexterity + Brawl as normal against living targets attempting to avoid contact in order to touch the victim. Success means that the flame manages to spread along the target, inflicting two points of lethal damage.

Against flammable objects, the Storyteller decides if the object catches fire. The flame does not injure the Promethean while it wreathes his hand. The character is not protected from any blazes set as a result of this power.

Divine Guidance

With such an in-depth study of the Divine Fire, a Savant learns how to allow it to guide his actions. It flows through his limbs, providing just enough extra strength, reaction time, or dexterity. It helps fire his synapses, allowing him to solve puzzles faster or act more wittily.

Cost: 3 Pyros

Dice Pool: Stamina + Occult + Azoth

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Fire consumes as well as transmutes. For the remainder of the scene, all Pyros expenditures require one Pyros more than normal.

Failure: The power fails to take effect.

Success: The character channels the fire's energy and takes it into her internal forge. She may automatically succeed (with the equivalent of one success) in a number of actions equal to the successes rolled on the power's activation.

Exceptional Success: The character gains two successes per action instead of one.

This power lasts for the duration of the scene or until the accumulated successes are used, whichever comes first.

Mutatus Aspiratus

In order to understand a thing, one must examine all aspects of that thing. The Savants know this and thus examine the Divine Fire in both its positive and negative aspects. Some Prometheans go too far, though, and become the Hundred-Handed.

Persistent: To better examine Flux, fthe Promethean must learn how to sense it.

Dice Pool: Wits + Azoth

Action: Instant

With at least one success, the Promethean discerns any instances of Flux within (Azoth x 10) yards. This includes active Pandorans, but not dormant ones.

Contain Flux

Instead of merely sensing Flux, the Promethean can protect himself from its servants. He uses his Azothic Radiance as a buffer, becoming resistant to Pandoran attacks.

Cost: 1 Pyros

Dice Pool: Presence + Athletics + Azoth

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character becomes more susceptible to Pandoran attacks, lowering his Defense by 2 against them.

Failure: The Distillation fails to protect the character.

Success: For the remainder of the scene, the character has armor equal to successes rolled against Pandorans or other sources of Flux, including the Flux Transmutation.

Exceptional Success: No benefit other than additional armor.

Drawing Flux

Pandorans attacking a Promethean with this power find it harder to draw on their stolen reserves of Pyros. Like a wick, the Promethean's Azothic Radiance pulls at the Pandoran's Pyros, expelling any extra into the air.

Cost: 2 Pyros

Dice Pool: Presence + Intimidation + Azoth vs. Composure + Rank

Action: Instant and contested

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Promethean loses an additional 2 Pyros as it leaks out of him.

Failure: The target Pandoran is not affected.

Success: One Pandoran within 20 yards finds it more difficult to draw upon Pyros, spending two points for every one it uses. For example, if a Pandoran uses a power that requires one Pyros, it must spend two points instead. In addition, Flux Alembics cost double the usual amount of Pyros.

Expel Pyros

By flaring her Azothic Radiance and the Pyros it carries, the Ophidian creates a temporary dead zone. Pandorans caught in this area fall into Dormancy, at least for a few moments — which may be enough time for the Serpent to make her escape (or restrain them for study).

Cost: 3 Pyros

Dice Pool: None

Action: Instant

The Ophidians' Pyros explodes outward in a momentary flash of light. Pandorans within (Azoth x 10) feet of the Promethean must immediately make a reflexive Stamina roll. If this roll fails, the Pandoran suffers Dormancy for a number of turns equal to the Promethean's Azoth.

Sanctus Aspiratus

While other Alembics concern themselves with what Pyros can do or what it represents, Sanctus Aspiratus deals with the Divine Fire itself. Savants who delve into this Alembic seek to understand Pyros at the source — or as close to it as they can get.

Persistent: The Promethean can seek out other sources of Pyros in her vicinity. Like calls to like, and her inner fire reaches out to kindred origins.

Dice Pool: Wits + Occult

Action: Instant

The Ophidian senses the closest source of Pyros other than herself within (Azoth x 10) yards. This power does not provide any other information on that source or whether there are any dangers near its location.

Refine Pyros

Once the Divine Fire is studied, both in and of itself as well as its qualities, it can be used more efficiently for a time. Once a Savant has spent an amount of Pyros to "prime the pump," so to speak, Pyros is temporarily more amenable to his will.

Cost: 1 Pyros

Dice Pool: None

Action: Instant

For a number of turns equal to his Azoth, each point of Pyros the Savant spends counts as two.

Steal Pyros

Every living thing carries a spark of the Divine Fire, and a Promethean using this Distillation can steal it.

Cost: 2 Pyros

Dice Pool: Strength + Occult + Azoth – Resolve

Action: Reflexive and contested

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Promethean loses a point of Pyros, which is given to the target instead.

Failure: The character does not steal Pyros.

Success: The Promethean may steal one point of Pyros per success on the activation roll. If the target has a Pyros pool, the Savant steals Pyros directly. If not, the Promethean inflicts one point of lethal damage per success and absorbs one point of Pyros for every *two* points of lethal damage inflict (so if the player rolls four successes, the character gains two Pyros and the target suffers four lethal damage). This Distillation has no effect on undead targets.

The Promethean may continue to steal Pyros from turn to turn so long as the Promethean maintains physical contact and keeps succeeding on his activation rolls. This may require a grapple or a touch attack, depending on circumstances.

Exceptional Success: No effect except for the increased damage.

Drain Pyros

No longer restricted by touch, the Promethean may pull Pyros from a target and redistribute it as she pleases. The Savant might transfer it all to herself, or she may spread it to a number of other individuals so long as they are all part of her branded throng.

Cost: 3 Pyros

Dice Pool: Dexterity + Occult + Azoth – Stamina

Action: Instant and contested

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character loses control of her own Pyros, expelling all of her stored points. This generates a Category 1 Wasteland or makes an existing Wasteland one Category worse.

Failure: The power fails to activate.

Success: For each success, the Promethean draws one point of Pyros from her target. If members of her throng are present, she may distribute the points as she desires among them. Otherwise the stolen Pyros goes directly to the Promethean. Any excess points over a subject's stored maximum are simply lost, regardless of target.

If the target doesn't have a Pyros pool, the Promethean can convert Health at the same rate described under Steal Pyros.

Exceptional Success: No additional effect beyond more damage inflicted or Pyros drained.

PROMETHEAN TRAITS

While Prometheans emulate humanity, they are not quite human and play by different rules. The following rules add to and, where applicable, supersede any of the general rules in Chapter Four.

Azoth

Within every Promethean lies Azoth, a condensed, palpable form of *Pyros* — the Divine Fire. Pyros by itself cannot animate the unliving; it must be filtered, refined, and idealized. Azoth animates the inanimate. It makes hearts beat, lungs expand, and tempers flare. Azoth isn't life, but it's a passable facsimile. Azoth is imperfect and corrupt, like life through weathered glass. The urge and drive to become human, to achieve perfection and true life, is *Elpis*.

Change comes as result of complex alchemical processes. Each of the procedures and rituals for awakening the Created brings massive amounts of Pyros together and crystalizes it into Azoth. Each procedure has the same end result, but gets there through divergent and incompatible fashions.

Every Promethean begins play with a single dot of Azoth. At character creation, five Merit dots may be spent for an additional dot, or ten may be spent for a total of three dots.

Effects of Azoth

Azoth is rated from 1 to 10 dots. It causes the following effects. Their specific numerical effects are reflected on the Azoth chart.

- **Maximum Azoth/Azoth Per Turn:** Azoth determines how much Pyros your character can store in her body at a given time and how many points she may spend in a turn. If an effect would require her to spend more Pyros than she can spend in a turn, the effect takes multiple turns to activate.

- **Trait Maximums:** At higher levels of Azoth, your character may increase her Attributes and Skills beyond five dots. A greater level of Azoth permits her capabilities beyond mundane limitations.

- **Radiance:** Azoth concentrates Pyros in such a dense fashion that it radiates outward. Azoth calls to Azoth; for this reason, Prometheans can identify one another with any of their senses. With a Wits + Azoth roll, a Promethean can identify the presence of other Azoth within a certain range (dictated by the chart). This radiance also draws malice from Pandorans. Note that if two Prometheans try to identify each other by Azothic radiance, the range is based on the witnessed, not the witness. If a Promethean with Azoth 1 and Azoth 6 come in the same city block, the Azoth 1 Promethean might notice the Azoth 6 Promethean, but the Azoth 6 Promethean would not notice the Azoth 1 Promethean.

- **Dampening the Fire:** A Promethean can intentionally repress her Azothic radiance. This could be used to stay out of Pandoran attention or away from the eyes of other Prometheans. Choose a lower level of Azoth; the Promethean's Azoth score falls to that level for at least 24 hours. During this time, all Azoth-related effects are dampened, including dice pools using the trait and Azoth's use as a Supernatural Tolerance trait. As well, levy a –3 penalty to any efforts to identify her by her Azoth. The dampening lasts at least 24 hours, but can be raised back to its normal level at any time afterward.

- **Disquiet:** Azoth unsettles humans around a Promethean. Rules for the Disquiet are found on p. 172.

- **Measure:** Torment stains a Promethean's Azothic radiance. When the Created sense each other's Azoth, they can sense a subtle presence of past Torment that deeply influences first impressions. Particularly Tormented Prometheans will find that other Created stay away from them whenever possible, for fear of drawing down that storm upon themselves.

- **Wasteland:** All Prometheans are capable of scorching the world with their Divine Fire, but Created with higher Azoth ratings do more damage faster. Rules of Wastelands can be found on p. 174.

Increasing Azoth

In game terms, a Promethean's Azoth increases when his player spends either Experiences or Vitriol Experiences. Five Experiences *or* four Vitriol Experiences buys a dot of Azoth. These can't be mixed; the player must pay the full price of whatever type of Experience in order to raise Azoth. It's slightly less "expensive" to raise Azoth using Vitriol, but that also means that character isn't putting Vitriol toward the Pilgrimage.

In story terms, Azoth improves as the Promethean expends vast amounts of Pyros. Consider Azoth a muscle; it strengthens as it's used and fed. Of course, Azoth is a double-edged sword. While it improves a Promethean's abilities, it also draws in Pandorans and guarantees she'll never go unnoticed for long.

Pyros

Pyros is the Divine Fire, the sharp breath that separates a corpse from a living thing. Pyros transforms, changing whatever it touches. It is powerful and potentially destructive, but Promethean can expend and direct it, using it to become human.

Spending Pyros

A Promethean may spend a number of Pyros in a turn dictated by her Azoth (see p. 169). If a Distillation or effect requires more Pyros than she can spend in a turn, it takes multiple turns to use.

Pyros can be expended reflexively for the following effects.

- **Transhuman Potential:** By spending a point of Pyros, the player can increase an Attribute by a single dot for an action. If used to booth the Attribute for purposes of an extended action, it lasts until the character completes or abandons the task.

- **Shock Absorption:** By spending a point of Pyros when taking damage, the player may ignore one point of lethal damage or two points of bashing damage. If she can spend three or more Pyros in a turn, the player can spend three to ignore one point of aggravated damage. This must be done at the time the effect or attack occurs; the Promethean's Divine Fire simply denies that which would destroy her body.

- **Transmutations:** Activating Distillations of the various Transmutations a Promethean learns from her Refinement requires Pyros expenditure. Rules for charging these powers are found on p.118.

Replenishing Pyros

Each Promethean Lineage generates Pyros under different circumstances. The following conditions cause the Azoth to generate Pyros the Created may store and use.

- Every day at sunrise, a Promethean gains one Pyros. This is due to the Promethean's alchemical relationship with the sun — a sign of purest gold. While the sun needn't be present, its rise causes the Azoth to flare.

- A Promethean witnessing a thunderstorm creates Pyros. The first time in a day the Promethean hears a crack of thunder, her Azoth rouses and generates one Pyros.

- When a Promethean sleeps in or near her key element (see sidebar), she dreams and gains Pyros. This requires the Promethean sleep for at least four hours. After four hours, roll Azoth + Composure. Each success generates one Pyros.

Azoth Effects

Azoth	Trait Maximum	Max Pyros	Pyros/Turn	Radiance
1	5	10	1	Same Building
2	5	11	2	City Block
3	5	12	3	Several City Blocks
4	5	13	4	City Neighborhood
5	5	15	5	City Quadrant, Borough
6	6	20	6	Half of City
7	7	30	7	Entire City
8	8	40	8	Entire City
9	9	50	9	Entire City
10	10	100	10	Entire City

These Pyros-generating dreams are vivid and powerful. They are not normally Elpis visions (p. 187); they only exist to rouse the Azoth.

- Once per day, a Promethean regains a point of Pyros if she spends an hour or more around humans.
- Azoth invigorates when exposed to electricity. When exposed to a current that would cause electricity damage to a mortal, a Promethean heals damage (p. 170) and regains Pyros.
- At Storyteller discretion, life-affirming events in the Created's Pilgrimage may award Pyros.
- Certain Distillations allow a Promethean to generate further Pyros.

Promethean Advantages

Every Promethean possesses certain advantages as result of his inhuman genesis.

Superlative Endurance

Promethean bodies don't suffer fatigue like a human. Left unchecked, they only need sleep after 48 hours have passed. After that time, they suffer a cumulative –1 penalty to all dice pools every six hours. When they finally rest, four hours of sleep fully replenishes them.

Durability

A Promethean has a sense of touch and feels pain. However, it registers differently that it does for humans. Instead of registering as an instinctive warning, it registers academically. "My arm is missing" is a reasonable Promethean response to a terrible wound that would leave a human screaming or dying in shock.

Functionally, Prometheans suffer no wound penalties. Also, bashing and lethal wounds alone will not stop the Created. Prometheans do not have to resist unconsciousness when their last Health box is filled with bashing or lethal damage. Indeed, the Created only stop when destroyed, when their final Health box is filled with aggravated damage.

Note that this doesn't mean the Promethean does not suffer the damage; she simply shrugs it off. A sword still chops open her flesh; she just doesn't slow for the injury.

Finally, aggravated damage always causes a Promethean to suffer a Tilt. Each attack that causes aggravated damage inflicts one Tilt appropriate to the injury. See the appendix for a list of sample Tilts.

The Journey to the River

Once in a Promethean's existence, she may die, truly die, and return. When she's fully dead, with her last Health box filled with aggravated damage, she may revivify. Some representation of her — her nascent soul, her Azoth, or simply a ghost-like reflection of her personality — journeys to a River of Death and returns (see p. 301). Her body recovers a number of Health levels equal to her Azoth and rises. This can occur at any time within a number of days equal to her Azoth. She cannot recover from true obliteration, such as cremation, but can reform so long as the majority of her heart — the seat of Divine Fire — remains.

The body does not recover during the waiting period; the resurrection is all-or-nothing, all at once. So if a Frankenstein loses an arm and a leg to a wood chipper during his death, those limbs stay gone until she revivifies a few days later. Then, all at once, it's as if he's born again. The limbs return, the heart fires, and he becomes alive once more. While he does not recover, he also does not decompose. He remains identical to the moment of death without any outside intervention. His body may lose blood or other fluids, but does not decay if it will return.

Constitution

As side effect of their superlative endurance and preternatural durability, Prometheans do not require the same sustenance as humans. Azoth keeps the Created body moving and needs only minimal nourishment. Azoth can consume any organic matter the Promethean swallows; it atomizes the consumed material completely, creating Pyros. The Promethean does not need to expel waste matter from her body after eating.

Lineages and Their Elements

Frankenstein characters must sleep near massive amounts of electricity or by fire. An open electrical transformer strong enough to shock those who get close enough is sufficient, as is a camp fire.

Galateid characters must sleep among human voices. These voices cannot be recorded; they must be heard directly from the speaker's mouth. For this reason, Galatea prefer to sleep just out of the way in crowded places.

Osiran Prometheans replenish Pyros by sleeping in or partially submerged in water.

Tammuz characters must sleep buried or partially buried within the earth to regain Pyros.

Ulgan characters must sleep in spiritually charged areas to replenish Pyros. Actual haunted houses work as well as loci of spiritual energy, such as dragon lines, fairy trods, or places attuned to feng shui.

Unfleshed characters must sleep near a power source relevant to their original form. Mechanical Unfleshed must sleep near batteries or generators, for example. Steam-powered Unfleshed might sleep near fires or rushing water. A clockwork Unfleshed might need to sleep to a rhythmic sound, such as a metronome.

Extempore have one specific element they must sleep near to regain Pyros, which is unique to each character. Additionally, Extempore may sleep near another Promethean regaining Pyros during his slumber. This vague kinship recovers Pyros as if she were near her own element.

While the Promethean can atomize any organic matter, this does not make her especially able to chew and swallow such matter. At Storyteller discretion, eating particularly challenging materials can cause the Promethean bashing or even lethal damage. Once she swallows, though, the material is no longer a concern. Any rolls to resist toxins or poisons receive the Promethean's Azoth as a dice bonus.

Hunger only mounts after a number of days equal to the Promethean's Resolve. After the next day, she suffers increasing Torment (see p. 171 for Torment).

Unaging

Prometheans do not keep the fire burning forever. After about a century in her condition, the fire quenches and she ceases to be if she has yet to attain true mortality. Additionally, this clock resets if she Returns (see p. 169). This could add another theoretical century to her life.

During the Pilgrimage, the Promethean does not age. His muscles remain strong. His senses remain sharp. If he attains mortality, he begins his new life at an age appropriate to his body.

Electroshock Therapy

Electricity flows through wires, Pyros flows through electricity. Electricity acts as a vehicle, a conduit for the Divine Fire. For this reason, a Promethean exposed to massive amounts of electricity generates Pyros and rapidly heals. This process never looks boring or benign; the Promethean's body conducts chaotically, with sparks and arcs flying off in every which direction. Stronger power sources will look more dramatic. But to the untrained eye, this is always alarming or frightening.

Every turn in which a Promethean is exposed to sufficient electricity to cause damage to a human being, she generates a single point of Pyros and heals damage. Electricity, as described on p. 212, inflicts a set amount of bashing damage per turn. A Promethean *heals* this amount of damage rather than suffering it. It takes two points of electricity "damage" to heal a lethal wound, and three to heal an aggravated wound. If the Promethean holds on long enough, she can regenerate lost limbs or organs.

A Promethean not only conducts electricity in this fashion, she acts as a powerful conduit, rapidly overloading electrical systems. After a number of turns equal to half the power source's damage rating (see p. 212), the power source might short. The Storyteller should roll a dice pool based on the size and power of the electricity source, modified by how old and well maintained it is. A subway line is fairly stable (six dice), but it the city infrastructure is crumbling, the Storyteller might apply a –2 modifier. A private residence might be up to code, but it doesn't draw too much power to begin with (starting pool of two dice, +1 for being well-maintained). If the roll fails, the power supply shorts out. Multiple Created can absorb from the same source, but this hastens the short; apply a –1 modifier to the roll for every Promethean after the first who draws power. A Promethean using the Generator Distillation (p. 138) can prevent this from happening.

While healing from electrical exposure, the Promethean can also spend Pyros to heal. This healing is reflexive. One Pyros heals one lethal damage or two bashing damage. Three Pyros heals one point of aggravated damage. The Promethean is limited by her normal per-turn Pyros expenditure as determined by her Azoth (see p. 169). Further, she's limited by the time she's able to absorb electricity.

When experiencing an immediate and massive jolt, such as through a lightning bolt, the entire process begins and concludes immediately. This confers all Pyros and healing effects instantaneously.

Example: *A Promethean touches the live rail on a subway. She's just been in a fight with a Centimanus and, although she escapes victorious, she also suffered four lethal damage and three bashing damage. The rail would normally cause 6 bashing damage per turn, which means she can touch it for six turns before it shorts. On the first turn, she heals all three of her bashing damage, and one point of lethal damage. One point of "damage" is left over, and carries into the next turn. She also gains a point of Pyros.*

On the second turn, she heals the three remaining points of lethal damage (each of them requires two "damage" from electricity to heal from the six she has incoming) and gains a second point of Pyros. She holds on for one more turn, gaining a third point of Pyros, and then lets go; she doesn't want to short the rail.



Transhuman Potential

Every Promethean can strain her Azoth to great intensity, pushing her body beyond what it might otherwise be able to do. By spending a point of Pyros, the player can increase an Attribute by a single dot for one action (limited only by her per-turn expenditure limits). If the character is undertaking an extended action, the increased Attribute lasts for the entire action, not just a turn; if she abandons the action partway through, the increase fades as well. This only increases raw ability, not practiced skill. An increase in Intelligence, for example, does not impart new knowledge, it simply increases raw cognitive ability.

The Drawbacks

While Prometheans have some advantages over humans, mostly physically, they suffer a number of drawbacks as part of their condition. The Divine Fire that animates them scorches the world and burns too hot for humans to be comfortable in its presence. Their alchemical physiologies react strangely to other phenomena, too.

Fire

While the Divine Fire burns within every Promethean and electricity bolsters it, physical fire is anathema to the Created. The Divine Fire reacts with natural fire, causing Prometheans grievous injuries from flame. The Created suffer the same amount of damage from fire as a human would (see p. 213), but the injuries caused are considered aggravated.

Disfigurements

Every Promethean comes from unnatural means. Some come from animated clay. Some come from human parts sewn together. Each Lineage comes from different stock. This leads to the Created looking generally inhuman, each Lineage doing so in a different way. To the naked eye, Prometheans frighten, alarm, and dismay. However, the Azoth masks this fact, hiding these disfigurements. Flesh moves, seams blur, and the illusion persists that the Promethean is not inhuman. The façade of humanity peels back, however, each time a Created channels her Pyros.

When charging Alembics, accessing Transhuman Potential, or otherwise using Pyros, the illusion briefly — but meaningfully — breaks down, revealing the truth below. This isn't a full, conscious revelation, but more like something horrible revealed in a flash of lightning. The witness can't necessarily explain what he's seen, but he's unsettled and knows he's seen *something*.

Prometheans always see through each other's Azothic deception. They see one another for what they truly are. They can still see and understand the illusion, however, so they can engage in public with the proper context if they wish. If a Promethean dies, her Azoth ceases to protect her image. She shows the world her true form.

Torment

When Azothic imbalance is caused by emotional or physical stress, the Promethean's primary humour overflows. The damage is internalized, and the overflowing humour forces the Created into a state of unimaginable emotional and physical distress. This distress is called *Torment*.

A Tormented Promethean may feel as though she isn't in control of her actions, but it's more complicated than that. The feeling is more that she's entirely aware of what she's doing, the damage she's causing, and how much this will blow up in her face when she comes to her senses. She knows this isn't how she would act normally. She can't stop herself. Her mind resists all attempts to analyze the situation or to try and prevent the obvious outcome. A Tormented Promethean is a man strapped into a car with a cinder block on the accelerator: he can do nothing but continue his self-destructive path until it comes to a painful end.

Each Lineage has its own Torment, a reflection of the humour that, left unchecked, can run roughshod over her Elpis. The exact nature of the pain, madness, or both she's overtaken by is specified in each Lineage's description in Chapter One and summarized below. These are only guidelines, however. Players may work with the Storyteller to customize the details of their Torment for each occasion. The effects of a given Promethean's Torment might all be variations on a single theme, but the causes are not. Torment can come from anything that drives a Promethean to exceptional stress, from pushing away loved ones with Disquiet, to intense pain, to simply failing to accomplish something. Whatever the cause, he can try resisting it, of course, maintaining control over himself. If he fails, however, he can't hold back the flood, and Torment takes hold.

What Torment Is Like

When a Promethean succumbs to Torment, she gives in to a dark reflection of all her doubts, fears, and self-loathing. A Tormented Promethean is fed up with this world, and it is tearing him apart. She sees her Pilgrimage as worthless, and the New Dawn as impossible. The only thing on her mind is punishing herself for ever believing in something so ridiculous. Until she snaps herself out of it, her Elpis no longer matters. The only thing of any importance is her pain and bringing that pain upon herself and everyone around her.

How this pained state expresses itself varies. It usually involves a combination of the character's primary humour (see Chapter One) and her personal Torment (see p. 106). Broad generalizations are possible, as are distressing similarities to Disquiet. The actual expression, as stated previously, can vary a great deal. If the player has an interesting idea for Torment, she is encouraged to run with it.

Frankensteins, ruled by the **choleric** humour, are the most blatantly angry. Their lashing out comes in the form of unchecked violence and destruction of the things they love, only to lead to immense sorrow when they realize what they've done.

The **sanguine** humour of the **Galateids** expresses as passion burning with the uncontrollable heat of their Azoth, emotions running out of control. The emotion varies, even from Torment to Torment, and can be compared to the highs and lows of bipolar disorder and anxiety disorders.

Tammuz of the **melancholic** humour are consumed by their failures. If something goes wrong, it's their fault. If something needs to be done, they're bound to foul it up. It's been known to express both as laziness and as deep depression, depending on the personal Torment.

The Prometheus Question

A common belief is that Torment and Disquiet are not simply a function of Azoth, but rather a punishment from on high. In Greek mythology, the titan Prometheus stole the Divine Fire from the gods to give to man. To punish Prometheus, the gods chained him to a rock and created the Caucasian Eagle, a bird that would peck out and devour Prometheus' liver every day, only for it to grow back and be pecked out once again the next day.

Given their names, comparing Prometheans to this titan's story is obvious, but the parallels don't readily appear. Demiurges and alchemists sometimes argue that the Disquiet they suffer as they spend time with their masterpieces is the representation of Prometheus's torment. Are they not, after all, the ones that suffer for the crime of bringing down fire from the gods?

Philosophically minded Prometheans suggest a more elaborate interpretation of the myth. While their creators committed the sin of stealing fire, many Prometheans believe they must inevitably create another of their kind as a step on the Pilgrimage; thus they are equally guilty of stealing fire. The fact that they are punished "in advance" may mean that all Prometheans are meant to follow the Pilgrimage, whether they like it or not.

Phlegmatic Osirans become the ultimate chessmasters. They shed all attachments, all friendships, all alliances, seeking absolute control in order to carry out their whims. The desires they enact so ruthlessly are always grand-scale, and always bad news for everyone that isn't the Osiran and is foolish enough to stand in their way.

Ulgan Ectoplasm brings out the bizarre and otherworldly, making them more like the spirits they are so connected to. Immediate concerns are temporal and not worth paying attention to. Mundane affairs are paltry and worthless compared to the supernatural, and the Ulgan will happily ignore the former for the latter. He sees nothing but the big picture, and will ignore anything without long-term ramifications.

The **Unfleshed** and their **oily** humour result in an embrace of their artificial nature. They question their right to even go on the Pilgrimage. An Unfleshed is just another machine, no more a viable person than a toaster. Why bother grasping at humanity when humanity is something you clearly are not?

Extempore Torment is a painful, constant reminder that its victim has no place in the world. He is a mistake, an accident, and is of no value to anyone. His identity is burnt away by the Azoth. All the Matchless can do until it subsides is pick up fragments of a personality from others, becoming the ultimate patchwork person.

Torment Triggers

The following events can cause a Promethean to enter Torment:

- Knowingly triggering stage-three Disquiet.
- Recovering all Willpower from the character's Torment trait
- Taking aggravated damage from fire
- Any major failure related to the Pilgrimage, including stepping backwards.
- Dramatic failures on certain Distillations can cause Torment

If any of the above Torment triggers occur, the player rolls to ignore the imbalance and resist Torment. If the character is in a Wasteland at the time of the trigger, the player receives a negative modifier (see p. 176).

Dice Pool: Resolve + Composure – Azoth

Dramatic Failure: The Promethean falls into Torment more deeply than usual. Gain the Tormented Condition (p.312). When attempting to resolve it, the player rolls Azoth. If this roll fails, the character remains in Torment (but gains a Vitriol Beat).

Failure: The Promethean can't resist the agony inside and gains the Tormented Condition.

Success: The Promethean will not be defeated. Gain one point of Willpower.

Exceptional Success: The Promethean utterly shuts down her Torment and forces herself into order. Take a Vitriol Beat.

Escaping Torment

Breaking free from the bonds of Torment is troublesome, but not even close to impossible. Any act that causes the humours to resume their normal balance can free the Promethean. The easiest way is to witness someone act in accordance with the Promethean's Elpis, or to resist the draw to self-destruct and fulfill her Elpis herself, showing the kindness — or cruelty — that she feels is most human. Another more destructive option is to let loose the Pyros churning deep inside, though this inevitably results in a Wasteland and is thus not a favorable option. Changing one's Refinement (except when changing to Stannum) or retreating from all contact with humanity or other Prometheans for a month also balances the Tormented Created.

Disquiet

A Promethean isn't human — yet. She acts strangely and seems out of touch with humanity because she *is*. She lacks the basic building blocks of personality and empathy that even the most socially maladjusted human has at his disposal, and has to learn them in a way that no human has to. These aren't just the visible or verbal cues, like the wrong facial reactions or laughing at an inappropriate time. All too often, the Divine Fire within the Created burns too bright, spilling out and warping the minds of those around them. Prometheans have no control over when this may happen, and many are socially maladjusted on top of this primal unease.

When a Promethean slips up, as she inevitably does, her facade of normalcy cracks, the Divine Fire bleeds through, and the person

on the receiving end is infected with a supernatural malady that the Azothic memory calls Disquiet. The affliction worms its way into the victim's mind — and the victim doesn't necessarily have to be mortal. Anything not animated by Azoth is susceptible, including most other supernatural beings and animals. The only entities that don't have to worry about it are other Prometheans, Pandorans, and the enigmatic *qashmallim*.

Symptoms start as confusion and annoyance, but can advance to paranoia, confusion, and eventually a contagious stage, where the victim forms an angry mob to hunt the Promethean down like an animal. Thankfully, it's exceedingly rare to reach the contagious stage unless in a Wasteland.

In addition to the increasing obsessive hatred of the Promethean that started Disquiet, the Lineage a Promethean descends from adds another effect to their Disquiet experience. A Frankenstein must watch as those afflicted build him up as the source of all the ills in their lives, while Disquieted victims expect an Unfleshed to toil ceaselessly for their benefit.

Disquiet Triggers

Any extended social contact with a susceptible target can trigger Disquiet, but the Storyteller has some latitude as to when to call for a Disquiet roll. Note that not every character who causes a Disquiet trigger necessarily needs this roll. If the Storyteller character is one that players are likely to come into extended or significant contact with, or who could easily cause further complications, it's worth rolling. The Storyteller can waive rolls for unimportant characters and adjudicate the result. The intent of Disquiet isn't to bog down the game or restrict all contact with humanity, but to underscore the isolation and difficulty of the Promethean Condition. The Storyteller should use Disquiet to separate Prometheans from humanity, to drive them together, to help nudge them towards milestones, and to prevent the Pilgrimage from stalling.

The following is a list of situations that can cause a Disquiet trigger:

- A mortal spends a full scene in superficial social contact with the Promethean. Additional scenes in the same chapter do not count as another trigger.
- A Promethean attempts to seduce, persuade, intimidate, or otherwise manipulate the mortal, whether through using Skill rolls or Social maneuvering (see p. 202).
- A character uses supernatural senses on a Promethean, such as the Unseen Sense Merit or the various detection and scrutiny-related powers of supernatural beings.
- A mortal witnesses a Promethean's disfigurements (see p. 171).
- The mortal and the Promethean engage in a conversation lasting more than a few minutes, or exchange personal information (even falsified).

When one of these triggers occurs, the subject must attempt to resist Disquiet. This represents the Promethean's Azoth trying to overwhelm the victim's ability to think rationally and resist its influence. In this roll, failure is advantageous for the player. As such, she cannot voluntarily acquire a dramatic failure for a Beat. Instead, she can voluntarily take an exceptional success.

Action: Instant and contested

Dice Pool: Azoth vs. Resolve + Composure

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: No additional effect if the player dramatically fails. If the Storyteller rolls a dramatic failure, the player gains the Disquieted Condition at one stage higher than she would normally.

Failure: If both the player and the Storyteller fail the roll, nothing happens.

Success: If the player rolls successes equal or exceeding the Storyteller, the victim gains the Disquieted Condition or advances to stage two, if he already has it. If the Storyteller rolls more successes than the Promethean's player, the subject resists Disquiet.

Exceptional Success: If the player rolls more successes than the Storyteller and gains an exceptional success, the victim gains the Disquieted Condition or advances by a single stage even if the victim would advance to stage three without a Wasteland present. If the Storyteller rolls more successes than the player and gains an exceptional success, the victim is immune to all further Disquiet risks for that chapter.

The Disquieted Condition

A victim who fails to resist Disquiet gains the Disquieted Condition (p. 308). It is a four-stage condition that warps the victim's mind and turns him against the Promethean that caused

Disquiet and the Supernatural

Most other supernatural beings are susceptible to Disquiet in some way. While an in-depth examination of which creatures suffer Disquiet and in what manner is beyond the scope of this book, below are some suggestions:

Vampires and **werewolves** in Disquiet perceive the Promethean as a threat. The Divine Fire burns too hot and triggers their instinct for blind rage. Disquiet imposes penalties to resist frenzy and Death Rage.

Mages, **changelings**, **hunters**, and **Sin-Eaters** are human enough that they respond to Disquiet like human beings. Many such creatures have ways to mitigate or resist Disquiet, if they know to do so.

Demons and **mummies** respond strangely to Disquiet; demons are affected by it, but as they maintain ironclad control over their responses, they can choose whether or not to act on it and in what capacity. Mummies seem to respond to Disquiet if their cults have been afflicted, but data is scarce given the rarity of both the Arisen and the Created.

Finally, **Beasts** are completely unaffected by Disquiet.

the Condition. Disquiet can advance to stage two by simple contact with a Promethean, but unless a Promethean's player manages an exceptional success against a victim with Disquieted (Stage Two), Disquiet cannot advance to stage three unless the trigger takes place in a Wasteland.

Lineage Effects

In addition to a general disgust and hatred of the Promethean, each Lineage has its own Disquiet effect that increases in intensity in each stage.

Frankenstein: Frankensteins become their victims' scapegoats. Any negative thought turns to the Promethean. Ever trivial, unrelated annoyances become the Promethean's fault in the victim's eyes as Disquiet worsens. The victim eventually sees this obsession as revenge — if the abomination is behind all their woes, it deserves anything it gets.

Galateid: Galateid Disquiet results in dark, lustful obsession. This isn't a crush; Galateid Disquiet is stalking, shrines, and feigning disgust because he can't come to terms with the cognitive dissonance of hating and desiring someone at the same time. Eventually, the victim decides that he has no choice but to make the Promethean his, and only his, by any means necessary.

Osiran: The Nepri are the masters of secrets and lies. Their Disquiet brings this trait forth in its victims. The victim becomes filled with unstoppable scientific curiosity towards the Promethean — she's clearly not human, so what is she? The victim finds himself compelled to find answers to that question, whether through stalking, obsessive research, or, in the final stages, kidnapping the Promethean to dissect him and learn what he is directly.

Tammuz: Tammuz have an odd relationship with language. It animates them, gives them life and purpose, but when their Disquiet infects people, language fails them. Everything a Tammuz says to someone inflicted with his Disquiet is the wrong word choice, the wrong tone, the wrong body language. Everything is misinterpreted — a joke is a threat, an offer of help a promise of violence. Eventually, the mob forms and brings the Tammuz to "justice," believing his cries for mercy to be a confession.

Ulgan: Monsters exist, unnatural creatures that stalk the night wearing human form; none know this truth better than the victims of Ulgan Disquiet. These poor souls grow intensely paranoid about the Promethean's otherworldly nature, whether that nature is real or imagined — either way, in the victim's eye, the Ulgan is an unnatural hunter, something beyond humanity. As the Condition advances, they see the Promethean as a true monster — a creature not of this world that exists only to hunt in the guise of a man as it stalks its prey. Ironically, the victim becomes much the same, insisting that he must destroy this hunter for the sake of all mankind.

Unfleshed: The Unfleshed is not human. It's something that's well-understood even in stage one: the Promethean is a *thing*, nothing more. The idea that it should be recognized as human is as ridiculous as one's blender or smartphone one day deciding it is human. The victim denies the Promethean the humanity it so desperately craves in the most cruel ways possible to teach it its place. If it continues to toil under such an obviously false premise, the victim may decide to fix the Promethean, to correct the malfunction. It's not murder, don't worry. You can't "murder" a machine.

Extempore: Extempore Disquiet victims are confused. They can't seem to keep the Promethean's identity straight, though they act like it's the Promethean's fault somehow. Is she the girl that works at the library? Or his annoying boss? His estranged sister? The victim can't identify the Promethean unless in a scene with her. As Disquiet intensifies, the people he'll confuse her with grow more sinister, culminating in confusing her for some great criminal — a terrorist, a pedophile, a serial killer — someone that must be put away, or worse.

Wasteland

The Promethean condition carries with it a terrible side effect called the Wasting of the Peaceful Range, or Wasteland. Like Disquiet, it is born of Azoth. Unlike Disquiet, this phenomenon takes its toll on the environment, instead of directly affecting people.

The Wasteland is a force of entropy, it breaks down structure, life, and patterns in its midst. This isn't a palpable sickness, this isn't a plague that can be cured. Wasteland is the universe balancing out the Promethean's theft of life.

This phenomenon encourages Prometheans to stay on the move. Ethical, human Created understand that their presence has a terrible gravity. More academically minded Created simply recognize that unchecked Wasteland grows and ultimately draws attention to the strange, as well as the fact that Disquiet triggered within Wastelands becomes contagious and intense.

A careful Promethean *can* stay in one area, if she's careful. The Wasteland phenomenon does not occur automatically when a Promethean enters an area. Wasteland gradually progresses, and these progressions are tied to the rapid flow of Pyros. This can occur through many methods. If an area is not currently tainted with Wasteland, any of the following methods starts it along its track. If the area is already tainted, the Wasteland runs the risk of Festering (see Festering, below).

Causes for Wastelands

The following occurrences can lead to a Wasteland or can cause a Wasteland to Fester.

- A single Promethean spends a great deal of Pyros in a scene. The amount required depends on the Promethean's Azoth dots. Greater Azoth burns brighter and hotter than the Pyros of a less potent Created. The amount required is (11 – Azoth). The most powerful Prometheans cause a Wasteland with even the slightest usage of Pyros. The weakest must expend themselves fully to cause such a blight.
- Attempting to force an Elpis vision (p. 187) can create a Wasteland.
- When a character attempts to create a Promethean — successful or not — the coalescence of Pyros that accompanies the practice creates or exacerbates Wastelands. Use the creator's Azoth + 1, or 6, whichever is higher, to reflect the effects.
- Prometheans can return to life when destroyed (see p. 169). This causes an enormous rush of Pyros, not dissimilar to a new Promethean's creation.



- When a greater *qashmal* manifests, a Wasteland can occur. Use the creature's effective Azoth in this case.
- When a Promethean attains a universal milestone, the influx of Pyros can cause a Wasteland.
- If a Promethean goes too long without a Refinement shift or without a milestone, the buildup of excess Pyros can taint the area around her. At lower levels of Azoth (1–2), this occurs after six months in an area. At mid levels (3–5), this occurs after a single month. At higher levels (6–7), only a week must pass. The most powerful Created (8–10) must evolve quickly — indeed, daily — and either move along, dampen their Azoth, or cause a Wasteland.
- Relatedly, a Promethean who becomes stuck in a Role automatically creates a Tainted Wasteland when she breaks out of that rut (p. 179).
- When Pandorans awake, they can shake an area into a Wasteland. When four or more Ranks' worth of Pandorans awaken in a single scene, they create a Wasteland. Consider their Azoth to be (total Ranks – 3) for this purpose.
- Any suitably dramatic event culminating in a massive influx of Pyros can spawn or grow a Wasteland, at Storyteller discretion.

Affected Areas

A Wasteland generally starts small and increases in size with time. Prometheans with greater Azoth cause more massive Wastelands.

When a Wasteland comes into existence, compare the creator's Azoth to the chart below. It starts at that level. Whenever a Wasteland Festers (see below), it spreads outward. As Wastelands fade, this occurs in reverse, and the Wasteland shrinks.

Progression of Affected Areas

Azoth	Basic Affected Area
1–2	Single Room
3–4	Small Home
5–6	Full Building
7	City Block
8	Neighborhood
9	City
10	Region

Wasteland Categories

Category	Name	Effective Azoth	Fade	Torment	Environment	Effects
1	Touched	1	Creator's Azoth in Days	–1	0	–1 Durability
2	Tainted	2	Creator's Azoth in Days x 2	–2	Level 1	–1 Structure, –1 Durability
3	Blighted	3	Creator's Azoth in Days x 2	-3	Level 2	–1 Structure, –2 Durability
4	Wasteland	4	Creator's Azoth in Weeks	–4	Level 3	–2 Structure, –3 Durability
5	Firestorm	5	Special	–5	Special, see **p. 264** for Firestorms	

Festering

With time, or with further flow of Pyros, a Wasteland Festers into something greater. At the amount of time listed below or when an activity occurs that would normally cause a Wasteland, the Wasteland risks Festering and growing in size and category.

Roll the creator's or the Wasteland's effective Azoth, whichever is higher. If the roll fails, the Wasteland remains at the same level. If it succeeds, the Wasteland increases in category and size. On an exceptional success, the Wasteland immediately becomes a Firestorm.

At lower levels of Azoth (1–2), Festering occurs after six months in an area. At mid levels (3–5), this occurs after a single month. At higher levels (6–7), only a week must pass. At the highest levels (8+), this occurs each day.

If multiple Prometheans are in an area, count only the highest present Azoth for the purpose of Wasteland Festering. Note, too, that a branded throng can decrease or increase the effective Azoth used for a Wasteland, depending on the Lineages of the members.

Effects of a Wasteland

A Wasteland starts small and increases in size and potency over time. The size is tracked on the chart above, and the following five categories track the potency. Each category also imposes a penalty to all rolls to resist Torment within the threshold.

Wastelands cause objects and people within to suffer weakness, frailty, and brittleness. Each category lists penalties to Health and Durability. Structure and Durability losses reflect on all objects in the area, and are imposed over the first day an object is within. Objects reduced to 0 Structure fall to worthlessness after that time. Health penalties act as bashing damage applied to humans within. They may not heal that damage while within the Wasteland. Note that this applies only to humans; Prometheans are immune to these Wasteland effects.

As a Wasteland Festers, it becomes an extreme environment (see p. 212) and the area becomes all but uninhabitable. The danger in Wastelands reflects the humour of the Promethean that created it.

A **Frankenstein** creates Wastelands where fires catch randomly, and intense temperatures are the norm.

Galateids cause manic, fierce obsession in everyone around while sand storms weather and polish everything into brittle nothingness.

Osirans cause great overconfidence and hubris, turning everyone against each other while majestic thunderclouds storm relentlessly on the area.

Tammuz cause apathy, with heavy rains and earthquakes that result in flooding and mudslides.

Ulgan cause depression and melancholy, empowering spirits and ghosts to reach across the Gauntlet.

Unfleshed Wastelands make surfaces become slick and treacherous. People become listless, methodical, and repetitive, talking to each other only as much as is necessary and performing their jobs in a perfunctory manner.

Extempore create Wastelands as varied as they are themselves. One Matchless might create a Wasteland in which stone crumbles and the air tastes of salt, while another creates one in which everything moves more slowly, as though all the energy is being sapped.

The Fade

A Wasteland fades over time without Azoth to sustain it. Without its creator present, a Wasteland fades by one level at the given interval on the chart.

Non-Promethean Players and Disquiet

These rules are written under the assumption that the players in a **Promethean** chronicle are all playing the Created, and the only characters susceptible to Disquiet are controlled by the Storyteller.

If players are controlling other characters, such as mortals, vampires, demons, etc., the rules apply the same way, with one exception: If the victim isn't a Storyteller Character, the victim can also take a Beat whenever the Disquieted condition generates a Beat for the Promethean.

For example, a Blight caused by a Promethean with four dots of Azoth becomes Tainted after eight days. After eight more days, it becomes Touched. After four more days, it ceases to be a Wasteland at all.

Additionally, a Promethean can trigger a Firestorm at her discretion, which washes away the Wasteland entirely. To trigger a Firestorm, a Promethean must cause enough Festering triggers to bridge the gap between the current level of Wasteland and the Firestorm. For example, if an area is Tainted (a Category 2 Wasteland), the Promethean would need to cause three Festering triggers to bring about a Firestorm. Usually, this means a massive expenditure of Pyros. Triggering a Firestorm is a dangerous prospect, as the character has absolutely no control over the Firestorm once started. The full rules for Firestorms are on p. 264.

PILGRIMAGE

Prometheans are not human, but they long to be — and they have the chance to achieve their desire. A Promethean has a path in front of her, a series of alchemical transformations that slowly burn away the impurities of the Promethean condition and make her more person than monster. The Pilgrimage trait measures her steps on this journey.

If she has low Pilgrimage, she may have much to learn about being human, or she might have consciously chosen to ignore the lessons that the universe put in front of her. If she has high Pilgrimage, she's learned what it means to be human — the highs and the lows that affect both the people around her and her own desires.

Each character starts with one dot of Pilgrimage — she is alive and can learn and think and feel. She has nine dots to go before she is fully prepared to undergo the Great Work, the final alchemical transformation that makes her human. Some of the Created try this final transformation before they are fully prepared, but in doing so they fall foul of their own hubris. An alchemical transformation requires all the components and reagents to be in place before it will work. That the reaction fails doesn't mean that nothing happens, however. In any alchemical process the reagents combine into something; especially in the case of the Magnum Opus, the result of a botched transformation is never pretty.

Defining the Path

Every Created has a different Pilgrimage in front of her. The Pilgrimage answers questions and defines what kind of human being the Promethean wants to become. As a result, each character's Pilgrimage comes with its own choices. Though she may reach ten dots of Pilgrimage, that doesn't mean she's ready to complete her Great Work. A Pilgrimage involves progressing through the Refinements as well as the world.

Each Promethean has a specific path through the Refinements, though the character doesn't know what it is. The player, however, is well aware of his character's path. He can drive her to greater success — or show her greater challenges. In order to complete the Great Work, a character has to internalize lessons from at least four Refinements — two basic Refinements and two complex Refinements. Part of internalizing the lesson involves completing a Role in those Refinements. One player may want his character to focus on Aurum and Ferrum, Aes, and Mercurius, a path that focuses on refinement and self-improvement through means both physical and mystical to become part of humanity rather than an outsider. Another player may decide that her character should follow all ten Refinements, in an occult journey that examines every aspect of human and Promethean existence that follows a planned progression.

Though it may seem easier to complete a Pilgrimage based on few Refinements rather than all ten, that's not the case. The Promethean has to complete the same number of Roles either way. Taking in eight or ten Refinements means changing between disparate Roles, going from a Hermit to a Leader to an Ascetic, which means greater changes in the character's outlook and facets of her personality. Fewer Refinements means the character must take on more Roles from them, giving the character greater consistency at the expense of mystical experience. Each Role provides internal alchemical components for the Magnum Opus, thus its success is based on the number of Roles completed, not the number of Refinements that the Created studied. Studying more Refinements does give her a broader choice when she undergoes the New Dawn (p. 303).

A character's starting Refinement is automatically part of her Pilgrimage. The player should then note down the remaining Refinements and Roles of his character's Pilgrimage. A Pilgrimage Sheet is a handy way to track both Refinements and Roles, and to visualize how far a Created is through her journey.

She must go through at least two basic and two complex Refinements, and must always go through at least as many basic Refinements as complex. She could not, for example, go through Aes, Argentum, Ferrum, Mercurius, and Stannum, as that would mean studying more complex Refinements than basic ones. The Refinement of Flux cannot be part of a character's journey, as it involves stepping away from the Pilgrimage entirely. The Storyteller should make notes of each character's Pilgrimage, and offer chances to adopt the appropriate Refinements — and challenges appropriate to them.

The player then notes down ten Roles that are part of the Refinements on his character's Pilgrimage. The Promethean must pass through most of these Roles to get to the point of the New Dawn. As long as she has completed at least one Role in each Refinement on her Pilgrimage, and at least eight Roles in total, she can attempt the New Dawn. She will, however, have a much better chance if she completes all ten Roles. More details on creating a Pilgrimage from both a player and Storyteller's viewpoint is provided in Chapter Seven.

The Created can — and frequently do — take on Refinements that aren't part of their Pilgrimage. Almost every Promethean falls to Stannum for a time, delving into the darker side of the human

experience to bleed off angst and Torment. The Centimani are another example, as they step off the Pilgrimage entirely, while other Prometheans take on new Refinements based on their evolving interests. If a character spends a lot of time reflecting on her current state, she may choose to follow Plumbum whether it's on her Pilgrimage or not. A Promethean can change Refinements and Roles as needed, though she must be careful. If she is currently following a Role of one of her Pilgrimage's Refinements, she must either complete the Role — hitting the related milestone — or risk stepping backward on her Pilgrimage.

Walking the Path

The Storyteller designs the details of each characters' Pilgrimage based on the player's input — their answers to the five questions (p. 101) and the Roles they must take in each Refinement. These details take the form of milestones, specific events that reflect both a Promethean's ongoing search for the knowledge to perform the Great Work and their understanding part of what it means to be human.

Characters *step forward* when they gain a dot of Pilgrimage. The easy way to step forward involves completing a superlative milestone — doing so immediately grants the character a dot of Pilgrimage. The harder way is to spend the Vitriol Experiences gained from milestones. Stepping forward is slow going; a character can only spend Vitriol Experiences to buy a dot of Pilgrimage when she completes a minor or major milestone. A superlative milestone has its learning experience baked in as part of the reward; the character can't learn more from the same event.

Though most Prometheans desperately want to step forward on the path of the Pilgrimage, almost all stumble at one point or another. These moments can cause her to *step backwards* on the path, needing to find more milestones to guide her to her Magnum Opus. These stumbling blocks come in the form of breaking points; specific factors that remind a character that she is not human and that she does not understand the human condition as well as she otherwise might. Each of the Roles that make up a given Refinement has its own breaking point — a moment where the Promethean demonstrates that she hasn't learned the lesson of a Role.

Sample Breaking Points

- Taking on a new Refinement before completing a Role related to your Pilgrimage
- Making it impossible to fulfill a milestone
- Using supernatural means to intentionally murder a human
- Injuring or killing multiple people with supernatural abilities
- Creating a Pandoran
- Becoming a Centimanus*
- Performing the lacuna

Becoming a Centimanus is a special case. In addition to the breaking point (and associated risk of stepping backward), this Refinement involves stepping off the Pilgrimage entirely. While she studies the Refinement of Flux, she cannot achieve any milestones towards her Pilgrimage and cannot generate or spend Vitriol. She does not have to worry about additional breaking points — she is no longer following the path of her Pilgrimage, so it doesn't matter if she makes mistakes along the way.

Some breaking points refer to "supernatural means." This does not just include Transmutations, but any abilities or powers a Promethean possesses that go above and beyond human potential: a Galateid's supernatural Social prowess or an Unfleshed's internal mechanics both count. The Promethean has to be responsible for the act, but she does not need to perform it herself — it's enough to know that her spark of inhumanity caused the result. As such, spurring a werewolf into a murderous rage or deliberately allowing a Pandoran to feast on an enemy both count as killing through supernatural means.

As she starts her Pilgrimage, a Promethean finds it easier to recover from her occasional stumble. She is still learning, but she can bounce back quite easily. As she progresses, she comes to understand both herself and her place in the world around her. Faltering at that point makes it harder to continue; she must work out why she fell and compensate for it. As she prepares for the Great Work, she has all the metaphysical ingredients in place for her final transformation and the slightest disruption threatens the entire process. This requirement for greater focus as she steps forward is represented in her dice pool when facing a breaking point. To determine whether a character steps backwards or not, she rolls a dice pool based on her Pilgrimage so far.

Pilgrimage	Dice Pool
10	Chance die
9	1
8–7	2
6–5	3
4	4
2	5

She cannot spend Willpower on this roll. Whether she succeeds or fails, the player takes a Vitriol Beat.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character falls hard. She's reminded that she is not human, just a collection of inert parts given action by an outside force, chasing an impossible dream. She loses a point of Pilgrimage and falls into Torment with no roll to resist. Take a Beat.

Failure: The Promethean steps backward along her path. She loses a dot of Pilgrimage and gains the Disconnected Condition.

Success: The character catches herself as she stumbles. She does not lose any Pilgrimage but gains the Disconnected Condition.

Exceptional Success: Not only does the character not lose any Pilgrimage, the thought of how she nearly slipped revitalizes her. She gains the Inspired Condition, driving her to push toward her next milestone.

No matter how many times she steps backward, no outside events can force a Promethean to step off the path of her Pilgrimage altogether. Returning to the start of her journey would return her animating spark to the Divine Fire and her body to its component

parts. She can never lose her last dot of Pilgrimage; if she otherwise would, she instead falls into Torment.

Roles

As part of his ongoing attempts to learn more about the human condition, a Promethean studies a number of Refinements. While a Refinement may be partly philosophical in nature, looking at what humans do and why, they focus on different areas of knowledge. Each Refinement has a set of Roles, specific human archetypes that reflect the Refinement's philosophy. The Created takes on one of these Roles, fitting in to what humanity in general accepts as reasonable behavior for that Role.

What is reasonable behavior in the context of a Role is not necessarily what people think of as "good" behavior. If he is a Soldier, should he follow orders to the letter (or spirit), or should he disregard orders in order to save his fellow soldiers' lives? Humanity as a whole accepts both options as reasonable for soldiers. Both can lead to great rewards — or to court martial. A Promethean who takes the Role of the Soldier doesn't have a right answer. He has to work that out himself. Likewise, a Leader could be an inspiring figure, a big brother who his siblings look up to, the leader of an organized criminal organization, or a vicious lunatic who commands through fear. Whatever the case, the Promethean is learning about what it means to take responsibility for a group.

Often, making a decision like that acts as a pivotal moment as the Promethean decides what kind of person he wants to be — and fixes his idea of what makes that Role special in the eyes of humanity. This realization is often but not always the point where he learns the lesson of the Role and achieves the milestone associated with it. As it's a superlative milestone to complete a Role, the realization is always a step forward along his Pilgrimage. Other Created don't internalize the lessons of a Role by resolving a pivotal question, but come to a gradual understanding of their place in humanity over time. Whatever the case, a Role's milestone often only comes up weeks or months after she first takes on the Role.

Turning Away

The problem with taking up an identifiable archetype in human society is just that: it's an identifiable archetype. An Outcast who maintains contact with the social groups he was a part of before taking up the Role, a Confessor who cuts people off or otherwise ignores a chance to learn about people: these are cases of a Promethean going against her Role. He deliberately ignores the parts of human nature that he should internalize, for whatever reason. Perhaps he needs to betray his learning in order to save his throng, or perhaps he simply cannot understand what makes people choose to be a Companion, an Observer, or a Watcher. Whatever the case, turning his back on his Role means ignoring the milestone in front of him. This is not in and of itself a problem, but if the Role is related to his Pilgrimage, it gives him a real chance of stepping back along his Pilgrimage.

A Promethean has to actively ignore his Role in order to risk stepping backward. Being bad at his chosen Role isn't enough — by doing so, he learns both what others value in the Role and how he chooses to interpret it. These lessons are very valuable to a Created wanting to define the end-point of his Pilgrimage.

Each of the Roles below presents two examples of milestones that might show that the character has learned his lesson, as well as a breaking point for turning away from the Role. While he's on the Role, add this breaking point to the list of things that can cause a step backward (p. 178).

Stuck in a Rut

Some Prometheans become too comfortable in a Role. Having learned his lesson, a Created should carry on to a new Refinement or a new Role in the same Refinement. By carrying on with the same Role, he doesn't learn anything new. He actively holds back his progress on the Pilgrimage in order to embody a facet of humanity that he feels comfortable in. Some make the conscious choice to not change Roles, while others get stuck naturally and do not realize that they should change.

A Created who does not change Roles after achieving the milestone associated with it becomes limited in her actions. She has to keep embodying the Role in order to stave off negative consequences. A Soldier has to keep acting as a soldier — he can't go back to his family or friends and act as a normal person. He is a Soldier and that's all the world will accept him as. As long as he only acts in accordance with the Role, people he meets in that capacity think he is a normal person — he does not cause Disquiet. When he drops the façade, proving himself more than the Role, all hell breaks loose.

Breaking from the Role involves taking any action that people do not associate with that Role. Taking time to pursue other avenues, either meeting people not related to the Role or even just spending too long alone both count, as does spending more than a scene without taking a significant action involving the Role. The Created can impart knowledge of the Role to other Prometheans, but only if no humans are present. Even then, he casts the knowledge through the lens of his Role. Using any kind of supernatural ability — using the same standards for breaking points — knocks the Promethean out of character.

Dropping character is not a good thing. The character has to fall back to a new Role in a basic Refinement — often Stannum. The area around her immediately becomes a Tainted Wasteland. In addition to the effects of the Wasteland, humans who interact with the Promethean in the resultant Wasteland have their rolls to resist Disquiet reduced to a chance die.

Taking a Role

The following descriptions of each Role include milestones and breaking points as illustrations; the Storyteller is encouraged to use these as inspiration, tailoring each Role to the characters that take it.

Aes

The Roles of the Refinement of Bronze focus on the values of service, loyalty, duty, and self-sacrifice.

Bodyguard

A Bodyguard's duty is to protect her charge, whether her charge wants protecting or not. A few choose their entire throng as a charge, but most focus on a single individual.

Milestones: Take a serious injury — a gunshot or similar— for your charge when you are not in danger. Follow your charge into a dangerous situation that you have warned against and protect him anyway.

Breaking point: Do significant physical harm (more than a point of lethal damage) to your charge.

Servant

The servant takes on tasks that his throng find trivial, prosaic, or otherwise distracting from their Pilgrimage. He must adapt to their changing needs and the obstacles that the world sets against them.

Milestones: Spend several days or weeks serving another character while she achieves a major or superlative milestone. Remove an obstacle from your throng's path without them noticing.

Breaking point: Make it impossible for another character in your throng to complete a milestone.

Seeker

The seeker acts as counselor and spiritual guide to hir throng. Sie shares their stresses and troubles, helping them focus on the road ahead.

Milestones: Provide counseling to your throng, helping at least one of your charges to step forward. Help a member of your throng escape Torment.

Breaking point: Drive a member of your throng into Torment.

Argentum

The Refinement of Silver studies the spaces around the edges of humanity; as such, its Roles focus on dealing with other supernatural creatures.

Envoy

The most pro-active Role of Argentum makes direct contact with the supernatural. He may act as a medium or speaker with the dead, or have the unenviable task of brokering co-existence with an angry pack of werewolves.

Milestones: Broker peace with a group of supernatural creatures. Help a ghost resolve its anchors and move on.

Breaking point: Attack a supernatural creature without provocation

Observer

The Observer watches the supernatural from far away. Sie draws her own conclusions on the supernatural by studying their actions from afar, without involving hirself directly.

Milestones: Discover a well-guarded secret — observing a mage's ritual or a demon's true form. Make a lasting friend of someone touched by the supernatural.

Breaking point: Directly intercede in the actions of a supernatural creature.

Warden

The Warden is concerned with her throng's safety above all else. Too many supernatural creatures see humanity as prey, so they focus on being ready — learning their strengths and weaknesses before the worst happens.

Milestones: Become friends with a human monster hunter. Have the right weapon or tool to hand to exploit their weaknesses when supernatural creatures attack your throng.

Breaking point: Go unprepared for supernatural attack because you are convinced they are not a threat.

Aurum

Gold's Roles, along with the rest of the Refinement, focus on integrating with humanity so that the Promethean can live among humans and develop an understanding of human nature.

Companion

The Companion wants to belong. She might focus on a single person, trying to become her friend or lover, or she might try to integrate with a group so that they accept her as an equal.

Milestones: Develop an intimate relationship with your chosen partner, or have nobody in the group challenge your inclusion. Be shunned by your partner/group for entirely human reasons (abuse, infidelity, or breaking the group's social norms).

Breaking point: Leave your partner or group, vanishing without a trace.

Follower

By putting hir fate in the hands of others, the Follower learns to trust others. Sie may find a regular human to act as a surrogate parent or mentor, or copy another person's looks, mannerisms, and decisions.

Milestones: Be at risk of physical or emotional trauma and survive by following your patron's instructions. Experience a significant misfortune by disobeying your patron.

Breaking point: Put yourself into a position of leadership over your patron, and have him follow your instructions.

Leader

In contrast to the follower, the leader must earn the trust of others. He may position himself as a "big brother" to a younger person, start a self-help group, or act as a leader among her community.

Milestones: Have a group or community formally accept you as their spokesperson. Have someone under your care avoid harm because of your instructions.

Breaking point: By your actions, cause your group to reject or shun you as an outsider.

Cobalus

The Refinement of Cobalt's focus on burning out the impurities of the Promethean condition leads to Roles that study selfishness and vice. That way, a practitioner can identify them and discover how to overcome them.

Confessor

The Confessor hunts out other people's unsavory activities. Sie wants insight into the criminal mind so sie goes out and finds it, whether as an accomplice to a crime or as a bartender who hears everything but keeps hir mouth shut.

Milestones: Be an accomplice to a major crime (grand theft, first-degree arson, or murder). Hear confessions to heinous and sickening crimes, but keep your council.

Breaking point: Expose the crimes of someone who has confided in you.

Deviant

The Deviant throws himself headlong into a life of vice, getting a first-hand taste of what it's like for a human to experience sin and transgress against social norms. Whether he checks in to a psych ward or joins a hate group, his personal experience is second to none.

Milestones: Indulge in your chosen sin for a significant period of time. Perform a significant act of debasement that leaves you enlightened.

Breaking point: Refuse an opportunity to indulge your chosen sins.

Provocateur

A Provocateur doesn't do bad things herself, but she's happy to treat other people like experiments, spurring her target to greater excesses that indulge his dark side and push him out of his comfort zone.

Milestones: Push your target into a physical confrontation that destroys one of his relationships. Stir a community up into a fervor towards a target of your choice.

Breaking point: Talk your target down from committing a sinful act.

Cuprum

The Roles of the Refinement of Copper focus on specific actions that allow a Created to turn within herself, examining how the world reacts to her and how she can improve to better fit in with the world around her.

Hermit

The Hermit stays away from people not because he fears them, but because he needs to control his interactions. When he does interact with people, it's strictly on his own terms.

Milestones: Have a normal person approach you for your help. Return to a group of people you had walked away from, ready to reintegrate.

Breaking point: Give in to the fear of other people, spending a week or more without social interaction.

Sage

The Sage knows that the true worth of knowledge is what a seeker must overcome to find it. She sets herself apart and creates challenges for other people to overcome before they can reach her — challenges that teach more than the Sage herself can impart.

Milestones: Seek the assistance of another Sage and complete her challenges. Teach another to take your place.

Breaking point: Dispense your secrets freely to anyone who asks.

Watcher

The Watcher is in the world, but not of it. Sie remains hidden, tracking and following people to observe how they act when zhe is not around, to determine if sie makes a positive impact on the world.

Milestones: Observe a social situation that would have gone better had you interceded. Shadow a person for a significant period without being noticed.

Breaking point: Reveal your presence to someone you are following.

Ferrum

The Refinement of Iron focuses on purifying the body. Its Roles enable that by driving adherents to a life of self-improvement and self-sacrifice.

Exemplar

Always willing to show off, an Exemplar's prowess in her chosen field is second only to her competitive nature. She wants people around her to be better than they are, and so she tests them against her full ability.

Milestones: Be bested in a fair contest by someone you have trained. Become acknowledged as a world-class talent in your chosen field.

Breaking point: Back down from a challenge in your chosen field where your victory is uncertain.

Martyr

The Martyr focuses on endurance rather than prowess. He wants to take on endure and survive impossible physical odds, pushing his body to greater and greater lengths to prove that the world has not conquered him.

Milestones: Survive physical injuries that would kill a normal human. Endure ongoing hardship (extreme environments, ongoing torture) for longer than a normal human could.

Breaking point: Require someone else's help to survive physical hardship.

Soldier

The Soldier wants to protect hirself and others. Sie wants a Pilgrimage that doesn't just enrich hir, but that makes everyone around hir that little bit safer. To that end, sie studies combat in all its forms and stands ready to do her duty.

Milestones: Face a superior foe in single combat and win. Defeat a superior foe through strategy and positioning rather than direct physical confrontation.

Breaking point: Surrender to an enemy, allowing them to harm your companions without challenge.

Mercurius

These Roles are related to the Refinement of Quicksilver. They focus on exploring the internal and external alchemies of the Promethean condition, the nature of the Divine Fire, and strange creatures and philosophies.

Craftsman

A Craftsman wants to mold the world in hir own image. Sie might be a carpenter, a mechanic, or an architect — anything that requires using hir knowledge and skills to make things. Sie studies the way things connect together to understand the inherent alchemy in all things.

Milestones: Complete a significant project (design or build a house, rebuild a car from scratch) and give it away. Become known among a group of humans as the person to go to for fixes and repairs.

Breaking point: Destroy something that you have built because you cannot bear to have anyone else use it.



Explorer

The Explorer moves through the world, tracking down manifestations of the Divine Fire. She looks for signs of Firestorms, follows stories of *qashmallim* and *Sublimati*, and experiences the Wasteland in order to harden herself against future manifestations.

Milestones: Experience a Firestorm and survive. Follow clues to a series of Athanors that grant Elpis visions.

Breaking point: Deliberately avoid a chance to investigate the Divine Fire's work in order to deal with mundane concerns.

Scientist

The Scientist experiments with Pyros and the Divine Fire. Perhaps the archetypal Mercurius Role, he often works out of an alchemical workshop, trying to master both human and Promethean alchemy.

Milestones: Successfully replicate a work of human alchemy. Replicate an Athanor (except Jovian Athanors).

Breaking point: Refuse to perform an experiment on ethical grounds.

Phosphorum

Death is a part of life, and the Roles of the Refinement of Phosphorus study human attitudes and reactions to death.

Daredevil

Pushing hirself beyond hir limits, a Daredevil takes joy in risk and the proximity of death. Sie is deliberately reckless, throwing hirself into foolhardy stunts in order to understand the thrill humans get from the proximity of death.

Milestones: Take a risk with a significant (but not overwhelming) chance of death and survive. Take a series of non-fatal but generally self-destructive risks and don't fail.

Breaking point: Back down from a challenge with a significant chance of death because you are scared.

Psychopomp

A Psychopomp watches those intimate moments around death, looking at the moment when the soul escapes. She also studies the people who try to prevent — or cause — death, including surgeons, EMTs, and assassins.

Milestones: Watch someone you have a relationship with die when you could have done something. Pull someone back from the brink of death.

Breaking point: Ignore someone who is close to death in favor of dealing with the living.

Whip

The Whip sees what others could do if they only let go of their inhibitions. He pushes other people to take that chance — quit their job, marry their partner, or move halfway across the world. By understanding how to convince humans to accept risk, he understands risk itself.

Milestones: Have someone take a life-changing physical, financial, or social risk, whether it pays off or not. Help many people take smaller risks that may improve their lives.

Breaking point: Talk someone out of taking a risk that may significantly change their life for the better.

Plumbum

The Refinement of Lead studies the Created state itself. Its Roles focus on what the Promethean is, and what she could become.

Ascetic

An Ascetic sequesters hirself from humanity, reflecting on what sie can do and what that says about hirself. Sie is often happy to share that information, but knows that any answers must come from within.

Milestones: Have another Promethean who has studied with you take up this Role. Observe other Prometheans and understand how they differ from humans on a fundamental level.

Breaking point: Reconnect with human society before understanding yourself.

Chronicler

A Chronicler talks to other Prometheans, learning whatever they will tell him about their path towards the Great Work. In doing so, he often must travel and stands a good chance of discovering clues to Athanors and new impressions in the Azothic memory.

Milestones: Discover a hidden or lost Athanor. Discover enough of other Created's Pilgrimages to discover underlying commonalities.

Breaking point: Discard the information you have gathered as inapplicable to your Pilgrimage.

Pilgrim

The Pilgrim focuses on the road in front of him — not physical travel, but the alchemical journey between Created and human. She can't directly influence or predict much of another Created's journey, but if she can help, she will.

Milestones: Assist another Promethean in achieving a major or superlative milestone. Share stories with other Created of the milestones your throng has encountered.

Breaking point: Steer another Promethean away from completing a milestone.

Stannum

Each of the Refinement of Tin's Roles focuses on a way that a Promethean can work through her built-up angst and Torment.

Outcast

The Outcast tries to find the diamonds among the shit of his life. Surrounding herself with people that society has discarded, she tries to work out her issues by understanding why humans choose to ignore some of their own.

Milestones: Make a tangible improvement in the lives of those dispossessed around you. Lash out at those who offer acceptance and be accepted anyway.

Breaking point: Become firm friends with a number of humans.

Savage

The Savage lashes out at everything around hir. Being nice, fitting in, all of that shit is too much work. The world hates hir, wants hir to be a monster? Bring it on. Sie revels in breaking things for the sake of hearing them snap.

Milestones: Injure or permanently drive off a close friend or loved one. Terrorize a community.

Breaking point: Offer non-violent help to people without expecting any reward.

Vigilante

She may understand the desire to destroy, but the Vigilante can hold it together — just. She might have a specific location or group of people that she protects, or maybe she likes finding bad people and breaking heads. As long as she sticks to bad people, where's the problem?

Milestones: Kill or drive off a criminal element threatening your throng or community. Strike out against something you believe in because "justice" demands it.

Breaking point: Let your target go because you cannot bring yourself to hurt them.

Milestones

The key points on a Created's journey from her genesis to her final transformation come in the form of milestones. While the Pilgrimage trait measures how close she is to having the metaphysical reagents in place to undergo the New Dawn, a milestone is a specific moment when she learns something about the human condition. That momentary rush of understanding also brings with it an element of supernatural power called Vitriol.

Milestones come in three distinct kinds. Universal milestones are, as their name implies, milestones that all of the Created must go through before performing the Great Work. Prescribed milestones reflect the Role that the Promethean has taken, as well as specific moments unique to her ongoing story. Instinctive milestones are those that come about soon after the Promethean's creation, moments that answer questions or otherwise define the Promethean's basic nature.

Universal Milestones

Every Promethean has to complete the universal milestones before she can complete the Great Work. If her Roles and knowledge of the Refinements are the alchemical reagents and herself the crucible of the reaction, the universal milestones provide the necessary background and apparatus for the transmutation to happen. Without completing all of the universal milestones, she cannot experience the New Dawn. The universal milestones correspond to the later operations of the Saturnine Night. Each Pilgrimage is unique, and characters can hit these milestones in any order.

A Promethean's knowledge of these milestones (as with the other operations of the great work) comes from her connection to the Azothic memory. As such, this knowledge is as much instinct as it is conscious awareness. As they have no link to the Azothic memory, Extempore do not know of these milestones, and may not be able to achieve them even if they discover their existence. Most notably, no known Extempore has so far come back from the River of Death.

- *Sublimato*, sublimation — A Created may not know her Pilgrimage to begin with, but she knows that it involves passing through a number of Refinements, and that each has something to say about what it means to be Created and what it means to be human. One Promethean encounters this milestone on completing her first Role. Another realizes the truth after completing her first Role in a complex Refinement. Yet another only gains enlightenment after creating an Athanor. This milestone is separate from that involved in completing any given Refinement, as it focuses on the need for Refinements and Roles in general.

- *Separatio*, division — The Promethean must understand the parts of herself that sets her apart from others, the effects of Disquiet and Torment. The precise expression of this milestone varies. Some Prometheans must complete a Role in the Cuprum or Stannum Refinement; this is often the case if one of those Refinements is already on her Pilgrimage. Alternatively, she may come to the understanding of this milestone after falling into Torment or through causing significant Disquiet and a Wasteland.

- *Ceratio*, tentatively affixed — A Promethean must affix herself to the world by connecting to others of her own kind within it. Sometimes, this comes in the form of meeting another Created and taking her Measure (p. 84). Another encounters this milestone when she joins a throng, or when that throng binds through the alchemical pact. Some others only achieve this milestone when they use an Athanor that another Created left to educate others — or when they themselves create an Athanor to benefit others.

- *Fermentatio*, fermentation — The Created are both reagent and crucible in their alchemical workings, and this milestone reflects that fact. Each Promethean is a reactor that ferments Azoth into Vitriol. It might hit the first time the character earns Vitriol Experience, or when she first spends Vitriol Experience. A few Prometheans only come to understanding when they spend Vitriol to fix a specific Transmutation that speaks to their nature, or when they build up knowledge of the Pilgrimage from a number of lesser milestones.

- *Multiplicatio*, multiplication — Humans have a need to create, as do those who would be human. This stage of the Great Work requires the Promethean to pass on what she knows, to leave a piece of her that will remain in the world after she undergoes the New Dawn. Many choose to propagate their existence by sharing knowledge, mentoring another Created and inducting him into a complex Refinement, and generally passing on knowledge. Others create a new Promethean, either out of a desire to experience parenthood, or the belief that only by creating something to take her place can she ever transcend to a new state.

- *Projectio*, projection — As an operation, projectio involves passing from dead stuff animated by Divine Fire into an actual living human. It is the culmination of the Great Work, the moment of the New Dawn. As a milestone, scholars call it *anastasis*, meaning resurrection, or the Milestone of Dust. The Promethean must die and drink from one of the Rivers of Death, as dying is part of what it is to live. Despite many Created leaving it until last, it is like the other universal milestones in that it can take part at any point during the Pilgrimage.

Instinctive and Prescribed Milestones

The Storyteller creates the prescribed and instinctive milestones that each character faces. She bases the instinctive milestones on the answers to the five questions asked during character creation (p. 101), and may ask more questions to draw out enough to make the milestones. Prescribed milestones mostly come about through a character's Role. While she might pick a milestone from the examples listed for each Role, the Storyteller is encouraged to come up with the exact milestone based on each character's personality and circumstances. She will also come up with further prescribed milestones based on the characters' outlook and actions, and the lessons that each individual Promethean learns. Further advice on creating milestones is available in Chapter Seven.

A player won't typically know his characters' instinctive or prescribed milestones, though he can likely get an idea of the instinctive milestones as they're based on his input. As the story progresses, a Created receives Elpis visions and other signs that a milestone is close. If the Promethean refuses to engage with these signs, and goes out of her way to ignore things that might propel her along her Pilgrimage, she runs the risk of stepping backward.

Magnitude

When a character achieves a milestone, she reaps the reward in the form of Vitriol. How much Vitriol she gains depends on the magnitude of the milestone — whether it is minor, major, or superlative. The type of a milestone has nothing to do with whether it is instinctive, prescribed, or universal. One Promethean may experience a moment of superlative understanding from a relatively brief instinctive milestone early in his Pilgrimage, while another finds great understanding comes from understanding her place in the broader world, uncovering prescribed milestones.

- A minor milestone gives between 1 and 3 Vitriol Beats.

- A major milestone gives a Vitriol Experience.

- A superlative milestone gives a Vitriol Experience *and* a step forward on the Pilgrimage.

Completing a Role is never a minor milestone. If the related Refinement is on the character's Pilgrimage, it is a superlative milestone; otherwise, it's a major milestone. Likewise, the *anastasis* milestone is always superlative. Beyond that, the Storyteller determines which milestones are of what magnitude when working out the milestones, as noted in Chapter Seven.

Double Dipping

What happens when a character hits two milestones in one? Often, this comes when an instinctive milestone coincides with a prescribed milestone related to the character's Role. Often, this won't be much

of a problem — the Storyteller can work around it when placing milestones for the character to hit. Sometimes, he can't avoid it.

A Promethean can complete multiple milestones as long as they're not of the same magnitude. She cannot complete two superlative milestones at once, no matter how significant — the lesson of one overwhelms the lesson of the other. Otherwise, she completes both and takes the rewards for both.

Other times, completing one milestone means being unable to complete another. If the completed milestone is the same or higher magnitude than the one she cannot complete, she suffers no consequences. If she gives up the chance to complete a milestone of greater magnitude, she faces a breaking point.

Every step forward on the Pilgrimage is based on the lessons involved in completing one or more milestones. While a Created can use the Vitriol that she gains from completing milestones to buy dots of Pilgrimage, she can only gain one dot of Pilgrimage from any source at any given milestone. If she gains enough Vitriol Experiences to buy a dot of Pilgrimage from a superlative milestone, she must wait to spend it until she completes a major or minor milestone.

Creation

Many Created make more of their fellows, often in order to complete the *multiplicato* operation of the Great Work. Others honestly believe that it is their duty to bring new Prometheans into the world, for whatever reason. One believes that creating new Prometheans siphons off portions of the Divine Fire, preventing it from becoming all-consuming. Another believes that those who undergo the New Dawn become better humans as they have already strived to earn their state, and making more Prometheans will improve humanity over time. A third is stuck in a Role of the Mercurius Refinement; he's long completed the Role but makes new Prometheans to test new theories about the character's condition.

The process of creation follows the operations of the Saturnine Night. Some creators follow the progression of the human shell from birth to death — though most do not take a direct Role in shaping the shell, for fear of alchemical contamination. Others act as hidden "guardian angels," and still others take an active part in the shell-to-be's upbringing, as a mentor or companion. As such, they can help the human progress through *congelation* and *fixatio* far faster than most humans would manage. While the Created who do guide their charges see themselves as helpers on a path, others find the obsession with driving a human to reach the point of *fixatio* so she can die and be reborn as a creepy, morbid obsession that can end with the Promethean committing murder out of a twisted sense of love. Frankensteins who intervene in a potential shell's life must divide their time between many, as their host is a patchwork of body parts from different donors.

Once the human body dies, the creator must perform the operations of *digestio* and *distillatio* in order to prepare the body. The exact method used depends on the character's Lineage; these are discussed in more detail in Chapter One.

The Generative Act

As she prepares the body to receive the Divine Fire, the creator must spend a point of Pyros to ready the shell to receive her Azoth. She then uses herself as a crucible and her Pyros as a solvent to dissolve a fragment of her own essence, creating a core of Azoth that passes to the new Promethean.

In game terms, every two points of Pyros she spends grants her one die in her pool, up to a maximum dice pool of her Azoth. She then applies the appropriate modifiers to the dice pool for her situation, and rolls the resulting pool.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The corpse shudders and jerks, splitting into a writhing mass of Pandorans. Roll for Pandoran creation as a rote action.

Failure: The corpse twists, flesh twisting and tearing into a number of Pandorans. Roll for Pandoran creation.

Success: The creator is successful; her creation comes to life as a new Promethean. It does not gain full consciousness for several days.

Exceptional Success: The new Promethean comes to full awareness and capability by the end of the scene.

Creation Modifiers

–1	Per previous attempt at the generative act since her last superlative milestone.
–1	Attempting the generative act over a period of hours rather than days.
–1	Per week the body has been dead.
–1	The Promethean is coerced into the generative act.
–1	The creator is a Centimanus.
–1	Generative act takes place in a Wasteland.
–1	Per point of unspent Vitriol in the genitor's body.
–2	A human witness suffering Disquiet is present during the generative act.
–2	The corpse is that of a Promethean who has undergone the New Dawn.

Whether she creates a Promethean or a clutch of Pandorans, the generative act leaks Pyros into the world, triggering a Wasteland **(p. 174)**.

Pandoran Creation

Whenever a Promethean fails the roll to create another of her kind, she creates Pandorans. When this happens, the Storyteller rolls the creator's Azoth as an unmodified dice pool. The Promethean's player cannot accept a dramatic failure on the result, though a particularly twisted Centimani can choose to spend Willpower to increase her dice pool. As the pool always has at least one die, Pandoran creation can never result in a dramatic failure.

Roll Results

Failure: The corpse tears itself apart, creating a single Pandoran.

Success: One Pandoran is created per point of Pyros spent on the creation roll.

Exceptional Success: Every five points of Pyros spent on the generative act creates a *Sublimatus*. Remaining Pyros creates Pandorans per a success.

Pandorans created in this manner either slink away, finding a place to undergo chrysalis, or enter a feeding frenzy. Frenzied Pandorans expend all their energy and must consume Pyros by the end of the scene or fall dormant; those with the instinct to run do not have that limitation.

New Dawn

A Promethean's Pilgrimage trait represents her gathering of the knowledge that will allow her to attempt the Magnum Opus. If she succeeds, she undergoes the New Dawn and becomes truly human. If she fails, it was not the right time; she must gather more knowledge to understand why she did not initially succeed.

In order to attempt the Magnum Opus, a Promethean must complete at least eight Roles, including at least one Role in every Refinement that is on her Pilgrimage. Any Roles not related to her Pilgrimage do not count towards this transformation. She must also have completed all of the universal milestones. Centimani cannot attempt the Great Work. They have deliberately stepped away from the Pilgrimage and must return to it before attempting to find mortality.

Attempting the Great Work before meeting these conditions automatically fails and affects her as though she had rolled a dramatic failure, though the player does not take a Beat. If she meets these conditions, the player rolls Pilgrimage as a dice pool, subject to the following modifiers:

New Dawn Modifiers

+1	The character has met her creator and understands her condition.
+1	The character has an Azoth of 6+.
+2	The character has a relationship with a normal, non-supernatural human being.
0	The character has completed ten Roles related to her Pilgrimage.
–1	The character has caused a Wasteland since her last superlative milestone.
–1	The character has completed nine Roles related to her Pilgrimage.
–2	The character has entered Torment since her last superlative milestone.
–2	The character has completed eight Roles related to her Pilgrimage.
–5	The character has performed the lacuna in the last year.

Dramatic Failure

On a dramatic failure, the Promethean loses control of the transformation in a huge and dangerous way, with explosive results. She creates a Blighted Wasteland around her, falls into Torment, and loses three dots of Pilgrimage. It's a huge shock, a sign that either the time was not right or she performed the alchemical operations in the wrong fashion. She cannot attempt the New Dawn until she has completed at least five more milestones, at least two of which must be superlative.

Failure

The transformative reaction fizzles out. She has come to the perfect moment, ascended to the mountaintop...but something goes wrong, and the reaction comes to a premature halt. Her Pyros burns cold within her, and for a time everything reminds her that she is a constructed creature, not a human being at all. She loses two dots of Pilgrimage and falls into Torment. She cannot attempt the New Dawn until she has completed at least two milestones, one of which must be superlative.

Success

In a blaze of Divine Fire, the Promethean's body burns away, replaced by the living flesh and blood of a normal person. Until the end of the scene, she remembers everything of her life as one of the Created. At the end of the scene, she falls asleep as a human being for the first time. She may remember everything or even have a measure of access to the Divine Fire that once powered her every action. She may awake with no memory or close ties to the world around her.

The player determines his character's final fate based on the Roles she has completed along her Pilgrimage. While she might have completed additional Roles, they do not feed in to the result of the Great Work. Her life is a synthesis of all of these portions of the human experience, stitched together into a tapestry of flesh and memory.

Her history as a human might match the path she took through those Roles, with each one contributing a phase of her life. The Savage Role might translate to a period as a violent junkie, while time as an Ascetic might become a period in the seminary.

Alternatively, her history might reflect a synthesis of Roles, or she may have personality traits based upon them. A Promethean who went through both the Savage and Ascetic Roles might be an introvert who becomes belligerent and violent when people don't leave him alone, or might have spent time in solitary confinement for assaulting other prisoners.

Whatever the case, the player writes his character's human history based on her experiences on her Pilgrimage. This is the place that the Great Work has created for her in the world. Even if she remembers her time among the Created, the world has changed to reflect who she was. She may have a passport — or a criminal record — for her human identity and have to fake amnesia until she can piece it all together.

In game terms, the exact results depend on the number of Refinements that the character has completed. If the character has completed six or more Refinements, the player can choose whether her character remembers her experiences, or remembers her human life. The character retains all of her Attributes and Skills as a human being and has an Integrity trait equal to the number of Refinements she has completed. She loses all Promethean-specific traits, including her Refinement and Lineage, Pilgrimage, Bestowment, Azoth, Pyros, and Transmutations.

Refinements	Effects
4–5	The character's memory is a jumbled and patchy mess. She is missing large sections of who she was, or may even be entirely amnesiac. She suffers constant nightmares of her previous existence and gains the Broken Condition. If she completed five Refinements, she loses the Broken Condition after a month if she has not already resolved it.
6–7	The character either remembers names, faces, and significant events from her past life, or awakens with vague memories of a mundane human life at the player's discretion. She awakes with her clothes and possessions appropriate to her place in the world in the same place she fell asleep. If she completed seven Refinements, the player can spend one free dot on Social Merits to represent her place in the world.
8–9	The character either remembers everything of her previous life, or has specific memories of her human life. Whether she remembers or forgets, she awakes in a place appropriate to her new life; the player can spend two dots on Social Merits to represent her new connections to the world. If she completed nine Refinements, she either gains Unseen Sense: Prometheans or an additional two dots of mundane Social Merits, depending on whether she remembers or forgets.
10	The character gains ties to the mundane world as though she had completed nine Refinements. If the character remembers everything, she can use an Alembic of one Transmutation that she fixed in her previous life, substituting Willpower for Pyros. If she remembers a mundane existence, the player can spend a further three dots on Social Merits to represent it. The first time she succeeds at a breaking point roll within the following month, she can reverse her choice instead of gaining a Condition — regaining her memories and supernatural power, or surrendering it for a normal life.

Exceptional Success

Even in the brief moment before the New Dawn, the Promethean can discover more about what it means to be human — and about the alchemical transformation currently affecting her. She becomes human as though she had completed one extra Refinement.

Elpis Visions

All of the Created can call upon the last aspect of Pyros left in Pandora's box. Called Elpis, or Hope, this power urges a Promethean along her Pilgrimage. Elpis is not, however, a benevolent force. It urges a Created towards humanity, forcing him onward even when he would rather take a moment to breathe and more fully understand what he has encountered so far. As such, while Elpis visions can provide hope that a small part of the universe wants the Created to succeed, they also provoke a sense of dread — especially among those Prometheans who have become stuck in a Role that they feel defines them.

A few Created don't wait for Elpis visions to find them, instead searching the depths of Azothic memory or seeking out Athanors to force themselves into Elpis visions. This is a risky proposal. Spending too long in the Azothic memory can kindle a Wasteland, while a Created can never be certain just what kind of Athanor she will find. While some can spark Elpis visions, others contain the pain and hatred of the creator — or spark Firestorms.

Most Elpis visions come in the form of a dream or hallucination that reveals itself to the Promethean over time. He may feel like only minutes have passed, or that he has spent days in the vision, but most last for around an hour. In game terms, an Elpis vision gives the player a chance to ask the Storyteller about her character's Pilgrimage. Rather than playing out the whole vision, the Storyteller instead relates the key points that the player (and character) must interpret.

Dice Pool: Wits + Azoth

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The player asks a question as per a success; the Storyteller should either give false information or a twisted version of the truth.

Failure: The vision holds no meaning.

Success: The player can ask the Storyteller one question from the list below. The Storyteller must frame the answer using the imagery of the vision, but it should be fairly straightforward for the player — and character — to interpret. Where the question has more than one answer (such as in the case of Roles and Refinements), the Storyteller should pick one.

Exceptional Success: The player can ask two questions instead of just one.

Elpis Questions

- What major or superlative milestone will I face soon?
- How will I know I have completed my Role?
- Who will play a significant part in the next steps of my Pilgrimage?
- Which Role must I take on soon?
- Which Refinement must my Pilgrimage still go through?
- Which universal milestone am I closest to?

Forcing a Vision

The Storyteller normally starts Elpis visions (see Chapter Seven for more information). A Promethean can meditate on the Azothic memory to try to spark a vision. She must spend at least an hour in a meditation, lucid dreaming, or in a hallucinogenic vision to start the search.

Each character can only try to force an Elpis vision in this way once per story. Doing it more often always results in a Wasteland. He can still receive Elpis visions from some Athanors or have them instigated by the Storyteller without ill effects. Searching Azothic memory is the dangerous part, not the vision itself — not normally, anyway.

Dice Pool: Composure + Azoth

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The search flares Pyros into the environment, beginning or Festering a Wasteland.

Failure: The Promethean may come up with odd facts and trivia from his meditation, but does not find anything of relevance to his Pilgrimage or spark an Elpis vision.

Success: The character falls into an Elpis vision.

Exceptional Success: The character falls into an Elpis vision and recalls things from the Azothic memory that help him interpret the vision; the interpretation roll receives a 2-die bonus.

Lacuna

For some Prometheans, Vitriol is a thing to steal, not to earn. These disturbed Created are mostly Centimani, who cannot generate Vitriol of their own as they have stepped aside from their Pilgrimage. Some are not; Prometheans on their Pilgrimage who enjoy the rush of using Vitriol to cement their Transmutations and cannot wait for their internal alchemies to produce more may tear it from their fellows. Pandorans, too, reap Vitriol from the Created, using it to fuel their transformation into *sublimati*. Those Pandoran monsters can use more stolen Vitriol to develop Transmutations.

The process of stealing Vitriol — of stealing away the evidence of a Promethean's progress upon her Pilgrimage — is called the lacuna. Tearing into a Promethean and pulling out the viscous, acidic fluid is not the worst part of the experience. That substance is the alchemical distillation of the knowledge the victim has accrued on her Pilgrimage. Some victims experience blank spots; a complete loss of memory around a milestone. Others can remember the milestone but in a detached way, without the emotional or spiritual link that sparked her discovery. The sudden loss of memory is a violation of his very self, and leaves the Created worrying what else he might lose were another to perform the lacuna upon her again.

The creature performing the lacuna gains none of the victim's memories. Vitriol is both a catalyst and a byproduct of a milestone, a fungible substance that doesn't carry the memory of a specific event. Even if the victim were to perform lacunae against his attackers, he would not get the lost memory back.

A Promethean performing a lacuna upon another of her kind must restrain her victim, or otherwise leave him unable to resist. She grabs and squeezes her victim's body, and may even plunge her hands deep into his chest to coax the Vitriol out. It takes about ten minutes for the Vitriol to bubble up to the surface, when the attacker can consume it herself. Performing a lacuna is always a step backwards. Should the attacker succeed, her roll to resist stepping backward is reduced to a chance die.

Action: Instant and contested

Dice Pool: Strength + Occult (Prometheans) or Brawl (Pandorans) vs. Stamina + Resolve

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The admixture of alchemical substances and mystic reagents throws the attacker's humours out of balance. She suffers a –2 penalty to all actions for the rest of the scene.

Failure: The reaper does not extract any Vitriol from the victim.

Success: The reaper extracts one unspent Vitriol Beat from the victim per success rolled and takes it into herself. Vitriol Experiences break down into five Beats for the purpose of the lacuna. She can roll again next turn to extract more without prompting further breaking points. She can only take as many Vitriol Beats as the victim has available; once Vitriol is spent, the lacuna cannot extract it.

Exceptional Success: In addition to stealing Vitriol, the lacuna saps some of the victim's will. He suffers the Broken Condition.

Pandorans who successfully perform the lacuna can transform Vitriol Beats into Pyros on a one-for-one basis. Alternatively a Pandoran can combine five stole Vitriol Beats into a Vitriol Experience. If it does so, it grows into a *sublimatus*.

If the victim of a lacuna is able to retrieve the Vitriol and ingest it before it has been consumed, the memories and milestones are restored. This is a rare occurrence, however, and is unlikely to occur in the normal scheme of things.

Athanors

A Promethean can create an Athanor when she is ready to leave something for future Created,. She must have completed three Roles of the same Refinement. She can then embed everything she has learned into a physical symbol — an item, a marking, or a shrine — that acts as a key into the Azothic memory, passing on a fragment of what she has learned. Doing so lights a furnace within her that consumes everything she has passed into the Athanor, burning the Refinement's lessons and philosophy into herself.

To create an Athanor, the Promethean spends a Vitriol Experience and rolls Azoth. The first time she successfully creates an Athanor is a superlative milestone and may, at the Storyteller's discretion, fulfill the *ceratio* universal milestone. Further Athanors are a major milestone.

Dice Pool: Azoth

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Something goes wrong. The Promethean does not empty herself of her understanding but of her darkest emotions, pouring her despair into the Jovian Athanor.

Failure: The Promethean cannot internalize the necessary lessons; as such, she does not create the Athanor.

Success: The Promethean creates the Athanor she desires.

Exceptional Success: The Promethean creates any Athanor she desires, in addition to a Refinement Furnace. If she had intended to create a Refinement Furnace, she creates a Refinement Mentor as well.

Types of Athanors

A Promethean can create all manner of Athanors, which have a variety of effects depending on the portion of the Azothic memory that the key unlocks. The Refinement that she has completed must relate to the function of the Athanor, but that depends as much on the Promethean's attitudes to the Roles she has completed as to the Refinement itself.

Firestorm Catalyst

Firestorm Catalysts are highly dangerous Athanors that only a few Savants ever create. By touching the Athanor and spending a point of Pyros, the Athanor creates a widespread Azothic Firestorm. Determine the Firestorm's Aspects and consequences when creating the Athanor; its Strength and duration is equal to half the successes rolled at creation (round up).

Pilgrimage Marker

A Pilgrimage Marker is a tool for teaching other Created about the journey from monster to human. Meditating upon the Pilgrimage Marker sparks an Elpis vision. After the vision, the Storyteller informs the player of an upcoming milestone. A Created can only use a given Pilgrimage Marker once.

Refinement Furnace

The Refinement Furnace links the Promethean with the understanding that she gained from her Refinement. While she carries it with her — as a tattoo, brand, or a physical token — she can use the Transmutations of the Refinement she completed without fixing them with Vitriol. If she has already fixed a Transmutation, she gets the spent Vitriol back. Only the creator can use a Refinement Furnace.

Refinement Mentor

One of the most common Athanors along with the Pilgrimage Marker, a Refinement Mentor can teach a complex Refinement. The user must meditate upon its secrets for a period of hours, but is then able to take a Role in that Refinement.

Sanctuary

When around a Sanctuary Athanor, the Promethean's dice pool for causing Disquiet is reduced to a chance die; rolls to resist Torment do not suffer the Promethean's Azoth as a penalty. It also prevents Pandorans from discovering anyone near. A Sanctuary's effects extend out two yards per dot of the creator's Pilgrimage.

Vitriol Fount

A Vitriol Fount produces the viscous, black liquid form of Vitriol, which it exudes when accessed by a Promethean touches it and spends a point of Pyros. This Athanor possesses Vitriol Experiences equal to half the creator's Pilgrimage. Once depleted, they can take decades to recover.

Jovian Athanor

A Jovian Athanor is the result of a Promethean pouring out her negative experiences into an Athanor. When she creates the Athanor, she immediately resolves any negative Persistent Conditions, as they are moved into the Athanor.

The effects of each Jovian Athanor are different, but can include:

- The Athanor attracts any Pandorans within (100 x creator's Azoth) yards.
- The creator loses a point of Azoth, which only returns once the Jovian Athanor is destroyed.
- Anyone touching the Athanor falls into Torment.
- Any Promethean within 100 yards of the Athanor causes Disquiet without a roll.
- The Athanor places the creator's mark on the area, creating a Wasteland. The Athanor Festers the Wasteland by remaining in the area.

Any Promethean can attempt to destroy a Jovian Athanor, but it is dangerous. He must work through whatever emotional trauma inspired the Jovian Athanor's creation, which is a breaking point. He also takes on any Conditions in the Athanor. Once he has resolved the Conditions and worked through the emotional trauma, he destroys the Jovian Athanor.



THE GREAT WORK: PART IV

Imam prayed under his breath. He prayed in every tongue there was in *The New Word,* shifting language without pause. The subject would change often: the throng, the field, humanity, but most of all, Wisher. He would look back across the field every so often, where he could see Wisher and Roark sitting and talking just out of earshot.

The clouds were gathering. A cold wind blew through the field and made him shiver. It was getting to Clay's Girl, too. He saw her pull her hood up and dig her hands deep into the pockets of her jacket. He tried to do the same, but the pockets on his dress pants were too shallow for his large hands. He looked at the grass stains on the cuffs and tried to pull them off the ground as he walked.

Clay's Girl scoffed. "No sense in worrying about that. We'll be done here soon." She scattered the undergrowth and examined the branches of trees. Her observations were careful and deliberate. Imam had seen this kind of attention to detail before, when she would get nervous. She had acted like this during the trip, always looking around to search for things that were not there. Then she stopped and whispered to him, "I think I saw something in that brush over there."

Imam looked. It was as dark and empty as the rest of the forest around them. Wisher claimed that it had to be this field, in this clearing of a forest, but nothing struck him as significant about it. No saints had died here, for example, and there was no deeper meaning to the clearing's shape. The Principle and its will were as confusing as ever.

The two combed through the bushes and looked around every dark spot, but there was nothing to be found. Clay's Girl stood still and tried to listen to the forest, but the wind covered any noise she could have heard. She groaned and kicked a bush. "I can't find a damn thing!" she cried.

A thought came to Imam, and he spoke it aloud. "If you didn't want to be here, you didn't have to come."

She glared at him. "Is that what you think this is about?"

"I don't want to see her go either," he said, "I don't think it's her time."

"Screw you, Imam. I'm trying to keep us safe."

"Because of what happened to you?"

He saw her make a fist and then open it. She took a deep breath. "I'm not worried about that," she said. "Not the part that involves me. That's done."

Imam wanted to say something to her, but before he could find the words, he saw her eyes grow wide. She rushed over to a group of trees, and pointed at one of them. "I knew it!"

Imam looked and saw that the bark on the tree had multiple slits made into it. The slits were packed together in fours.

"I saw these around our apartment last week," she said. "Saw them at the rest stop too, before we got here."

He already knew what it was, and he felt his hands shake. The slices were too clean and deep to be anything else.

Clay's Girl grimaced. "We were followed."

"Yes," said a voice from the forest canopy. "Yes, you were."

Mistress Minerva's Dungeon

Dear Cleo.

I learned something important today. and I wanted to hear what you thought about it.

Anthony and Paul — those two men I wrote you about last week — cornered me on my way home from work. I could read the rage in their body language. both of them tense and shaking. I'd been playing with both of them off and on. I hadn't bothered to tell them about each other. Apparently they'd beaten me to it.

They were talking all sorts of nonsense. each of them saying that I was "his." I don't get it. Eliza taught me that it was just a game: you bow your head. you submit. you say and do what you're told. She made me. and I thought that she was the only person I'd ever really belong to.

I probably should have tried to calm them down. but you know how it is. The fire makes them crazy — the fire makes us crazy. I said something cruel and entirely fair about the both of them. And then suddenly they were both on top of me. driving me down. pounding me with fists and elbows.

They didn't get it. Months of playing with me. and they didn't understand that I am built to endure. My body is slender and my skin is pale. My eyes are large and dark and my eyelashes are almost too long to be a boy's. That's true. But Eliza made me to stand up to all the things she wanted to do. but couldn't do to a human without killing him. I am made of iron and concrete. and I know how to deal with pain. The things I do for fun hurt worse than what they were trying to do to me.

When I'd had enough. I got my feet under me and stood with so much force that they flew apart. smashing into the brick walls on either side of the alley. That's when the world went red for a little while. and the fire had me completely. I don't remember what happened next.

The next thing I remember was kneeling over Tony. hitting him again and again. My knuckles were wet with blood. and there were places where his face and body had split open from blunt trauma. He was still alive and conscious. trying to get his bruised hands between my fists and his face and begging me to stop.

I did stop. He didn't look like he was a threat anymore. so I stood up. I could see Paul in my peripheral vision. lying in a heap — not moving. but still breathing. I hadn't killed anyone this time. which was good.

The fire still twisted inside me. wanting more pain and not caring who it came from. Remember what I told you Eliza had always said? That I should listen to the fire — that it knows the way. Why was it so angry? What did the fire know that I didn't? When I spoke. the words just came out of me. and I knew they were true as I said them.

This is what I said:

"I don't belong to you. and I don't belong to Paul. either. I don't belong to Eliza. I'm not anyone's thing. I'm mine."

Then I left them there. bleeding in the alleyway.

I think I'll have to move on soon. How are things in Seattle?

Love.

Nicci





CHAPTER FOUR: RULES

This section contains the basic rules for playing **Promethean: The Created**. More information, system variants, and examples can be found in the **Chronicles of Darkness Rulebook**.

Traits

In addition to the supernatural traits of the Created, Chronicles of Darkness characters have mundane traits common to mortals and monsters alike. Attributes are raw potential, Skills are trained abilities, and Skill Specialties are specific areas of training in which a character excels. Willpower is the extra effort a character can bring to bear in a stressful or dangerous situation when success is crucial or hangs by a thread. Willpower is also used for some supernatural powers.

Finally, most human characters possesses a personal Virtue and Vice from which they can draw strength and refill Willpower, much the same way a Promethean derives Willpower from her Elpis and Torment.

> So many pretty parts and no pretty wholes.
>
> —May Canaday, *May*

Attributes

Attributes represent essential traits that every character possesses by default. These serve as the foundation for most rolls in **Promethean: The Created**. The nine Attributes are split into three categories: Mental, Physical, and Social. If a game rule refers to a "Social roll," or a "Mental action," that means an action that uses the appropriate Attribute category.

All Attributes receive one free dot. This reflects a below-average capacity. Two dots are about human average. Three and four reflect a high level of competency, while five reflects the height of human potential in that field. When creating your character, prioritize each category. The primary category receives five dots, the secondary four, and the tertiary three.

Mental Attributes

Mental Attributes reflect your character's acuity, intellect, and strength of mind.

Intelligence

Intelligence is your character's raw knowledge, memory, and capacity for solving difficult problems. This may be book smarts or a wealth of trivia.

Attribute Tasks: Memorization (Intelligence + Composure, instant action)

Wits

Wits represents your character's ability to think quickly and improvise solutions. It reflects your character's perception and ability to pick up on details.

Attribute Tasks: Perception (Wits + Composure, reflexive action)

Resolve

Resolve is your character's determination, patience, and sense of commitment. It allows your character to concentrate in the face of distraction and danger, or continue doing something in spite of insurmountable odds.

Attribute Tasks: Resisting coercion (Resolve + Composure, reflexive action)

Physical Attributes

Physical Attributes reflect your character's bodily fitness and acumen.

Strength

Strength is your character's muscular definition and capacity to deliver force. It affects many physical tasks, including most actions in a fight.

Attribute Tasks: Breaking a barrier (Strength + Stamina, instant action), lifting objects (Strength + Stamina, instant action)

Dexterity

Dexterity is your character's speed, agility, and coordination. It provides balance, reactions, and aim.

Attribute Tasks: Keeping balance (Dexterity + Composure, reflexive action)

Stamina

Stamina is your character's general health and sturdiness. It determines how much punishment your character's body can handle before it gives up.

Attribute Tasks: Staying awake (Stamina + Resolve, instant action)

Social Attributes

Social Attributes reflect your character's ability to deal with others.

Presence

Presence is your character's assertiveness, gravitas, and raw appeal. It gives your character a strong bearing that changes moods and minds.

Attribute Tasks: Good first impressions (Presence + Composure, instant action)

Manipulation

Manipulation is your character's ability to make others cooperate. It's how smoothly she speaks, and how much people can read into her intentions.

Attribute Tasks: Poker face (Manipulation + Composure)

Composure

Composure is your character's poise and grace under fire. It's his dignity and ability to remain unfazed when harrowed.

Attribute Tasks: Meditation (Resolve + Composure, extended action)

Skills

Whereas Attributes represent innate ability, Skills reflect behaviors learned and honed over a lifetime. These are things that could be practiced or learned from a book. Similarly to Attributes, Skills are divided into Mental, Physical, and Social categories.

Skills do not receive free dots at character creation. Skills without dots are deficient or barely capable. Skills with a single dot reflect a cursory training. Two dots are sufficient for professional use. Three represents a high level of competency. Four is outstanding, and five is absolute mastery of the discipline.

When creating your character, prioritize categories. The primary category receives eleven dots, the secondary receives seven, and the tertiary four.

We've listed sample actions for each Skill; these lists are just common actions and should not be taken as comprehensive guides to Skill usage. We also suggest dice pools, but it's important to look at the context of the scene and apply the best Attribute + Skill combination for the events at hand. Also remember that equipment and environmental modifiers can shift a dice pool. We've listed some sample equipment and factors that could enhance Skill usage. You can find deeper rules for equipment in the **Chronicles of Darkness Rulebook**.

Using a Skill with no dots incurs a penalty. For Physical and Social Skills, it levies a –1 die penalty to the roll. For a Mental Skill, it's a –3 die penalty.

Mental Skills

Mental Skills are largely learned as opposed to practiced. They reflect knowledge and procedure, lore and understanding.

Academics

Academics is a broad Skill representing your character's higher education and knowledge of the arts and humanities. It covers language, history, law, economics, and related fields. The Created often study history, literature, and philosophy looking for a way to relate to the world.

Sample actions: Recall trivia (Intelligence + Academics, instant action), Research (Intelligence + Academics, extended action), Translation (Intelligence + Academics, extended action)

Suggested equipment: Internet access (+1), Library (+1 to +3), Professional consultant (+2)

Specialties: Anthropology, Art History, English, History, Law, Literature, Religion, Research, Translation

Computer

Computer is your character's advanced ability with computing. While most characters in the Chronicles of Darkness are expected to know the basics, the Computer Skill allows your character to program computers, crack into systems, diagnose major problems, and investigate data. This Skill reflects advanced techniques and tricks; almost everyone can operate a computer for email and basic Internet searches.

Sample actions: Hacking a system (Intelligence + Computer, extended action, contested if against a security administrator or other hacker), Internet search (Wits + Computer, instant action), Programming (Intelligence + Computer, extended action)

Suggested equipment: Computer system (+0 to +3, by performance), Custom software (+2), Passwords (+2)

Specialties: Data Retrieval, Graphics, Hacking, Internet, Programming, Security, Social Media

Crafts

Crafts reflects your character's knack with creating and repairing things. From creating works of art to fixing an automobile, Crafts

is the Skill to use. Prometheans use Crafts to build shelters and repair vehicles, as well to create art that expresses the vagaries of the Pilgrimage.

Sample actions: Appraisal (Wits + Crafts, instant action), Counterfeit item (Intelligence + Crafts, extended action), Create art (Intelligence + Crafts, extended action), Repair item (Wits + Crafts, extended action)

Suggested equipment: Point of reference (+1), Quality materials (+2), Tools (+1 to +3, depending on utility and specialty), Well-equipped workplace (+2)

Specialties: Automotive, Cosmetics, Fashion, Forging, Graffiti, Jury-Rigging, Painting, Perfumery, Repair, Sculpting

Investigation

Investigation is your character's skill with solving mysteries and putting together puzzles. It reflects the ability to draw conclusions, find meaning out of confusion, and use lateral thinking to find information where others could not.

Sample actions: Examining a crime scene (Wits + Investigation, extended action), Solving riddles (Intelligence + Investigation, instant or extended action)

Suggested equipment: Forensic kit (+1), Unrestricted access (+2), Reference library (+2)

Specialties: Artifacts, Autopsy, Body Language, Crime Scenes, Cryptography, Dreams, Lab Work, Riddles

Medicine

Medicine reflects your character's knowledge of the human body and how to fix it and keep it in working order. Characters with Medicine can make efforts to stem life-threatening wounds and illnesses. While Prometheans don't generally benefit from Medicine, the humans they love (or hate) do, making this Skill useful.

Sample actions: Diagnosis (Wits + Medicine, instant action), Treating wounds (Intelligence + Medicine, extended action)

Suggested equipment: Medical tools (+1 to +3), Trained assistance (+1), Well-stocked facilities (+2)

Specialties: First Aid, Pathology, Pharmaceuticals, Physical Therapy, Surgery

Occult

The Occult Skill is your character's knowledge of things hidden in the dark, legends and lore. While the supernatural is unpredictable and often unique, the Occult Skill allows your character to pick out facts from rumor.

Sample actions: Identify the sliver of truth (Wits + Occult, instant action), Relate two similar myths (Intelligence + Occult, instant or extended action)

Suggested equipment: Well-Stocked Library (+2)

Specialties: Angels, Alchemy, Mystic Places, Casting Lots, Phrenology, Sorcery, Supernatural Being (specify), Superstition, Witchcraft

Politics

Politics reflects a general knowledge of political structures and methodologies, but more practically shows your character's ability to navigate those systems and make them work the way she intends. With Politics, she knows the right person to ask to get something done.

Sample actions: Cut red tape (Manipulation + Politics, extended action), Identify authority (Wits + Politics, instant action), Sully reputations (Manipulation + Politics, extended action)

Suggested equipment: Official position (+1 to +5, by Status)

Specialties: Bureaucracy, Church, Democratic, Invictus, Local, Organized Crime, Scandals

Science

Science is your character's knowledge and understanding of the physical and natural sciences, such as biology, chemistry, geology, meteorology, and physics.

Sample actions: Assess variables (Intelligence + Science, instant or extended action), Formulate solution (Intelligence + Science, extended action)

Suggested equipment: Reference library (+1 to +3), Well-stocked laboratory (+2)

Specialties: Physics, Chemistry, Neuroscience, Virology, Alchemy, Genetics, Hematology

Physical Skills

Physical Skills are those practiced, trained, and learned through action.

Athletics

Athletics reflects a broad category of physical training and ability. It covers sports and basic physical tasks such as running, jumping, dodging threats, and climbing. It also determines a character's ability with thrown weapons. Over time, most Prometheans will develop at least the rudiments of Athletics; when Disquiet builds, sometimes running is the only answer.

Sample actions: Acrobatics (Dexterity + Athletics, instant action), Climbing (Strength + Athletics, extended action), Foot chase (Stamina + Athletics, contested action), Jumping (Strength + Athletics, instant action, one foot vertically per success)

Suggested equipment: Athletic Shoes (+1), Rope (+1)

Specialties: Acrobatics, Archery, Climbing, Jumping, Parkour, Swimming, Throwing

Brawl

Brawl reflects your character's ability to tussle and fight without weapons. This includes old-fashioned bar brawls as well as complex martial arts (Chapter Three of this book and **Chronicles of Darkness Rulebook** offer Merits to complement unarmed fighters). Most of the Created have at least a basic ability to defend themselves — sooner or later, it becomes necessary.

Sample actions: Breaking boards (Strength + Brawl, instant action), Hand-to-hand combat (covered in the combat section, p.204)

Suggested equipment: Brass Knuckles (+1)

Specialties: Biting, Boxing, Dirty Fighting, Grappling, Martial Arts, Threats, Throws

Drive

Drive is the skill to control and maneuver automobiles, motorcycles, boats, and even airplanes. A character can drive a car



without Drive dots; the Skill relates to moments of high stress, such as a high-speed chase or trying to elude a tail. It's assumed that most modern characters have a basic ability to drive. As well, Drive can reflect your character's skill with horseback riding, if appropriate to her background.

Sample actions: Impressive maneuvering (Dexterity + Drive, instant action), Pursuit (Dexterity + Drive, contested action), Tailing (Wits + Drive, contested action)

Suggested equipment: Performance vehicle (+1 to +3)

Specialties: Defensive Driving, Evasion, Off-Road Driving, Motorcycles, Pursuit, Stunts

Firearms

Firearms reflects your character's ability to identify, maintain, and otherwise use guns. This Skill covers everything from small pistols, to shotguns, to assault rifles, and anything else related. (You can find numerous Merits and further rules for firearms combat in the **Chronicles of Darkness Rulebook**.)

Sample actions: Firearms combat (see p. 207 for more on how firearms combat works)

Suggested equipment: See p. 208 for a full list of firearms

Specialties: Handguns, Rifles, Shotguns, Trick Shots

Larceny

Larceny covers intrusion, lockpicking, theft, pickpocketing, and other (generally considered) criminal activities. This Skill is typically learned on the streets, outside of formal methods. However, stage magicians and other entertainers learn these skills as part of their repertoire.

Sample actions: Bypass security systems (Dexterity + Larceny, extended action), Lockpicking (Dexterity + Larceny, extended action), Pickpocketing (Dexterity + Larceny, contested action)

Suggested equipment: Crowbar (+1), Crowded area (+2), Lockpicks (+2), Partner in crime (+1)

Specialties: Breaking and Entering, Concealment, Lockpicking, Pickpocketing, Safecracking, Security Systems, Sleight of Hand

Stealth

Stealth reflects your character's ability to move unnoticed and unheard or blend into a crowd. Every character approaches Stealth differently; some use distraction, some disguise, while some are just hard to keep an eye on. Pariahs find this Skill indispensable, of course, but all Prometheans eventually need to sneak away or watch someone unnoticed.

Sample actions: Losing a tail (Wits + Stealth, contested action), Shadowing (Dexterity + Stealth, contested action)

Suggested equipment: Binoculars (+1), Dark Clothing (+1), Smokescreen (+2), Spotters (+1)

Specialties: Camouflage, Crowds, In Plain Sight, Rural, Shadowing, Stakeout, Staying Motionless

Survival

Survival represents your character's ability to "live off the land." This means finding shelter, finding food, and otherwise procuring

the necessities for existence. This could be in either a rural or urban environment. This skill also covers the ability to hunt for animals or, under the right circumstances, people.

Sample actions: Foraging (Wits + Survival, extended action), Hunting (for animals, Wits + Survival, extended action)

Suggested equipment: Survival Guide (+1), Survival Knife (+1)

Specialties: Foraging, Hunting, Navigation, Shelter, Weather

Weaponry

Weaponry is the ability to fight with hand-to-hand weapons: from swords, to knives, to baseball bats, to chainsaws. If the intent is to strike another and harm him, Weaponry is the right Skill. (You can find numerous Merits for Weaponry-based fighting in the **Chronicles of Darkness Rulebook**.)

Sample actions: Attacking another (see p. 208 for more on Weaponry combat)

Suggested equipment: See p. 209 for a full list of weapons

Specialties: Chains, Clubs, Improvised Weapons, Spears, Swords

Social Skills

Animal Ken

Animal Ken reflects your character's ability to train and understand animals. With Animal Ken, your character can cow beasts or rile them to violence under the right circumstances.

Sample actions: Animal training (Manipulation + Animal Ken, extended action), Cowing an animal (Presence + Animal Ken, contested action)

Suggested equipment: Treats (+1), Whip (+1)

Specialties: Animalism, Canines, Felines, Reptiles, Threatening, Training

Empathy

Empathy represents your character's ability to read and understand others' feelings and motivations. This helps discern moods or read deceptive behavior in discussion. It is not inherently sympathetic; one can understand another's positions without agreeing with them. Developing Empathy is difficult but ultimately necessary for the Created.

Sample actions: Finding someone's pain (Wits + Empathy, contested action), Sense deception (Wits + Empathy, contested action), Soothing nerves (Manipulation + Empathy, instant action)

Suggested equipment: Muted clothing (+1), Relaxing environment (+2)

Specialties: Calming, Emotion, Lies, Motives, Personalities

Expression

The Expression Skill reflects your character's ability to communicate. This Skill covers written and spoken forms of communication, journalism, acting, music, and dance. Prometheans find that humans are often willing to tolerate eccentricity from artists.

Sample actions: Composing (Intelligence + Expression, extended action), Performance (Presence + Expression, instant action)

Suggested equipment: Quality instrument (+1 to +3)

Specialties: Dance, Drama, Journalism, Musical Instrument, Performance Art, Singing, Speeches

Intimidation

Intimidation reflects your character's ability to influence others' behavior through threats and fear. It could mean direct physical threats, interrogation, or veiled implications of things to come.

Sample actions: Interrogation (Wits + Intimidation, contested action), Staredown (Presence + Intimidation, contested action)

Suggested equipment: Fearsome tools (+2), Gang colors (+2), Isolated room (+1)

Specialties: Direct Threats, Interrogation, Stare Down, Torture, Veiled Threats

Persuasion

Persuasion is your character's ability to change minds and influence behaviors through logic, fast-talking, or appealing to desire. It relies on the force of your character's personality to sway the listener. Prometheans find this Skill important for talking their way out of trouble.

Sample actions: Fast Talk (Manipulation + Persuasion, extended action), Firebranding (Presence + Persuasion, instant action), Seduction (Manipulation + Persuasion, extended action)

Suggested equipment: Designer Clothing (+1 to +3), Reputation (+2)

Specialties: Confidence Scam, Fast Talking, Inspiring, Sales Pitch, Seduction, Sermon

Socialize

Socialize reflects your character's ability to present herself well and interact with groups of people (alive or dead). It reflects proper (and setting-appropriate) etiquette, customs, sensitivity, and warmth. A character with a high Socialize is the life of the party. Socialize is a survival tool among humanity, especially once Disquiet starts to build.

Sample actions: Carousing (Manipulation + Socialize, instant action), Fitting in (Wits + Socialize, instant action), Getting attention (Presence + Socialize, instant action)

Suggested equipment: Drugs (+1), Knowing People (+1), Money (+1 to +5)

Specialties: Bar Hopping, Church Lock-in, Dress Balls, Formal Events, Frat Parties, Political Fundraisers, the Club

Streetwise

The Streetwise Skill is your character's knowledge of life on the streets. It tells her how to navigate the city, how to get information from unlikely sources, and where she'll be (relatively) safe. If she wants to get something on the black market, Streetwise is how she'll know what to do.

Sample actions: Finding a shortcut (Wits + Streetwise, instant action), Working the black market (Manipulation + Streetwise, instant action)

Suggested equipment: Burner phone (+1), Known nickname (+2), Valuable contraband (+1 to +3)

Specialties: Black Market, Gangs, Navigation, Rumors, Undercover

Subterfuge

Subterfuge is the ability to deceive. With Subterfuge, your character can lie convincingly, project hidden messages in what she says, hide motivations, and notice deception in others. Lying comes

easier to some Prometheans than others; sometimes it's natural, sometimes it follows a hard lesson.

Sample actions: Disguise (Wits + Subterfuge, instant action), Lying (Manipulation + Subterfuge, contested action)

Suggested equipment: Costume Supplies (+2), Fake ID (+1)

Specialties: Detecting Lies, Doublespeak, Hiding Emotion, Little White Lies, Misdirection

Skill Specialties

In addition to Skills, your character possesses Skill Specialties. These are refinements of broader Skills: narrower than the main Skill, and defining your character's particular expertise. For example, your character might have three dots in Firearms but a Specialty in Rifles. This means he's capable with all guns, but particularly good with rifles. If you look to the Skill descriptions, you'll see example Specialties. The Storyteller is the ultimate arbiter of what constitutes a Specialty and what doesn't; Specialties that are too broad or too narrow can hurt the story or never come into play.

If a Specialty applies to your roll, add a die. Multiple Specialties may apply to a single roll, within reason. If you find yourself going to great lengths to justify a Specialty, it probably shouldn't apply.

Skill Specialties let you flesh out your character and offer a mechanical benefit. When creating your character, let Specialty choice guide his development. For example, there's a huge difference between a character with Brawl 4 (Bar Fights) and Brawl 4 (Aikido).

Virtues and Vices

Virtue and Vice are traits that human characters possess instead of Elpis and Torment. Virtue is a point of strength and integrity in the character's life, while Vice is a place of weakness. This is just a brief touch on the topic; for more, look to the **Chronicles of Darkness Rulebook**.

When choosing Virtues and Vices, use the following guidelines:

- Both should be adjectives that describe dominant personality traits. Don't use physical descriptions.
- Traits that describe existing Advantages, Attributes, or Skills similarly do not apply. For example, "Strong," and "Composed," would not work as Virtues.
- Virtue should be a point of self-confidence and self-actualization, but something easy and tempting to ignore. It's a higher calling if she chooses to walk the talk.
- Vice should contrast Virtue as a short-term, quick source of distraction from the world. It should be a hiding place when you're weak.
- Virtue and Vice must be different. The same adjective could work as both a Virtue and Vice in some cases, but a character must have two different ones.

Whenever a character acts in accordance with her Vice, she regains one spent Willpower. When she takes meaningful actions in accordance to her Virtue, she regains all spent Willpower. She can only recover Willpower from her Vice once per scene, and her Virtue once per chapter.

Speed

Your character's Speed is the number of yards or meters she can travel in a single turn. This trait is a combination of her Strength, Dexterity, and a species factor that reflects her age, physical configuration, Size and other considerations.

Other species, such as horses and cheetahs, have physical configurations that lend themselves to high travel rates.

Factor	Species
1	Turtle
3	Human toddler
5	Human adult
8	Wolf
10	Caribou
12	Horse
15	Cheetah

Rolling Dice

When your character is trying to accomplish something and the outcome is in doubt, you roll a pool of ten-sided dice based on his relevant traits and read the results to determine success. Most of the time, you roll a number of dice equal to an Attribute plus a Skill. For example, to get the cop off your back, you use your character's Manipulation Attribute of 4 and Subterfuge Skill of 3, so you roll seven dice. If you have a Specialty (p. 100) that's relevant to the roll, add an extra die to your pool.

Each die that shows an 8, 9, or 10 is a success. Normally, you only need one success to achieve your goal. It's always better to get more successes — especially if you want to hurt someone, since your successes add to your damage in combat.

Every die that comes up 10 also gets rolled again, potentially scoring another success. If this second roll comes up as another 10, count the success and roll it again, on until you roll a number other than 10.

Many rolls have modifiers, either from equipment, circumstance, or someone working against your character. Most modifiers are within the range of +3 to –3, though they can range as low as –5 or as high as +5. Apply the modifiers to your dice pool before you roll. Add all the bonuses first, then apply penalties.

If your pool drops below one die, you instead roll a single chance die. The chance die only counts as a success if you roll a 10. Any other result is a failure. If you roll a 1 on the chance die, your character suffers a dramatic failure.

Roll Results

Your roll can succeed and fail in a few different ways:

Success: Your character's action goes off as planned. Achieved by having at least one success (a die showing 8, 9, or 10; or a chance die showing 10).

Failure: Your character's action fails. This doesn't mean "nothing happens," just that she doesn't get what she wants and complications are headed her way. Occurs when you roll no successes.

Exceptional Success: Your character's action succeeds beyond her expectations. Achieved by rolling five or more successes. Your character gains a beneficial Condition. (See "Conditions," p. 305.) Usually, the Inspired Condition is the most appropriate. You can give this Condition to another character when it's appropriate to the story.

Dramatic Failure: Your character fails badly, and things are about to get a whole lot worse. Suffered when you roll a 1 on a chance die. Once per scene, you can take a Beat in exchange for turning a normal failure into a dramatic failure.

When to Roll Dice

You don't need to roll dice for many actions. If your character isn't in a stressful situation — nobody's actively trying to tear his throat open or demolish the building as he works — you don't need to roll. When the dice hit the table, the Storyteller should have some idea of what will happen if the roll fails, as well as if it succeeds. Sometimes that's coded in the rules. If you fail on an attack roll, for example, you don't deal any damage. Other times, it's up to the Storyteller. If you fail a roll to jump between buildings with a group of Disquieted cops on your tail, do you make it but fall on the other side, grab the next building by your fingertips, or plummet to the alley below?

Circumstance and Equipment

Sometimes, fortune favors your character. Other times your character gives it a helping hand by packing the right tools for the job. The Storyteller should weight how circumstances affect a character's chance of success. A slight advantage — picking an old and damaged lock — might be worth a bonus die, while a stressful situation — trying to pick a lock while people are shooting at you — might subtract three dice from your pool. Most of the time, the modifier from circumstances will be between +3 and –3, though in very rare cases — picking a lock while the room is *on fire* — it can range from +5 to –5.

Bringing the right equipment for a task also gives you extra dice to roll. A sharp suit might give bonus dice when trying to convince the CEO that your character knows the best plan, while a good pair of running shoes will help her escape from the things lurking in the shadows. Most equipment offers a +1 to +3 die bonus. A top-of-the-line or custom item might give a +4 or +5 die bonus, but such items often cost more than just money. When a task is impossible without some kind of equipment — hacking a computer, or driving a car — equipment bonuses indicate how far your tools are above the baseline. A beat-up old station wagon might not add any dice to a Drive roll, but a top-of-the-line sports car may add +4 or even +5 dice.

Willpower

A character's Willpower represents her determination and her ability to go above and beyond what should be possible to achieve her goals. Spending a point of Willpower adds a +3 die bonus to most dice pools, or +2 to a Resistance trait. You can only spend one point of Willpower per action.

Attribute Tasks

Some actions require no special expertise to perform. Mostly, these come in the form of Wits + Composure rolls to notice something that doesn't seem right, or using Strength + Stamina rolls to lift something. In these rolls, you add two different Attributes together to make your dice pool. If an action doesn't seem to involve any particular Skill, an Attribute Task can handle it.

Unskilled Penalties

If your character has no dots in an applicable Skill, the Storyteller may allow you to roll your Attribute as a dice pool. Your character's dice pool suffers a penalty for being untrained: if the roll would involve a Mental Skill, you take a –3 die penalty, while a Physical or Social Skill applies a –1 die penalty.

Actions

The majority of actions in the game are *instant* actions. They represent acts that only take a couple of seconds. In combat, an instant action takes up your turn.

A *reflexive* action is the sort of thing you don't even need to think about doing. Most rolls to resist supernatural powers are reflexive. You can take a reflexive action at any time, and it doesn't take your turn in combat.

When two people fight over a specific goal, they engage in a *contested* action. You roll your dice pool and the Storyteller (or other player) rolls the dice pool for the other party. Whoever rolls the most successes is the victor. Note that you count the total number of successes rolled when working out if you scored an exceptional success — don't subtract the other party's successes from yours. A contested action takes up the action of the person initiating the action; resisting it is a reflexive action.

Extended Actions

An *extended* action is an attempt to complete a complex task. You roll your dice pool multiple times. Each roll takes a certain amount of time, and represents a step in the process — your character either makes significant progress or faces a setback. You determine your dice pool for the action as normal — Attribute + Skill + Modifiers. Make a note of your Attribute + Skill + Specialty (if any); that's the maximum number of times you can roll before the action fails.

When you take an extended action, the Storyteller determines how many successes you require. Most actions require between five and twenty successes. Five reflects a reasonable action that competent characters can achieve with the right tools and knowledge. Ten represents a difficult action that's still realistic for a professional in a field. Twenty represents a very difficult action that even a particularly skilled character will have trouble pulling off.

The Storyteller also determines the interval between rolls. If an action would take weeks to complete, she might consider one roll per week. If it's likely to take a day's work, one roll per hour makes for a solid timeframe.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Lose all accumulated successes. In addition, the first roll on a subsequent attempt suffers a –2 die penalty.

Failure: You face a setback. The Storyteller will offer you a choice: take a Condition of her choice or abandon the action. You can offer a different Condition if you think it makes sense. If you refuse or cannot agree on a Condition, you lose all accumulated successes (see "Conditions," p. 305).

Success: Add the successes scored on the roll to your running total. Work with the Storyteller to determine what steps your character has taken towards his goal.

Exceptional Success: Choose one: reduce the number of successes required by your character's Skill dots, reduce the time on each following roll by a quarter, or apply the exceptional success result of the action when you complete your goal.

Resistance

Sometimes, an action is resisted. You roll your Attribute + Skill, but apply a modifier of one of your opponent's Resistance Attributes (Resolve, Stamina, or Composure), or your opponent's Defense. This resistance is over and above any other modifiers applied to the dice pool.

If you're not sure whether to use resistance or a contested action, use this guideline: Resistance applies in situations where the number of successes on the roll is an important factor. If what matters is just whether the roll succeeds or not, use a contested action. For example, combat applies Defense as a resistance because the number of successes on the roll determines how badly the attacker messes up his victim. A supernatural power that puts a victim in your thrall uses a contested action, because the number of successes you roll doesn't matter to the power.

When uncanny powers are involved, supernatural creatures can sometimes add an additional trait called Supernatural Tolerance. The Supernatural Tolerance trait for Prometheans is Azoth.

Common Actions

Here are some sample ways you can apply your Skills. Remember, you can invent your own at any time.

ARGUMENT
(INTELLIGENCE + EXPRESSION – VICTIM'S RESOLVE)

You try to sway someone with a rational argument. (If arguing with a crowd, use the highest Resolve in the crowd.) (See also Social Maneuvering, p. 202.)

- **Dramatic Failure:** You convince them of quite the opposite.
- **Failure:** They listen but are ultimately unaffected.
- **Success:** They accept the truth (or apparent truth) of your words.
- **Exceptional Success:** They're convinced and become recruits to your point of view, though they might change their minds if they find themselves at risk.

CAROUSING
(PRESENCE + SOCIALIZE OR STREETWISE)

You mix with a group, bringing high spirits with you and using them to loosen tongues.

- **Dramatic Failure:** A faux pas reveals that you don't belong... and maybe even hints at your supernatural nature.
- **Failure:** You end up a wallflower, with a drink in your hand that you don't even want.
- **Success:** You make a single-serving friend who might be willing to pass secrets or go with you somewhere private.
- **Exceptional Success:** You make a friend you can contact again.

FAST-TALK
(MANIPULATION + SUBTERFUGE – VICTIM'S COMPOSURE)

You may not be able to win the argument with facts, but you can try to get out of trouble with a little judicious spin.

- **Dramatic Failure:** The other party has a good idea what the truth is.
- **Failure:** The other party doesn't believe you.
- **Success:** The other party swallows your story.
- **Exceptional Success:** The other party believes you so thoroughly that they're even willing to offer a little aid...though they won't put themselves at any kind of risk.

INTERROGATION
(MANIPULATION + EMPATHY OR INTIMIDATION – VICTIM'S RESOLVE)

You try to dig secrets out of a reluctant informant. (See also Social Maneuvering, p. 202.)

- **Dramatic Failure:** The informant is so alienated or injured that he will no longer reveal information.
- **Failure:** The informant blabs a mix of truth and falsehood — even he may not know the difference.
- **Success:** You get the information you were looking for.
- **Exceptional Success:** You get the information you were looking for, and the informant is willing to continue cooperating.

INTIMIDATION
(STRENGTH OR MANIPULATION + INTIMIDATION – VICTIM'S COMPOSURE)

You try to get someone to do what you want by making him afraid of you.

- **Dramatic Failure:** They don't take you seriously, even if you knock them around a bit. They won't be doing what you want.
- **Failure:** They're unimpressed with your threats.
- **Success:** They're coerced into helping you.
- **Exceptional Success:** They develop a lasting fear of you, which could make them easier to coerce in the future.

INVESTIGATING A SCENE
(INTELLIGENCE + INVESTIGATION)

You look for clues to what's happened in the recent past...or tidy up so that no one else can find them.

- **Dramatic Failure:** You find clues but you contaminate them, or you leave evidence of your presence.
- **Failure:** You find evidence, but it's damaged and hard to interpret. Or you miss a spot in your cleanup that you won't find out about until later.
- **Success:** You find a clue of exactly the sort you need or manage to significantly confuse future investigators.
- **Exceptional Success:** You find a clue, and know exactly how it fits in, or you leave the scene immaculate and impossible to decipher.

JUMPING
(STRENGTH + ATHLETICS)

To get past an obstacle or out of danger, you leap into the air.

- **Dramatic Failure:** The task not only fails, but your character loses her balance.
- **Failure:** Your character doesn't achieve any significant distance at all — she jumps too early, has a false start, or loses her nerve.
- **Success:** Your character leaps a number of feet equal to the successes rolled, or a number of meters equal to the successes rolled divided by three.
- **Exceptional Success:** Your character leaps an impressive distance. If successes gained exceed the amount required to make the jump, your character may attempt another instant action in the air (say, firing a shot) or upon landing (maybe running up to her Speed), at the Storyteller's discretion.

REPAIR
(INTELLIGENCE + CRAFTS)

You try to fix something that's broken down.

- **Dramatic Failure:** The broken object's a lost cause. It'll never work again.
- **Failure:** You're stymied by the problem, but you could come back to it in another scene.
- **Success:** You get the thing working...for now.
- **Exceptional Success:** The object works better than before. It won't break again anytime soon.

RESEARCH
(INTELLIGENCE + ACADEMICS OR OCCULT)

Using your existing knowledge, you look for information on a current mystery.

- **Dramatic Failure:** You learn something, but it doesn't help. In fact, it sets you back. If using Occult, this could mean dangerously false assumptions.
- **Failure:** You turn up a lot of promising leads, but they're all dead ends.
- **Success:** You find the basic facts you were looking for.
- **Exceptional Success:** You find what you were looking for, which leads towards a much bigger score of information.

SHADOWING A MARK
(WITS + STEALTH OR DRIVE VS. WITS + COMPOSURE)

You follow someone, perhaps in the hopes of ambushing them, or of finding out their destination.

- **Dramatic Failure:** You're caught, either by the mark or some observer that's become suspicious of you.
- **Failure:** The mark senses he's being followed and manages to lose you.
- **Success:** You follow the mark to his destination.
- **Exceptional Success:** You find some means by which you can continue following the mark, such as an unlocked entrance into the building he arrived at.

SNEAKING
(DEXTERITY + STEALTH VS. WITS + COMPOSURE)

You're trying to avoid notice by someone...or multiple someones. Maybe you want to get into a place undetected. Maybe you're trying to break out.

- **Dramatic Failure:** You attract a lot of attention...enough that now it's going to be hard to get out.
- **Failure:** You're noticed but still have the chance to slip away.
- **Success:** You avoid notice and get closer to your goal.
- **Exceptional Success:** You avoid notice and get away before anyone has another chance to catch you.

Permutations

The Storytelling System has a few variations in how dice rolls work. This section lists the ones used most commonly in **Promethean: The Created**. For a more complete list, see the **Chronicles of Darkness Rulebook**.

- **9-Again:** You re-roll dice that show 9 or 10, as opposed to just 10. Keep rolling until you get a result that isn't a 9 or 10.
- **8-Again:** You re-roll dice that show 8, 9, or 10 — any successful die — and keep rolling as long as your dice show successes.
- **Extra Successes:** Assuming your roll is successful, you get a number of extra successes added to your total. This permutation mostly applies to weapons, which add their damage bonus as extra successes on your attack roll.
- **Rote Actions:** When you've got plenty of training and the steps you need to follow are laid out in front of you, you've got a significant chance of success. When you make a roll, you can re-roll any dice that do not show an 8, 9, or 10. If you're reduced to a chance die on a rote action, don't re-roll a dramatic failure. You may only re-roll each die once.
- **Successive Attempts:** When you fail a roll, you may be able to try again. If time is not an issue and your character is under no pressure to perform, you may make successive attempts with your full dice pool. In the far more likely situation that time is short and the situation is tense, each subsequent attempt has a cumulative –1 die penalty — so the third time a character tries to break down the door that's keeping her inside a burning building, her roll has a –2 die penalty. Successive attempts do not apply to extended actions.
- **Teamwork:** When two or more people work together, one person takes the lead. He's the primary actor, and his player assembles his dice pool as normal. Anyone assisting rolls the same pool before the primary actor. Each success from a secondary actor gives the primary actor a bonus die. If one of the secondary actors rolls a dramatic failure, the primary actor gets a –4 die penalty.

Time

When you're playing **Promethean: The Created**, time in the story can speed past or slow to a crawl compared to time in the real world. Weeks or months might pass in the space of few words, while a tense negotiation plays out in real-time — or takes even longer.

In addition to years, nights, and hours, **Promethean** also uses six units of dramatic time. These build upon one another, from shortest to longest.

- Turn — The smallest increment of time, a turn lasts for about three seconds. A character can perform a single instant action in a turn. Turns normally only matter in combat or other dramatic and stressful situations.
- Scene — Much like a scene in a play, a scene in a roleplaying game is the time spent dealing with a single, specific event. The Storyteller frames the scene, describing what's going on, and it's up to the players to resolve the event or conflict. A scene might be played out in turns, progress in real-time, or skip forward depending on dramatic necessity.
- Chapter — A chapter is the collection of scenes that happen during one game session. From the moment you sit down and start playing to the point where you pack up your dice, you're playing out a chapter of your story.
- Story — A story tells an entire tale, following the dramatic arc of a related series of events. It might comprise several chapters or be completed in just one. It has an introduction, rising tension, a number of twists, and a climax that brings things to a conclusion.
- Chronicle — The big picture, a chronicle is the collection of interlinked stories that involve your characters. They might be linked by a common theme or overarching plotline, or they may only share characters and locations. As your story progresses, the players and Storyteller work together to create an ongoing chronicle.

Social Maneuvering

These rules for Social actions assume your character is making effort toward getting another character or a group of characters to do what she wants. Social actions within this system may be direct or subtle, complex or simple. For example, your character may shout at another and demand he gets out of the way, or your character may subtly offer clues suggesting someone needs to vote for her.

It is not always possible to get someone to do what you want. For instance, no amount of Social Maneuvering is going to convince the chief of police in a large city to hold a press conference and admit to murder, even if the player has a dice pool impressive enough to make it happen. This system is designed to allow characters to manipulate or convince other characters to perform favors or undertake actions, but it does raise the question: is one character dictating another's actions, and how much of that should be allowed in a role-playing game? Or, put a different way, can one character seduce another with this system?

Under a strict read of the rules, the answer is yes. The goal is "get that character to sleep with my character," the number of Doors is decided as explained below, and impressions and other factors play into the final result. This is not too different from

how seduction and other less carnal forms of persuasion actually work — the persuader tries to make the offer as enticing as possible.

But because it's the persuader's player making the rolls, the target is left without a way to say "no." As such, we recommend reserving this system for use by player-controlled characters on Storyteller characters rather than on other players' characters. If one player's character wants to seduce, persuade, convince, or intimidate another, leave it up to roleplaying and let players make their own decisions about what their characters do.

Goals

When using a Social action with this system, the first step is to declare your character's intended goal. This is as simple as stating what you want the subject to do and how your character is going about making it happen. You need only announce the initial stages, as the effort will likely occur over multiple rolls, reflecting different actions.

At this point, the Storyteller determines whether the goal is reasonable. A character might, with time and proper tactics, convince a rich person to give him a large sum of money. He probably isn't going to convince the wealthy individual to abandon *all* of his wealth to the character (though it might be possible to get him to name the character as heir, at which point the character can set about speeding up the inheritance process).

Doors

Once you've declared your character's goal, the next step is to determine the scope of the challenge. We represent this with "Doors," which reflect a character's resistance to coercion: her social walls, his skepticism, mistrust, or just a hesitance toward intimacy. It's abstract and means different things in every given case.

The base number of Doors is equal to the lower of the character's Resolve or Composure. If the goal would be a breaking point for the character, add two Doors. If accomplishing the goal would prevent a character from resolving an Aspiration, add a Door. Acting in opposition to a Virtue also adds a Door. Doors may increase as the effort continues and the circumstances change. For example, if the goal seems mundane at first but the situation makes it reprehensible, it may increase the number of Doors required. If your character gives up on the goal and shifts to another, any Doors currently open remain so, but assess Aspirations, Virtues, and Integrity in case of a potential increase.

Doors must be opened one by one. Each successful roll — *not* each success — opens one. Exceptional successes open two. Also, Doors are specifically a one-way relationship between two characters. They may each have Doors to one another or Doors to other characters.

First Impressions

First (and later) impressions determine the time required between rolls. The Storyteller sets the first impression based on any past history between the characters, the circumstances of their meeting, the nature of the favor being asked (if the acting character is asking right up front — sometimes it's a better idea not to lead off with what you want!) and any other relevant factors.

"Average impressions" call for weekly rolls, which make the process very slow. Through play, your character may influence the interaction for a "good impression." This may mean meeting in a pleasant environment, wearing appealing clothing, playing appropriate music, or otherwise making the situation more comfortable. This should not require a roll during a first impression but requires one if attempted later. An excellent impression requires a roll to influence the situation.

For example, you may use a Wits + Socialize to find the right people to invite to a party. Perfect impressions require further factors. It may involve leverage or playing to a character's Vice (see below).

Hostile impressions come from tense first impressions or threatening pitches. These interactions require you manipulate the impression or to force the Doors (see below).

Impression	Time per Roll
Perfect	1 Turn
Excellent	1 Hour
Good	1 Day
Average	1 Week
Hostile	Cannot roll

Vices

If your character knows her subject's Vice, she can use it to influence the interaction. With an offer that tempts that Vice, move the interaction one step up on the chart. As a rule of thumb, if by agreeing to the temptation the target were to gain Willpower, it's a valid temptation. If using Social Maneuvering on a character that doesn't have a Vice (like a Promethean), a temptation that plays to a similar trait, like Torment, can have the same effect at the Storyteller's discretion.

Soft Leverage (Gifts and Bribes)

Soft Leverage represents offers of services or payments in order to lubricate social interaction. Make the offer. If the recipient agrees, move the impression up once on the chart.

Mechanically, this can be represented in certain Merit dots. For example, a bribe may be represented by a Resources 3 offer, or an offer of service may be reflected by Retainer 3. By default, these bribes give the recipient use of the Merit for a designated amount of time.

Opening Doors

At each interval, you may make a roll to open Doors and move closer to your character's goal. The roll might be different each time, depending on the character's tactics. Some of the rolls might not even be Social. For example, if your character is trying to win someone's favor, fixing his computer with an Intelligence + Computer roll could open a Door.

As Storyteller, be creative in selecting dice pools. Change them up with each step to keep the interactions dynamic. Similarly, consider contested and resisted rolls. Most resisted actions or contested rolls use either Resolve or Composure or a combination of the two, but don't let that stand as a limit. Contested rolls don't require a resistance trait. For example, Wits might be used to notice a lie, Strength to help a character stand up to threats, or Presence to protect and maintain one's reputation at a soiree.

Failed rolls impose a cumulative –1 on further rolls. These penalties do not go away with successful rolls. When the player fails a roll, the Storyteller may choose to worsen the impression level by one. If she does so, the player takes a Beat. If this takes the impression level to hostile, the attempt cannot move forward until it improves.

Aspirations

Aspirations are quick routes to influence. Find a character's goals, wants, and needs, and they can help move interactions forward. If your character presents a clear path and reasoning for how they'll help a character achieve an Aspiration, remove a Door.

This doesn't require follow-through, but it does require a certain amount of assurance. If the opportunity presents itself and your character pulls out of an offer, two Doors close.

Failure

A Social Maneuvering attempt can fail utterly under the following circumstances:

- The player rolls a dramatic failure on an attempt to open a Door (the player takes a Beat as usual).
- The target realizes that he is being lied to or manipulated. This does *not* apply if the target is aware that the character is trying to talk him into something, only if the target feels betrayed or conned.
- The impression level reaches "hostile" and remains so for a week of game time. The character can try again during the next story.

Resolution

Once your character opens the final Door, the subject must act. Storyteller characters abide by the intended goal and follow through as stated.

If you allow players' characters to be the targets of Social Maneuvering, resolve this stage as a negotiation with two possible outcomes. The subject chooses to abide by the desired goal or offers a beneficial alternative.

Go With the Flow

If the character does as requested and abides by the intended goal, his player takes a Beat (see p. 105).

Offer an Alternative

If the subject's player chooses, he may offer a beneficial alternative and the initiator's player can impose a Condition (see p. 305) on his character. This offer exists between players; it does not need to occur within the fiction of the game (though it can). The alternative must be beneficial and not a twist of intent. The Storyteller adjudicates.

The initiator's player chooses a Condition to impose on the subject. It must make sense within the context of the scenario.

Combat

Prometheans inevitably find themselves confronted with violence. Disquiet pushes people to brutality, Pandorans hunger for Created flesh, and practitioners of the Refinement of Iron spoil for a good scrap. Eventually, a fight is going to break out.

Combat is a catch-all term for what happens when two people find that they cannot reach agreement like rational individuals and instead beat, claw, and bite the living shit out of one another until one of them gets what she wants.

Everybody wants something out of a fight. The very first thing you need to do — before worrying about who attacks first or anything like that — is to determine what each character wants to get out of the fight. Boil it down into a simple sentence that starts with the words "I want:" "I want to kill Johnny," "I want the book that Frances is holding," or "I want what's in Larry's wallet."

A character's intent has to be something she could achieve through an act of violence in the current scene — even a gunman on the White House lawn couldn't get away with "I want to be President of the United States."

By stating her character's intent, a player is setting out how much her character is willing to hurt — even kill — someone else in order to get what she wants. If your intent has nothing to do with hurting people and you end up killing someone, you lose a point of Willpower.

Optional Rule: Beaten Down & Surrender

A character who takes more than his Stamina in bashing damage or any amount of lethal damage is Beaten Down: he's had the fight knocked out of him. He must spend a point of Willpower every time he wants to take a violent action until the end of the fight. He can still apply Defense against incoming attacks, can Dodge, and can run like hell, but it takes a point of Willpower to swing or shoot back.

Before that happens, he can surrender, giving his attacker what she wants according to her declared intent. If you give in, you gain a point of Willpower and take a Beat but you take no more part in the fight. If the other side wants to attack you, they've got to spend a point of Willpower to do so and probably suffer a breaking point. If everyone on one side has surrendered, the fight's over and the other side gets what they want.

If one side's intent involves violence, the other side can't surrender — not without being killed. If that's the case, their intended victims don't get Beaten Down and gain no benefit from surrendering. When someone wants to kill you, the only thing you can do is to try to stop her, whether you run like hell or unload a shotgun at her.



These rules only apply to people (or supernatural beings) who would incur a breaking point for committing (or attempting) "murder." Creatures that don't have a problem killing people in general — like Centimani — can ignore surrender without penalty and don't have the fight beaten out of them like normal folks. Prometheans, due to their superior resilience, cannot be Beaten Down unless a supernatural effect forces it on them.

Down and Dirty Combat

The Storyteller might decide that your character can get what she wants without focusing on the details of the fight. Maybe she's picking on people weaker than her. Maybe she's internalized the mechanics of violence. Or maybe the fight's not the important thing going on with regards to the character's intent. If that's the case, the Storyteller can opt to use Down and Dirty Combat. This system resolves the entire fight in a single roll. Storyteller characters might deal some damage, but they're never able to initiate a Down and Dirty Combat.

Action: Contested; resistance is reflexive

Dice Pool: Combat pool (Dexterity + Firearms, Strength + Brawl, or Strength + Weaponry) versus either the opponent's combat pool (as above) *or* an attempt to escape (Strength or Dexterity + Athletics). Ignore Defense on this roll.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The character's opponent gets the upper hand. This usually includes the opposite of the character's intent — if she wanted to disable the guards so she could escape, she is stunned instead.

Failure: The opponent wins the contest. If the opponent used a combat pool, deal damage equal to the difference in successes plus weapon modifier. Also, the opponent escapes unless he wants to press the combat.

Success: The character wins the contest. She deals damage equal to the difference in successes plus her weapon modifier and achieves her intent — if her intent includes killing her opponents, then she does so.

Exceptional Success: As a success, plus the character also gains a point of Willpower from the rush of inflicting violence on an inferior opponent.

Initiative

When a fight's inevitable, it helps to know who acts first. Time in combat is always tracked in turns. At the start of combat, determine your character's Initiative by rolling one die and adding her Initiative Modifier.

When your character is using a weapon, apply its Initiative penalty for as long as she's got the weapon ready. The only way to avoid this modifier is to sling it or drop it. Dropping a weapon is a reflexive action, but picking it back up takes an instant action. A character wielding two weapons subtracts the largest Initiative penalty from her score, and then reduces it by a further one. Wielding a baton (Initiative penalty –2) and a riot shield (Initiative penalty –4) thus applies a –5 penalty to Initiative.

Surprise

Characters who don't realize that they're about to be on the receiving end of bloody violence have a chance to notice the ambush by rolling Wits + Composure, contested by the attacker's Dexterity + Stealth. Any character who fails the roll cannot take an action in the first turn of combat and can't apply Defense for that turn. Determine Initiative in the second turn as normal.

Attack

On your turn, your character can attack using one of the following dice pools:

- **Unarmed Combat:** Strength + Brawl – Defense
- **Melee Combat:** Strength + Weaponry – Defense
- **Ranged Combat:** Dexterity + Firearms
- **Thrown Weapons:** Dexterity + Athletics – Defense

Resolve the attack roll like any other action. Determine damage by adding the successes rolled to any weapon bonus. See "Injury and Healing."

Defense

Subtract your character's Defense from any unarmed, melee, or thrown attacks that the character is aware of. Every time your character applies his Defense against an attack, reduce his Defense by one until the start of the next turn. Spending a point of Willpower increases his Defense by two, but only against one attacker.

You can choose not to apply your character's Defense against some attacks. If two Pandorans attack before a Centimanus wielding an ax, you might want to let the Pandorans get their blows in and apply your full Defense against the Hundred-Handed trying to take your head off.

You cannot apply your character's Defense against firearms attacks.

Dodge

At any point before your action, your character can choose to Dodge. Doing so gives up her normal action. When Dodging, double your character's Defense but do not subtract it from attack rolls. Instead, roll Defense as a dice pool and subtract each success from the attacker's successes. If this reduces the attacker's successes to 0, the attack does no damage. Apply successes from Dodging before adding any weapon bonus.

Against multiple opponents, reduce Defense by one for each opponent *before* doubling it to determine your dice pool. If your Defense is reduced to 0, you roll a chance die. A dramatic failure when Dodging leaves your character off-balance; reduce her Defense by one for her next turn.

Unarmed Combat

These rules present special cases that come up when fighting without weapons.

Bite

A human's teeth do –1 bashing damage. Other creatures treat their teeth like weapons, dealing lethal damage to mortals (see "Weapons," below). Most Prometheans don't do any extra damage with their teeth, though the Metamorphosis Transmutation can alter this. Animals have a weapon bonus depending on the kind of creature: a wolf applies +1, while a great white shark gets +4.

Humans and Prometheans (usually) can only bite as part of a grapple, using the Damage move.

Grapple

To grab your opponent, roll Strength + Brawl – Defense. On a success, both of you are grappling. If you roll an exceptional success, pick a move from the list below.

Each turn, both grappling characters make a contested Strength + Brawl versus Strength + Brawl action on the higher of the two characters' Initiatives. The winner picks a move from the list below, or two moves on an exceptional success.

- **Break Free** from the grapple. You throw off your opponent; you're both no longer grappling. Succeeding at this move is a reflexive action, so you can take another action immediately afterwards.
- **Control Weapon**, either by drawing a weapon that you have holstered or turning your opponent's weapon against him. You keep control until your opponent makes a Control Weapon move.
- **Damage** your opponent by dealing bashing damage equal to your rolled successes. If you previously succeeded at a Control Weapon action, add the weapon bonus to your successes.
- **Disarm** your opponent, removing a weapon from the grapple entirely. You must have first succeeded at a Control Weapon move.
- **Drop Prone**, throwing both of you to the ground (see "Going Prone," p. 207). You must Break Free before rising.
- **Hold** your opponent in place. Neither of you can apply Defense against incoming attacks.
- **Restrain** your opponent with duct tape, zip ties, or a painful joint lock. Your opponent is immobilized. You can only use this move if you've already succeeded in a Hold move. If you use equipment to Restrain your opponent, you can leave the grapple.

- **Take Cover** using your opponent's body. Any ranged attacks made until the end of the turn automatically hit him (see "Human Shields," below).

Touching an Opponent

Sometimes a combatant doesn't want to do damage. Maybe she wants to plant a bug or use a Contamination Distillation. Roll Dexterity + Brawl to touch, or Dexterity + Weaponry to tap an opponent with a weapon. A successful roll deals no damage.

Ranged Combat

These rules present special cases that come up when shooting at people.

Autofire

Automatic weapons can fire a short, medium, or long burst in place of a single shot.

- **Short Burst**: Three bullets fired at the same target. Add a +1 die bonus to the shooter's dice pool.
- **Medium Burst:** Ten bullets, which can hit one to three targets standing close together. Add a +2 die bonus to the shooter's dice pool. If firing at more than one target, subtract the total number of targets from the shooter's pool, then make one attack roll per target.
- **Long Burst:** Twenty bullets at as many targets as the shooter wants. Increase the shooter's dice pool by +3. If firing at more than one target, subtract the total number of targets from the shooter's pool, then make one attack roll per target.

Range

The firearms chart (below) lists the short, medium, and long ranges of some sample firearms. Shooting a target at medium range imposes a –1 die penalty, while shooting a target at long range increases that to –2. Shooting at targets beyond long range reduces the attack dice pool to a chance die.

Thrown weapons have a short range of (Strength + Dexterity + Athletics – object's Size), doubled for medium range, and doubled again for long range. Aerodynamic objects double each range — so an aerodynamic object's long range is {(Strength + Dexterity + Athletics) * 8}. Characters can only throw objects with a Size less than their Strength.

Cover and Concealment

Hiding behind something is a good way to not get shot. How effective the tactic is depends how much the cover hides. Concealment penalties apply to a shooter's dice pool.

- **Barely Concealed:** –1 (hiding behind an office chair)
- **Partially Concealed:** –2 (hiding behind the hood of a car, with upper body exposed)
- **Substantially Concealed:** –3 (crouching behind a car).

A character who is concealed and wants to fire at someone else takes a penalty to his Firearms attack that's one less than the penalty afforded by the character's protection — so if he's substantially concealed, he can fire back with a –2 die penalty.

If a target's entirely hidden by something substantial, he's in cover. If the cover's Durability is greater than the weapon modifier, the bullets can't penetrate the cover. Otherwise, subtract the cover's Durability from the attacker's damage roll. If the cover is transparent (bulletproof glass, for example), subtract *half* the cover's Durability, rounding down. Both the object and the target take any remaining damage. Durability is explained on p. 211.

Human Shields

Sometimes, the only available cover is another person — be they a terrified member of the public or a life-long friend. Characters who use human shields treat them as cover, with Durability equal to the victim's Stamina + any armor. Unlike normal cover, the victim takes all of the damage from the attack.

Using a human shield is a possible step backwards on the Pilgrimage.

Reloading

Reloading a firearm is an instant action. If you need to load bullets separately, you cannot apply your Defense on the same turn. If you have a magazine or speed-loader, you don't lose your Defense.

General Combat Factors

Some conditions apply to all kinds of fights.

All-Out Attack

A character can throw everything he has into a Brawl or Weaponry attack. Sacrifice Defense for the turn, but add two dice to the attack.

Movement

A character can move his Speed in a single turn and still take an instant action. He can forsake his action to move at double his normal pace.

Going Prone

When a character can't find cover, the next best thing when bullets are flying is to drop flat to the ground. Ranged attacks against him suffer a –2 die penalty. A standing attacker using Brawl or Weaponry to attack instead gains a +2 die bonus.

A character can drop prone at any point before his action. Dropping to the ground costs his action for the turn. Getting up from being prone also takes your character's action.

Specified Targets

Attacking specific body parts has its benefits. In addition to ignoring armor (see "Armor," p. 210), strikes to limbs and the head can have added effects called Tilts. Tilts are explained in detail in the Appendix (p. 312).

- Arm (–2): A damaging hit can Arm Wrack the victim if it deals more damage than the target's Stamina.
- Leg (–2): A damaging hit can Leg Wrack the victim if it deals more damage than the target's Stamina.

- Head (–3): A damaging attack can Stun the victim if it deals at least as much damage as the target's Size.
- Heart (–3): If the attacker does at least five points of damage, the weapon pierces the opponent's heart.
- Hand (–4): On a damaging hit, the victim suffers Arm Wrack.
- Eye (–5): On a damaging hit, the victim is Blinded.

Killing Blow

When performing a killing blow, you deal damage equal to your full dice pool plus your weapon modifier. You've time enough to line up your attack so it avoids your victim's armor.

While people who kill in combat can justify their actions based on the heat of the moment, performing a killing blow is a premeditated attempt to end a sentient life without the target having a chance to do anything about it. Going through with a killing blow is a breaking point, whether the victim survives or not.

Weapons and Armor

Weapons are one of the fastest ways to turn a fight into a murder. Sometimes, that's what you want; pulling a gun shows you're serious about killing people.

A weapon's damage rating adds bonus successes to a successful attack roll. When a weapon might help out in other ways — using a chain to grapple someone or a gun to intimidate her — add the weapon's damage rating as an equipment modifier.

Every weapon deals lethal damage to mortals. A baseball bat, club, or mace does just as much serious trauma to the human body as an edged weapon or a bullet.

The full traits of a range of weapons are presented in the Ranged and Melee Weapons Charts.

Rating: Armor provides protection against normal attacks and Firearms attacks. The number before the slash is for general armor, while the number after the slash is for ballistic armor.

Strength: If your character's Strength is lower than that required for her armor, reduce her Brawl and Weaponry dice pools by –1.

Ranged Weapons Chart

Type	Dmg	Ranges	Clip	Initiative	Str	Size	Availability	Example
Revolver, lt	1	20/40/80	6	0	2	1	••	SW M640 (.38 Special)
Revolver, hvy	2	35/70/140	6	−2	3	1	••	SW M29 (.44 Magnum)
Pistol, lt	1	20/40/80	17+1	0	2	1	•••	Glock 17 (9mm)
Pistol, hvy	2	30/60/120	7+1	−2	3	1	•••	Colt M1911A1 (.45 ACP)
SMG, small*	1	25/50/100	30+1	−2	2	1	•••	Ingram Mac-10 (9mm)
SMG, large*	2	50/100/200	30+1	−3	3	2	•••	HK MP-5 (9mm)
Rifle	4	200/400/800	5+1	−5	2	3	••	Remington M-700 (30.06)
Assault Rifle*	3	150/300/600	42+1	−3	3	3	•••	Steyr-AUG (5.56mm)
Shotgun**	3	20/40/80	5+1	−4	3	2	••	Remington M870 (12-gauge)
Crossbow***	2	40/80/160	1	−5	3	3	•••	

Damage: Indicates the number of bonus successes added to a successful attack. Firearms deal lethal damage against ordinary people. The type of damage may vary against supernatural opponents.

Ranges: The listed numbers a short/medium/long ranges in yards. Attacks at medium range suffer a −1 penalty. Attacks at long range suffer a −2 penalty.

Clip: The number of rounds a gun can hold. A "+1" indicates that a bullet can be held in the chamber, ready to fire.

Initiative: The penalty taken to Initiative when wielding the gun.

Strength: The minimum Strength needed to use a weapon effectively. A wielder with a lower Strength suffers a −1 penalty on attack rolls.

Size: 1 = Can be fired one-handed; 2 = Must be fired two-handed and can be hidden in a coat; 3 = Can be fired two-handed but not hidden on one's person

Availability: The cost in Resources dots or level of Social Merit needed to acquire the weapon.

* The weapon is capable of autofire, including short bursts, medium bursts, and long bursts.

** Attack rolls gain the 9-again quality

*** Crossbows take three turns to reload between shots. A crossbow can be used to deliver a stake through the heart (–3 penalty to attack rolls; must deal at least 5 damage in one attack)

Melee Weapons Chart

Type	Damage	Initiative	Strength	Size	Availability	Special
Sap	0	−1	1	1	•	Stun
Brass Knuckles	0	0	1	1	•	Uses Brawl to attack
Baton	1	−1	2	2	n/a	
Crowbar	2	−2	2	2	•	
Tire Iron	1	−3	2	2	••	+1 Defense
Chain	1	−3	2	2	•	Grapple
Shield (small)	0	−2	2	2	••	Concealed
Shield (large)	2	−4	3	3	••	Concealed
Knife	0	−1	1	1	•	
Rapier	1	−2	1	2	••	Armor piercing 1
Machete	2	−2	2	2	••	
Hatchet	1	−2	1	1	•	
Fire Axe	3	−4	3	3	••	9-again, two-handed
Chainsaw	5	−6	4	3	•••	9-again, two-handed
Stake*	0	−4	1	1	n/a	
Spear**	2	−2	2	4	•	+1 Defense, two-handed
Stun gun (melee)	1	-1	1	1	•	Stun; bonus successes don't add to modifier for damage

Type: A weapon's type is a general classification that can apply to anything your character picks up. A metal club might be an antique mace, a metal baseball bat, or a hammer, while a hatchet might be a meat cleaver or an antique handaxe.

Damage: Indicates the number of bonus successes added to a successful attack. Weapons always deal lethal damage.

Initiative: The penalty taken to Initiative when wielding the weapon. If using more than one weapon, take the higher penalty and increase by 1.

Strength: The minimum Strength needed to use a weapon effectively. A wielder with a lower Strength suffers a −1 penalty on attack rolls.

Size: 1 = Can be hidden in a hand; 2 = Can be hidden in a coat; 3+ = Cannot be hidden.

Availability: The cost in Resources dots or level of Social Merit needed to acquire the weapon.

Concealed: A character who wields a shield but doesn't use it to attack can add its Size to his Defense, and uses its Size as a concealment modifier against ranged attacks.

Grapple: Add the chain's weapon bonus to your dice pool when grappling.

Stun: Halve the victim's Size when aiming for the head with intent to stun.

Two-handed: This weapon requires two hands. It can be used one-handed, but doing so increases the Strength requirement by 1.

* A stake must target the heart (–3 penalty to attack rolls) and must deal at least 5 damage in one attack.

** The reach of a spear gives a +1 Defense bonus against opponents who are unarmed or wield weapons of Size 1

Defense: The penalty imposed on your character's Defense when wearing the armor.

Speed: The penalty to your character's Speed when wearing the armor.

Availability: The cost in Resources dots or level of Social Merit needed to acquire the armor.

Coverage: The areas of a character protected by the armor. Wearing a helmet increases the armor's coverage to include a character's head.

Improvised Weapons

The weapons charts can only go so far. Characters who grab improvised weapons still stand a chance of doing serious damage.

If your improvised weapon is close enough to one of the weapons above, use the associated weapon profile. Otherwise, an improvised weapon does (Durability – 1) damage, with an initiative penalty and Strength requirement equal to the weapon's Size.

Using an improvised weapon reduces your attack pool by one die. On a successful attack, the weapon takes the same amount of

Armor Chart

Type	Rating	Strength	Defense	Speed	Availability	Coverage
MODERN						
Reinforced clothing*	1/0	1	0	0	•	Torso, arms, legs
Kevlar vest*	1/3	1	0	0	•	Torso
Flak Jacket	2/4	1	−1	0	••	Torso, arms
Full Riot Gear	3/5	2	−2	−1	•••	Torso, arms, legs
ARCHAIC						
Leather (hard)	2/0	2	−1	0	•	Torso, arms
Chainmail	3/1	3	−2	−2	••	Torso, arms
Plate	4/2	3	−2	−3	••••	Torso, arms, legs

Rating: Armor provides protection against normal attacks and Firearms attacks. The number before the slash is for general armor, while the number after the slash is for ballistic armor.

Strength: If your character's Strength is lower than that required for her armor, reduce her Brawl and Weaponry dice pools by 1.

Defense: The penalty imposed on your character's Defense when wearing the armor.

Speed: The penalty to your character's Speed for the armor worn.

Availability: The cost in Resources dots or level of Social Merit needed to acquire the armor.

Coverage: The areas of a character protected by the armor. Unless an attacker targets a specific unarmored location ("Specified Targets", above), the armor's protection applies. Wearing a helmet increases the armor's coverage to include a character's head.

* This armor is concealed, either as normal clothing (e.g. biker leathers) or being worn under a jacket or baggy shirt. Attackers have no idea the target is wearing armor until after they land a successful hit.

damage as it inflicts; Durability reduces this damage as normal. Once the weapon's Structure is reduced to 0, the object is wrecked.

Armor

Armor provides protection against attacks, including bullets and knives. Though it's rare to find Prometheans wearing armor, police officers and other law enforcement agencies rely on it.

- Ballistic armor applies to incoming firearms attacks. Each point of ballistic armor downgrades one point of damage from lethal to bashing.
- General armor applies to all attacks. Each point of general armor reduces the total damage taken by one point, starting with the most severe type of damage.

If armor has both ballistic and general ratings, apply the ballistic armor first.

When applying armor to an attack dealing lethal damage, you always take at least one point of bashing damage from the shock of the blow.

Armor-Piercing

Some weapons have an armor piercing quality, usually between 1 and 3. When attacking someone wearing armor, subtract the piercing quality from the target's armor. Subtract from ballistic armor first, then general armor. Armor-piercing attacks in close combat subtract from general armor only.

When shooting at an object — or a person in cover — subtract the piercing quality from the object's Durability.

Injury and Healing

Characters can suffer three types of damage. Fists and feet, along with other kinds of low-impact trauma, deal *bashing* damage. Brass knuckles, knives, and speeding trucks deal *lethal* damage. Some horrifying powers deal *aggravated* damage. When something deals aggravated damage directly, it's quite obvious. Flesh bubbles and sloughs away. Foaming pustules taint the victim's flesh. Blackened veins streak out from the site of the injury.

When a character's health track is filled with bashing damage, his player must make a reflexive Stamina roll each turn for him to remain conscious. If it fills with lethal damage, then each minute thereafter in which the character receives no medical attention — mundane or supernatural — he suffers one more injury. One health box currently marked with an X is upgraded to an asterisk for aggravated damage, from left to right on the character's Health chart. Once all boxes are filled with asterisks, he's dead.

Supernatural characters often have different reactions to their health track filling up. Prometheans, for instance, don't risk unconsciousness or start to bleed out, nor do they suffer wound penalties.

Marking Damage

When a character suffers bashing damage, mark it with a slash (/) in the leftmost empty box of his health track.

When a character suffers lethal damage, mark it with a cross (X) in the leftmost box of his health track that doesn't contain lethal or aggravated damage. If you mark over a point of bashing damage, it moves one box to the right.

When a character suffers aggravated damage, mark it with a large asterisk (*) in the leftmost box that doesn't already contain aggravated damage. If you mark over a point of bashing or lethal damage, it all moves one box to the right.

Always mark the most severe injuries at the left of a character's health track, and push any less severe injuries to the right. Characters heal their rightmost health boxes first and progress left.

Example: Enoch has seven dots of Health. He's just taken two points of bashing damage. His Health boxes look like this:



If he's later stabbed and takes a point of lethal damage, his Health track would be:



If Enoch next suffered a point of aggravated damage, his Health boxes would look like this:



Wound Penalties

As a character takes damage, it impairs her ability to act. When one of her three rightmost Health boxes has damage marked, she suffers a penalty accordingly. Subtract this penalty from every action she performs, including rolling for Initiative but not including Stamina rolls to stay conscious. Prometheans do not suffer wound penalties, but mortals do.

Health Boxes Marked	Penalty
Third-to-last	–1
Second-to-last	–2
Last	–3

Upgrading Damage

If your character's Health track is already full of bashing damage, any further bashing or lethal damage upgrades the leftmost point of bashing damage to lethal — turn one of the slashes into a cross.

If your character's health track is full of lethal damage, any further damage upgrades an existing point of lethal damage to aggravated damage. Turn the leftmost X into an asterisk.

When a mortal character's rightmost Health box has bashing damage marked in it, she has to make a Stamina roll each turn or fall unconscious. If it has lethal damage, she takes another point of damage each minute (upgrading existing lethal damage to aggravated) until she receives medical attention. Neither of these eventualities apply to the Created.

Mortal Healing

Characters need time to heal once they've been beaten to a pulp. Mortal characters heal their rightmost health box at the following rate. The healing time is enough for the wound to fully recover — lethal damage doesn't "downgrade" into bashing. Normally, a character can heal without medical attention, though use of the Medicine Skill will doubtless help him recover. The only exception is if a mortal character has all her Health boxes full of lethal damage — she's bleeding out. She can't recover from that without urgent medical attention and emergency surgery.

Wounds recover at the following rates:

Bashing: One point per 15 minutes

Lethal: One point per two days

Aggravated: One point per week

Example: A Promethean's mortal companion gets between her and a Pandoran and pays the price. Her health track looks like this at the end of the fight.



Her rightmost wounds heal first. Each point of bashing damage takes 15 minutes to heal. Her lethal damage then heals over the course of the next two days. Finally, her aggravated wound heals over the course of the next week. In all, it takes a little over a week and two days for her to recover from her injuries, barring magical healing.

Objects

Objects such as lead pipes, walls, or cars have three traits in the Storytelling System: Durability, Size, and Structure. Mostly, these relate to how easy the object is to destroy.

Durability: How hard the object is to damage. Subtract Durability from any damage dealt to the object. Durability has no effect against attacks that deal aggravated damage.

Durability	Material
1	Wood, hard plastic, thick glass
2	Stone, aluminum
3	Steel, iron
+1	per reinforced layer

Size: How large the object is. Objects smaller than Size 1 can fit entirely in a person's palm.

Size	Object
1	Pistol
2	Crowbar, sawn-off shotgun
3	Assault rifle
5	Door
10	Sports car
15	SUV

Structure: An object's Structure is equivalent to its Health and equals its Durability + Size. Each point of damage removes a point of Structure. Once it's taken more damage than it has Durability, anyone using the object suffers a –1 die penalty. When its Structure hits 0, the object is destroyed. Objects do not differentiate between bashing and lethal damage and can be repaired with an appropriate Craft roll.

Disease

Outside of combat, a character who suffers from a disease suffers damage over a period of time. Resisting the damage inflicted by a disease requires a reflexive Stamina + Resolve roll. This roll is not contested but it is modified by the severity of the disease. Only one success is necessary to avoid damage each time.

Some diseases are the kinds that don't heal. A character's cancer could go into remission, or he can hold his HIV back with medication, but time alone won't cure him. The Storyteller should set a benchmark of how many rolls the character has to succeed at in a row for the disease to go into remission. Medical treatment can offset any penalties to the Stamina + Resolve roll applied by the disease — but might inflict penalties on other rolls, as sometimes the cure is almost as bad as the disease.

Drugs

A character who has taken drugs, willingly or not, must fight off the effects of the drug. Resisting the effects requires a reflexive Stamina + Resolve roll. This roll is not contested, but it is modified by the potency of the drug ingested. Only one success is necessary for a character to regain her senses. In the case of some drugs, this roll must be made once per hour, once per scene — or even once per turn, in the case of strong hallucinogens or narcotics.

Overdose

Characters who overdose on drugs treat the drug like a poison, with a Toxicity somewhere between 3 and 7. The overdose deals damage once per hour until the drug has run its course — if a character's spent 8 hours drinking, then the poison takes another 8 hours to fade, with Toxicity from 3 (beer or wine) to 5 (rubbing alcohol). A character who injects stronger heroin than expected takes damage for (8 – Stamina) hours, with Toxicity 7.

Electricity

Electricity is panacea to Prometheans, but deadly to mortals. If harm from electricity is more than just instantaneous — if there's a constant flow such as through power cables — a victim may not be able to escape. His muscles contract, which can prevent him from pulling away. Roll Strength as a reflexive action in each turn of contact. Failure means your character is still connected to the source and suffers its damage each turn until a successful roll is made.

Source	Damage
Minor	wall socket 4 (B)
Major	protective fence 6 (B)
Severe	junction box 8 (B)
Fatal	main line feed/subway rail 10 (B)

Worn armor provides no protection against electrocution.

Extreme Environments

The human body is not built to withstand extreme heat, cold, air pressure, and other harsh weather. These harsh conditions hinder and endanger unprepared characters. When exposed to an extreme environment, the Storyteller assigns a level to the environment using the associated chart as a guideline. Survival gear can reduce the effective environment level. Wastelands (p. 174) left to Fester become extreme environments.

While characters are exposed to these conditions, they suffer the level of the environment as a penalty to all actions. After a number of hours equal to the character's Stamina, he takes bashing damage equal to the environment's level once per hour. In the case of a Level 3 exposure, the damage is lethal instead of bashing. Level 4 environments cause lethal damage each *turn* after a number of turns equal to the character's Stamina.

Any damage caused by levels 2–4 exposure leaves lasting marks, scars, and tissue damage. Damage caused by extreme environments cannot be healed until the character is back in a safe environment.

Environment Levels

Level	Example Environs
1	Safe environment
2	Light snow, heavy storms; too cold to sleep safely; air pressure causes shortness of breath; sweltering sun can cause first-degree burns
3	Heavy snow; cold causes physical pain and potential hypothermia; sun quickly causes first-degree burns, can cause second-degree burns with time; minor radiation poisoning
4	Desert exposure; heat rapidly causing second-degree burns; moderate radiation exposure
5	Desert sandstorm, severe hurricane, tornado, tsunami

Falling

Your character tries to jump between buildings but doesn't make it. He tries to scale a ladder but someone above pushes it away from the wall. Perhaps your character is simply thrown from a height by a powerful opponent. Regardless of the reason, your character plummets and may be hurt on impact.

Falling damage is bashing, unless your character lands on a fence spike, or broken glass, or hits the ground at terminal velocity. A person suffers one point of bashing damage for every three yards fallen. Terminal velocity is achieved in a fall of 30 yards or more; damage is lethal at that point. If your character falls 30 yards, he loses 10 Health points to lethal damage.

Once your character reaches terminal velocity, the damage he suffers remains 10 Health no matter how far he actually falls. Thus, falls from 30 yards and 100 yards both inflict 10 lethal damage.

The Storyteller may allow armor to be subtracted automatically from damage taken, assuming it can absorb the kind of damage incurred, and if it makes sense. Generally speaking, no protective clothing helps once someone reaches terminal velocity.

The Storyteller may allow your character to try to break his fall by some means, perhaps by grabbing for awnings or twisting to strike soil rather than concrete. A single Dexterity + Athletics roll may be called for, with each success diminishing the damage. There may be a limit to how much damage can be shaved, though. There's only so much that desperate flailing and grabbing can do when someone falls from a significant height. Efforts to slow one's fall are usually useless at terminal velocity.

Falling into deep water, snow, or a pile of pillows might diminish damage taken automatically, if the Storyteller allows it. No such "soft" landing is possible once terminal velocity is achieved. At that speed, hitting water is like hitting concrete.

Fire

Fire automatically inflicts lethal damage per turn of exposure (no attack roll is required). The damage inflicted depends on both the size and intensity of the flames.

Size of Fire Damage

Torch	1
Bonfire	2
Inferno	3
Heat of Fire Damage Modifier	
Candle (first-degree burns)	–
Torch (second-degree burns)	+1
Bunsen burner (third-degree burns)	+2
Chemical fire/molten metal	+3

So, a fire the size of a bonfire (2) and with the intensity of a torch (+1) inflicts three damage per turn of contact.

In general, if exposure to fire persists for more than a turn, it catches anything combustible. A burning character continues to take full damage even if he escapes the original source of the flame. Depending on the accelerator involved, the size of a fire



can be reduced by one point per turn by such means as a hose or extinguisher. The Storyteller may rule that a fire goes out immediately under some circumstances (local oxygen is removed with a controlled explosion or your character is completely immersed in water). Or, a fire could continue to burn despite efforts to put it out, such as with a grease fire when water is poured on it.

Most armor can block its general rating in fire damage automatically for a number of turns equal to that rating.

Fire causes *aggravated* damage to Prometheans, not lethal.

Poison

Outside of combat, the victim of a poison or toxin suffers lethal damage over a period of time equal to the poison's Toxicity. Some substances deal this damage only once. Others deal this damage once per turn or once per hour until purged — or until the poison has run its course. To resist the damage, make a reflexive Stamina + Resolve – Toxicity roll. Each success reduces the damage taken by 1. This roll must be made every time the poison deals damage unless the character stops fighting and gives in.

Equipment

Here are some examples of the equipment you can buy with Resources.

Equipment, tools, and technology help to solve problems. Having the right tool for the job can mean the difference between life and death — or in the Chronicles of Darkness, the difference between life and a fate worse than death. This list is not all-inclusive, but features many of the tools that characters might have at their disposal.

Equipment is divided up by the Skills they typically assist with. Mental Equipment typically assists with Mental Skills, for example.

Availability and Procurement

The dot cost of a piece of equipment reflects directly on the Resources cost if your character wishes to purchase it (or the components, for some things). It also reflects the level of Allies or other Social Merit required in order to find the item and the Skill level required to procure it with a single dice roll. For example, if a Party Invitation has Cost •••, a character with Larceny •• should not be able to find and steal the item without a roll, but a character with Politics •••• might be able to get one by virtue of saying the right words to the right organization. If your character wishes to obtain higher Availability items with their Skills, doing so requires a deeper effort.

Size, Durability, and Structure

These are guidelines that represent common, standard examples of the items in question. For most items, characters could procure better examples at a higher Availability rating.

Dice Bonuses

Most equipment offers a bonus to dice rolls pertaining to its use. Multiple items can influence a given roll, but a roll should not receive more than a +5 bonus.

Game Effect

A character with the item can use these Effects. Any restrictions, costs, or parameters are listed individually.

Services

In addition to the equipment in this chapter, characters may look for services from other characters. Below is a list of some things characters may pursue. Each has an Availability rating that works identically to other equipment. This can act as a foundation for what certain levels of Allies, Status, and other Social Merits might accomplish. Most are sorted by Skills to reflect their general uses. Many include a die bonus as well. Assume most services take a week to procure at the listed Availability levels. Raise Availability by one to make that a day instead.

Note that some services listed could be highly illegal and should be limited in access to appropriate Merits. In many cases, illegal services only offer negligible die bonuses. Their real advantage comes from a layer of separation from legal authorities.

Mental Equipment

Mental equipment is all but essential for many character types. Mental Skills without the proper tools are almost useless in most cases. A doctor without medicine is hardly capable of healing, and an auto mechanic without a toolbox couldn't change even some minor belts on a car.

Automotive Tools

Basic (Kit): Die Bonus +1, Durability 2, Size 2, Structure 3, Availability •

Advanced (Garage): Die Bonus +2, Availability •

Effect: Automotive tools are a necessity for all but the simplest automobile repairs. Even then, a fully stocked garage with heavy equipment is required for more involved tasks such as engine or transmission replacement. If time is not a factor, any trained character with a Crafts Automotive Specialty can repair a vehicle's mundane issues without rolls. Complex modifications and enhancements or massive damage always requires a greater effort (an extended Intelligence + Crafts roll) to work out.

Cache

Die Bonus +1 to +3, Durability 2, Size 1–5, Structure 5, Availability • to •••

Effect: A cache is a hidden and defensible place for items, usually weapons. It keeps important items from prying eyes. A cache can never be more than half the Size of its parent object. For example, a Size 6 car can support nothing larger than a Size 3 cache. A given cache can

Services

Service	Availability	Die Bonus
ACADEMICS		
Historical specialist consulting	•••	+3
Research assistance from grad students	••	+2
Translation of a dead language	•••	+2
COMPUTER		
Custom phone application	•••	+2
Digital image enhancement	••	+3
Graphic design/forgery	••	+2
CRAFTS		
Antiquities restoration	•••	+2
Auto repair	••	+3
Custom equipment modifications	•••	+2
INVESTIGATION		
Consultation on evidence	•••	+3
Investigative photography	•••	+2
Private investigation/ background check	••	+2
MEDICINE		
Black market surgeon	••••	+3
Expert medical witness	••••	+2
Rush plastic surgery	••••	+2
OCCULT		
Esoteric consultant/sage	••••	+3
Exorcist	•••	+2
Protective amulets or wards	••••	+1
POLITICS		
Campaign assistant	•••	+3
Cutting red tape (read: bribe)	•••	+2
Spin doctor	•••	+2
SCIENCE		
Fact-checking	••	+3
Falsifying research/coverup	•••	+2
Lab access	••	+2
ATHLETICS		
Meditative assistance	•••	+2
Personal trainer	•••	+3
Throwing an athletic competition	••••	+4

Service	Availability	Die Bonus
BRAWL		
Arrange underground boxing ring	•••	+2
Bodyguard service	•••	+3
Self-defense classes	•	+1
DRIVE		
Chauffer	••	+2
Stunt performance/ mock crash	•••	+3
Tour bus rental	••••	+2
FIREARMS		
Antique gun repair	•••	+2
Cover fire from gangs	•••	+3
Procuring smuggled military arms	••••	+2
LARCENY		
Breaking and entering	•••	+2
Security consulting	•••	+2
Stealing a protected relic	••••	+3
STEALTH		
Strategic distraction	•••	+3
Tailing a suspect	•••	+2
Targeted vandalism	••	+2
SURVIVAL		
Field dress and preserve an animal	•••	+1
Trail guide	••	+3
Weatherproof a shelter	••	+2
WEAPONRY		
Properly forged sword	•••	+2
Identify wound from obscure weapon	•••	+2
Training in archaic warfare	•••	+2
ANIMAL KEN		
Buy a trained animal	•••	+2
Identify animal droppings	••	+1
Rule out natural causes of death	•••	+2
EMPATHY		
"Good cop" interrogator	•••	+2
Neutral arbitrator	•••	+2
Therapy session	••	+1

Services (Continued)

Service	Availability	Die Bonus
EXPRESSION		
Document forgery	•••	+3
Ghostwriting	••	+2
Motivational speech	•••	+1
INTIMIDATION		
Anti-interrogation training	••••	+3
"Bad cop" interrogator	•••	+2
Deprogramming therapy	•••	+2
PERSUASION		
Defense attorney	•••	+3
Hostage negotiator	••••	+3
Pickup artist	•••	+2
SOCIALIZE		
Catering	••• or ••••	+1 or +2
Elocution consulting	•••	+1
Escort	•••	+2
STREETWISE		
Arrange a rave or block party	•••	+2
Black market access	••	+2
Find crash space	••	+1
Smuggling contraband	•••	+1
SUBTERFUGE		
Amateur Actor/Actress	••	+2
Con artistry	•••	+2
Gambling ringer	•••	+2

hold two items of its Size and any reasonable number of smaller-sized items. Its Availability determines its die bonus, which both adds to concealment rolls and subtracts from rolls to find the items within.

Communications Headset

Die Bonus +2, Durability 0, Size 1, Structure 1, Availability ••

Effect: Communications headsets keep characters in constant contact. Different varieties work over different distances, but most commercial models work over about 200 feet. A common alternative is a conference call between cellular phones and Bluetooth headsets. If the users have practiced using their headsets together, they gain the die bonus on any coordinated efforts. In the case of a teamwork action, the die bonus only applies to the final roll. If the users are unpracticed, the bonus falls to +1 and actors must make reflexive Wits + Composure rolls to participate successfully.

Any heavy objects can obstruct a headset's signal. Anything obstructing with Durability higher than 3 requires listeners to make a Wits + Composure roll to understand shared messages. Levy a –1 penalty for each point of Durability over 4.

Crime Scene Kit

Die Bonus +2, Durability 2, Size 3, Structure 2, Availability ••

Effect: A crime scene (or CSI) kit is a toolbox full of investigative aids such as magnifiers, fingerprinting dust, cameras, tape, testing chemicals, and sample bags. While the kits offer a die bonus to Investigation rolls, the more important benefit of the CSI kit is that it allows evidence to be moved and digested elsewhere. Properly applied, it allows investigators to do the bulk of their work off-site and at their own pace.

Code Kit

Die Bonus +5, Durability 1, Size 2, Structure 1, Availability •

Effect: A code kit is a series of tools created for the purpose of making and interpreting a code for a specific audience. A common example is a book code, where a page, paragraph, and word from a certain book are used as the foundation for a cypher. This keeps any uninformed eyes off the intended message. In the case of a book code, a book is often chosen that all message recipients can access easily. This guarantees that the code never has to travel with the code key.

A successfully designed cypher is difficult to break. The die bonus acts as a penalty to any rolls to crack the code without the necessary reference key.

Cracking Software

Die Bonus +2, Durability N/A, Size N/A, Structure N/A, Availability •••

Effect: Crappy software's a dime a dozen. Good, reliable cracking software is hard to come by. With solid software, a hacker can force passwords, breach firewalls, and otherwise be a nuisance in computer systems. Beyond the dice pool modification, the benefit such software offers is a sort of buffer between the hacker and security. Any effort to track the hacker takes two steps: one to identify the software, then one to trace it back to the source. Functionally this means two rolls on behalf of the security personnel, with an opportunity for the hacker to withdraw before detection.

Digital Recorder

Die Bonus +1 or +2, Durability 1, Size 1, Structure 2, Availability • or ••

Effect: In the last decade, digital audio recorders have gotten smaller, more effective, and more affordable. Now, any student can carry a coin-sized device that would have put intelligence agencies of the 1980s to shame. The cheaper model of recorder gives its +1 bonus to any rolls to catch words or sounds. The bonus also applies to concealment rolls. The more expensive model gives +2. With an

Intelligence + Computer (with die bonus), a character can contest any rolls to obscure discussion or mask noises.

Duct Tape

Die Bonus +1, Durability 1, Size 1, Structure 2, Availability •

Effect: Duct tape has as many uses as one can think of, and just as many you never would. It can reinforce barricades, stabilize weapon handles, bind prisoners, repair broken pipes, and so much more. In most cases, duct tape can offer a +1 bonus to Crafts-related rolls. Alternatively, it can add a point of Durability to almost anything. If used as a restraint, rolls to break free suffer a –3 penalty, and must overcome the duct tape's Structure.

First-Aid Kit

Die Bonus 0 or +1, Durability 1, Size 2, Structure 3, Availability • or ••

Effect: A first-aid kit contains all the necessary supplies to stabilize an injury and stop wounds from getting worse until the victim can find proper treatment. The one-dot version of the first-aid kit does not offer a die bonus; it simply allows for treatment. The two-dot version offers a +1 to treatment rolls due to superior supplies.

Flashlight

Die Bonus +1, Durability 2, Size 1, Structure 3, Availability •

Effect: In a world full of darkness, a flashlight can be a person's best friend. It generally does what it's supposed to; it helps cut a path through the unknown. Its die bonus subtracts from any penalties due to darkness, and adds to any rolls to search in the dark. A good flashlight can serve as a club in a pinch. It can also blind an unfortunate subject. A Dexterity + Athletics roll, subtracting an informed opponent's Defense, will put the beam where it needs to be. The victim's player may make a contested Stamina roll. If your character scores more successes than the subject, they're blinded for one turn. Victims with especially acute senses are blinded for two turns.

Glowstick

Die Bonus +2, Durability 1, Size 1, Structure 1, Availability •

Effect: Glowsticks use a chemical mixture to summon forth enough light to see in a small area. Most commercial glowsticks last a couple of hours; police and other professional varieties can last twelve. Because they're small, airtight containers, they serve the added benefit of being useful underwater or in the rain. Functionally, they work the same as a flashlight. They cannot be used to blind a target, however, since their soft glow is far less obtrusive than a flashlight's beam. They're also very conveniently worn, which can serve strategic purposes for a group operating in low-light conditions. A member will not go missing without being noticed so long as they have a glowing neon bar on their belt.

GPS Tracker

Die Bonus +3, Durability 2, Size 2, Structure 2, Availability ••

Effect: With the advent of the modern cellular phone, most modern people have a GPS-enabled device on their person at any given time. With a bit of know-how and access to someone's phone, your character can track their every move (provided those moves are not in caves, tunnels, or sewer systems). Some characters will trade GPS data in case one of the group becomes lost or if they have to follow someone without notice. Planting a phone on an unwitting subject can serve as a highly effective tracking device.

Keylogging Software

Die Bonus +2, Durability N/A, Size N/A, Structure N/A, Availability ••

Effect: Keylogging software does exactly one thing: it logs keystrokes on a computer. This is usually done to record incriminating data or passwords. Usually, keylogging software is coupled with software to transmit the data once captured. The challenge for the would-be intruder is installing the software. Email scams are an unreliable way to get onto a specific computer, but could fool one member of a large organization. A thumb drive is very effective, but requires direct, physical access to the recipient computer. The software's die bonus offers an advantage to breach a network or to find important data.

Luminol

Die Bonus +2, Durability 0, Size 1, Structure 1, Availability •

Effect: Luminol is a chemical that reacts to certain metals in human blood and other bodily fluids. The reaction causes a faint neon glow for about thirty seconds, visible in the dark. It comes in an aerosol can and will seek out faint traces, even after a thorough cleaning. In addition to showing the exact locations of violent crimes, luminol can assist in tracking wounded people and animals. Luminol's die bonus applies to any roll to track by the fluid traces, or to piece together the details of a crime scene.

Multi-Tool

Die Bonus +1, Durability 3, Size 1, Structure 4, Availability •

Effect: Sometimes, the need for mobility doesn't allow for your character to carry around a full tool kit. In these cases, a multi-tool can be a lifesaver. From sawing to stripping wires, to opening bottles, to filing off serial numbers, a multi-tool can do the job in a pinch. The multi-tool offers a negligible die bonus on numerous Crafts and other assorted tasks, and most importantly, allows for rolls when sometimes they couldn't be made for lack of proper equipment. While not made for use as a weapon, it can serve as one, causing 0 lethal but suffering a –1 penalty to hit.

Personal Computer

Die Bonus +1 to +4, Durability 2, Size 3, Structure 2, Availability • to ••••

Effect: In the developed world, almost every household has access to a personal computer. They can vary in size, functionality, and price, from decade-old models that barely surf the web to high-end machines that process gigabytes of data per second. In today's world, many lives revolve around computers. For some people, their entire careers and personal lives exist within digital space. The Availability rating of the computer determines its die bonus.

Smartphones

Die Bonus +1 to +2, Durability 2, Size 1, Structure 1, Availability • to •••

Effect: By themselves, smartphones can make calls, send text messages and emails, take pictures, maintain an agenda, and search the web. With a bit of software, the Smartphone becomes the multi-tool of the electronic age. While it cannot accomplish the raw computing power of a full-sized personal computer, higher-end smartphones can manage almost all the same tasks with ease.

Most major gadgets have been successfully replicated with smartphone applications. GPS scanning and tracking are staples of the amateur investigator. Facial recognition software finds a face in a crowd with relative accuracy. They can photograph and transcribe text, then translate ancient tomes. They can store a library's worth of text and allow for automated searches. They offer directions with photographic assistance. Even the value of a mindless video game on a stakeout is often underestimated.

Special Effects

Die Bonus +2, Durability 2, Size 5, Structure 3, Availability •••

Effect: Special effects is a catch-all term for the tricks and chicanery used by amusement parks and stage magicians to fool witnesses. A character may use these as a distraction or a defense. For example, the Pepper's Ghost illusion is relatively easy to set up with the right tools. It uses a large mirror and a sheet of glass, along with a model and a light source. It projects an illusion of the model's reflection and makes witnesses see a "ghost."

In addition to the die bonus, special effects generally fool their audience at first. A witness will fall for the trick unless given good reason to be suspicious. This can waste valuable time or lead the witness into a trap.

Surveillance Equipment

Die Bonus +2, Durability 2, Size 2, Structure 2, Availability •••

Effect: Standard surveillance equipment usually consists of motion detectors, cameras, and monitors. High-end versions may include infrared heat sensors, barometric scanners, or even more complex gear. Either way, the point of surveillance equipment is to survey, detect, and otherwise track who enters or leaves a location. Often, this also means locking down breached zones. Unless someone knows surveillance equipment exists and actively avoids it, his presence is noticed and recorded. If he tries to avoid it, contest his Dexterity + Stealth against the installing technician's Intelligence + Computer or Intelligence + Crafts (for digital and analog systems, respectively). The technician may add the equipment's die bonus. If the intruder scores more successes, he remains unnoticed. Otherwise, he goes on record.

Survival Gear

Die Bonus +1 or +2, Durability 2, Size 2 or 3, Structure 3, Availability • or •••

Effect: Survival gear is the catch-all term for the various kits of equipment needed to survive in harsh environments. This could encompass tents, canned foodstuff, raingear, sleeping bags, sterile water, or any of the various things a person can use to survive the world outside their cushy homes. They come in two levels: a basic level and an advanced level. The basic level offers +1 and subtracts one from the effective level of environment (see Extreme Environments, p. 212), while the advanced offers +2 and subtracts two from the effective environment level. This does not help with a Level 4 environment. A resourceful character can rig or scavenge the necessary supplies for basic survival gear, but an advanced set of gear requires very specialized equipment. Basic survival gear can assist with most any environment, but advanced survival gear must target one particular type of environment.

Talcum Powder

Die Bonus +2, Durability N/A, Size 1, Structure N/A, Availability •

Effect: Talcum powder can keep a baby's bottom from getting diaper rash, but it can also show the presence of the unseen or evidence of intrusion if placed at a portal of entry. If an entrance is dusted with talcum powder, a character must achieve five successes on a Dexterity + Stealth roll to enter without a trace. Fewer successes will only obscure the specifics of their feet and hands. Some paranormal investigators use talcum powder as a way to give ghosts and other invisible entities a method for communication.

Ultraviolet Ink

Die Bonus +2, Durability 1, Size 1, Structure 2, Availability •

Effect: Ultraviolet Ink, or invisible ink as it's commonly called, is an outstanding way to relay messages in plain sight. Since the naked eye cannot perceive the ink without an ultraviolet light, a character can scrawl messages for other recipients in the know. It also allows for secretive information to be passed around through mundane channels. If nefarious forces are surveying someone, an ultraviolet message scribbled on a throwaway magazine is much easier to get into their home unmolested than, say, a suspicious letter slid through their doorframe. If you need to mark a path to a secret hiding place, what better way to conceal the guiding marks?

Physical Equipment

Physical equipment enhances the use of Physical Skills. This often means the use of simple and complex machines to make things easier, or tricks to heighten the effectiveness of a character's inherent talents.

Battering Ram

Die Bonus +4, Durability 3, Size 4, Structure 8, Availability ••

Effect: The purpose of the battering ram is to bring down doors and other barricades with direct, focused force. A battering ram uses a Teamwork action (see p. 202), allowing up to four participants. The primary actor adds the ram's die bonus to her roll. A ram ignores two points of Durability.

Bear Trap

Die Bonus +2, Durability 3, Size 2, Structure 5, Availability ••

Effect: A bear trap is a large metal contraption that looks something like a set of deadly jaws. For this reason, they're also commonly called jaw traps. When a human or large animal steps into the bear

trap, it snaps shut on their leg. Due to the serrated edges on the trap, this can cause massive bleeding or even broken bones.

The jaw trap causes 3L damage and ignores two points of armor or Durability. A character trapped in the jaws can attempt to escape as an instant action. Doing so requires a Strength + Stamina roll, with the trap's die bonus as a penalty due to the distracting pain and the strength of the jaws. Failure on this roll causes another point of lethal damage as the jaw digs in further. Creatures without opposable thumbs cannot escape this way and must rip themselves free.

Any rolls to hide a bear trap suffer its die bonus as a penalty. They're difficult to hide due to their awkward shape and weight.

Caltrops

Die Bonus +2, Durability 2, Size 2, Structure 3, Availability ••

Effect: Caltrops are small, pointed pieces of metal, arranged in such a way that one point is always facing upward. This makes walking (or driving) through a patch of caltrops inconvenient and painful. These traits assume enough caltrops to fill a doorway or other narrow corridor.

Moving through caltrops causes one point of lethal damage. Caltrops ignore a point of armor or Durability. To move through safely, a Dexterity + Athletics roll is required with the caltrops' die bonus applied as a penalty to the roll. A character may only move half Speed (rounded down) while moving safely through caltrops.

A character may hide caltrops, although it is difficult. A Wits + Larceny – 3 roll is required; the caltrops' die bonus does not apply to this roll.

Camouflage Clothing

Die Bonus +2, Durability 1, Size 2, Structure 3, Availability ••

Effect: Camouflage clothing allows its wearer to blend in sufficiently with her surroundings that for the untrained eye to pass over her completely. Effective camouflage must be catered to the environment; greens and browns in the woodlands, shades of grey in an urban area. Proper camouflage adds its bonus to rolls to remain unnoticed.

Climbing Gear

Die Bonus +2, Durability 3, Size 2, Structure 2, Availability ••

Effect: Climbing gear includes ropes, pulleys, handles, carabiners, hooks, and other assorted tools for scaling things. They serve a twofold purpose. First, they add their die bonus to the normal Strength + Athletics rolls for climbing. Second, if properly applied (with a Wits + Athletics roll), they prevent a character from falling more than ten feet at a time.

Crowbar

Die Bonus +2, Durability 3, Size 2, Structure 4, Availability •

Effect: A crowbar is a curved piece of steel used to pry open shipping pallets, jammed doors, and other things a normal person would be incapable of doing by hand. It adds to any dice rolls used to establish leverage. When prying things open, it allows your character to ignore two points of Durability on the lock or barricade. A crowbar can also be used as a weapon (see p. 209).

Firearm Suppressor

Die Bonus +2, Durability 2, Size 1, Structure 2, Availability ••

Effect: A firearm suppressor is popularly and misleadingly referred to as a silencer in cinema and other media. It's a cylinder placed on the end of a gun barrel that changes and lightens the sound of a shot. A suppressor delivers many minor benefits, but offers two noteworthy advantages: short-range accuracy and concealment.

Increased Accuracy: A suppressed firearm travels through a longer barrel and the muzzle crown evens the expulsion of hot gasses that can slightly affect trajectory. In game terms, reduce a suppressed gun's damage rating by 1 due to the bullet's subsonic flight, but increase the attack dice pool by 2 when firing at short range.

Position Concealer: The sound changes dramatically, to the point where many people do not recognize the sound as that of a gunshot and are often unable to place where the lower tone came from. The muzzle flash is also reduced dramatically with a suppressor, helping to conceal a shooter's position. A character trying to identify a suppressed shot must roll Wits + Firearms – 2. Any character searching for the shooter using the gun's tells suffers a –2 penalty.

Gas Mask

Die Bonus +5, Durability 1, Size 2, Structure 3, Availability ••

Effect: A gas mask is a filtration device placed over the face that defends against noxious chemicals in the air. With a working gas mask, a character can stand minor toxins for as long as he needs, whereas other characters might take damage over time or require rolls to remain conscious. Powerful toxins may still require rolls. A gas mask adds five dice to these rolls.

Handcuffs

Die Bonus +2, Durability 4, Size 1, Structure 4, Availability •

Effect: A solid pair of steel handcuffs is made to restrain even a remarkably strong person. Applying handcuffs to an unwilling combatant is an additional option in a grapple. Roll Strength + Brawl – the opponent's Strength. Success means the handcuffs are where they need to be.

Breaking out of successfully applied handcuffs requires a Strength + Stamina – 4 roll. Each success on the roll reduces the Structure of the cuffs by 1. Cuffs reduced to 0 Structure snap open. Each attempt to escape causes 1 point of bashing damage.

A character may also try to finagle their hands out of the cuffs. This requires a Dexterity + Athletics – 4 roll. Success allows for an escape, and causes one point of bashing damage. Failure on this roll causes one point of lethal damage, as the thumb jerks out of socket.

Attempting to do anything requiring manual dexterity while cuffed incurs a –4 penalty, or –2 if the hands are cuffed in front. Witnesses are unlikely to behave favorably around a cuffed character, Social rolls against strangers incur a –3 penalty.

Many police forces and security companies now prefer heavy-duty plastic zip ties in place of handcuffs. While they're slightly less durable (Durability 3), they incur a –5 penalty from behind or –3 from the front, because they can be far tighter on the wrists. They can also be cut free.

Lockpicking Kit

Die Bonus +2, Durability 2, Size 2, Structure 2, Availability ••

Effect: A lockpicking kit consists of picks, tools, and rods for manipulating tumblers and opening locks. A good kit contains a wide array of tools to all but guarantee intrusion of an analog lock. With such a kit and at least a dot of Larceny, a character can pick a lock without a roll if time is not an issue. If time is an issue, the die bonus applies to the Dexterity + Larceny rolls. At Availability •, a character may procure a portable lockpick. It has Size 1, Structure 1, and is far more concealable. However, it only offers a +1 bonus and doesn't allow for picking without rolls since the kit realistically may not have the right tools for a given job.

A lockpicking kit only works on mechanical locks. Digital locks require more specific hacking and code prediction. A character may procure a digital lockpick at Availability •••, but typically only works on one type of lock, such as the keycard locks used in hotels. Digital lockpicks can be Size 2, or Size 1 if crafted as an extension of a laptop computer or smartphone.

Mace (Pepper Spray)

Die Bonus +1, Durability 2, Size 1, Structure 1, Availability •

Effect: Pepper spray, or "mace" as it's commonly called, is a blend of chemicals (mostly capsaicin, the "hot" part of a chile pepper) in a small spray can, designed to debilitate threats. Civilians use these devices in self-defense; police use them to subdue unruly criminals. Use of pepper spray requires a Dexterity + Athletics, or Dexterity + Firearms roll. Each yard is a range category, so one yard is short range, two yards is medium, three yards is long range. An opponent's Defense applies, but in normal wind conditions, the die bonus applies to the roll.

Upon the first attack, the victim suffers the Stunned Tilt (see p. 318). Someone affected by the spray suffers a –5 penalty to all actions. This penalty can be reduced by 1 for every turn spent rinsing the eyes with water. Commercial chemicals designed to cleanse the eyes will fully remove the penalty after a turn.

Rope

Die Bonus +1, Durability 2, Size 3, Structure 2, Availability •

Effect: Rope is one of the oldest tools known to humankind. It's never left prominent use because of its simple, efficient utility. A good rope adds its die bonus to relevant Crafts rolls and anywhere else it would assist. As a binding agent, it resists breaking with Durability (or effective Strength) equal to its user's Crafts score, due to the multiplicative effect of solid knots. An applicable Specialty adds one to the user's Crafts score for this purpose. Some interrogators, shibari fetishists, and boy scouts alike specialize in remarkable knot-tying, potentially rendering subjects completely and hopelessly immobile.

Stun Gun

Die Bonus 0, Durability 2, Size 1, Structure 2, Availability •, ••, or •••

Effect: A stun gun is designed to deliver an overwhelming amount of electricity to an assailant in order to shut down her muscles and send her to the ground. As a defensive item, this gives the would-be victim time to run or get help. As an offensive item, it leaves the victim ready for restraint or worse.

These devices come in two varieties (hand-held and ranged) and three intensities (1–3, corresponding to their Availabilities). The hand-held model has live leads on the edge of a handle and can be used as many as fifty times on one battery charge. The ranged model fires small wired darts up to fifteen feet away. While the ranged model has similar battery life, it uses a compressed air cartridge that must be replaced after each shot.

Use of a handheld stun gun requires a Dexterity + Weaponry roll, penalized by the victim's Defense. The ranged model uses Dexterity + Firearms, also penalized by the victim's Defense. On a successful hit with either, the victim takes one point of lethal damage. The successes subtract from the victim's next dice pool. With the ranged version, the darts remain in the victim's body, adding three successes automatically each turn. They can be removed with a Strength + Stamina roll, with the initial successes penalizing the action. With the hand-held version, the attacker can attempt to maintain the shock, which takes a Strength + Weaponry, penalized by the greater of the opponent's Strength or Defense. Once the accumulated successes exceed the victim's Size, the victim collapses in neuro-muscular incapacitation. Once the shock ends, this lasts for (10 – victim's Stamina) in turns.

Social Equipment

Social actions deal with people. Social Equipment offers tools for leverage, influence, and manipulation.

Cash

Die Bonus +1 to +5, Durability 1, Size 2, Structure 1, Availability • to •••••

Effect: This represents a wad of cash, a briefcase of money, an offshore bank account number, or some other lump sum. It can't be reflected in the Resources Merit since it's not a regular income. However, it can be expended to offer a bonus equivalent to its Availability on any social roll where a bribe could benefit. It can also be expended to purchase one item of equal Availability. For more complex uses, consider it a single month's allotment of the same Resources.

Disguise

Die Bonus +1 to +3, Durability 1, Size 3, Structure 2, Availability • to •••

Effect: A good disguise goes a long way to help fit in with a strange group or go unnoticed in a crowd where one doesn't belong. Properly costumed for a situation, no rolls are required to blend into the crowd. Any rolls to actively detect the outsider suffer a penalty equal to the die bonus of the disguise; the disguised character also gains the bonus to remain hidden.

With a disguise, a character can emulate the first dot of a single Social Merit that would make sense within the scope of the scene. For example, it doesn't make money appear from thin air, but it would allow a character to get their drinks on a nonexistent tab, reflecting Resources •. This requires a Composure + Subterfuge to maintain in the face of anyone in the know, contested by the witness's Wits + Subterfuge. The die bonus of the disguise applies to the liar, but does not affect the witness.

Fashion

Die Bonus +1 to +3, Durability 1, Size 2, Structure 1, Availability • to •••••

Effect: Never underestimate the value of high fashion. Like a disguise, fashionable clothing allows a character to fit in. However, the point of fashion is to draw attention, not to fade into the crowd. As opposed to anonymity, fashion means being noticed. Note that the clothing chosen must be appropriate to the setting. Punk chic will not work at a Senator's fundraiser, for example. When improperly dressed, the die bonus applies as a penalty to all Social Skill rolls. The die bonus for Fashion is equal to half the Availability rating, rounded up.

Ephemeral Beings: Ghosts, Spirits, and Angels

Humanity isn't alone. It shares the Chronicles of Darkness with innumerable entities that are lurking invisible and intangible in a Twilight state, waiting for the right conditions to arise. When an area becomes tainted by the touch of death; when the wall between the world and the terrible, hungry Shadow of animist spirits grows thin; when people begin to see the gears of the God-Machine: these are the times when the ghosts, spirits and angels around us can manifest, interact, and further their alien goals. All of them want something from humanity — memories, obedience, emotion...even bodies. Sometimes, humanity fights back.

Invisible Incursions

The physical world of the Chronicles of Darkness borders on multiple realms, each with its own peculiar laws. The inhabitants of those realms aren't material beings. Although many are intelligent and self-aware, their thoughts are alien to humans. Mortal investigators almost never see the worlds these beings come from with their own eyes, for which they should be grateful. Everything occultists have been able to learn about the animistic Shadow World and the chthonian deep of the Underworld paints both realms as deadly and teeming with "natives." The enigmatic servant-angels of the God-Machine might come from such a realm, or might be created within the world by the processes and Infrastructure they serve. No one knows for sure.

Whether the beings are fleeing the dangers of their home realm, avoiding banishment to it, summoned from their home by mortal occultists, sent as agents by more powerful members of their own kind, or forced to cross over to complete a mission by the God-Machine, most encounters between characters and ephemeral beings take place in the physical world, where characters have the home-ground advantage.

Manifestation and Possession

Instead of bodies formed of flesh and bone, ephemeral beings are made up of spiritual matter called ephemera, which comes in several varieties. These substances are both invisible and intangible to anything not comprised of the same sort of ephemera — ghosts can see and touch one another, but are invisible to most living people and don't interact with solid objects or even other ephemeral beings that aren't ghosts. Spirits happily float through walls and pass through ghosts without even noticing them, and are incapable of interacting with people without help.

Almost every ephemeral being has the ability to *Manifest* — to make its presence known and to affect the physical world, ranging from remaining invisible but using powers, appearing as insubstantial but visible images, or even possessing a victim, sending his soul into hibernation and warping the commandeered body to suit their own uses. Some are more skilled at it than others (those so weak they can't Manifest at all are essentially impotent in the physical world and don't interact with humans), but all require certain appropriate conditions before they can use these powers.

An ephemeral being that wants to shift into physical form or to inhabit an object, animal, or person requires the specified area, item, or character to be prepared for it to successfully Manifest. Ghosts require Anchors — places, objects and people that are linked to their living days and reinforce their failing identities. Angels can only appear in the world when enough Infrastructure has been laid out by the God-Machine. Spirits need the emotional resonance of the area or victim-host to match their own.

The more powerful the Manifestation, the stronger the Condition needed is. The most powerful physical forms and tightly-held victims are the result of careful husbandry by the Manifesting being, slowly building up the necessary Condition by leveraging whatever Manifestation they can produce at first. Unless Conditions are very strong or the possessing entity extremely powerful, a human being falling victim to a possession is first urged to follow the entity's wishes instead of his own, then later forced to do its bidding, and only then physically mutated into a bizarre amalgamation of nature and supernatural power.

Summoning or exorcising entities from locations or Possession, then, is a matter of creating or destroying the appropriate setting for the creature, preferably near to a place it can cross over from or to its native realm. Most entities waste away as though starving outside of the needed Conditions, so breaking those Conditions is a sure-fire way of forcing the being to abandon its attempt at Manifestation and send it fleeing toward either a way "home" or another appropriate vessel. Cultists wanting to summon entities attempt to ritually create appropriate Conditions near to a crossing-point, or offer up a suitable vessel in the hope that the right sort of ephemeral being will accept the gift. In the case of angels, most participants in a "summoning" never realize the significance of their actions —the God-Machine moves pawns and machinery around until an angel is brought forth.

Ghosts

Echoes of the Dead

When human beings die, especially in a sudden or traumatic fashion, they sometimes leave parts of themselves behind. Ranging from broken, animated after-images unable to do anything but re-enact their death, to intelligent, malevolent once-human spirits with power over whatever kind of calamity killed them, the Chronicles of Darkness teem with vast numbers of the restless dead. More ghosts exist than any other supernatural creature, but the truly powerful independent specters of legend are rare.

The majority of ghosts are poor at influencing the world, trapped in their insubstantial state and unable to even Manifest; they are noticed only as a strange chill or eerie vibe, if the living sense them at all. Ghosts are drawn to places and people that they had emotional connections to in life — these things anchor the ghost in the world and allow those that have enough power to Manifest, whereupon they carry out whatever mad urges they still feel and attempt to further the goals they left undone in life.

Ghosts feed on Essence, a spiritual energy created by memory and emotion that builds up in their Anchors and is fed directly to them when they are remembered by the living. Ghosts that lose their Anchors and can't transfer their attachment fade from the world, passing over to a dread realm filled with all the orphaned Ghosts that have gone before. This realm has many names in occult writings: Tartarus, the Great Below, the Land of the Dead, the Dominions, or simply the Underworld.

The living seldom visit the Underworld, though mediums and death-obsessed mystery cults all over the world teach that gateways leading there are more common than supposed. Its doors exist in the same Twilight state as ghosts themselves, invisible and unnoticed by the living. Tales of living occultists who learned the right places and the proper ceremonies to open the gates of death describe the Underworld as a chthonian hell of passageways, tunnels and caverns, all filled with desperate ghosts that lost their grip on the world.

The Underworld sustains the dead, allowing them more freedom to move and act than the living world, but also imprisons them. Once there, ghosts may increase in power and influence, evolving beyond the image of the person they were into twisted rulers of dead kingdoms or sponsors and advocates of particular forms of death. If summoned back to the physical world or allowed to escape the Underworld by chance conditions, a ghost that has spent centuries growing stronger can wreak havoc until exorcised.

Spirits

Warped Reflections

Animist religions describe the world as being full of spirits, with every object, animal, and place hiding a spirit within it. They're partly right; everything in the Chronicles of Darkness apart from humans *does* cast a spiritual reflection, even transitory events and strong emotions, but all spirits apart from the cunning or a powerful few are confined to a world of their own. Separated from the physical world by a barrier known to knowledgeable occultists



as the Gauntlet, the spirit — or *Shadow* — world is a murky reflection of the physical. Its geography is (mostly) the same as the physical world, but places appear twisted to reflect their inner truth rather than showing an exact physical representation.

Spirits come into being alongside the thing they're a reflection of, but are dormant, barely-living, tiny lumps of ephemera at first. As well as creating new spirits, actions in the physical world and any emotions associated with them create Essence in the physical world, some of which crosses over into the Shadow. If enough Essence is created around an embryonic spirit, it becomes roused into activity. By absorbing Essence, the spirit remains active. By consuming other spirits, it merges those spirits into itself and grows larger and more powerful. Spirits war on each other for survival everywhere.

As spirits become more powerful, they become less pure as reflections of their origins and more thematic in nature. For example, the spirit of a single owl grows by consuming other owl-spirits. As it consumes spirits of night, hunting, the prey its owl eats, and other owl-spirits, the spirit subtly changes. By the time it becomes an independent, thinking being that no longer follows around the physical creature that created it, it has warped into an exaggerated spirit of silent nocturnal hunting. The Essence it consumes also has an effect — an owl-spirit evolving in an urban area feeds on different Essence to one in the countryside, and its appearance is colored by its diet.

When mortal characters encounter spirits, something has gone wrong. Some spirits are capable of using their powers through the Gauntlet and, as their self-awareness grows with power, decide to create food sources for themselves by influencing what sort of spirits and Essence will be created around them. The true culprit behind an unusual pattern of domestic murders, for example, might be a murder-spirit using its abilities to heighten arguments to homicide.

The spirits that mortal investigators encounter in the physical world are refugees and escapees: those that cross the Gauntlet to flee the constant risk of being killed and absorbed by larger spirits. They constantly strive to maintain their Essence, desperate to avoid returning to their own world. Without an easy source of Essence, spirits must anchor themselves like ghosts, finding an object or person that reflects their nature and tying their ephemeral bodies to them. The spirit remains intangible — and is often actually "inside" the host — but is safe from starvation as long as the host generates enough Essence to feed it. By influencing the host or humans interacting with a material host to more closely reflect its nature, the spirit gets a ready supply of Essence and may move on to more permanent forms of possession. Many items thought of as having "wills of their own" or as being cursed are actually house spirits.

Angels

Functions of the God-Machine

Unlike ghosts, who feed from being remembered and struggle to maintain their grip on the world, and spirits who flee their own Darwinian hell to carve a foothold in material reality, angels are both temporary visitors to the mortal realm and its only true "natives" among ephemeral beings. The God-Machine isn't some far-off thing lurking in a distant dimension; it's here, in the material world, built from mechanisms hidden from sight by guile and magic.

Other Entities

The ghosts, spirits, and angels presented here aren't the only ephemeral entities to exist. The various Chronicles of Darkness games have used the spirit rules updated in this section to represent many different beings, from the inhabitants of an astral world visited by mages to demonic owls made of smoke with a strange connection to vampires.

Just as ghosts, spirits, and angels are slightly different, adapting these beings to use the rules here involves setting out both where they follow these rules and where they don't. Future chronicle books may detail ephemeral entities particular to those chronicles.

When cultists summon a spirit, it journeys from the Shadow. When an angel is needed, the God-Machine is as likely to build the angel right there as to direct an existing one to journey to the site. When angels *are* reused, they spend the downtime "resting" in storage facilities hidden by the very deepest Infrastructure. Sometimes, cultists and prying outsiders who witness the gears catch glimpses of these facilities — cavernous chambers folded neatly into impossible spaces, filled with hydraulics, gears, and the hissing of machines surrounding the angels while keeping them fed with Essence. They're always guarded.

Being essentially tools designed by an intelligent if unknowable creator to fulfill specific functions, angels are far more specialized than spirits or ghosts. They're also usually more subtle and able to go unnoticed even when Manifested, but are extremely single-minded, aiming to complete the task they've been sent for and then vanish.

Game Systems

Ghosts, spirits and angels share a broad set of rules with minor variations to cover situations such as spirits reaching across the Gauntlet.

The State of Twilight

Unless they Manifest or use a power to appear, ephemeral beings remain in their insubstantial state when in the material world. This state is described as "Twilight." To beings in Twilight, physical objects appear pale and semi-transparent, light sources are dimmed and sounds are distorted as though underwater. Twilight isn't a place, though; it's more of a description of how ephemera interacts — or fails to interact — with material reality.

When in Twilight, only items, creatures, and phenomena that are also in Twilight and comprised of the same kind of ephemera can touch an ephemeral being. Attacks simply pass through the Twilight being; solid concrete and steel are no more hindrance than fog.

The exception to this rule is ghost structures. Destroyed objects — everything from a pen to a building — appear as after-images in Twilight, formed of the same ephemera as ghosts. These spiritual structures and items fade away on a timescale depending on how strongly they're remembered. Famous structures, or even obscure

ones that are loved and thought about frequently after they're destroyed, can last decades, solid and substantial only to ghosts.

If no ghostly structures get in the way, ephemeral beings in Twilight can move at walking pace in any direction. Gravity has no sway, though Twilight beings can only truly "fly" if it's appropriate for their form — most hug the material terrain. A ghost could walk up the side of a tower block, for example, but couldn't then float through mid-air to the next tower.

Some occultists and supernatural creatures practice Astral Projection, which allows a character to leave her body behind and explore the world in invisible form. These projected selves are technically in Twilight, but lack ephemeral bodies and so aren't solid even to one another.

Ephemeral Traits

Ephemeral beings aren't alive the way humans are alive. They aren't biological creatures and don't have the divides between body, soul, and mind that mortals and once-mortal supernatural beings possess. In game terms, ephemeral beings are represented by simplified game traits.

Rank

All ephemeral beings have dots in an Advantage called Rank, which notes how self-aware and powerful the entity is. Rank technically ranges from 1 to 10 dots, but entities with more than Rank ••••• are so alien they can't support themselves in the Conditions lesser beings use. They can only be brought into the world by story- and chronicle-defining maneuvers, conjunctions, and events. The Lords of the Dead, Gods of Shadow, and the mighty archangels are out of the scope of the Storytelling system. If they appear at all, they do so purely as plot devices.

Rank is used to determine the maximum ratings an ephemeral being can have in other game traits, as described in a table below, along with how many dots of Attributes the entity can have. All ephemeral beings have the ability to sense the relative Rank of other entities, and may attempt to conceal their own Rank by succeeding in a contested Finesse roll. Success means that the entity appears to be the same Rank as the being sensing the relative Rank.

Essence

Combination food, oxygen, and wealth, Essence fuels ephemeral entities' powers, sustains their insubstantial bodies, and allows them to continue existing. As a game trait, Essence resembles Willpower in that each entity has a permanent maximum Essence rating and an equal number of Essence points it can spend to achieve effects. Maximum Essence is determined by Rank.

Entities can use Essence in the following ways:

- Ephemeral beings must spend a point of Essence per day to remain active. If they have run out of Essence, they fall into hibernation until something happens to let them regain at least one point, which can then be spent on returning to activity. Such dormancy is dangerous — the entity remains in Twilight and can be destroyed if it loses all Corpus and Essence at the same time (see p. 227). When spirits enter hibernation, they are pushed back across the Gauntlet into the Shadow. Ghosts that don't have any anchors remaining are similarly forced into the Underworld. Angels remain dormant wherever they were.
- Ephemeral beings outside of a suitable Condition bleed one point of Essence per *hour*. The Influence and Manifestation Conditions starting on p. 229 state whether they protect from Essence bleed for different types of ephemeral being. Entities that run out of Essence due to bleed suffer a single point of lethal damage and enter hibernation.
- Ephemeral beings can spend Essence to boost their traits for a single scene on a point per dot basis. They can't boost a single trait by more than Rank + 2 dots; boosting takes a turn and they can only boost a single Attribute in a turn.
- Entities can sense sources of Essence appropriate for their needs from up to a mile away. Spirits can use this sense through the Gauntlet. The "Seek" Numen (p. 235) increases this range.
- Ephemeral beings regain one point of Essence per day they are in proximity to any Condition relating to them — ghosts are sustained by staying near their anchors, spirits in the Shadow eke out an existence by feeding across the Gauntlet, and angels are fed by Infrastructure.
- Ephemeral beings can attempt to steal Essence from beings of the same type — ghosts from ghosts, spirits from spirits, and so on. The attacking entity rolls Power + Finesse, contested by the victim's Power + Resistance. If the attacker succeeds, it steals up to the number of successes in Essence, as long as the victimized entity has Essence remaining to lose.
- Ghosts regain a point of Essence whenever someone remembers the living person they once were. Visiting their grave, simply sitting and remembering them, or recognizing their Manifested form as the person they used to be all qualify.
- Spirits may attempt to gorge themselves on a source of appropriate Essence. Once per day, when in proximity (even if it's on the other side of the Gauntlet) to a suitable Condition, a spirit can roll Power + Finesse, regaining successes in Essence. If the spirit is still in the Shadow, the dice pool is penalized according to Gauntlet strength.
- Angels are mechanisms in the God-Machine, and like any machine they are sustained by fuel. God-Machine cultists sacrificing precious resources (metaphorical or literal), animals, or even humans to the angel in its presence allow it to regain the Resources value of the item or animal, or the current Integrity of a human sacrifice, as Essence.

Attributes and Skills

Ephemeral beings don't have the nine Attributes familiar in material characters, but use a simplified set of the Power, Finesse, and Resistance categories mortal Attributes fall into. When creating

an ephemeral being, look at the Rank chart earlier in this section to determine how many dots are available and what the trait maximum is. Ghosts usually use the average rating in each category from when they were alive — for example, a man with Strength 3, Intelligence 2, and Presence 2 would become a ghost with Power 2.

Power describes the raw ability of the entity to impose itself on other ephemeral beings and the world at large. It is used in all rolls that call for Strength, Intelligence, or Presence.

Finesse describes how deft the entity is at imposing its desires with fine control. It is used for all rolls that call for Dexterity, Wits, or Manipulation.

Resistance describes how well the entity can avoid imposition from its peers and how easily it is damaged. It is used for all rolls that call for Stamina, Resolve, or Composure.

Ephemeral beings don't possess skills, but also don't suffer unskilled penalties as long as the action they're attempting is appropriate to their former self, nature, or mission. They roll the appropriate Attribute + Rank for actions relating directly to their concept, or Attribute + Attribute for actions like surprise and perception.

Advantages

Ephemeral beings differ in how they treat Integrity, Virtue, Vice, and Fate. When they possess these traits, the descriptions used are often unusual and the specifics change according to the entity's origin.

Ghosts retain their Virtue and Vice from life, but they are reversed in effect — ghosts regain all spent Willpower by fulfilling their Vice, but can only do so once per chapter, and regain up to one Willpower point a scene by fulfilling their Virtue. Alone among ephemeral beings, ghosts also possess Integrity set at the level they had before death. Their Integrity scores don't change, however, as ghosts do not suffer breaking points. Their self-image is fixed unless something happens to push them back to the level of cognizance and self-awareness they had in life. If this should happen somehow, they can suffer breaking points the same way living people can.

Spirits don't have an Integrity trait or a Virtue or Vice. Instead, they regain one point of spent Willpower per three points of Essence they consume by gorging or stealing as described above.

Angels lack Integrity — they simply obey the God-Machine in all things — and likewise don't have Fates. They do have Virtues and Vices, though, built into them as operating guidelines and preset responses. Angelic Virtues and Vices don't have to be anything a human would describe as virtuous or wicked. Examples include "Silent," "Hidden," "Obedient," "Curious," "Punctual," "Wrathful," and "Precise," all as either Virtue or Vice depending on the angel in question.

Other Traits

Because they have simplified traits, ephemeral entities calculate derived traits a little differently from mortal characters.

Corpus: Ephemeral beings don't have Health, but rather measure how intact their Twilight form is using Corpus. Permanent Corpus is equal to Resistance + Size and grants Corpus boxes that act like Health boxes, filling when the entity suffers injury. Corpus boxes don't have wound penalties associated with them.

Willpower: Entities have Willpower dots equal to Resistance + Finesse, with a maximum of 10 dots for entities with the Ranks presented in this book. As well as the Willpower gaining methods described above, all ephemeral beings regain one spent Willpower per day.

Initiative: Initiative is equal to Finesse + Resistance.

Defense: Defense is equal to Power or Finesse, whichever is lower, except for Rank 1 spirits, which use the higher of the two Attributes. The more an entity is driven by raw instinct, the more animal defense it displays in combat.

Speed: Speed is equal to Power + Finesse + a "species" factor. Spirits of inanimate objects usually have a species factor of 0.

Size: Ephemeral beings can be of any size. Ghosts are usually Size 5, while spirits often use Rank as Size, growing larger as they become more powerful. Angels designed to blend in are sized as

Ephemeral Rank

Rank*	Trait Limits **	Attribute Dots	Maximum Essence	Numina
•	5 dots	5–8	10	1–3
••	7 dots	9–14	15	3–5
•••	9 dots	15–25	20	5–7
••••	12 dots	26–35	25	7–9
•••••	15 dots	36–45	50	9–11

* Each Rank levies a –1 modifier on attempts to forcibly bind that entity and acts as a Supernatural Tolerance trait.

** These represent permanent dots, not temporarily boosted ones.

Ghosts can't increase Rank outside of the Underworld and come into existence as either Rank 1 or 2 depending on how much self-awareness they have. Nonsapient "recording" type ghosts are Rank 1, while those that retain most of their living memories are Rank 2. Ghosts summoned back from the Underworld, however, may be of any Rank.

Spirits and **Angels** run the full range of Ranks, depending on how old and successful a spirit is or how much importance the God-Machine places upon an angel.

humans or animals, but some angelic entities are very large, up to Size 10 or more.

Language: Rank 1 ghosts can't communicate verbally; they don't have enough of their sense of self left to employ language. Rank 2 and higher ghosts know whatever languages they knew in life. Spirits all speak the native tongue of the shadow-world, a strange, sibilant language that resembles Ancient Sumerian, but often learn the human languages common around their Essence-feeding grounds. Angels speak all human languages simultaneously, and more — they sometimes "speak" in strange glossalia or sounds more like electronic noise than a language and appear to understand each other when doing so. When an angel wishes to be understood, everyone present hears it speak fluently in their native languages.

Bans

All ephemeral beings suffer from a mystical compulsion known as the ban, a behavior that the entity must or must not perform under certain conditions. They can be as simplistic as "the angel cannot cross railway lines," as moderately complex as "the ghost must come if you call her name into a mirror three times within her anchor," or as difficult as, "the angel must receive a tribute of a printing press that has used blood as ink once a month or lose a Rank."

Bans increase in both complexity and consequences with Rank.

Rank 1 entities have mild bans that are easily triggered but don't endanger the entity. A spirit of bliss can't resist an offering of opiates. The ghost of a nun has to immediately use an offered rosary. A weak angel must stop still and parrot hexadecimal numbers when they're spoken to.

Rank 2 and 3 entities have moderate bans that curtail the creature's activities in a more serious way than mere distraction. A ghost must immediately dematerialize when it hears the sound of a cat. The murderous spirit of a car that has run down multiple people loses all Willpower if it doesn't kill one person a month. The angel of the records answers any question about the family, background, or true identity of a subject if the questioner accurately tells the angel her time (to the minute) and place of birth.

Rank 4 and 5 entities have complicated bans that put an end to whatever the creature is trying to do — often in an explosive fashion. They have consequences in game traits or long-term actions, but esoteric requirements. The Smiling Corpse, a ghost summoned back from the Underworld by a mystery cult, is immediately banished back to the Great Below if anyone should sing a particular nursery rhyme in his presence. The spirit of Mount Iliamna, a volcano in Alaska, will use its Numina to kill a victim named by anyone who makes it an offering of platinum mined from its foothills. The angel Uriminel, four-faced enforcer of destiny, has Defense 0 against individuals who have suffered lethal or aggravated damage within the last lunar month.

Banes

Ephemeral entities are not of the material world and react strangely to some elements of it. The interaction between their ephemeral Twilight form and physical substance always contains a flaw — a *bane* — that damages the entity's Corpus through symbolic or mystical interference. The bane is a physical substance or energy that the entity can't abide.

- Ephemeral beings voluntarily attempting to come into contact with the bane must spend a Willpower point and succeed on a Resolve + Composure roll with a dice penalty equal to their Rank.
- Banes are solid to entities, even when they are in Twilight. They do not, however, affect spirits on the other side of the Gauntlet.
- Simply touching the bane — even voluntarily — causes 1 level of aggravated damage per turn if the entity is Materialized, and causes the relevant Condition to end unless the entity succeeds in a roll of Rank in dice. The roll must be repeated every turn if contact holds.
- If the item or person to which a Fettered entity is linked comes into contact with the bane, the entity suffers 1 level of Lethal damage per turn as long as contact holds. The entity must use the Unfetter Manifestation Effect to escape.

Gauntlet Strength

The strength of the wall between the physical world and its Shadow depends mostly on how many people are present in the area. Why human activity pushes the Shadow away when it also creates vast quantities of emotionally resonant Essence is a mystery. If the spirits know, they aren't telling, but the Gauntlet breaks away more easily from civilization.

Whenever a spirit attempts to cross between the material world and the Shadow, uses Influence or Manifestation to reach across, feeds from the material world's Essence while still being in the Shadow, or uses a Reaching Manifestation **(see p. 230)**, the dice pool is penalized by a number of dice according to the following chart.

Location	Modifier
Dense urban areas	–3
City suburbs, towns	–2
Small towns, villages	–1
Wilderness, countryside	0
Locus	+2

A Locus is a location in which the Shadow world is especially close. Spirits don't need the Reaching Manifestation Effect to use their powers across the Gauntlet at a Locus, attempts to cross over are at +2 dice, and spirits whose nature matches the Locus' Resonant Condition heal at twice the normal rate.

- Touching the bane while in Twilight causes 1 point of lethal damage per turn to non-Manifest entities.
- If the bane has been used as a weapon against the entity, the wounds suffered are aggravated for Manifest entities and lethal for entities still in Twilight.

Banes are increasingly esoteric and obscure for entities of increasing Rank.

Rank 1 entities have common substances and phenomena as banes. Ghosts burn at the touch of salt. The spirit of a forest is poisoned by the fumes of burning plastic. A low-ranking angel can't touch gold.

Rank 2 and 3 entities have difficult to obtain but still "natural" banes. Powerful ghosts are repelled by holy water. A spirit must be killed by a sharpened stake made of pine. A mid-rank angel can be killed by a weapon dusted with the ground-up remains of a meteorite.

Rank 4 and 5 entities have highly-specific banes that require great effort to acquire. The lord of an Underworld realm now walking the Earth and served by a cult of worshippers can be killed by an obsidian blade marked with the names of thirteen Gods of Death. The spirit of the US Treasury (the building) can be killed by a silver bullet made from a melted-down original dollar. A high Rank angel can't willingly touch the sigils of a certain incantation in Sumerian and dies if the signs are carved into the flesh of its host.

The hierarchical nature of ephemeral beings also plays a part — Rank isn't a social convention for them but a fundamental part of their nature. Ephemeral entities of 2 Ranks or more higher than an opponent of the same type (a Rank 5 spirit attacking a Rank 3 spirit, for example) count as their opponent's bane when using unarmed attacks, claws, or teeth.

Combat

As noted earlier, ephemeral beings use the lower of Finesse or Resistance for Defense unless they are Rank 1, in which case they use the higher value. They apply Defense against *all* attacks, even firearms.

Honorary Rank

Some supernatural creatures that are closely related to a form of ephemeral being have "honorary" Rank in the appropriate otherworldly hierarchy; Sin-Eaters are all Bound to a ghost, for example, and werewolves are treated with respect by spirits according to their Renown.

Technicalities count, in this case, but only *against* the ephemeral entity. A werewolf who "outranks" a minor spirit will deal devastating wounds to it with his claws, but a high-Rank spirit can't burn that werewolf by touching him. There are other ways to assert dominance; high-Rank entities are quite capable of showing the half-fleshed who's boss.

Ephemeral beings roll Power + Finesse to attack. Their attacks inflict bashing damage unless the nature of the entity (a spirit with metal fists, for example) indicates that it should inflict lethal wounds instead. Some entities use weapons, in which case roll Power + Finesse and then apply weapon damage on a successful attack.

Entities in Twilight can only attack or be attacked by other ephemeral beings of the same type, unless the attack utilizes the entity's bane.

Physical attacks that normally cause lethal damage only cause bashing damage on a manifest entity unless the attack utilizes the entity's bane. Despite appearing to the naked eye and being solid, a manifest spirit, ghost, or angel doesn't have any internal organs to injure.

Ephemeral beings record and heal from wounds the same way as material characters, but in addition lose one point of Essence for every aggravated wound they suffer.

Ephemeral entities that lose all Corpus from lethal or aggravated wounds explode into a burst of ephemera stylized to their nature. A forest-spirit dies in a hail of rapidly-vanishing pine needles, while ghosts crumble, screaming, into the ground. The entity isn't actually dead, though, unless it has also run out of Essence. If it has even a single Essence point remaining, it reforms in a safe place (a Conditioned location, usually), hibernating. Once it has regained Essence points equal to Corpus dots, it spends an Essence point and reawakens. As the entity can't act while hibernating, this means waiting for the one point of Essence a day for being in a suitable area to slowly build up to Corpus, and that more powerful entities take longer to recover from being "killed."

Influence

All ephemeral beings have a degree of Influence over the world that they can leverage to control and shape the basis of their existence. Ghosts have power over their own anchors, spirits can control and encourage the phenomena they were born from, and the God-Machine grants angels broad authority over things relating to their mission.

Entities begin with dots in Influence equal to their Rank. Although a being's Rank is also the maximum rating for an Influence, ephemeral beings can split their dots to have more than one Influence. A Rank 4 spirit of dogs, for example, might have Influence: Dogs ••• and Influence: Loyalty •.

Entities may reduce their number of Numina granted by Rank to increase Influence dots at a cost of one Numen per dot.

Spirits and angels have Influences that relate to their natures, but that may be used in multiple circumstances — the dog spirit, for example, has Influence: Dogs, not Influence over a *particular* dog. Ghosts always have Influence: Anchors, though may have other Influences as well as they increase in Rank.

Influence is measured in both scale and duration. To use an Influence, compare the entity's Influence rating to the total dots of the intended effect and how long it is to last. The total must be equal to or less than the entity's Influence rating in order for the Influence to be attempted.

The entity pays the listed cost in Essence and rolls Power + Finesse, with success creating the desired effect. If the Influence is altering

Influence Effects

Level	Effect
• Strengthen	The entity can enhance its sphere of influence; it can add to the Defense of a loved one, make an emotion stronger, or make an animal or plant healthier or an object more robust, gaining the entity's Rank in Health or Structure. This Influence can shift the Anchor, Resonant, or Infrastructure Condition to Open for its duration. The cost is one Essence.
• • Manipulate	The entity can make minor changes within its sphere of influence, such as slightly changing the nature or target of an emotion, or making minor changes to an animal's actions, a plant's growth, or an object's functioning. The cost is two Essence.
• • • Control	The entity can make dramatic changes within its sphere of influence, twisting emotions entirely or dictating an animal's actions, a plant's growth, or an object's functioning. This Influence can shift the Open Condition to Controlled for its duration. The cost is three Essence.
• • • • Create	The entity can create a new example of its sphere of influence; creating a new anchor, instilling an emotion, creating a new sapling or young plant, creating a young animal or brand new object. The entity can cause a temporary Anchor, Infrastructure, or Resonant Condition in a subject for the duration of the Influence. The cost is four Essence.
• • • • • Mass Create	The entity can create multiple examples of its sphere of influence; triggering emotions in multiple people; creating new copses of trees, small groups of animals, or multiple identical items. The cost is five Essence. The number of examples of the Influence created is equal to Rank. Alternatively, the entity may create one instance of its sphere of influence — including creating the base Condition for its type — permanently, although an ephemeral entity can't permanently alter the mind of a sentient being.

the thoughts or emotions of a sentient being, the roll is contested by Resolve or Composure (whichever is higher) + Supernatural Tolerance.

Manifestation

Ephemeral beings can interact with the mortal world in many different ways, from lurking in Shadow and reaching across the Gauntlet to physically Manifesting or merging into a human soul. Just as Influence traits determine what level of control the creature has over their environment, Manifestation traits note which forms of Manifestation are possible for a particular entity.

Entities begin with the Twilight Form Manifestation and a number of Manifestation Effects from the list below equal to Rank. Some effects are only available to certain kinds of entity. Entities may increase their capabilities by reducing the number of Numina they are granted by Rank, at the cost of one Numen per Manifestation Effect.

Most Manifestation Effects have prerequisite Influence or Manifestation Conditions — a spirit can only Fetter to something with an Open Condition, for example.

All Manifestation Effects require a Power + Finesse roll to use. Most have an associated cost in Essence, and some are contested or resisted.

Ephemeral Influence and Manifestation Conditions

If something falls into an ephemeral being's sphere of influence, this is handled mechanically by declaring an Influence Condition. Influence Conditions resemble Tilts and character Conditions.

The different forms of Manifestation Effect are also Conditions applied to the location, object, or character the entity is Manifesting into or, in cases like Reaching, to the entity itself.

Unlike many Conditions, Influence and Manifestation Conditions are tiered and interrelated; Manifestation Conditions have Influence Conditions as prerequisites and vice-versa. The lower tiers are naturally occurring, while the later ones must be created by entities using Influences and Manifestations.

In the most advanced forms of Influence and Manifestation, entities may attempt to create a long-lasting Condition that has a prerequisite of a very temporary one. When one Condition is advanced into another, the remaining duration of the prerequisite Conditions is "frozen."

If a prerequisite Condition is removed from a character (for example, a Possessed character's Open Condition is removed by exorcism) any Conditions relying on it, any relying on them, and so on are immediately removed. The most advanced remaining Condition then resumes its duration.

ANCHOR

The subject of this Condition — usually a location or object, though it can be a person in rare cases — is within the sphere of influence of a ghost. Ghosts in or within Rank x3 yards of their Anchors do not suffer Essence bleed.

Causing the Condition: This Condition is immediately created when a new ghost is formed, based on whatever subject anchors the ghost's identity. Summoning rituals intended to release ghosts from the Underworld or call them from elsewhere temporarily create this Condition in their target. Finally, a high-Rank ghost can use Create Influence to mark a target as an Anchor.

Ending the Condition: The easiest way to end an Anchor condition is to destroy the subject. Some ghosts cling to Anchors

Influence Durations

Level	Duration	Cost
0	One minute per success	No additional Essence cost
•	Ten minutes per success	No additional Essence cost
• •	One hour per success	1 additional Essence
• • •	One day per success	2 additional Essence
• • • •	Permanent	2 additional Essence

that represent unfinished business, in which case resolving those issues can remove the Condition. Abjuration temporarily suppresses the Condition as described on p. 230, forcing the ghost to retreat to another Anchor if it has one. Ghosts without Anchors bleed Essence until they fall into dormancy, at which point the Underworld Gate Condition is created and the ghost is banished to the Great Below.

RESONANT

The subject of this Condition is within the sphere of influence of a spirit.

Causing the Condition: This Condition is common and naturally occurring — if an object, phenomenon, person, or place matches the spirit's purview in some way, it has this Condition. Anything matching the description of one of a spirit's Influences counts as having this Condition tagged to the spirit. Summoning rituals intended to entice a particular spirit to a location work by instilling the qualities that result in this Condition. Finally, a high-Rank spirit can use a Create Influence to cause the prerequisites for the Condition itself.

Ending the Condition: The Condition ends if the phenomenon creating it ends. A forest stops being Resonant for a tree spirit when all the trees are logged, a grief spirit can't Influence someone who has healed and let go of his pain, and a fire spirit must move on when the fire is extinguished. Abjuration and Exorcism may temporarily suppress the Condition or be the cause of it "naturally" ending if the ritualists remove the causal phenomenon as part of the ritual.

INFRASTRUCTURE

The subject of this Condition is within the sphere of influence of an angel.

Causing the Condition: The Infrastructure Condition, unlike Anchor and Resonant Conditions, is never naturally occurring. The God-Machine requires effort to prepare the way for its angels: extended actions by cultists, unwitting pawns, or even other angels to create Infrastructure. High-Rank angels can use the Create Influence to instill this Condition on behalf of themselves or a subordinate angel. In addition, characters with the Destiny Merit are always subject to this Condition.

Ending the Condition: Infrastructure's intricate nature makes it much more difficult to remove. Multiple extended actions taking place over whole stories are necessary to dismantle the Condition, opposed by the Angel itself.

OPEN

The place, object, animal, or person covered by a previous Condition has now been conditioned to accept the entity. That entity can now attempt to Fetter itself to the subject of the Condition, or, if the Condition is on a location, Manifest.

Prerequisites: The Anchor, Resonant, or Infrastructure Condition for the same phenomenon to which this Condition is tagged.

Causing the Condition: This Condition is usually the result of fine-tuning the prerequisite Condition as part of an extended action, involving the subject and entity acting in concert for a number of scenes equal to Rank or a living subject's Resolve, whichever is higher. Using a Control Influence allows an entity to temporarily create the Open Condition as an instant action.

Ending the Condition: The Condition ends if the prerequisite Condition is removed. Exorcism rituals work by removing this Condition, reverting it to the prerequisite.

CONTROLLED

The object, creature, or person covered by an Open Condition has now been so conditioned that the entity may attempt to Claim it, permanently merging with it.

Prerequisites: The intended subject of this Condition must have the Open Condition, tagged to the entity attempting to cause it.

Causing the Condition: This Condition is the result of repeated use of the Possess Manifestation effect by the causing entity. It must have succeeded in possessing the subject on a number of separate occasions equal to the Willpower of entity or subject (whichever is higher). If any Possessed Condition is removed before its duration ends, progress is lost on building to the required number of possessions.

Ending the Condition: Successfully ending the Claimed Condition against the entity's will, whether by Exorcism or by forcing the Claimed subject into contact with the entity's bane, removes this Condition and reverts the subject to Open.

REACHING

The spirit has opened a conduit through the Gauntlet, allowing it to use Influences and Numina to affect the other side. Numina

Manifestation Effects

Manifestation	Effect
Twilight Form	If the entity enters the material world, it does so in Twilight **(see p. 223)**. The Effect has no cost.
Discorporate	In emergencies, the entity can voluntarily Discorporate as though it had lost all Corpus to lethal injury – a painful way to escape a greater entity threatening to permanently kill it. The Effect has no cost.
Reaching	(Spirit only) By spending 1 Essence, the spirit applies the Reaching Condition to itself. The local Gauntlet Strength penalizes the activation roll.
Gauntlet Breach	(Spirit only – requires Resonant Condition) By spending 3 Essence, the spirit forces itself through the Gauntlet – returning to Shadow from the physical world, or appearing in Twilight Form by entering the material world. The local Gauntlet Strength penalizes the activation roll.
Avernian Gateway	(Ghost, angel or death-related spirit only – Requires Open Condition) By spending 3 Essence, the entity opens a nearby gateway to the Underworld, and applies the Underworld Gate Condition to the location.
Shadow Gateway	(Rank 3+ spirit or angel only – Requires Open Condition) By spending Essence equal to Gauntlet Strength, the entity opens a portal to the Shadow that it and other entities may use, applying the Shadow Gate Condition to the location. The local Gauntlet Strength penalizes the activation roll.
Image	(Requires Anchor, Resonant or Infrastructure Condition) By spending 1 Essence, the entity may make its Twilight form visible to material beings for a scene.
Materialize	(Requires Open Condition) By spending 3 Essence, the entity may shift from Twilight form into the Materialized Condition.
Fetter	(Requires Open Condition) By spending 2 Essence, the entity adds the Fettered Condition to itself. Living beings targeted by this Effect contest the roll with Resolve + Composure + Supernatural Tolerance. If the Effect is successful, living targets gain the Urged Condition.
Unfetter	(Requires Fettered Condition) By spending one point of Essence, the entity temporarily suppresses the Fetter Condition for a Scene, allowing it to use other Manifestation Effects or roam in Twilight. When the Scene ends, any Manifestation Effects used during it immediately end. If the entity isn't back within range of its Fetter when Unfetter ends, it immediately goes dormant.
Possess	(Requires Open Condition) By spending 3 Essence, the entity gains temporary control over an object, corpse, or creature, applying the Possessed Condition to the subject. Living subjects contest the roll with Resolve + Composure + Supernatural Tolerance.
Claim	(Requires Controlled Condition) By spending 5 Essence, the entity gains permanent control over an object, creature, or corpse, applying the Claimed Condition to the subject. Living subjects contest the roll with Resolve + Composure + Supernatural Tolerance. An entity must be capable of both the Fetter and Possess Manifestations to buy Claim.

with [R] after their name can be used with this Condition. Characters capable of perceiving spirits in Twilight can sense the conduit's presence with a successful Wits + Composure roll.

Causing the Condition: This Condition is the result of the Reaching Manifestation Effect and lasts for one Scene.

Ending the Condition: At the end of the scene, the Condition fades. Mortals may attempt an Abjuration with a 3 dice penalty to close the conduit and end the Condition early.

UNDERWORLD GATE

The location has an open gateway to the Underworld. All ghosts regain one Essence per scene that they are in the gateway's presence. Ghosts without anchors may use it to reenter the world.

Causing the Condition: Using the Avernian Gateway Manifestation Effect on an Open Condition can create this Condition. Some supernatural beings with ties to death are also able to open Avernian Gateways. Even mortals can open a gate if one is present and they know the proper means. Mortals who conduct rituals to first Open a Death-Resonant location that houses a gate can unlock it, causing this Condition, but require the *key* to do so. Every Gateway has a key – an item or action that will open it. Keys can be physical objects, but are also sometimes actions or emotions or are tied to times and events: a Gate might open for a murder at midnight, when touched with a certain doll, or when a woman betrayed in love turns her back on it three times. Researching a proper key is a difficult Intelligence + Occult roll, with a –3 to –5 dice modifier.

Ending the Condition: At the end of the scene, the Condition fades. An Exorcism directed at the gate can end the Condition early.

SHADOW GATE

The location has a hole punched through the Gauntlet. Spirits – and even incautious people – can cross through it without the use of any powers. The Shadow Gate is visible even to material beings, as the Shadow world and material worlds mix.



Causing the Condition: This Condition can be created by using the Shadow Gateway Manifestation Effect on an Open Condition. Very rare summoning rituals can also create this Condition, allowing the spirit being called to access the material world.

Ending the Condition: At the end of the scene, the Condition fades. An exorcism directed at the gate can end the Condition early.

MATERIALIZED

The entity has shifted from ephemeral to material substance, manifesting in physical form. All the rules for ephemeral entity's traits still apply except for the effects of being in Twilight. This Condition protects the entity from Essence Bleed for its duration.

Causing the Condition: This Condition is created by an entity using the Materialize Manifestation Effect on an Open Condition. If the Open Condition used is on an object or person, the entity must materialize within its Rank in yards.

Ending the Condition: Materialization lasts for one hour per success on the activating roll. When the duration ends, the entity fades back into Twilight. Physical contact with a Bane or removal of a prerequisite condition can cause the Condition to end early.

FETTERED

The entity has secured itself to an object or creature. As long as it remains Fettered, the entity is safe from Essence Bleed. The entity remains in Twilight and must stay within five yards of the Fetter. Most entities Fettering themselves literally hide inside their Fetters if they are small enough.

The entity pays one less Essence for using Influences on the Fetter, but may not use them or Numina on another target as long as the Fetter lasts.

Prerequisites: The intended subject of this Condition must have the Open Condition, tagged to the entity attempting to cause it.

Causing the Condition: This Condition is created by an entity using the Fetter Manifestation Effect.

Avernian Gateways

Doorways to the Underworld, also called *Avernian gates*, exist all over the world but are invisible to all but a handful of psychics. The gateways are in Twilight, made of ghostly ephemera, and appear in places with the Resonant Condition tagged as "Death" — anywhere that people die in large numbers or that has a feel of Death about it can house a gate. They remain closed unless they are the nearest gate to a ghost who loses his last Anchor, in which case they open for a turn as his Corpus passes on.

Ending the Condition: Fetters are permanent unless the prerequisite Conditions are ended, or if the subject of the Fetter is destroyed or killed (if a living being). The entity can voluntarily end the Condition by using the Unfetter Manifestation Effect. A successful Exorcism removes this Condition.

URGED

This animal or human host has been used as a Fetter by an ephemeral being. The entity may read the subject's thoughts with a successful Power + Finesse roll, contested by Resolve + Supernatural Tolerance. Success reveals surface thoughts. The entity may urge the host to take a specified action with a successful Power + Finesse roll contested by Resolve + Composure with an extra die. If the entity wins, the urge is created. Following it rewards the host with a Beat.

Causing the Condition: This Condition is created by an entity using the Fetter Manifestation Effect.

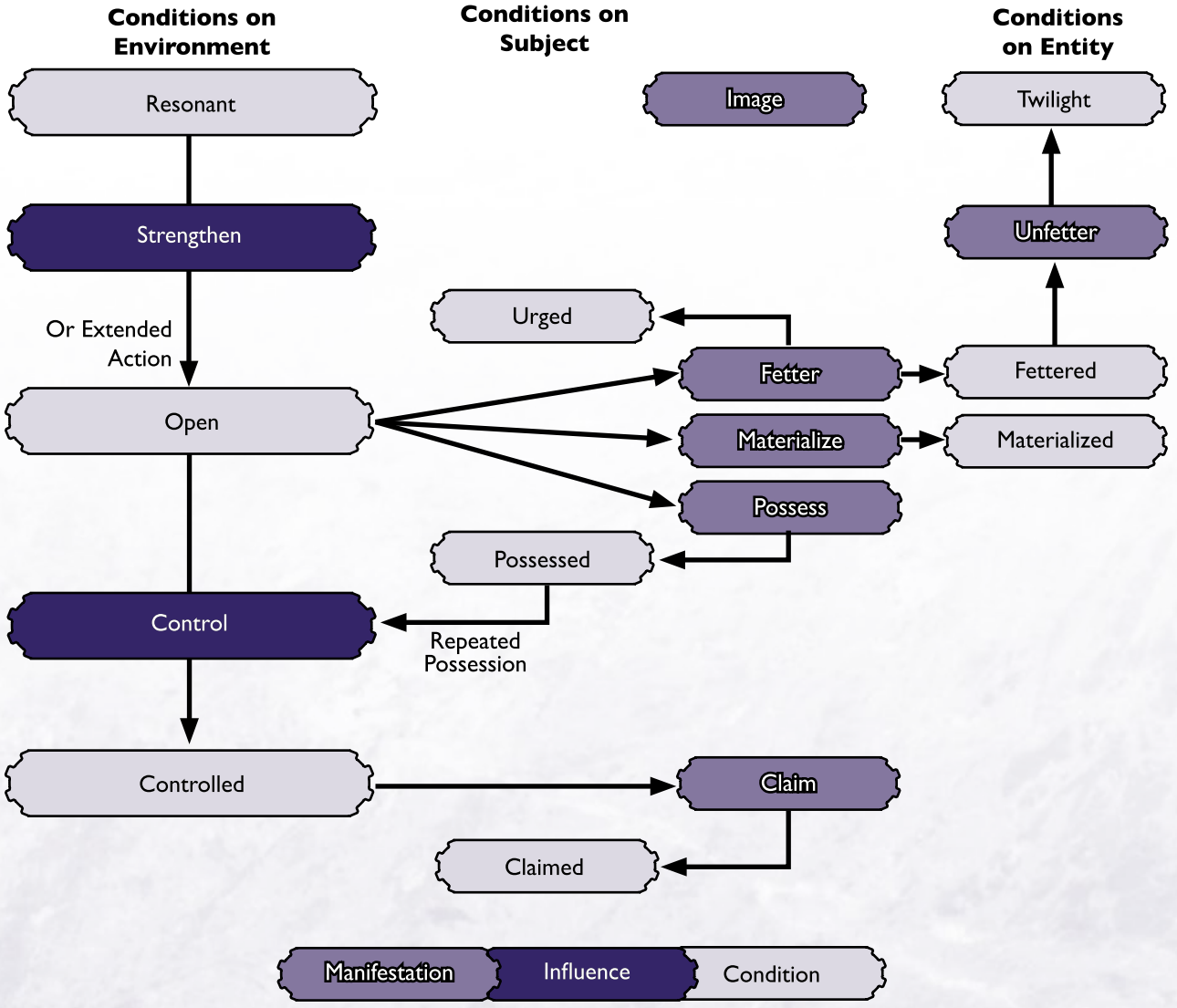
Ending the Condition: The Urged Condition ends whenever the linked Fetter ends.

POSSESSED

This object, corpse, or living being is temporarily controlled by an ephemeral entity. Living hosts are put into a coma-like state while being possessed — they experience the possession as missing time, except for flashbacks that might come out in dreams or times of stress, such as losing Integrity. The entity may not use Numina or Influences while controlling the host, but is safe from Essence Bleed as long as the possession lasts.

The entity may pay one Essence per turn to heal one lethal or bashing wound or a point of structure lost to damage. Corpses that died through damage begin Possession incapacitated and must be "healed" with Essence

Entities possessing inanimate objects or corpses have a great deal of control over their host. An entity controlling an object



can't make it do anything it couldn't do while being operated, but it can turn switches on and off, operate machinery, use keyboards, and turn dials. Use the entity's Finesse if dice rolls are necessary.

Corpses and other articulated hosts capable of movement, such as shop mannequins or industrial robots, use their own Physical Attributes but the entity's Attributes in Social or Mental rolls. By spending a point of Essence, the entity can use its own Attributes instead of the host's for Physical tasks for a turn, but doing so causes one point of lethal damage or structure loss to the host.

Living hosts require more time for the entity to gain full control and always use their own Attributes. The entity may read the host's mind with a Finesse Roll at a –4 die penalty, use the host's Physical Skills at a –3 penalty, and the host's Social and Mental Skills at –4. These penalties are all reduced by one die per day that the entity has been Fettered to the host. Most possessing entities Fetter themselves to their intended hosts and use the Possess Manifestation Effect to take full control only in emergencies.

To possess a host, the entity must remain in Twilight, superimposed over the host. This means that if the host touches the entity's bane or is injured by a weapon made of the bane, the entity will suffer wounds to its Corpus.

Causing the Condition: This Condition is created by an entity using the Possess Manifestation Effect. The object or victim must be under the Open Condition, tagged to the entity.

Ending the Condition: The possession lasts for a single scene unless the entity abandons it early or the host is killed or destroyed. Abjurations, Exorcisms, and forced contact with banes and bans can all motivate an entity to release a host.

CLAIMED

A Claimed object, corpse, creature, or person has been permanently possessed and merges with the entity involved. Unlike Possess, living Claimed aren't put into a fugue state, but remain mentally active while their soul and the Claiming entity merge together over the course of several days. During the period of fusion, the subject is under all the effects of the Urged Condition, described above. Once per day, starting with the moment the Claimed Condition is created, add one dot of the entity's Attributes to the host's, permanently raising them. Power may be assigned to Strength, Intelligence, or Presence, Finesse to Wits, Dexterity, or Manipulation, and Resistance to Stamina, Composure, or Resolve. The host's physical form begins to mutate, taking on an appearance influenced by the original host and the entity.

Claimed corpses add points to Attributes as above, but start with all Mental and Social Attributes at 0. Inanimate objects use the statistics appropriate for their type (Adding Resistance to Structure and Durability, Power to Acceleration and Finesse to Handling) instead of Physical Attributes, and also start the claiming process with all Mental and Social Attributes at 0. Corpses and inanimate hosts don't spend the claiming period under the Urged Condition, having no minds of their own to warp.

Claimed may use the entity's Influences, but not Numina or Manifestation Effects. They may develop supernatural powers as Merits. From the moment the Claimed Condition is laid, the entity is safe from Essence Bleed. The hybrid being that results has the entity's Essence trait, Virtue, Vice, Fate, Ban, and Bane, but is a material being. Claimed that were once spirits may cross the Gauntlet at a Locus with a successful Intelligence + Presence roll. Claimed that were inanimate objects are fully animate, fusions of spiritual power, metal and plastic.

Causing the Condition: This Condition is created by an entity using the Claim Manifestation Effect.

Ending the Condition: Claim is permanent in living hosts unless the entity decides to detach itself, rolling its original Power + Finesse penalized by Rank in dice and contested by the Claimed hybrid's Resolve + Composure, including any dots gained from being Claimed. If the entity succeeds, the entity and host are separated. Former hosts are physically and mentally scarred — the physical appearance changes back at the same rate it mutated and the extra Attribute dots fade at a rate of two per day. The Essence trait and any supernatural powers the Claimed developed immediately vanish. Former Claimed, however, retain the Virtue and Vice of the entity that took them over.

In nonliving hosts, Claim is only temporary – once the Claim has fully formed, the host loses one dot of a Physical Attribute (or equivalent for formerly inanimate objects) per three days. When any of these Attributes reaches 0, the host disintegrates and the entity is released into Twilight.

Numina

In addition to Influence and Manifestation, all ephemeral entities have a number of discrete magical powers called Numina. Each Numen is a single ability linked to the entity's nature — activated by a successful Power + Finesse roll unless stated otherwise.

The Numina described here are deliberately generic. Individual ephemeral beings display their Numen in ways reflecting their type, theme and biases — a ghost's Blast is a empty, freezing cold in the bones of its victim, while an angel's Awe manifests as a terrible holy aura.

Numina with R next to their name are usable in conjunction with the Reaching Condition.

AGGRESSIVE MEME

The entity speaks to a person (it must be in a Condition capable of doing so) and plants an idea in their mind. When that person tells someone else the idea, it takes hold in their mind, too, and whoever *they* tell, and so on. The Numen costs seven Essence to activate and is contested by Resolve + Composure + Supernatural Tolerance.

AWE

The entity causes terror in anyone who can see it. The Numen costs 3 Essence and activation is contested individually with Presence + Composure + Supernatural Tolerance by anyone looking at the entity. Anyone gaining fewer successes than the entity is unable to move or speak for a turn. If the entity gains an exceptional success, the effect lasts three turns.

BLAST

The entity may wound opponents at a distance. Range is equal to 10 yards per dot of Power and the entity does not suffer range penalties. If the activation roll succeeds, the Blast wounds as a +0L weapon. The entity may increase the lethality of its Blast by paying Essence — every two Essence spent increases the "weapon" by +1L. The maximum weapon bonus is equal to the entity's Rank.

DEMENT ®

The entity may torture its victim's mind via psychic assault. This Numen costs 1 Essence. The activation roll is contested by the victim's Intelligence + Supernatural Tolerance. If the entity succeeds, the victim suffers the Insane Tilt (p. 316) for the rest of the Scene.

DRAIN

The entity can steal Essence or Willpower (chosen at activation) from a material being. The activation roll is contested by Stamina + Resolve + Supernatural Tolerance. Whichever character — entity *or* target — gains the most successes receives points of Willpower or Essence equal to the number of successes, while the other party loses the same number.

EMOTIONAL AURA ®

The entity sends out a wave of powerful — and distracting — emotion. This Numen costs 1 Essence and lasts for a scene or until the entity uses another Numina. The activation roll is made once but anyone coming within 5 yards of the entity must make a Resolve + Composure + Supernatural Tolerance roll. If the activation roll has more successes, the victim suffers a –2 dice penalty to all actions as long as the aura remains. If the victim gains more successes, he is immune to the aura unless the entity uses the Numen again.

ESSENCE THIEF

The entity may consume and steal Essence from ephemeral beings other than its own type — for example, spirits with this Numen may consume ghosts and angels. The Numen costs 1 Essence to activate.

FIRESTARTER ®

The entity causes flammable materials to combust. This Numen costs 1 Essence and causes one small fire to break out per activation success within the entity's Power in yards.

HALLUCINATION

The entity may create an illusion experienced by a single target: it can be anything from a sight or sound to an imaginary person who holds a conversation. The Numen costs 1 Essence and is contested by the victim's Wits + Composure + Supernatural Tolerance. Each success over the contesting roll alters one of the victim's senses.

HOST JUMP

The entity may leap from host to host when using the Possess or Claim Manifestations. The current host must touch the intended host while the entity spends 3 Essence; the new host must be under all necessary prerequisite Conditions. If both prerequisites are met, the entity immediately transfers the Possessed or Claimed Condition to the new host, although Claimed hosts must begin the process of Claiming again. The entity does not need to re-spend Essence on the Manifestation Effect when jumping hosts with this Numen. Living Claim victims who are vacated with the use of this Numen still suffer the aftereffects listed under the Claimed Condition.

IMPLANT MISSION ®

This Numen grants a mortal a vision of a task the entity wishes him to accomplish as well as a magical determination to see it through. The entity pays 2 Essence and rolls Power + Finesse. On a success, the subject receives a short vision of whatever the entity wishes him to do and is under the Obsessed Condition regarding carrying that mission out.

INNOCUOUS

The entity is very good at being overlooked. Perception rolls to notice the entity are penalized by 2 dice. This Numen does not require a roll to activate and has no cost.

LEFT-HANDED SPANNER

The entity disables a device, paying 1 Essence and touching the object if Manifest, or moving its Twilight form to superimpose with it if not. The device must be a human-manufactured object with at least three moving parts. If the activation roll succeeds, the device malfunctions for a number of turns equal to the successes rolled. Using this Numen in combat requires the entity to Grapple and gain control of the object, and so can't be used this way in Twilight unless the target is in Twilight as well.

MORTAL MASK

This Numen disguises a Materialized entity as a human and can be used at the same time as the Materialize Manifestation Effect.

Using the Numen costs 1 Essence and the human seeming lasts for activation successes in hours. The human "costume" is flawed — witnesses may make a Wits + Composure roll penalized by the entity's Finesse to realize that something is wrong. Characters able to sense the entity in Twilight do not suffer a penalty to the roll.

OMEN TRANCE

Once every 24 hours, the entity may enter a trance in order to gain a glimpse of the future. The Numen costs 1 Essence if the entity is trancing on its own behalf or 3 Essence if it is searching for omens for another. The activation roll is an extended action, lasting at least one scene. If successful, the entity sees a vision of an event sometime in the next week. The visions are predisposed to be warnings of danger.

PATHFINDER ®

This Numen allows an entity to know the quickest route to a destination. The fastest route isn't always the safest, of course; the Numen doesn't reveal any dangers on the way, only a set of directions to the target. If the destination is the subject of the Safe Place Merit, the activation roll is contested by the lowest Resolve + Supernatural Tolerance among any owners. The Numen costs 1 Essence and lasts for a scene. If the destination is too far away to reach that quickly, the entity must use the Numen again.

RAPTURE ®

The entity forces a response from the pleasure centers of a living being's brain, granting ecstatic visions, a feeling of communion with the universe, and sensations of bliss. The Numen costs 2 Essence to activate. If successful, the victim suffers the Insensate Tilt (p. 317). If the victim fails a Resolve + Supernatural Tolerance roll, she gains a temporary derangement for the entity's Power in days, in a form that binds her closer to the entity's wishes.

REGENERATE

The entity can use Essence to heal bashing and lethal wounds on its Corpus. This Numen does not require a roll to activate, but costs 1 Essence and heals one level of damage — the entity must reactivate the Numen each turn to heal more severe wounds. Bashing damage is healed first, then lethal.

RESURRECTION

This Numen — only available to Rank 4+ angels and spirits of healing — raises the dead. The Numen costs 10 Essence to use and the activation roll is penalized by one die per day that the subject has been dead. Supernatural beings that have already died as part of their transformation — vampires, mummies and Sin-Eaters — can't be resurrected, nor can anyone who died of natural causes. Other supernatural beings lose their powers when resurrected. Mages become Sleepwalkers and werewolves, wolf-blooded.

SEEK ®

The entity can sense the presence of suitable Conditions from a distance. The base range is two miles per Rank; entities may spend an Essence to multiply this by 10. If successful on a Finesse roll, the entity becomes aware of the direction and distance to the nearest suitable Anchor, Infrastructure, or Resonant Condition.

SPEED

The entity accelerates into a blur of movement. The entity chooses whether to spend 2 or 4 Essence when activating this Numen. Spending 2 Essence doubles its Speed for the remainder of the scene, while spending 4 Essence triples it.

SIGN

The entity creates messages or images in any media they would be able to access to be used by a mortal — it can write in the condensation on cold glass, produce images on computer screens, and send audible messages via phone lines. The Numen costs one Essence to activate, and if successful creates a single message.

STALWART

The entity appears armored in Twilight form and uses Resistance as its Defense score instead of the lower of Power or Finesse.

TELEKINESIS ®

The entity can manipulate objects without using a Manifestation Effect. This Numen costs 1 Essence. Successes on the activation roll become the entity's "Strength" when attempting to lift or throw an item. Fine motor control is impossible using this Numen.

THE GREAT WORK: PART V

When the creature scurried into the evening light, she hated it immediately. She hated the way it stretched out like taffy as it descended from the trees, and the fact that its claws matched its teeth. She despised the scars that crisscrossed its body, which were pulsing. Its presence, its smell, its smile, they were all offenses.

If she knew that the body would look anything like this then, she would have made sure to burn it before Wisher even saw it. Maybe then she wouldn't have to stare it down twice.

The creature grinned, showing off that mouth full of claws. "Hello, again."

Clay's Girl answered the creature's greeting with a blow to one of its solid red eyes. Her fist made a deep imprint on its face. She felt a pang of disappointment as the imprint shrank.

It stretched its head to bite her. She braced herself, but heard the snapping of wood. Imam hit the creature's extended neck with a large tree branch, giving her the opening to clamp its jaw shut. She pushed its neck back to its body. Imam beat its body, and then Clay's Girl slammed it into the trees.

"Get to the car," she told him, "Make sure he doesn't have friends waiting. Then get them out of here!"

Imam looked at her, then the creature. He nodded and ran into the clearing. She couldn't watch him leave, the creature was righting itself. Clay's Girl pulled a knife from her jacket.

"Bet you feel real embarrassed, seeing us again," she said.

The creature growled.

The two circled each other, eyes locked. Clay's Girl knew it could be cut; Wisher nearly tore off one of its limbs last time, before it got loose. All she needed was the opportunity. It presented itself when one of its legs stepped wrong, and too much of it pressed to the ground.

She was on its back in an instant. She stabbed every part of it she could. While its shape mimicked humanity, she knew its vitals could be anywhere. Some of the fluid from its scars poured out; it was clear and smelled of pus.

The creature reared back, and Clay's Girl's head slammed against a tree. Yellow bile burst from her mouth, and the knife, stuck in its flesh, slipped out of her hands. She tumbled to the ground, and the creature impaled her with its claws in the small of her back.

Her chest jerked up and she tried to draw in breath. It was harder than it should have been. Roark and Wisher were still standing in the field. Neither Imam nor the car was with them. Clay's Girl howled out any words she could, telling them to run, to hide, and that she was so sorry.

The creature cupped her face with its hand, and she felt its claws dig into her flesh.

"You were wrong," it said. Then it pulled her head off.

HAKAN'S RAMBLE

My friends,

I don't think I can make you understand how much you all mean to me. We have traveled together for a long while with a shared purpose, but increasingly I have come to realize that you are my purpose and that I have no desire to follow the road we travel without you. I have made a decision, one with which I know you would not agree, but my conscience would not permit me to act otherwise. The monsters that dog our heels grow ever closer and the injuries Dorothea suffered have only made it clear to me that our time is running out. It is selfish, I know, but I cannot bear to watch you, my friends, fall one by one to these creatures, your dreams of humanity snuffed out by hatred and spite. I see only one path forward for the rest of you and that is for me to turn my back on you and our New Dawn and face our pursuers. I cannot fight them off. I cannot reason with them, nor do they have any higher nature to appeal to. No, they only bow to one of their own and so I must do something worse that merely giving my life. I must sacrifice my soul.

We all hear the siren call of chaos in the roaring fire of our Azoth and we know that this is the call our pursuers heed. It is the language of the damned and the only way to master it is to embrace it. Already, I can feel the corrosive force of my sin burning away the progress of my pilgrimage and I mourn the man or woman that I might have been had things been different, but I do not regret my decision. As I succumb to madness and dissolution, I shall always hold onto this one shining hope that you will complete your Great Work and that I may have had some small part in making it happen.

So, please do not consider me fallen. I have not abandoned what we hoped to accomplish. On the contrary, I am more dedicated to it than I have ever been. I will pay whatever cost I must to see you through to the end of your journey. You are my Multiplicatio, my last act as a pilgrim on the road to humanity. You are the end that I pray will justify my means.

I love you all.

Hakan

Athanor found as the centerpiece of a makeshift altar in the lair of a Centimanus in Detroit on April 14, 2016.

Dorothea, I found this in the Monk's collection and I thought you should have it.
I'm so sorry.



CHAPTER FIVE: FIRESTORM

As rare as an understanding of Pyros is, Prometheans aren't the only beings in who deal with the Divine Fire. From the misbegotten Pandorans, to human alchemists, to the enigmatic *qashmallim*, a throng can encounter many strange creatures over the course of their Pilgrimage, all with agendas of their own. Some might be allies, but Prometheans can't count on anyone but themselves.

Pandorans

A Pandoran is a twisted, broken creature — a mockery of life infused with Flux and inevitably mad. It exists in a constant state of agony and is more than willing, eager even, to share that pain. Prometheans are its favored prey, but a Pandoran deprived of the nourishment and entertainment a Created can provide will gleefully turn its attention on mortals before falling into Dormancy. The result of a Promethean creation that hasn't fully gestated, Pandorans are sometimes referred to as the *Unborn* — a painful reminder of what could have been, but now never will.

Almost everything Prometheans know about Pandorans comes from the Centimani, who are the only beings who can get close enough to study them. Azothic memory provides some information, as well.

Birth

Despite efforts to catalog how a Pandoran comes to be, the truth is that Prometheans are just not sure. They know that Pandorans are "birthed" when Promethean creation goes awry and that this failure springs from the creator's Azoth being tainted. They do not know *how* that taint defines itself, nor how they can check for it, which leaves Prometheans in a terrible state of uncertainty when it comes to reproducing. The Centimani know that a creator's Azoth can be tainted by unspent Vitriol or heavy Flux in the area, but they would rather keep this information to themselves.

Immediately after its conception, a new Pandoran's body is gripped by roiling, churning Flux, causing it to sprout new limbs and deformities even as Flux rips the body apart from the inside out. The resulting creature (or *creatures*, as ripped off parts sometimes gain a life of their own) is smaller than the average human and horribly bent and broken. Assuming its creator doesn't kill it right then and there, the Pandoran snatches up whatever broken body parts it can and scurries away. This misshapen being is only a proto form, an embryo spewed forth before it was fully gestated. Sensing its incompleteness and still being ravaged by Flux, some Pandorans seek the nearest place where they can burrow out of sight and undergo a chrysalis. Others though, driven by hunger and violence, ignore their malbirthed form and attack immediately.

A Pandoran in chrysalis might adopt a shape of marble, stone or wood that looks tranquil on the outside even as the creature inside writhes and turns. Another might build an elaborate cocoon of flesh and mucus. During this gestation period, the Pandoran is vulnerable to anyone who can damage its chrysalis shell. Waiting for its body to set, the creature remains in the grips of Flux — resulting in limbs sprouting from bellies, gnashing maws on hands, joints that bent backwards and a myriad of other deformities. Chrysalis can last anywhere from a few hours to a few weeks.

The Pandoran that crawls forth from its chrysalis knows no compassion, no intelligence, no higher purpose. It only hungers with a wicked, sadistic glee. This is not what makes them truly horrible though. The real horror comes from something, *a glimmer*, of what could have

> This universe, which is the same for all, has not been made by any god or man, but it always has been, is, and will be an ever-living fire, kindling itself by regular measures and going out by regular measures.
>
> —Heraclitus of Ephesus

been amidst the broken shell of its body and mind. A creator might look upon a Pandoran and briefly see a flash of the child she set out to create, a beautiful and vibrant companion who would have eased her loneliness and pain. And then, while she is lost in the vision of unfulfilled dreams, the Pandoran rips her face off.

Hunger

A Pandoran *needs* Pyros to balance its internal Flux, or that Flux will tear it apart. Lacking the body alchemy to create Azoth on its own, it relies on Prometheans to provide nourishment. Like a demon child suckling at its parent's breast, it feasts on Promethean flesh. Ripping off succulent fleshy bits and delicious, marrow-filled bones, the Pandoran gains Pyros directly from the Promethean's furnace body. This means the Promethean can fight back while being devoured, as his own Pyros reserves remain untouched. It also means the Pandoran, if clever enough, can keep the Promethean alive and eat him one knuckle bone at a time while savoring the Pyros in every single bite. In fact, a Centimanus might cut off pieces of his own flesh as treats for his ravenous Pandoran pets.

Even without a Centimanus to guide them, Pandorans possess a cunning animal intelligence and are capable of hunting in packs. These packs have no apparent leader; while the pack realizes on some instinctual level that its best interest is served by working together, infighting is both common and brutal. Any hint of Pyros-rich blood whips the pack into a frenzy, and pack members turn on each other as easily as they do the Created. Still, despite their chaotic nature, packs are so vicious and persistent that they scare any Promethean with measure of common sense.

A Pandoran is hunger incarnate, driven by emptiness amidst a constantly changing mass, and it fights like it, too. It may spend hours, even days, setting up an elaborate spider's web to ensnare its prey, or painstakingly track a Promethean using the trail left by his Pyros — but when the first drop of Pyros-soaked blood spills, all bets are off. Using tooth and claw to tear off chunks of Promethean flesh and stuffing them in its mouth as it goes, a Pandoran's fighting style resembles a starving man at a walking buffet as much as it does actual combat.

Consume Pyros

The Pandoran uses teeth and claws to rip away and consume Promethean flesh on the spot, stuffing the meaty bits in its mouth even as it goes back for more.

Cost: —

Action: Reflexive

Dice Pool: None (accompanies an attack roll)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Not only does the Pandoran's attack miss, it forgoes its Defense for the turn.

Failure: The Pandoran's attack misses.

Success: The Pandoran rips off and consumes flesh worth one point of Pyros for every two bashing damage or one lethal damage dealt. A hungry Pandoran may forgo its Defense this turn to rip off enough flesh to consume *two* Pyros per point of lethal damage. A Pandoran's preternaturally sharp nails and teeth always inflict lethal damage, though it may opt to attack with balled fists if it wants to inflict bashing damage instead.

Exceptional Success: Successes are their own reward.

Track Pyros

The Pandoran can sense Pyros on the air and follow it back to its source — usually a deliciously juicy, plump Promethean. A Pandoran might smell the coppery scent of Pyros, see it hanging in the air like a trail of fire, hear a faint sound of thunder in the distance or simply feel its pull. Once an Unborn is on the scent of a Promethean, nothing will stop it — whether it takes a day, a month or a year to catch its prey. Dormancy or more easily captured prey might divert the creature's hunt for a while, but death is the only true end to the hunt.

Vitriol

Vitriol holds a special place in a Pandoran's cold heart. Lacking a working inner refinery, the Pandoran must consume Promethean Vitriol to shape its body into a new, fully formed mutation. The Pandoran must act quickly though, as its own distorted alchemical body warps and corrupts any stolen Vitriol, making it completely unusable in less than a minute. Consumed Vitriol, if spent within this short time frame, may be used to purchase new Physical Attribute dots or Dread Powers. A Pandoran may also try to raise its Manipulation or Intelligence with Vitriol, even though its own nature resists such delicate balancing. If the Storyteller decides that a Pandoran, usually an exceptionally clever or recurring antagonist, attains dots of Intelligence or Manipulation in this fashion, the creature immediately becomes a *sublimatus*.

Sense Vitriol

Completely reliant on an outside source of Azoth, the Pandoran is perhaps more attuned to the variations of Pyros than any other creature. It can sense the scent of Vitriol lying deep within a Promethean's organs and longs for this special treat above all. The Pandoran can sense any unspent Vitriol the Promethean has. How this sense manifests, as scent, sight, hearing, or even feeling, is dependent on the individual Pandoran and left to the Storyteller to decide.

Consume Vitriol

The Pandoran infuses its teeth or hands with one point of Pyros to coax the Vitriol to the surface, then violently rips into the Promethean's body to yank out his inner organs. If it has the luxury of time, the Pandoran might savor the piece of liver, spleen or tongue like a gourmand. If not though, it will happily stuff the offal down its throat like a cheap snack — a Pandoran is nothing if not opportunistic.

Consume Vitriol uses the same system as lacuna (p. 188).

Dormancy

A Pandoran with a Pyros pool of zero and no immediate access to new Pyros becomes dormant. This serves a similar purpose as the cocoon that saw the Pandoran through its chrysalis. In Dormancy, the Pandoran takes on an instinctive camouflage depending on

where it is at that time. A Pandoran who falls dormant in a museum might appear as a fine marble statue, while one in the wild might look like stones in a hedge wall or a water-logged piece of wood at the bottom of a lake. The object retains some features of the Pandoran, be it in the face of the statue, shadows cast by the wall or a peculiar shape in the wood.

If a Dormancy object is exposed to Azothic radiance for a full minute, the Pandoran awakens as it becomes aware of the sweet promise of Promethean flesh. Uncoiling itself, the Pandoran's actual transformation to its original form takes only a single turn. The object shatters and the creature springs forth in a snarling tangle of claws and teeth.

A freshly awakened Pandoran is desperate for Pyros and is only barely sentient. The creature is no more than a ravenous beast, attacking any source of Pyros regardless of strength and size. After the first hunger is stilled, though, the Pandoran returns to its senses and becomes markedly more cunning, weighing the odds of ripping away more Pyros now or escaping to safety. A Pandoran who does not manage, for whatever reason, to consume a point of Pyros in the scene it awakened returns to Dormancy (though future Azothic radiance awakens it again).

A dormant Pandoran does not emit Azothic radiance, making it nearly impossible for Prometheans to distinguish between normal objects and a mockery in Dormancy. A Pandoran in Dormancy is, for all intents and purposes, an object with Durability equal to the Pandoran's Stamina and Structure equal to its Health. Any damage to the object's Structure suffered in Dormancy manifests as lethal damage upon awakening.

Disquiet

Half broken Promethean, half monster, a Pandoran instills a Disquiet of fear and insanity in the mortals around it. Pandoran Disquiet is driven by Flux and is both terrible and immediate, requiring no build-up to infect those who see the creature. By comparison though, it immediately ends when the Pandoran departs the scene.

Depending on the coherence of the victim and his vulnerability to the madness of Flux, a person might freeze or flee in terror, blackout, or get swept up in the Pandoran's raging hunger. A victim of Pandoran Disquiet is likely to suffer from nightmares or even traumatic flashes afterward. If he saw the Pandoran enter or emerge from Dormancy, he might also develop an unreasonable fear of objects of that kind.

Supernatural beings do not suffer from Pandoran Disquiet. Mortals touched by the supernatural, including ghouls and wolf-blooded, are offered no such respite. When a mortal character is afflicted by Pandoran Disquiet, the Storyteller chooses a Condition to represent the effect: Stricken, Terrified, or Murderous.

Division

Driven by the need to hunt and feed, something deep inside the Pandoran still adheres to the base instinct of all living things to reproduce. Flux itself is incapable of such a feat — constantly changing and evolving, it devours cells as quickly as it can multiply them. When confronted with large quantities of Azoth though, the Pandoran finally gets its chance. This reproduction occurs whether the Pandoran wants it or not, as the drive to multiply is no more under the Pandoran's control than its ravenous hunger.

Divide

Division is a power inherent to all Pandorans, though it only manifests under specific circumstances. Division can only be used once per scene unless the Azothic radiance in the area increases, in which case Division is reset and may be used again. Use of Division is not voluntary and occurs immediately if the listed requirements are met.

Requirements: The Pandoran has a full Pyros pool and is exposed to Azothic radiance with a rating more than double its rank.

Cost: 1 lethal Health wound per Pandoran spawned

Action: Instant

Dice Pool: [Pandoran's Rank x 2] + Azoth of being creating radiance

Effect: One new Pandoran splits off from the original per success rolled. Every new Pandoran begins at Rank 1, has a single chosen Dread Power in addition to innate ones, and a Pyros pool of zero. A new Pandoran begins its existence in a feeding frenzy, but this ravenous hunger abates if it manages to consume even a single point of Pyros (at which point the Pandoran may continue to seek out Pyros or take other actions as it pleases). At the end of the scene in which it was spawned, a new Pandoran must undergo a chrysalis lasting one hour to become fully formed — unless still in the throes of hunger, the creature will scurry away to a safe place before then.

Praecipitati

While a Pandoran hungers for Azoth with the desperation of a starving man, it also needs Flux to retain its broken alchemy. A Pandoran exposed to too much Pyros enters Flux Hunger, which drives it to consume its fellow Pandorans in a cannibalistic frenzy to acquire more Flux.

As the Pandoran devours those of its own kind in an orgy of hunger, it grows and mutates at an astounding rate and becomes a *praecipitatus*. A *praecipitatus* is horrible to look upon, as it is constantly changing from one deformed shape to another. Fortunately, the nature of Flux is not coherent enough to maintain a *praecipitatus* for long and the monstrosity is usually short-lived.

Flux Hunger usually occurs with clever Pandorans who have access to a trapped Promethean or other reliable source of Pyros. When a Pandoran ends every day with a full Pyros pool for a continuous week, it becomes chemically imbalanced with too much Pyros and too little Flux. A Centimanus might deliberately keep her Pandoran pets at full Pyros in an attempt to trigger Flux Hunger, so she might add a *praecipitatus* to her retinue.

Praecipitatus

A *praecipitatus* is formed when one Pandoran consumes others of its kind in the throes of Flux Hunger. A *praecipitatus* need look nothing like the subsumed Pandorans, instead sprouting impossibly long limbs ending in grasping claws, orifices eager for



flesh, or other monstrous features as Flux molds the *praecipitatus* like plague-ridden clay. The only features even remotely recognizable *might* be those of the key Pandoran — the first to suffer from Flux Hunger and begin the feast of cannibals.

The *praecipitatus* has the following traits:

Attributes: Highest Physical Attribute of any merged Pandoran. Social and Mental Attributes equal to those of the key Pandoran.

Skills: Highest Physical Skill of any merged Pandoran. Other traits equal to those of the key Pandoran.

Size: 4 + [1 per two Pandorans merged]

Dread Powers: All Dread Powers of merged Pandorans

Pyros: Equal to sum of Pyros pools of merged Pandorans

Special: Centimani believe they have identified three base *praecipitati*, which they named after the Hekatonkheires of Greek mythology. The *praecipitatus* gains an additional power based on the highest of its Strength, Presence or Intelligence. In case of a tie, Intelligence trumps Presence and both trump Strength.

Briareus the Vigorous: A *praecipitatus* who has Strength as its defining Attribute adds another +1 Strength per two merged Pandorans.

Cottus the Furious: A *Praecipitatus* who has Presence as its defining Attribute instills a numbing fear in those around it. Animals flee without a roll, snapping and snarling at anything that comes in their path. Sentient creatures must score [key Pandoran's Rank + 1 per additional merged Pandoran] successes on an extended Resolve + Composure roll or suffer the Fugue Condition. This does not affect supernatural beings.

Cygnes the Cunning: A *praecipitatus* who has Intelligence as its main Attribute is quick to learn and adapt. It may add one new Dread Power per three merged Pandorans.

The *praecipitatus* falls apart naturally when the scene ends or when it is rendered destroyed due to damage. If the *praecipitatus* falls apart naturally, the merged Pandorans return to their previous state and divide remaining Pyros evenly amongst them (if there is not enough to divide, start with higher ranking Pandorans first). Damage dealt is distributed evenly amongst the lowest ranked Pandorans until no damage is left. If a *praecipitatus* is destroyed by damage, all lowest ranked Pandorans take damage equal to the full damage the *praecipitatus* suffered.

Sublimati

While a Pandoran is a clever and cunning creature, it is no more intelligent than a spider or shark. A *sublimatus*, however, is different. A *sublimatus* has evolved, growing both in body and in

mind. Sentient and nasty, a *sublimatus* is fond of convoluted and layered plans, which it concocts after stalking and observing its prey, and learning his weaknesses.

The creature's intellect is constantly growing and turning in on itself, devouring its own tail like a snake while sprouting new and terrible mutations. The end result is a completely warped creature whose intelligence is only matched by its madness. It also doesn't have much in the way of a heart, ethics, or any of the things that might hold it back as it relentlessly pursues its prey: the Created.

A *sublimatus* has learned to harvest the tiny spark of divine fire inside mortals, meaning it can consume human flesh to gain Pyros and avoid Dormancy. This consumption yields only half the Pyros eating Promethean flesh would. Most *sublimati* feel it lacks a certain *je ne sais quoi* pleasing to the refined palette, and so are still likely to hunt Prometheans over mortals. Likewise, rather than the Pandoran pets with which the Centimani like to surround themselves, a *sublimatus*' relationship to any Centimanus it accompanies is more akin to a partnership in a cabinet of horrors than one of subservience.

Prometheans often mistake *sublimati* for Centimani, though the freaks and mockeries themselves can tell the difference just fine. While a Centimanus is a Promethean in the grips of Flux, a *sublimatus* is a Pandoran who has managed to evolve (albeit barely) above pure chaos. This has led some Created to wonder if a *sublimatus* might evolve even further, becoming a Centimanus and, from there, a Pilgrimage-abiding citizen who might reach New Dawn.

If an existing Pandoran devours a Promethean's Vitriol, it can also become *sublimatus.* The Storyteller rolls the Pandoran's Resolve + Composure. If successful, the creature may spend Vitriol to purchase Intelligence or Manipulation dots and become a *sublimatus*. If the roll fails, the Vitriol is corrupted and lost to Flux.

Lastly, when a *praecipitatus* breaks apart, the key Pandoran might become a *sublimatus*. The Storyteller rolls the key Pandoran's Stamina + Composure and must reach [6 – the key Pandoran's rank] successes. If successful, the Pandoran becomes a *sublimatus* and may divide a number of dots equal to its Rank among Mental and Social Attributes (at least one of which must be spent on Intelligence or Manipulation). It also gains a number of dots worth of Dread Powers or Flux Transmutations equal to its Rank.

Rank and Traits

Pandorans focus on Attributes and Skills suited to stalking and killing (or capturing) Prometheans. They don't much care for niceties or intellectual pursuits, though the *sublimati* do love to spin elaborate webs to lure and trap their victims (sometimes literally).

Pandorans have the following traits and abilities (if not explicitly specified, treat *sublimati* as Pandorans):

- **Rank:** Pandorans have a Rank (rated 1 to 5) based on the total amount of Pyros they have stolen. All other traits derive from Rank (see table below). Low-Ranking Pandorans hunt in packs, when they can, while high-Ranking Pandorans may prefer to work alone. Due to their violent and chaotic lives, it is exceedingly rare to see a non-*sublimatus* Pandoran above Rank three.
- **Attributes**: Pandorans begin with an automatic dot in all Physical Attributes, Wits, Resolve, Presence, and Composure. Intelligence and Manipulation have a rating of one and may not be raised for Pandorans. *Sublimati* may purchase additional dots of Intelligence and Manipulation. The maximum total Attributes (calculated including starting dots) are determined by Rank.
- **Skills:** Pandorans may not purchase Social Skills except for Animal Ken and Intimidation, nor may they purchase Mental Skills. This restriction does not apply to *sublimati*.
- **Merits:** Pandorans generally do not have Merits, though *sublimati* might.
- **Willpower:** [Resolve + Composure]
- **Initiative:** [Dexterity + Composure]
- **Defense:** [Higher of Dexterity and Wits] + Athletics.
- **Size:** [4] (Pandoran) or [5] (*sublimatus*). Due to their botched creation, Pandorans lack full human bodies. *Sublimati* grow in body as well as mind when they gain sentience.
- **Speed:** [Strength + Dexterity + Species Factor 6 (Pandoran) or 5 (*sublimatus*)]
- **Health:** [Stamina + Size]
- **Pyros Pool:** Total Pyros pool is determined by Rank. Pandorans can spend up to their Rank in Pyros per turn. They must spend one point of Pyros per day to sustain their existence and can only regain Pyros by consuming Promethean flesh. A Pandoran with no more Pyros left is susceptible to Dormancy.

Rank	Pyros stolen	Attributes / Max per Att.	Sublimati max Int/Man	Max Pyros/per turn	Dread Powers in Dots
1	5	15–24 /5	2	10/1	4
2	10	25–44 /7	3	12/2	8
3	20	45–74 /9	4	14/3	12
4	40	75–104 /12	5	17/4	20
5	70	105–135 /15	6	20/5	30

- **Dread Powers:** Pandorans begin their existence with Consume Vitriol, Divide, Sense Vitriol and Track Pyros. In addition to these, Pandorans may purchase an average (some Pandorans might have significantly more or fewer purchases) number of Dread Powers based on Rank. *Sublimati* may also use the Flux Transmutation; each Distillation is a separate power (see p. 252).
- **Electroshock Therapy**: As the Promethean trait.
- **Disquiet:** Pandorans do cause Disquiet, although this is Flux based (see Pandoran Disquiet on p. 241).
- **Pandoran Constitution:** While Pandorans must consume Promethean flesh to devour the Pyros inside, they do not require nourishment in the traditional sense. Additionally, they are immune to poison and disease.
- **Speech:** Most Pandorans cannot speak coherently, though they can shriek, hiss and howl. Some learn a simple word or phrase to repeat ("rip, rip, rip," "Mommy, Mommy," etc.). *Sublimati* can speak normally.
- **Superlative Endurance:** As the Promethean trait, with the exception of resurrection from death (that requires Azoth).
- **Transhuman Potential:** As the Promethean trait, but Pandorans may only use this to increase their Physical Attributes.

Dread Powers

Pandoran Dread Powers are mutations caused by Flux. They are often active without the creature consciously being aware of it. For a Pandoran, having carapace-like skin or being able to breathe poisonous gas isn't a power, it's just part of what it is. Dread Powers gear towards one singular purpose: tracking, hunting and killing Prometheans. S*ublimati* may use the Transmutation of Flux (see p. 252); each Distillation counts as a separate Dread Power.

ARMOR
(• TO • • • • •)

The Pandoran's body is covered in natural armor, such as a horrific exoskeleton or gelatinous slime.

Cost: —
Action: Always on
Dice Pool: —
Effect: The Pandoran gains an armor rating equal to the dot rating of this power.

BEASTLY MUTATION
(• TO • • • • •)

The Pandoran looks more like a mutated beast than anything resembling a human.

Cost: —
Action: Always on
Dice Pool: —
Effect: Each dot in this power yields +1 to attack. Furthermore, this power might grant special powers based on the beastly mutation. For example, a Pandoran with octopus-like tentacles might gain additional Defense, while a frog tongue can inflict ranged damage and razor wings allow for flight. The Storyteller chooses the form of the mutation and any additional benefits when this power is purchased.

BIZARRE WEAPONRY
(• TO • • • • •)

A predator without peer, the Pandoran has tusk-like fangs, bestial claws or bony spikes protruding from its body.

Cost: —
Action: Always on
Dice Pool: —
Effect: The Pandoran adds +1 weapon damage per dot of this power on applicable attacks (i.e. fangs do damage when biting, but not when grappling) and upgrades the damage from bashing to lethal, or lethal to aggravated. The Storyteller chooses the form of the mutation when Bizarre Weaponry is purchased.

BREATH ATTACK
(• TO • • • • •)

The Pandoran spews forth lightning, acid, fire or even poisonous gas with its breath.

Cost: 1 Pyros
Action: Instant
Dice Pool: Strength + Athletics
Effect: Each dot purchased in this power can be applied to either direct damage, extended damage, or armor or Defense evasion. These effects can be mixed as desired. The Storyteller chooses the type of attack when this power is first purchased.

Direct damage: Add dots as weapon damage to the attack.

Extended damage: The attack causes one damage per turn, for [2 x dots] turns.

Armor or Defense evasion: One dot negates either armor *or* Defense; two dots negates both.

The attack can hit anything within the Pandoran's direct line of sight.

Roll Results
Dramatic Failure: The power fails and cannot be used for the rest of the scene.
Failure: The power fails.
Success: The attack hits and causes damage appropriately.
Exceptional Success: The attack hits, causes damage, and instills a Tilt in the victim as appropriate (i.e. Blinded if the Pandoran spat in the victim's eyes).

BRIAREUS' PROWESS
(• TO •••••)

Small and misshapen, the Pandoran is quicker, stronger and hardier than it looks.

Cost: — or 1 Willpower

Action: Always on, or Reflexive

Dice Pool: —

Effect: The Pandoran adds one dot of Strength, Dexterity or Stamina per dot of Briareus' Prowess. The Storyteller chooses which Physical Attribute to enhance when dots are purchased. The Pandoran may purchase dots equal to its unenhanced Physical Attribute rating.

CAMOUFLAGE
(• TO •••••)

The flesh of the Pandoran changes with its surroundings, allowing the creature to blend in perfectly with the background.

Cost: —

Action: Always on

Dice Pool: —

Effect: Characters trying to see, hear, smell, or otherwise perceive the Pandoran suffer a one dice penalty per dot of this power on Perception rolls, as long as the Pandoran remains still or moves at half speed. This penalty becomes one dice per two dots if the Pandoran moves at three quarter speed. The penalty is lifted entirely if the Pandoran moves at full speed.

MALLEABLE FORM
(• TO •••••)

The Pandoran's body is malleable and soft, allowing the creature to squeeze through the smallest of openings.

Cost: —

Action: Instant

Dice Pool: Dexterity + Athletics

Effect:

The Pandoran is capable of squeezing through any opening it can fit its head through. Each dot enhances the speed with which the Pandoran can move through the opening: one quarter speed, half speed, three quarter speed, full speed or even double speed.

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Pandoran becomes stuck. Its defense is reduced to 0 for the turn.

Failure: The Pandoran fails to squeeze through.

Success: The Pandoran moves its applicable speed through the opening.

Exceptional Success: The Pandoran moves through the opening at a speed of one category higher than it normally would.

PARALYZE
(• TO •••••)

Either through poisonous fangs, claws, or skin-to-skin contact, the Pandoran injects its victim with a paralyzing poison. Even Prometheans are not immune to this Flux poison.

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Instant and contested

Dice Pool: Stamina + Brawl + Paralyze vs. Stamina + Azoth

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The power fails and the victim is immune to Paralyze for this scene.

Failure: The power fails.

Success: The Pandoran successfully injects its poison into the victim, instilling a moderate Poisoned Tilt in Prometheans, or a grave Poisoned tilt in all other creatures. This lasts for a number of turns equal to the Pandoran's Paralyze rating.

Exceptional Success: Successes are their own reward.

SCURRY
(• TO •••••)

Loping on misshapen hands and feet, the Pandoran moves at impossible speeds.

Cost: 1 Willpower

Action: Reflexive

Dice Pool: Dexterity + Athletics + Scurry

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Pandoran stumbles, loses her Defense for the turn, and cannot re-activate Scurry this turn.

Failure: The power fails.

Success: The Pandoran adds Scurry to Speed. And add successes to Defense for the turn.

Exceptional Success: Additional successes are their own reward.

WALL WALKING
(• TO •••••)

Using squid-like suckers on its hands, lizard-like fingers, or a sticky ooze, the Pandoran may traverse walls and ceilings as easily as floors.

Cost: —

Action: Instant

Dice Pool: Strength + Athletics

Effect: The Pandoran may traverse any surface that can hold its weight, adding its dots in Wall Walking to Climbing roll.

A Cabinet of Unborn

The Pandorans detailed here can serve as inspiration for such creatures in your **Promethean** chronicle, or as quick antagonists if your players' characters go poking around someplace they shouldn't.

THE CALAVERA

Vida. Vida. Vida.

Background: The Calavera was created by an unnamed Mexican Tammuz. Highly superstitious, the Tammuz believed the first Day of the Dead would be the perfect time to petition whatever forces govern such things to infuse a dead body with life. He spent hours preparing the corpse, carefully coating it in clay and beads that he had bought especially for the occasion, then carving the word "VIDA" on the body's forehead. The result was a work of art — one that would haunt the Tammuz in days to come.

Burying the body deep in the Chihuahuan Desert, the Tammuz sat down to wait. As the sun set on the third Day of the Dead, the new creation crawled forth from the earth. Ecstatic that it had worked, the Tammuz approached his child. He was so overcome with joy that he never noticed that the creature did not shake off the dirt or beads. By the time he realized that his creation was tainted by Flux, the Pandoran was already upon him. Though the Tammuz proved too hardy to kill, the Calavera made off with the tools its creator had used to so lovingly carve its body.

The Calavera remains highly aggressive today. It seeks combat even if it does not have the upper hand and relies on its hardiness and superior speed to take opponents by surprise, hoping a decisive first strike will weaken them enough to give it the upper hand.

The Calavera's dormant form is considered a work of art in its field and it has traveled most of Mexico and the US border states as a museum exhibit. It has gained some notoriety amongst Prometheans, many of whom can identify the Pandoran in Dormancy. Indeed, the Calavera takes some twisted pride in its visage and often poses so its dying victims might admire their abuser.

While the Calavera hunts constantly, like any Pandoran, the three Days of the Dead are its favorite. The Calavera will even join with other Pandorans in a hunting pack to celebrate these special days.

Description: In Dormancy, the Calavera looks like a beautiful skull sculpted from clay, adorned with bright beads that cover it completely in a rich, colorful pattern. Active, the Pandoran retains its signature skull, though it takes on a more leering quality and sprouts a small, hunched clay body. Several of its fingers have been replaced with the sharp tools that it stole from its creator.

Rank: 2
Mental Attributes: Intelligence 1, Wits 4, Resolve 2
Physical Attributes: Strength 4, Dexterity 3, Stamina 5
Social Attributes: Presence 3, Manipulation 1, Composure 2
Skills: Athletics 3, Brawl 4, Expression 2, Intimidation 3
Willpower: 4
Initiative: 5
Defense: 6
Size: 4
Speed: 13
Health: 9
Dread Powers: Armor (3), Bizarre Weaponry (2), Consume Vitriol, Divide, Scurry (3), Sense Vitriol, Track Pyros

DOLLFACE

<pure silence>

Background: Though Dollface was created in the last century, its creator was a Galateid from the Victorian era. Struggling on the last league of her Pilgrimage, the Galateid finally gave in and accepted that *multiplicatio* for her must indeed mean procreation. Carefully selecting the corpse of a beautiful boy on the cusp of adulthood, the Galateid set to work. Perhaps her own reluctance spilled through into the creation. Perhaps she had the process





wrong. Whatever the cause, the Galateid's attempt at creation failed and a Pandoran emerged. Feeling her Pilgrimage slip away, the petrified Galateid was unable to strike her creation down; Dollface, ever opportunistic, scampered off to begin its chrysalis.

Dollface does justice to its name. The creature is lovely to look at, yet utterly devoid of personality. It spends hours stalking and torturing prey — humans will do in a pinch, should no Promethean be available — but does so with the cold detachment of a shark. Dollface knows no passion, no joy. It merely hunts, hurts, and consumes.

Dollface's great skill and cunning make it a formidable hunter, and its favorite prey are thronged Prometheans. Singling out the weakest Promethean in the group, Dollface proceed to capture and torture its victim. If a Promethean cannot be had, Dollface turns to kidnapping and torturing human friends or allies.

Unlike most Pandorans, Dollface gains no pleasure from inflicting pain. It simply believes the victim's pain acts as a distress signal and uses this to lure more Created into its trap. Ironically, Dollface is half-right. Created will come for their loved ones, though the measure of pain inflicted upon them has nothing to do with this.

Description: In Dormancy, Dollface looks like a Victorian doll with a lovely sculpted face, short blonde curls (made of real human hair) and a tiny gentleman's suit. Awake, Dollface is as lovely as ever, even if its porcelain skin is too white, its nails too sharp, and its breath comes out in paralyzing, toxic tufts. Dollface's costume shows the wear and tear of its existence and hangs around it in bleak grey tatters.

Rank: 3
Mental Attributes: Intelligence 1, Wits 7, Resolve 5
Physical Attributes: Strength 6, Dexterity 7, Stamina 6
Social Attributes: Presence 6, Manipulation 1, Composure 4
Skills: Athletics 5, Brawl 4, Stealth 5
Willpower: 9
Initiative: 11
Defense: 11
Size: 4
Speed: 19
Health: 10
Dread Powers: Armor (2), Bizarre Weaponry (1), Breath Attack (4 – direct damage 2, armor and Defense evasion), Camouflage (2), Consume Vitriol, Divide, Paralyze (3), Sense Vitriol, Track Pyros

THE PILGRIM

I am like you. Please, sister, let me stay with you.

Background: The Pilgrim began its life as a mindless, broken monster, just like every other Pandoran. Its Ulgan creator successfully rent and re-assembled its body, only to see it be torn apart by Flux at the moment of conception. Exceptionally quick even as it scurried off the slab, the Pilgrim snatched up its body parts and, carrying an armful of itself, squeezed through a pipe leading out of the chamber. The distraught Ulgan tried to kill



her creation as it slithered away, but the Pilgrim's waxen body merely absorbed the blows.

Three years the Pilgrim wandered from place to place, going wherever hunger took it, until it fell under the control of a Centimanus. Its cunning placed the Pilgrim above other Pandorans, making the creature its master's special pet and, later, the key in a *praecipitatus* experiment. The Pilgrim came away from this experiment with a new sense of purpose. It remained with its master for another long year — watching, learning — until it had learned enough. Leaving its master's broken body behind, the Pilgrim set out on its own again.

The Pilgrim *believes* it can become a normal Promethean. After all, it was born a senseless monster and then it became sentient. It believes it shares enough commonalities with the Centimani to cross over to their state of being and, from there, become a proper Promethean. This twisted Pilgrimage is the creature's life's work. It has already begun by identifying as female because most humans are not "it." It sometimes seeks out Prometheans and pretends to be an Extempore Centimani looking to return to the Pilgrimage. Since Extempore do not appear in Azothic memory, the Created do not have an easy way to check the veracity of this claim.

The con, of course, it never lasts. The Pilgrim becomes hungry or frustrated by its lack of process and then lashes out. Maybe a Promethean recognizes the creature for what it is and, in a great act of denial, the Pilgrim kills him to avoid any more finger pointing. Like a broken clock, the Pilgrim returns to its quest time and again, though it will never get anywhere.

Description: While the Pilgrim cannot pass for human by a long shot, it *can* pass for a terribly mangled Created. Its body is crisscrossed by scars. The mockery walks with a pronounced limp that seems to vanish whenever it reveals its Pandoran nature. Its fingers are bent and rheumatic, with sharp nails. Its speech comes out in a slurred whisper, but can be understood if the listener is willing to come just little closer to its toothy maw.



Storytelling Hints: The Pilgrim currently identifies as female and has sculpted its malleable body to match. She dresses in skinny jeans and a tank top and her behavior, likewise is feminine. She is not above playing the "sister in need" card when a female Promethean is nearby, though she is less comfortable around male Prometheans as she has no idea how to play them. The Pilgrim is eager for knowledge of the Pilgrimage and, in many ways, her claims are true. She really *does* believe that she can become a Promethean and her desire to learn about the Pilgrimage is sincere. At least, it is when she is well fed and happy. But then something angers her or she gets hungry, and she reveals her true colors. In the end, the Pilgrim is merely a very confused and deluded predator.

Rank: 3

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 4, Wits 7, Resolve 8

Physical Attributes: Strength 8, Dexterity 9, Stamina 8

Social Attributes: Presence 4, Manipulation 4, Composure 6

Mental Skills: Investigation 2, Occult (Prometheans) 3

Physical Skills: Athletics 4, Brawl 5, Stealth 3, Survival 5

Social Skills: Intimidation 3, Subterfuge 3 (masquerading as Promethean)

Merits: Danger Sense, Fast Reflexes (2), Fleet of Foot (2)

Willpower: 14

Initiative: 17

Defense: 11

Size 5

Speed: 24

Health: 13

Dread Powers: Armor (3), Bizarre Weaponry (1), Briareus' Prowess (Dexterity 2), Consume Vitriol, Divide, Malleable Form (3), Scurry (2), Sense Vitriol, Track Pyros, Wall-Walking (3)

Flux Transmutations: Disaster (as the Solvent Distillation), Disruption (as the Solvent Distillation) Lordship

Centimani

Refinement of Flux (Dissolution) Freaks

The Refinement of Flux stands in opposition to the other Refinements. So much so, that it could more properly be called a degradation. The Freaks have abandoned the Pilgrimage, either as a conscious choice or through despair, apathy, or frustration. Many Prometheans consider Stannum the "ground state" of a Promethean, but Freaks know the truth: past rage and torment there is division and chaos. This is the precipice that they stand on, staring into the abyss of pure dissolution.

Adherence to the Refinement of Flux isn't necessarily suicide. A Promethean can find peace in accepting her own nature, in not having to fight to become something else and being able to stop running from the Pandorans at her heels. Some Prometheans even see themselves as kin to the Lilithim: necessary agents of chaos and destruction. Others are less philosophical. They stop thinking and give themselves to instinct and impulse. Some are purely practical, seeing a path to power.

This path is not without its downsides. The Flux transforms a Promethean, body and mind. Their forms often become twisted and mutated, like a Pandoran, hence the moniker *Freaks.* Many are insane or, at the very least, highly unstable and unpredictable. By its very nature, Flux is the enemy of order and coherence. Those who spend a long time in this Refinement find it hard to keep their thoughts together. Memories become a jumble and complex rational thought becomes elusive. Only their Azoth allows them to maintain any shred of sanity or identity. Many Centimani become creatures of ritual, investing what habits and practices they manage to hold onto with a nearly religious observance.

Yet, Centimani are not irredeemable. All else aside, the Refinement of Flux is just that: a Refinement. Any Freak can choose to switch to Stannum to escape the chaos and begin the difficult road back to the Great Work. Sometimes it is a moment of clarity that allows him to return to the Great Work and begin rebuilding himself. Other times, a Hundred Handed One's former throng will pull him from the grip of despair and help to set him to right. The former Centimanus may have done terrible things while chasing the Flux, but who among the Prometheans hasn't? He is just another monster seeking redemption.

Practices

Centimani have dedicated themselves to being monsters. They embrace isolation and shed connections to humanity.

- Humans need regular sleep, three square meals a day, and must shield themselves against the elements lest they sicken and die. Centimani do not pretend to be human. They eschew prepared food and eat whatever is available. They sleep only when they must; many stop wearing clothes, adorning themselves instead with trophies to make themselves more terrifying.
- Freaks abandon human definitions of beauty. They accept deformity and monstrous beauty. The flesh is malleable and Centimani are slaves of change, so their appearance should similarly be in a constant state of flux, reflecting the whims of the monster within. They take little care for how they look and are generally unkempt.
- Monsters do not have friends. They live in isolation on the outskirts of civilization. They find the ruined places, the wastelands and the wilderness, and they only leave to hunt among the weak and defenseless. Many embrace this ideal by systematically destroying all bonds they held in their former life. This can be as simple and traveling someplace new where they are unknown or as brutal as the ritual murder of every person they have any connection to. Some Centimani burn their old life to the ground once they decide to join the Hundred Handed.
- Every monster has its lair: a place where it can hide during its slumber and kennel its beasts. It is someplace defensible, hard to reach, and full of traps and pitfalls.

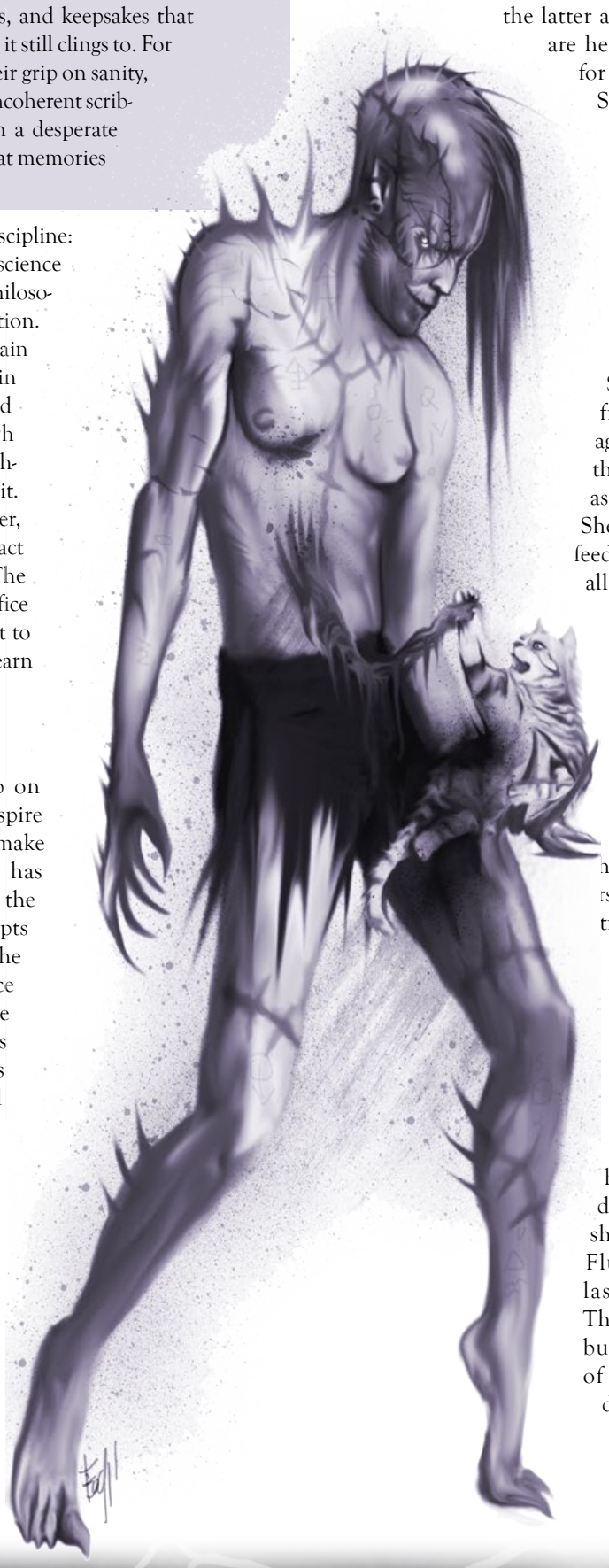
"We aren't human. We'll never be human. Stop telling yourself this lie and accept what you are."

It is also the monster's inner sanctum, where it hides secrets of the person it once was or aspired to be: trinkets, mementos, and keepsakes that represent what identity it still clings to. For those who have lost their grip on sanity, their lair is covered in incoherent scribbles and pictograms in a desperate attempt to preserve what memories are left to them.

- To Freaks, Flux is a discipline: religion to some and science to others. It is their philosophy and their occupation. As long as they maintain self-awareness, they gain insight from the mad flow of Flux through them and can use it rather than being used by it. Mastering Flux, however, is still intrinsically an act of self-destruction. The Centimanus must sacrifice his own enlightenment to the void in order to learn its secrets.

Ethos

A Freak has given up on humanity. She does not aspire to learn compassion or to make human connections. She has no desire to find a place in the civilized world. She accepts that she is a creature on the fringes of society; her place is in the darkness with the other monsters. Monsters pursue their own desires and kill those who stand in their way. They do not feel empathy or sacrifice of themselves. They are driven by instinct and need. The truth of life is that it is a chaotic struggle for survival that will ultimately fail. Trying to build anything to last is a waste of time. Everything is impermanent.



Prometheans stand between humanity and the monsters. A Centimanus has sided with the latter and so other Prometheans are her enemies as well as food for her allies, the Pandorans. She is more dangerous than the mockeries, though. A Pandoran awakens and seeks out Azoth when it senses its heat, going dormant when it is gone, but a Freak hunts her prey down, chasing him from city to city, relentless and driven. She rouses Pandorans from dark recesses to send against her quarry and feeds them to keep them active for as long as they are needed. She encourages Disquiet and feeds Wastelands, reminding all Prometheans of what they are and the curse that they bear.

A Centimanus does not build things. She doesn't organize and she doesn't gather. Unlike other Refinements, which have established Roles and practices, the Centimanus prides herself on not having rules or traditions. She revels in her freedom but also suffers from its aimlessness. She struggles every day to hold herself together in the wake of Flux, both mentally and physically. Her identity is slowly eroded, replaced by hunger and a desire for destruction; even though she has devoted herself to Flux, she clings to these last remnants of herself. This may be a contradiction, but Flux is the antithesis of order. Chaos does not demand consistency.

Roles

The Refinement of Flux has no Roles. Those walking its path cannot achieve milestones or advance on the Pilgrimage. Life as a Centimanus consists of steps backwards, not forward.

Practitioners

Tara is lost in her Torment, filled with rage and despair and unable to come to terms with what she is. In time, her Azoth degrades, becoming tainted with Flux. She has no choice, makes no decision to join the Hundred Handed. She simply falls from grace, her fire corrupted and tainted, slowly twisting her physical form until she resembles the monsters she once feared. More frightening is how it twists her mind, wearing away at everything she once clung to in the dark moments until all she has left is a desire to destroy, hoping that annihilation will take away her pain.

Marv comes to the conclusion that the impurity within him is his humanity. By removing that weakness, he can become a better, more refined monster. He turns his study to the Refinement of Flux, using it to burn away the progress he's made on his Pilgrimage. Only by embracing both sides of the Divine Fire can he hope to make himself pure. Marv wonders how he could ever have been so foolish as to believe that humanity was something to aspire to, especially when he stands over their pathetic mewling bodies, glorious in his newly found perfection.

Chicago is tired of running, tired of being afraid, and, most of all, tired of self-hatred. She decides to embrace the role of the monster, to become what she fears and stop aspiring to what she can never be. She starts by embracing Tin, but this isn't enough. Stannum gives her strength and lets her channel her rage, but she is still struggling. She decides to take the final step. The next time the Pandorans come for her, she doesn't run. She calls them kin. It is a relief.

Badi sees the power to be had in the mastery of Flux and the control of the monsters that harry his brothers. He is no idealist, his interest is purely practical. His ambition leads him down a dark path, searching for the mentor who can teach him forbidden alchemy. Badi turns his back on humanity and gives himself to chaos. Try as he might, he is ultimately unable to hide what he has become from the other members of his throng, so he feeds them to the Pandorans to gain their obedience and walks into the night.

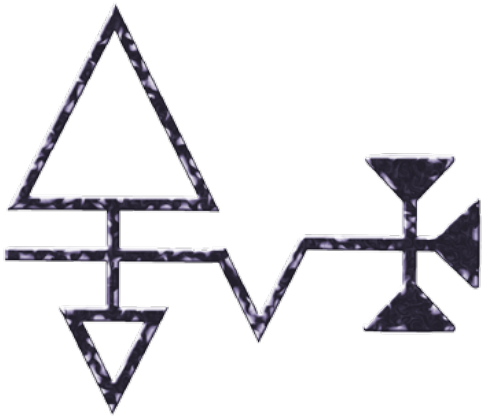
Every night, Hakan dreams of seeing his friends fall to the monsters, rent and torn asunder despite all his efforts to protect them. One night, he goes to a place where the Pandorans are known to lie dormant and makes a deal with the Hundred Handed who is their master, turning his back on his Great Work. The next time his throng sees him is when he steps out in front of a pack of Pandorans, stopping them in their tracks. His body twisted and his eyes filled with pain, Hakan bids them to flee.

Refinement Condition: *Destructive* – The Centimani are tuned into Flux and have an instinct for physical weaknesses. By spending a point of Pyros, a Freak can ignore a number of points of Durability or Armor equal to her Azoth for one attack.

Transmutations: Flux

Stereotypes

- **Aurum:** Monsters playing dress-up. And they call *us* obscene.
- **Cobalus:** Humanity is your impurity.
- **Cuprum:** You understand that isolation is our natural state.
- **Ferrum:** I'll show you how to improve a body.
- **Mercurius:** It's *all* Pyros. You'll see if you just look.
- **Plumbum:** Rooting through the muck, looking for meaning.
- **Stannum:** So close.



Flux

Consorting with Flux is not without its cost. By giving themselves over to Flux, Centimani are fundamentally changed. These changes are expressed through Flux Alembics. The powers they gain are not just things that other Prometheans can't do, but things they *wouldn't* do. By mingling with Pandorans, she allows Flux to mutate her body and taint the Transmutations of those around her. By encouraging the spread of Wastelands and Firestorms, she has given herself over to what her fellow Prometheans consider the darkest blasphemies. She has become tainted.

Flux is divided into four Alembics. Those Alembics are: Blight (feeding Disquiet), Lordship (controlling Pandorans), Mutation (physical transformation), and Solvent (canceling Transmutations). The Storyteller determines how many Alembics a Centimanus has learned, based on how long the character has followed the Refinement of Flux.

Blight

While most Prometheans struggle against the darker aspects of the Divine Fire, Centimani embrace Flux and can feed it to exacerbate its manifestations. Disquiet can be sown and nurtured, Wastelands fed, and Firestorms called into being. The Centimanus revels in the destructive power these things represent, for he believes that this is the Prometheans' true nature writ large and made unescapable.

Persistent: The Centimanus is so acclimated to the energy of Flux that he ignores extreme environment effects caused by Wastelands or Firestorms.

Invoke Disquiet

The Centimanus encourages the Flux within an individual in order to feed Disquiet, either calling it into being or making it worse. This is a useful tool to inconvenience another Promethean or as a way to drive those affected by his Pandorans' Disquiet further into destruction and madness. It is not unknown for a repentant Centimanus, wracked with guilt for what he has done, to use this power to turn the mob on himself to end his suffering.

Cost: 1 Pyros
Dice Pool: Manipulation + Empathy + Azoth vs. Resolve
Action: Instant and Contested

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The backlash of Flux rips into him, causing one point of aggravated damage.

Failure: He is unable to control the Flux.

Success: The target enters the first stage of Disquiet directed at the Promethean of his choice. If the subject is already suffering Disquiet, it advances to the next stage.

Exceptional Success: The subject starts in the second stage of Disquiet or advances to stage four.

Aggravate Wasteland

By tainting his surroundings with Flux, the Freak either brings about a Wasteland or worsens the one that is already there. This can be a means to harry a Promethean he is hunting or simply because the Flux-tainted environment is more comfortable for him and his Pandorans.

Cost: 2 Pyros
Dice Pool: Presence + Occult + Azoth
Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The backlash of Flux tears at his body, causing two points of aggravated damage.

Failure: He is unable to direct enough Flux to have an effect.

Success: He creates a stage one Wasteland focused on himself or Festers an existing one to the next stage.

Exceptional Success: The Wasteland starts at stage two or advances to stage four.

Summon Firestorm

By pouring out Flux in a torrent, he is able to create a Firestorm (p. 264) in a Wasteland. This is usually done to awaken the local Pandorans.

Cost: 3 Pyros
Dice Pool: Resolve + Occult + Azoth
Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Rather than targeting the Wasteland, the Firestorm is centered on the Centimanus with a strength equal to his Azoth.

Failure: He is unable to channel sufficient Flux to spark a Firestorm.

Success: He generates a Firestorm whose strength is equal to the number of successes rolled.

Exceptional Success: The Centimanus can choose one of the aspects of the Firestorm.

Lordship

The Centimanus' attunement with Flux puts him on the same wavelength as the Pandorans. As soon as he gives himself over to that side of his nature, they recognize him as one of their own. By playing on this empathy, he is able to influence them and even gather them into packs with himself at the head. The roll is only necessary when the Centimanus is trying to assume command of Pandorans while distracted, like when engaged in combat. Otherwise, he just pays the Pyros cost and assumes control.

Unlike most Alembics, Lordship does not have multiple Distillations. The more Pyros it is charged with, the more Pandorans can be controlled.

Persistent: The Centimanus registers to Pandorans as one of their own. They will not attack him except in self-defense.

Cost: 1 Pyros per Pandoran

Dice Pool: Presence + Animal Ken + Azoth vs. highest Resolve in group

Action: Instant and contested

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Pandorans turn on the Centimanus and attack him like any other Promethean for the duration of the scene.

Failure: The Pandorans ignore the Centimanus.

Success: The Centimanus takes advantage of his sympathetic connection with nearby Pandorans to gain control over them. If successful, for the rest of the scene he can issue simple verbal commands, which they understand regardless of the language used. It is not direct mind control, so the Pandorans will generally interpret the command according to their individual temperament and personality. This power cannot be used on a *sublimatus*. Lordship can be activated additional times to bring further Pandorans under his control.

The Centimanus can retain control for longer periods by feeding the Pandorans from his own Azoth. This is accomplished by allowing them to eat bits of himself. Every time he does so, he loses a point of Pyros and takes one lethal damage, but extends the duration of control by one day. He can control up to his Azoth rating in Pandorans in this manner. Greater numbers are possible, but they require the loss of another point of Pyros and Health for each multiple of his Azoth.

Example: *The Huntsman has an Azoth rating of 3 and so sacrifices 2 Pyros and 2 lethal damage every day to control his hunting pack of six Pandorans.*

Exceptional Success: The initial duration is one day.

Mutation

The Centimani are twisted and mutated by Flux; it introduces changes to their bodies similar to those that afflict the Pandorans. Even when temporary, the transformation is traumatic; when a Freak uses stolen Vitriol to make it permanent, it is one step closer to irrevocably turning her into a monster. Sometimes the Freak is emulating an ability she has observed in a Pandoran, but more often the mutation is an instinctual change in reaction to a situation. For example, being attacked might cause her to manifest thicker skin or sharp teeth.

Unlike most Alembics, Mutation does not have multiple Distillations. The more Pyros it is charged with, the stronger the Dread Powers she can manifest.

Persistent: The Freak may spend Vitriol Experience equal to the Dread Power's rating in order to make a mutation permanent. This is a step backwards, and she must roll to avoid losing a dot of Pilgrimage. These mutations are retained if she switches Refinements, even if access to the Mutation Alembic itself is lost.

Cost: 1 Pyros per dot of Dread Power

Dice Pool: Resolve + Stamina + Azoth – Dread Power's rating

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The mutation goes awry and she suffers from the Arm Wrack, Leg Wrack, Sick (moderate), or Blinded (one eye) tilt for the rest of the scene.

Failure: The changes are purely cosmetic or nothing happens at all.

Success: She gains use of the Dread Power for the duration of the scene.

Exceptional Success: She retains the Dread Power for one day.

Solvent

A Freak can feed Flux into the Transmutations of others to cause them to fail, often catastrophically, or to produce unexpected results.

Persistent: The Promethean develops sensitivity to Azoth to rival a Pandoran. She can sense when an Alembic is charged and knows instinctively how much Pyros it contains.

Disruption

The Centimanus degrades the Transmutations of other Prometheans, tainting them with decay and dissolution so that Pyros leaks uselessly from the Alembic. The Solvent Alembic must be charged to the same level as the target Alembic in order for this ability to work.

Cost: 1 Pyros

Dice Pool: Resolve + Occult + Azoth – target's Resolve + Azoth

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Her Solvent Alembic is disrupted and cannot be used for the rest of the scene.

Failure: The Centimanus is unable to overcome the Azoth of the target.

Success: The Alembic is disrupted and any effects it is generating end instantly. The Alembic cannot be recharged for one turn per success achieved.

Exceptional Success: The Alembic cannot be used by the target for the remainder of the scene.

Disaster

The Freak causes a Distillation being activated by another Promethean to fail.

Cost: 2 Pyros

Dice Pool: Wits + Occult + Azoth vs. Wits + Azoth

Action: Reflexive and contested

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Flux backfires on the Freak and she is unable to access any of her Transmutations for the remainder of the scene.

Failure: She fails to taint the target Distillation.

Success: The target fails to activate the Distillation.

Exceptional Success: The target suffers a dramatic failure.

Detonation

The Centimanus uses the power of her enemy's Alembics against him by tainting the Pyros used to charge it with Flux in order to cause him damage.

Cost: 3 Pyros

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Occult + Azoth vs. Stamina + Azoth

Action: Instant and contested

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The backlash of Flux causes her own Alembic to burn. She suffers three points of Lethal damage and the Solvent Alembic is discharged.

Failure: She is unable to ignite the Pyros.

Success: The Pyros charging her target's Alembic becomes tainted with Flux and becomes unstable. The Alembic discharges, causing one point of Lethal damage for each point of Pyros used to charge it. It can be charged again as normal.

Exceptional Success: All of the target's active Alembics are discharged, as above.

Disciples of Flux

THE HUNTSMAN

Feed, my pretties! Feed and grow strong!

Background: The Huntsman has always wanted to be loved, like most Muses. Early in his existence, he witnessed a young boy and his dog playing and the unconditional love that the animal showed its owner stuck with him. With each painful experience he had with humans, the more he yearned for that simple companionship. On his first encounter with Pandorans, he didn't see monsters; he saw hounds chasing their prey. He hid; when he saw their master emerge from the shadows, he called out. In time, he too learned to command the adoration of the beasts. In order to keep his pack well fed, he learned to track others of his kind. He feels no guilt. Anything which isn't Pandoran is simply prey.

He has no home. The search for food for his pack drives him to keep moving. When he moves into an area, the first thing he does is find a place to establish a den. Once he and his hounds have a safe place to rest, he starts hunting. He knows where his kind lurks and seeks them out. Any Pandorans he comes across are brought into the pack. He doesn't shirk from attacking an entire throng; he just makes sure he has enough hounds before engaging. Once he feels like an area is tapped out, he pulls up stakes, lets his excess Pandorans go dormant, and moves on.

Description: The Huntsman once represented the Byronic ideal of a man: curly dark hair, strong features, and athletic. Years spent living among his pack and feeding them from his own flesh have left him scarred and mutated. His jaw now extends outward, like a muzzle, and his mouth is filled with sharp teeth. Short dark fur covers his body, even replacing the hair on the top of his head and covering the exterior of his now pointed ears. Human nails are replaced with short, blunt claws, though he retains fingers instead of paws. He walks with a loping gait and even falls to all fours to travel rapidly in short bursts.

When his disfigurements are visible, his deeply soulful brown eyes appear glassy and artificial and his sleek fur looks glossy, like plastic. Each exhale carries with it the mist of the Divine Breath that animated him, like a beast panting on a frigid night. The vapor clings to him and even seems to seep out from his pores, making him resemble some sort of dark hound of the moors.

He doesn't wear clothes anymore, but does sport a studded leather dog collar and wraps himself in leashes of different materials — nylon, leather, rope — in a variety of colors and styles. He wears them as belts, bracelets, bandoliers, and necklaces. He carries no weapons, preferring to use his teeth in battle, tearing at Prometheans for the Vitriol they contain before his pack consumes them for their Pyros.

Storytelling Hints: The Huntsman seems genuinely happy. He is the stereotypical dog person, rolling around on the ground with his pets and taking them out to run free. His ire is raised only when someone hurts them or keeps them from feeding. He has no tolerance for other Centimani or *sublimati*, seeing them as rivals for his Pandorans' affection.



Lineage: Galatea

Refinement: Centimani

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 2, Wits 4, Resolve 2

Physical Attributes: Strength 3, Dexterity 5, Stamina 3

Social Attributes: Presence 4, Manipulation 2, Composure 2

Mental Skills: Crafts 1, Investigation (Prometheans) 3, Occult 1

Physical Skills: Athletics 3, Brawl (Teeth) 3, Larceny 2, Stealth 3, Survival 3

Social Skills: Animal Ken (Dogs) 4, Intimidation 2, Streetwise 3

Merits: Danger Sense, Demolisher 2, Fast Reflexes 3, Fleet of Foot 3, Residual Memory (Medicine, Weaponry) 2, Trained Observer 3

Willpower: 4

Pilgrimage: 1

Elpis: Companionship

Torment: Jealousy

Initiative: 8

Defense: 6

Unholy Repast (*****)

By devouring the heart of a dead Promethean within five minutes of her death, he can absorb her power and sometimes her memories and skills.

Prerequisite: *Sublimatus* or Promethean

Cost: None

Dice Pool: Strength + Resolve + Azoth – target's Stamina + Azoth

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: His victim's Azoth overwhelms him and he takes one lethal damage per point of her Azoth.

Failure: He fails to metabolize the heart and gains no benefits.

Success: His Pyros pool is refreshed and he gains any and all Vitriol the victim had. His victim is destroyed and cannot resurrect.

Exceptional Success: He gains access to his victim's recent or significant memories and gains a dot of Residual Memory for her highest-rated Skill.

Size: 5
Speed: 14
Health: 8
Azoth: 3
Pyros/per Turn: 12/3
Bestowment: Unearthly Mein (Presence)
Transmutations: Flux – Lordship, Mutation
Dread Powers: Bizarre Weaponry (Teeth) 2, Unholy Repast
Notes: The size of the Huntsman's pack varies. He has a minimum of three Pandorans with him at any time. When he is on the hunt, he will rouse as many as he can find and feeds them off his flesh to keep them active and under his control for as long as he can manage. Unsurprisingly, when he has a large group to feed, he is aggressive to the point of recklessness and finds a ready source of electricity, like a generator building or power plant, in order to restore the toll on his body.

THE SCHOLAR

Nobody has ever completed the Great Work. Whomever told you otherwise was lying.

Background: The Scholar spent many long years walking the Pilgrimage and she was close to success, very close, but in the end she failed. She became obsessed with learning why, initially switching Refinement to Cobalus but eventually degrading to Flux



in her search for the impurity that sabotaged her Great Work. She became convinced that the dual nature of the Divine Fire dooms Prometheans, its children, to a hopelessly flawed existence. She argues now that it is impossible to purge Flux and, thus, there is no way to purify Azoth sufficiently to reach the New Dawn. All rumors of success are just urban legends, spawned by false hope.

Now she acts as a mentor, convincing other Prometheans to give up the Pilgrimage and teaching them the ways of Flux. She is widely known for her immense knowledge about the Great Work; few are aware she's become a Centimanus. Most believe that she is a very advanced Cathar, and this is what draws people into her web. Since those who find her are either converted or killed, the word has not gotten out yet. She maintains a large abandoned mansion in a remote area and makes sure that pilgrim marks for hundreds of miles around point Prometheans her way.

Description: The Scholar is tall, conservatively dressed, and radiates authority. Everything she says is deeply meaningful. She doesn't indulge in small talk and looks down on those who persist in such trivialities. Her congeniality hides a general disdain for the intelligence of others; though she rarely raises her voice, she is quite adept at expressing her disappointment through other means. Her pale bluish-gray eyes suggest still water.

When her disfigurements show, her features are sunken and her eyes are even paler, losing their blue tint. Her long hair looks brittle, dry, and not nearly as thick. Despite her stature, she seems light and frail. A smell like orange and bergamot oil clings to her, overpowering her subtle floral perfume. The ring fingers on both her hands are missing.

Storytelling Hints: She is highly intelligent and rational, but reacts poorly to those of strong faith and hope. Once she decides that someone will not be brought around to her viewpoint, she dedicates herself to destroying them as an intolerable reminder of what she's lost. She genuinely enjoys being a teacher, despite the dark psychological reasons that drive it. Once she spent a day

observing students in a classroom; the vision of that moment when a student understands some new concept has stayed with her through her dark journey.

The key to using The Scholar is to keep her nature a secret for as long as possible. Turn her into a resource that the players come to rely on for her knowledge of Promethean lore. Long conversations about the nature of their being might subtly hint at her true beliefs but she is very careful about not overplaying her hand and has done this for a long while. She may also turn up as a rival to get to a rumored Athanor, though her goal is to destroy it. Once she is revealed, her powers and her Bestowment should make her very difficult to dispatch.

Lineage: Osiris

Refinement: Centimani

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 4, Wits 2, Resolve 4

Physical Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 2, Stamina 2

Social Attributes: Presence 2, Manipulation 5, Composure 3

Mental Skills: Academics (Philosophy) 4, Investigation 3, Occult (Alchemy) 4, Science 2

Physical Skills: Athletics 1, Drive 1, Larceny 3, Stealth 2, Survival 3, Weaponry (Sickle) 2

Social Skills: Empathy 2, Expression 3, Persuasion 4, Subterfuge 3

Merits: Interdisciplinary Specialty (Philosophy), Iron Will, Library (Occult) 3, Pusher, Repute 3, Safe Place 3

Willpower: 6

Pilgrimage: 3

Elpis: Epiphany

Torment: Fatalistic

Initiative: 5

Defense: 3

Size: 5

Speed: 9

Health: 7

Azoth: 8

Pyros/per Turn: 30/8

Bestowment: Revivification

Transmutations: Contamination – Suffering; Flux – Blight, Lordship, Mutation, Solvent; Mesmerism – Penthos

Dread Powers: Perfected Bezoars (Acid, Disease, Fire, Injury, Poison)

Alchemists

In Atlanta, Georgia lives a woman who is two hundred and fifteen years old. Every year on the anniversary of her birth, she drinks a potion made from nightshade, quicksilver, a perfect black pearl, and the bodily humours of an unlucky Promethean. She shakes and vomits up the cellular detritus of the last year, but in the end, it works. It always works. She hasn't aged a day since she brewed her first, one hundred and seventy years ago. All it takes is,



every so often, killing something that doesn't even count as human. She doesn't even mind anymore that they are human enough to beg and plead and scream as she bleeds them dry, storing their fluids in bottles against lean years.

The house on Old Hawk Hill isn't a place that good, normal folk go anymore. The sky overhead is always dark and twisted with writhing thunderheads. If you're close enough, when the storm finally comes, you can hear the sound of someone screaming, just above the sound of the wind and rain. But Tony McAllister, who lives up on the hill, doesn't seem to notice the sound. The old man is as spry as ever, and still comes into town once a week to buy books and chemicals with oddly shaped, almost organic looking lumps of gold.

He hasn't slept properly in weeks. His whole body hurts — his head from eyestrain, his back from hunching over his desk, his nose and eyes from exposure to the gas that came of his last attempt to create aqua regia, his gums, his fingertips — but he doesn't care. He's so close to making something divine in his basement workshop that when he accidentally meets a stranger who seems to have the power of creation and transformation at her fingertips, he can't help but hate her. He can't help but find her again, this time with a stun gun and a baseball bat and a vial of chloroform so he can drag her back to his lab and cut her open and find out what she really is.

Playing God

Alchemists are not content with the minds and bodies nature gave them. They are obsessed with unraveling the mysteries of their bodies and world around them. Alchemists believe that occult knowledge brings mastery over the vagaries of flesh and the power to determine the courses of their lives.

This attitude is popular among humans. From the first human to make a rock into a tool to modern scientists and engineers, humans have expressed a capacity to manipulate the world around them. The difference between alchemists and these pioneers of the occult and the mundane is that alchemists have come to hate the human condition. They are so terrified of death, infirmity, and ignorance that they have lost sight of love, fellowship and the value of mundane accomplishment. Bit by bit, they sacrifice their humanity for power and knowledge, until they have turned themselves into something monstrous. Scientists, engineers, and occult explorers spend their lives trying to make the world better for their species — alchemists spend their lives running from death.

Where the Created seek to transcend their monstrous condition, leaving behind their power, longevity, and superlative durability in favor of the simple pleasures of humanity, alchemists want to leave their humanity behind in the hopes of becoming something more than human. More frequently, they end up becoming something much less.

Although alchemists meddle with Pyros and Flux, the stuff of creation, change, and destruction, they are still only human. Their ability to generate the Pyros they need for their alchemical workings is sharply limited. The best way to get around this limitation is for them to steal Pyros from those beings who generate it naturally — Prometheans.

Prometheans are a wealth of alchemical wisdom. Although a Promethean's conscious insights to alchemical change are mostly useless to alchemists — most Prometheans engage with alchemy on an instinctive level, while alchemists decipher it cerebrally — alchemists can learn a lot by examining and experimenting on his organs and bodily fluids.

Between the Pyros Prometheans store and the wisdom that can be gleaned from their body parts, it should come as no surprise that alchemists often hunt Prometheans. Their goals and methods vary wildly, however. Some alchemists hunt alone, while others work in groups. Some alchemists use force; others use guile. An alchemist with many sources of Pyros might use a great deal of alchemy in his hunt, while another with more money than magic might rely on hired help and expensive, specialized weaponry. A more patient and economical alchemist might try to immobilize or disable her prey so she can keep them as a permanent source of Pyros, while a more impulsive alchemist simply kills Prometheans and takes what he can get.

Rarely, an alchemist and a Promethean might be able to come to an accord, with the Promethean trading some of his Pyros as part of a fair exchange for something that only the alchemist can provide. These relationships rarely last long. Alchemists are ambitious by nature; those who hate their human limitations enough to turn to the darker side of alchemy are not likely to feel

The Great Work

Some alchemists walk the line between obsession and madness. Although sufficiently frustrated with the limitations of the human condition that they seek to push those boundaries, they don't hate their humanity enough to try to abandon it altogether.

Sane, rational, and cautious alchemists are unlikely to come into a Promethean story, however. Because they are more interested in knowledge than power, they are generally content with lesser alchemical workings and don't have the same hunger for Pyros and Vitriol as the mad alchemists described here. Without the self-hating obsession of those who despise their own humanity, they are not driven to commit atrocities against the Created.

Most importantly, sane alchemists just know better. Chasing Prometheans is a good way to end up insane, maimed, or dead. These cautious alchemists rarely enter into the lives of Prometheans, and when they do, it's usually because the Prometheans sought them out, hoping for guidance.

Alchemists who avoid Prometheans sometimes call those who hunt them down for their humors "the Insatiate," referring to their endless hunger for Pyros. Alchemists who hunt the Created simply call more cautious alchemists fools or weaklings, when they bother to refer to them at all.

themselves constrained by morality or be the sort to keep bargains. Disquiet can eventually warp even good intentions and suborn even the most ordered mind, and alchemists are rarely pure of heart or emotionally stable to begin with.

Even worse, the only way for an alchemist to work a permanent change upon their own body — including some of the more infamous alchemical feats, like immortality, increasing their regenerative abilities, or permanently curing chronic diseases — is for the alchemist to ingest a potion based on Vitriol. No Promethean would willingly part with their precious Vitriol, so the only way for an alchemist to get her hands on it is to steal it, usually violently.

The Furnaces of Innumerable Alchemists

Alchemists come to their art from all walks of life. The only thing that unites them is a desire to dissect the world and exploit what they discover, as well as some quality of temperament or circumstance that prevents them from seeking out a more conventional path, like a career in science, medicine, or engineering.

Those alchemists who take their quest further have more in common, becoming the insane and driven alchemists who hunt down and dissect Prometheans. They share disdain for their own human nature and desperation to escape it, which is what drives their atrocities.

Despite the qualities that unite them, Alchemists further divide themselves based on culture of origin, economic or social background, motivation, and other factors. For example, a circle of alchemists who are united by their privileged backgrounds are unlikely to have much to do with an alchemist who grew up in rural Tennessee who started off cooking meth and initially turned to alchemy as a way to improve the quality of his product. Similarly, alchemists who practice Taoist-style "internal" alchemy and most European alchemists rarely work together because they don't have much to teach each other — their practices are just too different.

Alchemists rarely gather in groups of more than three or four, and most are completely solitary. They are jealous of their secrets and often compete for access to the same resources, such as rare books and chemical ingredients. Alchemists who hunt Prometheans are even more likely to keep their numbers down, because any Promethean they catch only contains so much Pyros and even less Vitriol, if any. More than one band of hunter-alchemists has been destroyed by infighting following a particularly rewarding kill.

Even so, with the advent of a reliable global mail network, telephones, and the Internet, alchemical organizations have grown. Although they may operate alone or in small groups locally, these groups might be associated with a larger organization.

Below is a list — far from exhaustive or complete — of some of the alchemical organizations that exist in the Chronicles of Darkness. Only those organizations who condone or at least do not condemn hunting down Prometheans and harvesting their Pyros, Vitriol, and body parts are listed here. Alchemists who don't hunt the Created still form small cells and larger organizations, but since they are likely to avoid Prometheans, they aren't included.

Strange Alchemies

Other groups in the Chronicles of Darkness often harbor alchemists or maintain close relationships with alchemists. Among hunters, those humans brave enough to put themselves in the way of supernatural beings that threaten ordinary people, the practice of alchemy is common among the members of Ashwood Abbey, the Loyalists of Thule, and the Cheiron Corporation. The Ascending Ones are essentially an alchemical society, but they have their own safer preparations and are usually savvy enough to shy away from insatiate alchemy. The Malleus Maleficarum maintains a few alchemists as well.

Hunters who become alchemists know that they walk a very dangerous line between using the parts of their Promethean targets for power and becoming monstrous enough to attract the attention of their companions. Some hunters who are not alchemists themselves stay on good terms with local alchemists — insatiate and otherwise — and sometimes trade information, access to rare books, or Promethean body parts for insight and alchemical potions.

Mages who are particularly interested in unraveling the nature of the world might turn to alchemy, but they rarely become black alchemists. The power behind their Awakenings is more reliable and less dangerous than hunting Prometheans for their humors. However, it isn't too unusual to come across the occasional mage who knows how to make a few alchemical preparations in addition to her spells, even if she learned them out of idle curiosity rather than real need.

Lodowick Society

Welcome, Friend, in the name of God.

These Christian alchemists are unique in that they don't hunt down Prometheans just to harvest their humors and internal organs, but also because they believe that their existence is an affront to God. That they get access to the Pyros and Vitriol that they need to fuel their miracles — which includes keeping the elder members of their society alive, curing diseases, and transforming base materials into precious metals to fund their operation — they view as evidence of God's favor. The divine has taught them how to use their unnatural prey's parts to empower them for their eternal hunt.

The Lodowick Society is embroiled in an occult war with another group of alchemists, the Golden Friends. Both groups maintain that they are the true ideological descendants of Christian Lodowick, a Quaker alchemist who lived in Newport, Rhode Island in the late 1600s. The Golden Friends are pacifists who actively and vociferously condemn harming Prometheans, even though they share the Lodowick Society's belief that they are abominations that defy the natural laws laid down by God. The power imbalance between the groups has led to the Golden Friends being hunted nearly to extinction by the Lodowick Society.

Alchemists of the Lodowick Society are distinguished by the Christian symbolism and ritual that surrounds their alchemical preparations. They prefer to clothe their transmutations in the trappings of miracles and like to think that their alchemical creations somehow prove the existence of God.

In addition to their war with the Golden Friends, the Lodowick Society's relationships with other alchemists are chilly, at best. They are deeply suspicious of other alchemists' motivations, viewing them as trying to steal divine secrets and somehow usurp God's throne, rather than doing God's will by exploring His creation.

The Emerald Crucible

I know your pain, sister. All of us have felt the touch of death. Join us, and you need never fear it again.

All alchemy — even the sane and cautious alchemy of those who avoid the Created — carries with it a touch of transhumanism. All alchemists want to expand what it means to be human, even if they don't reject it entirely.

The Brothers and Sisters of the Emerald Crucible take transhumanism to its natural extreme. Their stated goal is to completely escape the human condition. Whether this means becoming fully embodied superhumans or transcending the physical to become occult gods, they will stop at nothing less than unlimited power, all-encompassing knowledge, and immortality.

The Emerald Crucible recruits almost exclusively from among those who have felt the sting of the human condition. They prefer those who already know what it's like to be hindered by a disability or have some faculty stolen by illness or injury. Their first hunt for Vitriol — usually aided by their elders within their order — cures that condition and ties them forever to the Emerald Crucible.

Killing Prometheans for their humors is very important to these alchemists. They need a great deal of Pyros to temporarily mitigate the limitations of their humanity, and only Vitriol can remove those limitations permanently. They are utterly ruthless in their pursuit of Prometheans since only Pyros and Vitriol can stave off mortality, that final human indignity that terrifies all of them. When they do catch Prometheans, alchemists of the Emerald Crucible dissect them and extract their humors with an almost religious degree of ritual. They understand that they are consuming something both more and less than human and view it as a sort of sacrament.

Oddly, the Emerald Crucible is one of the most prosocial groups of insatiate alchemists. Along with their transhumanism is a strong thread of ordinary humanism. They believe that all humans deserve to transcend death. Many of them who have achieved personal immortality refuse to go further in their transformation and remain behind to guide other alchemists down the path of transcendence (which, of course, involves convincing them to murder and butcher Prometheans). As a result, Brothers and Sisters of the Emerald Crucible are the most likely to be found working in groups with alchemists from other traditions.

The Pristine Order of the Auric Chalice

The secrets of the Art aren't for everyone.

One of the most famous alchemical miracles is the transformation of gold into lead. Anyone who has made even a basic study of alchemical lore, however, knows that it is merely a metaphor. In fact, many alchemists believe that the search for material wealth is a dangerous distraction that can lead a seeker down dark paths.

The Pristine Order of the Auric Chalice agrees with this sentiment to the point of violence. These alchemists universally come from money — usually old money — and frown upon using alchemy for personal gain. In fact, they believe those alchemists who attempt to turn lead into gold or otherwise improve their material circumstances with alchemy are somehow a danger to everyone else.

The details of this ideology are quite foggy. Some members of the Pristine Order believe that using alchemy to base ends somehow poisons the soul, to the point that those who indulge in this sort of alchemy will inevitably descend into dangerous madness and use their alchemy to wreak indiscriminate havoc. Others hold that such "base" alchemy releases or creates dangerous spirits or monsters. Some even claim that Prometheans, Pandorans, *qashmallim*, and other dangerous freaks and prodigies of the Divine Fire are somehow created or released by selfish uses of alchemy.

The only thing they can do, of course, is use their money, contacts, and alchemy to prevent anyone from debasing alchemy. The best way to do that is to kill them (though a few members of this order have had some luck force-feeding their victims potions that erase their memories of alchemy, along with many of their other memories and some of their ability to reason).

Alchemists of the Pristine Order hunt Prometheans for the Pyros and Vitriol they need to carry out their war against other alchemists. Anyone who lacks a privileged background is fair game, since these alchemists assume that the temptation to use alchemy for material gain is just too great for anyone without wealth to fall back on.

The Pristine Order of the Auric Chalice is also one of the most socially backwards alchemical organizations in the world. The heart of their organization is a longing for the "good old days" of alchemy, when it was a secret art practiced only by those who could afford to pay its cost. The modern day, with its electronic communication, scanned grimoires, mass-produced glassware, and online chemical suppliers has ruined alchemy by making it accessible to anyone. Female alchemists aren't explicitly banned in this organization, but they are rare. The same is true of non-white alchemists, or those with money but no family history of wealth.

Many of these alchemists try to cover their murderous campaign with a veneer of old-world sophistication.

Amalgama Ltd

Just sign here, here, and... here. There we go. Welcome to the company.

On the surface, Amalgama Ltd is a chemical and biotech company based out of London with offices scattered across the world. Although not quite as successful as their greatest competitor and sometimes business partner, the Cheiron Group, they remain an important player in the world of biotechnology and manufacturing.

To those in the know, Amalgama Ltd is essentially a corporate mercenary. They seem to have an uncanny ability to make things happen. In return for contracts, stock tips, and cash, Amalgama is willing to ensure the success or failure of a business venture or make sure that a factory or office building has a catastrophic fire or explosion, or that a certain corporate or political figure dies of entirely natural causes. The only thing Amalgama won't do is cross other corporations that are as deeply invested in the supernatural as they are — among them the Cheiron Group, Deva Corp., Hototogisu International, Last Dynasty International, TELM Trust, and others.

In actuality, Amalgama Ltd is an alchemical syndicate run by three immortal Dutch alchemists born in the 15th and 16th centuries. Their primary goal is to secure as much control as possible over the world's alchemists. To this end, they run what is essentially a protection racket. When an alchemist of sufficient talent — regardless of whether or not they hunt Prometheans — comes to their attention, they offer him the position of "client consultancy." This means that the hapless alchemist pays Amalgama for the privilege of practicing alchemy without being abused or murdered by Amalgama thugs (though, in all fairness, Amalgama does take pains to make sure that no one else harasses their "clients"). The only way to reverse the direction of the cash flow is to join Amalgama Ltd as a "partner," which means, potentially, performing alchemical operations on behalf of the corporation, assisting in Promethean hunts, or becoming one of those thugs.

More than a few alchemist who originally had no interest in bothering Prometheans have been forced into insatiate alchemy by their unwilling association with Amalgama. The only way to turn the relationship with Amalgama into a profitable one is to do work for the company, and the only way to rise within the corporate hierarchy is power, and the quickest way to alchemical power is...capturing and gutting the Created.

Alchemists who belong to Amalgama Ltd have surprisingly normal, secure lives. They are employees first and alchemists second, and they know they can count on reliable paychecks and their employer's support. However, they are also ultimately expendable; Amalgama will not hesitate to use them up and abandon them if need be.

The Order of the Four-Cornered Seal

Pain is the path to eternity.

Eastern and Western alchemy are surprisingly similar, despite their disparate cultural and historical contexts. Both were interested in the transmutation of base materials into valuable materials, like gold, and both viewed this transmutation as a metaphor for a spiritual achievement. The differences are largely superficial — for example, Eastern alchemy has a somewhat stronger focus on achieving immortality, and Eastern alchemical preparations are more likely to include plant and animal products, which Western alchemists largely avoided.

The Order of the Four-Cornered Seal has a long and murky history. Periodic purges, conflicts with Prometheans, other alchemical societies, and mortal authorities have obscured the organization's origins. The Seal was probably founded in China sometime in the 3rd century, when a group of Chinese alchemists captured a Promethean and attempted to study him. They discovered that the elemental energies of this semi-human creature were wildly and dangerously out of balance. If it were human, it would be dead; not only did it live, but it seemed in superlative health with incredible durability and regenerative abilities.

Snakes in Human Skin

The real sociopaths of alchemy, the monstrous experimenters who reconfigure their bodies into hideous amalgams of flesh, rendering their fellow humans down into tallow and fixing the iron and nitrogen from their bones for use in their preparations, don't generally join alchemical guilds. They might become associated with the looser sort of organization, joining their web forum or talking their way in to raid the library, but they rarely stay members for long.

Even groups like Amalgama Ltd, which is arguably led by a trio of sociopaths, don't generally recruit this sort of person. If they find out that one of their recent "hires" matches that profile, they often eliminate the subject. Sociopaths are too difficult to manipulate and control, and they are bad for office morale.

The kind of alchemist who joins a guild does so out of a healthy human need to justify their actions. They seek out like-minded alchemists who tell them that it's acceptable to kidnap, torture, and kill the Created, or whatever other atrocities they commit in the name of progress. They are deluded and deeply invested in their bogus justifications, but they still feel that it's important to justify their actions. The true monsters of the alchemical world hunt alone.

Finally, one of the alchemists rendered the Promethean's inner fluids down into a potion — finally killing the tormented creature — mixed them with quicksilver and other occult ingredients, and drank it. The potion conferred some measure of the creature's durability and, as time would tell, longevity to the alchemist, opening up a new avenue of alchemical exploration.

Most Eastern alchemists believe that the path to immortality lies in achieving a supreme or superior inner balance. After their experience with the Promethean, the alchemists who would become the Seal came to believe that true immortality came from the right kind of imbalance. This order's eponymous "Four-Cornered Seal" comes from the number four's place as an unlucky number in Chinese numerology. These alchemists quickly developed a reputation for ghoulishly lurking among the sick or insane, trying to understand how their various elemental imbalances caused them harm but doing nothing to ease their pain. The Order of the Four-Cornered Seal gradually came to view "balance" as the enemy. They actively sought to become as imbalanced as possible, cultivating physical ailments and deviant behavior.

This obsession with sickness caused China's other alchemists to shun and eventually attack the Order of the Four-Cornered Seal and drive them out of China. With the rise of modern China and the decline of ancient superstitions, such as the practice of alchemy, the Order of the Four-Cornered Seal has gradually returned to their homeland, but they remain stronger elsewhere in Asia and in the West.

Above all, the Order of the Four-Cornered Seal believes in hunting down Prometheans in order to extract and exploit their dangerously imbalanced humors. No other source of Pyros can compare, and Promethean Vitriol is necessary for the potions that bring immortality and other physical changes. Members of this order are also more likely than others to use Vitriol to mutate their bodies into strange forms. Having spent years among the sick and the mad and turned their backs the very idea of balance, they are quick to throw themselves into monstrous transhumanism.

Alchemists and Their Prey

When alchemists and Prometheans meet, it's usually because the former is hunting the latter for the precious Pyros and Vitriol contains in their humors and tissues. In this sense, the easiest way to use an alchemist in a **Promethean: The Created** story is as a physical threat. Like Pandorans, alchemists want to hurt Prometheans in order to satisfy a deep need, though for alchemists the hunger is less visceral.

Alchemists also differ from Pandorans in that they are intelligent and (more or less) rational beings. While a Pandoran can easily be a "monster of the week," adding an element of tension to a plot, alchemists are a good choice for a villain with more complex motivations. If the Storyteller wants an antagonist who can scheme and plan for the future, move in human society, and work with a group of minions or peers, an alchemist might be a good choice.

Prometheans might be afraid of an alchemist's intellect, but what's horrifying about alchemists is their eagerness to throw away their humanity. The kind of alchemists who hunts the Created has everything a Promethean wants, but it isn't enough for him. Storytellers can use alchemists to push the throng to question the Pilgrimage itself. If humans aren't satisfied with humanity, then what's the point?

Alchemists can also be tragic antagonists. The fact is that insatiate alchemy is a dead end. Even if she manages to make herself physically immortal, by the time she achieves this goal, an alchemist will be completely insane and degraded, her mind and body shredded by Pyros, her soul worn down to a blackened nub. For all that they present a credible threat to Prometheans, insatiate alchemists are also a danger to themselves.

This theme is even more powerful if the Storyteller finds a way to introduce an alchemist who doesn't want to kill the throng (at least not right away). Maybe she claims that she is trying to escape the world of alchemy but needs some Pyros to pull off one last preparation. Maybe she wants to learn something from the Prometheans before she guts them, so she pretends to have a different motivation. Black alchemists are obsessives, addicts, users, and abusers; chances are good that any who try to talk to Prometheans are deluding themselves, the throng, or even both. In the meantime, however, the alchemist's doomed quest for apotheosis casts the Pilgrimage in a new light.

Ultimately, most Prometheans won't turn away from the Pilgrimage just because some humans can't cope with the limitations of humanity. Forcing a Promethean to acknowledge the power she is giving up by pursuing humanity, however, makes the Pilgrimage that much more meaningful.

The Making of an Alchemist

The Storyteller should begin by determining the Alchemist's traits in the same way as any mortal character. Alchemists tend to favor Mental Attributes and Skills, especially Intelligence and Resolve, Academics, Crafts, Occult, and Science. Alchemists also favor Merits that help them in their studies. Many alchemists were born with a minor supernatural ability, like a sensitivity to ghosts and spirits or the ability to see auras, which might help to explain how they got into alchemy in the first place. An experienced alchemist might have any number of Mental, Physical, or Supernatural Merits as the result of permanent changes wrought with Vitriol (see below for more details).

Once the Storyteller has determined the alchemist's mundane traits, she needs to consider the alchemist's Magnitude.

New Advantage: Magnitude

An alchemist's Magnitude represents her overall capacity for manipulating the Divine Fire. Attributes and Skills reflect the alchemist's skill at the mechanics of alchemy — mixing chemicals,

Magnitude

Magnitude	# of Distillations	Max Pyros/Pyros Per Turn	Pyros Regeneration
1	3	5/1	1/week
2	6	6/1	2/week
3	9	7/1	2/week
4	12	8/1	3/week
5	15	9/2	3/week

running experiments, reading arcane alchemical texts — but Magnitude is her enlightenment, the degree to which she has expanded her mind and spirit to encompass alchemical truths.

Magnitude controls the number of Distillations an alchemist knows and the amount of Pyros an alchemist can store on her person at once. Alchemists do not store Pyros in their bodies the way Prometheans do, but in alchemical preparations that must be quickly mixed into other potions to activate them. Many alchemists don't properly understand why their ability to create and store Pyros is limited — just as they don't understand the mechanisms by which they capture it in the first place — but the limitation remains.

When an Alchemist steals Pyros from a Promethean, that Pyros is not subject to this limitation. So, for example, an Alchemist with Magnitude 4 can store up to eight points of Pyros that she generated herself, but as many points of stolen Pyros as she can manage.

Finally, an alchemist's degree of enlightenment somewhat frees her from the humanity's weakness in the face of the supernatural. Dots of Magnitude are added to Resistance traits when the alchemist is the target of a supernatural power.

In the same way that a demiurge's obsession steals some Pyros from the Principle and brings it into the world to imbue a new Promethean with life, an alchemist's obsession allows her to steal a tiny trickle of Pyros. The greater an alchemist's Magnitude, the faster the Pyros trickles into her.

Pyros is not for mortals, however, and alchemists suffer consequences for continued exposure. Every alchemist labors under several persistent Conditions and Derangements, reflecting the way that their bodies and minds bend under the pressure of the Divine Fire. Conditions like Addicted, Disabled, Madness, Mute, and Obsession are particularly appropriate, but the Storyteller should feel free to be creative.

Some alchemists can even develop unique Conditions related to the presence of Divine Fire in their bodies and souls. These Conditions could include having accumulated enough radiant spiritual detritus that the alchemist can awaken Pandorans as though she were a Promethean, inspiring a weakened form of Disquiet in her fellow humans, or becoming hideously deformed or sensitive to sunlight. The Storyteller should be as sadistic as possible without crippling the alchemist to the point that she is no longer a threat to the Prometheans she hunts. Alchemists are foils for Prometheans because of how they ruin and degrade their bodies and minds for the sake of power.

Perfection the Self: Working with Vitriol

The last step in making an alchemist is to consider how the art of alchemy might have changed her. Alchemists can use a Promethean's Vitriol to work permanent changes in their bodies, which is part of why black alchemists hunt the Created.

Most alchemists use Vitriol to cure physical ailments or to make themselves into paragons of humanity, which can be represented by Merits. An alchemist who takes a Merit in this way does not need to meet the prerequisites. For example, an alchemist can drink a potion that permanently toughens her flesh — the Iron Skin Merit — without any dots of fighting style Merits. The alchemist can learn any Merit related to the functioning of her body, but not Merits that require special training, such as Fighting Styles. On the other hand, many Promethean-only Merits are fair game. Appropriate Merits include: Acid Stomach, Ambidextrous, Double Jointed, Giant, Good Brain, Iron Will, Small-Framed, Striking Looks, Terrible Disfigurement, and Weatherproof.

The most ambitious (or, depending on how you look at it, most insane) alchemists can use Vitriol to become increasingly transhuman, transforming their bodies into monstrous parodies of humanity. To reflect this, the Storyteller can also choose Pandoran Dread Powers for alchemists. These Dread Powers do not come from Flux, but rather represent the various hideous ways the alchemist has manipulated her own body.

Magic Potions

Prometheans wield Pyros like an extension of their nature. Although Transmutations require practice and study to unlock, once they are learned they are as easy as breathing. A Promethean who knows how to conjure flame to attack her enemies can do so as quickly and easily as she can throw a punch.

Everything a Promethean can do thanks to his nature, an alchemist can only do thanks to long hours of study and experimentation. Pyros doesn't flow through an alchemist's flesh. He distills it with obsession, stores it in jars and bottles, and uses it to work strange miracles in his basement laboratory.

Before the players' characters encounter an alchemist, the Storyteller should decide which preparations the alchemist has available and roll ahead of time. In the heat of the moment, the Storyteller should roll for whatever action the alchemist actually

takes to activate her powder, oil, or potion. To fumble a vial of foul liquid into her mouth and keep it down, an alchemist might have to roll Dexterity + Stamina. Blowing mind-altering powder into her victim's face might use Stamina + Brawl. Alchemists are at least as aware of their strengths and weaknesses as anyone else, and will try their best to make preparations that take forms they find easier to use.

Because alchemists create their preparations in the relative safety and comfort of their laboratory, they are frequently able to take their time and work slowly and carefully. The Storyteller can, if she feels it's appropriate, apply the rote quality to the alchemist's roll to create her alchemical preparation. On the other hand, alchemists only have access to the preparations they have made ahead of time. If an alchemist is caught completely flat-footed, she is no more powerful than a typical mortal (and may be less powerful, thanks to the Conditions she has inflicted on herself).

ALCHEMIST — KAREN DEGALLE

Shush... it's too late. Just let go. It will hurt less if you hold still.

Background: Karen started to hate her flesh when the cancer took her left breast and part of her jaw. She started to hate people when her husband Owen left her; he said it was because of her growing obsession, but she knew the real reason was her scars.

If medical science couldn't guarantee that the cancer wouldn't come back, Karen was determined to find something that would. For years, Karen jumped from practice to practice — yoga, raw food, meditation — but she had been a PhD candidate in political science before her cancer. Her cynicism, sharpened to a deadly point by Owen's departure, and her natural intelligence led her to see through all these false panaceas. She was on the verge of despair when the Emerald Crucible found her, showed her real miracles, and promised to help her to become a god.



Description: Karen was never a beauty queen, but she had taken some pride in her symmetrical features, long auburn hair, elegant figure, and bright green eyes. Cancer took all of that away. The surgery to remove her breast and part of her jaw left her lopsided and scarred and after the chemotherapy; her hair grew back brittle and grey. Only her eyes remain unchanged, glittering with intelligence and determination from within her ruined face. At one time, Karen might have wanted to use alchemy to restore her appearance, but after a few years in the Emerald Crucible, she has her sights set on higher goals.

Although she is certainly obsessed, Karen still tries to dress like a regular person. She prefers jeans, t-shirts, and sturdy boots, but can play dress up if she has to. Karen takes a perverse pleasure in the juxtaposition of her scarred body and fancy clothes, but her new life as an alchemist and hunter gives her few opportunities.

Storyteller Hints: Karen is dominated by fear. She fears illness and the infirmity and indignity that comes with it. She hates and fears the way healthy people look at someone who is obviously sick. Most of all, she fears death and the annihilation of her persona. Before her illness, her anxiety drove her to succeed in the world of academia; now it drives her alchemical explorations and atrocities.

Fear isn't a heroic motivation, so Karen tries to present it as ambition. She isn't *afraid* of mortality, she *wants* immortality. She isn't *afraid* of sickness; she *wants* power. The easiest way to earn Karen's genuine spite is to point out that her actions are founded in fear. Part of Karen's cover-up of her anxiety is her cool, businesslike demeanor. She pretends not to hate the Prometheans she hunts and kills — in reality, she is deeply jealous of their power, durability, and extended lifespan — and sometimes tries to comfort them as they die under her knife.

Virtue: Ambitious

Vice: Anxious

Mental Attributes: Intelligence 4, Wits 2, Resolve 5

Physical Attributes: Strength 2, Dexterity 4, Stamina 2

Social Attributes: Presence 3, Manipulation 3, Composure 3

Mental Skills: Academics (Political Science, History) 5, Computer 2, Crafts (Glass) 3, Investigation (Research) 4, Medicine (Cancer) 2, Occult (Alchemy) (Prometheans) 4, Politics (Theory) 4, Science (Chemistry) 3

Physical Skills: Athletics 1, Drive 2, Firearms (Rifle) 4, Larceny 2, Stealth (Stalking) 3, Weaponry 2

Social Skills: Empathy 2, Expression 3, Intimidation 3, Persuasion 2, Socialize 2

Merits: Contacts (Academics, Alchemists, Chemists) 3, Language (Greek, Latin), Resources 3, Sleepless, Status (Emerald Chalice) 2, Striking Looks 2

Health: 7

Magnitude: 3

Distillations: Mesmerism — Rattle, Swoon; Metamorphosis — Natural Weaponry; Vulcanus — Direct Fire, Divine Guidance, Drain Pyros, Fire Grasp, Refine Pyros, Steal Pyros

Pyros/Per Turn: 7/1

Willpower: 8
Size: 5
Speed: 11
Defense: 2
Initiative: 7
Armor: None
Dread Powers: None

Note: Karen is a full-time alchemist. All her Resources come from her savings and the coffers of the Emerald Chalice; she no longer holds down a normal job or has any mundane friends. As a result, she has plenty of time to work on her alchemical preparations. She usually carries a large number of powerful alchemical preparations. In no case does she leave her lair without preparations of Fire Grasp, Natural Weaponry, and Sense Pyros on hand, just in case.

Karen suffers from the Addicted and Obsession Conditions. She has fallen into the habit of creating alchemical compounds that soothe her anxiety and ease her troubled conscience, but becomes shaky and irritable when she can't get her fix. Karen's Obsession is a fixation with death. Like some powerful alchemists, Karen awakens Pandorans as a Promethean with Azoth 3 (her Magnitude). These Pandorans can sense that Karen's body contains very little of interest to them, and will only attack her in the absence of nearby Promethean targets.

Firestorms

A Promethean is an engine of change, an artificial or piecemeal body wrapped around a core of Azoth. Some Prometheans, especially Unfleshed, think of Pyros as fuel and Azoth as a flame burning it. Within the "engine" of a Promethean, Pyros is relatively safe. If the fire burns too hot, it reveals the Promethean's disfigurements. If the Promethean uses too much Pyros too quickly, some of it "leaks" into the environment like spilled gasoline, polluting the surroundings into a Wasteland. A Wasteland can subside on its own given time, especially if the Promethean responsible leaves. Gradually, the world absorbs the spilled fuel of Pyros. If that fuel should catch a spark, however, everything explodes.

Despite the metaphor, Pyros isn't precisely fuel. It's *change* — the raw stuff of potential change, either fusion (Elpis) or entropy (Flux.) Pyros is also its own catalyst — put it with more Pyros, and you run the risk of a chain reaction. When too much Pyros gathers in one place, it can suddenly manifest; all the pent-up potential burns off in a violent display of raw power. The world erupts in a maelstrom of chaotic energies, with whatever triggered the event caught in the center. The landscape — and the trigger — warps and burns in the mutagenic fires of Flux or Elpis as the catalytic power of the Divine Fire spends itself in a matter of seconds.

Prometheans are among the greatest concentrations of Pyros in the world, and as such they can set it alight by accident or design. Not every Promethean experiences the pain and terror of Pyros gone amok, but most do at some point in the Pilgrimage. The Azothic Memory warns of *Firestorms*, also called "Eumenidean Vortices." Some Prometheans see Firestorms as punishment for real or imagined sins, but the fires have no more judgment than a bolt of lightning. It *is* possible for a Promethean to fall prey to Flux or build her energies up too quickly, sparking a Firestorm, but a Vortex can also be created by the Final Work, a greater *qashmal* manifesting in a Pyros-rich environment, or by the action of Pandorans. Some Prometheans (especially Centimani) even trigger them deliberately in order to use the fires of Flux as a weapon.

Like a brushfire, a Firestorm destroys and changes the landscape, but it also clears the way for new growth. A Vortex consumes all the Pyros in its path until it is spent. Terrifying as they are for a Promethean caught up in the chaos, Firestorms clear Wastelands, kill Pandorans, and consume Pyros that alchemists might otherwise steal for their own ends. It's rare, but some Prometheans set off Firestorms with this cleansing in mind, hoping to weather the chaos that results in order to erase a mistake — a clutch of Pandorans, perhaps, or a large Wasteland.

The Anatomy of a Firestorm

Most lore about Firestorms comes from three sources, besides the Azothic Memories left by Prometheans who have suffered in the flames. A Promethean who goes looking for more answers than his Pilgrimage can give should bear in mind the motives of those he asks — or those whose knowledge is being passed on by a third party.

- Centimani, thanks to their affinity with Flux, often have a fascination with the spectacular displays of Flux' power within a Vortex. Centimani sources regarding Firestorms describe them as expressions of power or something that can be harnessed. Some even regard the study of Vortices as a replacement for the Great Work.
- Savants study Firestorms as an expression of Pyros and Azoth, especially in their manifestations toward the end of a Promethean's Pilgrimage. Ophidian sources regarding Firestorms describe them as an analogy to the Promethean state of existence, expressions of pure metamorphosis fueled by the Divine Fire.
- Alchemists warn one another about Firestorms as consequences of disastrous failure in the laboratory, with emphasis on how Vortices form. Alchemical sources regarding Firestorms describe them as natural disasters or catastrophic chemical reactions, often recording (as best as the alchemist can understand) the steps that led to a Firestorm so that they can be avoided in future.

Fuel

The only requirement for a Firestorm is concentrated Pyros — free Pyros is more likely to combust, but even the relatively small amounts used in alchemists' experiments will do. Ordinarily, Pyros is too thinly spread across the world to catch alight. Some force, natural or supernatural, has to act on it and make it gather

to create the proper conditions for a Vortex. Unfortunately, the creation of a Promethean counts — and the Created are walking reserves of Pyros just waiting for the right spark to set it off.

Spark

Prometheans and alchemists who study Firestorms record several different forms of trigger event, which can affect how widespread the storm is. Firestorms can range from affecting a single person (usually the individual who triggered the Vortex) to warping whole landscapes, depending on the trigger and the amount of Pyros or Flux available to feed the chaos.

Ophidian sources name the known triggers after the Furies of Greek myth, goddesses of torment who punished hubris with implacable fury. Like the Kindly Ones they're named after, Eumenidean Vortices can't be controlled or tamed, only survived.

Semnai Firestorms are the best-known to Savants, sparked by the slow build-up of Azoth and unused Pyros toward the end of a pilgrimage, especially when multiple Prometheans near the Final Work together. Victims feel them coming hours or days in advance, like an approaching thunderstorm.

Maniae Firestorms are triggered by sudden, jarring events such as an instantaneous spike of Elpis or Flux, an overwhelming flash of inspiration or revelation, a moment's error when using Pyros to fuel powers, or the sickening feeling of stepping backward. They strike without warning, but are usually short-lived.

Praxidikae Firestorms are triggered by too much Flux mixing with Elpis — the awakening of multiple Pandorans in a small Pyros-rich space is the most common cause, but Praxidikae also covers deliberate vortexes set ablaze by the Hundred-Handed.

Potniae Firestorms are triggered by the manifestation of a *qashmal* — the more Pyros in the area, the less powerful the *qashmal* needs to be to set it alight. The mighty arch-*qashmallim* are so strong that they almost always manifest in a Firestorm, leaving devastation in their wake.

Dirae Firestorms are the least understood by Savants and Centimani, the result of Pyros surging and moving outside of the bodies of Prometheans or the manifestations of *qashmallim*. Alchemical experiments in storing the Divine Fire sometimes trigger Firestorms in terrible accidents, as do failed attempts by mortals to become demiurges.

Flame

Once the chain reaction has been triggered, the Firestorm is inevitable, though what form it takes is highly unpredictable. Vortices can cover miles or assault only a single Promethean. They can utterly devastate anything trapped in the storm or cause more pain and terror than physical injury. About the only certainty is that they are always *brief* — the world simply doesn't contain enough Pyros to sustain a Firestorm in one place for more than a minute, although it will feel like the longest minute in the life of any unfortunate Promethean at the epicenter.

Despite the name and the way they consume Pyros, Firestorms don't always take the form of literal flames. They can, but the cascade of violent Pyros is as likely to manifest as a blizzard, electrical storms, or stranger aspects like all living flesh melting into grotesque shapes. Some Savants and Centimani claim that the aspects a Firestorm takes are influenced by the surroundings; that it takes the form of whatever change has the most *potential* to happen but hasn't yet. If the link exists, it's subtle — trying to predict what form a Firestorm will take is like predicting the weather.

Ashes

After the chaos of a Firestorm has died down, survivors find that whatever once hosted the Pyros consumed by the vortex is irrevocably changed. If the Firestorm centered on a Promethean, that unfortunate suffers the effects of having his internal alchemy disrupted — some Created immediately enter Torment following a Firestorm, but a vortex might also *remove* Torment that was already in effect before the Spark.

The aftermaths of more widespread Firestorms are no less devastating. The rains of blood, flesh-warping energies, or blizzards in the tropics may have ended as suddenly as they began, but the pools of blood, twisted bodies, and rapidly-melting snowdrifts don't vanish when the Vortex runs out of Pyros to consume. Aside from the sheer environmental damage, Firestorms kill Pandorans, destroy Wastelands, and ruin alchemical experiments.

Firestorm Mechanics

Firestorms are unpredictable and strange, even to Prometheans who spend their entire Pilgrimage studying them and recording their insights into Athanors. The systems presented here are only *guidelines*, which troupes should deviate from whenever it makes for a better story.

Step One: Trigger Events

As described above, a Firestorm can trigger whenever Pyros (or its more specialized forms like Azoth, Flux, Vitriol, or Elpis) undergoes a chain reaction by being concentrated enough in a charged environment. The following are some of the game mechanic events that can result in a Firestorm. The list is not exhaustive, and none of the events here are *certain* to spark a Firestorm. Whether they do or not is up to the Storyteller, who may not wish to derail a story with a Eumenidean Vortex.

Semnai

- When the player of a Promethean rolls or declares a dramatic failure on the first roll of a trait after the Promethean raises her Azoth.
- When a genitor successfully creates a new Promethean in an environment that she has spent Pyros in within her Azoth in days.
- When a Wasteland reaches the most severe level (see p. 176.)
- When more than one Promethean in the same throng raises their Pilgrimage to ten dots within the same story.
- When a Promethean character is killed suddenly, losing all Health in a single turn.

Maniae

- When the player of a Promethean with five or more dots of Azoth rolls a dramatic failure on a roll using two or more points of Pyros.
- When a Promethean character suffers two or more dramatic failures in a single scene, both on rolls involving Pyros. Note that only one failure per scene can be declared dramatic (p. 105), so the player must roll at least one of the dramatic failures naturally.

Praxidikae

- When an attempted genitor creates Pandorans in an environment that she has spent Pyros in within her Azoth in days.
- When a Centimanus uses the "Summon Firestorm" Alembic.
- When five or more Pandorans awaken at the same time to the same Azothic Resonance.

Potniae

- When a lesser *qashmal* manifests into a stage-four Wasteland.
- When a greater *qashmal* manifests in the presence of a Promethean with 8 or more dots of pilgrimage.
- When an arch-*qashmal* manifests.

Dirae

- When an alchemist attempts to store more Pyros than his Magnitude allows.
- When an alchemist character suffers two or more dramatic failures in a single scene, both on rolls involving Pyros.

Step Two: Quantify the Firestorm

Every Firestorm has an Element (the form of Pyros it sparked from), a scale, a duration measured in turns, and a Firestorm Strength.

Element

The Element of a Firestorm affects one of its Aspects — the manifestation of the vortex's power — and what aftereffects the Firestorm leaves in its wake.

Azothic Firestorms feed from Azoth and Vitriol. Semnai-triggered Firestorms are always Azothic.

Elpidian Firestorms feed from free Pyros or Elpis. Maniae-triggered and Dirae-triggered Firestorms are always Elpidian, as are Potniae-triggered vortices caused by Elpidos Qashmallim.

Lilithian Firestorms feed from Flux. Praxidikae-triggered Firestorms are always Lilithian, as are Potniae-triggered vortices caused by Lillithim *qashmallim*.

Scale

Firestorms are either *centered* around a single character or *widespread* across a whole area of ground — for example, a valley, a forest, a city block, or a mountainside. If the trigger event involved the Pyros within a Promethean sparking, the vortex will be centered, but other trigger events vary. Some *qashmallim* manifest with Firestorms centered around themselves, while others ignite the whole landscape into which they manifest. The Summon Firestorm Alembic of Flux targets a Wasteland, so it is usually widespread, but if the Centimanus triggering the storm makes a mistake it can ignite the Pyros within her body instead. Alchemists mishandling stored Pyros ignite Firestorms covering their entire laboratory, while those who make critical errors in their calculations find the vortex centers on them.

Even centered Firestorms spill over to unfortunates who are close enough to the victim. A centered Firestorm has a rough radius of one yard per dot of Azoth or Magnitude of the central character.

Duration

Centered Firestorms last one turn per dot of Azoth or Magnitude of the central character.

Widespread Firestorms last for one turn per dot of Azoth or Magnitude of the highest-rated character within the Vortex. Firestorms with no suitable characters within the area last for their Strength in turns.

Strength

To determine the Strength of a centered Firestorm, roll the Azoth or Magnitude of the central character as a dice pool. For widespread Firestorms, use the highest-rated Azoth or Magnitude of characters within the affected locale, or simply assign a dice pool of one to ten dice based on the needs of the story.

Dice Modifiers

Every additional character with an Azoth trait within the affected area	+1
Every Pandoran — active or dormant — within the affected area	+1
Each stage of Wasteland suffered by the affected area	+1
The presence of a lesser *qashmal*	+1
The presence of a greater *qashmal*	+3
The presence of an arch-*qashmal*	+5
Every Promethean in a branded throng with the central character, whether in the affected area or not	–1

Firestorms at a Glance

Step 1: Determine Trigger

Step 2: Quantify the Firestorm. Determine Element, Scale, and Duration. Roll for Firestorm Strength

Step 3: Choose Aspects

Step 4: Determine aftereffects

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Firestorm looms, breaks, and then dissipates without igniting. The affected area becomes a stage 1 Wasteland or progresses an already-existing Wasteland by one stage.

Failure: The Firestorm is only fed by the initial trigger event. It has a Strength of 1.

Success: The Firestorm's Strength is equal to (successes +1).

Exceptional Success: The Firestorm's Strength is equal to the rolled successes plus 1. Centered Firestorms become widespread. Widespread Firestorms increase their duration to a full scene.

Step Three: Choose Aspects

Every Firestorm is different, though most are potentially deadly.

All Firestorms are level four Extreme Environments (see p. 212), meaning they impose a four-dice penalty on all actions for characters within the Vortex, and inflict four points of lethal damage per turn after the character's Stamina in turns. This degree of harm only affects Prometheans and Pandorans, as it represents the Pyros within the environment burning itself out, including the Pyros inside their bodies. Mortals (including alchemists) and other supernatural beings only treat the storm as a level two Extreme Environment, taking two bashing damage *once* rather than per turn, and a three dice penalty to all actions. *Qashmallim* are entirely immune to Firestorms' effects.

All dormant Pandorans within the affected area of a Firestorm immediately awaken.

As well as the above, all Firestorms have one or more *Aspects* that provide more detailed effects, pose additional dangers, may increase the Extreme Environment rating of the Firestorm for mortals, and apply Environmental Tilts to any character (except *qashmallim*) in combat during the Vortex's duration. A Firestorm has up to its Strength in Aspects.

The following list of Aspects is not exhaustive. Storytellers should improvise new ones whenever needed.

Blinding: The fluctuating Pyros in the Firestorm creates intense light or utter darkness. Characters within the Vortex suffer the Blinded Tilt for the duration of the Firestorm. This Aspect may be resisted.

Burning: The overwhelming Pyros in the Firestorm superheats victims, putting them at risk of spontaneous combustion. Characters within the Vortex who fail to resist catch on fire, suffering one point of fire damage every Turn (lethal to mortals, aggravated to Prometheans.) The flames continue burning until extinguished, even after the Firestorm ends. Flammable objects will also set alight, creating the secondary hazard of a large fire even after the Vortex ends.

Resisting Aspects

Some Aspects may be resisted — in these cases, roll a resisting character's Stamina, penalized by the Firestorm's Strength. Success resists the Aspect's effects for the character's Stamina in Turns (after which they must successfully resist again,) or for the entire Duration of the Firestorm on an exceptional success.

Caustic: The Firestorm coats every exposed surface in caustic material, burning flesh and blinding eyes. The atmosphere inflicts one lethal damage to everything within the area of effect per turn, and characters suffer the Blindness Tilt. Both the Tilt and damage may be resisted but must be resisted separately. The caustic material vanishes when the Firestorm ends.

EMP: The Firestorm disrupts electrical equipment, destroying it immediately. The damage may be repaired after the Vortex ends. Although the electrical activity of the Firestorm is not enough for Electroshock Therapy, Promethean characters heal one bashing wound per turn.

Flesh-Warping: The Firestorm inflicts temporary random physical transformations on all fleshy forms within the area — Unfleshed are immune, but other Prometheans suffer the effects unless they resist. Affected characters gain the Firestorm's Strength in Pandoran Dread Powers dots (see p. 244), but only gain any advantages of their new body parts after a successful Stamina + Resolve roll. Centimani add two dice to the roll. After the Firestorm ends, the mutations painfully end, inflicting their dot rating in bashing wounds as they vanish.

Flooding: The Firestorm drenches its area of effect with water, oil, tears, sap, blood, or other stranger liquids, pouring out of solid surfaces, raining from the sky, and sweating out of exposed flesh. Everyone within the Vortex suffers the Flooded Tilt, which persists after the Firestorm ends until the fluid drains or dries.

Hurricane-Blown: The Vortex creates winds so strong that small objects turn into deadly weapons, shredding the flesh of victims, and even people go flying. The Extreme Environment rating of the Firestorm increases to 4 for mortal characters, and the Vortex imposes the Heavy Winds Tilt on everyone within its area of effect.

Icy: The temperature in the Firestorm's area of effect plummets to Antarctic conditions. The Extreme Environment rating of the Firestorm increases to 4 for mortal characters, and the Vortex imposes the Ice and Extreme Cold Tilts on everyone within its area of effect. The Extreme Cold Tilt may be resisted.

Lightning-Laced: The Firestorm unleashes bolts of Pyros-infused lightning, striking at random within the area of effect. Prometheans hit may use the lightning to heal as per Electroshock Therapy (p. 170,) but mortal characters suffer 10 bashing wounds.

Madness-Inducing: The Firestorm warps the minds of victims, inflicting the Insane Tilt on all sapient beings within the area of effect until its duration ends. The Tilt may be resisted using the character's Composure rather than Stamina.

Torrential: The Firestorm pounds its area of effect with rain so heavy that it bruises flesh. The Extreme Environment rating of the Firestorm increases to 3 for mortal characters, and the Vortex imposes the Heavy Rain Tilt on everyone within its area of effect.

Step Four: Determine Aftereffects

Once the Firestorm ends, those who suffered through it must pick up the pieces. Depending on the Firestorm's Aspects, the area may be flooded, frozen over, burnt to ashes, or otherwise ruined. As well as these physical remnants, the Firestorm also leaves its mark on the supernatural elements caught in its influence. Firestorms burn out the potential energy of Pyros, consuming the divine fires

as they rage. Anything influenced by Pyros, from Wastelands to Prometheans themselves, can come away from a Firestorm *changed*.

The Element determined in Step Two influences what consequences arise from a Firestorm. Choose one of the options per level of Firestorm Strength, the first of which must be from the Firestorm's Element.

Azothic

- All Promethean characters enter or leave Torment upon the Firestorm ending.
- All mortal characters immediately suffer Disquiet, or lose existing Disquiet.
- All Promethean characters gain one Vitriol Experience.

Elpidian

- All characters with a Pyros trait lose twice the Firestorm's Strength in Pyros.
- Wasteland effects on the Firestorm's area of effect immediately end.

Lilithian

- All Pandorans in the area of effect suffer the Firestorm's Strength in aggravated wounds.
- All characters with a Pyros trait gain or lose the Firestorm's Strength in Physical Merits.

Qashmallim: The Scintillating Flames

It's three AM, and she's still at the library. She can't bear to go home, where the inert form with her lover's face lies in the locked back room. Months of work to find donors and weeks of incantations, prayers, electrical shocks, and chemicals, all wasted. No matter what she tries, her creation refuses to live.

She takes a coffee break, and on her return finds a man she doesn't recognize standing at her desk, going through her notes. Outraged, she demands he leave; he does so without a word.

Checking to make sure the stranger didn't disturb anything, she notices a book turned to the wrong page — or rather, as she scans it with increasing excitement, the *right* one.

She knows where she's been going wrong. Her creation will live.

And the stranger, unnoticed and forgotten, vanishes just as quietly as he appeared.

They have been with us since the beginning, adjusting and guiding Humanity's destiny. Often quiet and subtle, sometimes terrifying and awe-inspiring, the strangers promote change: distillation and entropy. They have been frequently mistaken for angels, and religious alchemists named them *qashmallim*, the Dominions. Of all the Chronicles of Darkness' characters, Prometheans know them best; *qashmallim* apply guidance and punishment to guide them along the Pilgrimage to humanity. Rather than servants of a Christian god, however, the *qashmallim* are formed from a substance close to Prometheans' hearts: Pyros.

Pyros permeates the entire physical world in small quantities wherever humans (and other beings) plan, act on impulse, build, tear down, create, and destroy. Demiurges steal the Divine Fire to create Prometheans. Alchemists bottle it in their experiments. Pandorans feast upon it. The Created burn it into Azoth like messy reactors. Far from simple magical fuel, though, Pyros *reacts*. It forms its own agenda — its own *Principle* — and coalesces into its own agents and advocates.

The *qashmallim* are the agents of Pyros in the Chronicles of Darkness, formed from the Divine Fire itself in response to unique needs. Every *qashmal* is "born" from the Fire with a singular purpose — a **Mission** that it must carry out to the best of its ability within a strict time limit. Succeed or fail, the Divine Fire reabsorbs the *qashmal* when the Mission is over, and its Mission is never repeated. Prometheans sometimes describe *qashmallim* as sleeping dormant in the Fire until needed, but whether this is true or if they're wholly created for their Missions is a matter for debate. Even the extremely rare cases of what seems to be the same *qashmal* appearing more than once could simply be coincidence in form. Equally mysterious are the reasons Missions are "selected," or if they're even deliberately chosen at all. *Qashmallim* have no memory of existence before the start of their current Mission, and if asked who or what sent them can only say "The Principle."

Some Prometheans believe the Principle is God or a manifestation of destiny. Others think it doesn't really exist as a separate entity, that *qashmallim* are natural by-products of Pyros and experience, in their own strange way, their Missions as immutable orders woven into their being. One sect of alchemists describes *qashmallim* as being to Firestorms as a chain reaction is to nuclear decay; any sentience they seem to exhibit is entirely in the eye of the beholder. The *qashmallim* don't seem to care what anyone thinks about their origin — it is *the Principle*, and needs no further explanation.

Born From Fire

In their natural form, *qashmallim* are abstract shapes comprised of scintillating Divine Fire, in a "frequency" of Twilight distinct to those of ghosts or spirits. *Qashmallim* may become visible and audible at will, revealing their presence as burning spheres or wheels of fire, tendrils of Pyros, multiple wings, animal-shaped heads, crowns, or weapons. They can even render themselves tangible if their Mission demands it, though it runs the risk of physical confrontation. Only a minority of *qashmallim* encounters take the form of angelic visions, however; a *qashmal* can disguise itself as anything when fully materializing. Most of the time, the Messengers appear as a humans or animals. On rare occasions, *qashmallim* have appeared as inanimate objects, or Prometheans have realized too late that what they thought was a Pandoran was something much more powerful. *Qashmallim* aren't limited to single bodies, either, some appearing as multiple people at once. Although they don't possess victims as some ephemeral entities do, they can imitate any person, living or dead.

The Mission

From the moment it appears until the moment it vanishes back into the Pyros, a *qashmal*'s existence revolves around its Mission. It

is "born" into the world by an inrush of Pyros, coalescing into its Twilight form and sometimes triggering a Firestorm in the process. As soon as it appears, it knows what it is supposed to do and how long it has to do it.

Prometheans and other scholars of *qashmallim* lore frequently try to work out what the purpose of a *qashmal's* Mission is. From the benefit of hindsight and a wide view, *qashmallim* Missions often concern a great change, which the *qashmal* is sent to instigate or prevent. In practice, though, Missions usually follow the path of least resistance and operate under the butterfly effect, with small changes leading to great movements. The main difficulty in studying such things is that the *qashmallim* themselves only know about their Mission's goal, not the long-term consequence of success. A *qashmal* might awaken from the Fire with the Mission to inspire a young activist, not knowing or caring that the result of its Mission ten years down the line is a violent revolution. A *qashmal* might force a Promethean out into the world by aggravating her Disquiet, while another manifests in fiery form to a second Promethean whose Pilgrimage has stalled, ordering him onto the road, without either *qashmal* being aware that their Missions' end result is the two Prometheans meeting and forming a throng.

A large minority of *qashmallim* Missions have no large-scale consequence onlookers have been able to find. If the Principle *is* an entity deliberately choosing Missions for the scintillating flames, it doesn't seem to have any regard for scale, only the amount of power needed. Terrifying, burning angels have moved mountains to save a single life, and minor *qashmallim* cloaked in human shape have quietly started continent-consuming wars.

One aspect of *qashmallim* Missions remains constant across every encounter; the Scintillating Flames work to a strict timetable. Every *qashmal* knows how long it has to succeed or fail at its objective, and experiences something like pain if prevented from trying to achieve it. Biding time or waiting for an opportunity doesn't count, though, and few supernatural forces are capable of holding a *qashmal* against its will. If the deadline for the Mission passes without success, the *qashmal* dissipates back into the Pyros.

Beyond their goals, *qashmallim* have autonomy in how they approach their Missions. They don't always awaken knowing all the facts about their purpose. A *qashmal* might know it must kill a certain human but not where to find them, or work to avert a natural disaster without knowing how it will happen. *Qashmallim* aren't all-powerful, either. They can fail, make mistakes, or even lose physical confrontations with people and entities trying to prevent them from succeeding. No matter what, if a Mission fails, no *qashmal* ever appears to try again.

The Burning Revelation

The majority of Missions involve a Scintillating Flame simply interacting with others, setting events in motion with a quiet whisper or thunderous declamation.

If a *qashmal* needs to speak to fulfil its mission, it can make itself understood by any sapient being. Everyone the *qashmal* wishes to speak to hears its voice in their native language, without it needing to open its mouth or make physical sounds at all. Some *qashmallim* "speak" in high-frequency noise, glossalia, or musical tones. Even if a *qashmal* is willing to talk, they make frustrating and single-minded conversationalists. Everything except for the Mission is irrelevant. Enquiries about the mysterious Principle are an exercise in frustration; when asked to describe their patron, *qashmallim* blankly say "it is The Principle," and are unable to elaborate further.

Some Savants claim that *qashmallim* aren't strictly speaking sapient; that any *qashmal* appearing able to come across as a thinking being has no more truth behind it than a parrot imitating speech or a robot playing a recorded message. All a *qashmal* can think about is its Mission — it assesses every development and situation as benefit or hindrance to that Mission, and ignores irrelevancies. Some Prometheans have tried to persuade Messengers away from their goals to no avail. Supernatural beings attempting more overt mind control find that there's nothing to get "hold" of, or become obsessed with assisting the *qashmal* through magical feedback.

One nickname of the *qashmallim* — Messengers — describes a bias in the Principle that students of *qashmallim* lore have noted. A sizeable portion of Missions — or of Missions that Prometheans are aware of — involve the *qashmal* imparting a revelation, offering advice, or commanding obedience. These visitations can seem like divine revelation or angelic encounters to subjects who aren't aware what the Messenger is, but the Azothic Memory warns Prometheans to be wary — *qashmallim* impart information to others in order to fulfil their Missions, but nothing forces the Messengers to be truthful. Credulous Prometheans who take the Scintillating Flames at face value or mistake their angelic appearance for inherent "goodness" have been led into disaster and destruction by following the advice of *qashmallim*, and the Messengers accept their Missions so totally that catching one out in a lie is exceptionally difficult. A *qashmal* doesn't know or care if what it's telling someone is good advice; it is the Principle.

The Fiery Sword

While many *qashmallim* dispense "wisdom," others manifest with more direct, brutal Missions. These agents of the Principle take on tangible form to apply their might against a subject, or use powerful Numina to inflict horrors on a victim. Sometimes, the *qashmal* torturing a hapless victim will explain some transgression the victim made that prompted the *qashmal* to manifest with their pain as its Mission. Other times, they're left to figure out how they sinned for themselves.

These bloody Missions never have simple punishment as the goal; the Divine Fire doesn't care about a sinner's crimes. Rather, *qashmallim* whip, slice, and burn for the benefit of their victim, or of onlookers; a *qashmal* might kill a Promethean following a particular Refinement in order to encourage her throng to avoid that Refinement in the future. As with their revelations, the "justice" of the Messengers is anything but angelic; a *qashmal* will commit terrible crimes without flinching if doing so furthers its Mission. If a *qashmal does* manifest with a Mission to kill a particular victim, they're as likely to arrange for their target's death through a third party or staged accident as they are to assassinate the target in person.

Qashmallim and the Created

Although they can undertake Missions involving humans or any of the supernatural creatures sharing the world with humanity, *qashmallim* (or whatever it is that sends them) have a special interest in the Created. A few Prometheans go their entire Pilgrimage without encountering the Scintillating Flames, while others find *qashmallim*

dogging their existence from creation to Final Work, cajoling, punishing, and guiding them to mortality. Most fall somewhere in-between, encountering *qashmallim* near important Milestones or when facing turning points in the Pilgrimage. Whatever the Principle is, it doesn't seem to have a moral opinion on the existence of Prometheans. *Qashmallim* sometimes appear with contradictory missions, punishing Prometheans for actions another *qashmal* encouraged, forcing Created to step backwards, or giving a needed push to restart a stalled Pilgrimage. They appear with guidance for Centimani just as much as for the Refinements (and scourge them for inadvertent sins just as much).

Choirs and Orders

Prometheans and alchemists who study the *qashmallim* sometimes describe two distinct "Choirs" of Elpidos and Lilithim, which correspond to the two forms of Pyros; Elpis and Flux.

Elpidos are the *qashmallim* of Elpis, the creative or distilling Fire. They encourage the Final Work, guide artists, foster new creation, bring throngs together, grant visions guiding would-be demiurges to a lineage's formula or hint at the next step of a Pilgrimage. In appearance, Elpidos are the most likely to be mistaken for angels by credulous onlookers — their natural forms are bright, shining figures wreathed in flame, and as a consequence of their Missions they often display powers that provoke religious awe or revelation. Although some scholars characterize the Elpidos as agents of order or creation, this is a function of their Missions, not how they comport themselves. An Elpidos sent to encourage a man to become a demiurge may decide the best way to nudge its target into trying to create life is to kill everyone he cares about. Elpidos punish transgressors but don't have any sense of justice. They promote the advancement of peace and harmony with bloodied hands.

Cousins to the Elpidos, **Lilithim** are the *qashmallim* of Flux, the destructive and entropic Fire. They awaken Pandorans, guide demiurges to flawed formulae, tear throngs apart, force Prometheans backwards in their Pilgrimage, and work to force the breakdown of institutions, societies, and individual lives. Lore on the Lilithim is rarer than the already difficult-to-find studies on the Elpidos, because to beings who can't sense Pyros (that is, almost everyone that isn't a Promethean,) they're usually mistaken for something else entirely. Far from their cousins' angelic appearances, Lilithim manifest as horrifying mockeries of flesh and biology, warped humanoid forms, or monsters taken as unusual Pandorans. If Elpidos represent order in some classifications, the Lilithim are agents of chaos and destruction, although like their cousins, the means by which a Lilithim achieves its Mission might not be "chaotic" at all.

Qashmallim never describe themselves as belonging to either Choir, or even acknowledge the "other" Choir's existence. An Elpidos and a Lilithim with Missions relating to the same individual at the same time won't appear to notice one another's presence, but the terms persist fo for Prometheans trying to understand what they're encountering.

As well as the two Choirs, the few *qashmal*-scholars classify the Flames into three "Orders" of power: Lesser, Greater, and Arch.

Lesser *qashmallim* are by far the most common, following Missions that only require a few days' effort and without the need for overt supernatural power. They appear, usually in the guise of human beings, carry out their Missions quietly and vanish back into the Pyros. They don't need or have any overt supernatural abilities; appearing in the right place at the right time is enough to make the difference and achieve the Principle's Mission.

Greater *qashmallim* face longer-term or more difficult Missions, and have power to suit. They spark Firestorms with their initial manifestation, adjust reality in accordance with their Mission using potent Numina, and achieve their aims with brute force. They are less likely to assume human or animal form, instead manifesting in their true form or even becoming physically solid when their Mission requires it.

The third Order, or arch-*qashmallim*, are only whispers and legends in the Azothic Memory. Firestorms spark in their mere presence, and their Missions decide the fate of the whole world. An arch-*qashmal*'s manifestation may have caused the Tunguska blast, or the Event that wiped out the dinosaurs. Unlike the other Orders, arch-*qashmal* don't divide neatly into the two Choirs; when describing beings this powerful, "order" and "chaos" don't have any meaning.

Angels?

An undisguised *qashmal* is a terrifying sight, a being of pure Divine Fire. Onlookers often mistake the Scintillating Flames for angels, especially the Elpidos. *Qashmallim* never refer to themselves by that name or acknowledge the existence of Choirs and Orders. If asked who or what they are, they simply describe themselves as "messengers" or "agents." If asked who they are agents of, they reply "The Principle."

The Chronicles of Darkness contains at least two kinds of entity called "angels." The first are living symbols of power and truth summoned into the world by human mages. The second are the biomechanical, ephemeral servants of the God-Machine. *Qashmallim* are not Supernal Entities (they're born of this world's Pyros, not the Supernal Realms of platonic forms) and they aren't the servant-slaves of the God-Machine. Some demons, "Unchained" former angels, theorize that the God-Machine's servants were created from qashmallim their master somehow captured, but the God-Machine's commands are not the Principle, and its angels burn Essence, not Pyros.

On the rare occasions *qashmallim* and either kind of angel meet, the result is either explosive or oddly anticlimactic, with both entities ignoring one another's presence unless forced into a direct confrontation. These rare battles inevitably take place in materialized form, as none of the differing "angelic" hosts share a form of Twilight.

GAME SYSTEMS

Qashmallim share many traits in common with ephemeral entities like ghosts and angels (described in Chapter Four,) but differ in several key ways.

- **Body of Pyros:** Rather than being composed of ephemera and using Essence to fuel themselves, *qashmallim* are made entirely of Pyros and have a Pyros pool like a Promethean. They do not require any special environmental Conditions to sustain themselves as ephemeral entities do, but must spend one point of Pyros every 24 hours. Creatures attuned to the same form of Pyros as the *qashmal* (Prometheans for Elpidos, Pandorans for Lilithim) gain one point of Pyros if they are in the vicinity of the *qashmal* spending its daily Pyros; this can cause Pandorans to awaken from dormancy in the presence of Lilithim and tip Prometheans off when an Elpidos is nearby. This effect extends to greater distancse the more powerful the *qashmal* is; a Lesser Elpidos might only alert Prometheans if they spend extended time in close company to it, while a Greater Lilithim awakens all Pandorans within miles.

A rare few *qashmallim* can replenish their Pyros with special Numina, taking it from Prometheans or Pandorans, but for most Messengers their Pyros supply imposes a hard time limit on their Mission. A *qashmal* that runs out of Pyros simply vanishes, fading away back into the Fire, its Mission failed.

- **Manifestation:** A *qashmal*'s natural form exists in a state of Twilight (see pg 223) but is not made of ephemera and is invisible and insubstantial to ephemeral entities as well as material beings. They range from Size 2–8, with more powerful *qashmal* tending to be larger. *Qashmallim* may make themselves visible and audible but still be intangible or fully material at will. They do not require any Conditions to manifest, and change between forms with a reflexive action by spending a point of Pyros.

- **Disguised Flame:** When appearing from Twilight, a *qashmal* may choose its appearance freely and shape itself into facsimiles of any person or creature. Their disguised forms can be anything from aberrant monsters to imitations of people so complete that the *qashmal* could undergo an MRI scan. If the *qashmal* attempts to impersonate someone and another character has the opportunity to see through it, roll its Power + Finesse as a contested action against whatever dice pool the observing character uses.

- **Heavenly Host:** Messengers are not limited to a single form, but may choose to appear as groups or even swarms. A *qashmal* with more than one physical body must keep them all within its Azoth in yards (Lesser) or miles (Greater) and acts as a single being for purposes of using its powers or taking damage, but not for purposes of actions. A *qashmal* manifesting as two or more people may act independently in each body, as long as they remain within distance of one another. If separated beyond the limits of Order, all but one of the *qashmal*'s bodies vanish.

If it Has Traits, You Can Kill It

When designing a *qashmal* for a Promethean story, ask yourself if you need to come up with game traits for it *at all*. *Qashmallim* only engage in physical violence when it's the focus of their Mission; some fight to win, others only exist to deliberately lose, but no *qashmal* gives someone the chance to kill it unless it's the will of the Principle.

- **Traits:** *Qashmallim* use the three simplified Attributes of Power, Finesse, and Resistance used by ephemeral entities and calculate Willpower, Corpus, Speed, Initiative, and Defense in the same way. (see pp. 223-228) They do not have Bans or Banes; if killed, they vanish (Mission failed) rather than reforming later like an ephemeral entity.

- **Fiery Blood:** Even when masquerading as a human, a *qashmal's* internal organs are unnecessary for its survival. *Qashmallim* convert all lethal and aggravated damage to bashing. They may heal their Corpus through electricity like a Promethean or spend Pyros to heal in the same way as a spirit spends Essence.

- **Order:** *Qashmallim* do not use Rank. They have an effective Azoth rating applied to rolls as a Supernatural Tolerance Trait (see p.118), and trait limits defined by their Order as follows:

Order	Azoth	Trait Limit	Attribute Dots	Max Pyros	Numina
Lesser	3	6 dots	up to 18	15	2–5
Greater	6	15 dots	19–45	50	6–10

- **Soul of Fire:** *Qashmallim* have no Integrity Trait. They have Virtues and Vices like a human, although the specific Virtues and Vices are often alien and, especially in Lilithim, run counter to human morality. A *qashmal*'s Mission acts as an Aspiration for purposes of Social Maneuvering, with the added benefit of granting the *qashmal* rote factor (reroll failures) on all attempts to resist being persuaded away from its goal. Attempting to read or control the mind of a *qashmal*

provokes a Clash of Wills (with the Storyteller rolling Azoth + Resistance for the *qashmal*.) If the *qashmal* wins the clash, the character attempting to tap into its mind has one of their Aspirations replaced by the *qashmal*'s Mission.

- **Numina:** *Qashmallim* do not possess Influences or Manifestations. Each *qashmal* appears knowing a number of Numina useful for their Mission up to the limit imposed by their Order. Common *qashmallim* Numina include Awe, Blast, Drain, Firestarter, Implant Mission, Rapture, and Sign, and greater *qashmallim* almost always have at least one unique Numen relating to their purpose. Storytellers can use Promethean Transmutations as "Numina" for *qashmallim* Storyteller characters.

Example Qashmallim

No one is sure how many of the Principle's agents are active at any one time, with estimates varying from a few dozen to thousands. The following example Flames show Missions of the different Choirs and Orders, and how *qashmallim* might follow them.

Ruby and Mr. Gold (Lesser Elpidos)

Somewhere in the dark of night, a group of people are trapped. The force keeping them prisoner could be a monster, an ephemeral entity of some kind, or something altogether stranger. The predicament could be a cave-in, a boat sinking, or every lock in the building resetting. Whatever the cause, innocents are trapped by supernatural means, and lives are at stake.

No one sees them arrive, but they introduce themselves when the trapped humans stumble across them. The impish brunette woman in the red dress calls herself "Ruby." Her dour companion is "Mr. Gold."

They quickly take charge, marshaling the survivors and investigating the hidden cause of the predicament. Ruby works on the human element, probing the relationships and fears of the victims, while Gold concentrates on gross phenomena. They experiment. They call the evil forth and confront it. The *qashmal* — Ruby and Gold are a single *qashmal* — has a Mission to resolve the situation by any means necessary. Even if the humans all die screaming, Ruby and Gold will restore order and return to the Pyros as quietly as they appeared.

The Witness (Lesser Lilithim)

On the surface, he has it all. A loving family, well cared for and safe. A prestigious career high in his industry. Valued clients and loyal employees. Perfect.

He keeps seeing her out of the corner of his eye. She passes him in the street, vanishing into the crowd when he turns to look. He sees her stood at the platform as his train pulls away. He can't make out her features late at night, standing silently down in the street when he looks out of the window, but he knows it's her. He can't



sleep, but catches a flash of her reflection in the television screen. Those closest to him notice his stress and changed behavior, but don't know what to do. It's as though he's haunted.

He's becoming certain that they're right. That she's back, somehow. The face of a youthful mistake, staring at him, reminding him that even if no one else knows, if he never stands trial, he'll always be a murderer.

He confesses. His family is shattered, his business ruined. Everything he built comes crashing down.

The *qashmal* with his victim's face returns to the Fire.

The Judge (Greater Elpidos)

For almost his entire Pilgrimage, the Tammuz Joseph Sand has been bedevilled by Mr. Anton Deeds, alchemist and former student of his demiurge. Whenever he put down roots, Deeds would find him. When he once met another Creation – another like him! – Deeds drained her Fire until she died. Through refinements and milestones, Sand has become hardened, defined by his nemesis as much as by the word inscribed beneath his tongue.

One summer evening, Sand comes back to the abandoned farmhouse he's squatting in to find a car outside and the door open. He knows that the alchemist is back. When he enters, holding a poker like a weapon and ready to fight for what's his, he finds Deeds has already been caught. The alchemist lies, sobbing, wrapped in chains of light that burn his flesh. The being holding them tells Sand to not fear it. It has heard his hatred and come to set things right.

Just one question, here at the end of Sand's Pilgrimage. Does the alchemist deserve to die?

The Judge has manifested in response to a Promethean nearing a crucial point late in his Pilgrimage: the chance to forge ahead to the New Dawn or step backward. Revenge or forgiveness, mercy or punishment, the *qashmal* is here to Judge — but it's Joseph that's on trial, with himself as jury.

The Red Waters (Greater Lilithim)

She was a Savant but now she's not sure what Refinement she's on, if any. She's been living alone in the forest for months, nearly a year now, moving around to keep the Wasteland at bay. Every few weeks she follows the river down into the logging town to acquire supplies and practice dealing with people. She's accepted the idea that she'll never be human, but by her effort no one suffers Disquiet at her presence, and she isn't hurting anyone. She could stay like this forever, never moving on, never stepping back.

She feels it arrive — the sick twist of Flux all around her, threatening a Firestorm. Thinking it's a Pandoran, she hunts through the forest and finds it standing in the shallows of the river. It's covered head-to-toe in what looks like red robes, but when she gets closer she realizes it's skin, turned inside-out. When she approaches, wary, it tells her that her exile is at an end. She must leave the forest and return to her Pilgrimage. She refuses, and it melts, dissolving into the water.

That night, she feels a Wasteland forming far too soon after moving camp. Refusing to give in, she moves around more. After two weeks, she sees the figure in the water again.

Leave, it says. No, she replies.

The next time she's in town, the people shy away from her, afraid. Fear turns to aggression, and she realizes that Disquiet is too strong, too fast. She flees back to her forest.

The Lilithim sent to force her to step backward from the dead-end she's in has given her two warnings now, but the time for it to complete its Mission is running out. The next time it merges with the river's water, it will spread disease to everything the course touches — the town, the forest along its banks, the creatures within it. If she will not give up the half-life she's made, the *qashmal* will tear it down around her.

The Star of Unity (Arch-qashmal)

People say that Antarctica isn't inhabited, but of course that's not true — even in the depths of winter, nearly a thousand humans call the southern ice home, sheltering in their bases and stations. This one is a survey team; geologists, meteorologists, and the people needed to keep them alive on the Southern ice. They were like a family; their nearest neighbors, hundreds of miles away, joke about how clannish they've become over the years.

It came with a sonic boom heard through the howling winds and a bright emerald light that bathed the entire base in its radiance. A few scientists said it might be a meteor. Then all the radios went dead. Then the screams started.

They were a meteorologist and a mechanic, bumping into one another in the confusion and panic. They're just not quite sure which of them was which. When they touched, memories — whole sections of their lives — transferred between them. Their personalities were ripped up and remixed along with their pasts. And worse — when it happened again to two junior researchers, the base population thought a disease might be involved. When it happened again, and again, the scale of the problem became clear. *Everyone* was affected.

Two months on and no one at the base is unscathed. Whoever the scientists were before, those people are gone — and twenty-three remixed, reshuffled people remain, patched together from pieces of their former lives. With every transfer, the past becomes a little more uncertain, and the new population grows a little more homogenized. They nearly died, over the winter — none of them have a complete set of any of the many specialist skills needed for their survival, and only teamwork and luck have kept the power running and the heating on.

The winter storms have passed while the patchwork people are running out of supplies. A relief ship is on its way, but in the meantime two of the afflicted are making their way to the next base by land. If they make it, who knows how far their affliction will spread?

THE GREAT WORK: PART VI

It was all supposed to work, that was what was in Wisher's vision. They were to come here and she was going to take the New Dawn. She could feel it in the fire that drove her. She was ready. It was time.

Instead, she was alone in the field, with just symbols in the dirt. Imam had told them to stay put as he crossed the field to get to the car. They did as he said, but he didn't come back. When they heard Clay's Girl's screams and then heard them cease, Wisher told Roark to run to Imam. He hadn't come back either.

The sky rumbled.

"It looks like you need assistance," the clouds said. "A shame you do not have any!"

The rumbling increased to a roar, and the laughter of the clouds awoke the other spirits of the forest. The spirits watched as the creature sauntered into the clearing, its face covered in a thick yellow liquid.

"Mother," it said, "I have returned."

Wisher looked back to the forest, where Roark and Imam had run. The woods were still empty.

Wisher's creation said, "You are alone. I am sure of that."

In a blink of an eye it was upon her. She grappled onto its soft body and it dug its teeth into her side. She slapped both of her palms on the creature's flesh, and imagined that she was feeling smooth stone. The fire inside responded, and it became stone before it could bite her again.

That was when Wisher saw the knife planted in its back. She swung her body on top of the monster and pulled out the blade with ease. She took in every detail of the creature she had made stone. Little human details of its original body remained. It was a priest, once. That's what Clay's Girl had said.

She thought she had everything right then, too. The right preparation, the right time, the right help, and it was all for nothing, They had tried to run away when the priest's body warped after being torn apart. They got away, but all it led to was this.

She took a few steps back from the stone creature. It would have been so easy to just run away. She could have been long gone by the time it became flesh again. She could try again, and hope it wouldn't find her.

She squeezed the handle of the knife. The fire inside pulsed. She wanted to run, but that wasn't what she needed to do. She had to own up to her failure, to correct her mistakes while she still could.

After all, wasn't that just being human?

She struck the creature with the knife. The blade broke, but the force behind it was enough to send a deep crack along its back. The fire inside her rose, growing stronger with each blow she made. The creature shattered as the fire reached its fever pitch.

Among the fragments of stone, Wisher took her first mortal breath.

GILLAN'S RAMBLE

gillian.germany@gmail.de

To: Mika1346@gmail.com

Subject: re: Berlin

I know, Mika. You said to leave well enough alone. But I can't. It's *__like__* us. This entire city is like us. Speer wasn't just indulging the visions of a murderer, he was tapped into something. The Allies broke it with the Mauer, but I can still feel it. Coursing through the streets like liquid fire, breathing in and out through buildings, reaching deep into the earth. It's *__alive__*.

I can see you now, rolling your eyes. Maybe scowling. But I'm still right. Humanity is still foreign to me, but buildings aren't. Teufelsberg is the knot where it all comes together. The last, unfinished building of Speer's elaborate construct, buried under tons of stone and left to gestate in the dark.

The devil's mountain. Created by men, like us. The people of Berlin salvaged what they could after the bombardments, then they shoveled the rest together — broken stone, metal and bleached bone — and called it a day. Teufelsberg has drifted in and out of use since. The British built a spy station atop the elevation, but they were keen to abandon it when the Mauer came down. No one wants to live there. Because of what lies beneath.

I love this city. I'm not exaggerating. I sometimes sneak into the Fernsehturm after dark, and I can see the whole city laid out beneath me. It feels like coming home. I know that sensation, I've seen it in humans. Children when their parents pick them up from school. Lovers when they reunite after the day's work. It's a home coming and it shapes them. Berlin shapes me, made me *__feel alive__*. That is something I can never repay — but maybe I can pay it forward.

I know we discussed it and you said not to. But I am not a child. I am not yours to command. So here I am, in the darkness of the Devil's Mountain. Getting in was easy. The old spy station is chained off with fences, but they're broken in so many places. Not too conspicuously of course — just a bend here, a rip there. Enough for kids to get in. Actually getting into the underground was harder, but not impossible. There's cracks where the earth has shifted and, if you're sensitive to it like me, you can just feel the tunnels underneath. It took some digging, but I can handle hard work. You know me — I never stop. And now I'm in.

The hall is filled with rubble from the half-collapsed ceiling. I have one reception bar left, and there's very little light coming in. I don't need light to see though. The whispers are stronger here. Remember how we'd joke that ECHELON voices still echo through Berlin? I don't think it was ECHELON. It was the creature. It knows I'm here and I can almost feel it reaching out to me. I think it's happy I'm here. Its creator died before it was ready, and then it spent seventy years alone in the dark. I can use that. Annie has been teaching me how to talk to people. Relate, she calls it. There's a lot to relate to.

Maybe I can teach it kindness. Show it the beauty of Berlin. I was lost before Berlin. The city changed me as much as you, Annie and Ski did. This is my test. My leap of faith. If I can show it what I see….

If not though, I'll do what needs to.

Tell the others I love them. Give Ski my book if I don't return — I know they want it, even if they're too polite to ask. I'm not afraid. I'll return to the earth if the creature destroys me. Dust to dust — literally. I'll be right here. Coursing through the streets like liquid fire.

~ Gillian



CHAPTER SIX: JOURNEYS

Each city has its own nature, each a little world all its own, but a Promethean is alien, an eternal outsider. She has no home, not even the slab she woke up on. She has no family, very few people she can call friends, and no world to call her own. Instead, she journeys through world after world on her Pilgrimage, touching them but never truly becoming a part of them. Eventually she must move on, prodded by Disquiet and driven to seek new wisdom for her Magnum Opus. But no one passes through the world without leaving her mark on it, not even a Promethean. As they touch the worlds they pass through, these worlds touch them back, an alchemy as profound as the Pilgrimage itself and vital to it. These moments, these memories, come together to leave a trail that other Prometheans after her will follow, a gift to ease their way as they make their own Pilgrimages.

Then, too, stranger things than Prometheans dwell in the Chronicles of Darkness. They share these worlds with Prometheans even as they share them with humans, but in the name of their own alien needs and drives rather than a desire to settle down and become a part of one of these worlds they touch. Their leavings may provide some strange insight into the human condition. On the other hand, they could represent a dangerous roadblock in the Pilgrimage, and perhaps even a terminus to it.

In this chapter, we venture for but a few brief moments across these little worlds that Prometheans travel through, examining what might be found there, what evidence has been left by those travelers who preceded us, and those dangers that wait to ensnare the unwary.

> "I could tell you how many steps make up the streets rising like stairways, and the degree of the arcades' curves, and what kind of zinc scales cover the roofs; but I already know this would be the same as telling you nothing. The city does not consist of this, but of relationships between the measurements of its space and the events of its past."
>
> —Italo Calvino, Invisible Cities

What Happens in Vegas, Stays in Vegas

Las Vegas, Nevada

High rollers, neon lights, and the finest shows this side of Broadway. Amusement parks built on top of buildings. All this and more Las Vegas has to offer, at least until you take more than a few steps away from the Strip. The glitz and glamor quickly fades into empty six-lane side streets lined with boarded-up buildings, abandoned save for the few desperate souls who quietly cling to life here. The Strip is only a mask that covers this, the beating heart of Las Vegas: cold, lonely, and brimming with secrets and hidden threats.

Las Vegas is one of the most popular tourist destinations in the United States. Dry and punishingly hot in the summer, the Strip is designed to carry patrons from one building to another without ever leaving air conditioning. The lion's share of Nevada's population lives in the greater Las Vegas metropolitan area. The only other competition is Reno, with a population only a fraction of that in Las Vegas.

History

Named for its green meadows by Spanish scouts, the valley that became Las Vegas only officially became a city in 1905, when it was established as a railroad town. Development followed in successive waves, but in 1931 the city legalized casinos, after which organized crime quickly became involved and spurred the city's growth as a resort destination. Lit by neon and, sporadically, by nuclear weapons tests, Las Vegas grew up into a skyline of glimmering towers, a bright line scratched in the desert drawing tourists like moths to the flame.

Story Hook

Las Vegas is fueled by a sense of unreality, of the world being a Potemkin village that might collapse in on itself at any moment. To the Promethean, no city is quite so familiar at first glance. Are they not as real as everything around them here?

But Las Vegas is not all that it seems. Only a few dozen miles southeast of Yucca Mountain and the former Nevada Test Site, hidden in the shadow of the harsh glare of the Strip and the latent background radiation from myriad atomic tests, a new philosophy has quietly sprung up at the fringes of science and sanity.

At 5:29 AM on July 16, 1945, the world's first nuclear detonation took place at the White Sands Proving Ground, littering the desert with glassy green shards made from fused sand that the world called trinitite.

Three chemistry students attached to the project called it the Philosopher's Stone and were convinced that the detonation of a nuclear warhead was the lesser scientific advent of the day. Working in secret, they collected as much of the stuff as they could get away with before the government realized trinitite was radioactive and banned its sale.

All three students are alive today, blessed with an unnatural youth that is one of the twin fruits of their experimentation, the other being a surfeit of gold that, while not radioactive, bears misfortune in its wake. Swallowing pearls of trinitite to feed the criticality that has replaced their hearts, they've parleyed their alchemical talents into fortune, if not fame. Everything's coming up aces for the Trinity, except for one thing. There's only so much trinitite to go around. Sooner or later, they're going to need a new source.

Conspicuous Consumption

Portland, Oregon

Straddling the Willamette River, Portland's maze of one-way streets and intentional lack of parking hide hundreds of secrets. The largest bookstore in the world sits in a nest of local businesses that share high-rises with multinational corporations. Half a dozen bridges and an elevated gondola line span the Willamette, connecting the heart of the city with its eastward reaches. The sky may be clouded over on most days, but the city is bright nonetheless.

A drive through Portland can be short; designed to limit the modern city's propensity to sprawl, Portland is an urban island in a sea of rural farmland that surrounds the city just a few minutes' drive in almost every direction. Transit keeps outlying parts of the city easily traversable on foot, and the city's food cart culture is second to none. While the city's population has grown by leaps and bounds in the last twenty years, it remains an overwhelmingly white city. However, it also holds the distinction of having the seventh highest proportion of LGBT residents in the United States.

History

For young Americans who grew up playing Oregon Trail, the Willamette Valley is the archetypal destination for a long, arduous, and dangerous journey. The reality of the city's early days is not much removed from the game; Portland itself saw little development compared to Oregon City, just upriver, until the need for a deepwater port arose. It was once described by its native newspaper as "the most filthy city in the Northern States." Overshadowed by Seattle once the transcontinental railway to that city was completed, Portland nonetheless boomed in the 1940s and 1990s, and became known in particular for a vibrant art culture, which persists even after the burst of the dot-com bubble.

Story Hook

The humans are not the only residents of Portland, of course, and one in particular has taken the city's fascination with foodie culture and art to new and disturbing heights. One Centimanus, who prefers to call himself the Epiucure, has maintained just enough of a humanlike appearance to lure in unsuspecting fellow Prometheans. At first, he is friendly, sharing fine home-cooked food, a warm place to sleep, and stories of travels that are only somewhat edited for content. He is by all appearances a kind and gentle soul. His kindness hides not only his nature, though, but also a darker secret.

At first, the Epicure simply watched his pet Pandorans feed, studying the flow of Pyros and Flux in their body as they devoured the flensed flesh of his victims, growing wiser and more powerful with each meal and eventually maturing into a sublimatus. At first he meant to part the creature's rubbery flesh to peruse its inner workings and plumb its deep eye sockets for hidden secrets, but it was clever enough to charm the Epicure and talk its way out of such a fate. Amused, he called it the Stoic; they continued as they had before, with the Epicure luring the prey in and enjoying the grim spectacle, the Stoic mimicking the Epicure's attachment to luxury to curry favor. Curiosity proved to be too strong a temptation in the end; now the two dine together by candlelight to the tune of screams, a gruesome mockery of a human romantic ritual that neither really understands.

The Mother Lode

Sacramento, California

For Prometheans, the quest to transform lead into gold is a metaphorical and metaphysical one. For humans, that quest was almost always a literal one. While science may have left the purely alchemical quest behind, the human craving for gold has not abated. Sacramento has the distinction of being one of the few cities directly and literally founded upon the mad, frenzied desire to tear gold up from the very Earth itself. Its history transcends mere human greed, however, touching upon something deeper, something infinitely more valuable — and infinitely more dangerous.

History

The Sacramento Valley has been inhabited for thousands of years by the Nisenan and Plains Miwok peoples, but recorded history begins with Spanish explorers and the Swiss immigrant John Sutter's agricultural settlement. Once gold was discovered upstream, Sutter's son elected to found a city against his father's wishes, named for the river it straddled and from whence the gold

came. Sacramento quickly became one of the most important cities in California and has served as the state's capital since the 1850s. It has only grown since, attracting immigrants from every corner of the globe. Racial strife and legislative discrimination followed — after fires and railroad development, only a few landmarks survive today of a once-thriving Chinatown.

Today, Sacramento is a sprawling city, with suburbs reaching into the Californian Central Valley, north and south along I-5, and east and west along I-80. For all that old and new train tracks weave through Sacramento's grid, the modern city is of, by, and for the automobile. Huddled up against the capitol itself, the downtown is laced with bars and clubs that exist only for sweetheart development deals doled out by lobbyists and the well connected. Like many centers of government, it is a city where scandal is so commonplace that it's become a part of the background noise of the city. Wracked by drought brought on by climate change and saddled with budget deficits brought on by frozen property taxes, California looks to Sacramento to fix its problems. Sacramento, however, can barely solve its own.

Story Hook

Rare is the building in downtown Sacramento that doesn't have a peculiar rattling sound somewhere on its lower levels. When Prometheans are near, however, these noises redouble, becoming a scrabbling cacophony. Humans shudder and tell themselves it is nothing but vermin or the building settling; they do live in a flood plain after all, and the Sacramento and American rivers claim everything in the end, entombing all they touch in successive layers of silt. Built up again after each disaster, Sacramento boasts a network of catacombs, disconnected and walled off from each other but nonetheless containing the detritus and historical artifacts of the era when these shattered rooms once dwelt on the surface. Digging anywhere in the heart of the city, one might find one of these chambers, along with whatever is hiding within.

Sacramento has not only survived countless natural disasters, but also flourished and grown to become the capital of one of the world's largest economies: nothing short of a minor miracle. That the city has known the deep and abiding touch of the supernatural should come as no surprise – more than one of the raging fires, floods, and droughts that have struck the Central Valley bear Promethean fingerprints. Signs of their presence echo again and again throughout the city's history, an Azothic record that closely follows known history. Perhaps there is some resonance between the human lust for gold and the Promethean Pilgrimage, or perhaps it is merely a coincidence. Of course, the city might be an enormous karmic honeypot that draws in Prometheans with the lure of enlightenment, only to turn them aside from their Pilgrimages.

The rail yards encapsulate this paradox. As the original terminus for the transcontinental railroad, Sacramento was the ultimate destination for untold numbers of human settlers as well as the Prometheans who rode the rails with them to the promised land in the West. Though development is slowly tearing down the old structures, a litany of journeys remains written on the very foundations of the place. A hundred Pilgrimages are described here, with clues that could lead a wayward Promethean to a dozen different cities in search of long-lost treasure troves of Azothic wisdom. Unfortunately, while the lore is very real, so is the danger. The Pandorans of Sacramento know well that their favored prey will come here. Over years, decades, a century, they've slowly collected here, watching, waiting, hungry. There are Pandorans lost across the city, drowned or buried or well hidden, but the old rail yards house a swarm unlike any other.

Not every threat is so obvious, however. A small cafe, quiet and unremarkable save for the enormous collection of kick-knacks and miscellaneous junk out back, hosts a weekly movie night that is rapidly becoming a favorite for local hipsters and arthouse cinema fans. Only one movie is ever shown — a VHS tape found in the junkpile, containing nothing but a series of disconnected moments of anguish and humiliation, of seemingly random people hurling invective at the camera, with a low, pained voice whispering in the background. Devotees call it shocking and powerful outsider art, but any Promethean who sees it will instantly know that the tape is a Dark Athanor containing the rage and sorrow of a single Created, cast off in a desperate attempt at purification and release. The humans are not wholly unaffected by the Azothic energies of the tape, however – repeated viewings wear down their resistance to Disquiet, turning the clientele into a powerful transmission vector. If one should become infected, the others will follow in short order.

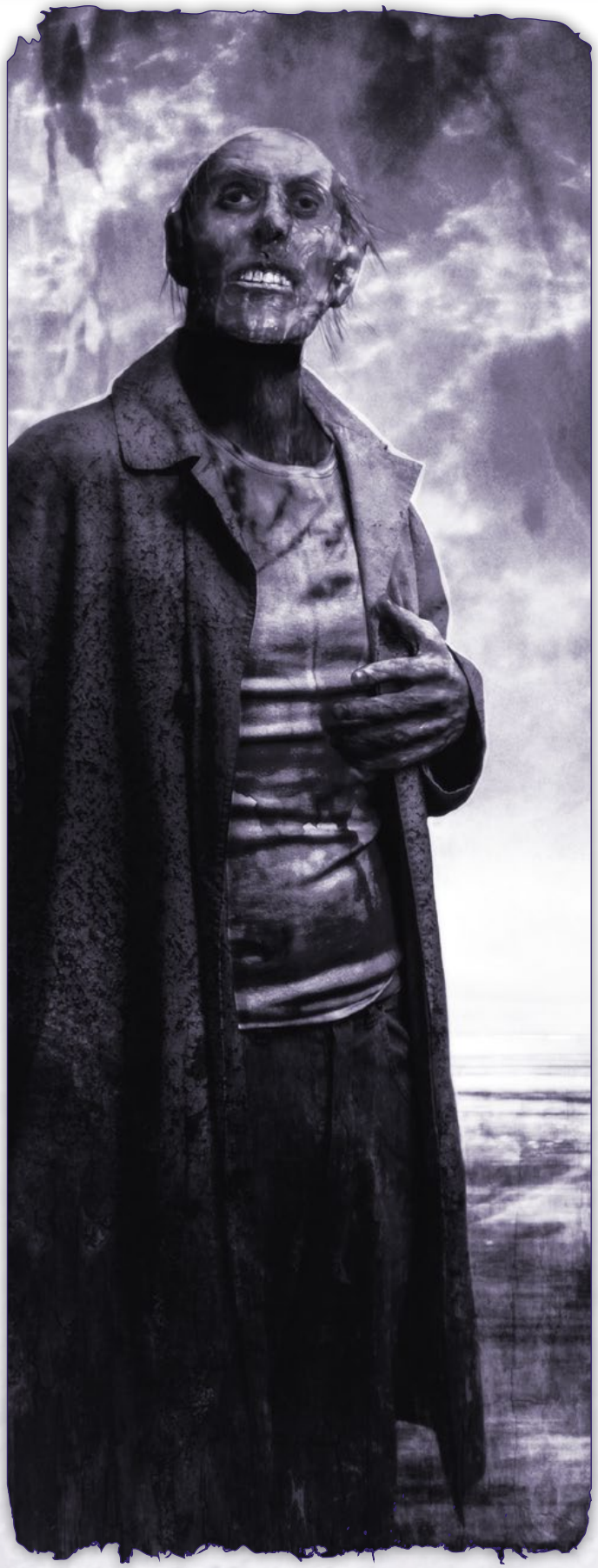
Of the subtle dangers, however, one surpasses all others. A small, nameless group meets weekly in a nightclub where women dressed as mermaids swim in enormous suspended tanks of water. This secret society of mages squats at the heart of power in Sacramento. Their touch is light but very real, and their sight extends far enough to glimpse even the subtle Azothic marks carved deep upon the city they have claimed for themselves. They don't know what Prometheans are, only that strange things lurk outside their sight, hiding in shadows they have no right to. A wise Pilgrim treads lightly in Sacramento — there are worse things than Pandorans waiting for them.

Fire in the Sky

Salton Sea, California

California is starved for water, leeching it from every surrounding state and more besides to slake its ever-growing agricultural and civil thirst. Perhaps it's appropriate, then, that the largest body of water in California is both man-made and saltier than the ocean itself. Salt-encrusted buildings line its ever-rising shore as agricultural runoff flows into the San Andreas Fault. The Inland Empire's own private sea is so saline that only a few species of fish can live beneath its waves, and with no avenue for escape the water grows saltier by the year.

The words "Inland Empire" conjures up visions of exurban excess, but once past Palm Springs that landscape is replaced with a strip of artificially irrigated farmland and the expanse of chaparral that makes up the desert. The population density drops off dramatically, replaced with the culture of rural townships and farms. Temperatures soar in midday and plummet at night, when the stars come out with a brilliance unseen in the city.



History

Formed in the early 20th Century after an engineering accident, what was meant to be an irrigation project for the Salton Sink ended up inundating it instead. The entire volume of the Colorado River poured in; the best efforts of the engineers responsible took two years to stem the flow. Several towns were completely submerged. Officials had little hope of draining the new sea, as its bottom was only five feet above the lowest point in Death Valley. Ultimately the Hoover Dam was constructed to forestall any further flooding of the Inland California region; by then, the Salton Sea was well established.

Story Hook

Lights in the sky are nothing strange out here. Locals put them down to top-secret military aircraft being flown out of hidden facilities in neighboring Nevada. Those of a more conspiratorial bent convince themselves that these glistening specters are of extra-terrestrial origin. They cite for support claims of encounters with strange beings, Men or Women in Black, black-eyed children, and the like, which are common in the area. Any Promethean present for a sighting, though, will know immediately what these strange lights in the sky and unusual people are: qashmallim.

Qashmallim so commonly visit this area that it is virtually legend among Prometheans across the entire West of the United States. What they might be doing, of course, is anyone's guess. There are as many opinions as there are Prometheans, varying depending upon the interpretation of Azoth and Pyros they subscribe to. It could be quite malign, or it could provide an insight into the nature of Azoth and Pyros that would revolutionize a Pilgrimage. It might even be both. The qashmallim care little; they go about their tasks, shedding their Pyrotic eminence, until at last they fade back into the nothingness from which they came as they rejoin the Principle. If you want to see a qashmal, they say, go to the Salton Sea.

Not With a Bang, But a Whimper

Antarctica

"To the ends of the Earth!" Those who have been to Antarctica, to the vast and empty polar plain, the six-month night of pure, uninterrupted isolation, know what the true ends of the Earth are. Here — dry beyond dry, cold beyond cold, blacked and whited out — is the end of everything. Some come for the pristine natural beauty of a continent clad in kilometer-thick ice, and some come to study the great mysteries of the universe. Some come because there's a paycheck in it, and some come for no other reason than the ice called them here. A rare few come to this place hoping to put an end to a lifelong Pilgrimage.

History

Antarctica's history is short. There are no native inhabitants save seals, penguins, and similar animals. While the coast was charted as far back as the Age of Sail, the harsh conditions made exploration of the interior of the continent all but impossible until the 20th

century. Declared a stateless land by treaty, its scant resources too remote to exploit, Antarctica is inhabited today by scientists and those who labor to maintain the infrastructure necessary to keep them alive.

Yet for all that humanity's presence in Antarctica is limited to modernity, that history is perfectly preserved by the arid climate. Old Norwegian whaling stations, abandoned Soviet research outposts, World-War-II-era air fields, and the hastily-constructed shelters of doomed expeditions dot the landscape. Like footprints on the Moon, they endure beyond their time, markers along a trail that winds through history as surely as it does the frozen wastes.

Story Hook

The population of Antarctica fluctuates, hovering around 5000 in the summer but plummeting to less than a thousand in winter. Those who stay on the ice are a pilot light, laboring to keep the facilities ready to receive the next group of tenants once the sun finally rises above the horizon once more. The weather makes ingress or egress an extremely risky proposition at best, so the night watch is there for the duration.

By far the largest population center in Antarctica is McMurdo Station, a muddy port that looks more like a factory town than a research outpost. In the summer, 1200 people make their home here; in the winter, less than 250 remain. Other stations, including Amundsen-Scott Station at the geographic South Pole, dwindle down to a few dozen at most. No one winters in Antarctica without being affected by the experience. The environment comes together to create a perfect pressure cooker of isolation, darkness, and claustrophobia. Extreme stir-craziness is a matter of when, not if.

Prometheans who come here are almost certainly seeking isolation, much like their famous cousin who ventured into the Arctic pursued by his dying creator. But here, people watch out for one another, because a moment's lapse can easily mean death — even for one of the Created. The polar plain is flat enough that one can easily be spotted even hours after venturing out of shelter, quiet enough at times that one's heartbeat is audible. Here, in the perfect isolation of blinding white and deep midnight, there is no escape. Perhaps that is the true lesson Antarctica teaches.

A Place for Pilgrims

Goa, India

Tourists flock to Goa for consciousness expansion. Neo-hippies pilgrimage to Goa's beaches to do drugs, eat cheap, and find enlightenment. Most travelers get hung up on one or two of those three things. For the Created, Goa offers a uniquely welcoming and understanding population and a region resistant to the effects of Wasteland. It offers diversity in perspective and many simple answers to complex questions. To the Created, it offers an opportunity to learn and grow in an environment welcoming to learning and growing.

Unfortunately, this blessed place finds itself overpopulated by the Created. Everyone wants a piece of what Goa has to offer. Through a series of pilgrim marks, travelers have set up a system for equitable sharing of the space. Not everyone buys into the system, however, so frustrated and desperate travelers often clash with those they feel have overstayed the region's welcome.

Goa is the smallest state within the Indian subcontinent. The capital city, Panaji, is an eighth as dense as Delhi and less still than Mumbai. Goa is well known as friendly to foreigners and boasts a high density of religious sites. Its Christian population is remarkably high for India, at about one-fourth the total population.

History

Goa's relevant history starts well after India's independence from Britain in the 1940s and indeed shortly after the 1961 annexation of the territory from the Portuguese. As tourism picked up from the British, this encouraged European Created to make the trek to Goa's lovely beachfront. This was particularly the case for poorer travelers who couldn't afford to holiday in the luxury of some of India's other cities. The city's blend of Hindi culture and Latin Catholicism meant Western travelers could find enough familiarity to remain comfortable while immersing themselves in an experience unlike anywhere else in India.

In the 1990s, some Created realized that the tourist center was particularly resistant to the effects of Wasteland. As word spread, dozens of desperate Pilgrims made their way to Goa, including some particularly potent Created. This rapidly broke through Goa's resistance and left the region mottled with Firestorms. Over the course of the next decade, a throng modeled after Parvati's mythology took up the cause of keeping Goa pure. They built a system of graffiti through which the Created could coordinate and organize their local Pilgrimages. Through word of mouth and Azothic memory, they built a social contract to keep the Created moving along their paths after a reasonable frame of time. This system was far from perfect, but it's kept the region free of major Firestorms for over a decade now.

Story Hooks

Goa fends off the Wastelands. Between the ever-moving coast, constant construction, and the highly transient population, Goa recycles itself rapidly. Wastelands in the Goa region last half as long once their creators leave, and all Wasteland effects and chances are calculated at –2 Azoth. If an area is not currently under the effects of a Wasteland, two triggers are required to start a Wasteland in the resistant zone.

The social contract between Created in Goa demands individual Prometheans not overstay their welcome. If a character creates a significant, noticeable Wasteland or flares her Azoth in a particularly obtrusive fashion, other travelers will intervene and encourage her to leave quickly. If she doesn't, things can get ugly. Because of the transient population, Repute might stand as a buffer here. Unknown Prometheans tend to receive excessive, harsh treatment in the name of defending Goa's sanctity. Worse still, these problems compound, as the retaliatory efforts can force a Wasteland to Fester and can wake Pandorans.

East Meets West

Hong Kong, China

In Hong Kong, it's easy to disappear. Walk down the wrong alley and you may never leave. This can make the central island daunting for humanity, but strangely welcoming for those who need to vanish from time to time. To many people in the world, Hong Kong is an opportunity. Its loose financial laws, contingent of wealthy residents, and massive low-cost labor force make it a hotbed for economic activity for China, Asia, and indeed the entire world. To the Created, Hong Kong is an overcrowded city where one can disappear for a while.

Hong Kong properly refers to the Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, which includes coastal area featuring numerous cities, Hong Kong Island, and hundreds of tiny islands in the area. When most people think of Hong Kong, they picture Hong Kong Island and Kowloon City. Those two cities alone comprise nearly half of the Special Administrative Region's over seven million inhabitants. The central part of Hong Kong is one of the single most densely populated areas in the world. Directly outside the region lies the Pearl River Delta, which is an immensely urbanized, densely populated series of major cities with over fifty million residents. Hong Kong bulges with incoming residents from mainland China looking for opportunity or to escape from the mainland's governance. This is particularly so as Hong Kong's governance is generally much freer than the rest of China, due to it being a British colony until 1997.

History

As much history as the Created can have in a city, they have in Hong Kong. During the time of British rule, organized criminal elements served a handful of powerful, wealthy foreign scientists in abducting test subjects. After all, without surefire conviction, Hong Kong prefers to ignore missing persons for fear of skewing its alarming murder rates. Most of these abductees died terrible deaths as result of failed experiments. Some few ended up chopped and reconfigured into Frankensteins.

Most of these Frankensteins have long since moved on or passed away, but some have made names for themselves moving from neighborhood to neighborhood, progressing on their Pilgrimages. They now act as de facto defenders of the city, keeping the Pandoran population in check and subtly distracting the police and media from uncovering and escalating Created issues.

Story Hooks

To Hong Kong, a single building is a neighborhood. In some parts, even a floor of a building is a neighborhood. Prometheans can move very short distances and effectively be in a new city entirely. This makes for easy, rapid movement to safe places. Much of the population remains very insular, not communicating outside their geographically tiny worlds. For the Created, these tiny worlds offer the unluckiest a chance to stay in a relatively small space while avoiding the lasting effects of their Torment. Some move from slum to slum weekly. One particular Frankenstein moves rapidly from building to building, leaving storms in his wake. When he runs across other Created, he forces them out.

Many of Hong Kong's temples maintain rigid policies about openness and inclusion. Even the most Tormented Promethean could find short-term shelter in one. With a bit of streetwise, a troubled Created could shift from temple to temple to maintain safety. Culturally speaking, these temples tend to be looked upon positively by local residents. Most threats that would pursue the Created would have trouble finding easy entry.

The Road Through the Borderlands

Tijuana, Mexico

Tijuana's a magnet town. Impoverished people from all over Mexico swarm the city in hopes for a chance at something different. The borders bloat outward with shanties and slums, since the city proper can't contain the influx of poor transients. Many wish to cross to the United States. Many struggle to find work in manufacturing in Tijuana. But every job, every immigration is a competitive struggle, a struggle to find a home in a place that doesn't want you. The Created sympathize with this struggle and pass through Tijuana for very similar reasons to their human counterparts; they simply want a place to call home. As with their mortal counterparts, it's never that simple.

Tijuana grows rapidly every day and is already one of the largest metropolitan areas in Mexico. It borders the United States, San Diego California in particular; prominent Mexico Federal Highway 1D and a fence less than twenty feet tall are the only things keeping the city's homes from spilling out against the California border. The city has three border crossings; one, the San Ysidro Port of Entry, is the single most commonly used land border in the world. Between the relative poverty and the activity at the border, everyone in Tijuana is either stagnant or on the move. Young people come from California to take advantage of lax drinking and prostitution laws, while migrant workers move in, move out, and make efforts to immigrate. Now even the popular tourist district, the Avenida Revolución, has grown run-down. Most of its formerly booming attractions have closed with economic recessions hitting leisure budgets hard.

History

In decades past, Tijuana was equally renowned and notorious as a tourist spot. Its general chaos and lawlessness fostered a carefree, edgy party attitude from visitors. But with the United States's increased scrutiny on border crossings after the September 11th attacks and the George W. Bush era economic recession, tourism toppled. Mexican law enforcement made efforts to legitimize the area, and appeal to more wholesome (read: lucrative) interests. This failed both because of the economic situation and because the culture of prostitution and wanton excess was too ingrained in the general perception of Tijuana.

Tijuana's also come under scrutiny for its massive role in human and drug trafficking to the United States and other countries.

Cocaine from Columbia filters through Tijuana all over the world. Sex slavery takes advantage of both export opportunities to the United States and visitors from abroad looking for a disgusting thrill. The Tijuana Cartel was a prominent and highly dangerous force in these fields, but has since dwindled in numbers and influence.

Story Hook

Some of the curio vendors have been distributing small statues, including traditional Día de Muertos skulls, which are more than they appear. An alarming number of these trinkets have turned out to be sleeping Pandorans. So far no reason for the phenomenon is apparent. Since a relatively high portion of these items end up in the United States as souvenirs, it has attracted Created from San Diego and Orange County California interested in investigating.

The Seoulis in the Software

Seoul, South Korea

South Korea is on the cutting edge of modern technology. Its populace is one of the most connected in the world. Estimates suggest it may be the world technology leader very soon. Korea's Kaist Robot Intelligence Lab recently manufactured a bipedal, sprinting robot inspired by dinosaur body structures, and this is just the technology that makes the news.

To the Created, Seoul stands as a revolution in the theft of fire. Where the five widely recognized Lineages have persisted for some time, creators in Seoul seek to formalize processes to create Unfleshed Prometheans.

History

Since the Korean War, South Korea and Seoul in particular have put great resources toward advancements in technology. Communications, robots, and biotechnology have all seen massive representation in Seoul. In the past two decades, scientists have developed feasible cloning technology, successfully cloning canines and showing evidence that human cloning isn't far behind. Their robotics technology rivals Japan's.

These advancements draw Prometheans on Pilgrimage looking for the secrets of life and the Divine Fire. Some such Prometheans reported that creating Unfleshed in Seoul is for some reason easier than creating a traditional Lineage elsewhere. It's certainly less risky, as Korea's sterile labs and eager lab assistants seem to buffer the zone from Wastelands and Pandorans.

This isn't without drawbacks, however. A low-risk opportunity to create others looks too good to be true for many, but draws in some of the worst and least humane among the Created. Many of these creations end up abandoned and unaware of their surroundings. Many end up running rampant, causing Firestorms, and ending up demolished after destroying communities.

Story Hooks

Seoul is a short plane trip from Tokyo. Numerous Prometheans fleeing the terrifying circumstances in Tokyo have ended up in Seoul's greener pastures.

Seoul is also a hotbed for creation. A single failed attempt to create an Unfleshed Promethean by a single creator does not draw the effects of Wasteland. Botched efforts do not usually create Pandorans. Pilgrims speculate on why this is; the popular theory is that the Divine Fire is particularly pure in this part of the world at this particular time. Skeptics warn to not abuse this phenomenon too frequently, for fear of forever tainting its potential.

When Pandorans do occur in Seoul, however, they're always stronger than the average specimen. They always take technological forms and benefit from that technology. Each of their Attributes is a single dot higher, including all derived traits. As well, they each have a single piece of technology grafted into their being which affords them a +5 dice bonus on all relevant rolls.

The Bay of Dolls

Tokyo, Japan

Kokeshi dolls are wooden dolls with a cylindrical body, no limbs, and round heads. They're carved on a pottery wheel then painted. Urban legends tell that these dolls were given to families in order to replace children that had to be put down due to deformities or overpopulation. In Tokyo, these Kokeshi play a sinister role for the Created; many, maybe hundreds of these older dolls are dormant Pandorans. This makes for a dangerous situation but raises the question, if all Pandorans are perverted Prometheans, from what Lineage do these strange dolls hail?

The Tokyo Metropolitan Area is the most populous in the world. At over 35 million residents, most people of the world can barely imagine a city like Tokyo. For the Created, this means anonymity: opportunities to blend in, fade away, and move on. The expansive metro area covers over 13,000 square kilometers, so a person could move from place to place monthly for her entire life without ever returning to the same place or leaving the Tokyo area. On the other hand, Tokyo neighborhoods trend toward tightly knit and very clean. The tiniest upsets in that order cause alarm and investigation. A Promethean in Tokyo should expect to move along quickly when busybody elderly residents begin prying into their affairs.

Tokyo also stands as an affluent, high-cost city. Unemployment is low. Productivity is high. With its relative level of activity, everything is somebody else's problem. While police boast remarkable, near flawless conviction rates, this partly comes from ignoring or disregarding challenging investigations. On the other hand, Tokyo's murder rate is perhaps the lowest of a major city world round (there's some debate over data collection methods), so people don't often disappear without a trace. Reports of a stabbing result in dozens of police officers mobilizing and combing the streets thoroughly for suspects, stopping trains, and otherwise locking down the area.

History

The Created have extensive history in the Tokyo region. Ulgan are by far the most common Prometheans in the area. Tokyo's Riven come from a pre-Shinto ritual from the J□mon period of Japanese history. The practice continued across nearly 10,000 years. Other Lineages didn't come into play in the region until the 17th century,

and even then only occur in unsubstantiated stories. It wasn't until the mid 19th century, when Japan opened its shores to the outside world, that other Created would visit in any number.

The Created are never particularly common, but in the 21st century, Tokyo sees representation from most if not all major Lineages at a given time. The Ulgan still dominate numerically; two all-Ulgan Throngs reside in the Chiba and Saitama prefectures.

The Pandoran Kokeshi come from the middle of the Edo period (the mid-17th century, most likely). While some of Tokyo's Created have attempted to uncover the source of such a massive occurrence of the monsters, evidence is vague and fleeting. Most evidence seems to suggest a sect of monks attempted to create soldiers to defend the empire from European invaders.

Prior to the Kokeshi, the same monks created vast armies of terracotta soldiers, stylized after the Haniwa funeral statues from second to third century CE. Ostensibly, these soldiers did not awaken and thus were destroyed, sold, or hidden away for centuries. After the clay soldiers, a brief period of experimentation with cast iron soldiers took hold with the monks. This experimentation was quickly abandoned due to cost and logistical hurdles.

The same group later crafted Kokeshi, similar to the dolls crafted in the northern Tōhoku region of Honshu. In a short period, they carved and painted thousands of the dolls in all sizes. Most were given away and sold; only a few hundred saw experimentation, and their incomplete records suggested positive results in only a small handful of cases. A great many of the experiments were burned, but incomplete records imply that burning was insufficient treatment for the failures. Inquisitive Created take this to suggest that the failures were in fact the Pandorans that pop up in antique shops and open air markets to this day.

Story Hooks

Occasionally, rumors surface of strange wooden Prometheans who are notoriously difficult to track. Are these the successful experiments from the monks' Kokeshi dolls? If so, might uncovering the secrets of these Kokeshi Prometheans help a Promethean along her Pilgrimage?

The strange Kokeshi Pandorans never appear alone. When they turn up, it's always in a mob. In a port city, the characters run afoul of a massive glut of the monsters, which rise and instantly create Wastelands and Firestorms. The existence of such a mob might very well be enough to take a trip to Japan to discover what could cause such a thing.

As with South Korea, Japan heavily prioritizes robotics and bioengineering technology research. While this hasn't led to more than one or two Unfleshed Promethean results, it does appear a greener pasture to some Unfleshed from Korea. Some such Unfleshed have researched all South Korea's available science on the topic of their birth, and have since moved on to Japan in order to further their studies into their nature.

The Ulgan of Tokyo sometimes run afoul of the werewolves in the region. The werewolves fight alongside shadowy, birdlike oni with eyes like burning coals. Both the demons and the werewolves fight tooth and nail against Riven spiritual influences. As far as the Riven can tell, the werewolves consider the spirit realms to be their territory and struggle to defend it from invaders. This hardly dissuades the Ulgan, but it does complicate their dealings greatly.

An international conglomerate corporation called Hototogisu Holdings has taken great interest in bioengineering in the past few years. Additionally, rumor has it that they're trying to abduct Created to find out what makes them tick. The rumors suggest the Hototogisu know a great deal about the Created, but have yet to steal the Divine Fire for themselves. Their motivations remain mysterious, aside from a general desire for raw profitability. The Hototogisu Biotech branch recently applied for numerous patents that strike very close to home and push the boundaries of commonly accepted science.

The Hunting Ground

Phoenix, Arizona, United States

Usually when a Promethean oversteps her bounds or overstays her welcome, the Disquiet steps in, Wastelands pop up, and humanity chases her out. In most places, time passes, people forget, and people move on. The threat fades and life returns to normal. In Phoenix, Arizona, however, the people never forget. It's easy to say the world is hostile to the Created outsiders, but it's never truer than in Phoenix.

At one and a half million people, Phoenix is one of the largest cities in the United States. Unlike most of its population rivals, however, Phoenix is widespread over an expansive area. Most homes have large lawns, and few buildings grow over a few stories. The city proper reaches absolutely oppressive temperatures, killing numerous people each summer. The Sonoran Desert is already deadly in the summers and warm during the winters, but Phoenix remains hot even during the cold desert nights thanks to the urban island effect. If the temperature weren't enough, atmospheric gravity current creates intense haboobs, which batter the people with dust and debris so thick cars can't drive for hours at a time. This guarantees the people have no respite for months of the year.

For the Created, Phoenix's temperature isn't the greatest agent of oppression. They can weather the sun and the dust storms. Some even enjoy the weather; it's sometimes refreshing for a Promethean to see a wasteland not of her own doing. The heart of Phoenix's oppression for the Created is the city's elected Sheriff, Russell "The Bulldog" Brown. Sheriff Brown knows too much and uses his position as a weapon against his sworn enemies. The Created are at the top of a very large list of those enemies. Unfortunately, Brown leaves few witnesses, so word hasn't spread about his specific, supernatural vendetta. Created spread rumors about Pilgrims traveling through Phoenix only to disappear, but they tell similar stories about dozens of cities all over the world. It's not as if Brown is on the television calling for the heads of Tammuz; he thinly codes his hate with terms like "mud people." Most of his deputies — and all of his constituents — are blissfully unaware of the truth behind the hate.

History

Phoenix has stood nearly fifty years as an important waypoint on the Promethean roads. It's smack dab in the middle of Sedona

and Tempe, Arizona, both of which play important roles to scholarly Created. Sedona features an alarming number of mystics and crystal gazers with a foundation in truth. A traveler can learn a great deal from Sedona's gurus. Tempe is a much more academic point, where important Native American knowledge is stored and taught. Their understanding of life and death can help a blocked philosopher find the right answer to progress. The two places are far enough that most travelers stop in Phoenix, if only for fuel and food.

Until Sheriff Brown took office, Phoenix was simply that waypoint between more important places. It offered some nice opportunities to hide out for a while and the best food in the region. But Sheriff Brown changed everything.

Russell Brown's vendetta came about due to his first run-in with Disquiet. He ran across a Frankenstein escaping a burning building. He looked upon the Promethean and saw the worst in the creature. He didn't see a piecemeal body; he saw the bodies of innocent white men, cut apart and sewn together as an affront to his God. Since that night in the early 1990s, he's dedicated his life to eradicating everything and everyone that doesn't look like "goodness" to him. His zeal and passion carried him in to city council, into militia leadership, then quickly to the Sheriff position. Soon he will celebrate his twentieth anniversary as Sheriff.

His critics claim he spends too much time cultivating his image and not enough doing the job. However, his record speaks for itself. He's lobbied for unprecedented budgets and his team's conviction rate is downright draconian. He organizes "neighborhood watch groups" that look more like civilian militias. These watch groups act as Brown's eyes on the streets and enact citizens arrests against suspected illegal immigrants and petty criminals. His beat cops have a nationwide reputation for brutal and efficient enforcement. He even had a short-lived reality television show centered on his "tough justice.'" Every few years, his campaigns have plenty of action to point at, and he riles his base enough to win the vote by a clear margin every time. Just ignore the fact that crime rates have increased over his tenure, and he looks like a rather effective lawman.

Phœnix Deputy
(New Merit, * to *****)

Sheriff Brown's deputies undergo extensive training as part of his agenda. Even for those who aren't inducted into the full truth, he provides tactics and techniques specifically geared toward hunting Created threats. At each level in this Merit, a deputy gains further advantages. As well, this Merit adds to any Intimidation rolls made against residents of Phoenix or those aware of Brown's brutal reputation. They also add this Merit to any roll to resist the effects of Disquiet.

• All deputies receive basic training in where to strike hardest. Deputies enjoy the 9-again quality on Firearms, Brawl, and Weaponry attacks.

•• Deputies quickly make connections on the street. They gain a dot of Allies and Contacts related to their job.

••• Extensive training in lethality becomes a priority for ranking deputies. All successful Firearms, Brawl, and Weaponry attacks cause one additional point of lethal damage.

•••• At this level, the deputy is informed of the ungodly truth about the enemy. They receive an Investigation Specialty in Prometheans and the Interdisciplinary Specialty and Area of Expertise Merits tied to that Specialty.

••••• Deputies are taught to work effortlessly as a team to overcome great threats. If one has this level, a team can use teamwork actions **(see p. 202)** for attack rolls with any other character with a dot or more in this Merit.

Story Hook

Everyone has a relative in Phoenix. In the case of the Created, everyone has a connection who happened to pass through. During an investigation into her origin, a character realizes her progenitor passed through Phoenix, where the trail died. Little did she know the trail wasn't the only thing to die there. When she arrives, she's spotted by one of Brown's deputy surveillance teams. She isn't immediately hunted, but the moment a Wasteland pops up, her face ends up on wanted posters with massive rewards.

The Wasted Land

Columbus, Ohio, United States

Some parts of the United States have less unemployment. Some have less crime. In some, the racial tensions run hotter. People pay attention to statistics. What bleeds leads in the world of news. By whatever criteria, the city that's the worst gets attention. The city that's second place gets overlooked. Columbus suffers for not being the worst at anything, and because of this, it's arguably the worst at everything. Columbus's problems aren't the worst so it's not worth attention, and it's most certainly not worth solutions.

Columbus is the most populous city in Ohio and its capital city. It's home to nearly one million people, or two million in its wide, expansive metropolitan area. It's a moderately affluent city for its region, with many successful international businesses based within. This optimistic picture doesn't extend far outside the downtown area, though. Blocks away from multi-billion dollar insurance conglomerates, destitute people shoot each other in the streets. One block north, however, Columbus looks every bit the hip, quirky arts city.

A large portion of Columbus consists of the Ohio State University and surrounding student housing. The University is the city's largest employer and guarantees an influx of both new residents and outside money. Created that visit Columbus often flock around the campus area, since very few of the locals are from the area and thus they can't as easily place when something is out of the ordinary. The clusters of tiny neighborhoods around campus shift in population in both the Spring and the Fall, so strangeness dilutes and quickly vanishes from the public's memory.

History

Everywhere you go, everyone you talk to about Columbus will tell you something that "used to be" important and special about the city. It "used to be" a center of aviation. It "used to be" a prominent base of industrial and mining labor movements. It "used to be" a city known for progressive approaches to women's rights. This hits home with the Created, as every Promethean "used to be" something else entirely.

Columbus was, and indeed is, known for its Frankensteins. German and Dutch immigrants brought more than farming, brewing, and architecture with them to the Americas. Some scientists in the 18th and 19th centuries fled persecution for their terrifying practices in mimicking life. Their Protestant peers eschewed such studies. As they fled to the United States, these scientists changed their names and memorized whatever they could not stow secretly in grain barrels across the Atlantic. They moved west to avoid more conservative scrutiny, and many settled in Columbus and Pittsburgh. Some passed away having never successfully stolen the Divine Fire. Some died at the hands of their creations. Some fled further west still.

The suburb Bexley has been home to a number of Tammuz, particularly in the last decade. One who goes by the name of Henry has carefully rooted himself in Columbus. He leaves for months at a time in order to keep the neighborhood safe from becoming a Wasteland, but returns a few times a year in order to mentor young Tammuz on their Pilgrimages. He encourages his students to watch Promethean activity in the nearby suburb of Whitehall, since it's strangely prone to Wasteland effects.

Story Hooks

Columbus remains a hidden library of dark sciences. A Frankenstein attempting to learn her alchemical origins or any Promethean attempting to understand his condition may find hidden knowledge in Columbus. Most of the authors of these tomes are long-since dead, but their creations' Repute carries far; rumors of these libraries pass along campfire tales among the Frankensteins.

Just east of Bexley, in Whitehall, the city is falling apart despite all efforts to reform and rebuild. Much of the suburb today comes from the remnants of tight-knit military housing, which has long-since fallen to slums. These cul-de-sacs now act as staging grounds for police special weapons teams eager to crack down on drugs and violence. An elected county judge personally owns over a fourth of these properties and rapidly cycles residents through the justice system, then personally sues them for contract violations. This area is a hotbed of Torment and risks spreading outward. The entire area of Whitehall is perpetually under the effects of a Category 1 Wasteland. Any Prometheans causing Wasteland effects immediately start at Category 2 in Whitehall.

On the north side of town, the Pontifical College Josefinium is seasonal home to a Galateid Promethean that calls itself The Saint. It appears to some of the students and faculty at the college, offering "revelation." It researches each potential candidate, and takes the image of whomever or whatever it feels he most needs to see. So far, it has managed to remain free of undue suspicion, but it is attracting a number of amateur "ghost hunters" who visit the Josefinium in hopes of uncovering the mysterious apparition. So far, the college officials have kept these investigations out of non-public areas. As local news scrambles for ratings, stations have discussed features on the team, and the college.

A City Divided

Johannesburg ("Joburg"), Gauteng, Republic of South Africa

Gold is the goal of the amateur alchemist, before the metaphor for perfection is realized. That doesn't lessen the value of the mineral in the minds of learned men, nor the possession of gold as symbolic power.

There's gold in Joburg, but there's pyrite too. The city is cyclically crumbling and birthing itself anew. Older streets bustling a generation ago are redolent with urban decay. Shiny new tourist traps spring up, eclipsing corroded clubs a few streets over. The city becomes an almost literal wasteland in the winter time; don't believe the tourist guides that call the weather pleasantly cool. Despite the transition to democracy, old racial wounds still fester. Too long the nation's wealth flowed into gilded coffers, including those held by a local group of alchemists, fanning the flames of racial hatred to work experiments on those they considered little more than spare parts. The Created of the city are nearly all natives and nearly all Frankensteins, five decades' worth of offspring from apartheid demiurges following herr Doktor's notes.

Joburg isn't one of South Africa's three capital cities, but it is the wealthiest and it's considered the lightning capital of the world, having more annual strikes than nearly any other city on the planet. The massive crime afflicting the city resulted in the government literally putting a CCTV camera on every street corner. It is also the world's largest city not situated on a river, lake, or coastline.

History

The Witwatersrand gold mine's striking in the late 19th century brought a massive wave of Dutch and German immigrants. Among them were descendants of Ingolstadt students, carrying with them a full set of good Doctor Frankenstein's working laboratory notes. Their grandchildren — the Dippelgesellschaft, a splinter faction of the larger Pristine Order of the Auric Chalice — retained the alchemical predilections and national pride of their forebears, endearing them to the pro-Nazi sympathizers within the Afrikaner ruling class that instituted apartheid. Made up of five extended families, the society remains a silent power in the city.

For half a century, the racist, segregationist ideology concentrated the nation's power into the hands of the few, and the grandchildren of Frankenstein used their wealth and the rampant crime in the city to follow in his footsteps. Apartheid's legacy endures in the form of persistent racial tensions and economic disparity; the city's Wretched and alchemists are a microcosm of this legacy, held fast by skin color and Disquiet. Disenfranchised and outcast, the

Frankensteins form unstable, uneven throngs concentrated around SoWeTo (South Western Townships), an adjacent city essentially created by segregation. The vast Reefs full of gold mining concerns are the sole area where the Wretched may safely be alone and bleed off Torment without wrecking the city's power grid even further.

Story Hook

Unlike his cousins, one Chalice alchemist is willing to deal: the *Dippelgesellschaft* is intensely backstabbing, as only families can be. He asks Wretched to murder three of his cousins under the guise of street killings; in exchange, he offers access to the Quicksilver and Gold Athanors jealously guarded by the society, as well as copies of Frankenstein's notes. If the Wretched of SoWeTo are asked, they report that such offers are becoming increasingly common, and they're torn between believing it's a trick to enslave them or whether the society is far more fragile than it appears.

The Broken Chain

Port-au-Prince, Ouest, Republic of Haiti

Haiti is built on the hope of freedom from bondage. The Haitian people have a pride about them, a sense of grand accomplishment, persisting despite adversity. Unfortunately, Haiti has seen a great deal of adversity: a succession of coups, occupations, and endemic, permanent corruption, not to mention persistent environmental difficulties. Adversity brings out the best and worst in people, so it's little surprise that it draws Prometheans as well, seeking to free themselves from the chains of Disquiet. Every type of person and interaction are available within Port-au-Prince, and the island offers a relatively pleasant Wastes in the form of the Plains de Cul du Sac. Yet even willing bindings cannot persist long in Port-au-Prince, for a throng in Haiti soon becomes in-name-only.

History

During the Golden Age of Piracy, the many tiny islands surrounding Haiti (Tortuga most notably) played host to privateers and buccaneers alike. The spirit of independence persisted despite the heavy importation of slaves, and was inflamed further by the French Revolution. It's a point of honor that the Maroon revolutionaries of Haiti achieved the only successful slave rebellion in all of history. A few years later, the few remaining white landowners were massacred, an act that turned a sympathetic world against the fledgling nation. Decades later, Haiti's isolation was ended by a humiliating reparations deal with France, permanently crippling the economy.

Port-au-Prince has yet to recover from a horrifying earthquake, followed by one of the largest cholera outbreaks in modern history — an outbreak the natives attribute to a local UN base dumping raw sewage into a river used for public consumption. A rainy season that lasts eight months, coupled with rampant poverty and unemployment, further weakened the aggrieved populace. Worsening the situation are the Firestorms periodically ripping through the city, exacerbated by the inability of alchemical brands to maintain their bonds west of the Massif du Nord, the mountain that gently slopes on the city's horizon. The brands crack within days and cannot be reforged inside national borders, leaking Pyros in their sundering and inflicting periodic Wastelands on the island.

Story Hooks

A national treasure of Haiti, the Black Maroon is a massive statue of a former slave blowing a conch shell with one hand and grasping a machete with the other. A broken chain completes the symbolism. While simply residing within Haiti slowly degrades the integrity of an alchemical throng, actually touching the Black Maroon instantly sunders the bonds. Curiously, the Azothic memory is blank on the topic.

A Centimanus comes to the characters, asking for help. The Mantle of Lordship will not function on the island and his former servants are now hunting him, following a Sublimatus that commands their loyalty through charisma and fellowship rather than mystical authority.

An Aurum Athanor exists on the isle of Tortuga, but it was left by Promethean pirates several hundred years ago. The key to unlocking it is, reasonably enough, engaging in high piracy on the open seas.

The Mother of Monsters

Prague, Czech Republic

City of a Hundred Spires: this is how Prague styles herself. A metropolis that held the title of the epicenter of European art and culture for century after century, Prague's cosmopolitan essence is built into her bricks, irrevocably intertwined with her people. Three Pragues stretch towards the sky — the ancient, the Communist, the modern. It has reinvented itself a dozen times over,

Matur Urbina, the Mother of Cities: this is how others style Prague. Prometheans view the city as a mother, for no other city has the Created written into their history and hearts. City natives, used to tourism and travelers, regard transients with a brusque and business-like demeanor — an attitude many Prometheans find refreshingly straightforward. Without lingering long enough for Disquiet to take hold, Prometheans can find any experience they desire on the city streets. Beyond that, Prometheans seek an understanding of their kind that can't be gleaned from the Azothic memory, and Prague is perhaps the only city in the world with a favorable legend. The golem's tale draws many Unfleshed to the city, seeking commonality from a highly individualistic Lineage.

History

Prague has existed since before human history; for all of that time, it has hosted Prometheans. The Celtic Ulgan native to the area formed pacts with Roman Galateids and Osirians for centuries before the birth of Christ. The city boasted a cosmopolitan reputation, flourishing long centuries before it was the imperial capital of the Holy Roman Empire during the Middle Ages. Much of the city's history can be seen in well-preserved structures; even the bombing raids during World War II left huge swaths of the city intact. As a result, the city boasts a higher-than-average number of Athanors, a



situation that — beyond its importance to Promethean history and the fact that Disquiet finds little purchase in long-term residents — makes Prague an attractive destination for travelling throngs.

Walk down the cobblestone road to see the medieval-era Prague Castle, and you'll pass both the massive blocky Ministry of Defense, a building made in the inimitable Soviet style, and a glass skyscraper stretching high into the night. Keep walking, and you'll find no less than three trendy bars that aren't more than five years old apiece, and hear seven different languages spoken, shouted, and laughed into the night.

The city's most famous Promethean heritage is far quieter. While the original golem was an Unfleshed, Loew's son used his method to create a Tammuz, drawing a body from the Jewish Quarter's cemetery to serve as guardian of his people. Disquiet pressed the progeny to leave and begin the Great Work, but he left a progeny from the cemetery in turn. Each Tammuz (and, on occasion, Unfleshed) created from the graveyard by the Loew method spends at least a decade serving the people of Prague, keeping their ancient bargain with the rabbi's descendants and preserving an unbroken Promethean oral tradition stretching back centuries. The sons and daughters of Loew are considered somewhere between prophets and superstars by the local Created. While tourists bleed money on the cobblestones, the Loew lineage (not Lineage) walks the streets to bind ghosts, clash with demons, and keep their mother vital and hale by eliminating other supernatural threats.

Story Hooks

Prague has one of the busiest metro systems in the world, running over twenty hours a day. Though the rail system was designed and construction began prior to World War II, much of the heavy sections of the metro were constructed during the Soviet era of Prague. Consequently, the metro features architecture that's modern, yet severe. It also features a number of hidden rails and survival chambers built for high government officials in case of an American nuclear strike. Rumors abound that one of the reclusive Nuclear Prometheans has made an ironic lair in one of these chambers, but the records of their locations and access points were lost in the fall of the Soviet Union.

The Old Jewish Quarter of the city has existed since medieval times, even though it's a shadow of its former self. Visitors flock to the synagogues and the Jewish graveyard, where limited space necessitated building atop extant gravestones. As a result, the graveyard is an eclectic mix of headstones and graves from a millennium of use. Rabbi Loew's grave is still well preserved and a tourist attraction, as is the synagogue where the original golem is rumored to be in the attic (he isn't). The pilgrim marks near the headstone hint at how to access the Plumbum Athanor that is in the attic, however.

Barrandov Studios controls most of the filming in Prague, and over the past decade the city's become an extremely popular destination when a film's got to have an "old European" feel. Many Prometheans find movie work, allowing them to explore a huge variety of roles (and Roles) and get paid for it, too. Prague's become well known for background actors who won't break character, even when the cameras stop rolling.

Now only a gift shop for Prague Castle, the Golden Way was once a bustling street and the repository ancient alchemical texts. Though it played host to dozens — possibly hundreds — of Athanors and secrets over the course of centuries, the structures and atmosphere that allowed access to those Athanors are long gone. However, the recent film industry boom has given hope that such an atmosphere can be artificially recreated on lighted sets. The Loew lineage is particularly interested in this, looking to acquire financing.

The medieval center of town is home to the Prague orloj, the world-famous astrological clock (and the Prague clocktower pub crawl, a lesser-known but equally reputed attraction). A triumph of medieval engineering, the clock keeps track of astrological signs, making it a handy reference for the alchemist far away from home. Strangely, the clock also seems to regulate Disquiet within the square itself, gradually stepping it down and alleviating the worst afflicted. This effect extends to much of the city, making the metropolis well-suited for long-term Promethean habitation.



THE GREAT WORK: EPILOGUE

"I'm sorry," the cab driver said, "I really thought you were someone else!"

Roark nodded. "It's all right. I get that a lot."

He tipped the driver. He counted the bills left in his wallet. It was enough to take another cab home, and then grab a bite to eat. Budgeting was something all humans had to do, and he was a fast learner.

The neon light palm in the front window was lit, and a plaque hung on the door.

"Sofie Weiss, Medium," he said to himself. "This is it."

He knocked on the door. When nothing happened, he knocked again.

"Appointments only!" yelled a voice from behind the door.

"Sofie," Roark said, "It's me."

After a moment of silence, Roark heard the sound of multiple locks clicking open. Sofie, the woman Roark knew as Wisher, cracked the door open. She leaned into the open space. Her face looked softer, her eyes were green and bright, but the wide-eyed look of awe hadn't changed. He would have to draw this later.

Sofie said, "Come inside. I don't have an appointment for another hour."

He told her everything over tea: how Imam fought the wave of Pandorans the creature left at the car, how they drove into town to lure them away from the clearing and to get help, and how they repaired Clay's Girl and waited for her to return to life. They went to find Sofie, but the search was fruitless. Roark had only been able to track her down a few weeks ago.

Sofie told him a summary of what happened: in a daze, she had wandered onto the road. She wasn't sure who picked her up, but when she came to, she knew that she was Sofie Weiss, and that she had been gone for a long time. It was only recently that her memories as Wisher resurfaced.

"Why aren't the others with you?" she asked.

He answered, "We're apart for now. Imam's working in Canada, and Clay's Girl went hitchhiking down in Arizona. We call each other now and then."

"Then what about you?"

"I came here to find you, to congratulate you."

Sofie smiled and wiped tears from her eyes. "Thank you, Roark."

He finished the last of his tea and checked his phone. He sighed. "I should get going. It's about time." He stood up to leave.

Sofie grabbed his arm and handed him a business card. "If the others don't feel like talking," she said, "call me."

Roark ran the card between his fingers. His hands should have stained the paper with dirt and grass, but the illusion of the fire prevented that. Perhaps one day he wouldn't need it. He slipped the card into his pocket.

"I should be thanking you now," he said. "Not just for the card."

Sofie let out a sob.

Roark wrapped his arms around her and hugged her tight. He whispered to her, "Have a nice life, Sofie Weiss. You've earned it."

And hereto I set down my story, that any who f ind it may learn and prosper by my misery.

I came to the sea three weeks after abandoning my child, my creation, in that dam graveyard. I searched but I did not f ind him, so I walked west, as I told him I would. When I reached the sea, I sat there in the sand and I thought of what I might do now, now that I'd seen the River, now I had a mortal sin on my head. Two, I suppose, because I new that leaving that boy behind must be a mortal sin.

I could do nothing but think, tho, because I didn't no how to write or to read. I new the marks that the 'bos made on barns and trees and signs, but I didn't no letters or words. I decided to learn, so I put myself to that task, and it took me a while, but as you can see, if you read this, I learned. So can you.

I want to tell you about the River. I died one evening, after I put my own gun under my chin. I woke up on the banks of a River whose water seemed still and shimmering, almost like it were made of starlite. I was thirsty because of the black blizzards, and so I drinked from the River, and then and there I saw my child, my creation. He was still skinny as bones, and he was still old in body but yung in soul, and I saw to him, "I m sorry, I m so sorry, of course you can walk with me."

And he said, "Papa, I can't. I walkt on like you told me to, and I can't come back to you because you're dead now."

And I said, crying as I said it, "But I could f ind you if you just walk west, I'll feel your f ire and f ind you."

And he took my hands and he said, "What happened taut me, just as it taut you. Please keep walking. If you f ind me, you can tell me what you ment to tell me in the graveyard. But for now, you just come back to the world and you keep walking."

And I felt better then. I new that this was just a show that the River gave me, that he weren't really there and probably I weren't either, but it felt better. It felt good, like I had really seen him and talkt to him.

I sat down on the banks of that River and I washed off my hands and my face. I stared out into the black across the River, and that thaut maybe I'd swim it. But then I herd a voice inside, the me-but-older voice, and it said, "Galveston, you go back up there."

It never spoke so clear before. It was mostly just a feeling, but here at the River I herd it perfect. I won t say it f ild me with joy, but maybe I felt hope. I realized I could learn, even if it hurts.

I can't say how I got back up away from the River because I don't really remember, but I did it, and I went to church, and I asked the father there to teach me to read and write. And this here is the f irst thing I ve wrote on my own, and I m gonna leave it here in the graveyard, so maybe if someone like me sees it, it can help them learn.

Gavelston, 18 August 1933



CHAPTER SEVEN: STORYTELLING

Promethean presents a few challenges to a Storyteller, whether she's been running the game for many years or this is her first time behind the screen. This chapter presents a set of tools to help mitigate those challenges, including working out milestones for a throng, gathering the characters into a cohesive group, or handling one character undergoing the New Dawn while his player wants to keep taking part in the game.

Gathering the Throng

Rather than having each player create a character independently then trying to bring them together into a throng, it's better for the Storyteller and players to set aside the first session to generate characters as a group. Before anyone puts dots to paper, the Storyteller should set the tone for the rest of the game. If she's got a particularly strong idea for how the chronicle will start (such as "The Mother We Share," p. 294), she should be up front about that. If she'd rather let the players take the lead, that's also fine, but she needs to know what they want from the game.

Once the group has a broad premise, move on to asking specific questions to help refine what the group can expect from play. The four questions below are a good fit for almost every **Promethean** game; the latter two extend past that to most games in general. The whole group, the Storyteller included, should work together to answer them and get a foundation for the world. Sometimes a Storyteller starts with a strong vision of the story that they want to tell. It's worth asking these questions anyway. If the players have a strong preference that breaks away from the Storyteller's plans, she should work with them to find a middle ground, figuring out things everyone can agree on and building her ideas from there.

Will the story focus on one place, or travel a lot?

In many ways, the default Promethean game is a little like a road movie or the 1970s Incredible Hulk television show. A group of misfits, unable to blend in with humanity as a whole, travels from place to place. In some areas they cause problems, in others they resolve problems, and as a result they learn what it is to be human. Storytellers need to be willing to improvise and not sweat the small details. If the characters never spend more than four sessions in one place, it's not worth looking up every little detail about it. On the other hand, if they like a specific place, nothing says they can't return to it later.

A nomadic lifestyle isn't for everyone. Giving the players a solid area to focus on — anywhere from a couple of streets to a full city — helps the story feel grounded, and gives both players and the Storyteller a chance to develop deeper relationships with other characters, whether they are the characters' creators or humans with whom they have started to develop a relationship. Building up a relationship over a number of sessions makes it all the more poignant when it all falls apart.

Where do you want the chronicle to start?

Even if the characters will travel, knowing where the chronicle begins helps the Storyteller set an appropriate mood. Starting in Prague gives a very different feel to a story that starts in Los Angeles, and both are very different from Buenos Aires. The local color can say a lot about the circumstances of a Promethean's creation and her early life. As a starting point for a traveling chronicle, a city or region can set up the kinds of things that the characters are used to, what they look for in a new destination, and what they are running away from.

For a game that will remain in the one place, the Storyteller can do some more research to insert appropriate weird and supernatural happenings. Focus less on the physical layout of

> "The very purpose of existence is to reconcile the glowing opinion we hold of ourselves with the appalling things that other people think about us."
>
> —Quentin Crisp

the region and more on important points. A biotech lab may be on the verge of creating an Unfleshed, or one of the characters could be that Promethean. An unexplained blaze could be the site of a Firestorm. Places with bad reputations could be Wastelands. Having these first few story hooks helps to draw the players into the action.

What aspects of humanity do you want the story to touch on?

Promethean is a game about people who learn how to be human, but "human" is a wide umbrella. Humanity includes paragons of virtue, who perform great acts of sacrifice and love to improve the lives of thousands. It also includes the worst elements of society: bigots, abusive spouses and parents, rapists, murderers, and serial killers. The vast majority of people fall between those two extremes, living their lives, watching television, and trying not to catch the attention of the things that lie in the cracks of the world.

This question highlights aspects that the players want to touch on. This is their chance to include parts of humanity in their characters' quest. Dealing with abusive families or bigots in the game can be an empowering experience, and this is the chance for players to bring up what they want to deal with. Likewise, if they want to focus on the slice-of-life mundanity of most people, then the Storyteller should give them plenty of chances to look at normal human lives and wonder, "is this it?"

What themes are off the table?

The converse to the previous question, the Storyteller can either ask this as a group or bring it up with each player in private. Bringing up past trauma in the course of a game can have a real negative effect on some players. Survivors of sexual abuse and the children of abusive parents may not want to touch on those elements in the game. Other players may get enough bigoted comments in their normal lives that they want to enjoy the game without experiencing them.

The Storyteller needs to listen to her players' answers to this question and act upon them. She shouldn't ask for an explanation unless the player offers one. Asking people to justify their discomfort means that they may well back down and sit through a story that rekindles real-life trauma. Instead, the Storyteller should listen to her players and not put these elements in the game.

The Alchemical Record

When all the players have answered the questions above, move on to character creation. Players should come up with a concept first, and then share them with the group. If two players want to play the same kind of character, they should discuss how they can differentiate the two, or whether one (or both) would prefer to play a different concept. The concept for a Promethean should include an idea of both the character's Lineage and initial Refinement. Once everyone's agreed, they may find it handy to write their concept on a sticky note or index card in front of them. Alternately, the Storyteller might have a large sheet of paper and colored pens, or mind-mapping software on a tablet to help with the next step.

Once everyone has a broad idea of what their character's concept is, go around the table and get some more information. These steps can happen before or after the players start recording Attributes, Skills, and the like. Doing them beforehand can identify Skills that might not be obvious from just the concept, while running through these stages after character creation means the players have a better idea of who their characters are and what they're capable of.

The Storyteller starts with the player to her left. He introduces himself in character — a quick run-down of name, major personality trait, Lineage, and Refinement. It's often a good idea to ask the five questions (p. 101) at this point. The Storyteller should make copious notes. The answers also give the other players a chance to work out what the character is all about. This continues clockwise; if the player can't come up with an answer to one of the questions he may want to ask the others at the table for some ideas.

Once everyone has answered the five questions, move back to the player on the Storyteller's left. He makes a brief statement about how his character came to meet one of the other characters. The other player then adds an extra detail to their meeting. This process continues clockwise around the players. Nobody can select a character with whom their character has an existing relationship. The Storyteller or one of the other players should make notes of these links.

For example, Carol's player says, "Carol met Dane when she was in the throes of Torment and he was watching her, studying what happened." Dane's player might reply "Dane thought the whole thing was quite beautiful, but would never admit to admiring another Created's Torment."

A throng of Created is a rare thing; this step means that the characters know one another and the Storyteller doesn't have to rely on a hackneyed "you all meet in a bar" style opening. Getting the throng together can be a very tricky story to pull off well, relying as it does on dividing the spotlight between the various characters and hoping that everyone works together. Starting with a throng already formed makes for a better introduction to a story that covers more ground.

Once everyone's established their relationship and how the throng knows one another, go around the table one more time. This time, each player names one person or place that his character associates with — the shallow grave he crawled out of, the weird guy who he keeps seeing, the kind man who gave the Created his jacket or shoes, the abandoned house where he rests. These characters and players are the Storyteller's responsibility in play, but to start with they help to ground each character. Finally, everyone connects their character with another one of these names or places, providing links between characters via the people and places they interact with. That kind man who gave Dane his shoes is also the security guard who is trying to catch Carol in the abandoned house where she rests. This brings up another source of conflict between the players

The resulting spider's web of connections may look messy, but the Storyteller (or one of the players) can clean it up later on, and host it online or bring it to future sessions. It gives everyone a good idea of where the story started, as well as where it's going.

The Mother We Share

One of the easiest ways to give a throng a common purpose is to give them a shared history. A specific starting point can help players unfamiliar with Promethean get into the story quickly, and gives the throng a shared goal from the start. That added sense of

focus and direction can help keep the story moving if it ever feels like it might stall out.

The simplest setup is to have all of the characters be Extempore, with their Azoth and link to the Divine Fire created *ex nihilo* by outside actions. A powerful Created attempting — and failing — the New Dawn, a raging Wasteland, or a Firestorm can all provide the raw power necessary to raise the dead as Created. Created by one event, no one character knows more about her condition than the others.

Sharing a Lineage means that the choices each character makes are more important, as each one sets her apart from her fellows. Extempore isn't properly a Lineage, but a group of Prometheans all animated in the same instance creates a bond very much like a Lineage. A game of Extempore is also well suited to players who aren't familiar with Promethean, as the characters' disconnection from the Azothic memory means they do not have any real preconceptions as to their place in the world, or what the world expects of them. This story is one of discovery — not just the Created learning what it means to be human, but of *tabula rasa* who must discover what they are before finding out what they might become.

A related story uses the Unfleshed as protagonists. Nothing says that a demiurge can only create one Promethean at once. He might build a family of clockwork automatons for a theme park that jerk to life when lightning hits his workshop. He might be developing variant state vectors from the neural map of a spiny lobster, hoping for human-like intelligence. Or he may find the hidden port where a modified Antikythera mechanism can bring a group of ancient statues to life.

The Unfleshed, at least partly aware of their condition through the Azothic memory, have a more pressing challenge: their shared demiurge. They'll need to escape quickly — anyone driven enough to create more than one of the Unfleshed won't like having a group of Created who have their own ideas about the purpose of their existence. Once they've escaped, the throng has two goals. The first is much the same as that of any other group of Prometheans, studying the Refinements in order to move along the Pilgrimage. Unlike other stories, the threat of the characters' demiurge should remain ever-present in the background, a problem that they need to deal with at some point.

Storytellers can build similar stories around any dramatic starting point. A throng of Tammuz all crawl from the earth at the same point; their birthing ground is a stretch of desert that the mob in Las Vegas uses for dumping bodies. Each member of a branded throng performs the generative act at the same time, leaving clues for the new Created to find one another but no hints as to their creators' identities. Starting the throng off with something that links them beyond the shared desire to complete the Pilgrimage helps keep them together, and gives the Storyteller a great tool to keep the story moving forward.

Patchwork People

A Promethean does not spring to life *ex nihilo*, replete with knowledge of the world. She knows things without knowing how she knows. She may be an expert programmer, or a master martial-artist, but she never needed the training or expertise that normal humans need to pick up those same skills. As such, a Created is a patchwork of knowledge even if he is not a patchwork of people.

Some groups may enjoy the idea of putting their Created's skills in the hands of one another — or random chance. The first method gives a measure of cohesion, while the second can provide some bizarre results. In both cases, the player still chooses the key details of her character.

The first method works best with four or more players, but it does need the Storyteller to be prepared. She'll need multiple colors of pen and lots of index cards. She should have at least three cards per player, each marked with one of the categories of Skills. If she has four players, she needs twelve cards — four each with Mental Skills, four with Physical Skills, and so on. If the group is amenable to the idea, it's easy to branch out into Attributes as well, either by including them on the same card as the Skills or by having them on separate cards.

The Storyteller needs a stack of index cards listing the Mental, Physical, and Social Attributes and Skills. It's up to her whether the Attributes and Skills are on the same card, offering some cohesion between likely dice pools, or whether they're on separate cards, giving a chance for the players to discover some unlikely combinations.

She needs one card of each category per player and a number of pens of different colors. Each player takes one card per category. For Attributes, fill in three dots in the first color, then one more dot in each other color. For Skills, fill in four dots in one color and note a Specialty in one of them. Then, fill out then three dots in another color, and four more in a third. Either use the same colors throughout the group (e.g. green for the first set, blue for the second set, red for the third set), or note down which color corresponds to which priority.

The Storyteller gathers up the cards, sorts them in to piles corresponding to the Skills, and shuffles each pile. Each player then draws one card for each category of Skills. She can choose which category is primary (taking all the filled in dots), which is secondary, and which is tertiary. The character will end up with the right number of Skill dots and appropriate Specialties, but it's up to the player to work out what they all mean together — much like it's up to the Created to work out what their abilities mean.

The second method is better suited to smaller groups, and can be done by each player on their own, but it does bring a greater degree of randomness. Each player decides how to prioritize Attributes and Skills. She then rolls that number of dice. For Attributes, each die showing 1–3 is a dot in the Power Attribute, each showing 4–6 is a dot in the Finesse Attribute, and each showing 7–9 is a dot in the Resistance Attribute. Characters start with one dot in each Attribute as normal. Roll any dice showing 10 until they show a number between 1 and 9. If rolling for Mental Attributes and the dice show 1, 2, 4, 7, 9, that translates to Intelligence 3, Wits 2, and Resolve 3.

For Skills, re-roll any dice showing 9 or 10, and then group them by number. Number the Skills in each category from 1 to 8, starting at the top. Count down the Skill list according to the number shown on the dice — if two dice show 3 when rolling for Physical Skills, then counting down from the top that means the character has two dots of Drive.

Whichever method you use, once the players have determined Attributes and Skills character creation proceeds as normal.

Pilgrimage: The Long Road

As mentioned in Chapter Three (Defining the Path, p. 177), each Promethean has a specific path through the Refinements in front of her. That path is a key part of her Pilgrimage; without completing it, she can't go through the New Dawn. Just one problem: she doesn't know the path ahead of her. The player chooses the Pilgrimage, but the character needs to discover it.

A player chooses her character's path through the Pilgrimage, selecting which Refinements and Roles his character must master. He can either do this as part of character creation or after the first couple of sessions has given him a better idea of his character's personality and the kind of challenges that would be fun for her to face. A Pilgrimage Sheet — a list of Refinements and Roles that a player can use to track his character's path, as well as those elements that she has completed — can help both players and Storytellers in this regard.

Some groups won't be happy with the idea that everyone knows their characters' Pilgrimages. Others may enjoy coming up with some elements but still want the surprise of working out their characters' ultimate fate. While each character's starting Refinement and Role is on their Pilgrimage, they want the rest to remain unknown. The Storyteller has a couple of options available, depending on her players' tastes.

The first is perhaps the simplest, but it takes the most work. The Storyteller defines a Pilgrimage for each character, based on their answers to the five questions and the group creation process above. This allows the Storyteller to link the Pilgrimage through the Refinements and Roles with the milestones that she's working out for each character. Though this is great for groups that prefer the thrill of discovery, it puts a lot of work on the Storyteller's shoulders and she may not be ready for that.

A Pilgrimage has to encompass at least four Refinements and at minimum eight Roles. The Storyteller might request that each player defines part of his character's Pilgrimage. In addition to the starting Refinement and Role, she might ask for four more, but keep the remaining three (or more) secret from the player. This helps get a sense of the player's idea of the alchemical journey while needing to discover the rest of his character's journey.

Finally, one thing that some groups might find fun is to mix things up. Everyone writes down Roles on small pieces of paper, folds them up, and draws from a hat. It's up to the players whether they look and so know the path their characters' take, or if they leave it up to the Storyteller.

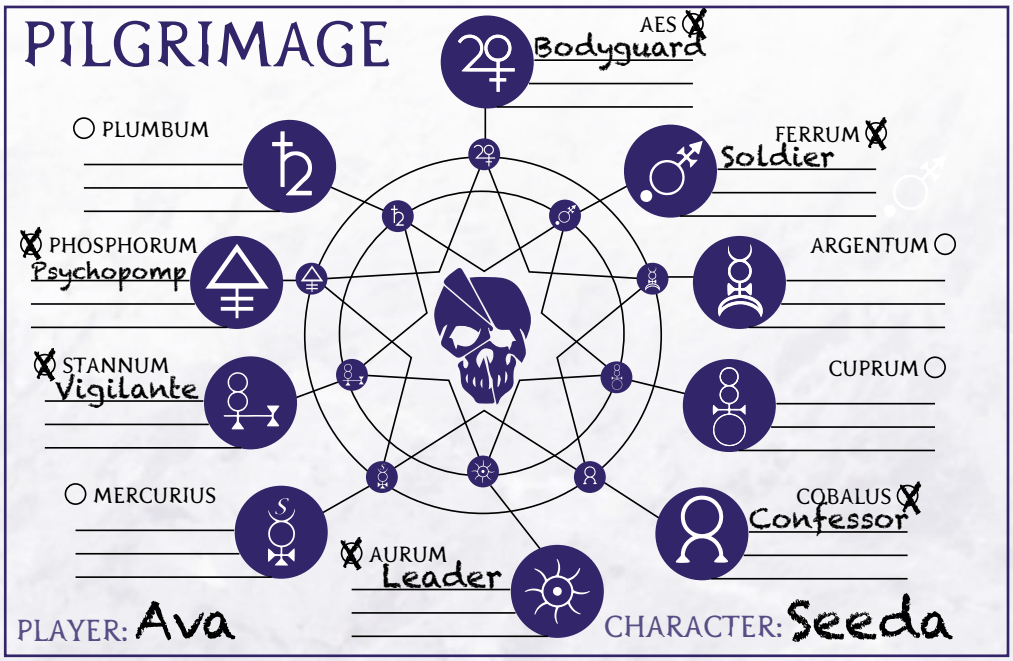
When each character has her Pilgrimage set, by whatever means, the Storyteller can use the first steps to weave the characters together. The player and Promethean both know the Role that the character is currently working toward — and the next Role the character will take — even if they do not know which is next on the character's Pilgrimage. Complementary Roles, or even characters taking on the same Role, can give characters reason to work together beyond their initial relationships. The Storyteller also has a better idea of where the first few sessions should go to give the characters a headstart on the Pilgrimage.

Pilgrimage Creation

Ava and Milly sit down to work out a Pilgrimage for Seeda, the character from p. 103. She starts play following the Refinement of Gold in the Leader Role. This is a pretty natural starting point for the character. Milly has some ideas about where she wants Seeda's story to go and what would make sense on her Pilgrimage, but asks Ava to keep four Roles secret. She wants a little of the thrill of discovery in play.

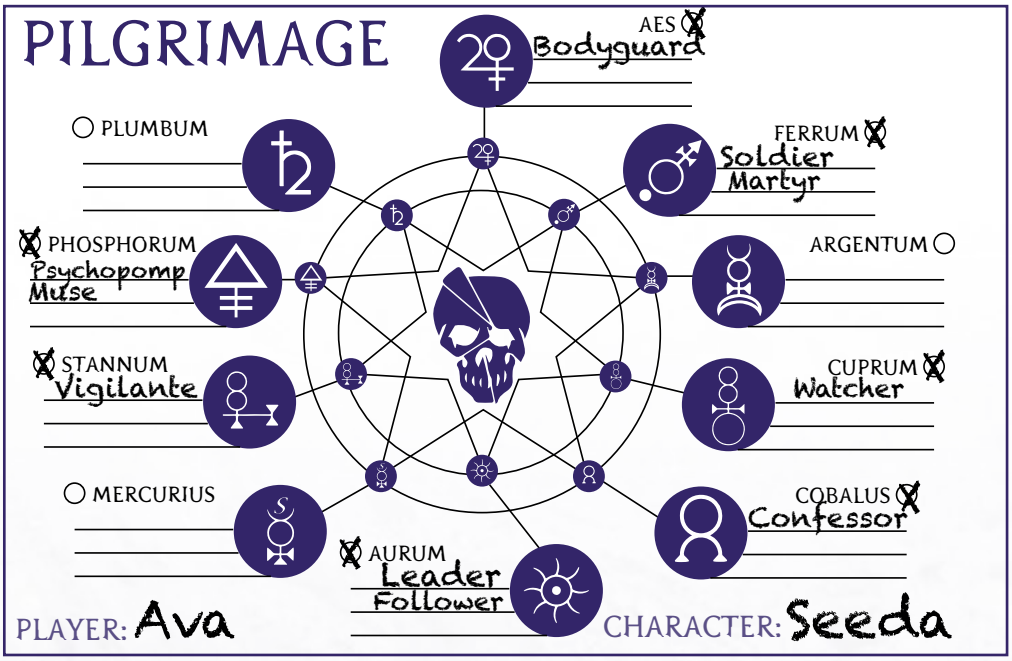
Milly sets down a Pilgrimage Sheet. She's already filled out Leader under Aurum, and has further marked off Aes, Cobalus, Ferrum, and Phosphorum as other Refinements she wants to hit. Ava points out that she needs at least one more basic Refinement. Aes, Cobalus, and Phosphorum are all complex Refinements, and she has to have a similar number of basic Refinements. She suggests Stannum — specifically, the Vigilante Role — and Milly agrees.

Having identified six Refinements, the pair now moves on to Roles. In addition to Leader and Vigilante, Milly suggests Bodyguard (under Aes), Confessor (for Cobalus), Soldier (for Ferrum), and Psychopomp (for Phosphorum).



Ava makes a copy and thinks about how Seeda's Roles play out with one another, and how they interact with her answers to the five questions. She notes down Follower (under Aurum) and Martyr (under Ferrum) as Roles that will give Seeda a more rounded view of her attitude towards humans. She also records Muse (under Phosphorum) — while Seeda might not seek it out initially, she can learn valuable lessons about helping people to change then watching what happens without intervening from the Role.

Finally, she marks Cuprum as a Refinement that Milly doesn't know about and records Watcher as the linked Role. It will help reinforce the lesson that Seeda doesn't have to be there for everything — her current attitude towards protecting those close to her makes her prone to micro-management. The Watcher Role will shake her up and give her a chance to see that, while she's making a positive impact, she doesn't have to have a hand in everything. While Milly doesn't yet know that Seeda has to complete any Roles on Cuprum, Ava plans on revealing the information early on through an Elpis vision.



Milestones

Part of the Storyteller's role in any **Promethean** game is to create milestones for the characters to face. The characters know about some of them from the Azothic memory, though they don't know precisely what action will hit a given milestone. *Ceratio*, for example, might involve anything from mentoring another Promethean to creating an Athanor that teaches a complex Refinement to performing the generative act. Usually, it at least relates to the Promethean's understanding of the operations of the Saturnine Night.

The players inform the creation of other milestones, as they spring from the answers to the five questions during character creation. Even if the player doesn't know the exact milestones, the questions tell both him and the Storyteller about his character, so he can make an educated guess.

Perhaps the trickiest milestones for the Storyteller to create are prescriptive milestones — not just the points at which a character can complete a Role, but other milestones that give the Promethean a chance to demonstrate what he has learned (or should have learned) from his existence so far.

Milestones also act as a pacing mechanism for the story. By spreading out major and superlative milestones, and using a number of minor milestones to keep characters motivated between the steps of their Pilgrimage, the Storyteller sets the pace of a longer-running chronicle. On the other hand, if characters find it easier to achieve major and superlative milestones they can progress faster through their Pilgrimage, enabling a shorter chronicle to cover the significant parts of a Promethean's existence.

If running a one-shot **Promethean** game — such as at a convention — a Storyteller can still include some minor milestones for each character, but change them to reward Willpower or Pyros. That way, they're still an important part of the game even when Vitriol is a less useful resource. The Storyteller should create each of the characters beforehand with notes for herself on milestones and the answers to the five questions already filled out.

One of the best ways to track milestones is via notes, either physical sticky notes or index cards, or a note-taking app for a tablet or laptop. Milestones are one of the parts of **Promethean** that benefit most from the Storyteller being prepared.

Instinctive Milestones

During character creation, players answer the five questions (p. 101). Their answers paint a picture of the character, and the Storyteller should take copious notes. If the player's answers aren't clear to her, further questions can help her understand. Providing plenty of chances for the player to elaborate on his answers gives everyone a better idea of the character and helps the Storyteller tailor milestones to the character. Getting the players to create characters as the first session gives the Storyteller a chance to sit down and work out instinctive milestones for the characters without the players getting bored and losing focus on the game.

In many cases, an instinctive milestone is about choosing, not what choice the character makes. If her creator abandoned her, she should have the chance to help — or abandon — someone who relies on her. Both choices fulfill the milestone. The only way to avoid it (and to risk stepping backward) is to walk away from the choice. The Storyteller shouldn't pose milestones that have a "right" and a "wrong" answer. The Promethean chooses for herself which answer is right. Only by avoiding the situation can she avoid the milestone.

Each character will end up with around three minor, one major, and one superlative milestone. Minor instinctive milestones should relate to the answer to one of the questions, and can be almost anything. They're often very easy to achieve. A Tammuz who has never had a chance to make his own decisions is asked "Where shall we go for dinner?" and comes up with an answer. An Unfleshed who feels cut off from her Demiurge might help a lost child at a funfair to find his parents. The most important thing about these minor milestones is that they be something that the character can achieve without putting themselves out too much, they're the early defining moments in the character's Created life.

As a guide to rewards, if the character only had to experience a situation, she gains a Vitriol Beat. This increases to two Vitriol Beats if she had to make a decision and stick with it, and three Beats if her decision included a dice roll.

Major and superlative milestones draw from the same well — they're questions and situations that the Created has to react to. The Storyteller should look at the five questions as a whole, searching for common threads that tie the answers together. The answers can help you work out if the character has unresolved issues. He may feel trapped in his creator's shadow, or that he must do right by the families of the dead people he now inhabits. The answers may belie something deeper. Does he hate his creator, or is he secretly glad that he can hide in the shadows? Does he do his duty to the families willingly, or is it a penance he took on to make up for his creator's crime, no matter that he hates them? Finally, look at what the character hates and fears about humanity; a major or superlative milestone should definitely involve one or the other.

A major instinctive milestone is a turning point where the character makes a concrete decision. A Tammuz, made to be an obedient servant, has a minor milestone when asked to choose what's for dinner or where to go on a day trip. A major milestone then focuses on a significant decision that affects the future: does the throng try to find the Athanor in the Minnesota forests or hunt down the Centimani operating in Cleveland? Making a decision of that magnitude is a major milestone.

Superlative milestones go one further. The same character has issues with needing to decide for himself, but also with rebelling against authority — he doesn't want anyone to tell him what to do again. His Storyteller decides to give him a choice. Neither outcome is bad, but the obviously better choice involves following the orders of someone that the character doesn't like. Will he buckle down and do as he's told, or take the other option out of a rebellious streak? Whichever he chooses is a significant statement about his character.

Milestone Creation

Ava takes the answers that Milly came up with during character creation and starts thinking about milestones. Looking over the answers, she sees a strong thread of guilt — Seeda wants to redeem herself, so she's putting herself in charge and leading from the front to keep others safe. That's a great start, but Ava reasons that just providing opportunities to save her friends doesn't teach Seeda much about how guilt works. It's driving her to protect her friends, but in doing so she becomes a martyr to them — either putting herself in the way of physical harm or taking on their problems without an outlet for her own.

Ava figures that this is a bigger lesson, one better suited to a major or superlative milestone. She doesn't want to bust Seeda down straight away, but rather to highlight both sides of her current situation. She also doesn't want to focus all of the milestones on the same character aspect.

She decides that the question of guilt should be a superlative milestone. Ava will put Seeda in a position where she can face great danger to rescue a human she's befriended from the cult of alchemists who are one of her major antagonists. She'll make it clear during the story that the cult don't know for sure who the Created are in the area; going in for that rescue will cause serious damage — the alchemists have laid traps for any Prometheans who try to uncover them. If Seeda doesn't give in to her guilt, the alchemists have no reason to kill the human; they scare him for a while then let him go.

For Seeda's major milestone, she has to make a real friend. While just getting to know someone might be a minor milestone, Ava wants Seeda to have to go a step further. Once she's made a friend, he starts asking questions — not about Seeda's Created nature, but about Dr. Hikari's money. She can either take him into confidence, extending her trust, or lie or dissemble, proving that she's not yet ready for that level of human intimacy.

For minor milestones, Ava already wants Seeda to have a chance to protect someone but also to become more connected to humans. Ava makes a couple of notes reflecting moments in the story that would reflect that. The first is a simple conversation with someone who doesn't freak out. Even if it's little more than idle chatter with a barista, Seeda can hit a minor milestone worth a Vitriol Beat. Next, she thinks about giving Seeda the chance to intervene in a mugging. The mugger's only got a banana in his pocket, but his victims don't know that. If she chooses to get involved, Seeda will gain three Vitriol Beats; if she decides not to bother, she risks stepping back. Finally, she wants to highlight that other humans don't stop just because someone dies. Seeing EMTs working at the site of a car wreck reminds her that humans won't stop fighting to save people. As she doesn't have to do anything, Ava notes that this milestone is worth one Vitriol Beat.

Seeda's — and Milly's — reactions to these milestones will help determine what Ava comes up with when she's determining prescribed milestones. She can build that in to how the story progresses with life in New York and the throng's encounters with the alchemist cult to determine what matters to Seeda.

Another Hand

Instinctive milestones can reveal intimate details about a character — what he values, what he loves, and what he will betray. If the group is amenable to it, the Storyteller might prefer to work with each player directly to come up with a major and a superlative milestone. Whether they sit down over coffee or exchange messages online, they should work together to come up with situations that highlight the character's main conflict. It's still up to the Storyteller exactly how the milestone comes up in the game, and what the possible outcomes might lead to, but the player can help frame it to get the best buy-in for his character. For some players, knowing what a milestone will likely involve gives them motivation to drive the game forward into those sorts of situation. That way, the Storyteller doesn't have to drive the game.

Some groups may be comfortable with widening the discussion further. At the player's discretion, he can ask the rest of the group for ideas with any given milestone, to see what works. He and the Storyteller have final say over the milestone, but if they're stuck for ideas then getting the other players involved can help shake things up more.

Prescribed Milestones

The Storyteller creates prescribed milestones during play, based on each character's actions and personality. They can range from moments that challenge a Promethean's received wisdom and understanding to the defining point where a character comprehends and internalizes a Role.

Many prescribed milestones come up in play in the same way as instinctive milestones. The difference is, a Storyteller doesn't have the five questions as a starting point. Instead, she bases them on what the character has said and done so far in the game, and on things the player has mentioned off-hand about what he might want to see happen. As he doesn't have as much input into prescribed milestones as instinctive ones, the Storyteller should make sure to telegraph important prescribed milestones via Elpis visions or other obvious signs and portents within the game. Storytellers may prefer to tie a specific dramatic cue to significant events, to telegraph the proximity of a milestone to her players rather than their characters. One character might notice a flock of black birds taking wing from a rooftop when a milestone is close; another catches sight of a mangy raccoon in the branches of a misshapen tree. Even if they're not particularly subtle, some groups will enjoy these dramatic cues. Others may feel that they call attention to something in a way that doesn't work for them. Neither is the "right" or "wrong" way to do things; the whole group should discuss beforehand how they feel about dramatic cues.

Prescribed milestones play a significant part in a Created's life as part of her Pilgrimage. While she may encounter many minor and even a few major milestones, superlative moments of understanding — with their associated rush of Vitriol — come about but rarely. While the Storyteller is the ultimate arbiter of a milestone's magnitude, superlative milestones should be rare events that happen when the character demonstrates true understanding of himself and his path.

Remember that while a player can spend Vitriol on a dot of Pilgrimage, he has to do so after a minor or major milestone — a superlative milestone brings a specific insight that prevents the character from double-dipping.

Completing Roles

The Roles given in Chapter Three ("Taking a Role," p. 179) include some ideas for possible milestones and breaking points. The breaking points reflect situations that make it impossible for the Promethean to complete a role; the milestones, however, are just suggestions of situations that might indicate the character has internalized the Role's lessons. As with other prescribed milestones, the Storyteller needs to fit them to the character's personality and her actions within the Role.

Sometimes, a Promethean will hit upon a defining moment that characterizes how he approaches his current Role without any prompting — and without the Storyteller setting it up. She should award the milestone immediately. No point in holding out for a second, more artificial lesson. These moments can be few and far between, but they show that the character really understands the Role.

Most of the time, the Storyteller has to create the milestone involved in completing a Role. In addition to the suggestions listed with the Role, she should think about the character involved. If Patchwork Jack has spent a lot of time around absent and abusive parents, they'll inform his view of the Leader Role. A milestone relating to the Role would involve giving him a choice between being a "parent" as he's heard of in stories, and being a parent as he sees every single day.

Remember that the milestone associated with a Role doesn't have a right answer. If Patchwork Jack decides that being a Leader involves beating the shit out of anyone who disobeys him to make them fall into line, even when other people around him would disapprove, he still hits the milestone. He has chosen what kind of parent he wants to be in a stressful situation that tests his vision of himself. That's the key for milestones. Put the character in a position where he doesn't have a right answer and make him choose anyway.

Not all Roles end with the sudden flare of realization or a dramatic moment appropriate to a public service announcement. Many Prometheans live their lives in a Role, trying to act like it's normal for them to be a Soldier or a Hermit or a Vigilante. For such a Created, the milestone strikes when he has completely internalized his Role. He has a chance to do something that would break the character he's built up, and he has to take a second to remember that he can choose to do so. The milestone doesn't hit when he stops acting and starts being, but when he realizes what he's done and what he has learned.

While it might seem like these gradual awakenings to completing a role might lead to the character being unwilling to leave the Role ("Stuck in a Rut," p. 179) that's not the case. Many Prometheans realize that they have internalized a truth about what it means to be human and choose to move on. Others choose to stick with a Role after reaching a defining moment, feeling that they can do more to be human if they chase other such moments.

Completing a Role that's associated with one of the Refinements on his Pilgrimage is always a superlative milestone. Completing a Role associated with any other Refinement still grants the Created a major milestone, and may help him in other ways — such as preparing him to create an Athanor. A Promethean always knows when he's completed a Role that's on his Pilgrimage — the rush of Vitriol is greater than it would otherwise be. While he probably won't know if a Role is on his Pilgrimage before he completes it, after the fact he's in no doubt.

Seeking Waypoints

Whether while pursuing a Role or seeking further insight into his Pilgrimage, a Promethean is never quite certain when he might encounter a milestone. The Storyteller has the perfect tool at her disposal to offer guidance to characters who lack direction; she can trigger Elpis visions that provide clues.

Elpis visions come in the form of dreams, even though the Created involved may be awake throughout. As such, they don't give concrete clues. A Promethean wondering where to find his creator won't dream of a map with a route drawn out upon it, or of the journey to his destination with turn-by-turn notifications and handy road signs. He dreams of symbols and portents instead, things that he must decode to work out the next step in his journey. Sometimes, the omens in the vision are annoyingly cryptic. Sometimes, they're blatantly obvious after a moment's thought.

As the Storyteller comes up with the contents of an Elpis vision, it's up to her to determine the symbols involved. While she may choose to use abstract imagery or to indulge her love of wordplay, she should only use them as clues if her players enjoy decoding her intentions. Too many sessions slow down when players take half an hour puzzling out a vision that the Storyteller thinks is blatantly obvious.

It's better, from a Storyteller's perspective, for the players not to waste time hunting for clues. She may choose to narrate the vision and then explain it, or offer a reasonably straightforward dice pool to uncover the meaning — though only if she has suitably interesting options open when the dice fail. Rolling dice over and over again to interpret a dream is frustrating. Better to have something waiting at another location that the dream might point to in the event of a failed roll. Why an Elpis vision might point to a nest of Pandorans or a Jovian Athanor is anyone's guess, but sometimes the Created receive mixed signals.

Whatever the case, an Elpis vision is a chance for the Storyteller to drive the action forward, pushing the characters towards their next challenge. If they fall prey to analysis paralysis, the Storyteller should step in and offer an explanation or shake things up with a sign pointing to the right way to go. The headless corpse of one of the throng's human friends clutching a note is often just the thing to shake the throng out of discussion.

Elpis visions don't necessarily point the way for just one Promethean. The strange alchemies linking members of a branded throng can create a compound Elpis vision, showing the next step forward for more than one member of the throng — or for the throng itself. Depending on the Storyteller, this may take the form of members of the throng having related visions, each contributing part of the answer, or all of the Created sharing the same vision that they must decode. Such Elpis visions provide a useful hook for bringing multiple characters to the next step on their Pilgrimage.

Universal Milestones

Knowledge of the universal milestones is available to almost every Promethean through the Azothic memory. It includes all ten operations of the Saturnine Night, from the birth of the human that will hold a spark of the Divine Fire to the very moment of the New Dawn. The milestones that matter most to a Promethean are those that happen after she awakens — from the initial steps on the pilgrimage with *sublimato* to the *anastasis* that comes soon before the Great Work. As discussed in Chapter Three, no two Prometheans go through the universal milestones in the same way. What is a simple, reactive process for one Created takes a significant amount of work for another. The ability of a Promethean to achieve the universal milestones in any order further complicates matters.

While the particulars of a universal milestone vary as much as the details of a prescribed milestone at the end of a role, a few things remain constant. The Magnum Opus is a work of both internal and external alchemy. Lighting the furnace and heating the crucible require a deliberate act. As such, the Created has to set out to complete one of the universal milestones; she cannot stumble in to them by accident. This intent isn't connected with a single action, but rather the *idea* of the action — a Promethean who decides to mentor another to achieve her *multiplicato* milestone has the required intent, even if it takes six months or a year to teach her protégé.

Also unlike prescribed milestones, it's relatively easy for a Promethean to fail a universal milestone. Turning a fresh shell into a writing nest of Pandorans or a *sublimatus* doesn't just mean that the character needs to try again — her failure made it impossible for her to complete the universal milestone this time. That failure is always a breaking point, risking a step backward.

Examples of failure states for universal milestones include:

Sublimato — Becoming a Centimanus*

Separatio — Become stuck in a Role to avoid Disquiet

Ceratio — Abandon or betray your throng; create a Jovian Athanor

Fermentatio — Performing a lacuna*

Multiplicatio — Create Pandorans instead of a new Promethean; have a protégé become a Centimanus.

Projectio — Fail the Great Work*

The asterisked events are already breaking points or otherwise chances to step backward; characters do not suffer them twice just because they are linked to a universal milestone.

Ex Nihilo

The Extempore have no such clues as to the path they should take through the world. Without a connection to the Azothic memory, these spontaneous vessels of the Divine Fire require a Promethean teacher — or a great deal of luck — to discover the universal milestones. They encounter instinctive and prescribed milestones along with other Prometheans, but that's the result of the Divine Fire reacting to their actions in the world. Extempore have more than just their uncertainty about the Great Work to worry them. Without a connection to the Azothic memory, can they survive the *anastasis*? How can they be sure that the fragile spark of the Divine Fire will not just wink out at some point?

Part of a Storyteller's job is to play up this uncertainty. An Extempore may be able to create a new Promethean as part of *multiplicato* or she might not. Even if she does, she must learn the generative act used by another Lineage, as she cannot hope to repeat the moment that created her. An Extempore may survive the journey to the River of Death, or the attention of the Underworld may take a moment to extinguish the Divine Fire within.

The Storyteller's job is to reinforce this tension, not to use it as an excuse to mess with the players. Nobody knows the answers to the Extempore's unanswered questions but her, but at the same time, she can't just kill a player's Extempore character on a whim. Well, she *could*, but if he didn't agree to it beforehand she may not have a group for long. On the other hand, the sudden death of an Extempore could provide a fitting reminder that the Divine Fire is

never certain, should the player want to portray a new character or have to leave the game.

When it comes to the universal milestones as a whole, it's true that nobody knows if an Extempore can do it, but that also means that nobody knows if they can't. If the character can learn of a universal milestone and puts the time in to attempting it, he should have a chance of success. The Storyteller may reflect that attempt with a dice roll when another character does not need to roll, or she may describe what happens based on what the Extempore has discovered so far.

The River of Death

To know life, a Promethean must also know death. Some of the Created get lucky. They never come across nests of Pandorans, never provoke an angry mob or a Wasteland or a Firestorm. Those that do sometimes get away with only enough scrapes that the Divine Fire can repair their tattered flesh. Their luck holds throughout their Pilgrimage as they come closer to the Magnum Opus. But they cannot live, not yet. In many ways, life is change — someone can change the world by bringing down a dictator or change herself by taking up a new hobby. One of those changes, the ultimate change, is death. Life is a temporary situation. It has an end. The Created have to be prepared for that end.

Other Prometheans — possibly the majority, though their numbers are small enough that nobody can say for sure — don't have a blessed Pilgrimage. For whatever reason, they suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, and the shotguns and firebombs of a people aggrieved. They know what it's like to fight or to flee; what it's like when bones snap and muscles tear; what it's like when they take a chunk of rubble to the face and everything goes black and death claims them.

It does so only briefly, however. When she first dies, a Promethean's Azoth flares, bringing her back from beyond. Before then, she feels what it's like for a human to die and awaken in the Underworld, a twisting network of caves and caverns where the Dead abide. Her Azoth brings her back, but only once she has sipped from one of the Rivers of Death.

The River of Death is a pivotal scene in a Promethean's Pilgrimage. The Storyteller can choose to run it in a handful of ways:

- If several of the characters died in a violent encounter — a gang-fight, a house fire, an angry mob, or a Firestorm — she might suggest that all of the characters died in that encounter. While the rules may say that one or two survived, the players may find the lure of a superlative milestone too much to resist.
- If only one or two characters died, she may prefer to run the River of Death as a scene featuring those characters. The other players take the roles of ghosts relating to the characters — friends or victims who died because of the Created.
- If just one character died, the Storyteller may ask the player about running the River of Death as a solo scene, either after a regular session or over chat or e-mail in between sessions. Though she loses out on having the other characters taking part, one-on-one scenes are more focused on the character in question and lend a sense of mystery when the other players don't know exactly what happened.
- If the character hasn't died before attempting the Great Work, she does so as part of her transformation. This is functionally similar to the other kinds of journeys to the River, but the character may be better prepared for what he will find — or unaware of what awaits him before the New Dawn.

A dead Created awakens at some point in the Underworld, a never-ending network of tunnels and caves. Some are barely big enough for her to squeeze through, while others are big enough that she might mistake them for the outside world. The geography is always stark and rocky. Her destination is somewhere in front of her, deeper in the caves — one of the mighty underground rivers that flows through the caverns. When she comes to the river, she must drink from it.

The Storyteller can make the journey as short or as long as she wants. If the character has to make much of a journey, she will encounter ghosts relevant to her life so far. Some will be victims of her actions, either directly or indirectly. Others will be people who she has mirrored, or who went through the same things she did. Some will be friends; some will be enemies. All of them recognize her as something different. All of them have something to say.

If all of the characters journey to the River of Death together, or if she's running the scene one-on-one with a single player, it's up to the Storyteller to decide who the characters encounter and what they will be like. She may want to keep notes of names and personality traits of characters who showed up earlier in the story, or she may want to invent them whole cloth for the scene. Whatever the case, each ghost should leave a character questioning his actions. By targeting what a character has done so far, the character (if not the player) should ask: "If I'd done that differently, would he still be alive? Would he be dead but hate me less?"

In some situations, the Storyteller will want to run the River of Death scene for one or two characters. In that case, she can hand off duties for playing the dead to other players. The easiest way is to jot down a name and a couple of personality traits on an index card, along with how the ghost is relevant to the characters, then let the other players run with it. The Storyteller retains veto power over their actions, but she's free to describe the environment as the players move through it. Through it all, however, the Created finally arrives at the River of Death.

The Underworld has many rivers, and each Created comes to a different one. Drinking from the river takes some of the Underworld into herself, internalizing the death that comes with life. The Storyteller determines which river the character arrives at, though it normally relates to her life and actions so far. One who has caused sickness or Wastelands may come to the diseased River of Pus, while one who is quick to anger may come to the River of Blood or the River of Hate.

Characters who belong to a branded throng and who journey to the River of Death at the same time arrive at the same River, based on their actions as part of the throng. Other Created who die at the same time journey to a River based on their individual actions.



Normally, drinking from the river is enough to spur the character back to life in a flare of Azoth. If a player is willing to start a new character (or is leaving the game), the Storyteller may — with his permission — have his character die instead. The Created can't expect to come back to life.

Compounds and Mixtures

Roleplaying is a group activity. When characters are part of a throng — bonded or otherwise — it's important to ensure that everyone gets equal focus. Sometimes, that means swapping out the spotlight, giving one character the chance to complete a Role while the others lend assistance. More often, it needs to include a way for more than one character to complete a milestone; ideally, it should include ways for multiple characters to complete their current Role.

Much of the work involved in getting to that point is a matter of controlling the pace of the story. Though each of the throng starts out on a role, that doesn't mean they all need to complete Roles at the same time. One or two characters may only take a session or two to internalize the lesson; the rest of the throng spends their time focusing on other goals, often things that are important to them — which often turn out to be instinctive milestones.

The real key is preparation. The Storyteller needs to be prepared. Even if she's got plenty of experience flying by the seat of her pants in play, without some idea of what to aim for she'll have a harder time integrating milestones into the same scene. Just a little prep-work can yield massive dividends. Writing each character's current possible milestones and role on an index card means the Storyteller can reference them at a glance. Those cards can remind her of things to include in the next few scenes or portents to include in an Elpis vision.

If she has the chance, the Storyteller should look over the cards beforehand and try to draw links between two characters' Roles. In that way, she can come up with situations that allow both characters to complete their Role. Sometimes they may have to work together — a Leader takes charge of a group of people when a werewolf attacks, trusting the Warden to hold them off. In doing so, the Leader cements his place as a guardian to those under his charge, and the Warden can demonstrate the virtues of preparation.

While it can be hard to work out how to combine two Roles at first, the Storyteller has the benefit of knowing the characters. Rather than trying to work out the most appropriate combination, she can pick two at random and come up with a situation featuring both Roles. Working a situation allowing a weird combination of Roles is part of the fun of Promethean, reflecting the variety of human existence. A Savage kicks off in a gated community, trashing cars and spraying graffiti on the houses, brutally attacking anyone who comes near. A Mystic watches, seeing the dichotomy between the Savage's actions and the residents' reactions, and understands why it's a significant act.

Sometimes a milestone pits two characters against one another. The Storyteller shouldn't use this trick often, as it can drive deep

The Rivers

Each of the Rivers of Death has a different appearance and different effects. The mechanical effects (if any) of drinking from a given river are at the Storyteller's discretion.

The River of Blood – Coagulating blood that inflames the passions.

The River of Bone Dust – Ugly and frothing, but sweet and nourishing.

The River of Consumption – Sweet and highly addictive.

The River of Dead Seed – Bitter and choked with plant seeds.

The River of Fire – Glows a dull orange; boils as it flows.

The River of Hate – Churning rapids that inspire visions of revenge.

The River of Lamentation – Drinking brings back memories of failure.

The River of Memory – Answers a question in exchange for a memory

The River of Pus – Diseased pus that prevents the drinker from healing.

The River of Scorpions – Eating a scorpion gives dreams like an Elpis vision.

The River of Woe – Greasy and slow-moving; brings painful memories.

divisions within a throng. On the other hand, adversity is a great teaching tool. In the case of the Savage in the gated community, another member of the throng who follows the Vigilante Role is bound by his Role to step in. A Muse pushes a human to quit his job and leave his family – but his family includes a Companion from the Muse's throng.

Pacing is also a matter of working out what happens when. Though the Pilgrimage is a large part of **Promethean**, not every session needs to include a character completing a Role – indeed, more than one such scene every session or two can quickly feel forced. Characters should still hit milestones in the meantime, of course. As a rule of thumb, a character should hit between one and three minor milestones each session, one major milestone every couple of sessions, and a superlative – either completing a role or hitting another major step in her Pilgrimage – every four to six sessions. Groups that meet infrequently or that want a faster-paced game may increase that rate to once every two sessions for a superlative milestone, though the situations involved can start feeling contrived at that pace, with the characters' lives more like a soap-opera than an examination of humanity.

The New Dawn

The Great Work. The Magnum Opus. The culmination of the operations of the Saturnine Night. Perfect internal alchemy. The moment where Azoth flares and the Divine Fire burns away the imperfections of the Created form, leaving a living creature behind. Or at least, so the theory goes.

The New Dawn does pose a problem to Storytellers, however. It's the focus of every story, the possible end-state of a Created – but that very ending is an issue. When one character achieves the New Dawn and becomes human, what happens to her? More importantly for the other players, what happens to the rest of the throng?

A Storyteller may want to hold off on giving characters time to perform the Great Work until the story allows it – a viable ending for those characters. Sometimes that's enough. A player may have to move away or have other commitments. He may also want to remain in the game, but playing a different character; if one of the other characters has performed the generative act, he may want to play her creation, or perhaps he has another concept in mind entirely. Alternatively, the chronicle may draw to a natural end; the New Dawn is a good ending to a character's story.

The New Dawn always involves a lot of power – Pyros and Azoth flare in a corona of heat and light, cycling through the visible spectrum. It's a blaze of power, and even if the player fails the roll it's an awesome sight to behold.

If the character fails at the New Dawn, he's missed something. The Storyteller should come up with some new prescribed milestones that reflect the circumstances of his attempted New Dawn and aspects of the human condition that he hadn't touched on before. If he succeeds, the Created becomes human.

Happy Endings

The New Dawn is unique in the Chronicles of Darkness because it offers a happy ending – though it may not seem that way at first. A character who only completes four or five Refinements is plagued by nightmares and gaps in his memory. At the same time, those gaps conceal as much as they reveal. He doesn't remember that he was once a monster, only that something terrible happened to him. Now, he's safe. He may need the help of his throng – who he sees as friendly strangers – to get clothes and a place to stay, but he's safer now than he was.

If he has completed at least six Refinements, the character can choose in that moment whether to remember his journey, or forget it all. If he remembers, he can fully appreciate what he went through. He's aware of the things in the night, though he may no longer notice them. Often, his memories spur him to do greater things, as he knows what he went through to become human. If he chooses to forget, he has the happiest ending of all – he remembers a normal life. His new life isn't perfect, but whose is? He's had fights with his parents, bad relationships, stress with his partner, maybe a divorce. This is what he remembers, and the universe creates just enough evidence to back it up.

When a Created chooses to forego his memories, the Divine Fire burns an identity into the world. It may take him a while to remember where he lives, but he has a home and a family waiting

for him. He wakes up with a whole identity, a history that resulted from his alchemical transformation. He is human, and always has been. As he completes more Refinements, the player can spend dots of Social Merits to reflect this new life — he awakens with a bank account, friends, and a bar where people know his name. The throng may encounter him in future stories; if the Storyteller's willing, his original player can take on the role once more, showing what the rest of the throng can achieve.

Other Created choose to remember in the moment of the New Dawn. Theirs is a harder path, but the memory of their existence leaves them in tune with the supernatural world. This comes in the form of supernatural awareness or even the ability to use an Alembic of a Transmutation. These characters make excellent supporting characters, as they remember the throng yet can move within the human world without causing Disquiet. A player who wants to remain part of the game but who wants a different challenge may choose to have his character remember and remain with the throng, helping the others with their Pilgrimages.

A character who hits all ten Refinements has that rarest of luxuries: a choice. She either remembers or forgets, but at her first Breaking Point she can choose the opposite. Characters in fiction who have a chance for a normal life sometimes realize that it isn't what they want — whether it's the *Doom Patrol*'s Crazy Jane returning to Danny the World, or Richard Mayhew embracing London Below in *Neverwhere*. Alternatively, a character who chooses to remember may find that it unearths too many horrific memories, and can take that chance for a clean break from the throng to live a normal life. That choice is a powerful one, allowing her the opportunity to change her mind.

Example of the New Dawn

After a long and hard journey, Seeda has come to the point of the New Dawn. She has gone through all ten of the Roles that Ava and Milly set out at the start of the chronicle. She has passed on her knowledge to another Created and supped from the River of Fire. She is finally ready. As the alchemical fire burns, Pyros and Azoth reacting with the world around her to create a whole new history, Milly gets to decide Seeda's new history. She looks over the Roles that Seeda has taken.

Follower, Soldier, and Leader represent a natural progression — she joined the Army, worked her way up the enlisted ranks, and was deployed to Afghanistan. Upon her return, she took bodyguard work and got shot twice in the line of duty — matching the Bodyguard and Martyr Roles, as well as parts of her Created history. After her second gunshot wound, she fell into depression. Trapped in her apartment as she recovered, she saw a group of well-dressed men dealing drugs right across the hall. Rather than calling the cops, she attacked them and beat one into a coma. The violence gave her an outlet for her dark feelings, and she acted as a "troubleshooter" for other families in her block — matching her Vigilante Role.

She tried catching up with her squadmates, but most of them had left for another tour — or had come back under a flag. She watched their families, seeing how they coped with losing a loved one, or having a family member dealing with PTSD. She never quite worked up the nerve to knock on the door.

Reflecting on what life has taught her, Seeda trained as a paramedic and worked for the fire department, responding to emergencies and trying to help people stay alive wherever possible, seeing the Psychopomp's line between life and death every week. After attending one especially nasty crash, she quit and went to tend bar. Now, she serves drinks and listens to the stories of con artists and clueless tourists alike, offering new perspectives and new ideas to people who stop to talk — from her Confessor and Muse Roles. She doesn't have to risk her life or watch people die, just serves drinks and suggests that people go a new job, a new vacation, or a new relationship. Every so often, she's amazed at everything she's been through in what feels like a short time, but she has her memories.





Appendix: Conditions and Tilts

Conditions represent ways in which the story has affected your character, and what she can do to move past those events. Players don't buy Conditions; events in the game apply them, and they remain until certain *resolution* criteria are met. A character can't have more than one copy of the same Condition unless each applies to a distinctly different thing — for example you may be Delusional about both spiders crawling under your skin and your friends plotting to kill you. You'd have to resolve each independently.

Characters can gain Conditions as a result of various factors. Some Distillations inflict Conditions. A player can also choose to take a Condition relevant to the situation as a result of an exceptional success, and breaking points can cause Conditions as a character deals with them. Every Refinement grants the practitioner a Condition, and using a Distillation without triggering disfigurements also grants a Condition. Sometimes the Storyteller will inflict Conditions based on the circumstances of the story.

The listed resolutions for each Condition are the most common ways to end its effects; other actions may also resolve it if they would reasonably cause the Condition's effects to end. Work with the Storyteller to determine Condition resolution. When your character resolves a Condition, take a Beat. If a Condition has a natural time limit and then fades away, don't take a Beat — just waiting the Condition out isn't enough to count as resolving it.

Some Conditions are marked as Persistent. These Conditions typically last for a long time and can only be resolved permanently with a specific and impressive effort. Once per game session, a character can gain a Beat when a Persistent Condition impacts her life.

Improvised Conditions

Need a Condition for a first edition game's conversion, but none of the ones in this book quite fit? If you have access to them, the other **Chronicles of Darkness** core rulebooks offer plenty of options you can easily cannibalize. You might want to change the descriptions or the names of the Conditions to suit your needs, but you should be able to find a mechanical effect that does what you want.

If you can't find an existing Condition that fits, or if you don't have the other rulebooks, follow this simple template to create your own Conditions:

First choose from one of the following effects:

- Add +2 to certain types of rolls, or subtract –2 from certain types of rolls.
- Add 9-again to certain types of rolls.
- Remove 10-again from certain types of rolls.
- Add or remove one Door in a Social Maneuvering action.
- Automatically fail a certain kind of action to resolve the Condition.

Then decide what the sufferer can do to resolve the Condition. Does it require a particular action, or for the character to improve a certain Trait? Does it require outside help, or is it a random turn of the dice? Finally, is it Persistent? If the Condition models something that will stick around for a long time, decide on a circumstance in which the Condition can be activated to give the affected character a Beat in addition to a circumstance in which it can be permanently resolved.

Lingering Conditions

Conditions are designed as reminders that events that happened earlier in the story have repercussions later. Usually, Chekhov's gun applies — if you put the Condition on stage, it should become relevant by the end. But storytelling games are slippery things, and sometimes it's better to drop a story thread represented by a Condition for the sake of the ongoing narrative.

For example, an emotional state like Wanton might no longer be relevant to events in the game because a long time has passed, or it might have been the result of a conflict with a character you don't care about anymore. In those cases, it's perfectly fine to just cross off the Condition. We recommend awarding a Beat as if resolving it, but that's at the Storyteller's discretion.

Do this sparingly, but the bottom line is: If a Condition doesn't feel relevant to the story anymore, just let it go.

Common Conditions

The following Conditions can be applied by exceptional successes, Transmutations and other supernatural powers, and various other circumstances in the game.

Addicted
(Persistent)

Your character is addicted to something, whether drugs, gambling or other destructive behaviors. Some addictions are more

dangerous than others, but the nature of addiction is that it slowly takes over your life, impeding functionality. If you are addicted, you need to indulge your addiction regularly to keep it under control. A specific addiction should be chosen upon taking this Condition; characters can take this Condition multiple times for different addictions. Being unable to feed your addiction can result in the Deprived Condition (see below).

Possible Sources: Alcoholism, substance abuse.

Resolution: Gain or lose a dot of Pilgrimage, or achieve an exceptional success on a step backwards.

Beat: Your character chooses to get a fix rather than fulfill an obligation.

AGORAPHOBIC

Your character is deeply disturbed by open spaces and large crowds. In any situation when more people are present than the character's Resolve + Composure, you suffer a –2 penalty to Initiative, perception rolls, and any action requiring careful focus or attention. In addition, any time your character encounters an extremely large crowd (e.g. a riot or at a major sporting event), you must roll Resolve + Composure. If you fail the roll, your character seeks to avoid the crowd and get away from the area. Any action not related to finding a safe, close, private space suffers a –3 penalty until the end of the scene.

Possible Sources: Torment.

Resolution: Gain or lose a dot of Pilgrimage, or achieve an exceptional success on a step backwards.

Beat: n/a

ALIENATED

The Mimic is so immersed in humanity that has having difficulty relating to other Prometheans. He suffers a –2 to Social rolls with others of his kind.

Possible Sources: Activating the Deception Transmutation without revealing Disfigurements.

Resolution: He opts to fail a Social roll involving another Promethean.

Beat: n/a

AMNESIA
(PERSISTENT)

Your character is missing a portion of her memory. An entire period of her life is just gone. This causes massive difficulties with friends and loved ones.

Possible Sources: Physical or psychological trauma, the Mesmerism Transmutation, the Residual Memory Merit.

Resolution: You regain your memory and learn the truth. Depending on the circumstances, this may constitute a milestone.

Beat: Something problematic arises, such as a forgotten arrest warrant or old enemy.

ATAVISTIC

A Promethean who delves too far into the Metamorphosis Transmutation runs the risk of losing himself, if even temporarily, in the mix of emotions and sensory input. All Mental Attributes take a –2 penalty (to a minimum of 1). This does affect derived traits, such as Defense (if the character's Wits drops lower than his Dexterity) and Initiative.

Possible Sources: Activating the Metamorphosis Transmutation without allowing disfigurements to flare.

Resolution: Succeed in a roll using a Mental Attribute.

Beat: n/a

BRANDED THRONG
(PERSISTENT)

The Promethean is part of a branded throng. She gains the benefits of Heed the Call's base persistent effect with regard to her throngmates, and gains +2 to all Empathy rolls to read them. She may share Pyros with throngmates through the Brand and likewise receive it from them; as long as she can detect a member via Azothic radiance, she can reflexively donate one Pyros to that member per scene. The only limit to the points she can receive is the number of throngmates she has.

Resist Torment rolls suffer a –1 for each throngmate that shares her Lineage, but gain +1 for each member that doesn't. Rolls to inflict Disquiet add one die for each member that shares her Lineage, but subtract one die for each member that doesn't. Members of a Branded Throng of the same Lineage add to the highest effective Azoth for purposes of Wasteland Festering (p. 306), but members of different Lineages subtract from the highest effective Azoth (minimum 1).

Finally, all Beats provided by this Condition are considered group Beats. These Beats go into a shared pot when taken, and then the pot is distributed evenly among the players at the end of the story. This encourages players to work together to tell a good story and help each other realize their characters' Pilgrimages, even when the characters themselves might be at odds. At the troupe's option, *all* Beats may be considered group Beats, not just those granted by this Condition.

Possible Sources: The Saturninus Transmutation.

Resolution: The Promethean spends one Pyros to erase her Brand and leave the throng. Alternatively, each other member spends one Pyros to *banish* her.

Beat: She is endangered, harmed or severely inconvenienced, or forced to reveal emotions she would rather have kept private due to throng membership. A Beat can be earned this way once per chapter.

BROKEN
(PERSISTENT)

Whatever you did or saw, something inside you snapped. You can barely muster up the will to do your job anymore, and anything more emotionally intense than a raised voice makes you flinch and back down. Apply a –2 die penalty to all Social rolls and rolls involving Resolve, and a –5 die penalty to all use of the Intimidation Skill.

Possible Sources: Tremendous psychological trauma, the New Dawn.

Resolution: Gain or lose a dot of Pilgrimage, or achieve an exceptional success on a step backwards.

Beat: You back down from a confrontation or fail a roll due to this Condition.

BURNOUT

While this Condition is active, the character contains the Divine Fire within her vital humour, when all it wants to do is get out. She must carefully control it, releasing it in just enough quantity for the Pyros to do what she wants, but not so much that her disfigurements flare. Instead the Pyros roils inside her, burning her out from the inside.

Mechanically, the character is beset by pain as the Divine Fire churns. While Prometheans do not normally suffer from wound penalties, the Condition inflicts a –2 penalty on most actions. Any activity other than using the Vulcanus Transmutation suffers this penalty. The Divine Fire wants out; it wants to be channeled and used.

Possible Sources: Spending Pyros to fuel Vulcanus Alembics without revealing disfigurements.

Resolution: The character chooses to fail at an action where the penalty is in play.

Beat: n/a

CALLOUS

The manipulation of another's emotions has caused the Promethean to become emotionally distant. He suffers a –2 to Empathy rolls as he begins to see others as tools rather than people.

Possible Sources: Activating the Mesmerism Transmutation without revealing Disfigurements.

Resolution: Opt to fail a Social roll involving a human being.

Beat: n/a

CONNECTED
(PERSISTENT)

Your character has made inroads with a specified group. While she has this Condition, she gets a +2 to all rolls relating to that group. Alternatively, she can shed this Condition to gain a one-time automatic exceptional success on the next roll to influence or otherwise take advantage of the group. Once Connected is resolved, the character is considered to have burned her bridges and is no longer an accepted member. The character may be able to regain Connected with the specified group per Storyteller approval.

Possible Sources: The Consortium Alembic

Resolution: The character loses her membership or otherwise loses her standing with the group.

Beat: The character is asked to perform a favor for the group that inconveniences her.

CONFUSED

Your character cannot think straight, either because of some mental power or good old-fashioned cranial trauma. You take a –2 die penalty on all Intelligence and Wits rolls.

Possible Sources: A blow to the head, some Distillations.

Resolution: Take half an hour to focus and clear your mind. Take any amount of lethal damage.

Beat: n/a

DEGAUSSED

The constant production of electromagnetic fields from refined Pyros causes disruption in electronic equipment that isn't properly shielded within a range of the Promethean's Azoth in yards. Walking down the street causes spontaneous hard drive failures, static in wireless headphones and cell drop in cell phones, and rainbow patterns playing across screens. In addition, she may be tracked and monitored with specialized equipment; if someone's familiar with her electromagnetic bias, they can examine the damage she causes and determine that she's been there.

Resolution: The electronic disruption causes a significant problem for the Promethean, such as wiping her cellphone of vital contacts or allowing a mortal hunter to pinpoint her by disruptions in the power grid. Alternately, she may energize the Azothic Detonation Distillation and unleash a pulse to reset her turbulent personal field.

Beat: n/a

DELUSIONAL
(PERSISTENT)

You believe something that isn't actually true — maybe you think that someone is poisoning your food, that a doppelganger has replaced your daughter, or that something lives in the shadows of your apartment. You don't actually hallucinate images that reinforce your delusion; you may believe that you're covered in spiders, but just looking at yourself is enough to clarify matters. Germs, on the other hand....

You can't truly repress your belief, but spending a point of Willpower lets you come up with an explanation (albeit one that sounds psychotic when you explain it to someone else) as to why your delusion does not apply to a specific situation.

Possible Sources: Certain Distillations.

Resolution: You completely disprove your delusion or destroy the source of your paranoia.

Beat: You adhere to your paranoid belief despite evidence to the contrary.

DEPRIVED

Your character suffers from an addiction. She is unable to get her fix, however, leaving her irritable, anxious, and unable to focus. Remove 1 from her Stamina, Resolve, and Composure dice pools. This does not influence derived traits; it only influences dice pools that use these Attributes.

Possible Sources: Your character is Addicted but cannot get a fix.
Resolution: Your character indulges her addiction.
Beat: n/a

DISCONNECTED

Your character has suffered a setback on her Pilgrimage, something that's shaken her self-confidence in her ability to complete her Magnum Opus. She feels disconnected from humanity, and as such suffers a –2 modifier on all Social dice pools when interacting with normal humans.

Possible Sources: Facing a step backwards.
Resolution: Complete a milestone, spend an hour talking with a normal human.
Beat: n/a

DISQUIETED
(STAGE ONE)

The victim is confused and annoyed by the Promethean's presence. The Promethean suffers a –2 penalty to all Social rolls against the victim, and has to open an additional Door in Social maneuvering.

Source: Disquiet
Resolution: Stay away from the Promethean that caused this Condition for at least a week.
Beat: Once a session, the player of the Promethean that inflicted this condition can take a Beat by choosing one of the following:

- Taking the Watched Condition (p. 312)
- The victim successfully draws some kind of negative attention to the Promethean at an inopportune time.
- Permanently increasing the social penalty associated with the victim by 1.

DISQUIETED
(STAGE TWO)

The victim is consciously aware of the Promethean's "wrongness" and finds himself compelled to act on these feelings. In addition to a –2 penalty and requiring two additional Doors in Social maneuvering, the Promethean's player can no longer take advantage of the 10-again rule in social rolls against the victim.

Source: Disquiet
Possible Resolution: Stay away from the Promethean that caused this Condition for at least two weeks.
Beat: Once a session, the player of the Promethean that inflicted this condition can take Beats by choosing one of the following:

- The Promethean can no longer spend Willpower to improve Social rolls targeting the victim as long as the victim has some form of the Disquieted Condition.
- The victim refuses to have anything to do with the Promethean. Any attempt to force the matter will result in the victim becoming violent.
- If the victim and the Promethean are in the same place, he will do everything in his power to drive the Promethean from the premises.

DISQUIETED
(STAGE THREE)

The Disquieted Condition can only advance to Stages Three and Four in a Wasteland, or from the Promethean's player rolling an exceptional success to inflict Disqiuet against a victim with Stage Two or Three Disquiet. The victim is compelled to go above and beyond in her pursuit of the Promethean. The Promethean's player is reduced to a chance die in all Social rolls against the victim. Social maneuvering automatically fails.

Source: Disquiet in a Wasteland, or exceptional success on a Disquiet roll
Possible Resolution: Staying away from the Promethean that caused this Condition for at least a month; killing the Promethean.
Beat: Once a session, the player of the Promethean that inflicted this condition can take Beats by choosing one of the following:

- The victim recruits between one and three Storyteller characters to join him in hunting down the Promethean. These additional characters have Disquieted (Stage One).
- The victim becomes determined to be a thorn in the Promethean's side. He'll stop at nothing to find out what her current goals are, and do everything she can to sabotage them.
- The victim tells as many people as possible about how dangerous the Promethean is, without mentioning her supernatural nature. Instead, he'll describe her in vague terms as a threat and a menace.

DISQUIETED
(STAGE FOUR)

The victim's only goal in life becomes sating the compulsion that has been forced upon him — he will kill for it and die for it. All social rolls against the victim fail at this stage, whether by the Promethean or someone trying to make them see reason. In addition, anyone that the victim tells about the Promethean is immediately given Disquieted (Stage Two).

Source: Disquiet in a Wasteland, exceptional success on Disquiet roll
Possible Resolution: Staying away from the Promethean for six months; killing the Promethean.
Beat: Once a session, the player of the Promethean that inflicted this condition can take Beats by choosing one of the following:

- When the victim infects another character with Disquiet, it starts at Stage Three instead of Stage Two.
- The victim recruits between one and three Storyteller characters to join him in hunting down the Promethean. They have no regard for collateral damage: anyone not with them might as well be against them. These extra characters have Disquieted (Stage Two).
- The victim recruits between ten to twenty characters to hunt down the Promethean, and the Promethean alone. Unlike the second option, the mob has some concern for collateral damage and doesn't have the Disquieted Condition. Even then, though, mobs get out of hand easily.

DISTRACTED

Constant confusion and distractions buffet your character from all sides. She cannot take extended actions, and suffers a –2 die penalty to all rolls involving perception, concentration, and precision.
Possible Sources: Being in a highly confused environment.
Resolution: Leaving the environment.
Beat: n/a

EPHEMERAL ANCHOR

By delving into the esoteric nature of the world, the Mystic must open herself to the strange energies that permeate it. This can leave the Promethean vulnerable at times. While this Condition is active, it acts as the Open Condition (p. 229).
Possible Sources: Spending Pyros to fuel Spiritus Alembics without revealing disfigurements.
Resolution: The character's spiritual openness causes a setback or difficulty.
Beat: n/a

FATIGUED

You've never been so tired in all your life. Your eyelids are like millstones, your brain a cobwebbed mass of exhaustion. You've reached that point where fatigue becomes a physical thing, and all you can think to do is close your eyes and rest, just for a moment. Every six hours, you must make a reflexive Resolve + Stamina roll to remain awake. If you fail, you pass out. Even if you succeed, you suffer a cumulative –1 penalty to *all* dice pools (including your rolls to stay awake). Long periods of strenuous activity, like cross-country hiking, fighting, or heavy labor increase the penalty to –2 or – 3. Even then, a normal person can only go a number of days without sleep equal to the lower of his Resolve or Stamina, at which point he passes out. Once a Fatigued character passes out, he remains asleep for 8 hours plus 1 additional hour for every six-hour period he stayed awake. Attempts to rouse him during this period suffer a penalty equal to the highest penalty the Fatigued character suffered before passing out.
Possible Sources: Staying awake for 24 hours, being dosed with a sedative or anesthetic.
Resolution: Sleeping, as described above.
Beat: n/a

FLAWED VESSEL

Like the mortals she so wishes to emulate, the Promethean's obsession with transformation has wrought a change upon her. Unfortunately, the shift towards sympathy with humanity wreaks havoc upon her ability to retain Pyros. The Promethean's Azoth score is considered Magnitude, maximum 5, (see p. 262) for purposes of how much Pyros she can retain and spend per turn. Excess Pyros remains locked and unusable within her body.
Possible Sources: Charging an Alchemicus Distillation without flaring disfigurements.
Resolution: She is reminded of her Promethean nature in a dramatic or grandiose fashion — engendering Disquiet, witnessing or causing a Firestorm, achieving an exceptional success on a Transmutation or Bestowment roll, etc.
Beat: n/a

FRAGILE

The Cathar's skin develops a faint bluish coloration in her hands as her impurities rise to the surface, and her body becomes slightly less durable. Any time she suffers damage, she takes an additional point of bashing damage.
Possible Sources: Charging a Contamination Distillation without flaring disfigurements.
Resolution: Suffering two or more points of damage due to this Condition.
Beat: n/a

FRIGHTENED

The character is terrified of the Promethean and will do anything in her power to escape him, even if it means abandoning her friends and allies. She will not willingly approach the object of her fear or act against him. If she is unable to flee, she cowers in terror. She may ignore the effects of this Condition for a turn at the cost of a point of Willpower.
Possible Sources: Intimidation, the Phobos Alembic
Resolution: The character escapes from the source of her fear.
Beat: n/a

FUGUE
(PERSISTENT)

Something terrible happened. Rather than deal with it or let it break you, your mind shuts it out. You are prone to blackouts and lost time. Whenever circumstances become too similar to the situation that led to the character gaining this Condition, the player rolls Resolve + Composure. If you fail the roll, the Storyteller controls your character for the next scene; your character, left to his own devices, will seek to avoid the conflict and get away from the area.

Possible Sources: Psychological trauma, Residual Memory, some Distillations.

Resolution: Gain or lose a dot of Pilgrimage, or achieve an exceptional success on a step backwards.

Beat: You enter a fugue state as described above.

GREEDY BRAND

The burdens of leadership can be heavy, but more than that, they can be taxing. The Sentry pulls a point of Pyros from the throngmate with the highest Azoth rating every scene. The point is wasted, but counts as having been spent for the purposes of generating a Wasteland or Firestorm.

Possible Sources: Charging a Benefice Distillation without flaring disfigurements.

Resolution: She causes a Firestorm or forms a Wasteland due to her wasted Pyros.

Beat: n/a

GUILTY

Your character is experiencing deep-seated feelings of guilt and remorse. This Condition is commonly applied after a successful breaking point roll (p. 178). While the character is under the effects of this Condition, he receives a –2 to any Resolve or Composure rolls to defend against Subterfuge, Empathy, or Intimidation rolls.

Possible Sources: Torment, some Distillations.

Resolution: The character confesses his crimes and makes restitution for whatever he did.

Beat: n/a

HYPEREXTENDED

The gifts bestowed by the Vitality Transmutation come at a price. If the Promethean fails a physical roll, he takes bashing damage equal to his (modified) Strength.

Possible Sources: Activating the Vitality Transmutation without revealing Disfigurements.

Resolution: The character heals the inflicted damage.

Beat: n/a

INSPIRED

Your character is deeply inspired. When your character takes an action pertaining to that inspiration, you may resolve this Condition. An exceptional success on that roll requires only three successes instead of five and you gain a point of Willpower.

Possible Sources: Exceptional success with Crafts or Expression, the Inspiring Merit, exceptional success on a breaking point roll.

Resolution: You spend inspiration to spur yourself to greater success, resolving the Condition as described above.

Beat: n/a

IRRITABLE

The Promethean's tempers are running hot and she is having difficulty keeping control of herself. She suffers –2 to all Composure rolls due to her lack of self-control, including Perception rolls.

Possible Sources: Activating the Disquietism Transmutation without revealing Disfigurements.

Resolution: She opts to fail a Composure roll or have her Composure not subtracted from a resisted roll against her.

Beat: n/a

KINESTHESIA

The Promethean's body responds perfectly to her will, but she loses herself more easily in the distracting physical sensation of graceful movement. She suffers a –2 penalty to Intelligence rolls, finding it difficult to concentrate on academic matters or bring her will to bear.

Possible Sources: Charging a Corporeum Distillation without flaring disfigurements.

Resolution: She opts to fail an Intelligence roll, or her distraction causes her to commit a life-endangering error.

Beat: n/a

LEVERAGED

Your character has been blackmailed, tricked, convinced, or otherwise leveraged into doing what another character wishes. You may have the Leveraged Condition multiple times for different characters. Any time the specified character requests something of you, you may resolve this Condition if your character does as requested without rolling to resist.

Example Skills: Empathy, Persuasion, Subterfuge

Resolution: Your character may either resolve the Condition by complying with a request as above, or if you apply the Leveraged condition to the specified character.

Beat: n/a

MURDEROUS

Swept up in the horrible beauty of Flux, you believe yourself to be a dread hunter and everyone else your prey. Select one nearby creature, though not the Pandoran, as your prey for the remainder of the scene. You may spend a Willpower point to roll Resolve + Composure — success allows you to flee the scene rather than harm someone.

Possible Sources: Pandoran Disquiet

Resolution: When you are no longer in the Pandoran's presence or have brought another human down to his last Health box.

Beat: n/a

OBSESSION
(PERSISTENT)

Something's on your character's mind and she just can't shake it. She gains the 9-again quality on all rolls related to pursuing her obsession. On rolls that are unrelated to her obsession, she loses the 10-again quality. Obsession can be a temporary quality per Storyteller approval.

Resolution: The character sheds or purges her fixation.

Beat: Character fails to fulfill an obligation due to pursuing her obligation.

Beat: n/a

PARANOID

Your character is certain that no one can be trusted, that vast conspiracies are moving against her, and that random coincidences are the signs of a greater plan. She removes 1 die from all Composure-based dice pools. In addition, when the Condition is applied, choose one thing the character fixates on as a sign of the forces moving against her (a common turn of phrase, a color, a particular corporation/government entity, etc.) Anyone she associates with that sign is regarded as a threat.

(If a conspiracy actually *is* out to get her, choose something that actually represents that conspiracy.)

Possible Sources: Certain Distillations, Torment, Residual Memory.

Resolution: The character is confronted with conclusive proof that no one is out to get her, or she exposes the conspiracy.

Beat: n/a

RECKLESS

The character is incapable of considering the consequences of her actions and is driven to do incautious things for the sheer thrill of it. The player takes a –2 to Perception rolls and other Composure rolls made to notice something (such as to oppose Sleight of Hand or a stealth-related supernatural power).

Possible Sources: Charging a Luciferus Distillation without flaring disfigurements.

Resolution: The character or one of her allies suffers some harm or major setback due to an ill-considered risk or reckless action she takes.

Beat: n/a

REGRESSIVE

The Originist wallows in her leaden nature, reverting to base Promethean instinct. She displays inhuman behaviors and has more trouble than usual considering human perspectives. Apply a –2 modifier to all Social interactions with human beings.

Possible Sources: Charging a Saturninus Distillation without revealing disfigurements.

Resolution: She opts to fail a Social roll while interacting with humans, or gains Willpower through her Elpis.

Beat: n/a

SHAKEN

Something has severely frightened your character. Any time your character is taking an action where that fear might hinder her, you may opt to fail the roll and resolve this Condition.

Possible Sources: Facing a step backwards.

Resolution: The character gives into her fear and fails a roll as described above.

Beat: n/a

SPOOKED

Your character has seen something supernatural — not overt enough to terrify her, but unmistakably otherworldly. How your character responds to this is up to you, but it captivates her and dominates her focus.

Possible Sources: Certain Distillations, Residual Memory.

Resolution: This Condition is resolved when your character's fear and fascination causes her to do something that hinders the group or complicates things (she goes off alone to investigate a strange noise, stays up all night researching, runs away instead of holding her ground, etc.).

Beat: n/a

STEADFAST

Your character is confident and resolved. When you've failed a roll, you may choose to resolve this Condition to instead treat the action as if you'd rolled a single success. If the roll is a chance die, you may choose to resolve this Condition and roll a single regular die instead.

Possible Sources: Encountering a step backwards, certain Distillations.

Resolution: Your character's confidence carries him through and the worst is avoided; the Condition is resolved as described above.

Beat: n/a

STRICKEN

This Condition only affects mortals afflicted by Pandoran Disquiet.

Confronted by the horror of a Pandoran, your mind struggles to retain clarity. You may freely turn and run, or cower and hide, but all other actions are at –2.

Possible Sources: Pandoran Disquiet

Resolution: When you are no longer in the Pandoran's presence. Upon Resolution, gain the Fugue Condition.

Beat: n/a

SWOONING

Your character is attracted to someone and is vulnerable where they are concerned. He may have the proverbial "butterflies in his stomach" or just be constantly aware of the object of his affection. A character may have multiple instances of this Condition, reflecting affection for multiple characters. He suffers a –2 die penalty to any rolls that would adversely affect the specified character, who also gains +2 die bonus on any Social rolls against him. If the specified character is attempting Social maneuvering on the Swooning character, the impression level is considered one higher (maximum of perfect; see p. 203).

Possible Sources: Be on the receiving end of an exceptional success of a Persuasion or Subterfuge roll, the Mesmerism Transmutation.

Resolution: Your character does something for his love interest that puts him in danger, or he opts to fail a roll to resist a Social action by the specified character.

Beat: n/a

SYNESTHESIA

The Promethean's senses become confused and crossed, causing him to interpret stimuli from one sense as coming from another entirely. He tastes colors, sees sounds, and occasionally feels the stimuli of others, such as a tap on someone else's shoulder. He suffers a –2 to Perception rolls.

Possible Sources: Charging a Sensorium Distillation without flaring disfigurements.

Resolution: The player chooses to fail a Perception roll.

Beat: n/a

TERRIFIED

You would hide from the Pandoran if only you could stop screaming. The only thing left to do then is run. You may spend a Willpower point to remain at the scene, though all actions you take are at –2.

Possible Sources: Pandoran Disquiet

Resolution: When you are no longer in the Pandoran's presence.

Beat: n/a

TORMENTED

Effect: Your character is in the throes of Torment. She suffers the effects of her Lineage's Torment (see p. 171) until this Condition is resolved. In addition, Willpower can only be recovered by acting in accordance with the Promethean's Torment.

Possible Sources: Failing a Resist Torment roll.

Resolution: Witness your Elpis, perform a task related to your Elpis, burn enough Pyros to create a Wasteland, cause a Firestorm, change Refinements (except when changing to Tin)

Beat: Causing a dramatic setback for yourself or your Throng. A dramatic setback can mean making their current goal more difficult, killing a human, even creating a Wasteland or heavy Disquiet, forcing the Created to leave the area before they're ready to.

WANTON

Your character wants for the sake of wanting. He's distracted with temptations of excess and indulgence. Any Composure or Resolve rolls to resist temptation suffer a –2 die penalty. As well, the character that brought forth this Condition achieves exceptional success on three successes instead of five when making any rolls to tempt your character.

Possible Sources: Certain Distillations.

Resolution: Regain Willpower through Torment.

Beat: n/a

WATCHED
(PERSISTENT)

Someone's on to you. He has reason to believe you're something inhuman, and he won't stop until he finds conclusive proof. No matter how cool one's head is, knowing you're being stalked fosters paranoia. –2 to all Wits + Composure rolls.

Possible Sources: The Disquieted condition, using supernatural powers in the sight of others, exposing Disfigurements.

Resolution: Confronting the stalker and getting him to back off, getting caught doing something blatantly supernatural.

Beat: Being caught by the stalker, giving him conclusive proof of the character's inhumanity.

Tilts

Tilts are a unified way of applying circumstances to both characters and scenes. Tilts are mechanically similar to Conditions, but they affect characters and scenes in combat. Out of combat, use Conditions instead. They provide a way of handling drugs, poisons, sickness, and environmental and weather effects, but *only as they apply to combat*. Out of combat, use the normal rules for these effects.

Tilts do not give characters Beats when they end, but the effects of a Tilt can very easily cause a Condition. For instance, a character in a fight gets a handful of road salt flung in his eyes and

receives the Blinded Tilt. When combat ends, this shifts to the Blind Condition. Resolving this Condition will give the character a Beat. If the character enters combat again before the Condition is resolved, the Blinded Tilt applies again.

Tilts come in two forms: Personal and Environmental. Personal Tilts only apply to one character and include ways that character can overcome the effect. Environmental Tilts affect the whole scene and offer ways for individual characters to mitigate their effects.

ARM WRACK

PERSONAL

Description: Your arm burns with pain and then goes numb. It could be dislocated, sprained, or broken, but whatever's wrong with it you can't move your limb.

Effect: If your arm's broken or otherwise busted, you drop whatever you're holding in that arm and can't use it to attack opponents — unless you've got the Ambidextrous Merit, you suffer off-hand penalties for any rolls that require manual dexterity. If this effect spreads to both limbs, you're down to a chance die on any rolls that require manual dexterity, and –3 to all other Physical actions.

Causing the Tilt: Some supernatural powers can cripple a victim's limbs or break bone with a touch. A character can have his arm knocked out by a targeted blow to the arm (–2 penalty) that deals more damage than the character's Stamina. A targeted blow to the hand inflicts this Tilt if it does any damage.

Ending the Tilt: If the Tilt is inflicted as a result of an attack, mark an "x" under the leftmost Health box inflicted in that attack; the Tilt ends when that damage that caused it has healed. If the damage that inflicts this Tilt is aggravated, the character loses the use of his arm (or straight up loses his arm) permanently.

AVALANCHE

ENVIRONMENTAL

A rockslide, mudslide, or veritable wall of snow or similar material is careening down a mountainside or other incline toward you.

Effect: Each turn your character is within the avalanche's reach, he takes a point of lethal damage from the force. Unless he also succeeds in a Dexterity + Athletics roll, he's also moved along by the wave of material, at the avalanche's Speed. This may have its own detrimental effects — if you get swept off a cliff, for instance, you have a lot more to worry about than some rocks rolling down a mountain at you.

Causing the Tilt: A loud noise in a snowy pass might break enough snow loose, or selecting the right boulders on a rocky slope may do the trick.

Ending the Tilt: Avalanches continue until they run out of momentum or material.

BEATEN DOWN

PERSONAL

Description: The character has had the fight knocked out of him.

Effect: The character cannot take active part in the fight without extra effort. The player must spend a point of Willpower *each time* he wants the character to take a violent action in the fight. He can still run, Dodge, and apply Defense. If he wishes to take another action, the Storyteller should judge whether the action is aggressive enough to require the expenditure.

Causing the Tilt: The character suffers bashing damage in excess of his Stamina *or* any amount of lethal damage.

Ending the Tilt: The character surrenders and gives the aggressor what he wants. At this point, the character regains a point of Willpower and takes a Beat, but can take no further action in the fight. If the aggressor's intent is to kill or injure the character, obviously surrender isn't a good option.

BLINDED

PERSONAL

Description: The character's eyes are damaged or removed.

Effect: The character suffers a –3 penalty to any rolls that rely on vision — including attack rolls — and halves his Defense if one eye is blinded. That penalty increases to –5 and losing all Defense if both eyes are affected.

Causing the Tilt: The normal way to inflict the tilt is to deal damage to the target's eyes — a specified attack with a –5 penalty (see Specified Targets, above). A successful attack normally damages one eye. It takes an exceptional success to totally blind an attacker. An attacker can inflict temporary blindness by slashing at her opponent's brow, throwing sand into his eyes, or kicking up dirt. This requires an attack roll of Dexterity + Athletics with a –3 penalty; the victim's Defense applies to this attack. If it succeeds, the target is Blinded for the next turn.

Ending the Tilt: If an attack against the character's eye does any points of damage, mark an "x" under the leftmost Health box inflicted in that attack. If the damage inflicted is aggravated the character loses vision in that eye permanently. Otherwise, the condition ends when the damage that caused the Tilt is healed.

BLIZZARD

ENVIRONMENTAL

Description: Heavy snowfall carpets the ground and just keeps falling, whipped by howling winds into a barrage of whirling white.

Effect: Blizzards make it very hard to see for any real distance. Rolls to see things close to the character's person, out to arm's length away, suffer a –1 penalty. Each additional ten yards inflicts an additional –1 penalty (cumulative) on all visual Perception rolls. This penalty also applies to ranged attack rolls. Moving through snow is difficulty. Every four inches of snow applies a –1 penalty

to appropriate Physical rolls, including combat rolls, Athletics, and the like. The Blizzard Tilt rarely applies by itself — the Storyteller may also inflict any or all of the Extreme Cold, Heavy Winds, or Ice Tilts (all found below).

Causing the Tilt: For the most part, the weather is out of the characters' control — the Storyteller should telegraph an incoming blizzard before it hits, but it's ultimately up to her. Some supernatural powers might grant a character the power to create a blizzard.

Ending the Tilt: Without supernatural powers, characters can't "end" a blizzard. The best they can manage is to escape the weather or waiting for it to stop. Proper equipment (such as goggles and snow boots) can add +1 to +3 to a roll, offsetting some of the penalties. If someone is causing this Tilt through a supernatural power, it's possible that the characters could disrupt his concentration.

BURNING
PERSONAL

Your character is on fire. Either she was caught in a burning building or suffered a supernatural assault. Regardless, the flames lick at her skin, consuming her.

Effect: A character with the Burning Tilt takes damage from the fire each turn depending on how much of her body is covered. A small portion, such as a hand or foot, inflicts 1 lethal, while an arm or leg inflicts 2 points of lethal damage. A character whose entire body is engulfed suffers 3 lethal damage per turn.

Causing the Tilt: The character was the target of a flame-based event, whether as simple as having burning debris falling on her, or as complex as being on the wrong end of a flamethrower. Or, perhaps, the character was the victim of a supernaturally-charged fire attack.

Ending the Tilt: The character can end this Tilt by extinguishing the flames. Usually this means using "stop, drop, and roll" techniques, or some form of retardant, such as water or a fire extinguisher. Some supernatural powers may resist these efforts, however.

DEAFENED
PERSONAL

Description: The character can't hear. Maybe he's suffering intense tinnitus or can only hear the roaring of blood in his ears, or he just plain can't hear.

Effect: If the character is deaf in one ear, he suffers a –3 penalty to hearing-based Perception rolls. A character who is struck deaf in both ears only gets a chance die on hearing-based Perception rolls, and suffers a –2 penalty to all combat-related dice rolls — suddenly losing the ability to hear the people around you is tremendously disorienting.

Causing the Tilt: A particularly loud noise within 10 feet of the character may cause temporary hearing loss, as though the character were deaf in both ears. Alternatively, a targeted attack on the ear — at a –4 penalty — can deafen a character. Supernatural creatures with heightened senses can be deafened by loud noises at greater distances.

Ending the Tilt: Deafness from loud noises causes fades after 10 – (victim's Stamina + Resolve) turns. If an attack against the character's ear does any points of damage, mark an "x" under the leftmost Health box inflicted in that attack. If the damage inflicted is Aggravated the character loses hearing in the ear permanently. Otherwise, the condition ends when the damage that caused the Tilt is healed.

DROWNING
ENVIRONMENTAL

You're surrounded by more water than you can presently cope with. Either you're in some sort of container or room filled with liquid, or you're simply exhausted by swimming through a large body of water. Regardless, your lungs are starting to fill with water, which is a losing proposition for most.

Effect: Your character suffers one point of bashing damage each turn he spends drowning, as oxygen loss takes its toll on your body.

Causing the Tilt: Any form of immersion in a liquid is enough to cause the Tilt.

Ending the Tilt: Getting to a source of air and removing any liquid from your lungs is sufficient to end the ongoing damage from this Tilt.

DRUGGED
PERSONAL

Description: The character's mind is addled by mind-altering substances, such as drink or drugs.

Effect: The effects of specific drugs are detailed in the on p. 96 of the **Chronicles of Darkness Rulebook**. A generic narcotic can be represented with one set of modifiers: the character suffers a –2 modifier to Speed (and static Defense, if used) and a –3 penalty to all rolls in combat, including Defense and Perception. The character also ignores wound penalties.

Causing the Tilt: If the character has chosen to take drugs, then he suffers the effects. To administer drugs to another character is a Dexterity + Weaponry attack, suffering a –1 modifier for the improvised weapon. If the drug has to go in to a specific body part (such as an arm or mouth), it requires an attack against a specified target.

Ending the Tilt: Each drug in the **Chronicles of Darkness Rulebook** explains how long a high lasts. A generic narcotic lasts for 10 – (victim's Stamina + Resolve) hours. Medical help, such as pumping the victim's stomach or flushing his system, halves this time.

EARTHQUAKE
ENVIRONMENTAL

Description: Everything shudders and shakes, and rents tear the ground wide open.

Effect: Earthquakes don't last long, but they don't have to. When the quake's actually occurring, all Dexterity-based dice pools (and Defense) suffer a –1 to –5 penalty depending on the quake's severity. Characters take between one and three points of lethal damage per turn of the quake's duration, though a reflexive Stamina + Athletics roll can downgrade that damage to bashing — or cancel it entirely on an exceptional success.

Causing the Tilt: Without tremendous supernatural power, it's almost impossible to cause an earthquake. A character who detonates a powerful explosive underground might simulate the effects over a city-block for a few seconds.

Ending the Tilt: Earthquakes are fortunately very quick events. It's very rare for one to last more than a minute (20 turns), so waiting them out is the best course of action.

EXTREME COLD
ENVIRONMENTAL (SOMETIMES PERSONAL)

Description: Bone-chilling winds bite through the character, or trudging through knee-deep snow takes all of the sensation from his limbs. Any time the temperature gets down below zero degrees Celsius (32 degrees Fahrenheit), a character can suffer from the cold's effects. This Tilt can sometimes be personal, as a result of a medical condition like hypothermia or a supernatural power.

Effect: When the temperature's below freezing characters can't heal bashing damage — the extreme temperature deals damage at the same rate normal characters heal it (a cut might turn to frostbite, for instance). Supernatural beings and characters who heal faster than normal instead halve their normal healing rate. For every hour that a character is continuously affected by this Tilt, he accrues a –1 penalty to all rolls. When that penalty hits –5 dice, he instead suffers a point of lethal damage per hour.

Causing the Tilt: A character can suffer this Tilt from being in a frozen environment — whether he's outside in the Arctic tundra, or in a walk-in freezer. Inflicting the Tilt is reasonably straightforward: throw the victim into a freezing lake or lock him in a freezer for long enough, and he'll develop hypothermia.

Ending the Tilt: The best way to escape the freezing cold is to find a source of warmth — either a building with working heating, or warm bundled clothing. A character with hypothermia requires medical attention.

EXTREME HEAT
ENVIRONMENTAL (SOMETIMES PERSONAL)

Description: The character might be stumbling through the desert with the sun beating down on him, or running through the steam-tunnels surrounding an old boiler room. This Tilt can also be personal, the result of a debilitating fever that spikes his temperature far above the norm. Extreme heat is normally anything above 40 degrees Celsius (104 degrees Fahrenheit) — this includes the temperature of the environment, or the temperature of a fever.

Effect: When the temperature is far above normal characters can't heal bashing damage — the extreme temperature deals damage at the same rate normal characters heal it (a cut might heal, but it's replaced by sunburn or sunstroke). Supernatural beings and characters who heal faster than normal instead halve their normal healing rate. For every hour that a character is continuously affected by this Tilt, he accrues a –1 penalty to all rolls. When that penalty hits –5 dice, he instead suffers a point of lethal damage per hour.

Causing the Tilt: This Tilt is usually caused by environmental factors — being out at noon in the desert, or spending too long in a sauna or forge. Even a fever is the result of an infection, rather than something that an opponent can force on a character. It's possible to create this Tilt on a given character: securing someone to a chair right next to an old, inefficient boiler, or stranding them in the desert far from any shade.

Ending the Tilt: The key to ending this Tilt is simple: get out of the heat. In a desert or similar environment, finding shade is paramount. Elsewhere, the character needs to escape whatever is causing the abnormal temperatures.

FLOODED
ENVIRONMENTAL

Description: Some liquid — brackish water, mud, gore, or raw sewage — is high enough to impede the character's progress.

Effect: Each foot of liquid inflicts a –2 penalty to all Physical dice pools. If the water goes up over her head, a character has to swim (Dexterity + Athletics) with a penalty appropriate for the speed of flooding. Alternatively, she can try to hold her breath if she cannot get her head above the rising waters.

Causing the Tilt: Normally, this Tilt is the result of heavy rain, sudden snowmelt, or a broken water main. Characters can cause this Tilt by smashing up a water heater, or blowing up a small dam. Some supernatural creatures may be able to call floods down onto a region.

Ending the Tilt: Characters can escape flooding by getting to high ground, which is enough to mitigate this Tilt. A long-term fix would require draining the floodwaters, but each flood requires its own solution.

HEAVY RAIN
ENVIRONMENTAL

Description: Torrential rain lashes down in knives, bouncing high off the sidewalk. The sound of rain on the ground is a constant hammering rumble that goes on without end, like dropping ball bearings on a tin roof. Thick gray curtains of water obscure vision.

Effect: Heavy rains — approaching tropical storm levels or worse — cause a Perception penalty of –3 dice to both vision and hearing.

Rain's hard to see through, but it's also *loud*. If the rains carry on for an hour or more, the Flooded Tilt will soon follow. This Tilt is often accompanied by Heavy Winds; a character trapped out in Heavy Rains might come under the effects of Extreme Cold.

Causing the Tilt: Short of supernatural power or a fleet of cloud-seeding aircraft, Heavy Rain is the result of natural weather patterns.

Ending the Tilt: The best way out of the rain is to get indoors. Unless it's the start of some sodden apocalypse, the characters can wait for the weather to ease.

HEAVY WINDS

ENVIRONMENTAL

Description: Howling winds buffet the characters, whipping street furniture into the air and tearing the roofs from buildings. Powerful winds can toss cars around like toys. Anyone out in the winds feels like they're taking a beating just for walking down the street.

Effect: Heavy winds are loud, so characters suffer a –3 modifier to aural Perception rolls. Also the wind inflicts a penalty to all Physical rolls when out in the winds — including Drive rolls. Grade the wind from one to five — one is tropical storm level (around 40 MPH), three is hurricane level (around 80 MPH), and five is tornado level (150+ MPH). This is the penalty applied to Physical dice rolls. Characters outside in the maelstrom take damage from flying debris, taking bashing damage each turn equal to the wind's rating. Characters can make a reflexive Dexterity + Athletics roll to avoid damage.

Causing the Tilt: Heavy winds are a fact of life, from siroccos in the desert to tornados in the Midwest to wind shears everywhere.

Ending the Tilt: Getting out of the wind is the best way to end this Tilt. Sometimes that's as easy as sheltering in an automobile — as long as nobody tries to drive. Buildings provide more permanent shelter.

ICE

ENVIRONMENTAL

Description: The ground's covered in a mirror-smooth layer of ice that sends wheels spinning and people's feet flying out from under them. The ice could be so thin as to be nearly invisible, or a thick layer that's the only thing keeping the characters from sinking into a frozen lake.

Effect: When a character can't trust her footing, divide her Speed in half and all Physical rolls (and Defense) suffer a –2 penalty. Attempting to move at full Speed increases the Physical penalty to –4. Any dramatic failure on a Physical roll inflicts the Knocked Down Tilt. Driving on ice is a real pain — halve Acceleration, and characters suffer a –5 penalty to Drive rolls.

Causing the Tilt: This Tilt doesn't just apply to icy conditions, but to any surface that's slick and slippery, including a spill of industrial lubricant or just a really well-polished wooden or linoleum floor. Characters can use a Dexterity + Crafts roll to cover an area in industrial cleaner or mix up cleaning chemicals into a lubricant. If the Extreme Cold Tilt is in effect, even covering the area with water would do the trick.

Ending the Tilt: "Get off the ice" is good advice, but that can take work. Characters can use heat or fire to melt ice, or throw down copious quantities of salt or grit to increase traction.

IMMOBILIZED

PERSONAL

Description: Something holds the character fast, preventing him from moving. This could be a grappling opponent, a straightjacket wrapped with heavy chains, or a coffin secured on the outside with a padlock.

Effect: The character can't do anything but wriggle helplessly. He can't apply Defense against incoming attacks, and can't take combat-related actions. If someone's holding him down, he can spend a point of Willpower to deliver a head-butt or similar attack, but even that might not free him.

Causing the Tilt: The usual way to inflict this Tilt is through the Restrain grappling move. This often uses material means to prevent the victim from moving, such as binding limbs with duct tape or zip-ties, tossing the victim into a car trunk or similar tight space, or applying painful holds and joint locks.

Ending the Tilt: An Immobilized target can break free by escaping from a grapple or snapping whatever binds her. If grappled, the character can struggle as normal but can only select the Break Free move on a success. If held by an item, the character must make a Strength + Athletics roll penalized by the item's Durability. If a character's arms and legs are both bound, he suffers a –2 penalty; this increases to –4 if he's hog-tied. On a success, he snaps the bindings or breaks free. Each roll, successful or not, deals a point of bashing damage.

INSANE

PERSONAL

Description: The character suffers from a panic attack, sudden imbalance, or a full-on psychotic break. Her pulse races and her mind cannot focus on what she wants. The world's an unstable place, and she's unable to keep her balance.

Effect: Someone suffering a psychotic break isn't the sort of person to go down without a fight. Her stated intent might be irrational or just plain impossible, and she might have fewer ethical problems with using extreme violence to get what she wants. The character gains a +1 bonus to all combat rolls, but takes actions after everyone else (if two characters suffer from the Insane Tilt, both act after everyone else but compare Initiative as normal). A character suffering from this Tilt cannot spend Willpower in combat, and suffers a –3 penalty to all Social rolls.

Causing the Tilt: Faced with extraordinary circumstances, any character with an appropriate Condition may gain the Insane Tilt. The Storyteller can call for a Resolve + Composure roll to resist a general anxiety that gnaws at the character's mind; if the character fails, he gains the Tilt. If the character witnesses something truly

horrific — a daughter watches her father walk to the end of the garden and shoot himself in the head, smiling all the while; a man stumbles into the wrong office at work and sees his co-workers feasting on the intern's organs; a solder sees her unit gunned down by a sniper while she can do nothing — the Storyteller can rule that the Tilt is unavoidable.

A character can work to *inspire* another character's madness in order to cause this Tilt. She could orchestrate events that she hopes will provoke a psychotic break, but that's amateur hour. A professional swaps out her victim's meds, giving stimulants just as his bipolar cycle ticks into mania, or dosing a paranoid or schizophrenic with hallucinogenic drugs.

Some supernatural creatures possess mind-affecting powers that can apply this Tilt, even to characters who do not have an appropriate Condition.

Ending the Tilt: The specific effects of this Tilt don't normally last beyond the end of the scene. A character can try to force her mind to a state of balance, but it's not easy. She must sit and focus on blocking out the craziness. She rolls Resolve + Composure as an instant action, contested by a dice pool of (10 – her Willpower). She can't take any other actions that turn, and doesn't apply Defense against any attacks.

INSENSATE

PERSONAL

Description: The character shuts down, either due to extreme fear or sudden pleasure. He may huddle in a corner, cringe away from sudden noises, or stare into space as waves of pleasure lap over him.

Effect: The character can't take any actions until the Tilt is resolved. He can apply Defense to incoming attacks, and if he takes any damage from an attack, he's knocked free of whatever fogged his brain.

Causing the Tilt: Several supernatural powers can leave their victim in a trance-like state of heightened emotion, whether it's a vampire's mind-affecting tricks or the pants-shitting terror of witnessing a werewolf take on an inhuman form. A truly heroic amount of alcohol or a hallucinogenic drug might have similar effects; administering such a drug is a Dexterity + Weaponry attack, suffering a –1 modifier for the improvised weapon.

Ending the Tilt: The Tilt wears off at the end of the scene. The victim can spend a point of Willpower before then to act normally for one turn. A successful attack will also end the Tilt. If a character has been knocked insensible by drugs, when this Tilt ends it is replaced with the Drugged Tilt.

KNOCKED DOWN

PERSONAL

Description: Something knocks the character to the floor, either toppling her with a powerful blow to the chest or taking one of her legs out from under her.

Effect: The character is knocked off her feet. If she hasn't already acted this turn, she loses her action. Once she's on the ground, a character is considered prone. The character can still apply Defense against incoming attacks, and can attempt to attack from the ground at a –2 penalty.

Causing the Tilt: Some weapons list "Knockdown" as a special effect of a damaging hit. Otherwise, a melee weapon with a damage modifier of +2 or greater, or a firearm with a damage modifier of +3 or more can be used to knock a character down with the force of the blow. Alternatively, a melee weapon or unarmed attack can knock an opponent down with a targeted attack against the legs (–2 modifier). The attacker declares that he wants to knock his opponent down, and halves the total damage done (rounding down). On a successful attack, the target is knocked down.

Ending the Tilt: The easiest way to end this Tilt is to stand up, which takes an action. A character who hasn't yet acted can make a Dexterity + Athletics roll, minus any weapon modifier, instead of her normal action. If successful, she avoids the effects of this Tilt altogether. On a failure, she falls over and the Tilt applies as normal.

LEG WRACK

PERSONAL

Description: Your leg feels like it's going to snap clean off whenever you move; when you stop moving, you feel a burning numbness that encourages you to avoid moving.

Effect: If your leg is broken, sprained, or dislocated, halve your Speed and suffer a –2 penalty on Physical rolls that require movement (and Defense). If both of your legs are wracked, you fall over — taking the Knocked Down Tilt — and cannot get up. Your Speed is reduced to 1; if you want to move at all, you cannot take any other action. Physical rolls that require movement are reduced to a chance die.

Causing the Tilt: Some supernatural powers can cripple a victim's limbs or break bone with a touch. A character can have his leg knocked out by a targeted blow to the leg (–2 penalty) that deals more damage than the character's Stamina.

Ending the Tilt: If the Tilt is inflicted as a result of an attack, mark an "x" under the leftmost Health box inflicted in that attack. The Tilt ends when that damage that caused it has healed. If the damage that inflicts this Tilt is aggravated, the character loses use of his leg permanently.

POISONED

PERSONAL

Description: You've got poison inside you. It's tearing you apart from the inside; burning like acid in your gut and making your head swim.

Effect: This Tilt applies a general sense of being poisoned to a character without worrying about Toxicity during combat. For the purposes of this Tilt, a poison is either "moderate" or "grave" — a moderate poison causes one point of bashing damage per turn of combat, while a grave poison ups that to one point of lethal damage per turn. If the Storyteller cares to continue the effects of the poison

outside of combat, he can apply the standard rules for handling poisons and toxins when combat is complete.

Causing the Tilt: It's possible for a character to not know that he's been poisoned. It could be as innocuous as switching drinks with a pretty girl who is the target of a mob hit, or as simple as walking into a house with a carbon monoxide leak. That said, the main time poison comes up in combat is when one combatant inflicts it on another. Injecting your opponent with a syringe full of drain cleaner or snake venom is a Dexterity + Weaponry attack, suffering a –1 modifier for the improvised weapon.

Ending the Tilt: Short of immediate medical attention — and how many fights take place in an emergency room? — all a victim can do is struggle on. Roll Stamina + Resolve as a reflexive action each turn that your character is poisoned. If your character intends to act (meaning, takes a non-reflexive action), the roll suffers a –3 penalty. Success counteracts the damage for one turn only.

SICK

PERSONAL

Description: Your stomach churns. You retch and heave but only succeed in bringing up bile. Sweat beads on your brow as you spike a fever. Your muscles ache with every movement. You're wracked with hot and cold flushes as a sickness gnaws away at your insides.

Effect: This Tilt applies a general sickness to a character without worrying about the specific illness. For the purposes of this Tilt, a sickness is either "moderate" or "grave." A moderate sickness, such as a cold, asthma, the flu, or just a bad hangover, causes a –1 penalty to all actions during combat. That penalty increases by one every two turns (the first two turns, the character suffers a –1 penalty, the next two turns the penalty is –2, and so on up to a maximum of –5 dice on turn 9). A grave sickness, such as pneumonia, heavy metal poisoning, or aggressive cancer, inflicts the same dice pool penalties as a mild sickness. In addition, the physical stress of fighting or even defending oneself from an attacker while gravely ill inflicts a point of bashing damage per turn of combat.

Causing the Tilt: It's not easy to deliberately make someone sick. Sure, if you can get your hands on a vial of smallpox, or deliberately use a disease you've got to make someone sick (a breaking point, especially in the case of grave diseases like AIDS) then you've got a reasonable chance. Some supernatural creatures have abilities that can inflict diseases on others. Aside from that, you've just got to expose your opponent to the sickness long before you fight and hope for the best.

Ending the Tilt: This Tilt reflects the effects of sickness as it specifically applies to combat. Outside of combat, use the existing system for diseases (p. 212). The penalties inflicted by this Tilt fade at a rate of one point per turn once the character has a chance to rest, but any damage inflicted remains until the character can heal.

STUNNED

PERSONAL

Description: Your character is dazed and unable to think straight. Maybe her vision blurs. If she's stunned as a result of a blow to the head, she's probably got a concussion.

Effect: A character with the Stunned Tilt loses her next action, and halves her Defense until she can next act.

Causing the Tilt: A character can be stunned by any attack that does at least as much damage as her Size in a single hit. Some weapons have a "stun" special ability. These double the weapon modifier only for the purposes of working out whether the attacker inflicts the Stunned Tilt. Attacks against the target's head (see "Specified Targets," p. 207) count the character's Size as one lower for the purposes of this Tilt. The Storyteller might determine that additional effects cause this Tilt, like being caught in the blast area of an explosion.

Ending the Tilt: The effects of this Tilt normally only last for a single turn. The character can end the Tilt during her own action by reflexively spending a point of Willpower to gather her wits, though she suffers a –3 modifier to any actions she takes that turn.





CHART QUICK REFERENCE

Ranged Weapons Chart

Type	Dmg	Ranges	Clip	Initiative	Str	Size	Availability	Example
Revolver, lt	1	20/40/80	6	0	2	1	••	SW M640 (.38 Special)
Revolver, hvy	2	35/70/140	6	−2	3	1	••	SW M29 (.44 Magnum)
Pistol, lt	1	20/40/80	17+1	0	2	1	•••	Glock 17 (9mm)
Pistol, hvy	2	30/60/120	7+1	−2	3	1	•••	Colt M1911A1 (.45 ACP)
SMG, small*	1	25/50/100	30+1	−2	2	1	•••	Ingram Mac-10 (9mm)
SMG, large*	2	50/100/200	30+1	−3	3	2	•••	HK MP-5 (9mm)
Rifle	4	200/400/800	5+1	−5	2	3	••	Remington M-700 (30.06)
Assault Rifle*	3	150/300/600	42+1	−3	3	3	•••	Steyr-AUG (5.56mm)
Shotgun**	3	20/40/80	5+1	−4	3	2	••	Remington M870 (12-gauge)
Crossbow***	2	40/80/160	1	−5	3	3	•••	

Damage: Indicates the number of bonus successes added to a successful attack. Firearms deal lethal damage against ordinary people. The type of damage may vary against supernatural opponents.

Ranges: The listed numbers a short/medium/long ranges in yards. Attacks at medium range suffer a −1 penalty. Attacks at long range suffer a −2 penalty.

Clip: The number of rounds a gun can hold. A "+1" indicates that a bullet can be held in the chamber, ready to fire.

Initiative: The penalty taken to Initiative when wielding the gun.

Strength: The minimum Strength needed to use a weapon effectively. A wielder with a lower Strength suffers a −1 penalty on attack rolls.

Size: 1 = Can be fired one-handed; 2 = Must be fired two-handed and can be hidden in a coat; 3 = Can be fired two-handed but not hidden on one's person

Availability: The cost in Resources dots or level of Social Merit needed to acquire the weapon.

* The weapon is capable of autofire, including short bursts, medium bursts, and long bursts.

** Attack rolls gain the 9-again quality

*** Crossbows take three turns to reload between shots. A crossbow can be used to deliver a stake through the heart (–3 penalty to attack rolls; must deal at least 5 damage in one attack)

Electricity Damage

Source	Damage
Minor	wall socket 4 (B)
Major	protective fence 6 (B)
Severe	junction box 8 (B)
Fatal	main line feed/subway rail 10 (B)

Worn armor provides no protection against electrocution.

Combat Summary Chart

Stage One: Intent

- The players and the Storyteller describe what their characters want out of the fight.
- Decide whether characters can surrender and become Beaten Down.

Stage Two: Initiative

- If the attacker springs an ambush or otherwise strikes when the defender isn't able to counter, the defender rolls Wits + Composure contested by the attacker's Dexterity + Stealth. If the defender fails, she doesn't act on the first turn of combat and cannot apply Defense against attacks.
- Everyone rolls Initiative: the result of a single die roll + Dexterity + Composure. If the character has a weapon readied, apply its Initiative Modifier.

Stage Three: Attack

- **Unarmed Combat:** Strength + Brawl - opponent's Defense
- **Melee Combat:** Strength + Weaponry - opponent's Defense
- **Ranged Combat:** Dexterity + Firearms
- **Thrown Weapons:** Dexterity + Athletics - opponent's Defense

A character's Defense is normally subtracted from any attack dice pools where it applies. If she chooses to Dodge, the defender rolls *double* her Defense as a dice pool against each attack. Each success reduces the attacker's successes by one. If the attacker is reduced to zero successes, the attack does nothing. If the attacker has successes remaining, add any weapon modifier to the number of successes to determine how many points of Health the target loses. All weapons deal lethal damage.

Stage Four: Description

The Storyteller describes the attack and wounds in narrative terms.

Possible Modifiers

- Aiming: +1 per turn to a +3 maximum.
- All-Out Attack: +2 with Brawl or Weaponry attack; lose Defense.
- Armor Piercing: Ignores amount of target's armor equal to item's rating.
- Autofire Long Burst: 20 or so bullets, no target limit pending Storyteller approval. A +3 applies to each attack roll; -1 per roll for each target after the first.
- Autofire Medium Burst: 10 or so bullets at one to three targets, with a +2 to each attack roll; -1 per roll for each target after the first.
- Autofire Short Burst: Three bullets at a single target with a +1 to the roll.
- Charge: Move at twice Speed and attack with Brawl or Weaponry in one action; lose Defense.
- Concealment: Barely -1; partially -2; substantially -3; fully, see "Cover."
- Cover: Subtract Durability from damage; if Durability is greater than the weapon modifier, the attack has no effect.
- Dodge: Double Defense, roll as a dice pool with each success subtracting one from the attacker's successes.
- Drawing a Weapon: Requires instant action without a Merit and could negate Defense.
- Firing from Concealment: Shooter's own concealment quality (-1, -2, or -3) reduced by 1 as a penalty to fire back (so, no modifier, -1, or -2).
- Offhand Attack: -2 to attack roll.
- Prone Target: -2 to hit in ranged combat; +2 to hit within close-combat distance.
- Pulling Blow: Target gains 1 Defense; the attack can't deal more than chosen maximum damage.
- Range: -2 at medium range, -4 at long range.
- Shooting into Close Combat: -2 per combatant avoided in a single shot (not applicable to autofire); -4 if grappling.
- Specified Target: Torso -1, leg or arm -2, head -3, hand -4, eye -5.
- Surprised or Immobilized Target: Defense doesn't apply.
- Touching a Target: Dexterity + Brawl or Dexterity + Weaponry; armor may or may not apply, but Defense does apply.
- Willpower: Add three dice to a roll or +2 to a Resistance trait (Stamina, Resolve, or Composure) in one roll or instance.

Armor Chart

Type	Rating	Strength	Defense	Speed	Availability	Coverage
MODERN						
Reinforced clothing*	1/0	1	0	0	•	Torso, arms, legs
Kevlar vest*	1/3	1	0	0	•	Torso
Flak Jacket	2/4	1	−1	0	••	Torso, arms
Full Riot Gear	3/5	2	−2	−1	•••	Torso, arms, legs
ARCHAIC						
Leather (hard)	2/0	2	−1	0	•	Torso, arms
Chainmail	3/1	3	−2	−2	••	Torso, arms
Plate	4/2	3	−2	−3	••••	Torso, arms, legs

Rating: Armor provides protection against normal attacks and Firearms attacks. The number before the slash is for general armor, while the number after the slash is for ballistic armor.

Strength: If your character's Strength is lower than that required for her armor, reduce her Brawl and Weaponry dice pools by 1.

Defense: The penalty imposed on your character's Defense when wearing the armor.

Speed: The penalty to your character's Speed for the armor worn.

Availability: The cost in Resources dots or level of Social Merit needed to acquire the armor.

Coverage: The areas of a character protected by the armor. Unless an attacker targets a specific unarmored location ("Specified Targets", above), the armor's protection applies. Wearing a helmet increases the armor's coverage to include a character's head.

* This armor is concealed, either as normal clothing (e.g. biker leathers) or being worn under a jacket or baggy shirt. Attackers have no idea the target is wearing armor until after they land a successful hit.

Azoth Effects

Azoth	Trait Maximum	Max Pyros	Pyros/Turn	Radiance
1	5	10	1	Same Building
2	5	11	2	City Block
3	5	12	3	Several City Blocks
4	5	13	4	City Neighborhood
5	5	15	5	City Quadrant, Borough
6	6	20	6	Half of City
7	7	30	7	Entire City
8	8	40	8	Entire City
9	9	50	9	Entire City
10	10	100	10	Entire City

Environment Levels

Level	Example Environs
1	Safe environment
2	Light snow, heavy storms; too cold to sleep safely; air pressure causes shortness of breath; sweltering sun can cause first-degree burns
3	Heavy snow; cold causes physical pain and potential hypothermia; sun quickly causes first-degree burns, can cause second-degree burns with time; minor radiation poisoning
4	Desert exposure; heat rapidly causing second-degree burns; moderate radiation exposure
5	Desert sandstorm, severe hurricane, tornado, tsunami

Melee Weapons Chart

Type	Damage	Initiative	Strength	Size	Availability	Special
Sap	0	−1	1	1	•	Stun
Brass Knuckles	0	0	1	1	•	Uses Brawl to attack
Baton	1	−1	2	2	n/a	
Crowbar	2	−2	2	2	•	
Tire Iron	1	−3	2	2	••	+1 Defense
Chain	1	−3	2	2	•	Grapple
Shield (small)	0	−2	2	2	••	Concealed
Shield (large)	2	−4	3	3	••	Concealed
Knife	0	−1	1	1	•	
Rapier	1	−2	1	2	••	Armor piercing 1
Machete	2	−2	2	2	••	
Hatchet	1	−2	1	1	•	
Fire Axe	3	−4	3	3	••	9-again, two-handed
Chainsaw	5	−6	4	3	•••	9-again, two-handed
Stake*	0	−4	1	1	n/a	
Spear**	2	−2	2	4	•	+1 Defense, two-handed
Stun gun (melee)	1	-1	1	1	•	Stun; bonus successes don't add to modifier for damage

Type: A weapon's type is a general classification that can apply to anything your character picks up. A metal club might be an antique mace, a metal baseball bat, or a hammer, while a hatchet might be a meat cleaver or an antique handaxe.

Damage: Indicates the number of bonus successes added to a successful attack. Weapons always deal lethal damage.

Initiative: The penalty taken to Initiative when wielding the weapon. If using more than one weapon, take the higher penalty and increase by 1.

Strength: The minimum Strength needed to use a weapon effectively. A wielder with a lower Strength suffers a −1 penalty on attack rolls.

Size: 1 = Can be hidden in a hand; 2 = Can be hidden in a coat; 3+ = Cannot be hidden.

Availability: The cost in Resources dots or level of Social Merit needed to acquire the weapon.

Concealed: A character who wields a shield but doesn't use it to attack can add its Size to his Defense, and uses its Size as a concealment modifier against ranged attacks.

Grapple: Add the chain's weapon bonus to your dice pool when grappling.

Stun: Halve the victim's Size when aiming for the head with intent to stun.

Two-handed: This weapon requires two hands. It can be used one-handed, but doing so increases the Strength requirement by 1.

* A stake must target the heart (–3 penalty to attack rolls) and must deal at least 5 damage in one attack.

** The reach of a spear gives a +1 Defense bonus against opponents who are unarmed or wield weapons of Size 1

Wasteland Categories

Category	Name	Effective Azoth	Fade	Torment	Environment	Effects
1	Touched	1	Creator's Azoth in Days	–1	0	–1 Durability
2	Tainted	2	Creator's Azoth in Days x 2	–2	Level 1	–1 Structure, –1 Durability
3	Blighted	3	Creator's Azoth in Days x 2	-3	Level 2	–1 Structure, –2 Durability
4	Wasteland	4	Creator's Azoth in Weeks	–4	Level 3	–2 Structure, –3 Durability
5	Firestorm	5	Special	–5	Special, see p. XX for Firestorms	

Personal Tilts

Tilt	Effects
Arm Wrack	One arm: Drop anything held, suffer off-hand penalties for most rolls. Both arms: Chance die on rolls requiring manual dexterity, −3 to other Physical actions.
Beaten Down	Cannot take violent action in combat without spending Willpower.
Blinded	One eye: -3 to vision-related rolls. Both eyes: -5 to vision-related rolls, lose all Defense.
Deafened	One ear: -3 Perception rolls. Both ears: Chance die on Perception rolls, -2 to combat rolls.
Drugged	-2 Speed, -3 to combat rolls (including Defense and Perception). Ignore wound penalties.
Immobilized	No combat actions. Can't move or apply Defense.
Insane	+1 to combat rolls, act after everyone else, -3 to Social rolls, can't spend Willpower.
Insensate	No combat actions. Can move and apply Defense. Taking damage ends the Tilt.
Knocked Down	Lose action this turn (if it hasn't been taken), knocked prone. Can apply Defense, attack from ground at -2.
Leg Wrack	One leg: half Speed, -2 penalty on Physical rolls for movement. Both legs: Knocked Down, give up action to move at Speed 1, movement-based Physical rolls reduced to chance die.
Poisoned	Moderate: One point of bashing damage per turn. Grave: One point of lethal damage per turn.
Sick	Moderate: -1 to all actions. Penalty increases by 1 every two turns. Grave: As moderate, but also inflicts one point of bashing damage per turn.
Stunned	Lose next action. Half Defense until the characters next acts

Environmental Tilts

Tilt	Effects
Blizzard	-1 penalty to visual Perception and ranged attack rolls, increased by 1 per 10 yards. -1 penalty to Physical rolls per four inches of snow.
Earthquake	Penalty to Dexterity rolls depending on severity. Take one to three lethal damage per turn, Stamina + Athletics downgrades to bashing.
Extreme Cold	Bashing damage doesn't heal. -1 penalty to all rolls, increasing by 1 per hour. At -5, further hours deal one point of lethal damage.
Extreme Heat	Bashing damage doesn't heal. -1 penalty to all rolls, increasing by 1 per hour. At -5, further hours deal one point of lethal damage.
Flooded	-2 to Physical dice pools per foot of flooding. Once water is over head, character must swim or hold breath.
Heavy Rain	-3 to aural and visual Perception rolls.
Heavy Winds	-3 modifier to aural Perception rolls. Winds rated between 1 and 5, severity acts as penalty to Physical rolls and deals that much bashing damage per turn, Dexterity + Athletics to avoid.
Ice	-2 Speed, -2 to Physical actions. Can move at normal speed but -4 Physical actions. Dramatic Failure causes Knocked Down; Drive rolls are at -5 and half Acceleration.

PROMETHEAN
THE CREATED
SECOND EDITION

Name: Elpis: Lineage:
Player: Torment: Refinement:
Chronicle: Concept: Role:

ATTRIBUTES

POWER	Intelligence	OOOOO	Strength	OOOOO	Presence	OOOOO
FINESSE	Wits	OOOOO	Dexterity	OOOOO	Manipulation	OOOOO
RESISTANCE	Resolve	OOOOO	Stamina	OOOOO	Composure	OOOOO

SKILLS

MENTAL
(-3 unskilled)

Academics _____ OOOOO
Computer _____ OOOOO
Crafts _____ OOOOO
Investigation _____ OOOOO
Medicine _____ OOOOO
Occult _____ OOOOO
Politics _____ OOOOO
Science _____ OOOOO

PHYSICAL
(-1 unskilled)

Athletics _____ OOOOO
Brawl _____ OOOOO
Drive _____ OOOOO
Firearms _____ OOOOO
Larceny _____ OOOOO
Stealth _____ OOOOO
Survival _____ OOOOO
Weaponry _____ OOOOO

SOCIAL
(-1 unskilled)

Animal Ken _____ OOOOO
Empathy _____ OOOOO
Expression _____ OOOOO
Intimidation _____ OOOOO
Persuasion _____ OOOOO
Socialize _____ OOOOO
Streetwise _____ OOOOO
Subterfuge _____ OOOOO

OTHER TRAITS

MERITS

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REFINEMENT CONDITION

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BESTOWMENT

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HEALTH
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WILLPOWER
OOOOOOOOOO
□□□□□□□□□□

AZOTH
OOOOOOOOOO

PYROS
□□□□□□□□□□
□□□□□□□□□□

PILGRIMAGE
OOOOOOOOOO

CONDITIONS

_____
_____
_____

ASPIRATIONS

_____
_____
_____

Size: _____ Speed: _____
Defense: _____ Armor: _____
Initiative Mod: _____
Beats: □ □ □ □ □
Experiences: _____
Vitriol Beats: □ □ □ □ □
Vitriol Experiences: _____

Attributes 5/4/3 • Skills 11/7/4 (+3 Specialties) • Merits 10 • Choose Lineage • Choose basic Refinement • Choose one Alembic from each of the Refinement's Transmutations • Choose Bestowment • Choose Role • Azoth 1 • Piligrimage 1
Health= Stamina+ Size • Willpower = Resolve + Composure • Size = 5 for adult human-sized Prometheans • Defense = Lowest of Dexterity or Wits + Athletics • Initiative Mod = Dexterity+ Composure • Speed = Strength + Dexterity + 5
Record starting Pyros(half maximum rounded up).

PROMETHEAN
THE CREATED
SECOND EDITION

TRANSMUTATIONS

Transmutation:_____
Alembic:_____
Persistent:_____
First Distillation:_____
Second Distillation:_____
Third Distillation:_____
Alembic:_____
Persistent:_____
First Distillation:_____
Second Distillation:_____
Third Distillation:_____
Alembic:_____
Persistent:_____
First Distillation:_____
Second Distillation:_____
Third Distillation:_____
Alembic:_____
Persistent:_____
First Distillation:_____
Second Distillation:_____
Third Distillation:_____

Transmutation:_____
Alembic:_____
Persistent:_____
First Distillation:_____
Second Distillation:_____
Third Distillation:_____
Alembic:_____
Persistent:_____
First Distillation:_____
Second Distillation:_____
Third Distillation:_____
Alembic:_____
Persistent:_____
First Distillation:_____
Second Distillation:_____
Third Distillation:_____
Alembic:_____
Persistent:_____
First Distillation:_____
Second Distillation:_____
Third Distillation:_____

FIXED ALEMBICS

MILESTONES

MASTERED ROLES

PROMETHEAN
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SECOND EDITION

OTHER TRAITS

_____ OOOOO	_____ OOOOO	_____ OOOOO
_____ OOOOO	_____ OOOOO	_____ OOOOO
_____ OOOOO	_____ OOOOO	_____ OOOOO
_____ OOOOO	_____ OOOOO	_____ OOOOO

EXPANDED MERITS

ALLIES

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_____
_____

REPUTE

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_____
_____

CONTACTS

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_____

RESIDUAL MEMORY

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LANGUAGE

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RESOURCES

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MENTOR

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OTHER(_____)

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POSSESIONS

GEAR(CARRIED)

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EQUIPMENT(OWNED)

_____
_____
_____
_____

VEHICLE	Durability	Structure	Size	Acceleration	Safe Speed	Max Speed	Handling

COMBAT

Weapon/Attack	Damage	Range	Clip	Initiative	Strength	Size

PROMETHEAN
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HISTORY

(REMEMBERED OR CURRENT)

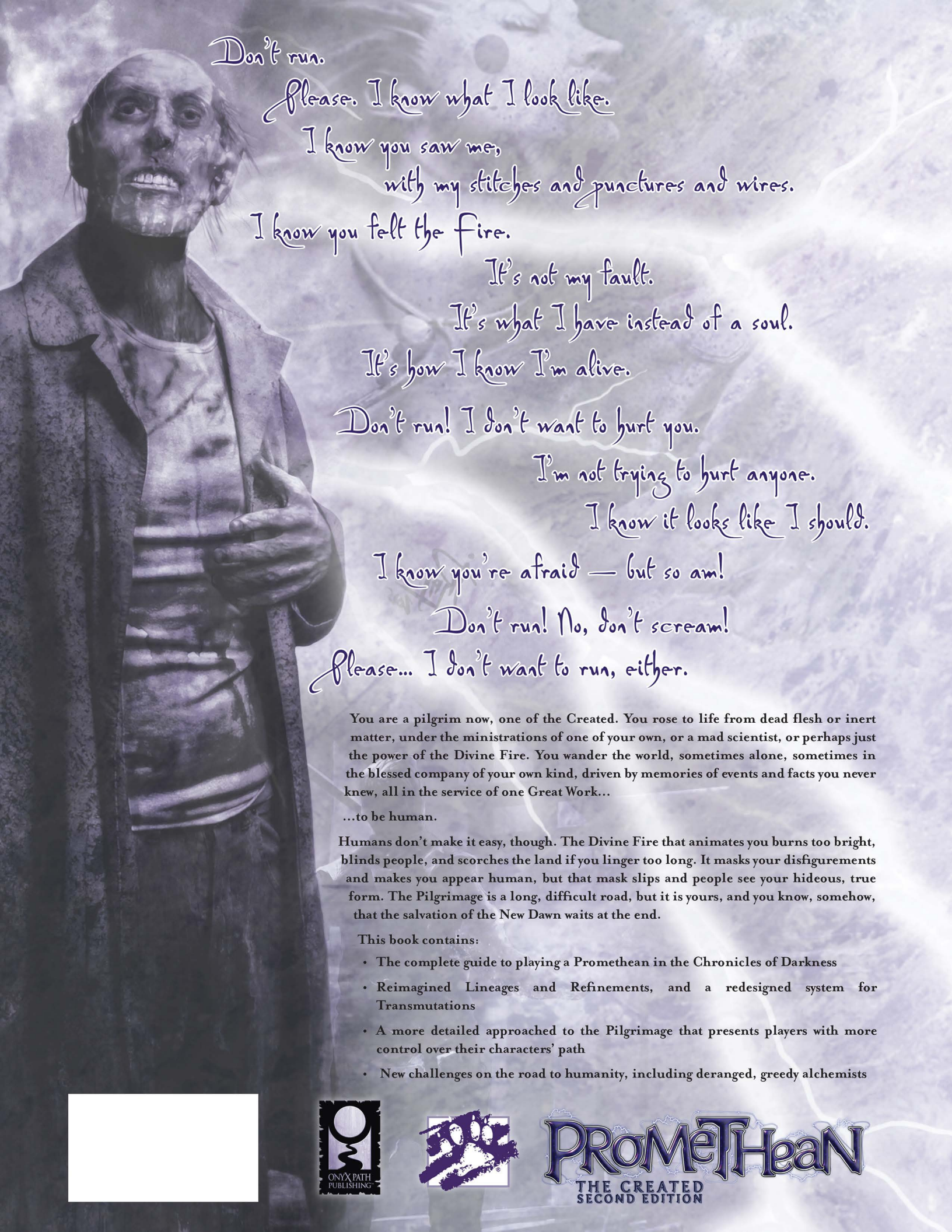
DESCRIPTION

Apparent Age:_____
Date of Creation:_____
Hair:_____
Eyes:_____
Race:_____
Nationality?:_____
Height:_____
Weight:_____
Sex:_____
Distinguishing Features:_____

VISUALS

THRONG CHART

CHARACTER SKETCH



You are a pilgrim now, one of the Created. You rose to life from dead flesh or inert matter, under the ministrations of one of your own, or a mad scientist, or perhaps just the power of the Divine Fire. You wander the world, sometimes alone, sometimes in the blessed company of your own kind, driven by memories of events and facts you never knew, all in the service of one Great Work...

...to be human.

Humans don't make it easy, though. The Divine Fire that animates you burns too bright, blinds people, and scorches the land if you linger too long. It masks your disfigurements and makes you appear human, but that mask slips and people see your hideous, true form. The Pilgrimage is a long, difficult road, but it is yours, and you know, somehow, that the salvation of the New Dawn waits at the end.

This book contains:

- The complete guide to playing a Promethean in the Chronicles of Darkness
- Reimagined Lineages and Refinements, and a redesigned system for Transmutations
- A more detailed approached to the Pilgrimage that presents players with more control over their characters' path
- New challenges on the road to humanity, including deranged, greedy alchemists

ONYX PATH PUBLISHING

PROMETHEAN

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