





SERIOUSLY? FREE-TO-PLAY?

Imagination is powerful. To quote Albert Einstein, "Imagination is more important than knowledge. For knowledge is limited to all we now know and understand, while imagination embraces the entire world, and all there ever will be to know and understand." Well said.

We believe in the power of imagination and how it creates wonder and inspiration. Roleplaying games are one of the few things that can do what they do. Some might say they are the last frontier for wild imagination and creativity. We certainly believe so. That's why we make roleplaying games – to help make that possible.

Making roleplaying games the way we have hasn't helped us spark imagination the way we'd hoped. We want to try something different.

First, we're adopting the Creative Commons license, so that you can contribute to the game in a meaningful way. That way, we can support you in your awesome ideas and help you get them out to your fellow players.

Then, we're going to give away electronic copies of the core book for free. We've all bought games that didn't end up working out for us. That's why we're giving this to you for free – so that you can figure out if you like the game before you decide to spend money on it.

If you like The Void and you play it, we're going to put out a bunch of cool material at very reasonable prices. We're going to do it buffet-style, so you can pick and choose what works best for you and your group. Buying these supplements supports us making more cool material, along with the rest of your fellow players.

After all, life's too short to waste time and money on games you don't like.
– The Staff of WildFire



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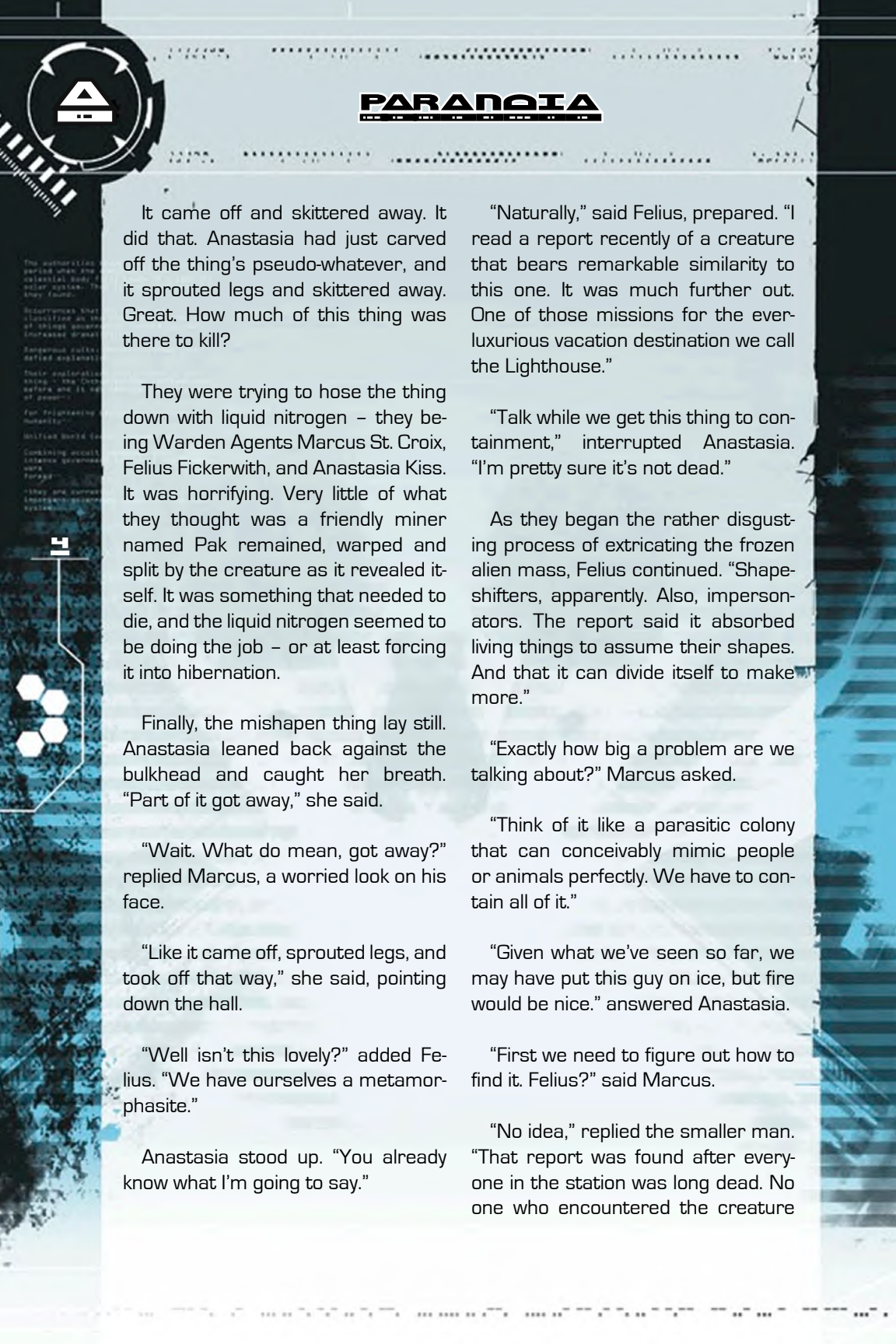
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PARANOIA

It came off and skittered away. It did that. Anastasia had just carved off the thing's pseudo-whatever, and it sprouted legs and skittered away. Great. How much of this thing was there to kill?

They were trying to hose the thing down with liquid nitrogen – they being Warden Agents Marcus St. Croix, Felius Fickerwith, and Anastasia Kiss. It was horrifying. Very little of what they thought was a friendly miner named Pak remained, warped and split by the creature as it revealed itself. It was something that needed to die, and the liquid nitrogen seemed to be doing the job – or at least forcing it into hibernation.

Finally, the mishapen thing lay still. Anastasia leaned back against the bulkhead and caught her breath. "Part of it got away," she said.

"Wait. What do mean, got away?" replied Marcus, a worried look on his face.

"Like it came off, sprouted legs, and took off that way," she said, pointing down the hall.

"Well isn't this lovely?" added Felius. "We have ourselves a metamorphasite."

Anastasia stood up. "You already know what I'm going to say."

"Naturally," said Felius, prepared. "I read a report recently of a creature that bears remarkable similarity to this one. It was much further out. One of those missions for the ever-luxurious vacation destination we call the Lighthouse."

"Talk while we get this thing to containment," interrupted Anastasia. "I'm pretty sure it's not dead."

As they began the rather disgusting process of extricating the frozen alien mass, Felius continued. "Shape-shifters, apparently. Also, impersonators. The report said it absorbed living things to assume their shapes. And that it can divide itself to make more."

"Exactly how big a problem are we talking about?" Marcus asked.

"Think of it like a parasitic colony that can conceivably mimic people or animals perfectly. We have to contain all of it."

"Given what we've seen so far, we may have put this guy on ice, but fire would be nice," answered Anastasia.

"First we need to figure out how to find it. Felius?" said Marcus.

"No idea," replied the smaller man. "That report was found after everyone in the station was long dead. No one who encountered the creature



"It Came Off And Skittered Away"

survived. But lighten up! We know more than we usually do."

"This is my fault," Anastasia replied. "Of course we'd come out here to find some incredibly hard to kill thing

that steals people's faces. It's always some kind of nasty, ugly creature that shouldn't exist with me. I'm cursed."

Silence. The guys froze with awkward looks on their faces.

"Well?" said Anastasia. "Aren't you going to say anything?"

Felius cleared his throat. "But we love you for it?"

That was it. Anastasia broke off a piece of the frozen metamorphasite and chucked it straight at Felius' head. The little turd even had the audacity to dodge it. He could be so infuriating sometimes.



If there weren't so many survivors, Anastasia would have been in favor of just flashfiring this entire station. It had been days and they'd only just figured out how to test for the thing. That was fun, especially when the metamorphasites freaked out and started killing people.

Anastasia still wasn't sure if she'd barbecued enough of these things for them to be safe. They couldn't test people all the time and this thing was a perfect mimic.

Claustrophobia and paranoia started to set in for everyone about the same time. This did not make things easier. However, it feels like the walls are closing in when you don't know who to trust and something is hunting you to become you.

The stimulants Anastasia had been taking were certainly keeping her awake, but at the price of making her paranoia worse. She was a mess – wild-eyed, tangled haired, and twitchy. It was not her best look.

All of this led to the moment in which Anastasia was holding a live incendiary grenade and screaming at everyone to get back.

"Whoa, whoa, whoa, Tasia!" said Marcus as he very gently approached, empty hands in the air. "We're all a little tweaked right now, but we are going to be fine. I need you to disarm that grenade and give it to me. You're scaring the locals."

"No! How do I even know you're really Marcus?" said the panicked Anastasia.

"Tasia, you have seen me take the test. I'll take it again, if that will make you happy," answered Marcus.

Anastasia took a threatening step forward, brandishing the grenade. "What if this thing got smart and the test doesn't work anymore? How am I supposed to know who isn't going to try to eat me?"

Marcus cautiously backed off. "The test hasn't failed us yet and we have no reason to believe it will."

"Miss Kiss, we're in trouble. We understand. But what you're feeling is drug-induced. It isn't real. This is a bad situation for speed," added Felius, from his corner of the room. "Please, love. Disarm that grenade."

"You're both acting like you, but I don't trust it!" shouted Anastasia. She moved towards the door. "I know that I'm human. I know that I'm safe. But until I'm sure about you, I'm locking you in here."

"Please do not do that," Marcus asked. "Please just take a deep breath and let us figure out."

His answer was the click of the lock.



Out in the hallway, Anastasia started to shake. The hab-lights were dimmed for night, so she curled up in a dark alcove and cried.

This was such a mess. She didn't know what to do. There wasn't anyone she could trust. She didn't know how much of this thing was left. And then what if it...

"I won't become one of those things," Anastasia whispered.

Long after the tears had stopped, Anastasia still sat in her dark corner, quiet as a mouse. She just stared into the distance at something no one else could see.

It was a noise that broke her reverie. It was uneven. A slap, a scrape, a squish. And it was very close and getting closer every moment.

Anastasia froze, waiting to see if the thing was going to pass by, or if it would turn and find itself right at her hidey hole. Long moments passed. Slap, scrape, squish.

Then, there it was. The sound was growing louder. The creature was heading her way. If Anastasia used her incendiary grenade, she'd burn. She gently unholstered her pistol.

For what seemed like too long, the creature approached. Then suddenly the noise began to change. It was no longer coming Anastasia's way. The acoustics had played a trick on her.

She knew where it was going. Anastasia had just locked up a bunch of people, who were now banging on the door. The metamorphasite was coming to eat them.

Time was short. Anastasia quietly rolled across the floor. She was behind the thing now. Peering out, she was greeted by another nightmare creature, mishapen and monstrous.

That's when she laughed. The thing stopped in its place. "Of course I'd walk out the door and run into you, Anastasia said to it. "I should trust myself more often."

A piece of the creature's back opened up into a giant maw and shrieked an unholy sound at her. That's when Anastasia tossed the incendiary grenade - which was now turning out to have been a good idea after all - into that maw, and diving around the wall for cover.

Anastasia was shielded from the ensuing inferno, but she sure was sweating now. She could hear the thing thrashing around, trying to turn on the fire emergency system. The same system which she had taken off-line yesterday.

She stepped into the flaming carriage, feeling like a weight had been lifted, and realized that she should also probably let her friends out.

Welcome to *Horrors of the Void 1: Body Horror*. This book contains an in-depth exploration of four monsters, looking at what makes them strong, what makes them weak, and why you should be terrified of them. This additional information should be all you need to craft entire adventures around each of these creatures.

You will find that the monsters presented in this book utilize some of the Monstrous Traits from *The Void Core*, which start on p. 200.

Here is a quick look at what's ahead.

Body Horror

Body horror is a specific type of horror, in which the awful things that occur have to do with the degeneration or appropriation of one's body. All of the creatures in this book are the kind that can turn you into one of them, take over your body, or make you a breeding ground.

Regardless of how individually powerful they are, each of these monsters should evoke an additional level of fear. After all, they represent a fate worse than death.

Vile Creatures

This book explores four monsters, all related to body horror. One monster is entirely new. Three of these creatures you may have seen from previous books, but none have been expanded the way they are here.

Metamorphasite

The ultimate adaptive lifeform, a metamorphosite can shapeshift into any creature it absorbs – and even take on their memories.

Myriad

Not all monsters are easily visible. The myriad are almost an alien disease, infecting hosts to bend them to their will.

Seethari

Aliens that exist only to kill, feed, and reproduce, they require living things to host their young.

Shambler

Hulking brutes, shamblers are most dangerous for their toxic bite. Those infected begin to change – and the shamblers' numbers grow.

Evolution

While you may have used metamorphasites, myriad, and seethari from previous books, each of them has evolved during development. Use the game statistics presented here for the most complete experience.

Threat Ratings

To help GMs balance encounters, we've added Threat Ratings to the creatures presented here. This should help you determine how the Characters will fare against these monsters.

The first thing to do is to figure out each Character's Level equivalency.

This equivalency system is simple – every 10 Advances equals a Level. So, a Character with 1-10 Advances is Level 1, a Character with 23 Advances is Level 3, and so on.

A monster's Threat Rating equals the number of Character Levels (on average) it requires for the Characters to have a fair shot at defeating it and surviving.

Thus, a Character should be able to face down a juvenile seethari (Threat: 1) in a one-on-one fight, but is very likely to die against the adult version (Threat: 7).

Some creatures, such as the infant seethari, have a Threat Rating of 0. This does not mean that they are not a threat. It means that an average Character is likely to kill it in one turn, and that groups are what is required to make the creature more deadly. However, such monsters usually have something else going on – like the infant seethari's ability to hide and rapidly grow.

Size Classifications

The *Tactical Combat* rules include map sizes for the monsters from *Horrors of the Void 0*. They have either been repeated or included here.

References

For ease of reference, all the monsters' game statistic listings are reprinted in one place at the end of the book.

Got Feedback?

We're all roleplayers here. When you're playing *The Void*, you're going to have feedback – whether it be questions, comments, or the awesome stuff you came up with while you're playing. We want to hear it. You've got two options. You can just fire off an e-mail to feedback@fearthevoid.com. Alternatively, you can jump into the pool on our forums and engage in conversation with both us and other players. Find them at <http://www.reddit.com/r/TheVoidRPG/>.

METAMORPHASITE

METAMORPHASITE

It is the thing of nightmares – intelligent, cunning, alien, and malicious. To call it a shapeshifter would be far too limiting. Dripping flesh peels back, spurs of bone spring forth, newborn tentacles thrash violently, and a fang-filled maw rises upward from a mound of writhing tissue. Only within these few rib-crunching and blood-spurting moments does this creature reveal its true self. For once the process of transformation is complete, the true masquerade of this creature begins. It could appear as your dog, your best friend, or your wife. You'd never know until it was too late, not until the weight of this beast holds you down while tendrils erupt from its morphing carcass to wrap your helpless body. Only then would you feel your consciousness begin to ebb as your life slips gradually away. Only then, in those last moments of silent screaming would you realize that everything about you was now ending only to be replaced by... it.

Overview

No one is sure if metamorphasites are a single organism or a community of countless, rapidly evolving microorganisms. Few people believe that they even exist outside of bar room talk and urban legend. Warden investigations of reported metamorphasite encounters have produced very little in the way of concrete data. Yet supposed eyewitness accounts seem to mark metamorphasites with certain common characteristics. They can transform themselves almost instantly, even separating body parts and growing

new limbs with which to move. Some accounts claim that the creatures are able to sprout natural weapons such as bone spikes, razor-sharp pincers, or even a new mouth with serrated teeth with which to strike.

The transformation process is, by human standards, a nauseating spectacle to witness. For a metamorphasite to grow in size, it must absorb other living matter. It excretes a toxic liquid that breaks down living tissue into a kind of opaque goo that the creature then absorbs – a horribly painful way for a victim to die. Some theorize that metamorphasite microorganisms are able to then read the victim's DNA coding and morph themselves appropriately. The transformation soon begins with wet gurgling noises, flashes of raw turned out flesh, and shifting crackling bones until the metamorphasite completes its change to a new form.

The fact that a metamorphasite body can split into separate independently functional bodies is a characteristic that makes the creature extremely resilient and very hard to kill. Crush it or burn it. As long as some portion of the creature's body remains intact to separate, sprout legs, and skitter away, some part of the creature will survive. Yet this apparent ability for metamorphasite cells to transform and operate as a newly formed organism also reveals the best way to pierce the creature's disguise. Attacking any part of it, even a sampled pool of blood with

a hot poker, will cause a physical reaction due to the primal need for each cell to survive. Some believe that this is the only real way to detect this creature from other organic life forms.

The actual story of a first encounter with a metamorphasite has varied depending on who is telling the tale. However, most agree that the likely first sighting took place a few years ago after a comet passed near the solar system. There was a great deal of debris thrown off by the comet's trail and a science research team was dispatched to investigate. Messages from the team's ship



indicated that they'd discovered a large chunk of ice containing rich deposits of methane, ammonia, hydrogen, and water. They also found what they thought to be a large object buried inside the large mass of ice. Later messages, though incomplete, indicated that the mass may have been a manufactured device of some kind – perhaps an escape pod. The last known message from that team was clearly wrought with fear and panic. It claimed that something horrible had awoken from inside the pod and infected the crew. Nobody could be trusted. People were consumed alive screaming while this thing stole their form. The teams' last warning was that this thing must never reach a large population center, like Earth. That was the last that anyone ever heard from them. Of course, most officials deny any truth in this tale.

Mindset

Metamorphasites are highly adaptive, intelligent, and cunning. They rely heavily on subterfuge and stealth in order to survive. They are creatures lost inside the Sol System – refugees from another time and another place. They may be looking for a new place to call home or may be hunting for a way to leave the solar system once and for all. While nobody knows for sure, one thing is certain. Metamorphasites will do what they can to spread their numbers when possible, and have no qualms about who or what they will destroy along the way.

A metamorphasite's strength truly lies within its ability to disguise itself and blend in. It is even capable of ab-

sorbing the knowledge and memories of those beings it assimilates. It is for that reason that the metamorphasite can perfectly imitate a human being, even to the point of knowing and understanding language and something of its victim's recent experiences. The metamorphasite will use this ability to its best advantage – preferring to bide its time and wait for the best chance to take a victim and, at the same time, minimize the possibility of discovery. It is diligent in its willingness to assess situations, gauge surroundings, and evaluate strategies. It learns well. It's that kind of balanced shrewdness and patience that makes the metamorphasite an extremely dangerous opponent.

Humans are a strange species to metamorphasites. Their static form seems so primitive for a space-faring race possessed of obviously advanced technology. They seem inferior. However, metamorphasites are clear that, though these sapient beings can be easily absorbed and misled, they are a resourceful race and thus potentially dangerous. And so the creatures remain cautious in their gradual approach toward the heart of the Solar System.

Strengths & Weaknesses

A metamorphasite's primary strength lies in its ability to adapt and blend with minimal chance of discovery. However, the creature remains a formidable opponent even when unmasked. Its ability to rapidly change its form makes the metamorphasite almost impossible to take down with standard weapons. Guns and blades can certainly cause physical damage,

but the creature will continue unphased as if it had never been harmed. Additionally a metamorphasite can separate a portion of its body to form a new creature, as long as it is not incapacitated. This takes three turns.

Another of a metamorphasite's strength is its ability to turn its body into a weapon. A nearby opponent can be grappled with a sprouted tentacle, and then run through by a bone spike protruding from the creature's torso. Any number of natural weapons can erupt from the creature's body in order to deal with the next possible threat – and it can do this almost instantly. Thus, a large enough metamorphasite can take on several normal opponents simultaneously.

A metamorphasite's largest weakness comes through anything that could cause total cell death – most notably fire. Fire slows down the creature's ability to transform, as it ruins cells and chips away at its body. Incinerating a metamorphasite is the one true method of making sure that the entire creature is dead. Chemicals can also be used for a similar effect, if sufficiently acidic or alkaline.

The creature is also extremely vulnerable during a major metamorphosis. The process required to absorb a creature the size of a dog or larger means that the metamorphasite must remain stationary until the transformation is complete. However, while it can't move, it can still attack. Therefore, catching one in this state while armed with a flamethrower would be an effective way of terminating the thing.

As the Enemy

It's not likely that a metamorphasite will bother an average person, unless it sees him as a threat or a means to an end. He might even find himself striking up a conversation at the train station, never realizing that he's in the company of a dangerous alien. Of course, a metamorphasite's understanding of human culture is limited. It will not linger in social situations, covering up a possible *faux pas* with apologies or excuses. Nevertheless, any small event within a single moment could cause the metamorphasite to reevaluate a person's position – is he a harmless bystander or now a tasty target of choice?

A metamorphasite will follow a person and watch him – learning his moves and habits. It will try to figure out who he associates with most and how he reacts to others. It will check out his habitats and most frequented places to determine where it is most likely to get him alone. It may even manipulate the intended victim into the perfect situation. Regardless, it will wait, patiently planning the kill with precision and purpose.

In Combat

Surprise is a metamorphasite's primary weapon. It might sneak up behind you to wrap you in tentacles while absorbing your physical form or spring a sudden set of claws from an unlikely appendage to spill your guts out. If cornered or in danger of being overpowered, it will attempt to slip away and hide down a dark tunnel or ventilation shaft. However, to a metamorphasite, this is only a temporary

setback. A tactical retreat is simply an opportunity to surprise and reengage an opponent.

A metamorphasite will also rely on subtle forms of attack, such as sabotaging valuable equipment or vehicles. It may damage or destroy food sources, if doing so weakens its enemy. Communications equipment is also a likely target for destruction, if the metamorphasite seeks to isolate its victims. It will do what it can to keep its opponents off-balance by creating chaos in the environment. If the metamorphasite could understand the human psyche, these tactics might be considered psychological warfare. To the creature, however, these tactics simply allow it to spin a web of control over its victims before it moves in for the kill.

Story Hooks

1. A crew answers the distress call of a deep space mining vessel. Though the outer fuselage of the ship appears undamaged, inside is entirely another matter. Bulkheads and passageways are scarred with the impact of gunfire and the searing imprint of flamethrowers. Small traces of human blood and tiny fragments of bone can be found everywhere. Whatever happened here, there are no survivors and the communications console has been smashed to pieces. Even the ship's log is unattainable. Nevertheless, the ship is intact and salvage rights
2. A Warden team is investigating a possible incident on an outer colony, when word comes of a small passenger ship that had recently arrived. The ship had supposedly been attacked by pirates, and it was by the smallest shred of luck that she was discovered by a passing freighter. Strangely enough, the only survivor of the attack is a quiet eleven year-old girl who has somehow pulled through, despite the odds. Word is that she is sickly and very quiet. The authorities have had her transported to a local hospital for evaluation. What grabs the team's attention is that strange things begin to happen at the hospital soon after her arrival. Whole blood supplies have gone missing and some of the staff have not shown up for work. Stranger yet, some people who were expected to pass away are now miraculously walking around as if nothing ever happened. Something dark has nested among the patients and staff.

Metamorphasite Game Statistics

Threat: 2

Size: Variable

Habitat: Anywhere not super-heated, Natural unknown

Average Attributes:

Awareness	3	Grace	Based on Form, or 4
Cleverness	5	Perseverance	7
Demeanor	4	Physique	Based on Form, or 5

Average Statistics:

Health	Form Grace + Form Physique + 7, or 16 (16/32/48/64)
Speed	Variable (Form Grace + Form Physique), or 18 mph/29 kph

Skills: Deception 5, Defense 3, Insight 4, Intimidate 4, Natural Weapons 2, Notice 3, Odd Job 3, Reaction 3, Survival 3, Others based on form

Weapons: Acid Spray (4d6), Short Range
Pseudopods (1d6 + Half Physique + Entangling)
Others based on form

Armor: By Form, Minimum Shapeshifting Hide (10/5)

Horror Factor: Average

Special Abilities:

- *Dividing* – A metamorphasite may split its form into separate entities. When it does, split its Grace and Physique between the new forms – all other Attributes remain. These new forms can absorb fresh victims in order to grow back to full strength. Each form is aware of the others at all times.
- *Feel No Pain* – Metamorphasites do not suffer penalties due to Wound Levels.
- *Entangling Attack* – Metamorphasites can use their pseudopods to entangle opponents.
- *Glider* – Metamorphasites can manifest membranes or wings with which to glide.
- *Deceiver* – Metamorphasites perfectly imitate other life forms, unless caught in the act of transforming.
- *Constrictor* – Once a victim is dead, the metamorphasite absorbs its kill within minutes.
- *Mimic* – Metamorphasites can transform into any life form they have ever absorbed, within minutes. They absorb and manifest the knowledge, experience, and physical characteristics of their victims – though the first two are linked to specific forms. These life forms must be approximately twice the size of a person or smaller.
- *Skilled* – Metamorphasites may be as skilled as humans, including knowledge of advanced science and engineering.
- *Tool Users* – Metamorphasites can decipher and use all forms of known technology, as well as some alien kinds.

MYRIAD

MYRIAD

You round the corner of the alley, following your partner's scream. You're not sure what to expect, but what you find is worse – a lot worse. He's lying on the ground, still screaming, but you can't hear a sound. His face is covered by some kind of slime, which oozes from the arm of the pickpocket you were both chasing. The ooze is hideously dissolving your partner, who only just twitches. Snapping out of shock, you pull your firearm and empty the clip. Panic makes most of the shots go wild, but the few that do strike just pass right through the thing, ricocheting off the wall behind him. As it staggers towards you, you keep pulling the trigger, but the clip is already empty. An acrid smell overwhelms you, as you are lost to the world.

Overview

The myriad are a race of microscopic organisms that infest a host body and, as they multiply, begin to influence the actions of the host. They cannot take direct control of the host, but will subtly twist his thoughts to bend him to their will. It is as if their victim is possessed.

Since it may take the Myriad months to begin to appreciably influence their host, they must plan and carefully execute infection. They must spend precious biological energy to create what is called a seed – a cluster of specialized myriad cells. The process is exhausting for the host, and can only be attempted about once a fortnight. Once created, the clock is ticking, as the seed is only viable for a few days.

The seed requires flesh-to-flesh contact in order to enter a new host. It is quickly absorbed into the skin, leaving behind a tear-shaped mark, which will heal and leave no evidence. Then, it begins to infect nearby cells. Unlike a virus, which ultimately destroys a host cell, the myriad create infiltrator cells which split off and continue infection. While the myriad are silent early during the infection, their whisperings become louder and louder over the coming weeks.

Once the myriad reach sufficient numbers, usually within a week, they begin to manipulate chemical processes within the host. They can help push the host's body closer to a physical peak, while healing wounds, defects, and most illnesses. However, there is nothing they can do regarding life-threatening or terminal illnesses – myriad tend to make sure their host is healthy before infection. The infection complete, the myriad are now permanently bound to their host and will die along with him.

The host then becomes able to hear the whispering of the myriad in his mind. The manipulation is subtle at first, making the victim believe he is only listening to his own mind. This continues over months, until the victim becomes highly suggestible to the myriad, though believing he is still the one in charge.

The myriad act as a localized hive mind. Every cell within a host is in con-

stant communication – and they know everything the host knows and experiences. Myriad in different hosts must touch skin-to-skin in order to share such information, but it only takes instants to download everything from one host colony to another.

Mindset

The myriad are parasites in every sense of the word. They view any living thing as a potential host, but it is the intellectual minds of humans that interest them most. Our capacity to reason and think makes us the most suitable targets for infection and domination.

Each colony of the myriad exists as a separate and distinct entity. The colonies constantly share information host-to-host, as opportunity permits. However, there doesn't appear to be any kind of leadership within the myriad. They simply coordinate, all with a shared goal in mind.

The myriad can feel the changes that



are being wrought upon the solar system as the Chthonian Star approaches. They know the Old Ones are awakening and they know they will have no special place in the things to come. Their only concern is the survival of their race, and they seek power, influence, and knowledge in order to do so. To this end, the myriad will work both for and against both mankind and the forces of the Old Ones to further their own ends.

Though many of the infected become host to a myriad involuntarily, the creatures know how to entice the imbalanced or marginal to come over willingly. Some seduce with power. They share visions of the might and glory that the myriad have witnessed and can share with a new host. Some seduce by belief. Cults are often targets for the myriad, where they can fake being a higher power which will join in perfectly balanced symbiosis with a new host. Neither types argue with the vitality and healing abilities that are a part of myriad infection.

Strengths & Weaknesses

The main strength of the myriad is their insidious nature. They are a hidden and patient threat, capable of infiltrating and controlling nearly anyone or any group they desire. From the outside, no one would notice the difference until it is too late.

Another major strength of the myriad is their racial memory. Each seed passed on contains the memories of the colony that created it, as well as all the related colonies that came before. New myriad colonies begin fully ma-

ture, with a wealth of knowledge and experience far beyond that of humans. They are sly and calculating from the get go.

Surprisingly, the myriad tide can be stemmed by the old world antibiotic, penicillin. Though the drug has lost its favor due to medical advances, penicillin hampers the spread of the myriad inside a host. While it will not kill them, the antibiotic will hold off the myriad infection for a while. This is only borrowed time, however, because the host will eventually become resistant to penicillin and the myriad will ultimately win.

Their ability to never take full control over a host might also be viewed as a weakness. They can only work to manipulate the host through their whispers, and sometimes a host will ignore the voices and do something unexpected. Those who have been hosts only a short time can be unpredictable, while those who have been infected long-term can be mentally unstable. It is rarely good for the myriad when a host takes self-determined actions.

Their tenacity is both a strength and a weakness. Once they have fully infected a host, there is no way the myriad can be destroyed or removed without killing the host. They are not a simple disease that can be treated with the right medicine. However, myriad cannot leave a host, except to pass on a seed. They can heal many injuries and slow the effects of aging, but eventually the myriad colony will die along with its host.

As an Enemy

The myriad are master infiltrators, who are willing to take years to reach their goals. Even if a host is discovered to be doing something untoward, no one will expect it's because he is being influenced by a parasitic organism.

It is through hosts that most will encounter the myriad. Those that were unwilling hosts were claimed because they had access to the knowledge, power, or resources the myriad required. This means they can often be dangerous, either due to their influence or due to their ability to defend themselves.

Those who have willingly chosen to become host to the myriad are far more dangerous. However these people discovered the myriad, they regard the parasitic colony as a path to longer life and greater power. These are the cult leaders and business magnates that make up the foundation of the myriad power-base. The myriad happily accept those who present themselves willingly, and allow the hosts to believe that they remain in control. Since the myriad and the willing host often have similar desires, the pairing works well. Willing hosts are often far more dangerous, as they know what they are doing and often have power to bring to bear.

Given the opportunity, the Myriad would far rather use their influence and knowledge against a threat than engage in face-to-face combat. Those who threaten one of the colony's own may find themselves with unexpected life difficulties, the kind that will occupy and distract them in such a way

as to force them to let go of the myriad they threatened. All it takes is the right call.

In Combat

Since the myriad and the host become one, the colony will attempt to avoid direct physical conflict. There is usually little to be gained, and the generation of a seed takes far too long to be passed on in combat.

If pressed, the myriad will use their racial memory to confer key abilities and knowledge onto the host. The host suddenly knows how to fight, fire a weapon, or whatever is required (use the creature's Odd Job rating for these new Skills). The chemical alterations the myriad have made to the host's body also come in handy, granting increased agility and strength, as well as rapid healing. They will do what they need to do – either subdue or kill an enemy – in order create an opening for them to retreat and hide.

When pushed to the limits, the myriad will use the host body as a chemical weapon. Though dangerous for the host and the colony, it is preferable to capture or death. The myriad will force the host to excrete a highly-acidic ooze from its pores, which will coalesce into a fully functional protoplasmic mass that can operate as an extension of the body. They will lash out with these pseudopods, leaving burning pain and chemical smoke in their wake.

This process will consume both the host and the myriad within an hour. However, before that time elapses, the myriad may dissolve either the

defeated enemy or another unwitting victim. They will then use the cells of the victim to rebuild its host. This takes four hours, during which the myriad may not move about freely. It can be a dangerous time for the colony, so they often find isolated, hidden places in which to do this.

Story Hooks

1. The Wardens have been keeping an eye on what appears to have been a mostly benign cult (located in any population center of appreciable size). They've been a disorganized group attempting to worship something akin to the Old Ones, without having the knowledge to do so in any meaningful way. Most importantly, they've mostly kept to themselves and haven't presented themselves as a threat.

Suddenly, things have changed. This cult now seems to know what they are doing. Their rites are more authentic, recruitment is up, and they are attempting to acquire things best left hidden. The Wardens begin to investigate this after surveillance reports confirm these things.

The true cause of this is the myriad. A host to the creatures recently arrived and has set himself up within the cult. His advanced knowledge has propelled him through the cults' ranks and he has begun a slow process of infecting the other cultists. It will only be a matter of time before it is a fully functioning myriad colo-

ny, doing the things they need to do in order to push forward their mysterious plans.

2. There is no known way to fight off a myriad infection. Once the creatures have begun to live in his body, a person only has a few weeks (much longer with penicillin) before he loses himself to the creatures.

An entire story could be told about the Characters' attempt to help their infected friend (or infected Character). The Characters must go on a quest to find a cure that will purge the infection. They will have to dig deep and risk much in order to get it, and the cure may something that is used up in the process.

All kinds of elements can be part of this story. The Characters may need to find a lost place of power hidden in the ice canyons of Uranus. There may be a lost artifact that is the key. Maybe some piece of the puzzle involves hunting and killing a rare monstrous being. The cure might require a combination of these things, or maybe an astrological event as well. All along the way, their friend keeps slowly losing himself to the voices of the myriad in his head.

Myriad Game Statistics

Threat: 3

Size: As Host Normally Microscopic

Habitat: Atmosphere of Uranus

Average Attributes:

Awareness	3	Grace	3 (as Blob)
Cleverness	5	Perseverance	6
Demeanor	3	Physique	6 (as Blob)

Average Statistics:

Health	As Form, 15 as Blob	(15/30/45/60)
Speed	As Form, 18 mph/29kph as Blob	

Skills: As Host, plus Crytozoology 3, Insight 3, Occult 3

Weapons: As Host, Blob (3d6 + 3d6 for Physique)

Armor: As Host, Blob (15/5)

Horror Factor: Average

Special Abilities:

- *Adaptable* – Myriad can survive in cold environments with thin atmospheres, like Uranus or Neptune, as well as Earth-like atmospheres.
- *Infection* – A potential host must succeed at a Hard Perseverance Test when exposed to the Myriad. Once infected, the host must succeed at an Average Perseverance Test to resist compulsion each day. The Difficulty for this Test increases to Hard after one week and to Legendary after two weeks. There is no known cure for Myriad infection.
- *Protoplasmic Blob* – If a Myriad host is threatened and is forced to reveal itself, it will covert its host to an acidic protoplasmic blob. Anything that touches it takes the listed damage above. Myriad can convert back to their normal host form when the danger is gone.

SEETHARI

SEETHARI

You're not sure why the alarm has sounded, but the screaming klaxons make it impossible to ignore. The halls are strangely empty, and that alone makes you worried. Then the lights go out, and you're left with the dim glow of emergency red and orange. You press your comm in growing unease, but all that waits for you on the other end is static.

You carefully make your way down the hall, back to your quarters where you left your sidearm – something you are deeply regretting now. It's hard to make out anything over the blaring alarm, but you swear you can hear something that sounds like clicking up ahead.

Turning the corner, you come face to face with the reason for the alarm. It's a creature of nightmare. The emergency lights flash off of its black, almost bio-mechanical skin. It's nearly as big as you, except for the lashing tail that whips through the air behind it. It is clearly a creature of death, with sharp claws at the end of every digit, the blade tipping its tail, and the mouth filled with rows of teeth. You can't tell if it should move on two or four legs – it seems to do both – as it crouches and leaps an impossible distance towards you. Its jaws open, dripping thick ooze, and it hisses.

The tail lashes through the air at light-speed, piercing deep into the flesh of your shoulder. As you scream, your arm is enveloped in white-hot fire and the thing yanks you closer. Suddenly, a

stinger-like tongue lashes out and stabs you in the belly. The pain is incredible, but that's not the worst of it.

You are overcome with the sensation that something was just pumped into your innards.

What's worse is when the creature withdraws its tail and begins to walk away. Why? Why would it do that?

Overview

Seethari are horrible creatures that are capable of hibernating for centuries in the cold vacuum. They are usually brought aboard ships or stations as part of salvage or mining, whereupon they awaken with two urges – to eat and to procreate. They, in fact, seem to have no other reason for being – other than to bring pain and suffering in their wake.

Seethari reproduce in a disturbing manner. Each is asexual and seeks to implant a tiny embryo into a living host using its stinging tongue. Once implanted under the skin, it makes its way to the digestive tract. There, it feeds on what the host eats (who seems to be hungry all the time), for the next three to five days. Then, properly gestated, it starts to move its way down the digestive tract, ultimately ripping its way out of the victim's colon and anus. The screaming victim usually dies a painful and bloody death, while the baby skitters out into the world.

However, this can be stopped, but only while the baby is painfully moving to be born – while gestating, it will kill the host if removed. This brief ten minute window is all there is to remove the angry baby seethari and save the host.

Seethari are capable of reproducing in any living creature of appreciable size, not just inside human beings. A creature must be at least the size of a large dog, such as a golden retriever or a mastiff, in order to be a host. Seethari are even capable of impregnating other beings, such as Deep Ones or ghosts.

Variations

Many encounters with seethari will involve their bloody reproductive cycle. This means that both infant and juvenile seethari will be a part of such engagements.



Infant seethari are those who have just ripped their way out of their host and are new to the world. They are small serpentine creatures, appearing to be black chitinous snakes with a vicious mouth and tiny spindly arms. Infant seethari are nowhere near as dangerous as full-grown adults, but are not to be underestimated. Their instinct is for survival, so they will do whatever they need to do to hide from possible danger – or escape from it when it comes.

Infant seethari will eat whatever they can get their hands on that is remotely organic and non-toxic. After approximately 36 hours, the infant will undergo a miraculous growth spurt, shedding its skin while transforming into a smaller version of an adult. This process takes about three hours, during which the creature is helpless.

After those three hours are up, the juvenile seethari will once again need to eat, though it will take another four hours for its armored skin to harden. For about the next 36 to 72 hours, depending upon how much food the creature can consume, the juvenile seethari ingests as much non-toxic organic material as it can. Then, it once again sheds its skin and undergoes a drastic growth spurt to transform into an adult. This process takes as long as the transition from infant to juvenile and is as debilitating for the creature. Once fully grown, seethari are capable of reproducing.

Mindset

Seethari are not intelligent in the way we think of intelligence, but they

are incredibly smart creatures. Their only two drives are those of all animals – to survive and to procreate – and they are very good at both.

The instincts of the seethari naturally allow them to balance any environment, assessing organic life in such a way that they breed to a capacity that will allow them to make the most of the remaining population as food. Since they can survive on other sources of food as well, they factor this into their actions.

Thus, the first action on the part of any seethari, especially one just coming out of hibernation, is to examine its environment – unless there is an immediate threat. It will determine how much food is present and if it can afford to impregnate a host, though most likely after eating.

Seethari are not impulsive creatures and they do not attack simply because something is there. Most often, they must hide during their the first days of life and this trait of stealth continues on into adulthood. They are not the kind of creatures who are likely to give their presence away, if given the opportunity.

Strengths & Weaknesses

In general, the seethari have many strengths. They are quick and mobile creatures, capable of jumping and climbing at quite a speed. They are tough, capable of both dealing with and dishing out punishment. Furthermore, they can see in the dark. Seethari appear to be a perfect predator, and they live short, bloody lives.

However, it is perhaps their ability to hibernate that is one of their greatest strengths. While they are not true void-dwellers that can live and thrive in the cold vacuum, seethari are capable of entering hibernation and surviving in such conditions for hundreds of years. Seethari of any age are capable of entering such hibernation when environmental conditions become hostile or when food becomes scarce. They will awaken from their sleep once both an environment and the possibility of food are present. In general, seethari live for about twelve years, but those years may be spread out over decades or even centuries.

However, like all creatures, the seethari have their weaknesses as well. The most obvious is their intelligence, or lack thereof. They may be cunning and their instinct may take them far, but when push comes to shove, they are still animals – or whatever they might be. Seethari can be outsmarted or fooled by those clever enough to outmaneuver their naturally canny instincts.

Their other weakness lies in their need to kill every living thing in their environment. Anything they encounter is either food or a host for breeding. They will eventually run out of both. For a period of time, once both are gone, seethari will turn on each other in a show of survival of the fittest. They will whittle their population down by at least half before their process of hibernation kicks in. If one can isolate a population of seethari, they will eventually cease to be a problem by virtue of their own biology.

As an Enemy

Seethari make it into colonies either when the colony spreads into an area in which there are hibernating seethari, or are brought in from digs of some sort. They are usually brought on board spaceships or space stations through things brought up from digs or from salvage operations. Once there, they begin their cycle of feasting and breeding.

A person might think that one would recognize the hibernating seethari as something alive and dangerous. However, when the creature hibernates, it rolls up into a tight ball. It's limbs fit so perfectly together that, with the right amount of time and deposits, it can be easily mistaken for something more innocuous.

One of the worst things that can happen to a Character is to have a seethari embryo implanted in him. There is a chance, albeit typically a small one, that the embryo will not take and the person's system will naturally flush it – but most times this is not the case. It is likely that the character in question has an embryo living in his gut for the next several days.

Few people even know about the seethari, so they won't think anything of having an odd sensation after being stung by one's tongue. The embryo finds its seat in the digestive tract quickly and without pain. In fact, most don't even know it's there. The only outside trait that appears is that the host, within about twelve hours, develops a serious appetite. After all, the infant needs to be fed.

A few hours before the infant is to make its journey down the digestive tract to tear its way out the opposite end, the victim will begin to feel like he has an upset stomach, along with some painful cramping. It doesn't feel like anything so out of the ordinary that people panic – most have had painful diarrhea at one point or another and assume it has something to do with their increased appetite.

Most people in this situation die on the toilet. They feel, in the moments the infant is descending through their intestines, that they have an intense need to go to the bathroom. The experience becomes more and more painful, but it isn't until it's too late that the victim realizes something is very wrong. The infant gets impatient as it descends and begins to rip up the victim's insides, causing a massive amount of internal bleeding in the minutes before its usually violent exit.

As the infant descends, there is about a ten minute window in which a skilled physician can operate and remove the infant. Such an operation is extremely stressful – it requires success at a Very Hard Medicine: Physical Test, and requires the correct tools. However, if successful, the physician will remove the infant seethari without further long-term harm to the former host. He will, on the other hand, have an angry infant that has been birthed by its equivalent of c-section.

In Combat

Seethari usually use stealth to their advantage, attacking from ambush or disappearing into the shadows. They have a good self-preservation instinct

and usually keep themselves out of straight-up fights.

If it's possible, seethari will seek to impregnate one of the people against which it fights. Once it does so, it will no longer attempt to harm that character in any way – this can give an impregnated character an edge, though the price will be stiff.

Though their claws are effective weapons, seethari most often try to bite in combat. They will first try to strike and entangle with their tails, following it up with a bite. Such a combination attack is usually enough to cripple an unarmored opponent. Their choice in targets is most often dictated according to whoever is closest and is the biggest threat. They are canny enough to use cover to their advantage when firearms are a factor.

Story Hook

The Characters receive a distress beacon broadcasting between two of the Outer Planets – for example, in the space between Jupiter and Saturn. Upon investigating this beacon, they find a ship adrift, vented to open space. The ship's cargo hold is filled with valuable salvage, though several of the crates have blood on them, as do other parts of the ship. While there are no bodies, it's clear something bad went down. One of the adult seethari managed to steal away into one of the cargo containers to hibernate, hidden in and among piping and other industrial hardware. If the Characters bring the cargo aboard, they will have an adult seethari that will awaken and begin its process of eating and breeding.

Seethari (Adult) Game Statistics

Threat: 7

Size: Medium 4' - 5' tall, 120 lbs.
1.2 - 1.5 m tall, 55 kg

Habitat: Any Atmosphere

Average Attributes:

Awareness	5	Grace	5
Cleverness	3	Perseverance	7
Demeanor	2	Physique	4

Average Statistics:

Health	15	(15/30/45/60)
Speed	16 mph/26 kph	

Skills: Athletics: Coordination 3, Defense 3, Freefall 3, Natural Weapons 5, Notice 3, Reaction 4, Stealth 4, Survival 2

Weapons: Bite (3d6 + 2d6 for Physique)
Claws (1d6 + 2d6 for Physique)
Tail (2d6 + 2d6 for Physique + Entangle)
Tongue (1d6 + 2d6 for Physique + Implantation)

Armor: Chitin-Like Hide (10/5)

Horror Factor: Average

Special Abilities:

- *Climber (x1)* – Seethari can climb as fast as they can run.
- *Embryonic Implantation* – When stung by a Seethari's tongue, a Character must succeed at a Very Hard Perseverance Test. Failure means the embryo enters the Character's body and moves to his digestive tract. Within three to five days, the embryo will mature and begin to move down the digestive tract. This is the only time it may be removed. This can be done once every 48 hours, if the creature is eating properly.
- *Entangling Attack* – Seethari can use their tails to entangle opponents.
- *Feel No Pain* – Seethari do not suffer penalties due to Wound Levels.
- *Jumper (x3)* – Seethari can jump three times as far as a comparable human. (12 yd/m horizontal, 12 ft/3.7 m vertical)
- *Infrared Senses* – Seethari can see in the dark.

Seethari (Juvenile) Game Statistics

Threat: 1

Size: Medium 3' - 4' tall, 80 lbs.
1 - 1.2 m tall, 36 kg

Habitat: Any Atmosphere

Average Attributes:

Awareness	5	Grace	4
Cleverness	3	Perseverance	5
Demeanor	2	Physique	3

Average Statistics:

Health	12	(12/24/36/48)
Speed	14 mph/22.5 kph	

Skills: Athletics: Coordination 2, Defense 3, Freefall 3, Natural Weapons 3, Notice 3, Reaction 4, Stealth 4, Survival 2

Weapons: Bite (2d6 + 2d6 for Physique)
Claws (1d6 + 2d6 for Physique)
Tail (1d6 + 2d6 for Physique + Entangle)

Armor: Chitin-Like Hide (5/3)

Horror Factor: Average

Special Abilities:

- *Climber (x1)* – Juvenile seethari can climb as fast as they can run.
- *Entangling Attack* – Juvenile seethari can use their tails to entangle opponents.
- *Feel No Pain* – Juvenile seethari do not suffer penalties due to Wound Levels.
- *Jumper (x2)* – Juvenile seethari can jump twice as far as a comparable human. (6 yd/m horizontal, 6 ft/1.8 m vertical)
- *Infrared Senses* – Juvenile seethari can see in the dark.

Seethari (Infant) Game Statistics

Threat: 0

Size: Small 10" - 12" long, 10 lbs.
25 - 30 cm long, 4.5 kg

Habitat: Any Atmosphere

Average Attributes:

Awareness	4	Grace	3
Cleverness	2	Perseverance	3
Demeanor	2	Physique	1

Average Statistics:

Health	7	(7/14/21/28)
Speed	8 mph/13 kph	

Skills: Athletics: Coordination 1, Defense 3, Freefall 2, Natural Weapons 2, Notice 3, Reaction 4, Stealth 3, Survival 2

Weapons: Bite (1d6 + 1d6 for Physique)

Armor: Chitin-Like Hide (5/3)

Horror Factor: Average

Special Abilities:

- *Climber (x1)* – Seethari infants can climb as fast as they can slither.
- *Feel No Pain* – Seethari infants do not suffer penalties due to Wound Levels.
- *Infrared Senses* – Seethari infants can see in the dark.

SHAMBLER

SHAMBLER

The movement of the shadowy form in the distance is wrong. At first, you thought it was your partner coming to help with the repairs, but it doesn't answer when you yell out. Instead, you get back a moan, almost a whine. The sound sends chills down your spine. The shadow lurches forward suddenly – it moves like it has a lame leg. You shine your light down the tunnel to get a better look, but what you see makes you take a step back as your eyes go wide.

The shadow may have looked human, but this is not. It has two arms and two legs, but that's where the similarity ends. It looks like a thing out of a horror movie. Its sickly, tattered green skin shows wet red muscles and yellow tendons exposed beneath. What there is of the skin is pulled taut, as though it were too small.

Its unnaturally long legs bend in the wrong directions. Powerful arms perch on an emaciated torso. Its vicious mouth is filled with giant teeth and you're clear it will rip flesh from bone. But where are its eyes?

As you turn to run, a sound echoes from behind the creature. This time, it's your partner. Before you can warn him, the creature turns. Its torso twists impossibly, as it looks behind – the rest of the body gently following. It is on your friend in a flash. As you finally run, you can hear his screams and the sound of bones crunching.

Overview

Shamblers are creatures that seem to have been pulled from a nightmare. Their bodies look dead and torn, though they are not. These creatures have begun to appear in populated areas, and are a dangerous threat wherever they are found.

A lone shambler is deadly enough on its own, but it is the creatures' ability to turn humans into their kind that is most terrifying. Where one is found, there will soon be more. If not dealt with quickly, they can be impossible to contain, spreading like a disease. News of a shambler swiftly brings Warden attention, and they will not hesitate to commandeer local authorities.

These creatures can be very difficult to kill. Shamblers regenerate, rapidly healing even the most severe wounds. Too many times, thought-dead creatures have risen again to continue their insidious agenda. Extreme measures are often required.

Not only are shamblers dangerous because they are drawn to population centers, they are also difficult to keep secret. Fortunately, the Wardens have seen to it that any images or stories that have gone public have been "debunked" as fakes. Unfortunately, that doesn't always do the job. A movie came out last year that featured a creature close enough to a shambler that it couldn't be anything else.



It is rumored that there are cults who may have found ways to summon shamblers. Some say that a few have figured out how to create them – for some hidden purpose.

Variants

For the most part, shamblers do not vary. Victims who have succumbed to Morphic Toxin may still

be wearing the clothes in which they transformed. This sometimes leads to shamblers wearing the remnants of armor – though this will be minimally effective.

Mindset

The shambler has a simple mind and limited intelligence. They have little ability to solve problems, but can figure out basic things if given enough time. They have a basic grasp of language, and communicate through a variety of grunts, growls, and whistles. Those shamblers who have recently transformed also generally retain an understanding of their native language for several months before it slips away.

Shamblers exist to make more of themselves. If possible, they prefer to incapacitate their victims, rather than kill. The Morphic Toxin then has time to work. Once content the transformation will be complete, the “parent” continues on its path. They never choose victims from the same place twice, which serves to throw enemies off their trail.

These creatures also have wicked appetites. Carnivores, shamblers will eat whatever they can catch. It is rare that one will eat humans – after all, they are far more useful as new shamblers.

Shamblers do not seem to be social creatures. While they don’t seek each other out, shamblers instinctively work with their own kind. They begin to form mobs when enough have been created. As these mobs grow in

size, they begin to attract shamblers from further and further out. They mobs split when they grow too large, but the process continues until they have been exterminated.

Strengths & Weaknesses

Shamblers are unfeeling opponents who are unbelievably tenacious. While not suicidal, they will not break off once they have chosen a victim. They can fight through pain and heal very fast. One has to be ready for a fight with a shambler.

Groups of shamblers are both easier and more dangerous with which to deal. Though they instinctively work together, they are not coordinated. Furthermore, they do not gang up on victims, since only one can infect. Any shamblers not directly engaged in the conflict will continue moving on, in search of more prey. It is possible for a well-armed group to take down a larger mob if they know how to play it, because they won’t be overwhelmed.

Tracking down lone or small groups of shamblers before it’s too late can be difficult. They tend to stay unseen until they transform enough victims. As the mob grows, it will be drawn towards larger and larger population centers. They understand enough to follow things like roads and rail-lines from place to place. This fact can be used against them.

Mobs of shamblers naturally break down when no prey is present. Within days, they will begin to split up and go off in search of new hunting grounds. This is both a blessing and a curse.

In Combat

Lone shamblers are sneaky. They do not randomly attack, instead waiting for a target who is isolated and alone. Staying out of sight, they will lurk in the shadows until the time is right.

Once they do attack, they usually leap from the shadows and subdue their victims. Shamblers, if given the chance, take their unconscious victims to a safe place so that the Morphic Toxin can do its work. If food has been scarce, they will eat the victims instead. If they cannot claim a victim this way, shamblers will begin to lash out with its wicked claws and giant teeth. They will not back down and must be put down.

This changes when mobs form. All attempts at stealth are forgotten as the shamblers wander brazenly in the open, searching for prey. Mobs will begin to go after groups of people at a time, instead of isolating individuals. At this point, the outbreak is severe.

Shamblers are also very difficult to deter. They do not react to wounds the way other creatures do. They heal rapidly. It takes knowledge to effectively take them down for good.

As the Enemy

Small numbers of shamblers can be scary things to face down. With their seeming immunity to pain, their amazing regenerative abilities, and their lack of self-preservation instincts make them literally relentless. Without knowing what they're facing, regular people have no ability to deal with them.

Defeating shamblers can be done with the right ingredients. The key is fire, or heavily corrosive or caustic chemicals. They must be burned when they die, or they won't stay dead very long. Flamethrowers and incendiary devices are very effective for this. However, a significant amount of firepower will be required to overcome their rapid healing and take them down. When it comes to shamblers, there is no such thing as overkill.

Once there are enough to form mobs, shamblers become like a vampire or zombie apocalypse. Survival becomes more important than resistance. The best way to deal with the situation is to mobilize the army and get out of the way.

These creatures can be found potentially encountered anywhere there is a breathable atmosphere, even in the open Martian deserts. However, they are most likely to be encountered in run-down areas of settlements and colonies, or even stowed away on a spacecraft.

Story Hooks

1. On a long journey through space, the Characters are either the crew or passengers onboard a large freighter or passenger liner. Things are fine through the first leg of A/D Stasis, but soon go wrong afterwards.

One of the crew or passengers came onboard shortly after what he believes to be an animal attack. He is bandaged and stable, but

needed to be on the ship – either for duty or transport. He didn't want to admit he'd had a close call with something from a nightmare, and the doctors had no idea what attacked him. Denial is a powerful thing, but he has the toxin of a Shambler in his veins.

The process of A/D Stasis kept the transformation in check, but came on with a vengeance once it was complete. Hiding in his quarters, this man has transformed fully into a shambler and is now loose on the ship.

The first sign anything is wrong is when people go missing. Searching, the first thing the Characters will find is one of the missing, half-way into the transformation. He will be horribly malformed and barely human.

From there, it's a question of pieces together the puzzle of what is going on, combined with surviving against and hunting down any shamblers onboard before the last leg of A/D Stasis begins.

However, there is the question as to whether the ship has sufficient enough medical facilities and supplies to halt the Morphic Toxin or not.

2. As Wardens, the Characters are summoned to investigate a potential incident on Mars. A small mining operation deep in the mountains of the Red Planet has suddenly gone silent. The only fly-over showed heat signatures,

but no one in the town out or performing their daily duties. It's like people are home, but hiding in their houses or the mountains. It has the local Martians freaked out.

Arriving at the mining colony, the Characters arrive to discover a ghost town. The only living thing that's around is a single dog – a small corgi, who is clearly someone's house pet. The dog is dirty and has clearly been scavenging to keep itself alive.

Other than that, the Characters can find evidence of a struggle throughout the colony, with plenty of blood, but no bodies. What's happened to the families and miners that lived out here?

The reality is that a shambler has gotten loose on Mars, and this station has fallen to either its toxin or hunger. The shamblers have been consolidating in the mountains, waiting until all the victims could fully transform. From here, they will begin to extend their reach out to neighboring colonies, finally heading towards the big cities.

This hook could also grow into or be designed for a potential shambler apocalypse. This mob could rapidly begin to grow in such a way that the Characters will need more than themselves to deal with the situation, and find themselves no longer the hunters.

Shambler Game Statistics

Threat: 2

Size: Medium 6' tall, 220 lbs
1.8 m tall, 100 kg

Habitat: Anywhere humans may be found

Average Attributes:

Awareness	2	Grace	3
Cleverness	2	Perseverance	6
Demeanor	2	Physique	5

Average Statistics:

Health	14	(14/28/42/56)
Speed	16 mph/26 kph	

Skills: Athletics: Brawn 4, Defense 3, Freefall 2, Natural Weapons 3, Notice 3, Reaction 3, Stealth 3, Survival 3

Weapons: Bite (3d6 + 3d6 for Physique)
Claws (1d6 + 3d6 for Physique)
Leaping Grab (1d6 + 3d6 for Physique + Entangle)

Armor: None (Possible Remnants)

Horror Factor: Average

Special Abilities:

- *Feel No Pain* – Shamblers do not suffer penalties due to Wound Level.
- *Entangling Attack* – The Shambler can leap at a victim up to 25'/7.6 m away and perform an entangling attack. A Shambler cannot use this attack against targets within 10'/3 m.
- *Regeneration* – Shamblers heal at an incredible rate and even seem to do so beyond death. A Shambler heals 2d6 points of damage at the start of each turn of combat. This will continue after the Shambler is "dead," healing at a rate of 2d6 Health every minute instead – it will not return to consciousness until it has healed to half of its maximum. The only way to prevent this is to burn the body after it is incapacitated.
- *Morphic Toxin* – Anyone that survives the bite of a Shambler will begin to transform into one himself. The changes happen while the victim sleeps. First, his body will stiffen and his skin will grow sallow and flake. He loses a die for any Tests based on Grace, as well as a point of Perseverance (both temporarily). Each night thereafter, the victim suffers an additional die penalty to all Tests based on Grace and another point of Perseverance (again, temporarily). Once the victim's Perseverance is reduced to zero, he will rise the next day as a Shambler. A physician can purge the toxins and reverse the transformation before it is complete, with reasonable medical and scientific gear. This requires success at a Hard Medicine: Physical Test, and one day of rest per point of Perseverance lost, to fully recover.

Metamorphasite Game Statistics

Threat: 2

Size: Variable

Habitat: Anywhere not super-heated, Natural unknown

Average Attributes:

Awareness	3	Grace	Based on Form, or 4
Cleverness	5	Perseverance	7
Demeanor	4	Physique	Based on Form, or 5

Average Statistics:

Health	Form Grace + Form Physique + 7, or 16 (16/32/48/64)
Speed	Variable (Form Grace + Form Physique), or 18 mph/29 kph

Skills: Deception 5, Defense 3, Insight 4, Intimidate 4, Natural Weapons 2, Notice 3, Odd Job 3, Reaction 3, Survival 3, Others based on form

Weapons: Acid Spray (4d6), Short Range
Pseudopods (1d6 + Half Physique + Entangling)
Others based on form

Armor: By Form, Minimum Shapeshifting Hide (10/5)

Horror Factor: Average

Special Abilities:

- *Dividing* – A metamorphasite may split its form into separate entities. When it does, split its Grace and Physique between the new forms – all other Attributes remain. These new forms can absorb fresh victims in order to grow back to full strength. Each form is aware of the others at all times.
- *Feel No Pain* – Metamorphasites do not suffer penalties due to Wound Levels.
- *Entangling Attack* – Metamorphasites can use their pseudopods to entangle opponents.
- *Glider* – Metamorphasites can manifest membranes or wings with which to glide.
- *Deceiver* – Metamorphasites perfectly imitate other life forms, unless caught in the act of transforming.
- *Constrictor* – Once a victim is dead, the metamorphasite absorbs its kill within minutes.
- *Mimic* – Metamorphasites can transform into any life form they have ever absorbed, within minutes. They absorb and manifest the knowledge, experience, and physical characteristics of their victims – though the first two are linked to specific forms. These life forms must be approximately twice the size of a person or smaller.
- *Skilled* – Metamorphasites may be as skilled as humans, including knowledge of advanced science and engineering.
- *Tool Users* – Metamorphasites can decipher and use all forms of known technology, as well as some alien kinds.

Myriad Game Statistics

Threat: 3

Size: As Host Normally Microscopic

Habitat: Atmosphere of Uranus

Average Attributes:

Awareness	3	Grace	3 (as Blob)
Cleverness	5	Perseverance	6
Demeanor	3	Physique	6 (as Blob)

Average Statistics:

Health	As Form, 15 as Blob	(15/30/45/60)
Speed	As Form, 18 mph/29kph as Blob	

Skills: As Host, plus Crytozoology 3, Insight 3, Occult 3

Weapons: As Host, Blob (3d6 + 3d6 for Physique)

Armor: As Host, Blob (15/5)

Horror Factor: Average

Special Abilities:

- *Adaptable* – Myriad can survive in cold environments with thin atmospheres, like Uranus or Neptune, as well as Earth-like atmospheres.
- *Infection* – A potential host must succeed at a Hard Perseverance Test when exposed to the Myriad. Once infected, the host must succeed at an Average Perseverance Test to resist compulsion each day. The Difficulty for this Test increases to Hard after one week and to Legendary after two weeks. There is no known cure for Myriad infection.
- *Protoplasmic Blob* – If a Myriad host is threatened and is forced to reveal itself, it will covert its host to an acidic protoplasmic blob. Anything that touches it takes the listed damage above. Myriad can convert back to their normal host form when the danger is gone.

Seethari (Adult) Game Statistics

Threat: 7

Size: Medium 4' - 5' tall, 120 lbs.
1.2 - 1.5 m tall, 55 kg

Habitat: Any Atmosphere

Average Attributes:

Awareness	5	Grace	5
Cleverness	3	Perseverance	7
Demeanor	2	Physique	4

Average Statistics:

Health	15	(15/30/45/60)
Speed	16 mph/26 kph	

Skills: Athletics: Coordination 3, Defense 3, Freefall 3, Natural Weapons 5, Notice 3, Reaction 4, Stealth 4, Survival 2

Weapons: Bite (3d6 + 2d6 for Physique)
Claws (1d6 + 2d6 for Physique)
Tail (2d6 + 2d6 for Physique + Entangle)
Tongue (1d6 + 2d6 for Physique + Implantation)

Armor: Chitin-Like Hide (10/5)

Horror Factor: Average

Special Abilities:

- *Climber (x1)* – Seethari can climb as fast as they can run.
- *Embryonic Implantation* – When stung by a Seethari's tongue, a Character must succeed at a Very Hard Perseverance Test. Failure means the embryo enters the Character's body and moves to his digestive tract. Within three to five days, the embryo will mature and begin to move down the digestive tract. This is the only time it may be removed. This can be done once every 48 hours, if the creature is eating properly.
- *Entangling Attack* – Seethari can use their tails to entangle opponents.
- *Feel No Pain* – Seethari do not suffer penalties due to Wound Levels.
- *Jumper (x3)* – Seethari can jump three times as far as a comparable human. (12 yd/m horizontal, 12 ft/3.7 m vertical)
- *Infrared Senses* – Seethari can see in the dark.

Seethari (Juvenile) Game Statistics

Threat: 1

Size: Medium 3' - 4' tall, 80 lbs.
1 - 1.2 m tall, 36 kg

Habitat: Any Atmosphere

Average Attributes:

Awareness	5	Grace	4
Cleverness	3	Perseverance	5
Demeanor	2	Physique	3

Average Statistics:

Health	12	(12/24/36/48)
Speed	14 mph/22.5 kph	

Skills: Athletics: Coordination 2, Defense 3, Freefall 3, Natural Weapons 3, Notice 3, Reaction 4, Stealth 4, Survival 2

Weapons: Bite (2d6 + 2d6 for Physique)
Claws (1d6 + 2d6 for Physique)
Tail (1d6 + 2d6 for Physique + Entangle)

Armor: Chitin-Like Hide (5/3)

Horror Factor: Average

Special Abilities:

- *Climber (x1)* – Juvenile seethari can climb as fast as they can run.
- *Entangling Attack* – Juvenile seethari can use their tails to entangle opponents.
- *Feel No Pain* – Juvenile seethari do not suffer penalties due to Wound Levels.
- *Jumper (x2)* – Juvenile seethari can jump twice as far as a comparable human. (6 yd/m horizontal, 6 ft/1.8 m vertical)
- *Infrared Senses* – Juvenile seethari can see in the dark.

Seethari (Infant) Game Statistics

Threat: 0

Size: Small 10" - 12" long, 10 lbs.
25 - 30 cm long, 4.5 kg

Habitat: Any Atmosphere

Average Attributes:

Awareness	4	Grace	3
Cleverness	2	Perseverance	3
Demeanor	2	Physique	1

Average Statistics:

Health	7	(7/14/21/28)
Speed	8 mph/13 kph	

Skills: Athletics: Coordination 1, Defense 3, Freefall 2, Natural Weapons 2, Notice 3, Reaction 4, Stealth 3, Survival 2

Weapons: Bite (1d6 + 1d6 for Physique)

Armor: Chitin-Like Hide (5/3)

Horror Factor: Average

Special Abilities:

- *Climber (x1)* – Seethari infants can climb as fast as they can slither.
- *Feel No Pain* – Seethari infants do not suffer penalties due to Wound Levels.
- *Infrared Senses* – Seethari infants can see in the dark.

Shambler Game Statistics

Threat: 2

Size: Medium 6' tall, 220 lbs
1.8 m tall, 100 kg

Habitat: Anywhere humans may be found

Average Attributes:

Awareness	2	Grace	3
Cleverness	2	Perseverance	6
Demeanor	2	Physique	5

Average Statistics:

Health	14	(14/28/42/56)
Speed	16 mph/26 kph	

Skills: Athletics: Brawn 4, Defense 3, Freefall 2, Natural Weapons 3, Notice 3, Reaction 3, Stealth 3, Survival 3

Weapons: Bite (3d6 + 3d6 for Physique)
Claws (1d6 + 3d6 for Physique)
Leaping Grab (1d6 + 3d6 for Physique + Entangle)

Armor: None (Possible Remnants)

Horror Factor: Average

Special Abilities:

- *Feel No Pain* – Shamblers do not suffer penalties due to Wound Level.
- *Entangling Attack* – The Shambler can leap at a victim up to 25'/7.6 m away and perform an entangling attack. A Shambler cannot use this attack against targets within 10'/3 m.
- *Regeneration* – Shamblers heal at an incredible rate and even seem to do so beyond death. A Shambler heals 2d6 points of damage at the start of each turn of combat. This will continue after the Shambler is "dead," healing at a rate of 2d6 Health every minute instead – it will not return to consciousness until it has healed to half of its maximum. The only way to prevent this is to burn the body after it is incapacitated.
- *Morphic Toxin* – Anyone that survives the bite of a Shambler will begin to transform into one himself. The changes happen while the victim sleeps. First, his body will stiffen and his skin will grow sallow and flake. He loses a die for any Tests based on Grace, as well as a point of Perseverance (both temporarily). Each night thereafter, the victim suffers an additional die penalty to all Tests based on Grace and another point of Perseverance (again, temporarily). Once the victim's Perseverance is reduced to zero, he will rise the next day as a Shambler. A physician can purge the toxins and reverse the transformation before it is complete, with reasonable medical and scientific gear. This requires success at a Hard Medicine: Physical Test, and one day of rest per point of Perseverance lost, to fully recover.

THE STYGIAN CYCLE

The Stygian Cycle is an epic campaign taking Warden Characters to every corner of our solar system, played out over a series of turn-key published adventures. Released monthly, they'll provide all you'll need to keep your group excited and engaged for a quite a while.

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Here's a quick look at the first four adventures of *The Stygian Cycle*.

Awakening I: Barsoom

Trouble brews in the small mining colony of Presidia, found deep within the Martian Canals of the Outback. Things have begun to go missing – now people as well. The Wardens are assigned to investigate, as this seems like more than a simple mystery.

Awakening II: Venusian Sunset

Venus is a corporate world with a caustic atmosphere. Now a rash of murders and the increase of the drug trade have gone beyond where authorities can handle them. While not normally the domain of the Wardens, the Unified World Council thinks there may be something more underneath the surface.

Awakening III: The House Always Wins

Troy, a pleasure city often thought of as the Las Vegas of the Outer Planets. Three days ago a collection of ten bodies was found arranged in a neat circle in the center of the main thoroughfare. They all show signs of radiation burns from the inside out. The Wardens must find the source of this atrocity, while keeping the ever-important flow of tourism going.

Awakening IV: Turbulence

The weeks long journey from Saturn to Jupiter is not without its share of perils, including stellar bodies, debris, pirates, and the cold vacuum of space. However, none of these are what plague the Wardens, stuck on a civilian transport. Sometimes the dark things in the solar system come knocking without warning.

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There are many exciting supplemental books available or coming up for *The Void*!

Secrets of the Void

Peel back the curtain to step into the true workings of the solar system, and what is going on behind the scenes.

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The *Characters Unbound* series introduces new options for Characters of all kinds, with this volume focusing on Lifepath Character Generation (for any kind of Character), optional Character rules, and a much expanded list of awesome Talents.

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- Best Interior Art – *Finalist*
- Best Game – *Finalist*

ORIGINS AWARDS

- Best Game – *Silver*



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The stimulants Anastasia had been taking were certainly keeping her awake, but at the price of making her paranoia worse. She was a mess – wild-eyed, tangled haired, and twitchy. It was not her best look.

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