



SHADOWRUN[®]

STREET WYRD



CORE MAGIC RULEBOOK



STREET WYRD





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INTRODUCTION

Magic is a tool, magic is a natural phenomenon. Magic is something we should take advantage of, magic is something we should fear. Magic is something any good runner needs, magic ain't nothing compared to a reliable firearm and a good getaway car.

You could make up just about any statement about magic, and someone out there believes it. But is it true? Maybe, if enough people believe hard enough. They study of magic is a lot like the study of physics—on one level, things are regular and predictable, but if you start getting into the real minutiae, you find out that things are evasive, unpredictable, and irregular. The first part of the study of magic is about building a body of knowledge; the second part is about trying to circumscribe all the areas you don't know and might never understand.

Street Wyrd will help grow your sphere of knowledge while also hinting at the mysteries out there. It starts with **State of the Arts**, which looks at what people know about the ever-changing nature of magic, especially with the weird alchera that have been popping up across the Sixth World. **The Tome of Now** has a host of new spells magicians can add to their arsenal, while **Elements of Magic** provides the ingredients needed to build those spells and others of your own design. **A Con-**

gress of Spirits is there for conjurers, adding new types of spirits and new techniques to use to keep them doing your bidding—or dealing with them when they break free. **Force and Grace** makes sure adepts aren't overlooked, with new powers and adept ways that help them focus their abilities in a selected direction. **Imbuing Magic** details startling advances in alchemy that will allow shadowrunners to use preparations in entirely new ways, and **Seeing and Believing** talks about traditions and how Awakened people use them to help them understand magic. Then there are chapters that serve as kind of an advanced-studies section for the Awakened—**Rungs of Power** offers information on initiation and new metamagics, **Conclaves and Coven**s details some of the more prominent magical societies in the Sixth World, and **Toil and Trouble** explores some of the darker uses of magic, namely blood magic and bug spirits.

Taken together, these chapters increase your knowledge of magic and your options for using it in the field. You won't know everything, of course, because no one does, but hopefully you'll know more than the next guy. Then use it to hit them, bamboozle them, charm them, or otherwise get away with whatever it is you're being paid to do.

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First Printing by Catalyst Game Labs,
an imprint of InMediaRes Productions, LLC
7108 S Pheasant Ridge Dr
Spokane, WA 99224

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PERSPECTIVE

BY KEVIN CZARNECKI

CW: COERCION BY MIND CONTROL

GOAT FOOT (SHAMAN)

Simple job.
No such thing.

My experience in simplicity exists in the nadir between doubt and faith. Juxtaposed concepts, to be sure. Nigh antithetical. But what is faith if it is not tested? It is forged in the fire of doubt, tempered and hammered and rendered sharp and fine, so that it withstands brutality with grace, alloys logic with compassion.

It also forms into an edge of mana in my hands, thrust forth with the whisper of prayer to wing into chitinous mass that was once metahuman flesh.

I don't linger long enough to see the impact, though it should take less than an eyeblink. Allah's grace flows at the speed of the spirit, the speed of the mind, and sooner than I can recoil around the corner, I can hear success. Pain as success. I blanch at the thought. The Qur'an teaches peace with your fellow metahuman.

These things are not metahuman anymore.

I feel oddly equal with my teammates. True, I've never worked with Red or EB before, but I've enjoyed their conversation on JackPoint, and in this circumstance, their inherent abilities are no help to them. Spirits will

brand their flesh as surely as mine, and their wounds won't knit any faster. Equality in the moment is a personal aspiration, though right now I would rather their unfair benefits tip the scales in our favor. Alas, Allah tests us. We shall not be found wanting, not against this alien violation against the soul.

Behind me, EB shouts at the target to get down and follow her. I look up to see Red across the hall, covering us, his hands stained in the ego of his own magic. Black light leaps eager from his fingertips, and this one I see dance down the rotten hallway, closing distance between us and three of the flesh forms. Even their demon-speed cannot dodge magic, and his blasphemy finishes what my faith started. It chitters a half-human scream, releasing a spray of venomous saliva from its mandible-split mouth, a dozen pairs of legs along its flank grasping at nothing. The spirit cannot comprehend its stolen flesh, does not understand the death of it, only knowing evanescence as this world's hostile manosphere kills it as surely as hard vacuum would kill us.

One down. Two to go. Then comes the shaman. A hundred more to follow.

TARGET (MUNDANE)

The screams follow us from the pit. I can still smell it on me, the sticky stink like yeast. The punk bitch with the silver and purple hair is grabbing my hand, but I'm shaking, and still slick from the egg shit that was all over me, and it slips free. I curl onto the floor and can't stop shaking.

I didn't ask for any of this. This is Hell.

Behind, I see another monster. Not like the others, the



bugs. Horns peek from a loose black mask, eyes like a human flash at me. But her legs emerge from loose slacks like stilts. A dark shag of fur. Little rubber booties at the end. Like hooves.

She leaps across the space, and there's a sound like in the trids, but so much louder. So real. Fireworks like on the yacht for Mom's UCAS Day promotion party, back when there was a UCAS and Ares stock wasn't in the shitter. Back when everything made sense and Hell wasn't around the corner and my biggest problem was Dean Temple breaking up with me before the Excalibur Dance.

It's safer in that when. It's cleaner and quieter, and I'm not afraid, and the noise is so loud. They're shooting guns. The bugs have guns? Why can bugs use guns? Why do bugs have guns?

Why shouldn't they? They can do everything else.

Across the hall, the goth boy with the sweet hoodie and the cherry-red hair is shouting something, and he raises his hands and steps into the hall, right where the fireworks are shooting, and metal falls in front of his fingers while purple circles light up like Christy Harmon's AR graphics at her coming-out party when she Awakened. But I don't have AR. I don't have cupcake sensates and Brave but Lazy playing "Anyway, Sarah ..." in my subdermals. This is real. This is happening. This can't be happening.

Goth Boy is thrown back when another monster slams into his real AR—no, magic, real magic like Christy was supposed to learn before ... before ... No, here. Here it breaks it and hits him and he falls back, a thousand little arms grabbing at his body while he tries to hold its mouth away from him. His fingers are bleeding from its bug pin-

cers, and its spit is dripping down and sizzling on him, and he's screaming ...

Christy and I were screaming right before Down for Stevie started playing "Why'd It Have to Be This Way?" They'd just finished "The Water Is Your Sanctuary," and I looked over at her and she looked at me, and I knew. I knew she was the most beautiful girl in the world, and I knew she could probably read my mind and could probably make me want her, and I didn't care. She leaned over and my first kiss was better than—

"Wake up!" Punk Bitch is shoving me, and I'm in Hell again.

EB (ASATRU BLOOD MAGE-LOKI)

Red's a dumbass. And now I have to save that dumb ass. Again.

The only reason we're here, and not watching *Porky's Landing* at my pad (and live or die, we're never gonna see that episode now), is because he won't take my money or crash on my pad. "Gotta earn my own way. Can't be a parasite." Funny, a vampire saying that to a vampire. Whatever. He wants to be a shadowrunner, fine. Why can't we kidnap some suit or steal some lab shit or whatever like last time? No. Now we're too many blocks deep in some Z-Zone shithole that looks like a B-horror sim set. Yippee. No one mentioned the dry rot. No one mentioned the bugs. And no one mentioned the missing kid was gonna be stuck-up corp-kid trash. Yay!

Right now, I've got her squealing and moaning about Loki-knows-what while Red is losing a wrestling match

with a centipede flesh form. Goat Foot is holding her own blasting down the hall and chanting verses from the Qur'an (or so my AR feed tells me), and here I am, debating holding on to this trust-fund heiress who represents Red's rent or running over and saving his ass.

The right thing to do is always the hardest. Almost always. Leaving her in a puddle of bug snot is way easier than watching Red get munched down.

Unlike Rick (oops, Red—codenames only, right?), I'm smart enough not to tangle with the likes of a bug spirit. Not that close, anyway. I twine my fingers in the old Norse rhythm, and the magic comes to me. What doesn't come ... is inspiration.

Are we having trouble, pet?

"Now isn't the time, Lord."

Lord? My, aren't we formal. Come. We have all the time in the world.

I look around, and the whole world is frozen. Like dropping a really good BTL and hitting pause and moving all around at a nice slow pace. I stroll through the space, taking in the sights. There's no rush. We're moving at the speed of dreams now, and I'm not getting out until my patron has had his words.

I can see the arc of bullets from the Uzis—the bug down the hall is dual wielding. That one's pretty close to human. Can't see through its mirrorshades (Ares Mavericks, legit)—maybe it's got bug eyes, or there's some shell under that Hawai'ian shirt (Knockoff Zoé, weak). Maybe there's no flaws at all, and the thing is wearing a metahuman mind just like it's wearing a body. Maybe that would mean more to me if I was a philosopher like Goat, or a martyr like Red, or a strategist like either one, but I'm just—

A trickster. My lovely daughter.

He's not wrong. He's also looking in the wrong direction.

I'm looking at the bug on Red. Nasty fuck, shell brown but shining like light off a soap bubble. Acrid, bile smell like a concert or a street doc's back alley, not just from its mouth but on the shell, too. Funny, I remember someone saying centipedes are poisonous to the touch. It's dripping down on the new hoodie I got him so he'd stop wearing longcoats all the damn time, and it's obviously ruined, and I'm pissed. I also remember Red saying that since spirit shit is dual natured, stuff that usually doesn't affect us, like poison, works all over again, like before we changed. I already know the claw marks and the spells aren't gonna regenerate. Red's already in trouble. Gotta take that into account.

And you say you're not a strategist.

Goat Foot has the right idea, sticking to cover and tossing manabols down the hall. I get why Red invited her, even if it was a last-minute thing. I just can't get over how pretty her eyes are. It's about all I can see of her face. I don't know if that's professional habit concealing identity or a matter of being Muslim. I don't have feelings about it, I just don't know when it comes to her. I don't know much except she's a spellslinging satyr with a string of proactive-isms when it comes to philosophy and politics. Which is cool. Cooler, she's busting the mana flow of this place. The bugs love their homemaking, and from the hive we saw in the basement, this place is all kinds of skittery in their favor. Whatever her deal is, she's making it a little cleaner with every zap.

That's faith, pet. Why doesn't yours shine so bright for me?

"Because I love to keep a man waiting. And you love the way I keep you waiting for me."

You don't really think you're the dominant one in this relationship, do you?

Down the hall, and there's something far worse than bugs coming. It twists in the astral like a warped frequency,

like sipping on a Flipside tripper back in the '60s. It's wrong and far away, and it feels less human and more nostalgic for humanity. I feel the shiver of millions of legs coming, and I know it's a taste of what's next: The shaman is coming, and we don't have time.

No, you don't. My patience is running thin.

I've got seconds left, but without context, what does that even mean?

Got any ideas? No?

I turn and look at Loki for the first time since time stopped, and I grin.

"I'm a fan of irony."

TARGET

Punk Bitch hisses and giggles like a witch, and her blue nails curl into claws, fingers wiggling, and the monster on Goth Boy rolls off him, brushing its hands all over itself like it's covered in something, like she spilled something on it ...

Christy slams me against the tile and a first kiss is becoming a first time. I didn't plan on this. I always thought she was cool, but I never really thought her that way. I like my boys and girls techy and showy and athletic. Christy's always been skinny and shy and my BFF since time began, and it's almost wrong, like kissing your sister, but now we're here, and it's wrong, but it's good, and it's right, and I'm hers, and I love it, and ...

The thing is squealing on the floor, and Goth Boy kicks himself away from it across the floor. He's bleeding and burned, and his teeth are long, his eyes are red. It's like the Midnight Son AR posters, like Darien Cross simflicks, like ...

"JetBlack is still the best performer of the century!"

I think JJ loves classic music just to be pretentious, but I don't really give a shit. Right now I'm just glad to be distracted. I don't want to think about what Christy did to my mind, what she made me okay with. She reached into me, and I never even felt it. Wrong just felt more right. I couldn't tell mom. She'd put me in therapy, make me talk about it more and more and ... it wasn't my fault. It was the magic. Christy Awakened, and she took a lifetime of friendship and turned me into a toy.

"I mean, consider this: We're approaching the twenty-second century. We'll see it in our lifetimes. All that time, and aside from Maria Mercurial, who could hold a candle to those jams? Dude is still selling, and he's dead!"

I looked up from him to the poster on his bedroom wall. *"I thought JetBlack 'lives.'"* I could hear how limp my own voice was. I don't think he noticed. I liked how he didn't notice things. That must have been nice. I'd give anything not to see myself, either.

"Psh. C'mon. If he was, an artist like that wouldn't be able to stop performing, and no one sounds like he used to. That whole vampire thing is bulldrek. Like, the closest we're gonna get to an infected performer is Pariah Soul, and he's just a ghoul. So, y'know, gross. Nice beats, but still ..."

Stillness. A moment of quiet. One solitary second without the fireworks and the screams and the roars and the smell. And then chaos again. My hands go to my ears and my fingers pull at my hair. I just want to die. I don't care. Please just let this end.

RED (DARK MAGE)

For once, I allow myself the luxury of avoiding the blame. My shield took a lot of abuse, and that flesh form was fast and strong. I did my best, and I could be proud of that. Didn't stop the pain, but it salved my ego.

Oh, the joys of being a Dark Mage, when your self-esteem somehow means more than the Awakened venom dripping onto your face.

Goat Foot was chanting, her voice gaining power. I'd always known she was a mage, but I'd never gotten the chance to see her work firsthand, and it was a thing of beauty. I winced at the faith that laced her every syllable, but better the ambiguous god disapproving than the very present aberration that wants your skin and your soul. I'd slid back from the bug when it suddenly started tearing at its scraps of clothing and slapping all over itself. I tried to understand what EB had cast on it when she grabbed my arm and slung me back into cover. She was smirking, and suddenly it became clear—she'd cast the illusion of crawling insects on the flesh form. I looked up at her as I slumped against the wall, letting Goat Foot cover us for a moment as I lisped around my fangs at EB.

"That was ... meta."

She flashed a toothy smile of her own as she drew a nail down her exposed forearm. "If you think that's cliché, you're gonna love this." My eyes widened as I recognized her movements, the Nordic Asatru chants and the way her blood welled and animated at her will as she tapped into the power of sacrifice.

"EB, don't! You said—"

"I've got my shit under control, Rick. Calm your tits." She shuddered with the mixture of pain and pleasure, the giving of self and the heady rush of stolen power, and her dark, infected aura threaded with glowing scarlet like oil in water. Her eyes glowed red as they opened, as though in the ecstasy of vampiric rage or appetite, and she blew on my face with mana channeled from her stolen soul.

Immediately, I could feel flesh knit once again. It was rare to need magic when regeneration was so close at hand, but oh, relief from the taint and tear of that flesh form. I watched the vibrant blood collapse from its suspended position over EB's arm, depleted and black, and scowled.

"You said you weren't gonna pull any blood magic anymore."

"And *you* didn't mention pulling some ungrateful corp brat out of a bug hive. So I guess we're all miscommunicating today."

The clatter of the flesh form told me it was recovering from EB's illusion. Not surprising, that sacrifice must have broken her concentration. I invoked my own Latin blasphemy and conjured a blade of black light. The idea of taming the ultraviolet to my will emboldened me, and the pyre line of searing violet magic slashed down with the stroke of my arm, severing the centipede's warped mockery of a head.

Goat Foot hasn't surrendered a centimeter. She sees what we did, but never stopped her chant, building power against the last of our immediate pursuers. It's nice to know she trusts us to do our job so she can do hers. The girl we're saving, however, isn't looking nearly so hot. Who can blame her, though? It's not every day you get put into an alien egg sack and then yanked out just before it can eat your soul.

"Hannibelle, ETA extraction?"

Her voice crackled in the Z-Zone's awful coverage. "Sable will be there in point-five. You better be on the street before they decide not to wait."

I glance down the hall opposite the remaining bug to where the external wall ends in transparent tarp—and a ten story drop.

TARGET

Goat Girl's voice echoes like a lecture hall. She brings her hand down, and the bug is squashed and the noise stops. There's no glitter, no light, no Suki Redflower spe-

cial FX, just green and grey splatting out across the floor and walls of the hall. More magic. It's fucking gross and it smells like yeast and ...

I can't place the smell when my bedroom door opens. It's not Mom, she's out of town for some symposium, and the cleaning drones know not to interrupt my sleep cycle. There's only enough light to define the silhouette, but I would know Christy anywhere.

"What the f—"

"Shhhh ..." Something washes over me, and my voice is gone. It's like she hit a mute button. Nothing I do makes a whisper. Not the shift on my sheets, or the crash of my lamp, or my pounding on the walls or my screams as nightmares take shape around me, dragging me into the dark with them on sharp, monstrous shoulders. I can't make one sound, and all I hear is the quiet rasp of the nightmare's shell against itself as it walks, the hiss of its gurgling breath, and the excited, willowy whispers of Christy. I can't look away from her amber eyes, the only light in the darkness, and they sway, over and over. We'll be together. We'll be together. We'll always be together. It's magic and it came from far away and we can always be together now.

I hate magic. It makes me love Christy even though she's the worst person I've ever known. It makes me love her when I hate her. It makes me love her, and I just want to die so it will end.

"Lauren ..."

My eyes snap wide. I stand. I run. I run right where I don't want to go, to the voice I used to trust more than anyone. I'm sobbing and fighting and all my body wants is to hold her and do anything she says.

The impact cracks something in my face, and I think Punk Bitch must have broken my birthday dermasculpt. Fuck! I want to scream, but I feel Goth Boy pick me up like I weigh nothing, and he's running away from ... he's saving me! They're taking me away from her!

"Fuck it," he's yelling, "We're pulling a Denver!"

Goat Girl is bounding beside him on those legs of hers. "A what?!"

"Just jump!"

There's a blast, a tear, and we're falling ... and then floating. Goth Boy is chanting, and we're floating like a feather. Goat Girl is doing the same, but the words are different. Above, I see Punk Bitch flipping the bird with both fingers before falling backward out the window toward us, then melting into mist and flowing past us, cold as a Seattle winter.

And then I realize, if they're using magic, they're like Christy.

I start screaming. And I can't stop.

CHRISTY (BUG SHAMAN)

I look down from the tenth story, but it's too late. They've got Lauren. Two land with her, dashing her into a sedan, the third reforming, still giving me the finger from the sunroof. I could will some of the Hive into hate, spear it at her, but she wasn't anyone we knew, and that meant she'd be gone as soon as she was paid.

I had been patient. I had time.

I turned from the broken plast, feeling the song of the swarm in my head and my heart. I wasn't lonely anymore. My Queen whispered comfort and community to me, and it was warm and perfect. It only lacked Lauren. My love was incomplete, only for lacking her, and I had enough of her now to find her anywhere. And the only division in my heart would be mended when Lauren would be my Queen, like I always dreamed.

I'm the luckiest girl in the world.



STATE OF THE ARTS

POSTED BY: IRE

Frag it all. I'm not kowtowing to the masses and the corporate bulldrek that fills the ears of modern magic-using youth. Magic is power, plain and simple. Controlling power is what everyone wants. Street mages, corp mages, wizkids, wizgangers, and every aspected, half-talented spellslinger are out to grab the biggest slice of the pie they can.

The thing about magic is, it isn't controlled in any one way. The corps may have been selling Unified Magic Theory (UMT) in order to create their legion of corporate mageslaves, but that drek is garbage. I'm not saying it doesn't work, but it creates a system the corps are already preparing to counter, so they keep the edge. This edge is what cuts the streets to pieces and keeps the monied class on top.

That's why the streets need to focus on their independence. Learn magic your way. Feel the power course through your veins. Let the mana flow

like water, get shaped like clay, draw its patterns in your mind, feed the chaos with your dance, or do whatever makes the magic move to your will.

I wrote the above words late one night on a rant. I had just lost a good friend who went the UMT route and came across a site with arcane security that countered him at every turn.

I visited the site. My magic was not diminished. I have ventured far from UMT and don't pander to the limits and designs of corporate magic. I had for years talked to my friend about expanding his horizons. My preliminary studies were back in the days before UMT, and when the early theories were being developed and locked into the instructional institutions around the world, I paid attention. I know how it works, and I see the glorious simplicity of it, but the lack of creativity stagnates magic. And it left my friend closed off.

Rest in peace, old friend.

I tell the story here because I was asked to talk about the current state of magic and how it's chang-

ing. The change is a good thing based on some of the events and effects we were seeing during the reign of UMT. While I can't blame it directly because I'm well past the research-and-argue phase of my magical career, I can still talk about all of the events to help us look at the best ways to actually understand magic.

- My pithy opinion is that magic is like walking: Many of us do it differently, we don't think about the deep science of how to do it, and we primarily focus on what works. Embrace the philosophy that works for you.
- Winterhawk
- Isn't this where Many-Names would say something indecipherable about the difficult-to-fully-comprehend nature of magic?
- Haze
- Magic has been making my points for me.
- Many-Names

THE CRUMBLING PHILOSOPHY

I remember in my youth, when magic was first coming back into the world and everyone was scrambling to gather bits of old traditions and use them to channel and shape mana in new and exciting ways. The options for learning how to control and hone your talent were numerous back in those early days. As time progressed, we saw different schools and teaching philosophies solidify, usually around an old religion, but a few neo-arcanists managed to develop an educational following as well.

Then Schwarzkopf got UMT solidly in the mix and basically told all those different groups they were doing the same thing in different ways. I've heard he was trying not to homogenize, but rather create the realization that all arcanists are doing the same thing. The megacorps jumped on his work and built it into a training philosophy based mostly on hermetic theories. The training efforts created an odd ripple through the realm of magic, with the most obvious effect being a shift in spirit forms and summoning. Despite their value to corporate drones, the elementals of old hermetic traditions were gone and they found themselves pulling forth beings that were less a construct of their mind and more a pull from an external plane. Shamans faced a similar shift, as the local spirits they once were calling arrived with a subtly different character.

This is how we view magic right now, and it has led to stagnation. We wallow in the muck of bland, cookie-cutter magic.

It is not wise to defy the great dragons of this world. A few have done so and come through with an appearance of victory, but dragons play the long game, and while we battle in the board-

rooms of the world to try to outmaneuver them in the moment, they are already lining up to own everything we fought for within a hundred years after we're gone. Throughout history and legends, dragons are kingmakers playing behind the scenes, only coming out as fire-breathing monsters when the things they treasure are threatened.

We are currently threatening the efforts of a great dragon. I personally don't care that I am choosing to address this dragon issue, as I've met Schwarzkopf, and in all my interactions I never felt a wrathful energy, even in the most heated of debates. In fact, we have even discussed the necessity of UMT at its time and the need for it diminishing to begin reducing some of the rigidity and stifling growth magic suffered under corporate control. While at one time the uniform teaching and greater access successfully produced more trained users of the arts, as time progressed, the philosophies have created a larger pool, but with a lack of creativity and distinctive styles. Magic has lost much of its spark and mystery, something that drives its practitioners to greater heights of discovery.

So, where are we heading?

Backward, some would say, but I say it is forward with greater tools. Much like ancient explorers, we have returned home with greater skill and mastery obtained during our journey. We have expanded our knowledge and now it is time to expand our hearts once more. This movement has momentum. It has support. While Schwarzkopf is unwilling to work extensively on this new route, he won't block it, either. In fact, after our talks, I was directed to speak with two other dragons for said support: Sea Dragon and Hestaby.

I'm not sure if it's my charming personality or just my persistent, well-timed pestering, but I managed meetings with both. They spoke of similar visions for arcane advancement in the coming times, though their overall philosophies and views on metahumanity in general are drastically different.

- Just remember that when dragons speak to you, they are not doing you a favor. They are getting something out of it.
- Kay St. Irregular

Sea Dragon, unsurprisingly, gave a water-related analogy. She spoke of magical learning like a river system. Those systems have many tributaries, off-shoots, and meander in a gentle yet still powerful fashion. Parts of them can be slow, fast, shallow, deep, winding, or straight; they may form waterfalls, create oxbow lakes, and otherwise shape a high level of variation. She compared UMT to a river that has lost that variety and simply runs straight. A straight running river is a force to be reckoned with, as many throughout history have learned when a dam has broken. Sea Dragon sees a need to begin rebuilding the ecosystem by making paths and streams around the dam to spread



the variety of magical teaching and understanding. The downside of this is that it is slow and requires that a large number of people yearn for change and work toward different kinds of movement. Sea Dragon has the patience of a dragon, but she also knows how enacting change through sudden violence can bring about a moment of turmoil that only settles into a new stagnation.

As for Hestaby, it was a very, very, very long conversation. She seemed bored and contemplative in her state of exile. I almost think she is desperate for people to talk to outside of her rather extensive inner circle, but I'm not going to bother to psycho-analyze a dragon. I sat down to chat, and several spells and doses of long haul later, we wrapped up, and I passed out for a day. It was rather surreal waking up, as she and the rest of her retinue were gone from our meeting place when I woke. Her view can be summed up as follows: The current state of magic and its educational reliance on UMT is stifling to the development and advancement of new techniques. Magic is about creativity and self-expression. Magic is about believing in the world around you, both seen and unseen. The current state will stifle magic and, she warns, the stifling of magic is the single biggest danger to our world.

I didn't ask why. I already knew the answer, and so does almost anyone reading this. I'll cover that point down this doc a ways, where I talk about the magical issues we've faced and are facing.

THE NEW PHILOSOPHY

Open minds and open hearts. Creativity drives magic. The return to those early days of singular originality. Open and honest, controlled with the power of the person, not the power of the masses.

We all know magic works. The new philosophies coming up from the streets and down from some of the more open-minded arcane institutions involve individuality. They promote the creation of styles not muddled in UMT, but instead drawn from a single idea.

If you are born with the Talent, your Talent is yours.

- > Preach.
- > Haze
- > Remember, when Haze is on your side, rethink your position. He's not always wrong, but the overall winning percentage is not great.
- > Lyran

This philosophy not only has begun showing promise with those who felt stifled or stupid in their inability to make mana flow through UMT teachings, but is also allowing other storied spiritualists to expand their ability beyond the blocks

that UMT teachings placed, even while using their previous philosophies.

The shift in mentality is apparently altering the “flavor” of mana and allowing it to be shaped more easily outside the constraints of earlier studies. From everything I am seeing, we are entering into a new arcane renaissance. But what does that new era look like?

One of the largest examples that comes to mind is the recent discovery of techniques to extend the potency of alchemical creations and hand them over to mundanes. This field was stagnant for decades and has recently exploded. The market is seeing a huge expansion of “magical” gear that can put a spell in the hands of someone without a single spark of arcane talent. The “how” is still shrouded, with the secrets behind the designs buried in a megacorporate database, but the creations are out on the street, expensive and limited as they may be.

- ▶ Those last two things are giving a number of runners pause. Sure, who wouldn't like a fireball spell to throw while shooting your machine gun? But spending cash for a one-use item that is not easy to find and may fizzle before you use it is making a lot of people wary.
- ▶ Jimmy No
- ▶ And remember the prime law of the shadows: Everything we have, they have. And know about. Corp security protocols are being updated to include the possibility of more widespread preparation use, which means they'll be doing things like draining preparations, counterspelling more, and of course throwing out preparations of their own.
- ▶ Lyan

A recent study has also shown that the number of successful new spell designs, compared to false starts and failed attempts, has been increasing as well. The melding of mana and machine is still a struggle, but creativity and different ways of thinking are allowing for more blending of the two than in the past.

One last shift I will mention here, even though there are dozens more, is the spirit revolution. Traditionalists have long ascribed a certain gamut of spirits that are responsive to a summoner based on their field of study, magical style, or tradition. This was an interesting limitation, as it never applied to the ability to banish them, which is, at its core, just a reverse summoning. But that was part of my philosophy and why I have for a long time been working out formulas and summoning techniques for a far wider variety of spirits than normal. Within the new philosophy (one I heartily promote), the summoning of a spirit for aid, guidance, or what-have-you is not limited, and any form of spirit can be called by a practitioner of an open mind.

Arcanists are small in numbers, and the vast majority of the community are still staunch fol-

lowers of the UMT, but as more and more Awakened individuals move toward this open-minded philosophy, the firmer it will become. This trend is not one that can change things overnight, but it will work in small increments. And from what some old lizards are saying, it may be needed sooner than we think.

While talking here, I would be remiss to not mention the dangers of abusing this philosophical shift. The corps have already begun marketing alchemy for the common person, but what happens if they keep cornering the market and mass-producing every magical innovation that comes along? I don't know the answer, but I know it tends to go poorly. Along the same lines are the dangers posed by a maniac. In a system fueled by creativity and mental energy, a maniac could be a potential thermonuclear-level threat. As a small example, I'll mention Abigail Strumly. Young Ms. Strumly suffered in the custody of a disreputable orphanage in Mumbai. After a fire ripped through the building, Ms. Strumly fled to a small village about fifty kilometers southeast of the city. The village was rapidly transformed into a fantasy realm modeled after Ashram Billoughby's *The Highest Rest* trid series. All of that was done through the magical talent of Abigail with a series of effects powerful enough to keep more than nine hundred residents playing their roles in Ms. Strumly's mentally crafted safe haven. Everything that happened was sheer force of will and belief, as Ms. Strumly was only nine years old and had never been formally trained in any aspect of magic. What would she have done with her instinctual abilities if they were not channeled in this fashion? If that question doesn't worry you, you're not paying attention.

MAGICAL MAYHEM

We've seen many magical incursions into our realm of existence since its return early this century. We've got insect spirits, shedim, shadow spirits, metaplanar foldings, alchera, manastorms, and a thousand smaller events that may not be global in scope but all still add into the dangerous nature of magical phenomena. Even while many of these things are spoken of in the past tense, most are still a current danger and still very relevant to the state of magic in the '80s.

The invae (insect spirits) caused the destruction of one of North America's most vibrant cities and have infested other locations and institutions around the globe. They most recently caused more chaos in Chicago and went wild in a blacked-out Detroit. Hives around the globe seem to be buzzing with activity after recent events in North America. Europe and the Middle East have seen several hives exposed, and the development of the subarcologies down in Pretoria has uncovered several hives underground in abandoned and expand-

ed mine shafts. The largest problem for me is the fact that even after more than thirty years of their presence among us, we know so little about them. Maybe after the recent events in Chicago, a certain race of extremely old and extremely intelligent lizard-like beings might take an interest in helping out the rest of us.

As it stands, the invae are increasing in activity across the globe. I once thought we had a better handle on them with Ares leading the charge in finding ways to combat their spread, but we've seen with recent events that Ares may not have been doing such a good job. The shadows need to do what we did back in the '50s. When the truth about the Universal Brotherhood hit the shadows, it wasn't the corps fighting them at every turn. It was us. We pushed to expose them (for good or ill). We kept the fight going in those shadows until Chicago exploded and then seemed to let them crawl back into their hives with the idea that the world now had a clue and the megacorporations and governments would handle things. They didn't, and we need to come back to the front line. I know both the dragons I spoke to are up for offering jobs. Yes, I know the street adage. But I also know the ones about the enemy of my enemy and the lesser of two evils.

- The people who run the world can try to save it. Ain't my job.
- Cayman
- The world doesn't change without the will to change it.
- Fianchetto

Since we were just talking about adages, let's remember the one about a cornered animal. Right now, that's the shedim. These bodysnatching astral jellyfish got a serious thumping when someone went and closed down the Watergate Rift and cut off the superhighway to their home metaplane. Since then, they've been a dying breed. More of them are disrupted and destroyed than can come through and repopulate with the few methods they've managed. This lack of access has forced them to slide deeper into the shadows, though some of their more powerful members have moved into influential positions to gain access, information, and opportunities. This is yet another batch of metaplanar mysteries that we have yet to solve. I know I've heard of at least two research firms that are trying to find a way to open a one-way gate back to their home metaplane, but they struggle with two things. First, one-way gates are tough. Second, and largely more importantly, we don't know the location of their home metaplane, and unless they have a master (what they call the more powerful shedim) working with them, they aren't likely to find out. And if they *do* have a master working with them, I don't think that slick sack of astral goo is really trying to make a one-way

gate. They had it good here for a bit, but kicking off your arrival with some flatvid Romero *Night of the Living Dead* drek was not a good intro. I'd advise anyone to take some of the slowly growing positive sentiment toward them with a grain of salt. I've heard the rumors about them fleeing here to avoid something more terrifying back in their native plane, but that same drek was said about the invae several times over the past decades. Even if they are, no one likes to get their body snatched or see the corpse of their dead grandmother up and walking around. We didn't buy the sob story of the Monads, no reason to buy the shedim's.

Most people have forgotten the terrifying stories of tempo addiction. Most people never knew that those stories were caused by spirits. That debacle was well-covered up, and being hidden behind a drug addiction made it easy to keep this arcane terror out of the public eye. The problem is it's not entirely gone, and the powers behind it, what we refer to as shadow spirits, are still around and looking for ways to take possession of individuals so they can induce powerful emotions and feed off the resulting astral energy. I speculate that since they don't act in massive groups and aren't out wiping out cities or terrorizing small towns, they get ignored, but they touch people on a far more personal level. Whether you are the possessed or one of the victims these beings feed from, you're left with the mental scars of your actions, the actions of someone you trusted, or the horrible feeling of being attacked, abused, or used. Based on the data I get from contacts all over the globe, the regularity of these events is increasing, and that means one of two things. Either the number of shadow spirits coming over to our plane is increasing, or the ones who are present are growing and in need of greater sustenance. Then again, there is also the terrifying possibility that it is both.

The possible increase in shadow spirits inhabiting our realm leads me to a small piece that has yet to become a great threat but is one of the many changes with our evolving arcanosphere. The drastic increase in the number of spirits that come to our metaplane (yes, I'm one of those people who believe we are just another metaplanar realm) and stick around. Whether it is those summoned into service who stay beyond their obligation to serve and "hang out" until sun sets or rises and forces them back, those who break the bonds of summoned captivity and choose the life of a free spirit here, or those who actively come here and seek out a new home, the number of spirits calling our astral and physical plane home has been increasing steadily since the early '60s. The haven created by Ghostwalker in Denver, the welcoming embrace of Amazonia, Azania, and Evo, the developing hamlets in the Mojave, Sahara, and Gobi deserts, and the gathering hotspots in Antarctica and the Australian outback are all points of relative safety and

growing community for the spirits dwelling here.

This is yet another arcane event we can't explain. I have a strong bond and solid reputation with the spirit community, and none of them care to discuss the reasons. Most don't even acknowledge it. The closest to an answer I've ever gotten was a claim that they were always here—we just hadn't noticed. This came from a spirit who was quite familiar with my global astral explorations, and the flare of sarcastic mirth in her aura was unmistakably mocking.

- As we have increased our understanding and knowledge of the metaplanes, their residents have learned more about our home, and about us. As is often the case, with that familiarity has come some degree of contempt. And better facility with manipulating us.
- Frosty

Mana storms have been wreaking havoc on various parts of the world for decades now. Some areas have them consistently (I'm looking at you, Australia) but every continent has seen at least one or two (sometimes more) each year. We at least know they tend to develop at ley connections or where mana energies have been shifted and gathered, but they are as big a mystery as tornadoes were back in the 1800s. Until we develop some detection systems for this type of energy or whatever energy shifts led to the storms, they will continue to be an unpredictable magical occurrence. According to a recent study by an MIT&T field research team, the occurrence of manastorms around the globe has increased by 2.4 percent per annum over the course of the last fifteen years of their study. This increase has included a greater-than-average number of "bursts" where a manastorm erupts and lasts under a minute.

Across the globe, the mundane population has come to marvel at the many alchera available for public consumption. Alchera tours rise and fall in popularity based on the PR campaigns used to either cover up disappearances or mask the fact that you will never get close to the actual alchera and will be viewing it from afar. The dangers of alchera are variable. Some come and go, and while most claim it is a rumor that people disappear, I can verify this isn't just a rumor. When an alchera disappears, it sometimes chooses who and what it takes with it. This fact is kept hidden from the public to keep the popularity of seeing these places high and keeping the tourist nuyen flowing to the corps and governments that manage the various sites and tours. Shadow and megacorporate research groups have found alchera that carry off individuals, leaving behind their clothes, electronics, even cybernetics. There has not been enough opportunity to study where they go, but preliminary data from a few returned subjects left them

to describe the experience as painless but certainly embarrassing as they came through the other side naked. Those who had augmentations were returned with their 'ware gone and their original body parts completely restored—which is beyond our current medical technology. This change is a medical marvel—and sufficient reason for funding alchera research to explore curative applications of the phenomenon—but the chaotic nature of the events is a major barrier to developing anything close to a predictable treatment.

More recently, new rifts and some small, brief, and spontaneous metaplanar portals have been popping up. These events have led to chaos in cities around the globe as metaplanar beings—not all of them spirits—have come across. Somewhat lost in a new world, these creatures tend to act in erratic ways, though most follow basic animal instinct tenets. They set up a territory, defend it, and then begin seeking out food sources. Predatory species are a bit more common for some reason, likely due to their tendency for roaming on the hunt, but entire herds of deer-like creatures, currently referred to as Seelie deer (though they don't come from the Seelie Court) have come through and taken up residence in the parks and woodlands around Paris. They are smaller-than-normal deer, have six legs, but seem to have a similar diet. They appear to be thriving.

While the investigation is still pending, no one doubts that magic was involved with the disappearance of the UCAS Army III Corps. We aren't sure if this was a portal incident or a metaplanar folding. What we do know is that if it happened once, it can happen again. It likely has happened before and even since, but not to such a large and obvious group. Legends all over the world talk about entire villages and populations disappearing. There is no reason to not think they could be connected to similar phenomena. Whatever those phenomena may be.

- This is making it sound like the disappearance of III Corps was a kind of random event, something that just sprang up, like a hurricane. It wasn't.
- Frosty
- So what was it?
- Cosmo
- Still working on that part.
- Frosty

Events like that have gone both good and bad—some catastrophically so. The point is, something about the current state of magic in our world is causing these issues. There's speculation that it is due to the homogenization of magic that has thinned the spaces between the metaplanes in or-

der for magic to regain its wonder. Paranatural animals were once thought of as creatures returned from myth, but modern science has slapped taxonomical labels on them, and several zoos have less-dangerous species on display.

The thing about all these gateways and foldings is that they go both ways and sometimes open to the same place over and over so intelligent beings on both sides can try to use them to move between worlds. Only ghost knows how many sapient beings from other metaplanes have made it to ours or what they're doing while they're here.

THE ADEPTS AMONG US

I tend to favor the spellslingers and summoners, but that's just because I am one. If I'm going to offer a small treatise on the current affairs in magic, I need to make sure I mention our adept kin as well. I don't think of them immediately, because when I was growing up, the adepts were not identified as magical talents—they were simply the pinnacle of athletic talent and highlight reels for combat sports. When the connection between a magical talent and what we now call adepts occurred a few decades back, the world's view, and the training and talent range of adepts, expanded and erupted.

The first adepts introduced to the world were what we called physical adepts, or physads, and we watched as they went toe-to-toe with the top-of-the-line cyber-fighters. Their abilities expanded from basic martial talents and athletic feats into marksmanship and sensory enhancements. It was an era of growth in the field of arcane study that led to more enhancements while also taking developments in an entirely new direction.

That direction was the social adept. The sudden ability to apply this form of arcane talent to social encounters made the thaumaturgical community take a long look back at history and realize that, much like those decorated athletes were adepts, some of the best grifters and politicians were also adepts, just a different kind. The realization that social adepts existed was one of those discoveries that left a lot of people feeling uneasy again about magic. The general population knows about magic. About a quarter have seen it in some form in real life. When magic first came around, it was terrifying. Even those who were excited about magic still admitted fearing it being used on them, especially spells that alter moods, thoughts, and self-control. This eased over time, especially with the knowledge that spells aren't usually invisible. They have traces and effects on the physical plane. Along comes the social adept who can sell ice to an Inuit, and no one is the wiser. The social adept is still a relative mystery, especially those who are smart enough to create

a feint with some physical talent that is beyond natural measure.

Along with the development of adepts, a mixed breed of adept/spellslinger arose. Their physical talents left them bound to their body and unable to enter the astral like a full magician, but they were able to both channel their magics inward and learn the intricacies of channeling mana in the form of spells. They were what many considered the best of both worlds, but their flashy spellcasting abilities and summoning talents, alongside a lack of being able to look into the astral without intense study, leaves them vulnerable.

Looking at all of these, I have to guess the adepts are not done evolving. I don't know what the next phase will be, but I'm sure it will change the world and the way we look at adepts. It always does.

- Techno-adepts?
- Traveler Jones
- Doubtful. There have been some interesting developments in the intersection of technology and magic recently, but I think that's a bridge too far. No, I think we'll see some interesting developments in stealth adepts, including what I call chameleon adepts.
- Winterhawk
- I think I've seen they kind of thing you're talking about, and when you combine it with some social skills, you get a really interesting con artist capable of playing multiple roles in a long con all by themselves.
- Pistons

MY OWN LOOK AT THE CROSSOVER PHENOMENA

I am a student of magic. I have accomplished much and have plenty to teach, but I am one of those people in the world who understands I cannot ever know everything about magic. There are new lessons every day. For this reason, I keep researching and looking into whatever phenomena and rumors I hear. Often these events aren't unique, so my efforts are short-lived, but the recent crossover events have led to some depth in my studies, and I really want to discuss them. This is currently one of the most widely talked-about arcane topics with both thaumaturgists and mundane infospinners.

I went out and grabbed as many stories as I could from those who made accidental crossovers into metaplanes and alchera. These tales are all skewed by the perceptions, mental blocks, and personal beliefs of their authors, but I'll lay them out here for others to dig through. I'll only be uploading a few quick tales, but you can find several more at this <link>.

A DESIRE TO RETURN

Greetings, Matrix malcontents, it's Sinister Sal here again, and I've got a whopper of a tale and even bigger request to put out to all those who follow my arcano-hunting adventures. With all of these arcane warps popping up like squatters outside a new McHugh's, I decided to try my hand at chasing one down. Thanks to all of you who tossed tips my way, and a huge thanks to gr8rmagi for the tip that hit the jackpot.

I'd like to start this out with a cool intro about a dark and stormy night or a wrong turn in a dark alley, but what really happened was rather mundane. I caught a quick glimpse of something out of the corner of my eye while passing an empty parking lot. I pulled in, got a closer look, and recognized the telltale signs of a warp. I was there for adventure, so I fired up the recording hardware, sent a quick message to a colleague in case I went MIA, and walked right in.

It was pure bliss. On the other side I was floating, with no sense of mass, but still fully aware of every sense. Thought moved me through what appeared to be rivers of color, each bringing new sensations. Every one of them was like the purest form of pleasure I have ever experienced. Every sense was stimulated in new and exotic ways. I have never smelled, tasted, or heard things that brought such intense emotions. The smell of fresh cinnamon cake, the

taste of perfect crème brûlée, and the sound of a perfect and pure rainstorm were just a few of the hundreds of things I experienced.

I got lost in the sensations. I lost any sense of time. I lost all desire to do anything but move from river to river. For me, it felt as if I had spent both a blink and an eternity in bliss.

Returning was a shock. I did nothing to initiate a return, I was just suddenly sprawled in an empty parking lot, once again aware of my body's mass, and the unpleasant sensation of both my arthritic knee and some strange soup of city muck in which my face rested. The scents and gooey slickness a stark contrast to my bliss of moments before.

I hunted in my nearby surroundings for a way to return, but the warp was gone. My footage showed it collapse slowly over the course of six hours before flashing into a pinprick of purple light while returning me.

As many may have already surmised, my favor is an obvious one. I want to go back and need help finding a way. I'm linking the file for what this warp looked like in hopes that should someone locate one again, I can return.

Thanks to all my chummers for linking in and especially for any information you may be able to offer in helping me find my way back. Sinister Sal, signing off.

A FOREST FROM NOWHERE

I've spent my entire life in the sprawl. The biggest patch of nature I ever experience is the stretch of dirt my neighbor up the street cultivates as a garden. I've never longed to vacation in the vast green expanse surrounding Seattle because I'm a city girl, born and raised. Maybe, if I had the nuyen, I'd hop down to a SoCalFree beach or some Carib League island, but none of that is within my reach right now.

So when I was taking a stroll to the local Stuffer Shack and cut through the alley between Main and Maple, I was shocked to suddenly find myself standing in the middle of a forest. There were trees, bushes, and other plants as far as the eye could see. Which actually wasn't very far, given how densely packed it all was.

It was pretty startling at first, and I may have spent a few minutes (or an hour) in a panicked frenzy trying to find my way back to the comfort of that alley. The panic was exhausting, and when I eventually wore myself out, I set out trying to do something a little more methodic. This forest was passable, and I had my trusty blade on me, so I started moving in one direction, nicking trees along the way to mark my course. As I walked, I noticed the sounds of life, but no signs of it. I never saw a bird, but I heard their calls. I never saw or felt bugs, but they chittered in the trees everywhere.

It was like an audio playback from one of those relaxation tracks.

Until it wasn't.

As the light faded—I never saw an actual sun or source for the light other than just a lit-up sky—the sounds shifted. The tone changed, and the feeling of relaxation and tranquil nature shifted to something more dissonant and off key. As the darkness built, the forest seemed to shrink, and the sounds of birds shifted to distant growls and the rhythmic rustling of nearby predators. Again, I saw none of these things, but I could hear them. While pleasant birds can be a nice tone and your mind can ignore that you don't see birds, predatory noises hit in a more instinctual way. Fear and panic grew alongside the growing dark.

By the time all the light was gone—and I mean all the light—I was once again in a panicked search for a way out.

Some aspect of that strange place I'd crossed into—no effort of mine, I'm sure—eventually ended my terror. The blackness was not around long, though it felt like an eternity, before I suddenly stumbled into a dumpster and could once again see the urban world I had left behind.

I was never so happy to see a pack of devil rats eating what looked like a dog in my life. I skirted them gladly and finished my trip to the Stuffer Shack without using that alley. I have not been back since.

I THOUGHT I DIED TODAY

I was walking home from school when I saw a flash, and suddenly I was standing on a cloud and looking at a massive golden gate. I'm not religious, but my parents are, and I remember hearing them talk about heaven and the entrance being pearly gates. I figured golden gates could be close enough. I started to walk forward, and the clouds swirled at my feet like low-hanging fog. I looked around, and there was no one else there. I expected a line or at least a procession of people, but it was just me.

I wondered how I had died and figured it was random. A bus, a random shooting, falling debris, or I fell in an open manhole or something. Either way, I was kind of happy I didn't remember and was just able to enjoy the feel of the place. It was perfectly temperate, and the air moved at just the right speed to feel good but avoid a chill.

As I got closer, I heard music. I expected harps, but it was more like a jazz piano. It was so inviting and exciting.

There was no other way to describe all of it other than truly spiritual, like a calm summer day with no stress.

Then it was gone.

I had a momentary feeling of falling as if I missed a step or the ground fell away, and then I was back standing in the street, exactly where I remembered leaving from.

I asked someone nearby, and they said a red ribbon of light flashed across the ground, and I stepped on it and disappeared for about thirty seconds. My trip felt like it had been at least an hour, and I was so relaxed. Then I just suddenly reappeared.

The red ribbon of light wasn't there, but they showed me a vid on their link. I believe them.

DO I NOT ENTERTAIN YOU?

I don't know if I want in on this whole riftwalker thing, but I definitely have a story to share.

I was hanging out with some friends tailgating outside the stadium and waiting for the game to start when we spotted what looked like a swirling pool of water hanging vertically in the air. We'd heard rumors and seen a few warnings up at the university, but no one took it seriously. After a few rounds of taunting and teasing, I came up with the bright idea of touching it. I couldn't talk anyone into doing it before me, so I walked up and stuck a hand in.

The step through was like cool water, but the other side was hot, dry, and loud. I found myself sitting in the front row of an arena that looked like the coliseum of Rome. Below me, a troll-sized figure who looked like he was made of dark stone was locked in battle with what I guess is a behemoth. I don't know my parazoology well. All around me was a crowd full of screaming fans. The fans were made up of every metatype and a collection of races I've only seen on the trid or in SURGE e-zines. It was pure excitement.

After the stoneman barely survived the behemoth, there was only a short lull before another contest began between a dozen combatants. The crowd (and me) cheered as the fighters went after each other.

I've never been a fan of the bloodsports, but there was just so much energy I couldn't help but scream along.

I picked my favorite fighter, chanted out his name while

he fought, and wailed in agony when he fell. Then I just kept booing the fighter who killed him. He even got close enough once that I know he heard me when I called him a backstabbing cheat, because he immediately spun his opponent and ran him through from behind, then flicked off the blood on the blade toward my seat.

It was fight after fight between men, women, and monsters, with each fight growing more and more thrilling. The energy in the place was palpable. I could feel the pulse of the crowd as tensions rose during close calls and as cheers rang out with each victory.

My return was not some smooth slide back. Instead, it was a jolt that left me sprawled on the pavement of the stadium lot, surrounded by flashing lights and a small crowd of my friends and Knight Errant cops. I had been gone for hours, but that was not the biggest shocker. When I came back, I was exhausted. My friends stared at me in horror before I finally tried to get to my feet and stumbled. I took a look at myself and saw my legs were all shriveled, and I was covered in various shades of gore. My arms matched my legs, and my face had gone gaunt.

DocWagon was nearby to honor my contract. I was dehydrated and starving. They said it would have taken weeks of starvation to cause the damage that had been done to me in that place. It was a thrill, but I'm still paying for all that excitement with rehab and an upgrade on my DocWagon contract.

CARDINAL CONFUSION

It's very strange to step through a rift, hoping for some awesome experience, and instead get four different directions of challenges and confusion.

I went across as a researcher. They were paying well, and I needed the nuyen. And it was a lot of nuyen. I had to write up a long report for them, but I'll post the basics here.

The place I went had four towering cities in four cardinal directions. I stood in what looked like a massive plain like they show in all those NAN guidebooks. Rust and Silver were opposite each other, with Gold and Crystal in the other directions.

As any good researcher would do, I moved toward each, figuring I could explore each in turn, but I never reached any of them. The cities were all a good two kilometers away in

each direction, and about every hundred meters, I met a new challenge. A puzzle, angry critters, an obstacle course, a writing prompt, a quiz on ancient Nergundian history (nope, not a place on our plane), a quiet bar that turned into a bar fight, and seventeen other events that I detailed there. Each time I failed, I was sent back to the center. I managed six hundred meters toward Rust City, failed a test, and poof, back to the start.

It was several hours of frustration before I was shifted back and told I had been gone for fifty-three minutes.

I appreciate all the tales of cool experiences, but I got nothing but a headache from mine. And maybe a desire to dig deeper into Nergundian history.

STABLE GATES

With sporadic overlaps making most of the newsfeeds, and screamsheets carrying crazy stories like I offered above, most regular folks don't know much about the handful of metaplanar gateways that are staying open on a long-term basis. It's a strange mix of thaumaturgical researchers and adventure addicts who are focusing on these phenomena, leaving information on them split between boring arcane research publications and Matrix hosts run by wild-haired adrenaline junkies who gain followers with crazy stunts, not in-depth data.

I looked into three of these gateways, all in the central region of North America. One in the Yellowstone region, another in the heart of Denver, and a third near Bear Lodge (once called Devil's Tower). The locations each have their own histori-

cal significance, independent of one another, but a connection between them does exist. Before I cover that, let me first enlighten you on each of these metaplanar paths.

YELLOWSTONE

What is likely the first "well-known" stable gate is tucked into a cavern in the Yellowstone region of the Sioux Nation. The relative advantages of publicity are lost on this gate, however, as the destination on the other side has little desire for tourists. The Yellowstone Gateway offers access to the Seelie Court, or more specifically, the region around the court. Knowledge of the pathway and what lies beyond are even further protected by the political connections growing between the masters of the Seelie and Unseelie Courts and the power brokers of the Sixth World. Politicians and CEOs alike barter for

connections to the unique resources and knowledge sources that come from powers in charge of their metaplane. It's all the typical political machinations between the leaders, but often enough those interested in learning about the rich history and unique flora and fauna of the metaplane can slip across.

The political atmosphere is frigid when it comes to the gateway itself, especially the conversation on whether to make an effort to close it. While neither side wants people just walking in and out all willy-nilly, they also aren't willing to do the extensive work needed to close off this new connection. The primary door is stable here, but small peripheral portals occasionally pop open, leaving opportunities for sneaking through and creating awkward encounters when some of the more interesting denizens of each side make an accidental crossover.

- ▶ The Seelie Court would love more control, while the Unseelie would like to let things get wilder, so the current State is kind of a balancing point between the two—accidentally so.
- ▶ Frosty

DENVER CROSSING

A few years ago, Denver saw a rather large shift in control as Ghostwalker laid claim and kicked all the other governments out. Shortly before these events the city was home to several arcane events hosted by a variety of forces trying to limit Ghostwalker's strength and magical prowess in order to prevent this. One of these events was directly related to the metaplanar reflection of Denver that was the home of Zebulon, the spirit of Denver. That metaplane did not fare well and took the brunt of the arcane assault on Ghostwalker. In the process, that metaplane was "broken," and Zebulon was destroyed. The broken plane still exists, but it is slowly dying, and strange phenomena rock this already bizarre metaplane regularly.

One of those strange phenomena is the gateway that has remained open. This path offers a way for metaplanar researchers to cross over and analyze the dying metaplane, as long as they can get Ghostwalker's blessing. It has also allowed those on the metaplane who can reach the doorway on their side (it's not in a convenient location) to leave the dying realm. Ghostwalker has welcomed all refugees thus far. The increase in metaplanar beings simply adds to the menagerie that is the population of Denver under Ghostwalker's reign.

From my own visits to Zebulon's Realm—or the Z-Zone, as I call it—I'm not entirely sure it's dying as others hypothesize. I believe it is simply changing. The realm already consisted of a series of smaller realms representing some of the most powerful notions and historical aspects of Denver. Now that Denver has shifted again, I think the realm is shifting. I think the loss of Zebulon at the

heart of the realm is going to be a huge factor in these changes, as she once was the primary sculptor of the Denver reflection around her. While the researchers may not be watching a metaplane die, watching a metaplane transform is just as new and informative, in my personal opinion.

I have also seen evidence that the metaplane and the open gateway may be offering an arcane boost to Ghostwalker, as well as those closely affiliated with him. A small initiatory group of Ghostwalker's closest allies have shown an unexplained growth in their potential since the gateway has been permanently opened. Whether this is also causing any of the degradation and transformation of the metaplane remains to be seen.

Not everything is coming up roses with this gateway open, though. Ghostwalker accepting all the refugees has allowed a small but potent force of dissent to come through. This group, calling themselves the Hearts of Zebulon, are angry at our metaplane's interference with their metaplane. They've found other local forces who are opposed to Ghostwalker's new fiefdom and have been a credible thorn in the paw of the white wyrm. The one I met seemed to be able to draw power from Z-Zone, much like I speculated above for Ghostwalker's allies. I tried to ask about this, and she was quite tight-lipped.

- ▶ Ire is underselling the importance of this. We all know how ferocious Ghostwalker can be about controlling his realm, so having a haven of dissent in an area that seems to be close to a power source for him is huge. Your Aztechnology contacts probably have information about jobs looking to connect to the rebels in this pocket plane.
- ▶ Kay St. Irregular

THE NOT-SO-HAPPY HUNTING GROUNDS

The third piece of this triangle is accessed via an unnaturally shadowed crevasse at the base of Bear Lodge (formerly Devil's Tower). This massive geological icon has had its fair share of activity post-Awakening and now is home to the third open metaplanar gateway in central North America. On the other side, you'll find yourself on the metaplane dubbed the Hunting Grounds, standing at the foot of a reflection of the same rock formation, though this one is formed with regenerating obsidian.

Let's talk about that obsidian. First off, it's a major reason this place is so well-protected. The Sioux Nation is not about pillaging metaplanes for resources, even ones as valuable as this stuff. With no refinement, the obsidian from this rock is a perfect reagent. When used to make foci, in particular weapon foci, the normal physical properties of natural obsidian aren't present. It doesn't chip

or flake and can go edge to edge with steel and not be damaged. All of these great features and, apparently, the rock is regenerative. Every piece that gets chipped off is rapidly replaced through an oozing black goo that hardens back into the lost shape. Damage to the formation on our metaplane is instantly reflected on the other side.

This alone was enough of a reason for the Sioux government to put a small military detachment here in order to protect access. The perimeter around the portal itself is—about fifty meters out—is a high-tech collection of detection and monitoring systems to observe traffic both ways. The distance was necessary because every structure or protection built closer was destroyed or malfunctioned. Records of the events are sealed, but a local contact mentioned entities traveling both ways through the portal and coming together to prevent structures from sealing off or blocking the path.

Blocking the path was the first plan, as several of the denizens that came across early on terrorized the local region. And from what I've gathered, some of those were never caught or killed, so they may still be out there. Now, the efforts to stop unwanted intruders are fast and lethal, but not one hundred percent effective, especially against some of the stealthier visitors. This rapid response is also not true with all crossovers. The Hunting Grounds are sacred across many of the Native American tribes, and often the beings coming across are called or come to serve a purpose. To respect that aspect, the Sioux will allow several specific entities, most common of which are the chindi, to cross over and complete their sacred tasks. For those unaware, the chindi are spirits of revenge, most often associated with revenge for Mother Nature.

- ▶ Hunting toxics? Find a way to get a chindi in your side. They are *fierce* on that job.
- ▶ Elijah

On the other side, the nature of the place is a decent protection. Local wildlife is oddly affected by the permanent connection to the mana of our world and most are highly aggressive toward anything coming over from our side. I was told we carry some of the taint of our world with us when we come across in this way. If a large enough group goes through, the aggression grows, and the radius to which it extends increases and keeps expanding. Best I can compare it to is a body's reaction to a foreign substance with an immune response.

Prior to the permanent doorway, Native American shamans regularly ventured to this plane to seek guidance or call upon the services of a chindi through the more traditional method. Many still do, but most shamans in the Sioux Nation simply petition the government for access. Militaristic ini-

tiatory groups or those with a strong link to survival in nature will also set up metaplanar quests to the Hunting Grounds to prove their skill. The wildlife on the metaplane is generally docile and pleasant, but the corruptions of the real world are often reflected in the Hunting Grounds. As such, they corrupt the local wildlife.

Speaking of these corruptions, the nature of the corruption being from our metaplane often creates a connection to the corrupted creatures, leading them to this doorway. Those that make it through the defenses around the doorway are often then drawn toward whatever point in our plane is corrupted. This leads to numerous problems along the way, as they come across local species and most often the biggest troublemakers on the planet: sentient life. Encounters range from injurious to deadly and usually put local law and security forces on alert, even when the event was a single moment in the travels of the visitor.

This happens all too often to sites being targeted by runner teams. Sometimes it makes for a great distraction, but usually it just gets the upper management crawling all up the hoops of the security staff.

In my studies, over a decade ago, I trained with a shaman and was guided to this place. This was well before the doorway was opened, so I had to come over in the traditional method. I was tasked with hunting a specific stag. I have great respect for those who are sent over to hunt the predators of this realm, because the corrupt stag was a challenge I nearly did not survive.

THE LINK

These three points are all connected to different metaplanes, and all have different cultural histories, so what is it that connects them all together? As with many things in magic, it's an unseen force. The three points form a triangle, and that triangle has a collection of powerful ley lines that flow into the corners, then flare, before linking between the points. This energy appears to be fueling the metaplanar gateways and allowing them to stay open.

The event itself is not as significant as the efforts to harness this ability by the megacorps in order to open permanent paths to new and exciting resources for them to pillage and use for profits. The efforts behind this are also extremely enigmatic. Some events involve traditional rituals, while others are operations to rile up a local gang, and I've even heard of one that was just dropping spam AROs all over a neighborhood. The hows and whys of magic are hard enough for a single individual, let alone trying to understand how to change the flow of rivers of mana. There's shadow money to be made here, but I for one am not a huge fan of megacorps redirecting the streams of magical energy. Especially since most of them will direct it straight to themselves, then corrupt it, and

then pin the blame on some other corp or group (shadowrunners) before bailing on the area and letting it collapse.

- Remember the Concord that the Astral Space Preservation Society has assembled to fight against the corps' messing around with the astral plane. They seem to have some deep pockets, because the ASPS has been throwing far more weight around than they usually can summon. If you found out anything the corps are up to in this area, find a way to report it to the Concord, because they have the means to do something about it.
- Elijah
- We don't know the identities of their five secret allies, though, so we don't know how much we can trust them, if at all.
- Winterhawk
- Funny thing about that. In the *Slip Streams* posting, we had some speculation about the identities of the partners. As a refresher, the guesses were: Peach as Ares, the CAS, or Zeta-ImpChem; Blackstone as Ares, the CAS, or Evo; Wolf Kingdom as Aegis Cognito, the Black Lodge, or Aztechnology; Filament as Spinrad Global; and Loesser as the Mafia or possibly an AA corp. Our theorizing leaked out into the world, and some of the reactions confirmed that at least one of the members of the Concord was included in that list. I don't know which one, or if it was matched with the right code name.
- Elijah

AS WORLDS COLLIDE

Much like the massive flow of energy that is keeping the three portals above open, the flow of various energies and some unknown force are coming together to make the smaller openings and rifts. The current theory is that collision points of shifting ley lines along with an unknown catalyst are sparking the phenomena all over the globe.

I just want to put a small warning here: These events are random, unpredictable, and dangerous. There is no guarantee you'll make it back after you step through, and rarely do we know what's on the other side before we cross over. There are a lot of strange metaplanes and planar spaces out there.

That said, the number of these is growing, and it's better to know what to expect and what to do than to go at it unprepared and just stare in awe at the iridescent ribbon in the air until a pack of little white blobkins comes pouring out and one jumps on your head and starts to suffocate you.

First, if you want to check them out, do it from a distance, preferably with a strong barrier between you and the rift. You also want an escape route. You never know what will come through, so you have to be ready to run if hiding ceases to be an option. Fighting should not be your first option, as many of the things that come across just shrug off physical attacks. If you got serious mojo, may-

be you'll handle them on your own, but if not, bail.

Second, avoid crossing the threshold. You don't know what's over there, and you don't know if it will be an easy-to-access two-way street. The permanent door up in Denver is two-way only in that both sides have a door that leads to the other side, but not always the same spot. If you are being required to cross over, do anything you possibly can to ensure you'll have a way back. Your best bet is to make a deal with another spirit that can open metaplanar gateways to go with you so that you can guarantee a way home. They aren't common and often aren't friendly, but most need things from us, and for a relatively harmless exchange you can almost lock in your ticket home. Be warned. I know of at least three metaplanes that mess with spirits when they cross over. I visited one that turned my spirit companion into a pocket watch, another where he became a statue near the doorway, and a third that forced him to float a meter above the ground everywhere he went so that the locals knew he was a spirit. That place was interesting, as the spirits that lived there had separated themselves from the rest of the population. Since then, I've helped several of them make a permanent home of our plane.

The rifts also discharge things into our world. Some come across benign, some predatory, some lost, and most a mix of everything. If the creature isn't sapient, it just walked into a whole new world. It may be sensing things it has never sensed before, especially the dual nature of our plane. Some beings come from planes where the two layers, astral and physical, are always visible and overlapping. It's just the nature of the plane. Give them space and avoid seeming threatening. Take note of what they do and where they go, and immediately contact the arcane division of your local law enforcement.

Yes, I recommended calling the pawns. If you're in the middle of doing something illegal, do it anonymously. Or do it anonymously just because you don't want to deal with them. Just don't do nothing and let whatever just slipped into our world go on a killing spree, spread some weird infection, infest locals with some spiritual overwrite, or do any other seriously drektastic thing while you did nothing to stop it.

- Nothing ever gets better when you involve cops.
- Puck
- If I get more bullets trained on something that needs to die, I'm going to do it. I'll deal with whatever consequences follow.
- Chainmaker

POPULATION SHIFTS

The increasing access of our world to metaplanar residents is leading to an interesting pattern of

emigration of metaplanar denizens and spirits. Just like I mentioned above about the strange planes for spirits, there are obviously places that make them feel more comfortable. Our plane seems to be one of those pleasant places. In the past year, the number of independent spirits living in our world has nearly doubled. There is no census for this, but I have a large number of spirit companions, and they aren't opposed to sharing about this growth. None of them will exactly tell me why they're comfortable here, but they have no problem talking about their numbers growing.

The bulk have moved to spirit-friendly places like Amazonia, Evo, Denver, and Japan, but some of the more adventurous individuals are settling wherever seems most exciting. A lot of jurisdictions don't have rules governing spirits, and a lot of these places are trying to push their learning curve forward quickly, but not without resistance

and pushback by the more rigid members of the community.

Be ready to see and meet spirits coming to a sprawl near you!

GAME INFORMATION QUALITIES

CLOSE-MINDED SUMMONER

(BONUS: 3 KARMA PER LEVEL,
5 LEVELS MAXIMUM)

With each level of this quality, you give up the ability to summon, bind, and banish one of the ten standard types of spirit (air, beasts, earth, fire, guardian, guidance, kin, plants, task, water). This quality can be taken up to five times, selecting a different type of spirit each time.



THE TOME OF NOW

WELCOME TO THE DIGITAL GRIMOIRE

The Digital Grimoire is home to thousands of shared formulas for spells, rituals, enchantments, and other magical artistry on consignment. What are you looking for?

[Spells]

Thank you for choosing Spellcraft.

Formulas are organized by category: Combat, Health, Detection, Illusion, and Manipulation. Once you select the spell formula, please review tradition context available for that spell. If you require special assistance, a virtual wizard is on hand for translation or presentation of a reasonable facsimile of the spell. Virtual wizard costs an additional 200 nuyen per spell category. *All sales are final.* Digital Grimoire is not responsible for less-than-ideal results from any casting. If you have

chosen the wrong tradition, you have ten days to trade in spell formulas. Any attempt at breaking the encryption and reselling any formula will result in severe penalties.

- › And welcome to our hack of the Digital Grimoire, giving you the chance to save a few nuyen! How did we do it? A little help from PRH, one of their admins, going a bit rogue. You still have to be careful—we're giving you entry to their servers, not copying all of their stuff into a safe place. Their security still might see you, and it's good. The Digital Grimoire is funded by various orders who could scry your hoop and turn it to goo before you complete your illegal transaction. Understand?
- › Glitch
- › That's an exaggeration, of course, but they'd certainly do bad things to you.
- › Winterhawk

COMBAT

Welcome to the Combat spell formula catalog. Before purchasing a lethal Combat spell, please have your permit code from your spellcasting license available for verification. The Digital Grimoire is not responsible for any maleficium performed after purchase.

- > Most of you reading this will be using fake licenses, so make sure they're good. Digital Grimoire security tears through cheap fakes like a high school troll football player running through a thin paper banner.
- > Glitch

DEATH TOUCH

(DIRECT COMBAT)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV	DAMAGE
Touch	M	I	3	P

MANABOLT

(DIRECT COMBAT)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV	DAMAGE
LOS	M	I	4	P

MANABALL

(DIRECT COMBAT)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV	DAMAGE
LOS(A)	M	I	5	P

Please note that Death Touch, Manabolt, and Manaball are all considered Class 5M weapons and require additional documentation of classes or corporate licensing before purchasing. These spells target living organisms and channel magical energy directly, causing massive cellular die off. Damage effects are similar to radiation or necrotizing fasciitis, but faster and without the continuing effects. But still, ick. Manaball is affected by subconscious targeting, which impacts plants, insects, and other visible living creatures within the area. No discrimination.

- > Always a good choice with quiet operations, but using Manaball leaves a big forensic footprint.
- > Ethernaut

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

For more information, see p. 133, SR6.

DISRUPT

(FOCUS)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV	DAMAGE
LOS	M	I	6	Special

ECTOMAGIC PULSE

(FOCUS)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV	DAMAGE
LOS(A)	M	I	7	Special

Annoyed by young punk street wizards who loaded up on the latest foci and fetishes? Take them down a peg or two by shutting off their toys. These spells divert mana into disruptive force, temporarily damaging the enchanted items by clogging up the flow of magic through them.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

These spells can provoke feelings of inadequacy in others.

These spells can be learned as general (affecting all foci), or for a specific focus type (Enchanting, Metamagic, Power, Qi, Spell, Spirit, or Weapon).

The spell formulas are highly specialized to work with the particulars of foci. Other spells with astral or mana effects cannot interact with foci in the same way as these spells; conversely, these spells cannot interact with other astral forms besides those of foci.

If learned for a specific focus type, gain +1 Edge when casting the spell.

These spells can be learned more than once, choosing a different focus type each time.

Each net hit on the Sorcery test does 1 box of temporary damage to the focus. While damaged, the focus is inactive and cannot be used. The damage heals at the end of each combat round at a rate of one box per round. It has a condition monitor equal to (rating x 2); filling the monitor means no more damage can be inflicted on the focus, but it does not disenchant or otherwise break the focus.

KNOCKOUT

(DIRECT COMBAT)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV	DAMAGE
Touch	M	I	2	S

STUNBOLT

(DIRECT COMBAT)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV	DAMAGE
LOS	M	I	3	S

STUNBALL/SLEEP

(DIRECT COMBAT)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV	DAMAGE
LOS(A)	M	I	4	S

Can't sleep? Are the constant police sirens and gang shoot-outs keeping you up? Try a little a knockout to quiet the neighborhood. Need an extra-strength dose for those insomniac rockers? Stunball is there when you need it.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

For more information, see p. 134, SR6.

FLAMESTRIKE

(INDIRECT COMBAT)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV	DAMAGE
LOS	P	I	5	P, Special

FIREBALL

(INDIRECT COMBAT)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV	DAMAGE
LOS(A)	P	I	6	P, Special

HELLBLAST

(INDIRECT COMBAT)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV	DAMAGE
LOS(A)	P	I	8	P, Special

Returning from the depths of the vault, we present Hellblast! With bluish hues and reeking of sulfur, this wicked manifestation of hell on earth will induce fear into your enemies—assuming they survive.

- > I always preferred Flamethrower to Flamestrike, but marketing and spell designers keep tweaking things. Flamethrower is the angry red stream of fire, dripping with globs of materialized heat. Flamestrike is more of a white “Holier than thou” kind of flame. An artificial cylinder of light and heat. Not my cup of soykaf, so I brought back Hellblast for nostalgia. I’ll give you a twenty percent discount for the whole set.
- > PRH

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Flamethrower and Flamestrike have only cosmetic differences, but they won’t tell you that. Advertisements compete on proving which one is “hotter.”

Secondary effects of a Flamethrower/Flamestrike/Fireball/Hellblast may include ignition of flammable materials, toxic aerosols, and the attraction of law enforcement.

Hellblast has the same damage potential as a fireball, but with the addition of a Corrosive status effect, with a level equal to net hits on the Sorcery test.

NAPALM

(INDIRECT COMBAT)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV	DAMAGE
LOS	P	I	7	P, Special

Flamestrike and Fireball are so medieval fantasy. Unless you’re wearing a pointy hat and a t-shirt with the words “Hi, I’m a wizard!” on it, I suggest you update your magical arsenal with Napalm.

While not the manifestation of the gelling agent and petroleum products that the spell is named after, it is still an effective creation of an exotic, superheated fluid-like material. Napalm is more effective than Flamestrike as it gets into the material and continues to bring on the heat!

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Napalm imposes the Burning status (p. 51, SR6) with a level equaling Sorcery test net hits.

Fire Resistance is only half as effective against it (meaning it reduces the Burning status by up to

- > Hello, I see that you are interested in Combat Magic. Allow me to help you.
<SING> In the middle of a railroad track, I looked round and I knew there was no turning back </SING>
I have found this Spell.
- > Grimmy the Grimore



THUNDERSTRUCK

(INDIRECT COMBAT)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV	DAMAGE
LOS	P	I	6	S, Special

A loud and proud stun spell that is sure to attract attention with the sound of thundering cannons. Intensity of the spell can track to over one hundred decibels with a similar concussive force of Clout.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Not legal in Texas (CAS).

Spell damage is the same as Clout (p. 133, SR6), with additional effects listed below.

If net hits of the spell are greater than the Body of the target, the target gains the Dazed status for 1 Combat Round.

Noise of the spell is centered on the target. The target and any other living creatures within two-meter radius must resist the spell or gain the Deafened status for (caster’s Magic rating) minutes. Every two net hits increases the Deafened level by 1, up to Deafened III.

The Increase Area effect can be applied to Thunderstruck’s noise, but the Clout damage only affects a single target.

- > I’m not sure where you get your information, but that’s not from the authorized menu of the Digital Grimoire.
- > Virtual Wizard
- > Byte me, Wizard!
- > Grimmy the Grimore
- > [Virtual Wizard has been Suppressed!]
- > What the? Sorry for the Agent activation. Weird, there’s no price tag on Thunderstruck—let me get back to you on the actual price.
- > PRH

half its rating, rounded up), unless the armor also has Chemical Seal (p. 267, SR6), in which case Fire Resistance functions as normal.

Increase Area effect can be applied to Napalm, changing from single target to a two-meter area (and beyond, if you really love the smell of napalm in the morning).

CORRODE (OBJECT)

(INDIRECT COMBAT)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV	DAMAGE
Touch	P	I	2	Special

MELT (OBJECT)

(INDIRECT COMBAT)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV	DAMAGE
LOS	P	I	3	Special

SLUDGE (OBJECT)

(INDIRECT COMBAT)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV	DAMAGE
LOS(A)	P	I	5	Special

RAM (OBJECT)

(DIRECT COMBAT)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV	DAMAGE
T	P	I	2	Special

WRECK (OBJECT)

(DIRECT COMBAT)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV	DAMAGE
LOS	P	I	4	Special

DEMOLISH (OBJECT)

(DIRECT COMBAT)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV	DAMAGE
LOS(A)	P	I	6	Special

Move over water, because magic has produced an even better universal solvent. Specify the item you want gone from this mortal world and *poof!* It's now a puddle of goo that can be washed down the drain. These spells are ninety-nine percent safe for use around people and pets.

- Wreck and Demolish are more of preferred classics than Melt and Sludge. Wreck and Ram have more flair and flash with arching sparks, cracking and crumbling of the object, before total disintegration and dust in the wind. Sorry—the destruction is so beautiful, it makes me wax poetic. Anyway, buy three of them, and I will throw in the fourth for free.
- PRH



TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Digital Grimoire is not responsible for any collateral damage caused by object destructive spells, especially those that target load-bearing walls.

These spells must include an object as part of the spell formula (Firearm, Commlink, Armor, etc.). The object chosen can either be narrow or broad. See the adjoining table for example objects for these spells.

These spells can be learned multiple times, each with a new object.

Gain +1 Edge when casting the spell if the object is narrow rather than broad (e.g., Heavy Pistol instead of Firearm)

Direct and Indirect Area Effect Spells target all objects that meet the criteria *and* are visible to the magician.

EXAMPLE OBJECTS FOR SPELL FORMULA

BROAD OBJECT	NARROW OBJECT
Armor	Armor jacket
Firearm	Heavy pistol
Melee weapon	Blades/clubs
Furniture	chair/table
Electronic device	Commlink/trideo player/camera
Ground craft	Car/truck/motorcycle

DAMAGE EFFECTS OF OBJECT TARGETING SPELLS

OBJECT	EFFECT
Armor	Damage reduces the Defense Rating of armor. If the Defense Rating is reduced to 0, the armor is destroyed (not repairable).
Weapons	Damage reduces the Attack Rating of weapons from all ranges. If any Attack Rating is reduced to zero or less, the weapon can no longer fire at that range. If all Attack Ratings are reduced to 0 or less, the weapon is destroyed (not repairable).
Wall/Barrier	Damage reduces the Structure Rating of the barrier. If the Structure Rating is reduced to 0, a one-half-meter hole is created in the structure. Additional net hits increase the size of the hole by half a meter in diameter, up to caster's Magic rating meters in diameter.
Vehicle/Drone	Apply damage to the vehicle's condition monitor.
Device	Damage reduces the Device Rating. If the Device Rating is reduced to 0, the device is destroyed (not repairable). If the device has a condition monitor, such as a deck, apply damage to the condition monitor instead.

Corrode, Melt, and Sludge are indirect combat spells, which means an object targeted that is in someone's possession can avoid the spell (p. 132, SR6). Casting these spells requires a test of Sorcery + Magic vs. Reaction + Willpower of the subject who has control of the object. Damage is then resisted by the Object Resistance (p. 129, SR6).

For remote operated vehicles, use Piloting + Evasion instead to resist the spell.

Ram, Wreck, and Demolish are Direct Combat spells (p. 132, SR6). Casting of these spells requires a Sorcery + Magic vs. Object Resistance test. Damage is not resisted.

If the Body of the object such as a vehicle or drone is greater than the Object Resistance, use the Body of object instead.

HOSE

(INDIRECT COMBAT)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV	DAMAGE
LOS	P	I	4	Special

TSUNAMI

(INDIRECT COMBAT)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV	DAMAGE
LOS(A)	P	I	6	Special

What better way to wash away your problems than these spells? Create a manifestation of naturally sparking, pure H2O to flush out unwanted obstacles and attention. Cleanup is quick and easy as the water simply washes away, assuming you cast it somewhere with drainage! The volume of the water can be focused to take advantage of the incompressible force (results may vary).

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

These spells are not recommended for drinking purposes for pressure reasons.

Water temperature may vary, though most subjects say it's slightly cooler than room temperature.

Targets of the spell gain the Wet status (p. 53, SR6).

If successful, each target is pushed back 1 meter away from the caster or the center of the spell.

If net hits exceed the Body of the target, then the target is knocked Prone (p. 53, SR6). Any additional net hits (resisted by the target rolling their Body) become the number of meters that the target is pushed back in addition to the first meter.

PUNCH

(INDIRECT COMBAT)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV	DAMAGE
T	P	I	2	S

CLOUT

(INDIRECT COMBAT)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV	DAMAGE
LOS	P	I	3	S

BLAST

(INDIRECT COMBAT)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV	DAMAGE
LOS (A)	P	I	4	S

Feel like you have telekinetic powers with Punch, Clout, and Blast spells! Hit like a prize fighter without the skillchip!

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

For more information, see p. 133, SR6.

SLAY (TARGET)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV	DAMAGE
LOS	P	I	3	P

BANE (TARGET)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV	DAMAGE
LOS	M	I	3	P

Slay and Bane are not only classified as 5M weapons, but they carry additional penalties as they target specific metatypes or sentient species. These penalties, depending on jurisdiction, can result in a death sentence. In accordance with Matrix policies, the Digital Grimoire does not sell any formulas relating to Slay and Bane.

- > This is all true, but that doesn't mean the spells aren't used. For example, Ares has certain contracts legalizing Slay and Bane targeting insect spirits. I think they call the formula "Insecticide." So while Digital Grimoire doesn't sell them, there are other businesses that they can be purchased from with varying legal protections. I'll connect you, for a small finder's fee.
- > PRH

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

When casting these spells, add 1 wild die (p. 48, SR6).

Slay is equivalent to Powerbolt in its results.
Bane is equivalent to Manabolt in its results.

These spells target one specific type of sentient creature (naga, centaur, sasquatch, etc.), spirit type (insect, earth, fire, etc.), or metatype (elf, dwarf, ork, troll, or human). These spells can be learned more than once, each time selecting a different target.

If the target is not of the correct type, the spell has no effect.

Subjects on the astral plane can only be targeted by Bane.

HEALTH

Welcome to the Health spell formula catalog. For your convenience, medical certification and training links will be listed for your area along with pricing. Digital Grimoire is not responsible for any malpractice suits based on use of any Health spell.

- > One of the things I suggest with magicians practicing healing magic is to take some medical training. It's not for the actual healing—it's more so that you can speak apples to apples with medical professionals or clients. Sure, red and yellow streaks in my aura are interfering with my fifth chakra, but mundanes might better understand me if I say, "My leg is broken."
- > Lyrn

ANAPHYLAXIS

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
T	P	S	5

EPHEDRINE

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
T	P	S	4

The world is loaded with things that don't react well to the body; pollution, pollen, bullets, and so on. For the first two, at least, there is a solution to ease the suffering. Magical ephedrine stops the body from overreacting to various allergens. This is temporary relief until the subject can get away from whatever allergen is causing the problem. Anaphylaxis is a Class 4 spell due to the possibility of associated death. Touching the subject causes an immediate allergic reaction, regardless if the subject has a known allergy or not.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Ephedrine does not cause drowsiness—by all means, allow the subject to use heavy machinery.

Every two hits on the Sorcery test increase (Anaphylaxis) or decrease (Ephedrine) the severity of the allergic reaction by 1 level (p. 75, SR6). If there is no pre-existing allergic reaction, the first two hits then create a mild allergic reaction (to the substance of the caster's choice, selected on casting) as long as the spell is sustained.

Once the spell is no longer sustained, the allergic reaction returns to normal levels—or just goes away, if no active allergens are present.

If, for example, a subject who is deathly allergic to seafood for some reason ate that food, then Ephedrine must be sustained until the worst of the reaction has passed (about eight hours) or until mundane medicine is applied. Otherwise, the deadly allergy returns.

Ephedrine can be used against any allergy.

DIAGNOSE

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
Touch	M	I	4

Street docs! Why deal with expensive technological equipment or wait for corporate labs to return results when Diagnose is here? Keep your business mobile and offer a plethora of services (blood work, X-rays, chakra scans, aura diagnostics, etc.) with Diagnose at your twitchy fingertips.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

After casting the spell, consult the Diagnose results table.

Results learned by the magician are inclusive, up to the hits cast by the spell. If the magician got 3 hits, they get the results from 1, 2, and 3 hits.

Once the Diagnose spell is cast on an individual, they cannot have it cast on them again for twenty-four hours.

The use of Diagnose adds +1 Edge to the magician's Biotech skill test when used on the subject within twenty-four hours.

A magician may choose to add 1 wild die to their Heal or Treat spell when used on the subject within twenty-four hours of casting the Diagnose spell on them.

DIAGNOSE RESULTS TABLE

# OF HITS	RESULT
0	Inconclusive. Write a prescription for a placebo and have them come back tomorrow.
1	General state of subject's physical health. While boxes of damage are the defined game mechanic this level of diagnose represents, it can be flavored with high counts of blood platelets (indicating bleeding or bruising), white cell count (diseases/poisons), low blood pressure (bleeding), low oxygen levels, etc.
2	Information on any broken bones, torn ligaments/muscles, internal bleeding/ fluid buildup. Also information on general maladies (e.g., high blood pressure, diabetes, allergies, gout).
3	The presence and location of cybernetics or foreign objects within the body, along with parasites and possessive spiritual entities.
4	The presence of toxins or diseases, along with their current effects on the body.
5	The presence and location of bioware (and their effects on the body).
6+	The presence of nanotech and any recent genetic anomalies (gene therapy, exposure to radioactive material, etc.) .

FAST

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
Touch	P	Special	4

Atkins, Dukan, Keto, Immortal Agrarian, Metagenic Slimworm, even the Paleo diet pale in comparison to the magic of the Fast spell. With Fast, there are no cravings, no bloating, no growling stomach, no thirst—just a sense of fullness even though you haven't eaten. Actual weight loss may vary.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The use of Fast should be carefully supervised, as death from starvation or dehydration is possible without the subject recognizing the symptoms.

Successful casting of the spell removes the feel-

EFFECTS OF HUNGER AND THIRST OVER TIME

- Each level of the Fatigued status imposes a -2 penalty to dice pools (see p. 52, SR6).
- Increase the subject's Fatigued status one level for every day without water.
- Increase the subject's Fatigued status one level for every two days without food.
- Reduce the Fatigued status by one level for every full day of adequate nutrition, hydration, and rest.
- If the subject doesn't have water after three days, they die.
- If the subject doesn't have food after six days, they require medical attention or risk death within three weeks.

ing of hunger and thirst for twenty-four hours.

Each additional hit reduces the Fatigued status caused by starvation and thirst by one level (see below).

Fast does not alleviate the need for food and water.

HEALTHY GLOW

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
T	P	P	4

Worried about getting to the office looking like what the cat threw up after a late rave at Dante's? Trying to get that promotion at work, but your night job as a punching bag is holding you back? Those who burn the candle with a flamethrower, worry no more! Healthy Glow can relieve that stress, just like magic! Healthy Glow brightens the physical appearance of the subject (improves circulation, whitens teeth, reduces wrinkles, blemishes, split ends, bad breath) and improves general health (bruising fades, tan lines blend, and cuts/ scars look more superficial).

Warning! Healthy Glow is a cosmetic change and not a Healing spell. Please see your local street shaman if you are looking for healing treatment.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

While the effects of Healthy Glow are permanent, hard living (though in the Sixth World, just going outside is considered “hard living”) and natural aging will, over time, reintroduce what the spell hid.

With a successful casting of the spell, the subject appears physically cleaner and healthier for up to one hour per net hit, though exposure to harsh elements can reduce this. This means they gain 1 Edge for Social tests thanks to their appearance.

Additionally, with a successful casting of the spell, any first aid or healing tests performed on the character gain 1 Edge to spend on that test. This bonus effect is only temporary, lasting (net hits) hours after casting the spell. The spell can only be used once every twenty-four hours on a particular subject.

NUTRITION

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
T	P	P	4

Hungry? Well, you too can eat like the great martial art masters. Try Nutrition and feast off the energies of the universe. GMO free and mystically organic! Gluten free! Fat free! Hell, free of any kind of physical form!

- Many wizards tweak this spell to give it an aftertaste to help sate the psychological cravings that sometimes remain after physical hunger has been magically satisfied. Usually, they make it taste like chicken.
- Frosty

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Use of Nutrition beyond two weeks can lead to Fae Food Syndrome and the inability to take in solid food and drinks without serious digestive problems. Fae Food Syndrome must be treated by a medical professional; treatments tend to last two weeks.

Nutrition provides the target with nourishment at a cellular level, allowing them to live off pure mana.

Each hit prevents starvation and dehydration for twelve hours (with a maximum of three days) but doesn't remove the feelings of hunger or thirst (see Fast spell above).

For an existing starving subject, each hit reduces the level of fatigue by 1 caused by starvation (see Fast, p. 30, for information on food and fatigue) before applying hits to provide nourishment.

OXYGENATE

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
T	P	S	4

Imagine being able to dive and stay underwater for more than a few minutes and not having

ICY VEINS

- Hello, I see that you are interested in Health Magic. Allow me to help you.
I have found this Spell.
- Grimmy the Grimore
- Please allow the Customer to request assistance from the Digital Grimoire.
- Virtual Wizard
- Hello Virtual Wizard, you are cramping my customer support style. Allow me to show you the door.
- Grimmy the Grimore

[Virtual Wizard has crashed—please see error log]

ICY VEINS

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
T	P	S	4

Are you really cool as a cucumber? Icy Veins puts you one level cooler than that! Chill out, knowing that you won't show up on thermals when the heat seekers arrive.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Not recommended for walking on lava.

Must target a willing subject.

Target gains the Chilled status (p. 51, SR6).

Target resists the Burning status (p. 51, SR6) in an amount equal to net hits on the Sorcery test.

Target doesn't show up on thermal sensors. This removes any attacker or defender environmental advantage over the subject if based on thermal vision.

- Grimmy's programming has gotten really quirky. And it won't let me delete it. I'm working on the problem.
- PRH

to worry about the bends when you come back up. With Oxygenate, “swimming with the fishes” becomes a survivable scenario (Digital Grimoire doesn't suggest testing this scenario). Oxygenate infuses the body directly with lifesaving, pure oxygen. No processing of earth's dirty air needed.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Oxygenate requires a willing subject.

Oxygenate provides 1 Edge on swimming or diving tests. That point must be used immediately or lost.

Each net hit provides an additional die on tests to resist damage from suffocation, strangulation, or other forms of oxygenation deprivation.

Each net hit reduces the Fatigued or Dazed status if the status is based on oxygen deprivation.

While sustained, the subject is immune to inha-

lation vector attacks and drowning (if the subject remembers to hold his breath).

Overuse of Oxygenate can cause lungs to atrophy. If the spell is used every day for a week or more, give the subject the Fatigued I status until they go without it for the same number of days.

PRESERVE

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
T	P	I	5

Worried that those smuggled apples will perish before getting to Mr. Johnson or that the milk acquired in your run will sour with all that heat? Well, fret no more! With Preserve, that doggy bag of posh goodies will stay as good as the first bite you had. Preserve prevents decay, mold, staleness, melting, and freezer burn.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Ice cream will stay frozen, pizza will stay warm, material links will stay viable, and cadavers will remain as they were found, confounding time-of-death estimates.

Successful casting of the spell prevents organic material from natural mold and decay.

Each hit puts the material in a state of suspended animation for six hours after casting, keeping the temperature, humidity, and so forth exactly as they were when the spell is cast.

The spell can affect 1 cubic meter of material. The Increase Area effect can be increase the volume by half a cubic meter (up to half the caster's Magic rating, rounded up, in cubic meters).

For bodies, add half the Body attribute to the Drain of the spell instead of calculating volume.

Each hit also counts as the protective rating against Chilled, Burning, or Corroded status as well as spell resistance to Rot.

The spell doesn't protect against physical damage. Any physical damage, disruption, or dispersal of the material breaks the spell.

ROT

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
T	P	P	5

Stop worrying about how the various bits you leave behind could be used against you as material links; the basic use of this spell destroys any biological material you don't want to carry with you. Rot is also good for composting, breaking down any organic material into simpler components. Warning: Rot is does not discriminate between living and non-living organic material and is considered a class 4M spell formula, meaning it requires the same permits as a combat spell.

- Disposing of a body is an excellent use of this spell. I'm a fan.
- Kane

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Rot breaks down organic material (plant, animal, bacteria, whatever), living or otherwise, into gooey material best suited for fertilizer. Hard organic material such as bones crumbles to bone meal (also good for plants).

Used offensively, Rot can cripple a subject. Every two net hits (the spell is resisted with Willpower + Intuition) can be used to inflict a level of the Disabled status (up to level III), (p. 106, *Firing Squad*) or Fatigued status (up to level III; p. 52, SR6) as flesh and bone cease to connect or even exist. Damage from Rot cannot be cured by Heal spells.

When not used offensively, the spell can affect half a cubic meter of material. The Increase Area effect can be applied to Rot to increase the volume by half a cubic meter (up to half the caster's Magic rating, rounded up, in cubic meters).

For bodies, increases the drain by one-half the Body (rounded down) of the target rather than calculating cubic meters of material.

ROT EFFECTIVENESS

# OF HITS	EFFECT
1	Unusable for material link
2	Unusable for genetic testing (though hard organic material like bones and teeth still remain)
3	Unusable for identifying if it's animal or vegetable; hard organics crumble; all materials unusable for forensics
4	It's just goo (only inorganic material such as cybernetics remain intact)

STERILIZE

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
LOS(A)	P	P	4

Kills one hundred percent of bacteria, viruses, parasites, and other pathogens in the targeted area. Sterilize is what you need to thoroughly clean a room, useful for the hypochondriac and hippocratic alike. Its area effect gets to all the hard-to-reach places to make sure that mold isn't coming back! One hundred percent safe for anything living—except microorganisms.

- This is good for making sure you don't leave behind any traces, and for killing anything you might think is laced with disease. Just don't try to use it directly on a person—you'll kill some of the organisms keeping them alive.
- Butch

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Casting of spell renders all organic material unfit as a material link within the area of the spell.

To prevent this spell from becoming harmful to complex life forms, it is designed not to work on anything but surfaces—thus, it cannot cleanse infected lungs, pathogens sealed in bottles, or other such things.

If a Heal spell is cast within two hours in an area affected by a Sterilize spell, the caster gains 1 Edge for use on the casting.

TREAT

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
T	M	P	4

Have you been affected by blindness or deafness? Have you accidentally fallen into some mysterious toxic goo and are now experiencing a burning, chilling, or dissolving sensation? Use Treat, then seek medical attention. While Heal can take care of wounds, it cannot always help with side effects. Also helps with dizziness, nausea, headaches, and fatigue. If there is a real emergency, please seek your nearest medical facility.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Treat removes or lessens damaging or debilitating status effects.

Reduce the Blinded, Burning, Corrosive, or Deafened status by one level per net hit, or simply remove the Chilled or Dazed status.

If there are multiple statuses, net hits can be split between them, but at a cost of +1 Drain for each additional status removed or reduced.

Since there are many status effects, the game-master has final say if Treat can remove or reduce a particular status. For example, Treat obviously can't help a subject with an Immobilized status due to being tied to a bed, but the gamemaster may allow Treat to be effective against the Immobilized status if the subject gained it from, say, falling from a great height or poison.

DETECTION

Welcome to the Detection spell formula catalog. These spells are designed to extend the magician's senses into the cosmos and better analyze the general environment. Interpretations of what they sense may vary.

ASTRAL WINDOW

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
LOS	M	S	3

Magic is hard to explain to the mundane, like color to someone blind. It can be hard to explain to another mage sometimes. With Astral Window,

you can open up a window to the astral plane, visible even to the mundane. Then they would understand why magic is so nuts.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Astral Window creates a small, one-half-meter-diameter sphere. Anyone within LOS of the sphere can use their Perception skill as astral perception to see the "other side" within the sphere.

The spell does not convey any knowledge to the viewer of what they are actually looking at (that requires the Arcane knowledge skill).

The Increase Area effect can be applied to Astral Window to increase the diameter of the sphere by half a meter, up to the caster's Magic rating in meters.

With a Shift Area Minor Action, the sphere can be moved to a location within the magician's line of sight.

Any spell (mana or physical) or astral entity intercepted by or crossing through an Astral Window becomes visible from the material plane.

BORROW SENSE

(SINGLE SENSE)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
T	M	S	4

PASSENGER

(MULTI-SENSE)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
T	M	S	5

Literally see through the eyes of a CEO or listen in on their privileged conversations—at least, until a corp mage traces the spell back to you.

ANIMAL SENSE

(SINGLE SENSE)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
T	M	S	4

Do you want to know where your cat goes? Or what rat or pigeon tastes like? Your pet can share that with you. Do you want to experience flight like an eagle? Now you can by hitching a ride in the mind of your pet or another animal.

EYES OF THE PACK

(SINGLE SENSE)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
Touch	M	S	4

Become your own SimStar without the technology. Share your POV with friends and family as you tour famous locations like the Needle, or participate in the entertainment such as the Running of the Bulls.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Not admissible as legal witness material, except in Tír Tairngire and Tír na nÓg.

Digital Grimoire is not responsible for any legal or illegal use of these spells.

Borrow Sense/Animal Sense/Eyes of the Pack allow the magician to select one sense (sight, hearing, smell, or taste) from a subject and with a Minor Action switch to perceiving that sense from the subject's perspective instead of their own.

Passenger allows the magician to perceive all the senses of the subject, making it essentially a magical live simsense experience (minus the emotional package).

Animal Sense only works with non-sentient animals (including paranormal ones).

Any enhancement (such as thermographic vision, low-light vision, high frequency) that the subject has with that sense is included with the perception the caster gains.

Astral, virtual, and augmented reality perception cannot be channeled through these spells.

Borrow Sense, Passenger, and Animal Sense are resisted by the subject using Body + Willpower, but the subject does not have a conscious notion of the spell taking effect.

Eyes of the Pack requires willing subjects. Increase drain by 1 for every animal connected after the first (with a maximum number of subjects equal to the caster's Magic rating).

While sustained, each subject can spend a Minor Action to change their perception to any other subject connected by this spell.

SCRUTINIZE

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
Touch	M	S	4

CATALOG

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
Touch	M	S	5

Do you have an eye for detail? Do you need one? Look no further than Scrutinize. Scrutinize can be used to appreciate the different shades of blue, the ridges of a natural brush on canvas, and yes, count the number of jellybeans in a jar.

If you need help putting the feng back in your shui, Scrutinize's more powerful relative, Catalog, can help. Bring that sense of balance and harmony to the whole room. Know the right angle and distance of each object down to the millimeter with ease. In no time, you can get the dragon line flowing through the room with Catalog.

Warning! Can cause severe OCD or hyperacusis if sustained for more than eight hours.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The spell allows the caster to be hyper-aware of an object or area. The Observe in Detail Action becomes a Minor Action while the spell is sustained and used for the object (Scrutinize) or area (Catalog).

These spells allow for extra details to be learned with Observe in Detail.

Each net hit provides one type of detail that can be learned. Below is an example list of details that the magician can choose from.

While the Catalog spell is sustained, the magician can spend a Minor Action to view any point in the area of the spell from any perspective.

The caster gains a point of Edge against any surprise tests within the area or attacks against invisible targets, as Catalog gives the caster a variety of details other than sight.

DETAIL LIST

- Know the exact count of items within a container or area.
- Know the dimensions of an object (height, width, length, volume, area).
- Know the weight of an object down to the gram and if the magician is able to lift or carry it.
- Know the temperature of an object down to the Celsius degree.
- Know the direction an object is facing by degrees.
- Know the distance between objects down to the millimeter.
- Identify the specific scent of individuals or items, and determine whether someone whose scent you know has been in the area recently.
- Identify ingredients in food or beverages.
- Identify textures as subtle as indentations of writing on a piece of paper, precise shades of color, or the flow of brush strokes.
- Identify a musical tone either from hearing it or even feeling the vibration frequency.

MANA WINDOW

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
LOS	M	S	3

As with all things magical, wards and barriers will prevent spells, including area spells, from working on the other side. If only there was a spell that could temporarily lift that mystical veil ... oh wait, there is! Mana Window temporarily opens up a hole in a mana barrier, wide enough for the magician to perceive and cast spells through.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Mana barriers are opaque on the astral plane (or when viewed with astral perception), so they block astral sight as well as spells and astral entities. This is in addition to preventing spells and astral entities from crossing.

Mana Window only works for spells and astral perception. It does not remove the barrier or allow astral entities to cross through. That would take a Mana *Door*.

Mana Window is opposed by a dice pool equal to the Structure rating of the barrier. If Mana Window achieves more hits, then the window appears on the barrier. The window is one meter in diameter; additional hits increase the transparency area by one meter, up to the caster's Magic rating in meters.

TRANSLATE

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
Touch	M	S	4

With this spell, you don't have to worry about having the correct linguasoft or whether the results successfully convey the intended meaning. When someone speaks in their native tongue, you hear the words in your own language. It's like a weirdly dubbed foreign film.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Translate creates a low-level telepathic connection between the subject and a specific target within sense range (see p. 134, SR6). An unwilling target can resist with Body + Willpower.

Translate is good for casual conversation but not diplomatic negotiations. Edge cannot be gained or spent when performing any social skill test through translate.

Both subjects must be able to see and hear each other for the spell to be effective.

Translate may be used to communicate with any sapient species that uses language (such as sasquatch or merrow) but may not be used to communicate with non-sapient animals.

The hits from the spell determine the quality of the translation; with relatively few net hits, the gamemaster can introduce elements of uncertainty into what the caster is hearing or what others hear them say (see Translation Quality table).

ILLUSION

Welcome to the Illusion spell formula catalog. There is no limit in what the imagination can do with Illusion spells (imagination not included).

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Illusion spells are hidden within the astral background so they cannot be detected unless an astral perception test exceeds the net hits of the spell.

TRANSLATION QUALITY

# OF HITS	CONVERSATION QUALITY
0	It's like yelling at the trideo. Saying it louder isn't helping either.
1	They're either happy to see us for lunch or happy to see us as lunch. It's mostly emotional context, with a word or two dropped in just to make things interesting.
2	See Dick run. Run, Dick, run. Rudimentary conversation with a kindergarten vocabulary.
3	Credstick. Nuyen. Guns. Normal Sixth World conversation stuff. Nothing too technical.
4+	Nuclear physics, anyone? Conversation about more complex concepts, with detailed vocabulary, can be had.

- > [Suppressed Digital Dragon]
- > [Opening Codex TSR2002A]
- > Uploading Thieves' Cant
- > Hello, I see that you are interested in Illusion Magic. I'm going to help you. I found this Spell!
- > Grimmy the Grimoire



BABBLE

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
T	M	S	3

THIEVES' CANT

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
T	P	S	4

In today's world, it's hard to have a private conversation without having someone or something overhearing it. White noise generators are fine but are obvious secret-hiders that can attract the curious. To address a pressing need, we introduce the Babble spell. Anyone who tries to hear your conversation instead hears a boring or not important conversation on weather or chess instead of the actual conversation (unless that's what you were actually talking about).

- > I'm turning somebody into a hag fish if I can't get this construct to follow host protocols!
- > PRH

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Spell is cast between the magician and a willing subject they touch. Multiple people can be connected to the same hidden conversation; each additional person increases the spell's Drain by 1.

Any Perception test that doesn't exceed the threshold of the spell's hits only allows the listener to hear some trivial conversation unrelated to the actual conversation.

Babble works against living entities.

Thieves' Cant works against cameras and other technology as well as against living entities.



Any interaction by someone with the illusion (picking up an illusory book or shooting a wall for example) will result in the subject realizing it's an illusion unless the caster has LOS and spends a Minor Action to incorporate the interaction into the illusion.

CHAFF

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
LOS(A)	P	L	5

A little low on luck? Chaff provides a barrage of sensory information to level the playing field. Flashes of light, static discharges, and disorienting noises create confusion in the real world and disruptions in the Matrix.

- If you like Chaos spells, then Chaff might be of some interest to you. It's an unusual fire-and-forget spell. You cast it, and it neuters those tech toys. Not strong enough to confuse the opponent, but enough distraction to prove useful.
- Jimmy No

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The spell is opposed by Willpower + Logic. It can be sustained up to 1 Combat Round for each net hit.

With a successful casting of the spell, Chaff makes 1 point of Matrix noise in the affected area for each net hit on the Spellcasting test. Any wireless signals passing through the designated area are affected.

DOUBLE IMAGE

(REALISTIC MULTI-SENSE)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
T	M	S	3

Need someone to talk to, but don't have any friends around? Confuse your enemy by splitting a party of one! Double Image creates a realistic illusory duplicate of a touched subject that moves just like them. Targets who fail to see through the illusion will not be able to tell them apart! Now go to the party with your magical plus-one.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Double Image can only be used once per person. No triplets! You can cast Double Image multiple times, but each time it must be for a different person. The spell is resisted by Willpower + Intuition.

Magicians can use a Minor Action to adjust the Double Image to keep it from breaking or help it function strategically.

While the subject and double image are moving parallel to each other, the subject gains 1 Edge when they both attack the same target.

The illusion will only act or react as the caster commands. If someone tries to tackle it or hit it, they move right through it, which reveals the illusion. This can happen on a melee attack that would have hit (on a melee attack, the illusion uses the caster's Reaction + Intuition to avoid the attack, but it has no De-

fense Rating, so the attacker always gets Edge). Most firearm or missile attacks just look like they miss the illusion. The illusion runs right through grenade explosions, revealing its unreal nature.

If someone is trying to chase the subject while the double image is moving in a different direction and they fail a Perception test (made using spell net hits as a threshold), then that person chases the illusion. Every (caster's Magic rating x 10) meters, the pursuer can make another Perception test to see if they see discrepancies in the illusion. The caster controls the movements of the illusion. If the illusion inadvertently runs through a solid physical object, the chaser gets +5 dice on their test to perceive the illusion (they might not have seen what happened or might not trust what they thought they saw). Running through multiple objects in a single Combat Round adds five more dice per item (as the dice pool becomes higher, characters should feel free to buy hits on the test, as per the rules on p. 36, SR6). Once the illusion is out of the caster's sight, it runs in a straight line for two hundred more meters, then disappears.

DREAMS

(REALISTIC, MULTI-SENSE)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
LOS	M	S	3

Be the crazy hero, battling bugs and riding a dragon across the Chicago landscape, by dreaming big. With Dream, you can share your delusions of grandeur. Be the literal stuff of nightmares to your enemies, all without having real skills or talent.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The target must be asleep or rendered unconscious for the spell to work., but they still resist the spell with Willpower + Logic.

Dreams allows the magician to craft a dream (including visuals, sounds, emotions, etc.) and transmit it to a sleeping target. Net hits determine complexity and details.

Dreams do not cause actual harm to the target.

Subject will remember the dream vividly but not necessarily that it was implanted.

To use the spell more aggressively, if the spellcaster achieves 5 net hits, they can disrupt the subject's rest period for the day, including any attempts at natural healing (p. 120, SR6) with an unshakable nightmare. That means a test to heal Physical damage cannot be made that day.

FOREBODING

(REALISTIC, MULTI-SENSE)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
LOS(A)	M	S	4

DISQUIET

(REALISTIC, MULTI-SENSE)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
LOS(A)	M	S	3

Are people ignoring your sign saying "Keep off the grass" and "No solicitors"? Do gophers and rats raid your garden or kitchen, avoiding the usual traps, flaunting their brazenness with a trail of droppings across your floor? The Foreboding spell may be able to help. Any target that crosses the threshold of the spell area will start to feel nervousness and a sense of dread—enough that they'll want to never darken your doorstep again.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Foreboding affects metahumans and sentient beings. Disquiet affects only animals.

Foreboding mystically broadcasts feelings of imminent danger, fear, and unease to any living being who enters the area affected by the spell. Targets simultaneously feel chilled and nervous. Their hackles rise, and they feel slightly panicked.

Any target who fails to resist the spell with Logic + Intuition gains the Frightened status (p. 52, SR6) while within the area affected by the spell.

If net hits exceed the Willpower of the affected individual, that individual gains the Panicked status (p. 52, SR6) in addition to Frightened, and they must flee the area.

Once outside of the spell's area, the Frightened/Panicked statuses go away after (caster's Magic rating) minutes.

If Foreboding or Disquiet is cast within a magic lodge, and 6 Karma is spent, then the spell is sustained until the lodge is removed, the caster cancels the spell, or someone actively counters it.

FALSE IMPRESSION

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
LOS	M	S	3

MANASCAPE

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
LOS(A)	M	S	4

Bored at a mystical society meeting? Try False Impression. Change your boss's aura to that of an Insect, or make yours appear multiple initiate ranks higher than normal. Mess with that one guy who's always assensing his teammates. Loads of laughs in an Awakened community. Trying to hide a magical duel from the authorities? Use Manascape to obscure all magical activity and hide the fact there are any magicians around.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

These spells cannot create a false aura; they can only change or hide an existing aura.

Any Assensing, Astral Perception test, or Astral Window spell that doesn't exceed the hits of this spell see what the spell caster intended for them to see.

If the Astral or Sorcery tests exceeds those of the False Impression/Manascape spell, then the tester recognizes there is a masking spell, but they can only get the real information based on the difference between their hits and those on the False Impression/Manascape spell.

HOT POTATO

(REALISTIC, SINGLE SENSE)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
LOS	M	I	3

Always a fun prank—even the most harmless items will feel like they are molten hot!

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Digital Grimoire is not responsible for any repercussions caused by using Hot Potato.

The magician rolls Sorcery + Willpower vs. Willpower + Intuition. If the target fails to resist the illusion, they must immediately use a Drop Object Minor Action (p. 41, SR6) to drop whatever they are holding, believing that it is causing them pain.

VEHICLE MASK

(MULTI-SENSE)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
T	P	S	4

PHANTOMSCAPE

(MULTI-SENSE)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
LOS(A)	P	S	5

Why use virtual wallpaper to change your home surroundings based on some hacker's limited coding options when you can go with your heart's desire? Change the appearance of your home or office with the illusory features and textures of Phantomscape. Why bring your friends over to your double-wide when it could look like a small keep, an English cottage complete with the scent of a blossoming garden and tea, or even a cabin in the woods (ominous background music optional). The same goes for your POS 5000. You might not be able to afford a Mitsubishi Nightsky, but you can make it look like you drive one with Vehicle Mask.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Vehicle Mask does not change the physical attributes of your vehicle.

Phantomscape cannot support nor stop physical objects passing through the illusory items.

Vehicle Mask covers a standard passenger vehicle or drone; the Increase Area effect can be used once to make it cover an SUV-sized vehicle, pickup, or passenger van; twice to cover a panel truck, shuttle bus, or shipping van; three times to cover a semi truck or bus. The illusion can be larger than the affected vehicle, but not smaller.

Phantomscape has a slightly larger area of effect than normal and is a cube rather than a sphere; it starts at 20 cubic meters (about the size of a small room) and increases by 20 cubic meters with each Increase Area effect. It only affects background, inanimate objects—not items that are going to be touched and used.

For both spells, the magician's Sorcery + Magic is opposed by the viewer's Willpower + Intuition.

MANIPULATION

Welcome to the Manipulation spell catalog. All the spells here are to help you transform and transmute your dreams into reality.

VINE

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
LOS	P	P	4

ROSEBUSH

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
LOS(A)	P	P	5

Be the envy of every witch or wizard who ever wanted to have a garden. Got a black thumb? No problem—you don't need thumbs at all with the Rosebush spell. Quickly start any seed or spore (results may vary). And when the kids won't get off the lawn, let the lawn give them a lesson with Rosebush!

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Must target living, willing plants. Remember that carrots distrust wizards. They know what happened to bok choy.

Hits accelerate growth. Each hit represents a week of growth or healing of boxes of damage done to the plant (if the plant has a condition monitor).

In an offensive use of the Rosebush spell, any subjects moving through the area gain the Off-Balance status (p. 106, *Firing Squad*), as a massive burst of vegetation (weeds, vines, branches, whatever) inhibit any movement through the area. If Sorcery test hits exceed the subject's Strength, then the subject also receives the Hobbled status (p. 52, SR6) while moving through the area.

Plants are not animated after the initial casting of the spell. Strength of the plant is equal to one-half the Magic rating of the caster, and it can be used as a threshold for escape tests.

FASHION

(ENVIRONMENTAL, AREA)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
T	P	P	4

When going from combat to social event, or maybe when you forgot to send your suit to the dry cleaner, this spell is the life-saver you need. Are you wearing the same outfit as the hostess? Fashion it! Is a tie required at a formal event? Fashion it! This spell can restore fabric to a just-like-new state, removing wrinkles and stains (even blood and sweat!) and mending small rips and tears. But that's not all. A true artist with this spell can adjust the cut, color, pattern, and fit of any outfit to suit their needs. Free up that closet space and rent it out as a small room, because one outfit and your imagination is all you'll ever need!

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Weight and volume of material of the clothing cannot change. A jumpsuit can't be converted into a bikini or vice versa.

After rolling Sorcery + Magic vs. Object Resistance (6 for most clothing), consult Fashion Results Table.

FASHION RESULTS TABLE

NET HITS	RESULT
1	The tint of the color can change (e.g., dark blue to light blue, but not blue to green); clothes are unwrinkled; small rips and tears are mended. Hair and dander are removed.
2	Adjustments to the fit of the clothing can be made, but nothing drastic about the nature of the clothes (for example, pants are still pants); color can change slightly (e.g., blue to green or purple, but not red); stains are removed.
3	A full spectrum of color can be manipulated. Simple geometric patterns and designs can be added, but nothing as elaborate as corporate logos or name tags. Modifications such as the addition or removal of pockets or pants to a skirt can be done. Heavy damage such as from bullets and blades is repaired.
4+	Clothing can be changed with enough specificity to mimic a uniform, provided enough material is available. Color changes can help mimic missing accessories such as buttons, labels, ties, badges, ribbons, etc. These changes, however, are only convincing at a distance if the physical accessories are not present. The closer a target gets to the subject, the more likely they will notice the actual accessories are missing (a gamemaster would call for a Perception test to see if the person notices). Patterns and designs on clothing can be as intricate as the magician desires.

Any armor with a Defense Rating higher than 3 resists the changes to Fashion more than usual. Apply (Defense Rating - 3) as a threshold when casting the spell, then consult the table using the net hits.

CATFALL

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
T	P	S	3

Gravity can be a harsh mistress. With Catfall, you can dance a little longer with her without crashing too badly at the end. Catfall reduces acceleration due to gravity, so the subject experiences the force of a much shorter fall.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Digital Grimoire is not liable for any injury or death from the use of Catfall.

Each net hit equals 3 additional meters of safe falling, cumulative with the basic 3 meters of safety anyone gets (p. 113, SR6).

The subject gains 1 point of situational Edge that can be used on Athletics or Damage Resistance tests related to the fall.

GECKO CRAWL

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
T	P	S	4

When you are stuck in a deep hole, what can you do? If flight is not one of your normal modes of transportation, then hopefully you have purchased Gecko Crawl. Gecko Crawl empowers the subject's hands and feet with ultra-reliable gecko sticky magic that allows climbing along vertical surfaces. Want more? How about the ability to climb horizontally, but upside down!

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Subject gets +1 Edge when making Climbing tests.

While this spell is sustained, the base threshold for climbing tests is reduced to zero (see p. 93, SR6).

The subject may move along a ceiling at their normal climbing rate (so long as the ceiling can hold them). If the Structure rating (p. 113, SR6) is less than the Body of the subject, then the ceiling buckles or breaks under the weight of the subject, and Gecko Crawl fails to keep the subject connected.

GLUE

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
LOS	P	S	Special

Ran out of duct tape and zip ties? No worries! With Glue, any surface will do to keep a subject from escaping. Also works for keeping bumpers on cars, change in pockets, and hats on heads.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Subject must be in contact with the object to be adhered when the spell is cast.

Glue is opposed by Object Resistance (p. 129, SR6) or Reaction + Intuition.

Drain is one-half the Structure rating (p. 113, SR6) of the object, rounded up (minimum 2). If there is no structure rating, substitute object resistance. If two objects are glued together, the drain is the higher Structure or Object Resistance rating of the two.

Individuals glued to a structure gain the Immobilized status (p. 52, SR6) until freed.

If the spell is successful, pulling the two surfaces apart requires an Opposed test between the spell's hits + caster's Magic rating and the separator's Strength + Body.

If Sorcery test net hits exceed the Structure or Body of the object/subject, then physical damage occurs if the objects are separated. The objects must resist Sorcery test net hits in damage as if the spell were a direct combat spell when they are successfully pulled apart.

ICE SHEET

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
LOS	P	S	5

Need an exciting way to get around town? Keep it cool and fun with Ice Sheet, and slide your way to destiny! Have fun surprising your friends, neighbors, or security officers with Ice Sheet. Watch them fall down as you slip away!

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

This spell creates a flat sheet of ice that covers a number of square meters equal to the caster's Magic rating multiplied by Sorcery test hits. The number of hits also relates to the thickness of the ice. At 5+ hits, the ice is thick enough that stairs become inclines.

Ice Sheet can also be used to make walls slick and smooth for purposes of climbing (p. 93, SR6) or frost over windows to obscure line of sight.

Anyone on the ice gains the Off-Balance status (p. 106, *Firing Squad*). Off-Balance remains in place every combat round until the subject gets off the ice.

Anyone driving over the ice sheet must make a Handling test or lose control of their vehicle.

Once the spell has stopped being sustained, the ice instantly effervesces into the aether.

LOOKING GLASS

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
LOS	P	S	Special

Transparent aluminum? How about transparent concrete? Yes, folks, this spell changes the opacity of any material to a new magical



- > [Found Folder]
- > [Face the Raven]
- > Uploading Disregard
- > Hello, I see that you are interested in Manipulation Magic. I'm going to help you. I found this Spell!
- > Grimmy the Grimoire



DISREGARD

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
LOS(A)	M	S	5

Disregard is a fascinating yet subtle mind-affecting spell. It manipulates and redirects attention, similar to the way people get so hyperfocused on a trideo show that they aren't aware of anything happening around them. It alters both perception and memory, making designated individuals unimportant to those affected by the spell.

For example, a police officer affected by Disregard could show a picture of a suspect to the actual suspect and ask if they'd seen themselves all without recognizing them. The suspect is not invisible—they're simply not important to the officer and not relevant to the task at hand. When the spell ends, the officer won't remember any details of their time under its influence.

- > Aw crap! This thing got into the Illuminati private collection! Need to shore up some wards.
- > PRH
- > I'm going to try something different and lay out some digital breadcrumbs to a honeypot instead of chasing it.
- > Slamm-O!

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

When a magician casts Disregard, they select one subject who will not be affected by the spell and will be ignored by those who are. They can select additional subjects; each one beyond the first increases the Drain Value by 1.

The spellcaster rolls Sorcery + Magic; every target in the spell area (or who enters the area while the spell is sustained) resists with Willpower + Intuition. Those who fail to resist the spell ignore most things happening around them—nothing seems to matter.

A guard on duty, for example, might simply wave at the subjects, or even be absent-mindedly friendly toward them, but not stop them from walking by.

Targets affected by the spell have difficulty remembering details from the time they were under its influence. Net hits become the threshold for memory tests when trying to remember specific details (p. 67, SR6).

The spell can be broken for targets if:

- Someone directly attempts to harm an affected person. Self-preservation automatically breaks this spell.
- Someone moving through the spell area glitches or critically glitches on a test. That could cause them to do something weird and noticeable enough that it can't be ignored.
- A sudden change in the environment (fire, gunfire, fire and gunfire, alarms) gives targets a second chance to resist the spell. They gain a point of Edge to use on this roll.
- Interference with a target's job allows them to resist the spell again. This could mean runners attempting to open a door that a guard is trying to keep closed or stealing a car from a garage a valet is watching. The gamemaster decides how much interference justifies to a re-roll.

translucence! It's so clear, you'd swear it wasn't even there.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Looking Glass is opposed by Object Resistance (p. 129, SR6).

Drain is one-half the Structure rating (p. 113, SR6) of the object, rounded up (minimum 2).

Any object affected by Looking Glass allows for line of sight to objects or persons on the other side of the object.

Looking Glass doesn't provide any illumination—just transparency.

MAGIC FINGERS

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
LOS	P	S	4

Magic Fingers creates psychokinetic force with enough precision to mimic the movement of hands. Handy for all those hard-to-reach places!

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The Magic Fingers spell does not fully replicate fine motor skills. Do not attempt watch repair, surgery, or bomb defusing with Magic Fingers.

Within a one-meter-diameter sphere, the magician has a pair of invisible hands with which they can perform various actions.

With a Shift Area Minor Action, the sphere can be moved to a location within the magician's line of sight.

When the hands attempt to do something, it uses the relevant skill rating of the caster combined with an attribute equal to the caster's Sorcery test net hits.

Edge cannot be gained or spent when performing an action through Magic Fingers.

MAKEOVER

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
Touch	P	P	4

Can't have a new wardrobe without a new do! Makeover can help color-coordinate nails, mascara, and hair with today's outfit. Feel like an autumn this week when you're actually a winter? Makeover can make the adjustment before you step out the door.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Makeover requires a willing subject.

After rolling the Sorcery test, consult the Makeover Results Table for results.

Makeover can create a coating for certain individual surfaces such as hair and nails that lasts for (caster's Magic rating) hours on a living subject. It can only be cast once every twenty-four hours on a particular subject. During this time, the material won't chip, fade, or wash off. After this time, it will then wear off through normal day-to-day routine.

Makeover cannot treat any medical conditions but can cover them up, provided the magician achieved enough hits (2 or more).

While the spell is in effect, the subject can gain 1 Edge for social tests thanks to the changes in their appearance.

MAKEOVER RESULTS TABLE

NET HITS	RESULT
1	Hair, horns, and nails are cleaned and groomed. Dirt and dried blood are removed from the skin. Breath is minty fresh.
2	Monocolor paints can be applied, generally chosen to match an outfit. Includes eyeshadow and coverup for blemishes. Hair can be trimmed/removed.
3	Patterned paints and makeup applied, including smoothing calluses, evening out nails and horns, softening the skin.
4+	A complete mani-pedi with any imaginable design for the nails and horns. Hair is dyed and permed however you like. You looking for tight curls? You got them. And full-spectrum makeup allowing a range from professional Halloweeners to femme/homme fatal.

- > I think I prefer Makeover over Fashion. It's not that one is better than the other, I just think I have good fashion sense and just need help in case I forgot to shave, or I had garlic for lunch.
- > PRH
- > I like Fashion, since you can change cut as well as color, which the polymers can't match.
- > Slamm-O!

MOB MOOD

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
LOS(A)	M	S	5

MOB MIND

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
LOS(A)	M	S	5

Do you want to spread the joy you feel to others? How about animosity toward someone? With Mob Mood, you can adjust the general feelings of the people in an area. With Mob Mind, you can give the same general thought to people in an area. So when you're happy and you know it, then wave your hands so everyone can show it with Mob Mood and Mob Mind!

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Targets in the area of effect resist the spell with Willpower + Logic.

If Mob Mood is successful, the targets' current feelings are adjusted by a new emotional state (happy, angry, sad, etc.). The more hits, the more intense the new emotional state. This can be disruptive to the subjects (applying a -1 dice pool penalty to tests involving active skills for every 2 net hits). Gamemasters can adjust the actual penalty when needed, such as reducing it when actions are based on the new emotion.

If Mob Mind is successful, for every 2 net hits, the targets' minds are adjusted from their current attitudes toward a subject chosen by the magician (including themselves) in the direction the magician wants. There are four basic attitude levels: Hostile, Dislike, Neutral, and Friendly. The caster can adjust the targets' attitude toward a specific subject, or more than one if they got enough net hits. This new attitude can affect social Edge (p. 98, SR6) while the spell is active.

The caster has no control over what actions the subjects take with their new mentality.

If either Mob Mood or Mob Mind gain 5+ net hits, the caster can make a Con + Charisma vs. Intuition + Willpower test; if successful, the caster has created a grunt group (p. 114, SR6) to start a riot, bar fight, protest, etc.

- ▶ Decrypted Layer [Under Pressure]
- ▶ Decrypted Layer [Here We Go Again]
- ▶ Decrypted Layer [One Day More]
- ▶ Decrypted Layer [I Wanna Be Sedated]
- ▶ Hello, I see that you are interested in Magic. I'm going to help you. I found this Spell!
- ▶ Grimmy the Grimoire



LOKI'S MUSICAL NUMBER

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
LOS(A)	M	S	5

Ever get an earworm that you just can't get rid of? Try passing it along to others, along with a singalong vibes and dance moves. Loki's musical number brings a party anywhere you are! Instant Bollywood scene!

- ▶ All right! That's it! Slamm-O! You better catch a flight over here in five minutes to physically purge this abomination, or your child will be stuck with an oak tree for a father! Sorry folks, this madness has to end.
- ▶ PRH

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Subjects in the area of the spell can be willing or unwilling participants. Unwilling participants can resist the spell with Willpower + Magic.

If successful, subjects have a low-level psychic connection with one another and the magician. Through this link, music can be heard by the subjects, and they gain mystical coordination of physical actions in time with the music.

Unwilling subjects who failed to resist the spell cannot voluntarily leave the spell's area of effect.

The caster or a willing subject must spend a Major Action to make a Con (Performance) skill test every combat round or the spell breaks.

If net hits exceed targets' Willpower, the caster can use a Minor Action to direct those targets to make a Teamwork test. Their next Major Action must be an Assist action (p. 42, SR6).

The Assist action becomes a Minor Action between willing subjects so long as they spend their Major Action with a Con (Performance) skill test; only 1 Assist action can be performed per person per Teamwork test.

All of this only occurs while the spell is in effect.



ELEMENTS OF MAGIC

FORMULAS FOR SUCCESS

POSTED BY: LYRAN

All right, I want to keep this casual for the guests I've invited here. All of you have at least dabbled in spell formula design; some of you have made some good money selling proprietary designs. I thought we could benefit from a sort of spell-writer's group, as it were, to share tips, ask questions, and support each other.

So let me start with this area of discussion: Are you pantsers or are you planners? That is, do you figure out what you want a spell to do, then work in a way to build to that result, or do you just start combining effects together to see what happens?

- › I know I'm supposed to be a planner. That way of thinking has been drilled into me. And I understand the virtue of it, I do. But

there are a lot of spellcasters out there, and a lot of corporate nuyen going into spell design, so the solid basics of spellcraft are pretty well covered. If you want something new, you have to think really different, and that can mean experimentation. And the whole point of experimentation is that you try something without being sure what will happen.

- › Frosty
- › I think the fair answer is that I want to be at a place where I can be a planner all the time. That requires both a lack of desperation and an extremely solid grounding of the workings of magic. You can't truly plan what you'll do with magic unless you know its full potential, just as an architect can't explore the full possibilities of buildings unless they know how all the materials they work with might behave, and the various ways of making them hold together. Have I tried a few offbeat things in the past just to see what would happen? Of course. I do that with decreasing frequency, though, as I have put a lot of effort into not having to function that way.
- › Winterhawk

- I'm trying to reform. Really, I am. I've been on a sort of bender for a few years, spending a lot of time with people who have done things I've never thought of and a few things **no one** ever should have thought of. It's been sobering, because I've seen the damage they've done to others and to themselves. Not that they recognize that last part. They don't see what they're becoming, and that's terrifying.

Still, the things they've managed to do ...

- Elijah

Next topic: What troubles have you encountered in making a spell at least a little transferable? My early designs were entirely idiosyncratic—no one could cast them besides me, even when I tried to share. I had to realize that I had some assumptions in my worldview that simply didn't translate to others.

Here's an example: For upbringing-related reasons that are too complicated to unpack here, I had a period of my life where I associated physical illness with moral weakness. That means every time I worked on a spell formula to address disease—curing or causing it—it was infected with my belief that I was building up or deteriorating the moral character of my target. The spells worked for me because they traveled through my distorted world view. When a caster tried them without making my perceptual mistakes, the spells didn't work. In order to make my designs more universal, I had to see reality better and see disease as it was, totally separated from character.

- This isn't going to sound great, but I'm going to say it anyway: Matching the perceptions of others, or what they call "reality," is one way to deal with the problem Lyran describes, but another way of dealing with it is just finding more people who think like you.
- Haze
- The fact that Haze might have found people who think like him is very upsetting.
- Jimmy No
- Another thing I've found that helps is cutting the fat. I wanted to do my own oxygenate spell, and I had an idea about using the carbon dioxide we exhale. Plants synthesize water and carbon dioxide and end with food and oxygen, so why not just replicate that with magic? Because it's really fraggin' hard to make all the moving parts work right. Sub-molecular magic is a **pain**. Want to know what's easier? Using mana to summon oxygen. The direct route is often the quickest.
- Elijah

Last thought for now. When you're designing a spell, does it ever feel like different parts of it are fighting each other? And if so, what did you do about it?

Here's one example. I was trying to make a spell that would manipulate a lock when you cast it so

you could open it smoothly. But every time I used magic to shift things around in a lock, the thing would keep thunking and clicking, which is not what you want when you're on a stealth mission. I tried to slow it down, but that became like tearing a candy wrapper slowly when you're in a college lecture—the noise gets prolonged, so it seems even louder. I thought about combining a silence component to the spell, but that was going to end up being a pretty draining spell for a fairly minor result. The solution? Use Shape Wood or Shape Plastic, make the hole in the door you want, climb through, and then restore the door. Sometimes the solution is realizing an existing spell can help you out just fine.

- I've tried multi-elemental spells before, and they're a bitch. I want to make someone burning hot and ice cold at the same time, but instead I just send a blast of lukewarm air at them. Opposing elements just do **not** like to combine. I haven't found a solution besides either casting spells one after another, or having two spellcasters.
- Frosty
- You're all way too fixated on control. Sometimes you need to cast a spell where even you don't know what will happen. I'm not talking about some Chaotic World illusion, I'm talking about actual chaos. Attract one element, repel another, shape a third, and see what happens when you do all of those things at the same time.
- Haze
- That may not be **the** way, but I believe in its power as **a** way.
- Many-Names

THE POSSIBLE WORLD

One of the core ideas of Sixth World magic, dating practically back to the Awakening, is that you can do practically anything with it—you just have to figure out how. Leaders in the field of magic have been dedicated to developing new spell formulas, and selling new and existing spells to each new generation of spellcasters is the core business of many a magic-focused retailer.

This chapter is about allowing you to join in that ongoing process.

The system in this chapter is the system used to build spells for *Shadowrun*, *Sixth World* and this book, and it can be used to build new spells. More combinations are possible—it's up to you and your gamemaster to determine what you can do.

DESIGNING A SPELL

The structure of spells is based on the spell type, with each spell ingredient adding different effects

to what the spell does. The ingredients bring a set amount of drain to the spell—the more ingredients are chosen, the higher the drain will be. Once the ingredients are selected, players and gamemasters should work together to define the full effects of the spell, including the function of net hits on the Sorcery test.

That's the basic process—now let's break it down step by step.

STEP 1:

SELECT A SPELL TYPE

There are five types of spells in *Shadowrun*. Selecting one of these types sets the basic parameters for how the spell will work and what function it will perform. Each type has a base test used for that type of spell, a prime function for net hits, and a base level of drain. The types of spells are as follows:

COMBAT

The purpose of a Combat spell is simple: cause damage, unconsciousness, or death.

Base test: Compare Attack and Defense Ratings to determine Edge distribution, then roll Sorcery + Magic vs. Willpower + Intuition (Direct Combat) or Sorcery + Magic vs. Reaction + Willpower (Indirect Combat).

Net hits: Increase damage by 1 per net hit.

Drain value: 1

DETECTION

Detection spells find things that normal senses don't perceive, often either extending an existing sense or adding a new sense.

Base test: Roll Sorcery + Magic vs. Body + Willpower when the target is sentient, and Object Resistance when they are not.

Net hits: See Detection Spells Results Table, p. 134, SR6.

Drain value: 1

HEALTH

Health spells attempt to undo what Combat spells do, patching up wounds or otherwise repairing what was damaged. This can be as varied as the many ways the Sixth World has to damage people.

Base test: Roll Sorcery + Magic with a threshold of [5 – target's Essence].

Net hits: Net hits affect Stun condition monitor.

Drain value: 2

ILLUSION

Illusion spells make the unreal as real as possible to distract, horrify, or otherwise prevent people from noticing you or punching you in the face.

Base test: Roll Sorcery + Magic vs. Willpower + Intuition or Logic.

Net hits: Increase the threshold to recognize the illusion by 1 per net hit.

Drain value: 1

MANIPULATION

Manipulation spells tinker with reality, making it move, twist, or perhaps appear out of nowhere.

Base test: Roll Sorcery + Magic vs. Object Resistance for objects. For spells controlling or affecting thoughts, the resistance test is Willpower + Logic.

Net hits: Increase the square meters of material affected, or the duration of control in Combat Turns.

Drain value: 1

STEP 2:

SELECT INGREDIENTS

Below are the ingredients for the spells. Any number of ingredients can be used; where noted, some ingredients can be added multiple times. The number of ingredients only affects the Drain Value; it does not affect the Karma cost of learning the spell. Note that some parts of descriptions are bolded to note critical functions of some ingredients that are needed to achieve widely used effects.

ACID

Either add the chemical elemental damage effect (p. 109, SR6) or counter it. Drain Value: +2

AFFECT ACCURACY

Makes the spell more likely to hit. Increase Attack Rating of the spell by 2 for each 1 point of additional Drain Value. Only used for Combat spells.

AFFECT LIVING THINGS

This ingredient is needed to make the spell have an effect on people, living plants, animals, etc. That means it's a necessary ingredient for pretty much any Combat or Health spells. If added to the Combat base, it makes the spell do Stun damage. If added to a Health spell, it repairs Physical damage. Drain: +1

AFFECT MINDS

This ingredient makes the spell able to have effects specific to sapient intelligences, such as the ability to read or alter thoughts. This is not needed for all illusions; just spells that directly dig into or tamper with the workings of the mind, including causing or countering statuses such as Confused, Frightened, and Panicked. The Affect Living Things ingredient must also be selected for the spell. Drain: +2

AFFECT SPECIFIC TYPE OF TEST

When this ingredient is selected, choose a type of test. This has to be narrower than a single skill—for example, Blade attack would be appropriate, but Close Combat attack would not be. Similarly, a Lockpicking test could be selected, but not any Engineering test. All tests of the selected type get +2 or -2 dice per 1 point of Drain the caster adds.

AFFECT SPEED

This ingredient is used to apply or counter statuses that affect movement speeds, such as Hobbled, Immobilized, or Stilled. The spell can only affect one of these statuses, which must be chosen when it is selected. It can be selected multiple times. Drain: +1

AFFECT TECHNOLOGY

The spell affects technology (including cameras and microphones) in the same way it is seen by living people. This cannot be combined with Combat spells to make them have a greater effect on technology. Drain: +1

ALTER LIGHT

The light levels in the area of effect are raised or lowered by 1 level per point of Drain Value added. Use the Light Levels table, p. 118, SR6.

ALTER SOUND

The sound levels in the area of effect are raised or lowered by 1 level per point of Drain Value added. Use the Sound Levels table on this page.

SOUND LEVELS TABLE

TOTAL SILENCE	HUSH	MILD	LOUD	DEAFENING
What is says!	Whispers	Level of normal conversation	Crowded restaurant, nightclub	Rock concert, airport runway

ANIMATE

This spell gives movement to otherwise inanimate material. An ingredient that selects a specific type of material (such as metal, plastic, or wood) must also be selected. Use the Volume Reference Table (p. 139, SR6) for this spell. Drain: +1

AREA EFFECT

This ingredient makes the spell affect a certain area, rather than just a targeted individual. The base area of effect is a two-meter sphere. Spells that affect a certain volume of substance to begin with do not need the Area Effect ingredient added

to them. Must be used with the Ranged ingredient. Drain: +1

ATTRACT/REPEL

This ingredient attracts or repels a certain type of material at a rate of one meter per second. At least one type of material must be selected. If two types of material are selected, the attraction is limited to them—they attract each other. Drain: +1 for each type of material affected. If the material has a structure rating of 4 or more and is not in discrete units of the needed weight, it does not move.

ATTRIBUTE BOOST

A specific attribute must be selected for this spell. The maximum attribute bonus is +4, and Edge, Essence, Magic, and Resonance cannot be affected by the spell. Drain: Caster rolls a Sorcery + Magic (5 - Essence) test; each net hit increases the attribute and the Drain Value of the spell by 1.

COLD

Either add the cold elemental damage effect (p. 110, SR6) or counter it. This ingredient can also be used to shape or animate ice, which has a power level of 2. Drain: +2

CORRODE

The Corrosive status (p. 52, SR6) is either added to a person or countered through the use of this ingredient. Drain: +1

CREATE MATERIAL

This ingredient channels mana into some sort of physical substance. An ingredient representing what material the mana becomes (e.g., metal, plastic, wood) must also be selected. Drain: +1

DISORIENT

The Dazed status (p. 52, SR6) is either added to a person or countered through the use of this ingredient. Drain: +1

ELECTRICITY

Either add the electricity elemental damage effect (p. 109, SR6) or counter it. Drain: +2

FABRIC

The spell focuses on fabric for animating, attracting, creating, shaping, or other purposes. The power index for fabric is 0. Drain: +1



FIRE

Either add the fire elemental damage effect (p. 110, SR6) or counter it. Drain: +2

GAIN INFORMATION

This ingredient is used to gain information about an unknown object. A certain class of objects is selected with this ingredient, such as enchanted items or technical objects. Each net hit tells the caster a piece of information about the target. Drain: +2

HARDEN/WEAKEN

This ingredient changes the core strength of a targeted object. The structure rating increases or decreases by a point for each point of Drain Value added.

INCREASE POWER

The capabilities of a piece of technology equipment gain a short-term boost. It is treated as having a Device Rating 2 points higher than normal (with all associated boosts), but when tests are made using the device, the wild die must be used as part of the dice pool. Drain: +2

LINGUISTICS

This ingredient allows the spell to affect the use and perception of language. Drain: +1

METAL

The spell focuses on metal for animating, attracting, creating, shaping, or other purposes. The power index for metal is 4. Drain: +4

NARROW TARGET

This spell can only affect certain types of individuals, usually defined by metatype. Drain: -1

NAUSEA

This ingredient can be used to apply or counter the Nauseated status (p. 52, SR6). Drain: +1

PETRIFICATION

This ingredient applies or counters the Petrified status (p. 53, SR6). Drain: +1

PIERCE

This ingredient allows the spell to reduce pro-

protective measures used against it, such as Fire Resistance or Cold Resistance. It reduces these defenses by half their rating, rounded up. Drain: +1

PLANAR EFFECT

This ingredient focuses the spell's energy on the astral plane. It can be used to apply or counter the Hazed status (p. 52, SR6). Drain: +1

PLASTIC

The spell focuses on plastic and other synthetic materials for animating, attracting, creating, shaping, or other purposes. The power index for plastic is 1. Drain: +2

POISON

This ingredient either adds or counters the Poisoned status (p. 53, SR6). Drain: +2

RANGED

This ingredient allows spells to be cast at range instead of touch. Drain: +1 for Combat spells, free for other spells. Cannot normally be used for Detection and Health spells.

RUBBER

The spell focuses on rubber for animating, attracting, creating, shaping, or other purposes. The power index for rubber is 1. Drain: +2

SHAPE MATERIAL

This ingredient allows the spell to change the shape of existing material. The spell needs to specify some type of material, such as metal, plastic, or wood. One cubic meter of material can be shaped per net hit. The object to be shaped does not need to be entirely constructed of the material, but it should be predominantly made of that material (for example, a wooden desk could be altered by a Shape Wood spell, though nails and drawer slides might not be affected, but a pot with a wooden handle would only have the handle affected by the spell. This ingredient could be selected multiple times for a broader range of effects. Drain: +1

SKILL BOOST

A specific skill must be selected for this spell. The maximum skill bonus is +4. Drain: Caster rolls a Sorcery + Magic (5 – Essence) test; each net hit increases the skill and the Drain Value of the spell by 1.

STAMINA

This allows the spell to focus on resisting hunger or thirst, per the rules on p. 30. Drain: +1

STONE

The spell focuses on stone and related materials (such as brick or concrete) for animating, attracting, creating, shaping, or other purposes. The power index for stone is 3. Drain: +3

VEIL

This ingredient adds or counters an element of concealment to the spell. This means instilling or countering the Invisible status or the Silent status (if you want both statuses to be affected, this ingredient needs to be selected twice). Drain: +1

WALLOP

This ingredient is used for Combat spells and converts the Stun damage to Physical. Drain: +1

WATER

This ingredient applies or counters the Wet status. Drain: +1

WOOD

The spell focuses on wood and related materials (such as paper) for animating, attracting, creating, shaping, or other purposes. The power index for wood is 2. Drain: +2

POWER INDEX

For purposes of magic, different substances are given a Power Index to delineate their different strength and effects. The Power Index is used as the damage value when the substance is animated, and also shows the resistance the animated substance offers if someone tries to impede its movement. The person trying to impede or alter the animated material's movement rolls Body + Strength with a threshold of the net hits on the Spellcasting test plus the Power Index of the material.

STEP 3:

CLASSIFY SPELL

Each spell fits into certain categories, and ingredients selected often determine which categories are assigned. Some assignments cut across all categories; others are specific to certain spell categories.

GENERAL

RANGE

Range of a spell is Touch unless it has the Ranged ingredient; that ingredient gives a spell the LOS range. The Area Effect ingredient changes the range to LOS(A).

DURATION

This quality is not assigned by ingredients; instead, it should be assigned based on the spell's function. Combat spells have an Instantaneous duration; Health spells generally have a Permanent duration. Most other spells have a Sustained duration; Limited duration is used for spells where net hits are best applied to extending the duration (including many Manipulation spells).

TYPE

This is Mana, unless at least one of the following ingredients is selected:

- Affect technology
- Harden/weaken
- Poison
- Wallop
- Any elemental effect
- Any material
- Any effect that moves or shapes physical substances

DRAIN VALUE

This is determined by the base spell type and the total of the Drain Value of the selected ingredients.

COMBAT SPELLS

Any spells with an element or material as an ingredient are Indirect spells; others are Direct.

ILLUSION SPELLS

Spells with the alter light or alter sound ingredients are Single Sense illusions. Spells with the affect minds ingredient are Multi Sense.

STEP 4:**FINAL TOUCHES**

The ingredients, once combined, will form the basic shape of the spell, but some finishing touches are required to make it fully functional. The spells in this book and *Shadowrun, Sixth World* provide guidelines on specifics like what tests should be employed, what the spell's duration is, and what net hits do. Net hits should help the spell be more powerful—the better you roll, the more the spell should do, so find a way to apply net hits to the spell's function.

EXAMPLES: EXISTING SPELLS

The spells in *Shadowrun, Sixth World* were made using this system; we'll walk through a couple of examples to show how this process led to the spells in the book.

FIREBALL

A classic spell for a reason, few things are as satisfying as exploding a ball of fire in the faces of your enemies. Here's how the spell was constructed:

STEP 1: SELECT A SPELL TYPE

Fireball is a Combat spell, so that type is selected. That sets the base Drain Value at 1.

STEP 2: SELECT INGREDIENTS

Fireball includes the following ingredients: affect living things (to make it damage people; +1 DV); area effect (to blast an area; +1 DV); fire (to include Fire elemental damage; +2 DV); ranged (to prevent you from having to make a fireball explode on a spot you touch; +1 DV).

Those ingredients add a total of 5 DV to the spell.

STEP 3: CLASSIFY SPELL

The spell has the area effect and ranged ingredients, so its range is LOS(A).

It has an elemental effect, so it's a Physical spell, and it's Indirect Combat.

The base DV for a Combat spell plus the value from its ingredients make the final Drain Value 6.

STEP 4: FINAL TOUCHES

The main adjustment on the final touches is to make the net hits increase the level of the Burning status, as that simulates the intensity of the fire from the blast after a good roll.

LEVITATE**STEP 1: SELECT A SPELL TYPE**

Since Levitate is about making physical objects hover in midair, it's a Manipulation spell. That makes the base DV 1.

STEP 2: SELECT INGREDIENTS

Achieving the intended effect of this spell is a little tricky. What makes it work is the idea that things can levitate if they are repelled from the Earth, and the Earth is largely made of rock. So we start with the stone elemental effect (+3 DV) and add repel (+1) so that the Earth will push things away (though we tweak the mechanics of repel to make steady hovering and non-movement possible, rather than constant pushing away). We want people to be able to levitate, so we add the affect living things ingredient (+1 DV). Adding the ranged ingredient for free makes it easier to make things float.

The ingredients add 5 to the DV.



STEP 3: CLASSIFY SPELL

The spell has the ranged ingredient, so its range is LOS.

It's a Manipulation spell, so the duration is sustained.

Since it affects a physical body by moving it, it's a Physical spell.

The Manipulation spell DV plus the value from the ingredients make the final DV 6.

STEP 4: FINAL TOUCHES

This is where we come up with a use of hits, the guideline is that net hits should make a spell more powerful—the more powerful a Levitate spell is, the more it should be able to lift. That means the rule is that for each hit, the spell can make 50 kilos of person or thing float. We also need to provide specifics for things such as moving the levitated object. The spell is more useful if the object can move, so we decide it can move at a rate of (caster's Magic rating) meters per combat round, and the movement requires the caster to spend a Minor Action.

EXAMPLES: NEW SPELLS

Now that we've looked at how some spells from the core book were assembled, let's look at how to make a brand new spell.

STEP 0: COME UP WITH A CONCEPT

Before we get into the nitty-gritty of the process, we need to have an idea of what we want a new spell to do. Ideally, it should fill a void in the existing spell catalog, provide some advantage to the magician that another spell can't deliver. Think about life in the Sixth World, what it's like for spellslinger surviving on the mean streets of the sprawl, huddled in a secondhand longcoat and hustling to get out of the acid rain. There's an idea—a spell to provide some shelter from the unfriendly and unpredictable elements, and make those long nights on the run a little more bearable. We'd name it "Weather Shield," but who are we kidding? Those wisecracking wizkids will just end up calling it "Comfort Zone."

STEP 1: SELECT A SPELL TYPE

Comfort Zone provides superb protection from the weather, but it's ultimately about keeping the body comfortable and avoiding unpleasant Wet and Chilled statuses. That makes it a Health spell, with a base DV of 2.

STEP 2: SELECT INGREDIENTS

The spell is meant to be cast on a person, so it needs the Affect Living Things ingredient (+1 DV). Ranged isn't an option for Health spells, but there's no need for it anyway. If all we cared about was stay-

ing dry, we might use the Attract/Repel ingredient to keep off the rain, but we want the spell to be strong enough to counter the Wet and Chilled statuses, so we choose Water (+1 DV) and Cold (+2 DV) ingredients instead.

The additional DV for these ingredients is +4.

STEP 3: CLASSIFY SPELL

Like most Health spells, its range is Touch.

It provides ongoing protection, so its duration is Sustained.

It has an elemental effect, so its type is Physical.

The Health spell base DV plus the value from the ingredients make its final DV 6.

STEP 4: FINAL TOUCHES

The original idea was a basic utility spell to keep the steady Seattle drizzle from seeping through your armor jacket—and we might have pulled that off as a simple Manipulation spell with the Attract/Repel ingredient—but hubris and the twisting, seductive path of spellcrafting led us instead to a fairly robust defense against inclement weather. It's time to consider what we can expect in return for that hefty Drain Value of 6.

The spell has the components for countering the Wet status and Cold elemental damage, so let's begin by looking at the potential effects of elemental cold (p. 110, SR6) and then the descriptions for Chilled (p. 51) and Wet (p. 53). Neither status has levels, so the spell should simply counter them if the subject already suffers from one or both, and prevent them from applying for as long as the spell is sustained.

So what use are net hits for this spell? Chilled and Wet statuses are simply countered, so let's go back to the environmental benefit. When casting a Health spell, you roll Sorcery + Magic against a threshold equal to [5 – target's Essence]. One hit should be sufficient to keep the subject comfortable and dry under normal conditions. Let's say that additional net hits protect the subject from increasingly harsh environments, as if their immediate surroundings were warmer (or cooler) by up to 5°C for every net hit.

We also need to think about how the spell might be adjusted. It can't use the Amp Up adjustment because it's not a Combat spell, and it can't use Increase Area or Shift Area because it's not an area effect spell. That was simple!

With all that set up, we write up the spell like this:

COMFORT ZONE

(HEALTH)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
Touch	P	S	6

Want to slow down pursuers, or cause chaos on the street? This spell specifically targets rubber,

pulling apart tires and making cars more difficult to control. When casting, target a specific tire and make a Sorcery + Magic (3) test. A successful test ruptures the tire; either the driver has to pull over or drive on a ruined wheel, which reduces the Acceleration by 1, the Speed Interval by 5, and the Top Speed by 10. Additionally, each net hit increases the Handling of the targeted vehicle by 1. If the original Handling is doubled or more, the vehicle must immediately make a Handling test to avoid crashing.

Let's do two more spells to make sure we have a feel for this process.

SPELL DESIGN TIPS

Here are things to keep in mind when designing spells.

- **Get gamemaster approval:** The gamemaster should always approve any custom spells you intend to use.
- **Use area effect cautiously:** Everyone wants an area effect spell, but that doesn't mean every spell should have that characteristic (for example, the Tire Shredder spell discussed in this chapter could cause a lot of chaos and gamemaster headaches if it affected an area rather than a single tire).
- **Net hits should only increase damage on Combat spells:** If a spell presents the possibility of doing damage, such as the Stone Fist spell below, net hits should not be used to increase the damage the fists deliver. Some other use should be found.

STONE FIST

STEP 0: COME UP WITH A CONCEPT

One of the things adepts can do is make their punches hit with greater effect. What if we made a spell that let mages temporarily make anyone's punch better? Let's give it a shot.

The elemental effect route is probably the best way to go here—let's make a spell that lets someone punch with the power of stone or metal. We'll work out which one as we go.

STEP 1: SELECT A SPELL TYPE

As with Tire Shredder, this spell manipulates reality, so we'll put it in the Manipulation category. The base DV is 1.

STEP 2: SELECT INGREDIENTS

We'll use the Touch range here, as making contact with the hands you want to enchant seems to be a good way to avoiding a glitch that might give the power to the wrong person.

The Affect Living Things (+1 DV) ingredient is a must. Then we need to decide what element to use. Plastic hands might be fun, but they would

provide too little damage. Metal would land a powerful blow, but the +4 DV might be more than we want for this spell. Stone seems like a good middle ground—and Stone Fist sounds like a cool spell name, so we'll go with that, adding 3 DV. That should do what we want it to.

The ingredients add 4 to the DV.

STEP 3: CLASSIFY SPELL

The spell has a Touch range.

It's a Manipulation spell, but we will use the net hits for something besides duration, so duration is Sustained.

Since it has stone, which is an elemental ingredient, it's a Physical spell.

The Manipulation spell base DV of 1 plus the value from the ingredients make the DV 5.

STEP 4: FINAL TOUCHES

We know that the spell gives the target hands of stone. The power index of stone is 3, so the base damage value with Stone Fists is 3S, and we will add 1 to that for targets with a Strength of 5 or more, to represent the force of the blow. Net hits could then be used to increase the Attack Rating of the attack.

This spell's final form is then like this:

STONE FIST

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
Touch	P	S	5

Casting this spell hardens the target's fists, making their punches feel like they are made with blocks of solid stone. Raise the Unarmed Combat damage of the target to 3S; if their Strength is 5 or more, make it 4S. Hits on the Spellcasting test increase the Attack Rating of the attack with the fists by 1 per hit.

For a final example, let's make another Health spell!

DISENTANGLE

STEP 0: COME UP WITH A CONCEPT

Increase Reflexes is great for seizing the initiative in combat, but we could use a spell to help people speed up when circumstances are slowing them down. We'll call it Disentangle.

STEP 1: SELECT A SPELL TYPE

As mentioned above, this will be a Health spell, making its base DV 2.

STEP 2: SELECT INGREDIENTS

Affect Living Things (+1 DV) is a critical ingredient here, and the other primary element is Affect Speed. If we want this to be a versatile spell, we can choose multiple statuses for it to affect. We decide Hobbled and Immobilized are the two we want to counter, so we add 2 DV.

The ingredients add up to +3 DV.

STEP 3: CLASSIFY SPELL

Since it is a Health spell, it has a Touch range and its duration is Permanent.

Since it has the Affect Living Things ingredient, it's a Physical spell.

The Health base plus the ingredients makes the DV 5.

STEP 4: FINAL TOUCHES

To look at the exact effect of the spell, we should examine some of the ways these statuses are imposed. Hobbled can come from physical injury (including a misstep as part of a glitch), while Immobilized might come from toxins or a power such as Binding or Engulf. For magical effects, we can roll Sorcery + Magic with a threshold of the Magic rating of the being that imposed the effect, the Power of the toxin, or the base damage value of the attack that imposed the status (if more than one of these apply, choose the highest). Net hits can serve as bonus dice on tests to resist the Immobilized status if the same source attempts to immobilize the target within 5 combat rounds, or to ignore the pain that otherwise might impose the Hobbled status.

The final stats look like this:

DISENTANGLE

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV
Touch	P	P	5

Slowed down by magic, a critter, or something else? Use Disentangle to keep moving. Touch someone with the Hobbled or Immobilized status and roll Sorcery + Magic, with a threshold of the Magic rating of the being that imposed the status, the Power of a toxin, or the base damage rating of the weapon that inflicted it (if more than one of these apply, select the highest). For targets with the Immobilized or Hobbled status, net hits serve as bonus dice on tests to resist the status or ignore the pain that might impose the status.



A CONGRESS OF SPIRITS

THE SPIRIT WORLD TODAY

POSTED BY: ASIKING N'O G'LORI

The world of spirits is not the same as it was just a few years ago. Shifts in the manosphere, the causes of which are still unknown, have altered some of our most basic understandings about the spirits that inhabit the Sixth World. Much like the shifts back in the '50s and '60s with UMT, which saw the core shift in hermetic and shamanic spirits, another subtle alteration in the dynamic is sliding into the realm of arcana. Spirits are growing in independence, and binding them to our world and our wills is becoming more challenging.

Their level of unity and knowledge about our world grows with each summoning, and we are learning that they remember the things they discover. They know how they and others of their kind are treated. It doesn't matter if it's a spirit of

fire or water or even the oh-so-familiar kindred spirit; they know and sense how we regard them and act toward them when we invite them into our realm. Our treatment across traditions is not universal, which means this seems to be a spirit world evolution that reflects the UMT revolution. Where once the world of spirits was easily split between the spirits of nature and the elemental spirits, now they blend and blur, as if shaped by our understanding and treatment. This change in our thinking is reflected in the multiverse, and now we face a world of spirits who, while they do not remember details, auras, and actions, *do* remember the intent. This intent is imprinted on their conjurers and can be recognized by all spirits, for good or ill.

As a final note, we have seen so many arcane events of late, and so often in recent times have the various metaplanes interacted with each other in ways that change all involved worlds. These collisions and the shift in mana, spirit relations, and mundane/arcane interactions have to mean some-

thing. While we at the street level see the twisting and devastation, the powers that guide our world see none of it. We are the front line—the bottom line—and the only line that will fight off trouble. Those above us seek to only to exploit and monetize, not fix.

I'm not a believer, but pride and greed as deadly sins seems an easy manipulation point for the modern corp mentality.

SPIRIT CATALOG

The core rulebook covers the basic summoned spirit types. For those players and gamemasters who want to stray from the basics, a few additional spirit types are included here for variety and to round out the traditions offered in this tome. If a player wants their character to summon a different type of spirit due to their own personal tradition and arcane philosophy, the gamemaster should be open to the idea as long as the player can generate a good story for their character. The basic shamanic and hermetic traditions of the core rule book are broad guidelines in a world of highly versatile and divergent magic.

PLANT SPIRITS

The flora of the Sixth World is highly varied and vibrant. Plant life is also deeply connected to the psyche of metahumanity, which means the spirit world reflects this diversity. From thorn-covered humanoids to Venus-flytrap-headed vine creatures, the forms and shapes of plant spirits are as varied as any other in the spirit realms.

PLANT SPIRITS

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	M	ESS
F+2	F-1	F	F+1	F	F-1	F	F	F	F

DR	I/ID	AC	CM	MOVE
F+2	(Fx2)/2D6	A1, I3	(Body/2)+8	10/15/+1

Astral Initiative and Actions: (F x 2) + 3D6, A1, I4
Skills: Astral, Close Combat, Exotic Ranged Weapon, Perception, Spellcasting
Powers: Astral Form, Concealment, Engulf, Fear, Guard, Magical Guard, Materialization, Sapience, Silence
Optional Powers: Accident, Confusion, Movement, Noxious Breath, Search
Attacks:
 Engulf [DV (F)P, AR (Fx3)/-/-/-/-]

GUARDIAN SPIRITS

With appearances ranging from avenging angels to Zulu warriors, guardian spirits are summoned to be the ultimate protectors. Driven by a warrior's code and strongly opposed to immoral tactics, these spirits come to their summoner's aid and defense but rarely bend a knee to a conjurer with a dark heart.

Guardian spirits will actively oppose and work at a maximum level of defiance against any conjurer with a negative Astral Reputation (p. 64).

GUARDIAN SPIRITS

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	M	ESS
F+1	F+2	F+3	F+2	F	F	F	F	F	F

DR	I/ID	AC	CM	MOVE
(Fx2)+1	(Fx2)+3/2D6	A1, I4	[(F+1)/2] + 8	10/15/+1

Astral Initiative and Actions: (F x 2) + 3D6, 1A, 4I
Skills: Astral, Close Combat, Exotic Ranged Weapon, Perception
Powers: Astral Form, Fear, Guard, Magical Guard, Materialization, Movement, Sapience
Optional Powers: Animal Control, Concealment, Elemental Attack (conjurer chooses element during summoning), Natural Weapon, Psychokinesis, Skill Specialization (choose any Close Combat skill specialization)
Attacks:
 Optional Natural Weapon [Close Combat, DV [(F/2)+1]P, (Fx2)/-/-/-/-]

GUIDANCE SPIRITS

Sometimes summoning is not about service but instead about seeking the advice of a wise sage. While the direction they deliver may come in the form of a riddle or masked in allusions, a guidance spirit rarely feels their job is complete until they have offered wise counsel.

The advice of a guide is directly related to the Astral Reputation of the conjurer (p. 64). The lower the score, the more cryptic and harder to understand the guidance will be, while the opposite is true for higher Astral Reputation scores.

GUIDANCE SPIRITS

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	M	ESS
F+3	F-1	F+2	F+1	F	F	F	F	F	F

DR	I/ID	AC	CM	MOVE
F+3	(Fx2)+2/2D6	A1, I3	(F/2) + 8	10/15/+1

Astral Initiative and Actions: (F x 2) + 3D6, A1, I4
Skills: Astral, Close Combat, Perception, Spellcasting
Powers: Astral Form, Confusion, Divining, Guard, Magical Guard, Materialization, Sapience, Search, Shadow Cloak
Optional Powers: Engulf, Enhanced Senses (Hearing, Low-Light Vision, Thermographic Vision, or Smell), Fear, Influence

TASK SPIRITS

Work, creation, innovation, invention, effort—these are all concepts intimately connected with the metahuman psyche for centuries. Since metahumanity first shifted to urban civilization, the various jobs of the world have been split, dissected, and narrowed. The spirit realm has mirrored those changes, creating a realm of spirits all skilled in differing ways. When you seek the aid of a task spirit, be sure you know the help you are seeking, for a spirit skilled in cobbling cannot help you make the perfect cobbler.

Task spirits are willing workers, and when successfully summoned, offer an additional service to their conjurer. When bound they offer an extra task point as long as the conjurer's Astral Reputation (p. 64) is positive.

TASK SPIRITS

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	M	ESS
F	F	F+2	F+2	F	F	F	F	F	F
DR	I/ID	AC	CM	MOVE					
F	(Fx2)+2/2D6	A1, I3	(Fx2)+8	10/15/+1					

Astral Initiative and Actions: (F x 2) + 3D6, 1A, 4I

Skills: Astral, Close Combat, Perception

Powers: Accident, Astral Form, Binding, Materialization, Movement, Sapience, Search, Skill (choose one from Biotech, Electronics, Engineering, Outdoors, or Piloting and a Specialization in the chosen skill as well as an appropriate Knowledge Skill)

Optional Powers: Concealment, Enhanced Senses (Hearing, Low-Light Vision, Thermographic Vision, or Smell), Influence, Psychokinesis, Skill (choose an additional skillset as above)

FREE SPIRITS

Let's talk about the spirits that live in the Sixth World free of any bonds to a conjurer. Perhaps they gained this freedom from the death of the individual who summoned them, or they managed to break those mystical bonds without having to off their summoner, or they found a way to come over on their own and have no intention of leaving.

FREEDOM AT LAST

Free spirits come from two primary sources. There are those who had been long or repeatedly bound to this plane who found a window to escape captivity, and those who found a way to cross the barriers of the metaplanes to establish a home here. Your average summoned spirit is not likely to become free unless it is powerful (Force of 6+) or experiences some strong emotional event that makes it see our world as a better home than their metaplane. If both happen to occur, they have really found a home in our reality.

In terms of the game, these rules leave the chances of a spirit becoming free by either method in the hands of the gamemaster rather than the roll of a die. If the story would benefit from a free spirit, bring one in. Free spirits become individuals with their own drives and goals. They can become contacts, enemies, teammates, and innocent bystanders. They are as much a part of the Sixth World as dragons and shadowrunners and should be treated and utilized as such.

When a spirit becomes free, their attributes and powers all stay the same as they were when freed, and they gain an Edge attribute equal to their Force. This attribute can be used just how a standard character would. Free spirits gain additional Edge as per standard rules.

FREE SPIRIT EXAMPLE

Granite frequently summons and binds the same spirit of earth (who goes by the name of Rocky) throughout most of her running career, connecting with them dozens of times over the past year alone. During several of those encounters, Granite has chosen to free Rocky prior to the spirit being disrupted or banished, which saved the spirit from those traumas. During a run, Granite had Rocky use Concealment on every member of her team except herself. A focused burst of automatic gunfire severed Granite's consciousness and her hold over Rocky, freeing them from her service. Rocky, feeling a deep connection to Granite and many strong connections to our plane, chose to stay in order to watch over Granite. With this choice, a free spirit was born.

GAINED POWERS

Every free spirit is considered a full magician (p. 65, SR6) with the exception that they may never possess the Conjuring skill. If they use the Inhabitation power, they may only attempt astral projection from a vessel if the spirit has the Astral Projection power (p. 66) as well. When doing so, they leave the Inhabited subject in a state of suspended animation.

Also, when a spirit becomes free, it gains a number of new powers equal to its Edge attribute. After that, each time the spirit's Edge increases, whether through a Force increase or using Karma to raise Edge alone, the spirit also gains another new power. New powers can be chosen by the gamemaster to best fit their campaign.

In place of a power, the free spirit may instead choose any metamagic technique they can utilize that is available to metahuman initiates. Free spirits use Edge instead of initiate grade. Free spirits may also possess metamagics currently unknown to metahumanity, which can provide gamemasters with a unique opportunity to introduce new metamagical techniques.

FREE SPIRIT SERVICES

Free spirits do not normally owe services to anyone, but they can perform all the services of bound spirits if they choose to do so.

TRUE NAMES

The true name of a spirit is a well-kept secret. This name can trap the spirit into a level of servitude far beyond simple summoning and commands. The name itself is actually a complex, arcane formula that symbolizes the sum total of the spirit's essence and nature. Even though they possess such complexity, true names can be transcribed by using the Astral skill (Spirit Types specialization) into recognizable symbols. Those who possess a copy of a spirit formula can command the free spirit that the formula represents, regardless of their own arcane talent, meaning mundanes can control a free spirit by possessing their true name formula. Since this is so powerful,

and the strain on a spirit torn between masters is agonizing, they rarely allow more than one copy of their true name formula to exist. At least one copy of the spirit's true name formula must exist in the material world for the spirit to remain here.

If more than one individual has the true name formula and attempts to command the free spirit at the same time, even if the commands are not opposing, the two controllers make an opposed Willpower + Edge test. The spirit suffers damage equal to the difference in hits between the two rolls. This damage heals at a rate of 1 box per day. The healing rate can only be increased by providing the spirit Karma—spirits need five Karma per damage box repaired, given in a one-hour ceremony, to heal the damage.

LEARNING THE SPIRIT FORMULA (TRUE NAME)

There are four primary methods to gain access to a spirit formula: random discovery, a hunt for the physical anchor, a metaplanar quest, and an effort to design the formula.

RANDOM DISCOVERY

By the providence of the gamemaster, a player can gain the spirit formula or true name of a spirit. This is usually done in connection with a plot point or as an extremely valuable reward for a job. There are no rolls or rules here, just the gamemaster handing over control of this powerful being for the good or ill of the runner and their team. Which means it should be done carefully and prudently.

HUNT DOWN THE PHYSICAL LOCATION

A spirit's true name becomes physically imprinted on an object, a person, or even a place that was near the spirit when it first broke free. While this seems an easy find, most free spirits quickly relocate any object imprinted with their true name at the earliest opportunity. This physical true name is similar to an astral signature and can be identified with an Astral + Intuition (3) test once located. Translating the true name into a spirit formula requires a little time and effort with an Astral + Logic (spirit's Force x 5, 1 day) Extended test. Once developed, the spirit formula takes a form appropriate to the tradition of the mage transcribing it: a thaumaturgic formula for a hermetic mage, a totemic statuette for a shaman, and so forth.

METAPLANAR QUEST

An initiate or individual with access to the metaplanes may learn a spirit's true name by undertaking a metaplanar quest to the spirit's native metaplane. The spirit's metaplane can be obvious or obscure, and many free spirits will work to appear as something other than they are. Without obvious clues,



a magician must assense the spirit or its signature. This requires either an Astral + Intuition (4) rest if observing the spirit directly, or an Astral + Intuition (5) test if assensing an astral signature.

A metaplanar quest to hunt down a spirit's true name should be a harrowing and difficult undertaking. This is an adventure of its own. The caster might require a spirit guide to reach and explore the necessary plane. At the end of a successful quest, the true name is etched in the initiate's mind. When they return to the physical plane, they can translate this name into a spirit formula with an Astral + Logic (Spirit's Force x 3, 1 day) Extended test.

These quests are often started and perpetuated by a rival free spirit who can help open the metaplanar gateway and send a caster and their allies to the metaplane for the hunt. Some free spirits are not allies (surprise, surprise), and they battle one another for dominance.

DESIGN FORMULA

If a magician spends time directly observing a spirit, they can perform an Astral + Intuition (spirit's Force x 5, 1 hour) test. Success allows them to attempt to design a functional spirit formula from their impressions of the spirit. Creating the formula requires an Astral + Logic (spirit's Force x 10, 1 day) Extended test. If the test is interrupted in any way, it needs to be completely restarted. A glitch means the magician thinks they have made good progress, but instead they have introduced an error that will make the formula a dud. A critical glitch means they have *someone's* name, but not the spirit intended. And when it shows up, it will be uncontrolled and pissed.

After the test is complete and successful, the formula is completed in the appropriate form for the magician.

SPIRIT FORMULA COPIES

Let's get something clear very quickly here: Free spirits do not like having these anchors out there in the world. A free spirit is instinctively and immediately aware of the location of all copies of its spirit formula. This includes an awareness of newly created, destroyed, or moved copies of this powerful link. If an astral barrier with a Force greater than the Force of the free spirit is erected or collapsed between the free spirit and the formula, the spirit is immediately aware of the disconnect or return of their formula.

PROPER FEEDING AND CARE OF YOUR FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD FREE SPIRIT

Free spirits use Karma to grow in power, just like characters, but unlike characters, they cannot earn it for themselves. A free spirit must receive Karma

from a willing metahuman, unless it has the Energy Drain (Karma) power (p. 67). While negotiating a deal with a free spirit, understand it will likely ask for Karma as payment. There are some occasions that spirits ask for services, contacts, unique enchantments, or even material wealth, but generally Karma is their most desired remuneration.

Giving a free spirit Karma requires a ritual involving the spirit's formula. Allowing metahumans access to their spirit formula places free spirits in a vulnerable position. This means the spirit's best move is to keep donors happy — or dead. The ritual to give Karma takes one hour per point of Karma given and rarely looks like an arcane ritual—it's more like a poolside chat or an evening out on the town. Some free spirits are still formal, but many enjoy the freedom they have, especially when it comes to getting Karma.

USING KARMA

A free spirit can use Karma to improve themselves through standard Character Advancement (p. 68, SR6), or they can boost their abilities in the following ways:

- They may initiate as a magician does, but doing so grants either a new spirit power per grade or a metamagic technique they can utilize.
- They may increase their Force by one point at a time by paying Karma equal to the new Force x 10. Raising Force increases all of the spirit's attributes and powers that are based on Force. If the spirit reaches another multiple of 3 in their Force, they gain another optional power for no additional cost.

SUMMONING A FREE SPIRIT

In order to summon a free spirit, the conjurer must have access to the spirit formula and spend time focusing on the spirit. As they know the location, the spirit will be drawn to the formula and manifest nearby. They will then take a good look at the conjurer and their Astral Reputation and act accordingly. This moment of summoning doesn't generate services and the summoner suffers no drain, but no roll is required. It's important to note that other magic cannot prevent this action from occurring.

If a spirit is **possessing** a vessel, they must abandon the vessel and appear if summoned this way. The only variation is a spirit on orders from another summoner. For that, a Willpower + Edge Opposed test is required, and the spirit takes the difference in hits as damage and then appears to serve regardless of which summoner wins.

If a spirit is **inhabiting** a vessel, they are more resistant to this pull since their essence is anchored to the physical plane, but they must travel toward the summoner by the fastest physical means possi-

ble. If the summoner moves before the inhabiting spirit arrives, the spirit is no longer drawn toward the summoner.

BINDING A FREE SPIRIT

Welcome to the big leagues! You are about to embark on the one of the greatest acquisitions of individual power known to metahumankind ... and I hope you are either exceptionally good-hearted or willing to be an evil sack of drek, because binding a free spirit to your service is little better than programming a bunnaku puppet. Due to the immense power of a true name, anyone—mundane and Awakened alike—can bind a free spirit to their every command. That's not to say those with magical talent aren't a wee bit better equipped to handle this kind of power. Be wary.

It's important to note that while possession of a spirit's formula and true name offer the bearer protection from the direct actions of a free spirit, that does not mean a spirit who feels they are being wrongly treated won't simply burn down the entire building around you. If you happen to die in the fire, it's not because of them.

BINDING RITUAL

The ritual to bind a free spirit requires (Force x 25) drams of reagents. The ritual may be conducted anywhere, does not require wards, and takes a number of hours equal to the spirit's Force. At the end of the ritual, the summoner makes an Opposed test by rolling their Willpower (+ their Conjuring skill and Binding specialization, if they have it) against the spirit's Force. Free spirits often use Edge when resisting this test. If the character wins, the spirit is bound to a number of services equal to the number of net hits.

Drain for this effort is equal to the Force of the spirit plus or minus the net hits of the test. If the character attempting to bind the spirit wins, they subtract the net hits; if the spirit wins, the net hits are added.

While bound, the spirit is unable to directly harm their controller until their services are exhausted, but the spirit can still plot to put their controller in harm's way. The spirit can also be bound again with another binding ritual; this can happen an unlimited number of times, but this is best done before the final service is rendered. If the controller glitches on the binding test, the spirit gets one Combat Round to do anything they want before the binding takes effect and places them back under the controller's will. If the controller suffers a critical glitch, all services owed are lost and the spirit becomes free once again (and could be quite angry).

BANISHING A FREE SPIRIT

Free spirits face the risk of banishment just like

PUNISHMENT PAIN

Shadowrun is a dark world. Binding a spirit to your will is easily viewed as an act of enslavement. This wrongness can be seen even though others hand over control in this world as well (wageslaves are called such for a reason). The thing about placing a free spirit under your command is that they are unique and majestic beings, with a strong will and sense of independence. They don't bend easily to their controller's will. Some dark souls find it useful to bring them to heel through painful use of their true name. With the true name of a free spirit, a simple mental command, and a heart as dark as a lump of coal sitting a hundred meters underground, an individual can intentionally inflict pain on a free spirit. A simple Willpower test inflicts the spirit with a wound modifier equal to the number of hits. This can be followed by a Charisma + Intimidation vs. Composure (Willpower + Charisma) Opposed test between controller and spirit. Failure indicates submission.

Any use of this technique immediately drops a summoner's Astral Reputation (see p. 64) by five. This is cruelty in its purest form, but many still believe this is the way to control.

any other spirit (p. 147, SR6). Most free spirits are unbound and owe no services that can be banished away, so instead, each net hit the banisher receives on a Conjuring + Magic vs. Force x 2 test reduces the spirit's Edge attribute (though bound free spirits add their Edge and services together). A free spirit whose Edge is reduced to zero in this way is temporarily disrupted and vanishes to its native meta-plane. It may return when its Edge replenishes at the next new moon.

Sometimes the goal of banishing is a permanent solution, and there is one. A free spirit that has been banished can be prevented from ever returning if the banisher immediately destroys a copy of the spirit formula and succeeds in an Opposed test between their Conjuring + Willpower and the spirit's Force + Edge. The results of this test are best kept secret, as there's no way to tell whether this succeeded or not, unless or until the spirit later returns. An uncertain banisher may repeat the process, but another copy of the spirit formula is required for each attempt.

ALLY SPIRITS

Initiated magicians gain a massively powerful boon with the conjuration of an ally spirit. To conjure an ally spirit, a magician needs a spirit formula. Only with a proper formula may the ritual to conjure and bind the spirit be attempted.

ALLY SPIRIT FORMULA

The spirit formula for an ally spirit is a representation of the spirit on the physical plane, similar

to an initiate's thesis (see p. 176, SR6). To perform the summoning ceremony, the conjurer needs a physical copy of this formula. For allies requiring a vessel, either the original or a copy of the spirit formula must be carved into the prepared vessel.

The spirit formula can be obtained in one of two ways:

- A formula can be created from scratch by the conjurer or a well-trusted third party by making an Astral + Logic (Force x 10, 1 day) Extended test. The trusted creator needs to be truly trusted, as keeping a copy of the spirit formula means the creator might have an edge over the ally in the future. See **Creating an Ally Spirit Formula** below for how to determine the Force.
- Undertaking a metaplanar quest to a chosen metaplane, which is an adventure of its own, allows an initiate to locate a formula that matches their needs.

CREATING AN ALLY SPIRIT FORMULA

Creating an ally spirit formula is not just about some rolls of the dice or a quest; it's also about figuring out the expenditure of Karma when the conjuring comes around. To determine the Karma cost for conjuring an ally spirit, run through the following five steps:

STEP 1: CHOOSE FORCE

You need to know just how much power your ally spirit is going to pack out of the gate. To determine the base cost, multiply the desired Force by eight.

STEP 2: CHOOSE THE FORM OR FORMS OF THE SPIRIT

During creation, an ally spirit may only possess one of the following powers: Inhabitation (p. 67), Materialization (p. 225, SR6), or Possession (p. 69).

Materialization allies have a base form that usually applies to the conjurer's tradition or the home metaplane of the spirit. Ally spirits with Materialization can have additional forms at the cost of two Karma each. An ally can switch between forms using a Major Action.

Inhabitation allies must have a prepared vessel for them, but they can only have multiple forms if a true form results from the merge.

Possession allies have no material form of their own, but vessels can be prepared for them.

STEP 3: CHOOSE POWERS

Ally spirits start with Astral Form (p. 222, SR6), Realistic Form (p. 70), Sapience (p. 227,

SR6), and Borrow Sense (p. 33) as an Innate Spell. Ally spirits also receive one additional power for every two points of Force. These can be chosen from any powers possible with spirits appropriate to the conjurer's tradition. Beyond this, further powers can be bought at a cost of five Karma per power if they are appropriate to the conjurer's tradition or 10 Karma per power if they fall outside the usual powers of a conjurer's spirits. If the conjurer chooses the Elemental Attack, Energy Aura, or Engulf powers, they must specify what form the power takes.

STEP 4: CHOOSE SKILLS

Ally spirits start with the following skills: Astral, Close Combat, and Perception. Additional skills that the conjurer knows, or others that may be required for the spirit to use their other powers (such as Exotic Ranged Weapon for Elemental Attack or Spellcasting for Magical Guard), cost five Karma each. Allies may never possess the Conjuring skill, and they may only be given the Athletics (Flying) specialization (p. 93, SR6) if it fits the spirit's form.

STEP 5: CHOOSE SPELLS

An ally spirit can be taught any spell the conjurer knows for three Karma each or ones the conjurer doesn't know for five Karma each, but spell formulae are still required.

CONJURING AN ALLY

The ritual for summoning an ally must be performed in a warded area with a Force at least equal to the ally being summoned and follows the standard conjuring rules for summoning (p. 146, SR6). Immediately after summoning, the spirit must be bound using standard binding rules (p. 62). The drain is calculated and resisted for the appropriate Force of conjuring, and both are resisted back to back as if summoning and binding a spirit of the ally's Force.

If the binding generates even a single hit, the magician pays an amount of Karma as outlined in the ally's spirit formula.

If the necessary amount of Karma cannot be paid, the ritual fails.

If the ally has the Inhabitation power, the conjurer must already have a prepared vessel. After the spirit is bound, they must immediately use their Inhabitation power on the vessel. As per the Inhabitation power (p. 67), the conjurer may choose to influence the outcome of the Inhabitation test. Inhabitation takes a number of days equal to the spirit's Force and is considered part of the ritual; thus, the magician must continuously attend to the vessel during this time. (Be sure to prep snacks ahead of time.)

ALLY SPIRIT ABILITIES

Ally spirits follow the standard rules for spirits, with the following exceptions:

AID SORCERY AND AID STUDY

Ally spirits have a bit of “jack of all trades” energy invested in them. When using the Aid Sorcery and Aid Study services, an ally spirit is considered appropriate for every spell category.

ATTRIBUTES

An ally's Physical and Mental attributes are equal to their Force. Ally spirits start with an Edge attribute of 1. This can be increased over time, but when the spirit first comes over, it is only loosely tethered to the concept and use of the Edge attribute, hence its lower value.

As a small exception, ally spirits with the Inhabitation power follow those rules (p. 67) to determine physical attributes.

LOYALTY AND ASTRAL REPUTATION

By crafting this formula and summoning this spirit to be your ally, you created a free-thinking friend. The bond between summoner and ally is as solid as an old friendship, but it is not unbreakable. If too many lines are crossed too often, the ally will buck (see **Spirit Relations**, p. 63). Ally spirits are more loyal than normal spirits because that loyalty is part of the spirit's formula, but it isn't servitude. Based on the formula, an ally will serve until their creator's death (or near-death) frees them. Based on how they are treated, even near-death sometimes doesn't break a friendship, with only a thread of mana linking the pair. On the other hand, a mistreated ally can turn on their master, plotting and making indirect efforts to create opportunities for freedom.

NATIVE PLANE

The native metaplane of an ally spirit is coded into the spirit formula. This can be used to destroy the spirit through the completion of a metaplanar quest to that plane.

SERVICES

The services available from an ally spirit are infinite. They can perform any unbound or bound spirit service (p. 62) an unlimited number of times, including Resist Drain (below). An ally spirit does not count against a magician's limit of bound spirits.

RESIST DRAIN

When casting a spell, the conjurer may choose to have their ally spirit take a portion of the spell's drain. Boxes of Stun damage from spell drain can

be transferred directly to an ally spirit as Stun damage, one-for-one, or two-for-one as Physical damage (i.e., two Stun for one Physical). Physical drain can only be transferred one-for-one as Physical damage. This service is painful for the ally. Frequent use will foster hatred over time.

ENHANCING AN ALLY

An ally spirit is summoned with a stagnant nature. They cannot be improved without first modifying their formula. This acts as a benefit, as nothing negative affects an ally permanently either. In order to alter an ally spirit's formula, the conjurer must complete a Ritual of Change. This involves an Astral + Logic (Force x 5, 1 day) Extended test or a metaplanar quest to the spirit's native plane. The ritual requires a warded area equal to the Force of the spirit along with Force x 10 drams of reagents.

At the completion of the ritual, the conjurer pays the Karma cost for the changes and the spirit's form is adjusted.

The Karma costs for advancements are the same as those for characters (p. 68, SR6), though a Force adjustment can be made at a cost of Force x 10 Karma.

A spirit with the Inhabitation power does not require a new test, but a new vessel can be provided for the spirit to merge with if prepared in advance.

LOSING AN ALLY

An ally is an intense investment and should be treated as such, but mistreatment, misuse, or even abuse of the spirit's kin will lead an ally spirit down the dark road to breaking free.

An ally spirit has two windows of opportunity to break from servitude: during a Ritual of Change and when their conjurer is knocked unconscious by Drain or damage.

When an ally spirit attempts to break free, it makes a Force x 2 Test against the magician's Conjuring (Binding) + Magic. If the spirit generates any net hits, it goes free and may become a free spirit (gamemaster's discretion). Any attempt to break free causes strain on the conjurer and they must resist Drain equal to the ally spirit's hits (not net hits) on the test.

If the attempt occurs during a Ritual of Change and the Drain renders the conjurer unconscious, the ritual fails. The reagents and time are spent but the Karma remains unspent. The ally also has a second chance to escape if they failed the first time. This additional test can cause the conjurer to suffer Physical damage as they need to resist the Drain again for the second attempt.

If an ally spirit goes free, the conjurer immediately loses one point of Magic. This point can be repurchased with Karma at the standard cost.

BINDING

Getting a spirit to stick around or do things outside of the basic purview of summoning requires a secondary effort, called a Binding. Binding a spirit enables Bound Tasks, which are special services gained that can be used for a variety of things.

Some key points on binding:

- Binding is a specialization of the Conjuring skill linked to the Magic attribute.
- Bound spirits carry the astral signature of the conjurer who bound them.
- Bound spirits count toward the total Force limit a character can command (p. 147, SR6).
- Binding spirits can make them grumpy.

Binding a spirit is a versatile activity and can be used in two significantly different ways. These two activities follow similar rules and rolls but with quite different outcomes in terms of both effects and spirit relationships. A spirit can have additional tasks or services put on it by its summoner through regular binding, or it can be held to a specific location or object via a special version of binding called fettering.

A binding ceremony begins with a spirit that has already been summoned and has at least one service remaining. The conjurer spends a number of hours equal to the spirit's Force inside the magical lodge, ward, or cricle of protection, with the spirit present on the astral plane. The ritual consumes reagents equal to twice the Force of the spirit. At the end of the ritual, the conjurer makes a Conjuring + Magic vs. (Spirit Force x 2) Opposed test. Immediately after the test, the conjurer must resist drain equal to the hits (not net hits) achieved by the spirit on the Opposed test, with a minimum drain of two. This is Stun damage unless the drain value exceeds the character's Magic attribute, in which case it is Physical.

Standard rules still apply to how long a spirit remains on this plane. If its time expires before the ritual is completed, the binding fails. The conjurer must still make the Opposed test and resist drain as usual for binding.

For the conjurer, net hits on the Binding test are converted to Task Points, which can be used on Bound Tasks, but special limitations apply as part of the binding ceremony.

The binding ceremony is specific to the desired effects, and those effects must be chosen before the ritual begins. Any extra net hits on the Binding test automatically become additional regular services owed by the spirit. If the test does not achieve enough net hits to cover all the chosen tasks, the summoner must start another binding ceremony at the end of the first. They must, however, resist drain from the first attempt before making another Binding test and resisting drain again after the

ritual endures for another (Force) hours. If the test goes beyond the spirit's normal service time, it automatically fails, and the conjurer must resist drain with no chance of keeping the spirit bound or under their command.

BOUND TASKS

ADDITIONAL POWER (1 TASK POINT PER POWER)

During the binding ceremony, the spirit can be augmented to gain additional optional powers. The powers need to be chosen as part of the ceremony.

ALTERNATE CONTROL (1 TASK POINT)

The spirit can be assigned to the control of another person. The other person must be present during the ceremony, and the mental link to the spirit is transferred from the conjurer to the new controller.

The spirit obeys the commands issued by the new controller for the normal duration of their existence.

It will not take any further commands from the conjurer, but it still counts against the conjurer's Force limit on bound spirits.

AUTONOMY (2 TASK POINTS)

The spirit is bound to complete their remaining services, but the connection to the conjurer is severed. The conjurer must assign commands to each service owed or lose them after the ceremony is complete. No more commands can be issued to the spirit. The conjurer cannot perform any more binding ceremonies on this spirit.

Once given autonomy, the spirit does not count toward the Force limit that can be under a conjurer's command (p. 147, SR6).

EDGE ACCESS (1 OR 2 TASK POINTS)

When this task is bound to the spirit, they are able to spend Edge. For one Task Point, the spirit gets an Edge rating equal to its Force, but it is not allowed to gain situational Edge. For two Task Points, the spirit starts with Edge equal to its Force and is allowed to gain situational Edge as normal.

This is a dangerous use, as it gives the spirit a pool of Edge they can use to break free if given the chance.

EXTENDED TIME (1, 2, 3, OR 4 TASK POINTS)

This task extends the time the spirit remains available to perform assigned services and to be instructed on services owed. For one Task Point the spirit will stay for one additional day (sunrise and sunset). For two Task Points, the spirit stays for one additional week (seven sunrises and sunsets). Assigning three Task Points keeps

the spirit present for a full lunar cycle, tying the spirit to the phase in which the ritual was performed. (This is twenty-eight days of service to keep calculations simple, though feel free to pull up a lunar calendar for your game year for a little more flavor.) At four Task Points, the spirit stays for a year.

These types of bindings do not make spirits happy. Our plane is not their home, and it won't take long for the spirit to get creative in their interpretations of the conjurer's commands.

INHABITATION (1 TASK POINT)

The spirit temporarily gains the Inhabitation power if they do not have it and can inhabit a prepared vessel for the duration of their service time.

PLANAR PROTECTION (1 TASK POINT PER EVENT)

A bound spirit can be a valuable asset that a conjurer does not want to lose. This task adds a layer of protection to keep the spirit summoned even after an attack on its presence, whether it be disruption, banishment, or fettering.

If a bound spirit with this Task is disrupted, banished, or fettered, they immediately return to the location of the binding ceremony or to an object assigned during the ceremony. Each Task Point assigned allows a single return to the ritual spot. In all cases the spirit is returned to its healthy state when they arrive on the astral plane in the assigned location.

POSSESSION (1 TASK POINT)

The spirit temporarily gains the Possession power if they do not have it and can possess a prepared vessel for the duration of its service time.

SERVICE (1 TASK POINT)

A Task Point can be used to add a service to what the spirit owes; the service follows normal rules (p. 147, SR6).

SUMMONED FETTERING (2 TASK POINTS)

This task binds the spirit to a specific location akin to fettering while automatically doubling the spirit's summoning duration. The location for the fettering is determined during the summoning and has a radius limit of Force x 10 meters from a central spot chosen during the ceremony. The conjurer must have some material or visual link to the location during the ceremony, including another spirit acting as spotter for the conjurer. This limit can be creatively flexed to keep the spirit inside a building, limited to a piece of property, or kept channeled within a specific set of corridors such as hallways in a skyscraper but not the offices.

UNIQUE ASTRAL SIGNATURE (1 TASK POINT)

During the binding ceremony, the spirit is scrubbed of the conjurer's astral signature. The spirit offers no clue to who summoned them.

FETTERING

Unlike a binding ceremony, fettering only requires a Major Action. It holds a spirit within a certain radius of a physical object for a short time period.

A conjurer makes a Conjuring + Magic vs. [(Force x 2) + number of remaining services] Opposed test. The conjurer's net hits on the test can be used in two separate ways: increase the amount of time the spirit is fettered or reduce the radius of the fettering. The spirit is fettered to an object for one Combat Round per net hit for the first three hits. If four or more net hits are used, the fettering sticks for one minute for each hit beyond three. The fettering binds the spirit within a radius of (Force – net hits used to reduce the fettering radius).

Like all magical activity, fettering causes drain. The conjurer resists drain equal to the hits (not net hits) scored by the spirit (minimum 1).

Fettering is also a far friendlier way to deal with spirits, as long as you don't get them stuck in a deathtrap. Being stuck somewhere is usually preferable to being banished or disrupted.

FREEDOM FROM OPPRESSION

The total Force of spirits bound to a conjurer is limited to the conjurer's Magic Attribute x 3, as all bound spirits are considered active spirits. This can be exceeded by using the Autonomy Task or with the Master Summoner metamagic.

Spirits that are bound may be more strongly connected to the conjurer, but they also gain more chances to escape control and flee to their home plane. Every time a bound spirit is injured, it may use a Minor Action to attempt to break free. The spirit rolls a dice pool of (Force – services owed) x 2 against a threshold of the conjurer's Magic attribute. The conjurer is aware of this attempt unless the spirit has been given Autonomy. If the spirit breaks the bond, they can return to their native plane or remain on our plane, free to act as they wish, until the next sunrise or sunset, whichever comes first.

SPIRIT RELATIONS

Spirits are not mindless entities created to serve. While some low-Force spirits are not the smartest beings in the universe, most summoned spirits are at or above average metahuman intelligence. They understand when they are being used and abused. This awareness and the residual energy leave a distinctive astral "scent" on a conjurer that other spirits are instinctively aware of. This scent clues them in to who they are working with, and most

SERVICE NOTES

Bound spirits offer a collection of additional services they can perform for a conjuror. Here, we'll specify services a bit and offer a few tricks that only a bound spirit can help with.

STANDARD SERVICES

Combat: "Fight on my side."

You can have a spirit fight on your side in combat. The entire combat encounter counts as only a single service.

Power Use: "Use your power of [power name] on [targets]."

You can have a spirit use one of its powers on a target or targets of your choosing. If the power is sustained, it counts as one service no matter how long it's sustained. If the spirit is given an order for another sustained power, this service must be used again to reactivate a power. If the spirit uses the identified power as part of another task (often in combat), then the power use doesn't count as a separate service.

Physical Task: "Come forth and do [do something]."

A spirit can perform actions on the physical plane for you. The act is the service, so use of the Materialization power to get to the physical plane is not counted against total services.

Remote Service: "Travel to [location] and do my bidding."

If a spirit is sent beyond the conjuror's Magic rating x 100 meters, it counts as a remote service. This is often done as a final service, because once the spirit is done with a remote service, they are released and go to their home metaplane, no matter how many services they still owe.

spirits will act in certain ways toward those conjurers who continuously abuse their summoned assistants. This can be as simple as attitude and trash talk. It could be a cunning interpretation of commands that accomplishes what the conjurer wants but not necessarily in the way they want. Some spirits will even go so far as seeking to get themselves banished just to irritate an inconsiderate or abusive conjurer.

In game terms, this translates to a conjurer's **Asstral Reputation** score. This AsRep score ranges from -10 to 10, representing the most horrible conjurers who consider spirits slaves at one end of the spectrum, all the way to conjurers who look at spirits as independent entities and seek thoughtful aid rather than servitude at the other. This numeric representation is not a dice pool penalty or bonus, but benefits and penalties are included at the two extremes of the spectrum. It uses positive and negative numbers to give an easy way of knowing if someone's reputation is generally positive or negative. Many of the actions that move the score are roleplaying-based or built off choices the character can make in commanding and interacting with the spirits.

BOUND SPIRIT SERVICES

Standard Services

A bound spirit can perform any service an unbound spirit can, with the only exception being a remote service. If a bound spirit performs a remote service, the controlling character doesn't lose any extra services when they are done, and they come back to their controller when finished.

Aid Alchemy and Sorcery

The spirit can add its Force/2 as a dice pool bonus to your Alchemy or Spellcasting tests if their type matches spell categories as follows: Combat (Beasts, Fire); Detection (Earth, Task); Health (Plant, Water); Illusion (Air, Guidance) Manipulation (Guardian, Kin)

Spell Sustaining

A bound spirit can sustain a spell after it is cast. They take the -2 dice pool penalty per sustained spell, instead of you. They can sustain the spell for a number of Combat Rounds equal to their Force for each service you spend on spell sustaining.

Spell Binding

This is like spell sustaining, but for a lot longer, at the cost of the spirit's own Force. The spell you hand off is sustained indefinitely, but the spirit's Force is irrevocably reduced by one each day (or part thereof) in which it uses spell binding. If the spirit's Force is reduced to zero this way, they dissipate forever. This is very painful for spirits and generally considered to be abusive – summoners need to know that if they use this, word about what they did will travel.

If a character has an AsRep of 6 or 7, they gain an additional service from any spirit they summon. If the score is 8 or 9, the spirit they summon arrives at one higher Force. If their score is a 10, the spirit arrives at one higher Force, *and* they gain the additional service.

If a character has an AsRep of -6 or -7, they have a threshold of one imposed on their conjuring efforts. If their score is -8 or -9, the threshold is two. If their score is -10, the threshold is three. These thresholds apply to all summoning and binding applications of the Conjuring skill, but not banishing.

Spirits act differently toward a conjurer based on their AsRep. In general, most spirits react neutrally to a conjurer with an AsRep between negative two and positive two. In this range, they follow the basic rules of summoned spirits and require services be used for any task they are asked to do, and they perform them, generally, as the conjurer intends. These spirits might voice quick reminders of limitations, like acting across planes, that allow the conjurer to amend service uses immediately. If a conjurer goes unconscious and the spirit is freed,

they will leave with minimal fuss, neither helping nor hindering the conjurer. Spirits summoned by others or free spirits have no particular like or dislike of an individual with a mid-range rating, other than something created by the Spirit Bane or Affinity qualities.

An AsRep of 3 to 5 puts a conjurer slightly on the spirit's good side. In this range, the spirit may use a power like Materialization just to be nice and talk on the same plane with the conjurer and their team without asking for a service to be expended. They offer basic advice, assistance, and aid if asked without requiring a service. If a conjurer falls and the spirit is freed, they may stick around and quickly move the conjurer's body out of harm's way or conceal it from enemies for a short time. With this kind of reputation, free spirits and other conjured spirits aren't going to prioritize the conjurer as a target unless specifically ordered to by their summoner (for conjured spirits) or they consider them a threat (for free spirits).

If a conjurer manages to get an AsRep of 6 to 8, they fall fully in the good graces of a spirit. At this point, the spirits summoned only require services be used for Powers in combat or stressful situations, and they often use a power just to be helpful. They freely offer advice, assistance, and aid without request and, if freed due to an unconscious summoner, they usually come to their conjurer's aid and get them to safety. Some will go as far as to attempt to heal their conjurer if they have access to that spell. They usually avoid anything offensive in this process (with the exception of spirits of fire, who sometimes use burning things as a distraction because they are inherent pyromaniacs) and don't generally care about anyone on the team besides the conjurer. Other spirits show deference to a character with this level of AsRep. Spirits put these characters lower on their threat list and try to use non-lethal methods if they are specifically commanded to attack.

When a conjurer achieves an AsRep of 9 or 10 they are considered an ally to the spirit community. They've shown their respect and acknowledge that spirits aren't servants but independent extraplanar beings. They know the methods of forcing their will on a spirit, but they prefer different tactics. While the standard rules for services and summoning duration still apply, spirits will often act as friends and allies during their stay, using powers without asking or being asked, doing things to help without commands, and offering advice, assistance, and aid as if they were just another member of the team. If they disagree with their summoner, they voice their opinion and engage in discussion. Any service requested of them will be performed in the most beneficial way possible. If their conjurer falls unconscious, they actively work with their allies to get them to safety, even helping other members of the team with powers and support. Most oth-

er spirits consider a character with this AsRep an ally and avoid making any kind of attack against them, if possible. Those summoned by particularly disreputable conjurers (AsRep of -5 or lower) may seek the aid of a 9+ AsRep character in being banished and getting freed.

As we go lower on the scale, things get less pleasant. With an AsRep of -3 to -5, the spirit displays passive-aggressive tendencies. They obey commands but perform them in less-efficient ways, including intentionally failing if an obstacle is in their way, such as being ordered to attack someone or use a power but not being told to Materialize first. They'll waste a Combat Round making a big show of their ineffectual effort to remind the conjurer of the need to use more services. If the conjurer falls unconscious, the spirits in their control will again act in spiteful but non-injurious ways, such as kicking them theatrically while they are down or posing them in embarrassing ways (though they never make more than a single Combat Round of effort doing this before enjoying their freedom and returning to their native plane). Other spirits and free spirits will choose these individuals as their first targets if ordered to attack a group. If ordered to attack an individual, these spirits will try to include conjurers with this low of an AsRep in the collateral damage.

A conjurer with an AsRep of negative -6 or -8 is in for unpleasantness. Spirits summoned take every opportunity to misinterpret commands. They require every action they perform for the conjurer to consume a service. If their command does not indicate immediate action, the spirit will take it upon themselves to perform that action at their leisure. If a command is vague, like "Attack my enemies," the spirit may spitefully make a weak attack against the conjurer with a claim of "you are your own worst enemy." If the conjurer falls unconscious, the spirit will take a single opportunity to cause further injury before departing to their home plane. Other spirits will avoid people like this with disdain and, if attacked or ordered to attack, will strike back in the most vicious ways possible. Even free spirits may take an active interest in removing a conjurer who treats spirits so poorly.

If a conjurer has an AsRep of -9 or -10, any spirit will arrive with an attitude and a desire to make life difficult. They will misinterpret commands to the point of injuring the conjurer or teammates, if possible. They may actively seek out another conjurer nearby and ask for banishment. These spirits will reach out to other nearby spirits, free spirits, and dual-natured creatures to cause additional trouble for their summoner, including attacks. They've been known to do things in the flashiest way possible in order to attract attention and even make sure to get close to projecting security mages in order to allow their astral signature to be read. If the conjurer falls un-

conscious, the spirit will stick around until they have killed the conjurer or their time on the plane runs out. Free spirits and the spirits of other conjurers will go out of their way to kill a conjurer with this level of AsRep.

ASREP SCORE ADJUSTMENTS

EVENT	ADJUSTMENT
Dismissing with services remaining	+1
Binding Specialization	-1
Binding for a week	-1
Binding for a month	-2
Binding for a year	-3
Fettering	+1
Fettering in a death trap	-2
Disrupting	-2
Use of Spell Binding	-3
Banishing	+1
Alternate Control abuse	-1
Planar Protection Use	-1/use
Asking their name	+1
Gift of Karma	+1 per 5 points

Sample roleplaying adjustments

Deliberately sending a spirit to disruption	-2
Frequent bad manners/ill temper	-1
Disregard of spirit suggestions	-1
Engagement with spirit in planning	+1
Courteous treatment	+1
Adjusting plans to preserve spirit safety	+1

In all cases, make the adjustment to the AsRep score when the action is taken or the listed skill/specialization is selected (but not every time it is used).

GREAT FORM SPIRITS

The most powerful of spirits are those summoned in their great form, which allows them to appear with greater power from their own plane. The invocation metamagic (p. 122) is used to summon great form spirits.

SPIRIT POWERS

New powers have notes for those only available to free spirits (Free) and great form spirits (Great). Among these are some dramatic, unusual, and powerful abilities that often define an entire encounter with a free or great form spirit. Gamemasters are advised to keep these powers rare, usually limiting a spirit to only a single one, but it is your game and combining a few together can make for a memorable nemesis for a runner team. Gamemasters are welcome to add a power here and there to a lower-power spirit to surprise the runners, but in general, these noted powers are meant for major opponents and adversaries.

GREAT FORM SPIRIT HIT RESULTS

# OF HITS	RESULT
4	Gain Magical Guard power (p. 69)
5	Gain an additional optional power (see powers listed by spirit type, pp. 147-8, SR6)
6	Gain greater spirit power appropriate to the spirit type
7	Astral Gateway power (p. 66)
8	Endowment power (p. 67)
9+	One additional power or increase Force by one with each hit beyond this amount

GREAT SPIRIT POWERS

TYPE	POWER
Air	Storm (p. 70)
Beasts	Paralyzing Howl (p. 226, SR6)
Earth	Quake (p. 69)
Fire	Storm (p. 70)
Guardian	Storm (p. 70)
Guidance	Temporal Displacement (p. 71)
Kin	Magical Guard (p. 69)
Plant	Regeneration (p. 227, SR6)
Task	Wealth (p. 71; produces 3 percent of value in Skill appropriate items/day)
Water	Storm (p. 70)

ASTRAL GATEWAY

(FREE)

TYPE	ACTION	RANGE	DURATION
M	Major	LOS (A)	Sustained

The spirit can open an astral rift, forcing all physical objects within the area to be dual natured, as well as allowing even mundanes to perform astral projection. The astral rift can connect to any metaplane the spirit can visit themselves (so while a fire elemental can open a rift to the Plane of Fire, they probably can't open a rift to the Hive).

ASTRAL PROJECTION

(FREE)

TYPE	ACTION	RANGE	DURATION
M	Major	Self	Special

The spirit can perform astral projection, just like a magician (p. 160, SR6). This power is only available to spirits with the Inhabitation power. A spirit that does not return to their body after (Force x 2) hours is disrupted.

AURA MASKING

(FREE, GREAT)

TYPE	ACTION	RANGE	DURATION
M	Minor	Self	Sustained

Sometimes you want to light up the astral plane like an outrageous fireworks show; other times you want to look like something else, or like nothing at all. Aura Masking essentially works like masking (p. 168, SR6) and extended masking all in one. That means the spirit can disguise their aura as well as the auras of any spells, preparations, foci, or other aura-containing items in their possession. The total number of spells/items that can be masked is equal to the spirit's Magic. The Force (or drain value, in the case of spells) of any item or spell the spirit wishes to conceal must be less than (not equal to) the Force of the spirit. When using this power, an Assensing test on the spirit is opposed by the spirit's Force x 2. Failure means the assenser sees only what the masking presents; any net hits means the assenser sees both the real aura and the mask.

DIVINING

(FREE, GREAT)

TYPE	ACTION	RANGE	DURATION
M	Special	Self	Special

This power functions like the Divination metamagic (p. 117), except the spirit uses Magic + Intuition.

ENDOWMENT

(FREE, GREAT)

TYPE	ACTION	RANGE	DURATION
M	Major	Touch	Sustained

This power allows a spirit to give access to one of their powers to a target. The spirit retains the ability to use the power. A character is limited to only a single power at any given time.

ENERGY DRAIN

(KARMA) (FREE)

TYPE	ACTION	RANGE	DURATION
M	Minor	Touch	Instant

Spirits thrive on Karma. For most spirits, that Karma is given freely through deals and services, but some spirits have no desire to pander to the whims and desires of mere metahumans and thus choose to take what they need.

Used alongside a successful unarmed Close Combat attack that does no damage, a spirit with this power can use a Minor Action to make a second roll to deal a mix of damage and Karma draining. Make an opposed Willpower + Charisma + Magic test between the spirit and the target that inflicts a number of boxes of Stun Damage on the losing side equal to the net hits on the test. This means these attacks are riskier against a magically

active character, which is why spirits with this ability usually go after the mundane.

Along with the damage, the spirit also takes a number of Karma equal to the net hits. If the character has unspent Karma, deduct it first from this pool. If they do not, they have a choice to make. The character must "unspend" some Karma and reduce an active skill or attribute. Use the advancement table (p. 68, SR6) to determine the amount of free Karma gained from the reduction. The spirit gets their owed Karma, and the remaining goes back into a character's unspent pool.

Note: This is an extremely powerful and versatile power. Spirits can sap a target of life, skills, and memories (the essence of skill training), but they can also create a pool of unspent Karma and a perpetually tortured and broken being that they can then remold into whatever form of servant they would like.

HIDDEN LIFE

(FREE)

TYPE	ACTION	RANGE	DURATION
P	Major	Touch	Permanent

Oftentimes a spirit with an agenda that might be opposed by outside forces finds it necessary to keep themselves bound to this world. This power permanently places the life force of the spirit in a creature, place, or object. With this in place, the spirit cannot be permanently banished or destroyed by any means. If successfully banished, the spirit is able to return on the next full or new moon, whichever is latest. While a spirit is banished in this manner, a character holding the spirit formula may still call them.

The subject holding the spirit's life gains Immunity to Normal Weapons and Immunity to Age (p. 224, SR6), based on the spirit's Essence equal. If the thing holding the hidden life is destroyed, the life force returns to the spirit, and the spirit is treated normally.

INHABITATION

TYPE	ACTION	RANGE	DURATION
P	Auto	Self	Special

Tales of unwanted spiritual presences are abundant, and this power is the reason. Most spirits touch the physical plane briefly through Materialization or Possession, but spirits with Inhabitation take over a physical form and occupy it in a far more permanent fashion. An inhabiting spirit permanently merges with a prepared vessel and cannot be separated with Banishing, but the spirit also cannot leave voluntarily. An inhabiting spirit is only dislodged when the vessel is destroyed from Physical damage overflow (see p. 121, SR6). Once

destroyed, the spirit returns to the astral plane immediately and will usually go in search of a new vessel or return to their native plane, if possible.

Inhabiting a living vessel offers complete control over the body and some access to its memories. During merging, the vessel's original spirit (if present) is consumed and, for all intents and purposes, that character is essentially lost (though, as always, gamemasters may decide otherwise if appropriate to their stories).

In order to inhabit a vessel, a spirit needs one of two things. A conjurer of an appropriate tradition can prepare the intended vessel in advance within a ward with a Force equal to or higher than the spirit's and using Force x 20 drams of reagents and making an Astral + Magic (Force x 3, 1 hour) Extended test. Or the spirit can spend a number of weeks equal to their Force "haunting" the vessel and connecting to their victim's slowly maddening aura. Once the vessel has been prepared, the spirit may use the Inhabitation power upon it. The process of inhabitation takes anywhere from a few minutes to a few months. The spirit makes a Force x 2 test and references the Inhabitation timetable to determine the time needed for a successful Inhabitation. To

INHABITATION MERGES TABLE

SPIRIT NET HITS	FORM
1-2	True Form
3-4	Hybrid Form
5+	Flesh Form

True Form: The spirit comes over and consumes the physical form of the vessel and instead appears as it naturally would on its native plane. Add half the spirit's Force (rounded down) to the target's Physical attributes; subtract the same number from Logic, and make Charisma 1.

Hybrid Form: This form retains the basics of the original vessel but contains a significant number of unnatural characteristics, making it identifiable as supernatural. Add half the spirit's Force (rounded down) to the target's Physical attributes; subtract the same number from the target's Charisma.

Flesh Form: The spirit appears completely normal on the physical plane and gains the characteristics of the Realistic Form power. It gains access to the subject's memories and skills. Add half the spirit's Force (rounded down) to the target's Physical attributes.

INHABITATION TIMETABLE

HITS	TIME
1	(Force) weeks
2	(Force x 2) days
3	(Force) days
4	(Force) hours
5	(Force/2) hours
6	(Force x 2) minutes
7+	(Force) minutes



complete the process, the spirit must stay in contact with the target for the duration.

At the end of that period, the spirit makes an Opposed test using its Force x 2 against the host's Willpower + Intuition. The spirit's conjurer (if any) may influence the result by adding their Conjuring skill to either dice pool as desired. If the spirit is attempting to inhabit an inanimate vessel, the spirit rolls Force x 2 versus the vessel's Object Resistance (p. 129, SR6). To determine the results, compare the net hits with the Inhabitation Timetable and check the Inhabitation Merges sidebar (p. 68). If the vessel wins, they can choose the form as a final effort of their essence before it is consumed. If the vessel rolls a critical glitch, the result is chosen by the spirit. If the spirit gets a critical glitch, the

merging is unsuccessful, and the vessel is immune to future inhabitation attempts by that spirit.

MAGICAL GUARD

TYPE	ACTION	RANGE	DURATION
M	Special	LOS	Instant

This power allows the use of the Boosted Defense aspect of Counterspelling to provide spell defense (p. 143, SR6).

MUTABLE FORM

(FREE)

TYPE	ACTION	RANGE	DURATION
P	Auto	Self	Special

Typically, spirits using the Materialization power appear with the same form each time. Mutable Form allows the spirit to change this form each time they materialize, making them look physically different whenever they want, but it does not change the spirit's aura, leaving them unchanged on the astral plane. If the spirit also has the Realistic Form power (p. 70), they gain a point of situational Edge and a dice pool bonus equal to half the spirit's Force on Disguise Tests (p. 94, SR6) made to impersonate someone. This power is only available to spirits with Materialization. The chosen form lasts until the spirit chooses to end the use of the Materialization power.

PERSONAL DOMAIN

(FREE)

TYPE	ACTION	RANGE	DURATION
M	Auto	LOS	Sustained

Free spirits often wish to make a true home of our plane. By leaving their mark across an area of astral space, up to 10,000 square meters per point of Force, the spirit builds a mana flow aspected toward their tradition. The flow accumulates with the spirit's extended presence and takes a month to build each level (low, medium, and high).

POSSESSION

TYPE	ACTION	RANGE	DURATION
P	Major	Touch	Special

Materialization is not a universal power of all spirits. Some must possess vessels in order to interact with the physical plane. Each possession attempt requires a Major Action. The spirit makes a Force x 2 vs. Intuition + Willpower Opposed test (for living vessels), or Force x 2 vs. Object Resistance (for inanimate vessels). If the vessel has been prepared with an Astral + Logic (Force x 3, 1 hour) Extended test, the spirit gains a point of Edge that must be used on the possession attempt. If the test

fails, the spirit is immediately forced back to the astral plane. If the test succeeds, the possession takes hold, and the vessel and the spirit are considered a single dual-natured entity for the duration. During possession, the spirit adds Force/2 (rounded down) to the vessel's physical attributes (subject to the normal adjustment cap of +4; see p. 37, SR6), can use its own skills and powers, and can access the surface memories and thoughts of the host.

A possessing spirit may be ejected from the vessel into the astral plane with a normal Banishing test (p. 147, SR6). If the possession fails or the spirit is banished, they may not attempt to possess that vessel again until the sun next rises or sets.

QUAKE

(GREAT)

TYPE	ACTION	RANGE	DURATION
P	Major	Special	Instant

The spirit can create earthquakes that affect an area with a radius of (Force) kilometers, with the shaking persisting intermittently for (Force) minutes. The effect varies based on the preparedness of the region for such events. Areas especially vulnerable to earthquakes are usually not areas that receive them frequently, as people in earthquake-prone areas tend to build dwellings with such disasters in mind. To determine the effects, the spirit makes a Magic + Willpower test, with the number of hits representing the magnitude of the quake, as noted on the Quake Table (below).

QUAKE TABLE

While the effects of an individual quake are highly dependent upon the conditions of surrounding soil, the quality of engineering, and the preparedness of the surrounding citizenry, the following basic guidelines can be used:

HITS	EFFECT
1	Motion detectors useless for the duration; motion sensor alarms are tripped; sleeping people awaken.
2	Top-heavy objects fall; unlatched doors and windows swing open or shut.
3	Furniture shifts; objects fall off shelves in bulk; drivers of land vehicles must make Crash tests.
4	Ordinary buildings damaged; doors jam; mine fields detonate.
5	Furniture overturns; windows break (potentially deadly when falling from a tall structure); entire area considered difficult ground.
6	Freestanding fences, walls, and trees sag or fall over; gas lines are unsafe.
7	Roadways become impassable; some buildings collapse.
8	Many buildings collapse; crevasses appear in pavement and open ground.
9+	Utter devastation, even to regions prepared for such events.

REALISTIC FORM

TYPE	ACTION	RANGE	DURATION
P	Auto	Self	Special

This power allows a spirit to be mistaken for a normal physical creature or object using Materialization, or it appears unremarkable when joined to a vessel. The form of a living being would breathe and have a heartbeat, while a technological object would function as normal. The spirit is in no way disguised on the astral plane, but to physical observation it appears to be a regular, unremarkable part of the physical world.

Note that spirits with the Materialization power only have one materialized form. Materializing spirits with this power can choose to appear using Realistic Form or their normal form. A water elemental can appear as a perpetually rolling wave of water, but might also be able to appear as an ork with crystal blue eyes.

REGENERATION

(FREE)

TYPE	ACTION	RANGE	DURATION
P	Auto	Self	Always

This power follows the rules for the critter power of Regeneration (p. 227, SR6). This power only applies to the spirit's materialized, possessed, or inhabited form. If the spirit possesses or inhabits a formerly living vessel, the vessel slowly regenerates back to its living form. For example, a wooden homunculus begins to grow new leaves, or a corpse regains a semblance of life.

SHADOW CLOAK

TYPE	ACTION	RANGE	DURATION
P	Minor	Special	Sustained

This power allows a creature to envelop itself in darkness. In all lighting conditions except broad daylight, this power allows the spirit to gain a point of Edge in situations involving combat, stealth, or social situations. In low-light conditions the spirit gains the Invisible (Force/2) status.

SILENCE

TYPE	ACTION	RANGE	DURATION
P	Major	Special	Sustained

A creature with this power can surround itself in a sphere of silence with a radius equal to their Magic in meters. Sounds from within the area are muffled, and sounds entering the area are harder to hear for the creature or anyone else. This power creates the Silent (Force/2) Status.

STORM

(FREE, GREAT)

TYPE	ACTION	RANGE	DURATION
P	Major	Special	Sustained

This power creates a massive and destructive elemental storm across an area. Icy rain, bolts of lightning, hurricane-force winds, and golf-ball-sized hail strike the area. The radius of the affected area equals the spirit's Magic x 50 meters. Creating the storm requires a Major Action. While the power is sustained, the spirit may use Minor Actions to perform any of the following attacks: Lightning Strike, Hailstorm, Rainchill, or Wind Strike (listed below).

If a target stays inside the storm area for three combat rounds without somehow gaining the Cover III or IV status, they gain the Wet status.

Lightning Strike: A bolt of lightning lashes out at the target. The spirit makes a ranged attack with an Attack Rating of (Force x 2) and rolls Magic + Agility vs. Reaction + Intuition. The Damage Value for the attack is (Force/2)P, increased by net hits, and it is considered electricity damage. The target rolls Body to resist the damage. If damage is done, the target gains the Zapped status for two combat rounds.

Hailstorm: A storm of ice chunks the size of golf balls peppers the target. The spirit makes a ranged attack with an Attack Rating of (Force x 2) and rolls Magic + Strength vs. Reaction + Intuition. The Damage Value for the attack is [(Force/2) + 1]S, increased as usual by net hits. The target rolls Body to resist the damage. If damage is done, the target gains the Dazed status for two combat rounds.

Rainchill: Focused freezing rain batters the target. The spirit makes a ranged attack with an Attack Rating of (Force x 2) and rolls Magic + Body vs. Reaction + Intuition. The Damage Value for the attack is [(Force/2) + 1]S, increased as usual by net hits and is considered cold damage. The target rolls Body to resist the damage. If damage is done, the target gains the Chilled status for two combat rounds.

Wind Strike: A focused blast of wind slams into the target. The spirit makes an opposed roll of Magic + Strength vs. Agility + Strength. Success sends the target tumbling (Force + net hits) meters in a direction chosen by the spirit and ends with the Prone status. If an object blocks that path, the target resists (meters moved)S damage with Body. If they strike another character, that character makes an Agility + Athletics roll with a threshold of (meters moved), with failure giving the Prone status. If any damage is done, the target gains the Confused 2 status for two combat rounds.

TEMPORAL DISPLACEMENT

(FREE, GREAT)

TYPE	ACTION	RANGE	DURATION
P	Major	LOS(A)	Sustained

This power appears to slow time in a (Force) meters diameter sphere. Those inside can move within the space and communicate but cannot affect objects outside the space. Any person or object that leaves the space (even just a pinky) returns to the pace of the outside world but carries no momentum across the field. So, no throwing objects or shooting out. In fact, spirits will never use this power in an offensive manner.

Those outside the sphere are unaware of the effect.

VESSEL TRADING

(FREE)

TYPE	ACTION	RANGE	DURATION
P	Major	Touch	Instant

Ever wonder where the old stories of body-snatching demons come from? Here's your answer. A spirit with the Possession power may use Vessel Trading to evict the life force of a living vessel. They can choose to force the victim's life force out into the astral, creating an astrally projecting creature (even if the creature is mundane) or put the victim's life force in the spirit's old vessel. For those spirits that hop between vessels, if the old vessel already has a life force that was subdued by Possession, the new victim is forced to astrally project instead.

Follow the standard rules for the Possession power (p. 69). Victims placed into a living or nonliving vessel cannot control the vessel like a possessing spirit. A living vessel enters a coma-like state, but their mind is still there and can be communicated with via certain mind-connection spells. A non-living vessel returns to its natural form with the victim trapped inside. The same rules apply for mind connection/

reading spells, but the object must be assensed (with 3+ hits) in order to know something is amiss.

The only methods of escape are a free spirit with this power switching them back, the victim having and using the natural astral projection ability, or the vessel being exposed to an astral rift or an entity with the Astral Gateway power (p. 66). A victim trapped in an inanimate vessel or astral space will feel their life force ebbing away, and they will die after (Magic or Essence) x 2 hours.

WEALTH

(FREE)

TYPE	ACTION	RANGE	DURATION
P	Major	LOS	Special

You ever wonder where Buttercup got her backing to buy into Evo? A spirit with this power can generate precious metals, jewels, and other rare items of great value. The origin of these items is something of which the spirits never speak.

Once per lunar cycle, the spirit with this power may make a Magic + Edge test. Every hit generates 10,000 nuyen worth of mineral alchemical reagents, usually in the form of precious metals or gems, even orichalcum. There is a downside for the spirit, as these creations indefinitely carry the spirit's astral signature. The regular markets being what they are, characters may find it difficult to sell magical gems to a legitimate source, but black marketeers will often pay a smaller sum to take on the risk. Make an opposed Negotiations test, starting at fifty percent of market value and shifting ten percent down or up based on net hits, up to one hundred percent and down to zero percent (if the targeted marketer doesn't deal in that type of merchandise).

A spirit with this power may also create a similar amount of temporary wealth each day that relates closely to their nature, but the next time the sun sets or rises, these valuable items vanish or transform into dirt or other worthless substances. Because of this, savvy businessmen are reluctant to purchase valuables with an astral signature.



FORCE AND GRACE

POSTED BY: AGENT THORN

“Agent Thorn,” people ask me all the time, they ask me, “Agent Thorn, how are you so incredible?” I’ve got three answers. Hard work. Clean living. I’m an adept.

- › Nobody ever asks him that, and two of those three answers are lies.
- › Fianchetto
- › You’ve got the soul of a bitter old man, you do.
- › Thorn

The simple fact, for once, aligns with the public perception; adepts are people who just have a magical advantage over your average, workaday schlub. This advantage tends to manifest itself much more subtly than the flashy and overt spell-casting of proper magicians, what with an adept’s power being more internal than external. Fans of

Karl Kombatmage or *Chase: Errant Knight* might think of adepts as “street samurai without the chrome,” of course. They think of someone who’s quicker than spit, stronger than hell, and tough as boiled leather, without the need for implanted muscles, dermal plating, and the like.

That’s about where the accurate public perception ends, though. Your average mundane wage-slave type hears “adept,” and they think “cheater.” They don’t think “magical advantage,” they think “unfair advantage.” They don’t think “internal manifestation of the ability to tap into mana,” they think “swaggering bollix.” And they don’t think “preternaturally talented at a great variety of things,” they think “Kung Fu and shite.” Yeah?

So we adepts have two major stereotypes pointed our way: firstly, that we’re cheaters who breeze through life without having to try very hard, and secondly, that we’re naught but a bunch of bloody ninja-slaying psychos (or ninja psychos, whatever the case may be).

- > Yeah, poor you.
- > Kane
- > You know you're just proving his point, don't you?
- > Ma'Fan
- > Pirates are unfairly marginalized and stereotyped as being awesome and violent, too!
- > Kane

For super-slick shadow operators like yours truly, these misconceptions are water off a duck's back. Luckily for my standard price tag *and* the world at large, super-slick shadow operators like yours truly are pretty rare animals. To the average adept, both of these common misunderstandings aren't only discriminatory, but dangerous.

THE FIRST BIG LIE

The first stereotype is the more insidious of the two, this idea that adepts are cheaters or, for lack of a better term, magical dopers. This came about, like a great many of our wee earth's many problems, largely due to the purposeful media manipulation of megacorporations. When sports, for instance, were racing to keep up with the changes of the last half-century or so, two broad branches of augmentation became clear: magical and mundane. The magical augmentation of ability came by way of the overt and clearly superhuman spellcasting or spirit-summoning abilities—generally not subtle, generally so different from what most people can do that they're clear violations of a sport's rules, generally inapplicable on a football field or baseball diamond—and the quieter, less obvious, abilities of an adept.

Now, a great many of an adept's advantages are comparable to those an athlete (for instance) could receive via mundane augmentation, aye? Shiny, fancy arms and legs or implanted slabs of muscle can make you run and jump better, just like internalized mana.

But the corporations can control who gets cyberware and the like.

They decide who gets an upgraded prosthetic, they decide who gets those high-tension myomer strands pretending to be muscle tissue, they can charge whatever they want for someone to get a skull full of electronics that let a fella see in the dark or hear a fly pass gas, and they own someone's spinal column once they decide to replace a goodly chunk of it with reflex enhancements. The companies control the means of production, distribution, upkeep, advancement, and all the rest. *They* decide who runs fast or punches out elephants or whatever.

They can't control adepts and the augmentations we get, and, mate, that scares the piss right out of them. So they started the First Big Lie™ and

they started acting like *nobody* controls what an adept can do.

This lie removes agency from adepts all 'round the globe, it belittles the advancements made—for decades!—in understanding how adepts do what they do, and *what* adepts can do, it undercuts the hard work adepts put into learning, and then exceeding, their limitations, and it makes sure the corporations keep a monopoly on who can outrun a chipped-up cop in a footrace, bring home Olympic gold, or make it into the Guinness World Records.

What that First Big Lie means to a young adept is that their abilities manifesting is seen by society at large as cutting corners. It's seen as dishonestly acquiring what other folks have to pay good, hard nuyen for. It's grounds for disqualification from a great many professional and youth sports, period, paragraph, end of line, just for *existing*, no matter what your abilities actually are.

Now let me ask you something. Do you really think Francis Daniels *cheated* to get his engineering doctorate and his fourth-*dan* black belt in aikido? Do you think he tripped and fell into college courses, or do you think he still focused, learned, and applied his lessons? Do you think he accidentally sparred for hours, days, months, years, think he accidentally worked out, think he accidentally applied himself? Of course not. He worked his brilliant, powerful ass off.

Adepts have to work, just like everybody else. A singer with a good ear still has to learn how to sing, aye? A genetically gifted athlete still has to learn the rules to their sport, learn the techniques, the plays, and teamwork, don't they? A naturally good-looking person still has to take care of themselves, clean up, shave, bathe, dress up, groom themselves, and all that, right? Adepts do the work. Adepts put in the effort. Adepts hone themselves. Don't buy the corp propaganda; see it for what it is: abject terror at a lack of control over who is gifted and who isn't.

When corporations and countries claim that adept powers are unpredictable, and propagate the idea that adepts are unreliable, lazy, and cutting corners, just remember one thing: they still trust us with their lives.

If Renraku thought adepts were dishonorable scum who don't know anything about discipline, they wouldn't have so many of 'em filling the ranks of the Red Samurai, would they? If adepts were really so unreliable and flighty, they wouldn't be among the highest-paid bodyguards doing freelance exec-protect work, would they?

Corporate and national security forces, militaries, and paramilitaries were some of the first and only places adepts were made to feel welcome—for *decades*.

Which, boys and ghouls, feeds into the Second Big Lie™: adepts are dangerous.

THE SECOND BIG LIE

Now, aye, I'm aware this leads to a sort of Schrödinger's Adept situation. Pop culture and corporate propaganda tells us that every adept you see *might* be a lackadaisic cad breezing by on unfair talent, or they *might* be the most explosively dangerous motherfragger you've ever met.

This stereotype of all adepts as "physical adepts" has deep, stubborn, and pernicious roots. It was another way for the corporations to control how adepts were treated, and trusted, in day-to-day society.

It was *also* a way for them to steer adepts toward the positions and lifestyle choices they wanted adepts to take (signing up to work as corporate security or waltzing into military recruitment offices). Why? Because the leverage they got over chipped-up razorboys still cost them money. If they could properly brainwash—err, I mean "instill loyalty into"—an adept and get just the same flavor of top-notch operator, and they could do it *without* investing a million nuyen into augmentations that, implanted haphazardly, could make your most promising triggermen shrivel and die or go cyberpsycho, then, well, why not? Footballers don't get indoctrinated quite like soldiers going through basic training and the like; the independence that adept athletes had was a hindrance, the innate improvements that adept shooters brought to the table was a benefit.

Controlling public perception toward adepts kept them disadvantaged, mistrusted, alienated, and vulnerable, kept the everyday schmucks from trusting or relaxing around them, and funneled them toward the physical careers that national armies and corporate security wanted for them. Yes, and all by design, but it *also* let those nations and corporations keep their other adepts—their versatile adepts, their sneaky adepts, their specialized adepts—a secret.

The other truth they were trying to hide, or to deny even to themselves—which has become increasingly clear, especially in the last decade or so—is that adepts can be better than you at *anything*, and that, too, is a terrifying prospect to plastic-faced men wearing suits and doling out nuyen and augmentations.

Because aye, some adepts *are* murderous bastards with blood that'll never come off. Lord knows I'm the last person who'll deny that. But *some* adepts are just soulful, sweet lads who are good with a paintbrush and try to share the beauty of an aura with other folks. Some adepts are rockergirls who can whip up a crowd like no one else. Some adepts are the sort who could sell snake oil to snakes, and would, if snakes had any money. Some see gadgets, gizmos, and engines in ways other people don't, and they can make machinery sing. There's nothing unfair about being

born with a gift, and there's nothing dangerous about leaning into it and trying to live your life with a knack or two.

Adepts are just people. For better or worse, there's no moral code or worldview automatically attached to being born with a bit of magic running through your veins. So, like people, we come in a splendid variety.

And, like people tend to, we still try to label ourselves and each other. That's where "ways" come in. Adepts've been around for a while, and we've settled into a handful or two of largely-agreed-upon categories for ourselves. An adept's way is almost like a tradition to a spellcaster; it says something about how the adept sees the world and sees magical power, but it says the *most* about how an adept sees themselves.

Don't let the names completely twist you up and make too many assumptions, either. If you somehow pull records on someone and find out their way—some social engineering or a nice hackjob of an initiatory group's databases, let's say?—don't leap to too many conclusions based solely on what you discover. Plenty of athletes are pretty violent these days—I've met world-class masters of soft martial arts who see themselves as performers first and foremost, many an artist rockerboy has learned to scuffle on their way to the big time, and there are almost as many invisible way followers as warriors in the world's top-tier operator teams. Similarly, don't think someone's *only* brawn, no brains, if you find out they're a warrior or an athlete, for instance; a way is more about intent, less about ability. Warriors can still be plenty subtle and might focus their adept powers very similarly to members of other paths, all in preparation for the right moment to strike.

Don't think anyone's a blunt instrument or a pushover, just based on one word. Especially in our line of work, sure and you never know what powers someone might pick up along the way.

The **artisan's way** is for those who, and bear with me here, like to do *things* with *stuff*. They like to make gadgets, improve upon gadgets, tinker with gadgets, design, engineer, and manipulate hardware and software. They like to tune up big engines and drive fast cars. They're the designers and the dreamers, the wily wheelmen and the console cowboys, the canny creators and daring demolition devils. They, artists, and speakers are often lumped in together as "soft" adepts, which can be a deadly mistake. If it has to do with high technology, high speed, or high horsepower, an artisan might channel their power into being good with it.

Adepts on the **artist's way** are generally a bit less pragmatic and a bit more personable than artisans, while having a bit more substance than speakers. They create to live and live to create, but often for less practical reasons than artisans do; if an artisan is a blacksmith, an artist is a paint-

er. Artists find their way these days by hook or by crook, and a great many types of entertainers fall under this umbrella. There are stuntmen and rockergirls, exotic dancers and exotic sculptors, chefs and storytellers.

The **athlete's way** is a hard but rewarding one, and they and warriors tend to be the first types of adepts most people think of. They're the highest profile, the reason why we were called "physical adepts" for so long! While still unwelcome in a great many sports (bloody urban brawl), when you *do* see an athlete adept at work (or play?), there's no mistaking it. They're some of the strongest, fastest, most entertaining-to-watch professionals around, and they're at least half the reason hurling's as popular as it is in the Tír. You owe it to yourself to see what one of these lads or lassies can do.

The **beast's way** was misunderstood for a long time, and often still is, truth be told. There are those who, over the years, have claimed it's a spin-off of the magician's way, the warrior's way, and the invisible way, but the truth is they're trying to fit a square peg in a round hole. The beast's way just *is*, and you'll know one when you see one. They might take on cat's eyes to see in the dark, grow terrible claws when they need to kill a spirit with their bare hands, or slip into a shamanic rat-mask when skulking about, but whatever their look, there's no denying their diverse abilities and their unique connections to their mentor spirits. A wolf or bear berserker is a sight to see, so long as it's from a safe distance.

More than a few unfortunate souls have found themselves on the **burnout's way** over the years, and for good reason; seeking to integrate store-bought and street-doc power with their natural adept talents is a slippery slope, and if anyone can strike that balance, it's a proper burnout. Those who focus themselves on mundane augmentation may have a crutch, but they lean on it proper hard, they do, and can be hard as a coffin nail in a scrap.

The **invisible way** isn't talked about much, and that's just how these buggers like it. They're easy to miss in the background of flashier, more violent, seemingly more impressive ways, but that's all a part of their angle, you see? When it comes to marksmanship and patience, there's precious little difference between a top-tier sniper of the warrior's way versus the invisible, except that the warrior's more likely to care about confirmed kills, letting a spotter keep up with him, and bragging to his mates back on base. It's a mindset issue, not a skillset one. Invisible adepts like to stay under the radar, even off the job. Whether a con man, a pick-pocket, a burglar, or an assassin, they're hard to find—but worth the money, if you can hire them.

The **magician's way** is another often-misunderstood path, and that's likely because of how it overlaps with those of sorcerers, summoners, and

all the other top-notch magical sorts. Magician's way followers are mystic adepts, one and all, and that's a can o' worms best opened by folks who can sling mojo. What I know is that magician's way adepts are often mistaken for a regular mage or shaman—ha, inasmuch as a "regular" mage or shaman exists—with just a few extra tricks up their sleeve. Just as often, though, they're overlooked as just another adept, but with a bit more flash and utility. The truth can lie at either extreme or somewhere in the middle; those walking the way with dedication and balance in mind can be some of the most versatile, powerful buggers you'll ever cross wands with.

Like invisibles, those on the **speaker's way** took a long time to rise to the general consciousness. When one bloke's faster than a speeding bullet and another is leaping tall buildings with a single bound, it's easy to miss the superjock's hype man and agent, aye? Speakers can be Mr. Johnsons, fixers, corporate executives, gang leaders, cult leaders, con men, and everything in between. If quick wits and smooth talking are the way to get a job done, it's a speaker who's likely your best bet.

And finally we land on the **warrior's way**, which is ironic given they were the first adepts—excuse me, "physical adepts," back in the day—to be discovered, recognized, and to have their abilities quantified. If you could take on a trio of top-chipped razorboys without breaking a sweat, and you could do it with nary a wire, port, plug, socket, or cyberlimb in sight, twenty or thirty years ago you were quite the rare bird and impressive specimen. Over time, society has started to take warrior adepts for granted, especially in the shadows, but it's important to remember just how many more tricks they can have up their mana-wrapped sleeves than simply strength or speed. Being a warrior is about having a purity of intent and a certain focus, not just the abilities you bring to the table. If all you think you're going to find is a gutterpunk who can't afford wired reflexes, you're liable to get yourself a nasty surprise.

- > So what about it, grandpa? What's your way?
- > Slamm-O!
- > Och, that'd be telling.
- > Thorn
- > Don't let the charm or stealth fool you; he's a warrior, through and through.
- > Fianchetto
- > Damn it! I knew I should've killed you in '69.
- > Thorn
- > See?
- > Fianchetto

ADEPT WAYS AND THEIR BENEFITS

(20 KARMA)

Adepts begin following a way by selecting it as a quality, which gives them the Innate Way, Focused Channeling, and Spark of Brilliance abilities, along with the listed benefit of their selected way.

INNATE TALENT

The focus and dedication that come from traveling on a way grant an adept the ability to routinely bolster their adept abilities in small ways. Once per encounter, they may reduce the costs of Edge boosts by one on any test that is modified in any way by an adept power or metamagic technique. For every level of initiation, this ability can be used one additional time per encounter.

FOCUSED CHANNELING

Adepts focused on a way may resist the hardships of using mana by relying on their way-specific training and mindset, instead of the default fortitude attributes of basic adepts. This alternate drain attribute is not mandatory, but the decision to change or not must be made when a way is gained and cannot be altered thereafter (until and unless an adept changes their way; see the *Finding Your Way* metamagic, p. 84).

SPARK OF BRILLIANCE

Finally, followers of ways receive some other minor enhancement to their magical power, as listed below, generally reflecting a greater trust in their magical ability that may prove inconsistent at times, but truly impressive when innate knacks and experience align properly.

ARTISAN'S WAY

Followers may resist adept drain with Logic instead of Willpower, and they may swap in a wild die on any roll made for Biotech, Cracking, Electronics, Engineering, or Piloting (the choice of one skill is permanent when this way is taken, but you may choose to include a wild die or not from roll to roll).

ARTIST'S WAY

Followers may resist adept drain with Charisma instead of Willpower, and they may swap in a wild die on any roll made for Athletics, Con, or Influence (the choice of one skill is permanent when this way is taken, but you may choose to include a wild die or not from roll to roll).

ATHLETE'S WAY

Followers may resist adept drain with any physical attribute instead of Body, and they may swap in a wild die on any roll made for Athletics (the choice of physical attribute for drain is permanent at the time this way is taken, but you may choose to include a wild die or not from roll to roll).

BEAST'S WAY

Followers may resist adept drain with Intuition instead of Willpower. They may swap in a wild die on any roll made for Outdoors or Perception (the choice of one skill is permanent when this way is taken, but you may choose to include a wild die or not from roll to roll), or they may choose to receive both the adept and magician benefits of their mentor spirit (purchased normally). The selection of which benefit to gain is made when the way is chosen.

BURNOUT'S WAY

Followers may resist adept drain with one physical attribute modified via mundane augmentation instead of Body (the choice of which attribute is permanent when this way is taken). In addition, they may use their *Innate Talent* way ability (see above) one additional time per encounter for every full Essence point they are below 6.

INVISIBLE WAY

Followers may resist adept drain with Agility instead of Body, and they may swap in a wild die on any roll made for Stealth or Perception (select one skill when this way is taken, but choose to include a wild die from roll to roll).

MAGICIAN'S WAY

Followers may resist adept drain with their tradition attribute instead of Willpower, and they may either swap in a wild die on any roll made for Astral, Conjuring, Enchanting, or Sorcery (the choice of one skill is permanent when this way is taken, but you may choose to include a Wild Die or not from roll to roll), or they may choose to receive both the Adept and Magician benefits of their mentor spirit (purchased normally). The selection of which benefit to gain is made when the way is chosen.

SPEAKER'S WAY

Followers may resist adept drain with Charisma instead of Willpower, and they may swap in a wild die on any roll made for Con or Influence (the choice of one skill is permanent when this way is taken, but you may choose to include a wild die or not from roll to roll).

WARRIOR'S WAY

Followers may resist adept drain with any physical attribute instead of Body, and they may swap in a wild die on any roll made for Close Combat or Firearms (the choice of which drain attribute to use and the choice of which skill for wild die manipulation are both permanent when this way is taken, but you may choose to include a wild die or not from roll to roll).

NEW ADEPT POWERS

AID SORCERY

Cost: 0.5 PP per level

Activation: Major Action (Minor to maintain)

An adept with this power can channel their inner magic to aid a nearby spellcaster with their sorcery. The adept must touch the spellcaster and spend a Major Action to open a mana conduit between them, and they must maintain physical contact and spend a Minor Action every subsequent round to keep the conduit open. A spellcaster that casts a spell while a conduit is maintained in this way adds the adept's Aid Sorcery ranks as bonus dice on any Sorcery test (also including Counterspelling and Ritual Spellcasting). After each time a spellcaster uses these bonus dice, the adept must resist drain in the form of Stun damage equal to their ranks in Aid Sorcery.

AIR DANCE

Cost: 1.5 PP

Activation: Passive

Using Air Dance lets a particularly speedy adept capitalize on their reaction time against slower opponents, gliding smoothly on air with their feet just a centimeter off the ground. At the start of the round, compare the adept's initiative to the highest initiative on the opposing side. For every (10 – Initiative Grade) Initiative Points that the adept beats their fastest opponent by, the adept gains +1 Minor Action.

ANALYTICS

Cost: 0.5

Activation: Passive

Adepts with this power recognize and solve patterns and puzzles with supernatural ease. They gain a bonus Edge when making any Logic-based test (this Edge must be spent on that test, or it is lost).

ANIMAL EMPATHY

Cost: 0.5 PP per level (max 2 levels)

Activation: Passive

Some adepts have an uncanny ability to connect with critters. An adept with one level of Animal Em-

pathy reduces the cost of Edge Boosts by one when making any Charisma-based test against mundane critters. The second level of Animal Empathy grants the same bonus with Awakened critters—including dracoforms, the Infected, and the like. Good luck with that!

ATTRIBUTE BOOST: MENTAL

Cost: 0.25 PP per level

Activation: Major Action

More refined adepts harness their internal mana flow and use it to empower not only their physical abilities, but their cleverness, perception, force of personality, and strength of will. When this ability is purchased, you specify a Mental attribute (Logic, Intuition, Charisma, or Willpower; this power can be purchased multiple times, either adding ranks to an existing Boost or applying it to a new attribute). This power cannot be applied to Physical or Special attributes.

When this power is activated, roll Magic + (Attribute Boost rating for relevant attribute). Each hit temporarily increases the rating of the designated attribute by 1, up to the augmented maximum of +4. This affects only dice pools, not Initiative rank, Condition Monitor, etc. The effect lasts for (net hits) rounds, and when the power expires, the adept must resist drain equal to their levels in this power in the relevant attribute.

BERSERK

Cost: 1 PP per level

Activation: Minor Action

Some adepts are wells of furious mana and have learned to tap into that primal energy to enter a frenzied state that greatly increases their physical abilities. When this power is activated, the adept gains +1 to all their Physical attributes per level of Berserk (this bonus combines with other enhancements but is still limited to the usual augmented maximum of +4), ignores an amount of damage equal to their ranks in Berserk (as though they also had Pain Resistance at the same level; this stacks with existing Pain Resistance and other modifier amelioration), but suffers a –1 to all Mental attributes per level of Berserk (to a minimum of 1) and is a slave to their mindless aggression. These modifications affect most dice pools and Close Combat Attack Rating (Initiative, attack rolls, soak rolls, etc.), but not Condition Monitors.

A berserk adept *must* make Close Combat attacks against a target in range or use Major Actions to close with someone in order to do so, every round (including friendlies or bystanders once they run out of opponents). The berserker frenzy lasts for (Berserk Levels x 2) rounds. If the adept wishes to leave this aggressive state early (in order to retreat or because their opponents are all down, for

instance) they must roll an Adept Drain test (Body + Willpower, or as appropriate for their way) and score hits equal to their ranks in the Berserk power. When the power expires, either naturally or through a voluntary withdrawal, the adept must resist drain equal to (2 x ranks in this power), using their regular (non-Berserk) drain attributes.

BLIND FIGHTING

Cost: 0.5 PP

Activation: Passive

An adept with this power uses some combination of other senses to reflexively compensate for a lack of vision, whether due to permanent injury, temporary penalties, or a simple blindfold. An adept using Blind Fighting never grants a Close Combat opponent bonus Edge for vision modifiers (for darkness, flash-paks, tear gas, or other vision-based penalties), but they are still vulnerable to ambush or surprise situations.

CLOAK

Cost: 0.25 PP per level

Activation: Passive

Some auras are harder to draw a bead on than others. For every rank an adept has in the Cloak power, they may impose a -1 dice pool penalty to tests made to read their aura.

COMMANDING VOICE

Cost: 1.5 PP per level

Activation: Major Action

The words of an adept with Commanding Voice are infused with supernatural authority and power. Every level of this power adds +1 die to opposed Influence tests for Intimidation that the character initiates, while also lacing those forceful commands with unstoppable intent. If the adept succeeds in such a test, the target *must* obey the adept's given order, at least momentarily.

Dangerous orders or orders given in dangerous situations (in combat, for instance) will be followed for a maximum of (Commanding Voice) rounds. Orders may never result in the target directly harming themselves ("leap off the roof," "step into traffic," and "shoot yourself" are not valid commands, for instance), though they may result in a moment of vulnerability that can be taken advantage of ("sit" or "freeze") or a momentary shift in allegiance ("shoot that guard!"). When in doubt, a successful order should at least make a target freeze up for at least one full round, even if the order given is impossible or clearly suicidal.

Clearly supernatural orders will leave a target aware of this external control, but less radical commands may result in longer obedience, and if phrased carefully may not even result in the target

or other witnesses being aware of any supernatural manipulation (though they'll still likely notice someone barking orders and those orders being obeyed, the magical control itself may not be obvious). "Come on, man, just *let us in*" may get you into a club without incident, while a shouted "*fight him*, muwahaha" and setting a bouncer against his coworker for your amusement is likely to draw attention and be pretty obvious.

COOL RESOLVE

Cost: 0.25 PP per level

Activation: Passive

Some adepts shield their psyches with mana and certainty, making themselves impressively unflappable. For every level in Cool Resolve, they may add +1 die to all opposed social tests to resist someone else's initiated Influence skills, and +1 die on all tests to resist the Fear critter power. (They *may* add these dice, not *must*, allowing them to benefit from friendly Leadership or Instruction rolls, etc.).

COSMETIC CONTROL

Cost: 1 PP per level (max 2 levels)

Activation: Major Action

An adept with Cosmetic Control may alter their body in order to change their physical appearance by growing or shedding hair, changing traditional gender markers, altering their skin tone, adding or removing blemishes or scars, reshaping their facial features, changing their height and weight, or increasing or decreasing other cosmetic physical attributes (bust and hip size, growing or retracting nails, etc.). These changes are purely cosmetic but are not illusory, and clothing and other equipment are not affected, nor may damage be healed in this way, augmentations expelled or installed, etc.

One level of Cosmetic Control allows for the adept to change within the confines of what is normally allowed for their metatype (ears remain pointed or round as appropriate, trolls maintain horns and orks tusks, height remains within the range of their metatype, and hair, eye, and skin colors are limited to the usual range of their metatype).

The second level of Cosmetic Control allows an adept to reach beyond the usual limitations of their metasppecies, in both general appearance (ear shape, the addition or removal of horns or tusks, etc.) and in size, allowing a dwarf to reach human/elven/orkish height (or reduce themselves to a smaller size, such as a pixie), allowing a troll to reduce to human/elven/orkish height, or allowing a human/elf/ork to grow or shrink to either extreme. These modifications still provide no alteration to attributes in any way, but they are enough to allow an adept to pass completely as a member of a different metatype. It also allows for a broader

array of other cosmetic changes, such as hair, skin, and eye colors and patterns with a greater variety (striped blue hair, green skin, adding tattoos, slit eyes like a cat, or whatever other purely cosmetic modifications they like).

Each level of Cosmetic Control, in addition to the visual modifications listed, lowers the cost of Edge Boosts by one for Con tests for Acting, Disguise, or Impersonation, as appropriate (and with the GM's discretion may also add to Influence tests as well, particularly Intimidation as it relates to size, or metatype-related Etiquette tests). GMs and players should also remain aware of the Social Test Edge chart (SR6, p. 98) for further mechanical guidance as circumstances and appearances change.

COUNTERMAGIC

Cost: 0.5 PP per level

Activation: Minor Action

Spells slide off an adept with this power like water off a duck's back. An adept with Countermagic adds one die to tests to resist spells per level of this power.

COUNTERSTRIKE

Cost: 0.5 per level

Activation: Minor Action

An adept with Counterstrike may smoothly shift from defense to attack in Close Combat, catching an opponent off-guard after successfully defending against an attack. This power may only be used on their first turn after successfully using a Minor Action to Block a Close Combat attack (p. 41, SR6). After spending an additional Minor Action to trigger Counterstrike, add dice to their next Close Combat attack roll equal to their levels in Counterstrike plus any net hits from the Block—but only on attacks against the character who attacked them.

DASH

Cost: 0.25 PP per level

Activation: Minor Action

Fleet of foot is putting it mildly! When an adept makes a Sprint test (p. 44, SR6) and invests a Minor Action to focus themselves, they add +1 meter to their movement for every rank in Dash.

DISTANCE GRASP

Cost: 0.5 PP per level

Activation: Minor Action

Distance Grasp lets an adept reach out and manipulate the physical world through a psychokinetic effect that roughly mimics their hands. The range of this power is (Distance Grasp levels x

Magic) in meters, and the adept has an effective Strength equal to their levels in Distance Grasp. They may use skills remotely, pick up small objects, flip switches, peck at keyboards, pick locks, etc, but they may *not* attack (see Distance Strike for that). The supernatural intent behind Distance Grasp is for manipulation, not offense.

DISTANCE STRIKE

Cost: 2 PP

Activation: Passive

An adept with Distance Strike may project their physical strength across short distances with the clear, mana-infused intent to deal damage, allowing them to strike a target without physically touching them. The range of a Distance Strike is the adept's Magic in meters, and it deals damage and has an Attack Rating the same as the adept's unarmed attacks (including supernatural or Essence-invested modifiers, such as Killing Hands, Elemental Strike, or Bone Lacing, but *not* purely external modifications like knucks or shock gloves).

The adept attacks with Close Combat as though it were a regular Unarmed attack, but targets may resist the attack as either a Close Combat or ranged attack (using Dodge or Block as they prefer). Cover modifiers apply as usual, and the strike cannot pass through solid objects or pierce mana barriers.

ELEMENTAL MISSILE

(ELEMENT) (WEAPON)

Cost: 0.5 PP

Activation: Minor Action

Elemental Missile lets an adept infuse a ranged attack with an elemental damage type (see Damage Types, p. 109, SR6). Activating the power and visibly charging your weapon with elemental energy requires a Minor Action, after which time it remains active for (Magic) rounds or until deactivated at will.

When Elemental Missile is purchased, the adept must choose one element *and* one type of ranged attack from the following list: Thrown Weapons (including attacks made with Missile Mastery), Projectile Weapons, one *Specialization* of the Exotic Weapon skill or one *Specialization* of Firearms (Automatics, Longarms, Pistols, Rifles, or Shotguns; the character need not have the specialization or expertise purchased, but the narrower categories apply to its use). Elemental Missile may also be purchased for the Gunnery specialization of Engineering, but the elemental effect can only be applied to Gunnery weapons if the adept has used Item Attunement to link to the drone or vehicle that holds the weapon.

This power may be purchased multiple times, either to apply alternate (not multiple) elemental

effects to one category of ranged attack, or to apply already-purchased elemental effects to a wider variety of weapons. Only one elemental effect can be active per attack.

ELEMENTAL STRIKE

(ELEMENT)

Cost: 0.5 PP

Activation: Minor Action

Prerequisite: Killing Hands (p. 157, SR6)

An adept with Elemental Strike may infuse their unarmed attacks with raw elemental force, adding an elemental damage type (see *Damage Types*, p. 109, SR6). Activating the power and visibly wreathing your hand, foot, or other striking body part with power requires a Minor Action, after which it remains active for (Magic) rounds or until deactivated at will.

The power may be purchased multiple times, adding a new elemental option with each purchase, but only one elemental effect can be active per attack.

ELEMENTAL WEAPON

(ELEMENT)

Cost: 0.5 PP per level

Activation: Minor Action

An adept with Elemental Weapon is able to channel elemental power into their melee attacks with Close Combat weapons rather than unarmed attacks. They add an elemental damage type (see *Damage Types*, p. 109, SR6) to their weapon attacks. Activating the power and wreathing your weapon in visible elemental energy requires a Minor Action, after which time it remains active for (Magic) rounds or until deactivated at all.

The power may be purchased multiple times, adding a new elemental option with each purchase, but only one elemental effect can be active per attack.

EMPATHIC HEALING

Cost: 0.75 PP

Activation: Major Action (see below)

Adepts can, in times of crisis, link their health to that of an injured person, and pull the target's injuries into their own body along this powerful, and painful, conduit. The adept begins the Empathic Healing process through physical contact with the target and a Magic + Willpower roll (threshold of 5 – target's Essence).

The adept removes 1 box of Physical or Overflow damage from the target per hit, simultaneously suffering 1 box of Stun damage for the first box of damage transferred this way, then Physical damage equal to the remaining boxes in future actions.

Damage is transferred at the rate of 1 box per Major Action, during which time physical contact must be maintained. Injuries can only be affected once with Empathic Healing (but using Empathic Healing does not count toward the limit of one Healing spell per injury).

Example: The team's face has Essence 6 and has received 8 boxes of Physical damage from a rifle shot. The adept makes contact, spends a Major Action, rolls Magic + Willpower, gets 4 hits, then adds +1 hit for the target's high Essence for a total of 5 hits. Immediately upon rolling, the face is lowered to 7 boxes of Physical damage and the adept receives 1 box of (unsoakable) Stun. During the next Major Action dedicated to the process, the face is lowered to 6 damage, and the adept takes 1 level of (unsoakable) Physical damage. If contact is maintained and the power is used for the full duration, at the end of the process the face will still have 3 boxes of Physical damage, and the adept will have 4 boxes of Physical damage and 1 box of Stun.

EMPATHIC SENSE

Cost: 0.5 PP

Activation: Minor Action

Empathic Sense allows adepts access to a weaker form of Assensing, allowing them to sense the true feelings and health of targets they can see. The adept spends a Minor Action and rolls Intuition + Perception, and gains information according to the Assensing Table (p. 159, SR6), but they are limited to the emotional state and the physical health of the target (maladies, injuries, toxins, whether the target is Awakened, mundane, a technomancer or Monad).

If an adept makes an Opposed Social test against the target and is able to leverage information gathered via Empathic Sense, grant the adept Edge on that roll (which must be used only on that roll, or it is lost).

If an adept with Empathic Sense later gains the ability for full Astral Sight, this Power Point may be reallocated.

ENTHRALLING PERFORMANCE

Cost: 0.5 PP

Activation: Minor Action

Enthralling Performance lets an adept lace an artistic performance with magical power in order to mesmerize their audience and, in fact, put them into a relaxed hypnotic state. By investing a Minor Action to harness their power (in addition to the necessary action investment to perform with their instrument, dance, sing, etc.), the adept may then roll their appropriate skill/specialty + Magic, and their hits serve as a threshold modifier for any Perception tests their audience might try to make during the performance. Enthralled audience members

may be distracted and entranced for a maximum of (Charisma + Magic) x net hits minutes, but viewers who are attacked, overtly threatened, or otherwise shocked out of it (an appropriately loud noise, sprinkler system or flash-pak going off, unsilenced gunshots, etc.) are snapped out of it early.

Enthralling Performance defaults to Con/Performance specialty, but gamemasters may allow Influence/Leadership for a rousing speech, Athletics/Gymnastics for an impressive display, or even Close Combat/Unarmed for a kata routine, Stealth/Palming for distracting magic tricks, or other combinations as appropriate for the character, decided when it is purchased. It may be purchased more than one time for different Skill/Specialization combinations.

FREEFALL

Cost: 0.25 per level (max 3 levels)

Activation: Passive

Some adepts are light on their feet, preternaturally so. Every level of Freefall adds 3 meters to the distance an adept falls before calculating damage (see p. 113, SR6).

GREAT LEAP

Cost: 0.25 per level

Activation: Minor Action

Great Leap lets an adept cross impressive distances with jumping. When attempting a Jumping test (Athletics + Strength) after investing a Minor Action to focus, an adept with Great Leap can make a running jump of 2 meters per hit, a standing horizontal jump of 1 meter per hit, and a standing vertical jump of 0.5 meters per hit. They also get +1 die on the Jumping test per level of Great Leap.

IMPROVED MENTAL ATTRIBUTE

Cost: 1 PP per level

Activation: Passive

Select a Mental attribute (Intuition, Logic, Charisma, or Willpower) when purchasing this power. That attribute receives an ongoing increase equal to the level of this power, up to the augmented maximum of +4 or 1.5 times the current level of the attribute.

IRON WILL

Cost: 0.25 PP per level

Activation: Passive

The adept is able to shake off supernatural influences easier than most. They may add +1 die per level of Iron Will to any test to resist magical mind control or magical emotional manipulation (including but not limited to Manipulation spells, critter powers, and adept powers).

KINESICS MASTERY

Cost: 0.25 PP per level

Activation: Passive

Prerequisite: Kinesics (p. 157, SR6)

An adept with Kinesics Mastery is a master of body language, nonverbal communication, and both sensing tension in others and hiding their own. This power provides two benefits: First, it allows two adepts with Kinesics Mastery and line of sight to one another to relay complicated, detailed information to one another without outsiders noticing (essentially holding a full conversation in secret). Second, every level of Kinesics Mastery increases the number of times per encounter that the Kinesics power grants Edge (p. 157, SR6).

LINGUISTICS

Cost: 0.25 PP

Activation: Passive

An adept with Linguistics is able to focus their superhuman perception, memorization, mimicry, and empathic powers in order to learn languages after only a minimal amount of exposure, and without spending Karma. Adepts must be exposed to a new language for a minimum of one hour, at which time they gain the new Language Skill at the basic level (see **Language Skills**, p. 99, SR6).

Linguistics also provides one bonus die to Perception tests to understand a language in which the character is trained (either via this skill or through traditional means).

LIVING FOCUS

Cost: 1 PP per level

Activation: Passive

Living Focus lets an adept focus their internalized mana and use it like a battery to sustain a spell cast on them (similar to a sustaining focus). Using this power to maintain a spell removes the burden of sustaining from the spellcaster and requires no roll, but the adept suffers the usual -2 dice pool penalty for sustaining the spell. If the adept falls asleep or unconscious, they can no longer sustain the spell, so the caster must either sustain it themselves (with the dice pool penalty) or drop it.

Additional levels of Living Focus allow adepts to sustain additional spells (one spell per rank in Living Focus) or may be invested in defraying the penalty of sustaining a spell (every rank of Living Focus, after the first, invested into a spell may lower the penalty by 1). For example, Living Focus 3 allows an adept to self-sustain one spell for no penalty, three spells for a total penalty of -6, or two spells for a total penalty of -3).

MANEUVER

Cost: 0.5 PP

Activation: Major Action

An adept with this power can almost run rings around their chosen opponent, thanks to balance and footwork, along with carefully watching opponents' body language and tells. To use this power, the adept invests a Major Action and rolls Close Combat + Intuition, opposed by their chosen combatant's Intuition. Net hits on the Maneuver test may then be allocated as bonus dice to either the adept's next Close Combat test made to attack that opponent or their next Defense test made against that opponent's attack (these bonus dice may be stacked with other modifiers, such as the Block action). This "pool" of Maneuver dice goes away if they are not used before the end of next combat round.

MISSILE MASTERY

Cost: 1 PP

Activation: Passive

Everyday items become lethal weapons to an adept with Missile Mastery, due to sheer power, uncanny accuracy, or both. With a purpose-built, non-explosive throwing weapon, increase the DV and Attack Rating of the weapon by +1 (grenades don't do extra explosive damage just because you throw them really hard, but they may be used as improvised weapons; see below). With an improvised throwing weapon—a coin, a bullet, a playing card, an empty magazine, a chopstick, a flash-pak, use your imagination!—the adept can attack for DV 1P or 1S, with an Attack Rating equal to the adept's Athletics + Strength at Close and Near range, half that (rounded up) at Medium range, up to a maximum 100 meters. (For example, an adept with Strength 5 and Athletics 4 would create an Attack Rating line of 9/9/5*/—/—.)

MISSILE PARRY

Cost: 0.5 PP

Activation: Passive

Through uncanny reflexes and hand-eye coordination, an adept with Missile Parry has an extra layer of defense against non-explosive thrown and projectile weapons (to be clear, bullets count as explosive due to the way they are propelled). When being attacked in such a way, the adept may use the Block Minor Action (p. 41, SR6), allowing them to add their Close Combat skill to their Defense test, despite not being in melee. If the adept's net hits on the Block test exceed the base damage of the projectile or throwing weapon, the adept may, at their discretion, catch the weapon instead of batting it out of the air.

MOMENTUM

Cost: 0.25 PP per level

Activation: Passive

Some adepts are capable of a level of focused concentration that unaugmented mundanes cannot match. The Momentum power helps them move from success to success, regardless of how long they work at a task; every level of Momentum lets them ignore one level of the -1 dice pool modifier that progressively shrinks their pool when making an Extended test (SR6 p. 36). For example, Momentum 2 would allow an adept to use their full pool for the first, second, and third Intervals of an Extended test, and then roll with only a -1 penalty on the fourth, -2 on the fifth, etc.

NERVE STRIKE

Cost: 1 PP

Activation: Passive

An adept with Nerve Strike is not only in tune with their own flow of internal mana, but also able to disrupt that flow of life energy in others by striking nerve clusters and other focal points where such mana pools. The adept declares the use of this power prior to making a Close Combat roll, then rolls (and the target defends) as normal. Instead of declaring damage after the attack and defense tests, the adept can lower the target's Agility or Reaction (adept's choice) by 1 per net hit. If the targeted attribute is reduced to a 0 or less, the target is paralyzed. Lost attribute points recover at the rate of 1 point per hour of rest. No Physical or Stun damage is done by the attack, regardless of any secondary effects that would normally occur (such as striking with a stun baton or making an unarmed attack with Elemental Strike empowered).

This power may be used against critters as well as metahumans but is useless against opponents without working nervous systems or biological life energy (drones, spirits, and the like).

NIMBLE FINGERS

Cost: 0.25 PP per level

Activation: Passive

Adepts with Nimble Fingers are amazingly dexterous and quick-fingered. The first level of Nimble Fingers lowers the cost of Edge Boosts by one on tests like Stealth (Palming) for sleight-of-hand or picking pockets, Engineering (Lockpicking) for opening locks, or Con (Performance) tests for certain fine manipulations.

Each level of Nimble Fingers after the first one grants a +1 dice pool modifier for such tests and a bonus Minor Action that can only be used to offset the Major/Minor Action cost of Pick Up/Put Down Object, Reload Weapon, Use Simple Device, and other actions that rely on quick

fingers and manual dexterity (Nimble Fingers 3, for instance, would reduce the Reload Weapon Major Action to an action cost of two Minor Actions, cutting the time it takes in half). This action discount does not apply for Ready Weapon actions; for that, see Quick Draw (below).

PAIN RELIEF

Cost: 1 PP

Activation: Major Action

By manipulating someone's nerve clusters, qi points, and other natural areas where mana and life energy pool within a metahuman body, an adept with Pain Relief may temporarily relieve tension, fatigue, and discomfort. The adept rolls Agility + Magic to accurately target the appropriate points on the body in a flurry of nerve strikes, and for every hit rolled, the target may ignore one point of Stun Damage for purposes of calculating wound modifiers. This damage is not healed, but the target feels refreshed and recharged, better able to continue on despite their bruises or exhaustion. This damage relief fades after (Magic) hours. Alternately, instead of ignoring damage, the subject may have the effects of the Nerve Strike power removed. This effect is permanent.

PENETRATING STRIKE

Cost: 0.25 PP per level

Activation: Passive

Some adepts are supernaturally precise, powerful, or both, in melee combat. For each level of Penetrating Strike, increase your Attack Rating with Close Combat attacks by +1.

POWER THROW

Cost: 0.5 PP per level

Activation: Passive

Adepts with Power Throw are amazingly dangerous with thrown weapons. For every level of Power Throw, add +1 DV or +2 Attack Rating to direct-damage (non-explosive) thrown weapons (choose which bonus when the level of Power Throw is purchased). These bonuses cannot add an Attack Rating where a weapon has no Attack Rating, and cannot more than double the base DV or AR of an attack so modified. This means a throwing knife (2P, 10/9/3/—/—) is capped, regardless of the number of Power Throw points invested, at an attack profile of (4P, 20/18/6/—/—). Only one level of Power Throw can be used in conjunction with the Missile Mastery power (p. 82), meaning bonuses are capped at +1 DV and +2 Attack Rating.

QUICK DRAW

Cost: 0.25 PP

Activation: Passive

The Quick Draw power lets an adept use the Quick Draw Minor Action with weapons larger than the usual pistol or small throwing weapon, and use it on those already-allowed small weapons without the need for a specialized holster, augmentation, or quality.

QUICK STRIKE

Cost: 3 PP

Activation: Passive

There is fast, and there is impossibly fast; an adept with Quick Strike is the latter. When initiative is rolled, an adept with Quick Strike rolls as normal, but may then choose to simply act first that round instead of taking their actions in Initiative order. Their Initiative score is not modified, and they receive no additional Minor Actions because of this power.

If two adepts with Quick Strike both use this power at the same time, compare their Initiative Rolls for a tiebreaker, with the higher of them going first, the loser of the comparison going second, and then Initiative progressing as normal.

SIDE STEP

Cost: 0.25 PP per level

Activation: Passive

Adepts with Side Step are experts at narrowly avoiding incoming attacks with the most precise and efficient movements possible. Every rank in Side Step provides +1 die on tests when they put extra effort into Defense, such as with the Block or Dodge Minor Actions (the bonus is not given on routine Defense tests, only on those augmented through an action expenditure such as those listed). These bonuses stack with the additional dice offered by Block and Dodge, and with Combat Sense or other such modifiers.

SPELL SHROUD

Cost: 0.25 PP per level

Activation: Passive

An adept with the Spell Shroud power is fuzzy and indistinct against those who seek them out magically. For every level of this power, add +1 die to all tests to oppose Detection spells.

SUSTENANCE

Cost: 0.25 PP

Activation: Passive

Some adepts are able to overcome the needs of the body, whether it be through discipline, harnessing the manafield of the planet, surviving off

sunlight, eating literal garbage, or meditating their hungers and exhaustion away. The Sustenance power lets an adept receive as much sustenance and rest from one good meal a day and three hours of sleep as most metahumans get from three square meals and a solid eight hours. Reduce the adept's Lifestyle cost by 250 nuyen/month (needing to eat less makes a world of difference to a Squatter, but not to someone who's making a full meal out of caviar and quail eggs).

THREE-DIMENSIONAL MEMORY

Cost: 0.5 PP

Activation: Major Action

Three-Dimensional Memory lets an adept memorize an area in detail through firsthand viewing and with a bit of time (a Major Action at minimum). Later, the adept may make a memory test (Logic + Intuition) with their Magic attribute replacing one or another of the mental attributes if they wish. The difficulty of this test varies based on how far back the adept is trying to remember (difficulty 1 for the first day, 2 for a week, 3 for a month, 4 for a year or more). The area memorized is limited by what the adept was actually able to see, so spending more than one Major Action is a good idea; if they didn't open a closet or inspect the inside of a desk drawer, for instance, they don't know what was hidden from them.

ADEPT METAMAGICS

ANIMAL ATTUNEMENT

PREREQUISITE: ANIMAL EMPATHY

Adepts may bond with a friendly, mundane critter, gaining its trust, sharing power with it, and creating a powerful mana conduit between the two. The bonding process should be role-played out accordingly for the animal being bonded with and the way of the adept in question, at the end of which time the adept pays (15 – animal's Essence) Karma.

Once so bonded, the adept may see the world through the animal's senses to a range of (adept's Magic) kilometers, changing from their own senses to the critter's or back as a Minor Action. The adept may also send brief, silent commands to their animal companion when within the same range. Finally, the critter rolls +1 die on all tests it makes for every level of Initiation the adept has (including the level wherein they choose this metamagic).

ASTRAL PROJECTION

PREREQUISITE: ASTRAL PERCEPTION

An adept who is already capable of perceiving the astral plane may, with this metamagic, fully

project themselves onto it (see Astral Projection, p. 160, SR6). All the usual rules for Astral Projection apply, including for Astral Combat, with two exceptions: First, all of an adept's powers may apply to their astral self, and second, adepts begin to lose Essence much more quickly than full mages if they remain on the astral for too long. They can only remain away for Magic hours (not Magic x 2), and they will lose 1 point of Essence for every *minute* they are away beyond that, not for every hour).

FINDING YOUR WAY

When an adept initiates, they may choose this Metamagic to gain an adept way (see p. 76) at no Karma cost. This may be an adept gaining their initial way, or this manner of introspection may represent a paradigm shift as they leave an existing way and transition to a new one (in which case they lose all the benefits of their original choice while gaining all the benefits of their new way).

INFUSION

PREREQUISITE: ADEPT CENTERING

An adept with the Infusion Metamagic is able to temporarily draw mana into themselves and channel it into boosting their existing powers, but it requires tremendous exertion. After using a Major Action to focus and center themselves, they may add 0.5 PP of temporary power to existing adept powers for every level of initiate grade they possess. This boost will last for (Magic) rounds (or may be ended early); at the end of the infusion, the adept's system is burnt out by channeling this additional power, and they must resist Stun Drain equal to their Magic rating.

ITEM ATTUNEMENT

Some adepts can create a powerful bond between themselves and a favorite vehicle, weapon, or other piece of gear. These threads of power woven between user and item turn the piece of equipment into an extension of the adept's body and make the fantastic into the routine when using it. Bonding with (or creating) the item in question should be role-played out as appropriate for the adept, the item, and their way (and may use the usual rules for crafting a focus or other Build/Repair skills as appropriate). At the end of the crafting or bonding process, the adept invests a part of their ability into their chosen item, spending Karma from the Item Attunement chart (see below).

When making a mundane check directly with an attuned item—not an Astral, Conjuring, Enchanting, or Sorcery test—the adept may add +1 die to their pool for every level of Initiation the adept has (including the level wherein they choose this metamagic).

Gamemasters and players must use their best judgement for when this bonus will apply; some of those times are more obvious and appropriate than others. To receive this bonus, the adept must be actively using the item, must maintain physical contact with it, and must be able to describe this bonus in some way related to skill and experience.

Attacking or blocking with a favorite commando knife is obvious, and a player may also be attempting a Performance or Intimidation check to impress someone or even a roll to carve wood with it (but simply having their favorite throat-cutter on them would not assist in Stealth tests). A getaway driver would get the bonus when chasing through city streets, of course, and they would also receive the bonus dice when making a vehicle Body test to resist crash damage (but not if the car was crashed into while sitting in park). Desperately bashing someone with your beloved solidbody guitar would apply as much as making a Performance test with it (but simply having the guitar nearby would not assist in a social roll).

If a piece of armor or clothing is attuned to, the bonus would apply only directly to soak rolls made, or at the gamemaster's discretion while using gear in a way it was crafted for (such as getting a bonus when sneaking in a stealth suit, or tests to sprint while wearing your favorite running shoes), but *not* to every test made while wearing your lucky underpants!

This bonus can apply in augmented reality (with favorite AR gloves or a lovingly customized cyberdeck or commlink, for instance), but not in full virtual reality. A jacked-in adept using a control rig may receive the bonus for a vehicle they are physically piloting while onboard but not for something being controlled remotely.

ITEM ATTUNEMENT COSTS

SAMPLE ATTUNE ITEM	KARMA COST
Production-line but low-tech, solid, item	7
Lockpick kit or bicycle; moving, mechanical parts	8
Car, motorcycle, monofilament, or smart blade	9
Monofilament whip, t-bird, cyberdeck	10
Item is handcrafted	-1
Adept customizes/repairs/personally crafts item	-1
Item is crafted of rare and precious materials	-1
Adept has spent Edge to succeed with the item	-1

VIRTUOSO

PREREQUISITE: ENTHRALLING PERFORMANCE

An artistically oriented adept with this metamagic has focused the sum totality of their creativity into a single, shining creation or composition that serves as a testament to their power, their devotion to their way, and their practiced ability in their chosen medium. Physical works of art can be a virtuoso creation, but so can performance pieces. One need not be on the artist's way to create such a work—a warrior or athlete might have a favorite kata or knife-dance, an artisan could create a technologically advanced magnum opus, a magician's way follower a particularly dazzling set of illusion spells, etc. These masterpieces echo with power and talent in equal measure, intoxicating and distracting all those who see or experience them, and the emotion lingers and colors the astral space around it for quite a time, tilting it in the favor of the prodigy who created such a wonder.

Physically, a material Virtuoso piece may serve as *telesma* when creating a focus (p. 152, SR6), and counts as though its Object Resistance for crafting is (creator's Initiate grade) lower. It also serves as a material link to the creator.

A Virtuoso piece counts as an Enthralling Performance to all who witness or experience it for the first time (without costing the creator adept any actions) and grants the adept a bonus on their Enthralling Performance test equal to the adept's Initiate grade.

In addition to that distracting, mesmerizing effect, the Virtuoso piece instills in all viewers/hearers/witnesses a strong emotional surge aligned with its creation (a few-word description decided upon by the creator at the time that it is crafted). An angry rock song may instill feelings of aggression and impatience, a lovely ballad may soothe and becalm audience members, a painting of cavorting nymphs and satyrs can fill viewers with feelings of lust and gluttony, a ring depicting of a tiny onyx dragon can instill feelings of dread or hopelessness in all those who cower before it, etc. This effect should, at the least, factor into assigning Social test Edge to assist in influencing the audience, and at the gamemaster's discretion may also apply a dice pool modifier to appropriate Social tests, up to the adept creator's Initiate grade.

Finally, being in the presence of a crafted Virtuoso piece, or playing a performed Virtuoso piece, realigns its creator with their talent and passion and bolsters their confidence in their work. Once per game session, if their Edge is below their Edge attribute when they are near their crafted good or performing their favorite piece, refill their Edge to their attribute level. If they are already at or above their Edge attribute, they gain a pool of wild dice equal to their Initiate grade that they can apply, one at a time, as bonus dice on any tests they make within (Magic) rounds of enjoying or performing their masterpiece.



IMBUING MAGIC

A NOTE FROM AN ALCHEMIST

My name is Albert Johnson. It's a boring name for a guy who may have just been the key to changing the world, but it's also likely to be a boring name in a bland obituary on a lonely host in some distant corner of the Matrix. I'm writing this and sending it over to a man I met in a bar. He may be an operative for my employer or he may be exactly who he says he is, a member of the world-famous runner nexus, JackPoint. If you're reading this, he was the latter, and I owe him a huge thanks.

Thank you, Winterhawk.

I developed the arcane processes that allow for extended preparation potency. While inside the process, I was driven by the desire to succeed. Now that I'm past it, I am looking back and wondering if I may have opened a door too dark for my conscience to live with. I won't go into arcane detail for two reasons. The first is that it is remarkably complex, and most of the mundane readers out there would not understand. The second is that it can be repeated and reused relatively easily by those with alchemical arcane talent and a non-existent moral code. As I said, I was driven, but now I have seen the child of my dark dealings, and while I could be ecstatic over the growth of my shares and net worth, I know my soul is going to pay for this.

Now, for the honesty. My employers answer to Aztechnol-

ogy. My training includes what the streets call "blood magic." This alchemical process falls well within that field. If you're morally opposed to this, don't use these preparations, and halt the means of production and distribution. Tell others. It's too late for my soul, but I can see the taint touching others as we keep producing.

- > I have never met this man before. An associate came across this while scrubbing data for me.
- > Winterhawk
- > If it was an Azzie operative using your ident, they haven't moved on Albert yet. He's still listed as an employee at a small facility several kilometers outside Aguascalientes. The location is officially listed as an Ars Magica storage office, but shadow word says it's an R&D outpost.
- > Glitch
- > Listed and living are two very different things. His work history moves him around a few times, and his latest transfer was to the facility mentioned above.
- > Slamm-O!

THE VALUE OF THE MAGIC PILL

You know what you're looking for. You want that magic pill. That one-stop fix to all the problems. But that's not really what you get with a magic pill. You get short-term fixes or a perpetual habit that needs to be kept up. But for many, it's better than the disconnect of cyber and bioware they hear about. They get that boost and don't have to question if they are more machine than metahuman. With these magic pills (and we use that term literally in many cases), many of the options of magic enhancement are right at your fingertips, and they won't cost a literal arm and a leg. Just a figurative one.

THE TOOLS, RULES, AND BITS OF POWER

These items have the potential to make a big shift in some of *Shadowrun*'s power curves. The design rules to follow are intended for players to make an artificer and build their own preparations, but past that you are going to find a list of preparations that are becoming available on the open market. Many are marked **Special** and thus are intended as products sold only by the megacorps (particularly Aztechnology) that have used their fortunes to monetize magic. These items aren't game-breaking, but they can certainly put a few bends in if they aren't properly treated. This treatment comes in the form of three game stats: Cost, Usability, and Shelf-Life.

Cost is simple. These new magic doodads are expensive. The cost is intended as an offset to putting some potent powers into the hands of a character who never paid for it in blood, sweat, or tears. These costs are rarely negotiable on the streets, and the few street dealers who get their hands on these items tend to upcharge rather than offer them at the corporate suggested retail price. Many of these are about money spent for a quick, short-term boost. These are the tools of the rich or those looking to play a short-term game.

While the text reads like all these devices are cookie-cutter, that's not the case. Subtle alterations are made to many of them in order to make them only useful by the purchaser. This means that stealing them from the fallen or trying to resell them is worthless. A street merchant will pay ten percent of the initial cost for an active preparation. If the preparation is used up or almost out of Potency, they'll walk away. Most of the time they are recovering what arcane reagents and components they can for resale rather than figuring out how to use it as intended.

In order to make these a little more useful to the public, the Potency of many of the preparations is

enhanced, using methods only known to a select few. This means they last a little longer than normal preparations, but they still don't last forever. This aging process should be closely tracked. Sometimes, one of these will fizzle before it is ever used. Assume items acquired at the start of a game session have their full Potency. During the game, items can be purchased with full Potency, but small discounts might be offered for lower-Potency items. The general rule is to keep these items pricey.

MUNDANES

These new preparations are intended to be used by mundanes as well as Awakened, but mundanes have the disadvantage of being unable to shut down an active preparation. Even if they want to, they can't cancel the effect once it's activated. This means the spell will be active until its Potency or the Potency of the current charge runs out.

This also means they may run into strange situations by hitting astral barriers and wards with an active spell. Mundanes cannot force their way through these barriers and instead feel a pressure on the preparation focus. They can push past the pressure, but the active spell immediately ends. To keep the preparation active, they would need the assistance of an Awakened character who can perceive and push through those barriers. Mundanes can choose to discard a preparation they activated and end the effect, with the exception of items with charges that can only deactivate at the end of their charge Potency.

AWAKENED

Even though Awakened characters have a greater understanding of magic, they may not necessarily have a greater understanding of alchemy. In order to turn off a preparation that is active, they need to dispel it. They gain a point of situational Edge and +1 dice pool bonus for the dispelling effort.

If a specific alchemist made a preparation, that individual can deactivate it whenever they wish. This includes preparations affecting them as well as those affecting others. This even involves whoever is creating all these corporate preparations that are for sale, in case you wanted an interesting plot hook.

TRIGGERS

A collection of new triggers is added here along with a few adjustments and notes on the original three. They have their drain adjustment included in the title and the three triggers from SR6 (p. 150) are included, with a minor tweak to the Contact trigger. Some of the new triggers have additional reagent costs associated with them to represent the variety of different substances needed in the cre-

ation process. This is a way to use money to track the effort of gathering strange things like firefly glands for the Light trigger. Gamemasters can add to this list with some of their own ideas if they want certain specific reagents to be more difficult to acquire or want an adventure built around finding certain items.

Each trigger requires a specific action to activate. Preparations with multiple triggers require multiple actions—all of the triggers need to go off for the item to activate. The highest single trigger adds to the drain value, but each additional trigger applied beyond the first allows for a reduction of 1 drain each time, with a maximum of 3 total triggers possible. Added drain from triggers must always be at least +1—additional triggers cannot make it lower than that.

COMMAND (+2 DRAIN)

The individual who made the preparation can trigger it by an act of will. The individual must be on the physical plane and have a line of sight to the preparation to set off this trigger. Triggering the preparation requires a Minor Action. In the core rulebook, the command trigger was the only trigger that Health spells can use, but this book adds some new triggers for that purpose.

CONTACT (+1 DRAIN)

Perhaps the simplest trigger, this spell goes off when the next living material being touches it. With these advanced rules, the living material can be selected in the creation process, limited to a specific scientific biological kingdoms (animals, plants, fungi, protists, bacteria, metaplanar life). This removes the “the spell goes off because of the microscopic life living on the dust particles in the air” argument. It also adds a unique twist on a two-part attack if the target is “painted” with a kingdom of creatures separate from its trigger.

TIME (+2 DRAIN)

When using this trigger, the character selects an amount of time, and when the creation of the preparation is finished, the clock starts ticking down on this time period. When the time is complete, the spell goes off. The time cannot be greater, in hours, than the Potency of the preparation. If the Potency ends up being less than the selected time, the spell fizzles when the Potency runs out.

LIGHT (+1 DRAIN)

**SPECIAL: 2 DRAMS OF REAGENTS,
DIM ENVIRONMENT**

The light trigger unleashes the magic when the object is exposed to light greater than 80 lumens

(the equivalent of a small flashlight). The creation must be done by candlelight and then stored in darkness to preserve the trigger. This trigger can be used with Health spells.

DARKNESS (+1 DRAIN)

**SPECIAL: 2 DRAMS OF REAGENTS,
WELL-LIT ENVIRONMENT**

This trigger activates when the light on the preparation drops below 40 lumens (the equivalent of candlelight). The process must be completed in a well-lit space, and the preparation cannot be stored anywhere without light. This trigger can be used with Health spells.

SPECIFIC AURA (+1 DRAIN)

**SPECIAL: ASSENSING (3) TEST,
2 DRAMS OF REAGENTS**

This trigger is linked to a specific target. When that target comes into contact (astral or material) with the preparation, it activates. The creator (or a spirit under their control) needs to make an Assensing test to create all the correct details for the aura. Not reaching the correct threshold leaves a potential error in the process, which means activation could occur early or could fail to happen when the target is near.

With no hits on the Assensing test, the creator knows they don't have enough information about the aura to make a good trigger. At 1 hit, they feel confident and create the mix but have a 1 in 3 chance of triggering it accidentally. Roll a 1D6 when the item is in the presence of any similar aura; on a result of 1 or 2, the spell is triggered. A similar aura is a broad category, such as another metahuman, spirit of air, dragon, etc. These only become significant if the object is brought somewhere with a lot of similar auras and exposed to a large number of auras.

At 2 hits, the chance goes to 1 in 6. Roll 1D6 when the item is in the presence of any similar aura; on a result of 1, the spell is triggered.

This trigger can be used with Health spells.

LOCATION (+1 DRAIN)

**SPECIAL: A PIECE OF THE PLACE,
ASSENSING (2) TEST**

The trigger links to a specific location. The location can be as broad as a building, narrowed down to a specific office in the building, or even down to a half-meter radius of a specific spot. Once chosen, it cannot be changed. The alchemist or a spirit they have conjured must visit the location and succeed at an Astral + Intuition (2) test to assense the location. If the test results in insufficient hits, the trigger moves from the original choice. If it was a specific spot, it becomes the area nearby. If the place was a specified

area, the trigger might become a small part of the area, or an area near the intended target. If the target was a larger area, it becomes a narrower section of the area (such as an office in a building, a copse of trees in a park, or a particular store on a block).

VERBAL (+3 DRAIN)

SPECIAL: 2 DRAMS OF REAGENTS

A verbal trigger is a spoken word that can be told to another to activate the spell. It can also be used as a clever trap when the alchemist provides the wrong trigger to the buyer but supplies their enemies with the real command. If the word is spoken aloud within three meters of the preparation (even if inside a loud bar), the spell activates. This includes when the word is given to the buyer, which means it is almost always sent as a message, or written on a piece of paper for security-minded folks. A Silence spell renders the preparation inert until the spell drops.

This is one of the most common preparation triggers used for items that will be passed to teammates or clients, but it has some of the greatest toll on the alchemist. The drain is higher, and the item still bears their magical signature.

DELAYED VERBAL (VARIES)

SPECIAL: 4 DRAMS OF REAGENTS

This trigger is common with area-effect combat spells, in essence creating an arcane grenade. The standard verbal trigger rules are in place, but a delay is put into the initial preparation design. The basic design features a 1 Combat Round delay (+4 drain value). A slightly longer delay of 2 Combat Rounds takes a little less of a toll on the alchemist (+3 drain value). Any preset delay time beyond that is only as hard as the regular time trigger (+2 drain value). The standard rules for Potency still apply, and if the trigger timer runs beyond the Potency, the effort is a dud.

MATERIAL (+2 DRAIN)

SPECIAL: 3 DRAMS OF REAGENTS

This trigger sets a secondary substance as the activation cue for the spell within the preparation. The substance can be anything, but gamemasters have the final call on how specific the substance needs to be. Possible examples include a pill that activates on contact with saliva or stomach acid and an ointment that needs a sprinkle of cinnamon to activate the magic. This trigger can be used with Health spells.

SOMATIC (+2 DRAIN)

SPECIAL: 5 DRAMS OF REAGENTS

Magic has always been connected to finger wiggling or grand gestures to make the mojo flow.

This is a particular movement action that needs to be performed in order to make the spell work. The coding is built into the preparation and needs at least 1 minute of study and practice (from the alchemist, an instructional trideo, or pamphlet) in order to properly perform the gesture. The gesture requires a Minor Action to perform once learned. This trigger can be used with Health spells.

POTENCY PERMANENCE

The creation of the magic pill has been a goal for the megacorps for decades. Having a pill, device, or object that can sustain a spell without the spellcaster and do it repeatedly has cost billions of corporate nuyen and been the target of thousands of runs. In the end, it was Aztechnology who discovered how to do it. The details aren't public, and this technique makes them a primary target for some serious corporate espionage.

This permanence allows two things: Extended Potency and Multiple Charges. Some corp-produced preparations can have multiple charges, as noted in the descriptions. Extended Potency allows a more permanent effect, where the Potency is extended longer for a decent shelf life. Extended Potency makes the preparation last for 1 week, and then degrade by 1 point each week after initial creation. Quadrupling the cost makes the base time 1 month rather than 1 week.

Currently, these techniques are not available to player characters but are mentioned for stories within your campaign and an explanation for several of the new preparations listed in this chapter.

NEW PREPARATIONS

These preparations are examples of what some alchemists can build along with a listing for megacorporate production models available to various public and private sectors featuring multiple charges and extended Potency.

The **Formula** and **Drain Value** are for alchemist characters. If the triggers or modifiers on the preparation are modified, so is the Drain Value of that preparation. The preparation has the effect of the listed spell and uses the listed trigger.

The **Cost** is for a single charge on the corporate-produced version. The megas can add multiple charges to preparations with the per-charge cost, but they all have the same Potency for casting and degradation.

All corporate-produced preparations are done by an alchemist with a Magic of 4 for the purpose of casting. This rating can be upgraded by up to four levels, but this increases the per-charge cost at a rate of 50¥ per rating-point increase.

Potency for all corporate creations starts at 4. It can be increased at a rate of 100¥ per point.

The preparations follow the rules for their spells unless otherwise noted.

ACID ON DEMAND

- **Formula:** Acid Stream, Verbal
- **Drain Value:** 8
- **Cost:** 600¥

This preparation is a small vial of actual acid that acts as a focus for a dangerous spell. Care and precautions should be taken to minimize harm and injury when using this preparation. To create an acid effect on a particular target, touch the vial, select the placement, and say “melt away.” The acid is created on that spot. There is an advantage with arcane acid, as it goes away after a short time (using the rules for the spell), leaving no chemical residue behind.

Acid covers an area of one-half square meter.

ACID WASH

- **Formula:** Toxic Wave, Verbal
- **Drain Value:** 8
- **Cost:** 600¥

Developed with scientific processes in mind, this preparation has been abused by individuals who accessed it on the black market. This creates a large area of acidic effect, initially with the intent to deal with chemical spills and provide intense acidic testing on a variety of surfaces with a regulated effect.

As with most preparations, use is easy. Touch or hold the curved vial of acid, select a region to place the acidic effect, say “awash in hydrogen ions,” and the preparation covers a circular area with a two-meter radius. Caution should be taken as with the smaller version, but again the effect is short-lived.

ARCANE TASER

- **Formula:** Lightning Bolt, Somatic
- **Drain Value:** 7
- **Cost:** 450¥/charge

Personal defense now has an arcane option. Keep this little lightning bolt charm on a necklace, earring, bracelet, or just in a pocket or purse so it's always available to help chase off unwanted advances. It's a quick piece of self-defense designed to keep you safe on the darkest of nights with a bolt of electrical juice.

To activate, you need to be in contact with the charm, see the individual you are targeting (or some part thereof), repeat the open-hand-to-balled-fist activation movement, and get ready for the show as they face the shocking revelation of your charm.

ARCANE TASER PLUS

- **Formula:** Lightning Ball, Verbal
- **Drain Value:** 9
- **Cost:** 600¥/charge

This is the next step up from the standard Arcane Taser, when you have a whole group of people

who need to be subdued. The plus version expands beyond a single individual, but it risks including you in its electrical blast, so be sure to select the initial location carefully.

Touch the small marble (even if it's still concealed), pick a spot for the party to start, say “tamed lightning,” and get ready to run from some stunned predators.

AURA OBSCURA

- **Formula:** False Impression, Material (Saliva)
- **Drain Value:** 5
- **Cost:** 300¥

This tiny vial holds a potent draught with a pleasant fruity flavor. Take a swig and pick the subject of your entertainment. Imagine what their new aura will look like, then sit back and watch the show as those around you with the talent to see auras marvel or ignore the aura you have created.

Some level of experience in aura viewing is usually needed to make a believable aura. This does not prevent an individual from using this to make something so ridiculous it is quickly seen through or dispelled, of course, but experience will lead to better, subtler uses.

BEAN COUNTER BEAN

- **Formula:** Scrutinize, Material (Saliva)
- **Drain Value:** 6
- **Cost:** 350¥

When you need a very specific set of details, pop this pill and focus. It could be information about an individual you are scoping out, a certain comm screen that you need to memorize, a keypad you're watching so you can access what it protects, or any other single small area you need details on. The pill simply activates in your mouth and gives you the hyperfocus you need to get the job done.

THE BENCH CLEARER

- **Formula:** Stunball, Delayed Verbal (1 Combat Round), Somatic
- **Drain Value:** 7
- **Cost:** 550¥

This preparation looks like a typical baseball. Speak the command words (default: “high heat”) and toss it into an area (fast ball or underhand, whichever), and you've got a shot at snoozing the opposing team, or at least wearing them down enough to rethink skinning their smoke wagons when you come in guns blazing. The toss requires an Athletics + Agility (1) test. If the test fails, the ball lands somewhere other than intended (use the scatter diagram, p. 114,



SR6, if desired) and fails to activate. The ball does not lose its charge on a failed activation but still must be used on the same location with a successful toss.

BOOMSTICK!, BOOMSTICK EXTREME!

- **Formula:** Thunderstruck, Increased Area (Extreme), Verbal
- **Drain Value:** 9; 10 (Extreme)
- **Cost:** 500¥/charge; 600¥/charge (Extreme)

This “wand” design actually looks like a twenty-centimeter-long hexagonal rifle barrel with a small iron sight on the end. As usual, the wand does not need to be waved, but a few creative souls use the hollow tube for targeting. The BOOMStick Extreme! has been upgraded with an increased area of effect, while the standard BOOMStick! is intended for a single target with only minimal collateral effect. In honor of the historical entertainment reference, the default activation phrase is “This is my boomstick!”

Using a Minor Action to look through the barrel gains the user a point of situational Edge.

BOOST PILLS

- **Formula:** Increase Attribute, Material (Saliva)
- **Drain Value:** 5
- **Cost:** 400¥

A range of these handy little pills are available to give a little edge just when you need it. Each pill is designed to bolster a different aspect with Speed Boost (Agility), Power Boost (Strength), Stamina Boost (Body), and Reflex Boost (Reaction) offering a full array physical enhancements. Popping the pill in your mouth or spitting on it in your palm are equally effective for activation.

BRUCE LEE KEYCHAIN

- **Formula:** Punch, Verbal
- **Drain Value:** 5
- **Cost:** 75¥/charge

This balled fist attached to a small chain is the tool of choice for those who like to practice the famous “one-centimeter punch” without seeking out a decade of training. Touch the keychain, touch the target, say “hoosh,” and *blam*, a blast of telekinetic energy erupts from your fingertips. It’s a great way

to start (or end) a bar fight, especially if the person you tag has someone else to blame the hit on. Did we mention it can be a great distraction?

CLIMBING GEAR

- **Formula:** Gecko Crawl, Verbal
- **Drain Value:** 7
- **Cost:** 500¥/charge

This gorgeous carabiner isn't just any old climbing tool. It's the secret to climbing without the need for a carabiner or any other standard gear. The activation of this preparation is a simple touch and talk. Saying "time to climb" while in contact with a surface activates the ability to have your hands and feet (also knees and elbows) stick to surfaces for easier climbing. This mystical adhesion is not impeded by basic clothing, gloves, or shoes, but bulkier armor will prevent contact connections for covered areas like elbows and knees. You can even use the connection to hang upside down if both you and the surface can support your own weight.

The preparation also makes you a nominally better climber, though it does not impart some grand level of wisdom or skill to assist your effort.

COLD AS ICE

- **Formula:** Icy Veins, Verbal, Somatic
- **Drain Value:** 6
- **Cost:** 500¥

Looking to show off at a party full of trolls and dwarfs? This is the ticket. Tear it, say the magic words, and suddenly you have ice running through your veins. It's not literal, as that would kill you, but with a simple muttered phrase you can become significantly cooler than those around you.

These were originally marketed for military members who wanted to avoid detection by enemy thermal scans, but they're now offered to the public to use a little cool magic to bring some hot times to a party near you.

DEEP BREATH DISK

- **Formula:** Oxygenate, Material (Saliva)
- **Drain Value:** 6
- **Cost:** 450¥

This tiny wafer is like an effervescent little breath mint that not only makes your mouth fresh, but also fills your blood with mana-generated oxygen. No need to breathe—especially since the wafer does not guarantee fresh breath. The preparation allows some extended breath-holding and keeps you safe from some nasty inhaled toxins, not to mention allowing for some nice deep free dives.

FREE DIVE DEEP BREATH MASK

This full-face mask has a series of slots to hold deep breath disks and a small lever to slide them out toward your mouth. The mask is purchased with a single deep breath disk; additional disks are extra. It allows for the equivalent of scuba diving without the pesky risks.

Cost: 150¥ **Availability:** 4

DISCO DISTRACTION

- **Formula:** Chaff, Verbal
- **Drain Value:** 8
- **Cost:** 550¥/charge

This handy little disco ball lets you pick a spot, say the magic phrase "disco never dies," and fill that region with all sorts of distracting and annoying effects, all related to the era of disco from the last century. It's a niche effect, but in the end the magic still works the same. Everyone gets distracted by "Stayin' Alive" while you do your best to do just that.

THE DOCTOR'S RIGHT HAND

- **Formula:** Diagnose, Verbal
- **Drain Value:** 7
- **Cost:** 500¥/charge

This glove, which comes in a variety of colors and styles, is the quick-and-easy way to figure out what's making your best mate bleed from all of his orifices. When it's near the target, say "activate scan," and voila, you know whether it's time to cut and run or to cut out those heavy metals in their diet! (Good luck with the latter.)

DON'T PISS OFF THE KITCHEN STAFF

- **Formula:** Anaphylaxis, Material (Saliva), Verbal
- **Drain Value:** 7
- **Cost:** 600¥

This powder can be sprinkled over a bit of food to make the person eating it allergic to everything! This is a mean little trick, one of those goods that requires certain alterations to the legal status agreement when making purchases in external corporate and national jurisdictions. It's as simple as sprinkle the powder on a platter, say the special words ("Is that a rash?"), and once the tainted food is eaten, watch the effects kick in.

DOOR? WHAT DOOR?

- **Formula:** Corrode [Door], Somatic
- **Drain Value:** 4
- **Cost:** 350¥

With a flick of the wrist, this vial of liquid is splashed on a door, and *voila*, no more door. The effect is limited to doors but has no limit on the material or style of door. It's still harder to break plasteel than wood, but that's about buying a potent-enough preparation. Using the preparation requires a single Minor Action to open the vial and toss out the liquid, all of which are part of the Somatic trigger.

DREAMWEAVER

- **Formula:** Dreams, Verbal
- **Drain Value:** 6
- **Cost:** 450¥/charge

Ever want to be the man, woman, or person of someone's dreams? This is designed for that very thing. Touch the dreamcatcher, put together a new mental menagerie of the mind for them to enjoy (or not), say "Concrete Dreams," and implant that new nocturnal machination right into their sleep. Yes, the target needs to be sleeping for this to work.

DROP IT LIKE IT'S HOT

- **Formula:** Hot Potato, Verbal
- **Drain Value:** 6
- **Cost:** 350¥/charge

These little party favors make for excellent pranks with an almost guaranteed effect, and yet they are completely harmless. The spell behind this one makes any object you can see feel like it's a thousand degrees Celsius. The nerve reflex kicks in even before the brain has time to make out that it could be a spell.

To make it work, simply select any inanimate object you can see someone holding. Once you've got eyes on, touch the little potato, say "hot like fire," and enjoy the humorous effect of a dropped commlink, drink glass, or anything else.

DUVALL SPECIAL

- **Formula:** Napalm, Delayed Verbal (1 Combat Round), Increase Area (2), Somatic
- **Drain Value:** 11
- **Cost:** 750¥

Some lines stick with a culture long after the pop phenomenon that spawned them has been remade a dozen times over. This preparation is named in honor of Robert Duvall, who uttered the famous line, "I love the smell of napalm in the morning!" The activation phrase, "smells like victory," is a little ode to a subsequent line and the destructive force of this spell. The preparation looks like a narrow cylinder pointed at both ends with a shield and horse emblem carved on. The thrower needs to make an Athletics + Agility (1) test or the

cylinder flies wild (feel free to use Scatter diagram, p. 114, SR6) and doesn't erupt in flame. The preparation is not consumed on a failed toss and can be recovered, but the spell is active and must be used at the desired location with a successful toss. It cannot be used anywhere else.

EMERGENCY EXIT

- **Formula:** Catfall, Verbal
- **Drain Value:** 6
- **Cost:** 450¥/charge

This is a strange preparation, but sometimes you need to prepare for the worst. No one wants to leap out of a third-story window, but sometimes an emergency comes up (we are not referring to bad P2Match dates). When the situation arises and you need to make that leap without a plan, this little feather token on your neck is what you want. Touch it, say "float," and the magic kicks in.

This is truly an emergency preparation, and the magic kicks in faster than one might expect. Beware the potential for whiplash as your fall is abruptly slowed.

FINGER OF DEATH

- **Formula:** Death Touch, Delayed Verbal (4 Combat Rounds)
- **Drain Value:** 5
- **Cost:** 450¥

Giving someone the finger has never been so deadly. This plain-looking rubber finger can be handed to a target or slipped into their pocket as the verbal command is given: "frag off." The spell the finger holds is triggered 12 seconds (4 Combat Rounds) after the hand-off using the delayed verbal trigger. This allows the user to get a little distance, put on a show, and most importantly, prevent confusion from the spell. If both parties are still in contact (up to ten centimeters away) with the finger, the spell only affects one, but that target is chosen randomly with an odds/evens roll of 1D6.

FIRESTICK

- **Formula:** Flamestrike, Verbal
- **Drain Value:** 8
- **Cost:** 550¥/charge

Like many of modern preparation designs, this one looks similar to a wand but doesn't really require the user to wave it around like they're some wizkid. In this case the "wand" is a 20-centimeter piece of plastic with inlaid flames. Using the FireStick requires the standard sequence: touch the stick, stare at the target, and speak the command phrase, "burn, baby, burn."

FLOAT SWITCH

- **Formula:** Levitate, Somatic, Verbal
- **Drain Value:** 8
- **Cost:** 350¥/charge

Ever wanted to be able to fly? Or skip the crowded elevator ride? Get yourself one of these and you can hover on up to the balcony of your own place or lower yourself down. As the name implies, it looks like a handheld toggle switch. Flip up the switch and say “up, up, and away” to activate the spell. Be sure you have ample power left to land—having the spell cut out when you’re twenty meters in the air is a bad thing.

FOUR EYES ARE BETTER THAN TWO

- **Formula:** Catalog, Verbal
- **Drain Value:** 8
- **Cost:** 350¥/charge

The Bean Counter Bean may let you take in all the details of a single object or small area, but these frames let you take in all the details of a wider area. Need to count the guns, goons, or even just tables in a room? This is your preparation of choice. These glasses are worn, but they need to be touched while saying “freeze frame.” The design is limited to a specific initial frame and anything out of view will not be accounted for, but if you move a meter or two over and look again, it allows for multiple perspectives in the same mental frame, almost creating a 3D image of sorts.

FRIGID LANCE

- **Formula:** Ice Spear, Verbal
- **Drain Value:** 8
- **Cost:** 100¥/charge

This design is produced in limited quantities and requires proper licensing. Its use is governed by local authorities. We have identified only offensive intentions for this preparation and therefore must regulate production and purchase in a fashion similar to handguns—that is to say, if a pistol is fine to carry in your local jurisdiction, this preparation should be acceptable as well.

Activation requires contact with the preparation (a 10-centimeter crystal), selecting a single target, and uttering the words “freezer burn.”

FRIGID RAIN

- **Formula:** Ice Storm, Verbal, Somatic
- **Drain Value:** 8
- **Cost:** 400¥

Imagine if hail were pointy instead of ball shaped. That is the advantage and effect of this preparation. It is regulated similarly to small automatic weapons, and thus local restrictions need to be checked to ensure that its use does not violate local laws. The preparation looks like a small glass ball full of sharp crystals. To activate the power, an area must be selected visually for the ice shards to fall on, the ball must be tossed on the ground (near or far doesn’t matter; a dramatic smashing is typical but unnecessary) while saying “winter is coming,” and the area is suddenly inundated in razor-sharp ice daggers moving at a rapid pace.

GAP IN THEIR SHIELDS

- **Formula:** Mana Window, Material (Air)
- **Drain Value:** 5
- **Cost:** 350¥

Magical defenses like wards and mana barriers can be such a pain and crossing them just isn’t an option all the time. For those moments when you want a clear line of sight, this little spray can is just what you need.

The preparation inside is specially formulated to activate on contact with air and a magic barrier to create a small window to clear your line of sight or just let you see what lies on the other side without breaking the barrier and warning the owner.

GET INTO THE RHYTHM

- **Formula:** Loki’s Musical Number, Somatic
- **Drain Value:** 7
- **Cost:** 500¥/charge

This handy little whistle is reminiscent of the Pied Piper, except it offers more of a leading tune than a hypnotizing lilt. Pick a small group of people, whistle a specific melody, and everyone suddenly dances to the same tune. It can be annoying, but it can also be great for group events, flash mobs, and other public displays. Whether it’s for a dance routine, a show performance, or just a cool walk across the street, this little trick puts everyone on the same beat.

GO JUICE!

- **Formula:** Increase Reflexes, Material (Saliva)
- **Drain Value:** 7
- **Cost:** 550¥

Twist open a bottle of Go Juice!, take a swig, and it’s time to move—and move quickly! The spell is chemically activated by contact with saliva. Then it’s time to move, and move quickly.

I AM THAT GOOD

- **Formula:** Mob Mind, Verbal, Somatic
- **Drain Value:** 7
- **Cost:** 600¥/charge

It's not nice to play with people's emotions, but it also sucks to be on stage in front of a crowd of "fans" who don't care about the opening act. Artists and individual performers have been purchasing this little treat to help get the crowd in the right frame of mind. It's a bit manipulative, and some jurisdictions do not allow its use, but most corps do. A few corps have even gone so far as to buy an establishment for a day to extend their laws over it to allow their performers to use whatever they want.

Have the little sock-and-buskin coin in hand, pick a region of the crowd (usually right in front of the stage), put out how you want them to feel, flip the coin in the air, say "I am what I am," and step into the spotlight!

INFOSTICK

- **Formula:** Analyze Device, Verbal
- **Drain Value:** 5
- **Cost:** 350¥ (Obj. Res. 5–9); 400¥ (Obj. Res. 10–12); 450¥ (Obj. Res. 13+)

Magic and technology do not always mix, but for years this preparation has been allowing a deeper understanding (if only for a fleeting moment) without intense time doing in-depth study. One of the most common regular uses of this is on bombs, especially those hidden within a tamper-proof case. Now, anyone can have that kind of power in their hand and finally figure out what the silver disc your grandfather says was "legit" in his day really is.

The InfoStick looks like a standard dongle with some impressive script work on it, but it doesn't need to be plugged in to use. Touch the dongle, touch your confusing device, say "run boot scan," and get ready for the data flow. There are various grades of InfoStick, because the more complex a device is, the harder it is to get the details. Purchasing the advanced model allows users to scan everything from a slingshot to a high-end commlink. The elite-tech version is pricey, but it can supposedly explain an Evo magdrive, and that's some Monad supertech drek.

INSTANT DECORATOR

- **Formula:** Phantomscape, Verbal
- **Drain Value:** 8+
- **Cost:** 550¥ (studio); 650¥ (2 bedroom); 750¥ (4 bedroom)

How many times have you just wanted to give your home the right look at the right time? Whether it's before hosting a party, having a special friend over, or just wanting to have a little staycation but with a different look to your pad, this is the preparation to use. You can make your space look like anything you want. You just need to pick up the proper preparation for the space, as differing booklets have different amounts of space they can handle.

Making the change is simple. Select the space you'd like to change, touch the booklet you would like to use, say "renovation," and enjoy the new appearance of your place. The key word is "appearance"—nothing created by the spell is functional, so make sure you are only changing the things that are for show.

INSTANT GARDEN

- **Formula:** Rosebush, Verbal
- **Drain Value:** 8
- **Cost:** 550¥/charge

Using the Plant Superfood preparation on an entire garden would be a little slow and inefficient, so this enhanced alternative is based on a larger area spell. Growth effects are remarkably similar, but this affects a wider region.

The methods are much the same, except you select an area of vegetation instead of a single plant. After you pick the area, touch the small booklet, and say "bountiful garden." The result is the sudden and rapid growth of all the vegetation in the selected area. There is a certain measure of practice with this if you are using it to grow anything that develops fruits or flowers to keep them from becoming overripe.

Some even suggest the use of this preparation alongside the tossing of particular seeds in an area if you want to seed a region with something specific.

INSTANT ICE RINK

- **Formula:** Ice Sheet, Material (Sodium Chloride Solution)
- **Drain Value:** 7
- **Cost:** 500¥

Ever feel the need to get in a little ice skating or hockey on a hot summer day, or even when you aren't near a good rink? This is your lucky day. The preparation comes in various strengths and offers different levels of effects. The Instant Ice Rink appears as a blue-tinged glowstick. Inside the capsule is the preparation waiting to be exposed to the internal chemical mix that creates a mild blue light for fifteen minutes and also activates the spell. You'll need to have a location mentally selected to place the rink before you crack the stick. If you

get distracted or fail to pick a spot, the spell will activate right at your feet, perhaps providing an interesting slide over a nearby ledge.

INSTANT MAKEOVER

- **Formula:** Makeover, Verbal, Somatic
- **Drain Value:** 6
- **Cost:** 550¥/charge

Don't have time for a day at the spa or several hours sitting in a chair getting makeup and hair done? Get your hands-on Instant Makeover. This preparation is heavily utilized by our trideo and simrecording clients in order to make hair and makeup changes fast and efficient. Brides and grooms have also been a big fan of this to help them gain the perfect look on their special day.

The use of a mirror in the preparation is a little on the nose, but there can be a virtue in simplicity. Make contact with the mirror (holding it in front of your face counts but isn't necessary), picture the look you desire (looking in the mirror is helpful for that), then say "mirror, mirror" while tracing a five-pointed star in the air or on the mirror. The effect kicks in immediately.

INSTANT OUTFIT

- **Formula:** Fashion, Material (Saliva)
- **Drain Value:** 6
- **Cost:** 450¥

Need a new outfit in a jiffy? Not a huge fan of carrying a change of clothes for a quick meeting? Really want to look like Siren Stormblade but lack the skill to make a proper cosplay? For any of these reasons, or a myriad more, you need this little purple pill. All you need to do is pop the pill in your mouth and imagine the outfit of your dreams.

The effect is not an illusion; your clothing is physically changed—which creates limitations on your possible outfits. Keep that in mind when you're considering doing that Stormblade cosplay, as her pauldron alone is more massive than most trench coats and the preparation has only a limited ability to magically convert physical masses.

INSTANT REJUVENATION

- **Formula:** Healthy Glow, Material (Saliva)
- **Drain Value:** 6
- **Cost:** 450¥

This is the best pill to pop after a late night of blowing off steam before a big meeting. Toss it in your mouth, swish it around a little, and feel the cleansing glow as you clean up to your perfect self. This is in no way going to make your hangover pain go away, it just makes you look

good while you grin through the pain.

INSTANT SHIELD

- **Formula:** Armor, Verbal
- **Drain Value:** 7
- **Cost:** 500¥/charge

Need a little protection but don't want to be caught dead in some bulky armored jacket? This little token can get you protected in no time. This small badge-sized shield (heraldry can be added, and some jurisdictions allow replication of official duty badges) just needs to be in physical contact with you as you say, "raise shields." The protective value of the preparation can be variable, but it's better than nothing.

INSTANT WALL

- **Formula:** Physical Barrier, Verbal
- **Drain Value:** 9
- **Cost:** 600¥/charge

This little brick may be small, but it packs a big impact. Or at least there can be a big impact if someone hits it after you randomly create a crackling wall of energy. To trigger the preparation, you must be in contact with the brick, do the usual location selection, say "brick by brick," and enjoy the separation created between you and whatever you were trying to avoid.

INSTANT WINDOW

- **Formula:** Looking Glass, Somatic, Verbal
- **Drain Value:** Varies by substance
- **Cost:** 300¥ (Obj. Res. 1–3); 350¥ (Obj. Res. 4–6); 400¥ (Obj. Res. 7–9); 450¥ (Obj. Res. 10–12)

This spell is marketed to parents who want to check on their kids' activities. Unfold the frame against a surface, say "full transparency," and blam, the spell activates, and you can see into the space beyond (though if it was dark in the other location before you cast the spell, it's still dark now).

This preparation has a variety of power levels, since the surfaces on which windows are opened present varying levels of difficulty in the creation process. Some operators prefer to keep a variety of these preparations handy to be ready for a variety of circumstances.

IT'S NOT PARANOIA IF IT'S REAL

- **Formula:** Combat Sense, Somatic
- **Drain Value:** 5
- **Cost:** 400¥/charge

Designed as a narrow black ring that can be worn under combat gear, this preparation is currently being heavily marketed to police, security, and military forces. The marketing focuses on helping a team psyche up before an insertion or breach. To keep the team quiet, the ring just needs to be worn or kept in a pocket, and a small gesture is used to activate the preparation (the standard gesture is a quick touch by all five fingers in sequence). With this small action, the bearer is more prepared for whatever might be thrown at them.

LIE DETECTOR

- **Formula:** Analyze Truth, Contact, Verbal
- **Drain Value:** 5
- **Cost:** 450¥/charge

No use of this device is admissible in court, but rich execs who want to give their nannies and au pairs an advantage will offer this little trinket to give them an edge in their battle against rebellious teens (and pre-teens). To activate this arcane polygraph, touch the multi-faceted crystal to the target while holding the silver chain. In contact with an aura, the crystal will glow, representing the connection. To activate the spell, say “be honest with me.” The crystal will glow and shift colors with each question asked, but the way to discern a lie is through the warming of the silver chain. The chain will flash warm for an instant each time dishonesty is detected.

LONG-RANGE HEADPHONES

- **Formula:** Clairaudience, Somatic, Verbal
- **Drain Value:** 5
- **Cost:** 450¥/charge

These little earbuds are connected by what looks like a cord but is really a fine strand of orichalcum (part of the formula). To make them work, put them in your ears and say, “I can hear the air.” Once the headphones are active, you can select a spot to listen to as if you were standing there with your regular old ears. With some concentration, you can shift the site you’re hearing so that it can become the exact right spot, especially if your targets move. While most people aren’t as adept at sensing via hearing as they are with sight, it’s great for eavesdropping private eyes—less so for spotting foes in ambush.

LONG-RANGE LEGERDEMAIN

- **Formula:** Magic Fingers, Verbal
- **Drain Value:** 7
- **Cost:** 500¥/charge

This is an extra set of hands that can handle some remote task. Need to extend your grasp down

into a ravine or up a cliffside for some climbing without doing the climb first? Get this preparation. No matter what you use it for, the preparation creates a pair of hands you can control at a distance once you assign a general location.

This preparation looks like a pair of clasped hands. To activate, you just need contact with the item (having it in your pocket or on a necklace counts), a spot in mind where the fun will start, and the ability to say, “many hands, light work.” After that, you’ll need to focus on the efforts of the hands as you use them.

The hands aren’t particularly skilled or dexterous on their own; the skill comes from you, and the dexterity is always a question at range.

LONG-RANGE LENSES

- **Formula:** Clairvoyance, Somatic, Verbal
- **Drain Value:** 5
- **Cost:** 100¥/charge

Binoculars are nice, but how would you like to be able to look around corners or beyond walls? To activate these lenses, put them on your face and say, “give me sight beyond sight.” Then just move the area you want to see around with a little mental effort. You can’t use any cool augmentations while using these, but at least you can move the viewing site around a corner or into a building without having to walk inside.

LOUISVILLE SLUMBERER

- **Formula:** Stunbolt, Verbal
- **Drain Value:** 6
- **Cost:** 300¥/charge

The Louisville Slumberer is a miniature bat, like a ballpark souvenir. The object functions as a wand but does not need to be pointed, swung, or any other such nonsense. The user just needs to touch the bat, stare at a target, whisper the words of power (default: “no joy in Mudville”), and the magic in the bat does the rest.

THE MAGIC NOZZLE

- **Formula:** Hose or Tsunami, Somatic
- **Drain Value:** 6 (Hose); 8 (Tsunami)
- **Cost:** 450¥/charge (Hose); 550¥/charge (Tsunami)

This ordinary-looking hose sprayer has quite a surprise in store for anyone who thinks a water source is needed on one end. Just point and click to saturate a target with some fresh clean “mana water.” With a little mental prep and a quick pull of the trigger, whoever or wherever you would like to place a massive dump of water on is going to end

up wet and wondering where the water came from. This is not recommended as a source of hydration, as the “mana water” ceases to exist not long after the spell is cast—even if it is inside someone.

THE MAGIC WINDOW

- **Formula:** Astral Window, Somatic
- **Drain Value:** 5
- **Cost:** 400¥/charge

This old-fashioned monocle creates a small astral shallow. To activate the spell, spin the monocle by its chain; the circle it describes becomes a half-meter sphere of astral space visible to the mundane eye. It can be moved around to view different spots without reactivating the spell. It's purely visual; nothing can pass from one plane to the other.

MAGICZAP MARBLE; MAGICZAP MARBLE PLUS

- **Formula:** Disrupt or Ectomagic Pulse, Contact
- **Drain Value:** Disrupt (7); Ectomagic Pulse (8)
- **Cost:** 400¥ (MZM); 450¥ (MZM+)

This marble can be designed with one of two different spells that both have a similar effect. The marble is tossed at or handed to a target with at least one active magical focus. The Disrupt version affects a single focus closest to the marble. If this is not easy to determine, it affects an active focus at random or as selected by the gamemaster. If the Ectomagic Pulse version is used, it affects all the foci on the target, as well as foci on targets within the normal range of the spell, including allies if they are too close.

MANABENZOATE

- **Formula:** Preserve, Verbal, Somatic
- **Drain Value:** 7
- **Cost:** 550¥

Looking to keep a corpse fresh until Tamanous shows up? Want to keep that Chicago deep dish fresh until you can enjoy eating it back home after a little jaunt into the former CZ? Those are just two small things that this mystical powder can be used for. Sprinkle a little dust over whatever you need to keep fresh (or at least not decaying), say the magic words (“Twinkies last forever”), and you’ve got a bit of temporary stasis and a little extra time on your hands.

MANA BREAD

- **Formula:** Nutrition, Verbal
- **Drain Value:** 7

- **Cost:** 500¥

It looks like bread, but it's not actually edible. Simply touch the “bread,” and mutter the activation phrase (“yum, yum, full belly”) and poof! You're dining on the deliciousness of mana (aftertaste and potential background flavors are not the responsibility of the seller). This delicious food supplement gives the perfect level of energy, but be warned—biological reactions are still possible, even with a belly full of mojo.

MANADYNE XX-10 SERIES

- **Formula:** Manabolt (MB-10) or Powerbolt (PB-10), Verbal, Somatic
- **Drain Value:** 6
- **Cost:** 500¥/charge

This is a weapon and is marketed as such. No longer are street punks limited to popping caps with their trash TZs now they can get their hands on a genuine magic wand. Seems ridiculous, but Manadyne has broken several arcane barriers with the aid of some strategic partners. The identity of these partners is guarded almost as closely as the design specs for this line of preparations. The wands have a limited window of use and a limited series of “charges.”

The MB-10 throws a bolt of mana energy that only affects living targets. The PB-10 is like tossing a magical rock and creates a physical rather than psychic impact. Manadyne is generally restrictive on teaching the gestures and phrases that activate the preparation, but we purchased a test model, and it followed the basic flow of select a target, perform a specific series of wrist twists, swirls, and snaps, say the activation phrase (ours was “Jupiter's wrath,” but we were told they differ widely), and let the magic rip. It was very pleasing to my inner child.

MANADYNE XX-100 SERIES

- **Formula:** Manaball (MB-100) or Powerball (PB-100), Verbal, Somatic
- **Drain Value:** 7
- **Cost:** 500¥/charge

The XX-100 series is the wide-area effect version of the XX-10s. This is again an item that requires proper licensing in most areas and is outright illegal in some regions of the world. As with their single-target counterparts, the activation is a series of “arcane” gestures and a phrase, but instead of a single person or physical target, you pick an area.

Due to the wide-array effect, these are even more regulated than the XX-10 series. These items are not intended for singular personal defense and so have been limited in distribution to security firms. They are rumored to be present in some specialized military units but are far too expensive for general issue or widespread use.



MOJO SCANNER

- **Formula:** Analyze Magic, Verbal, Somatic
- **Drain Value:** 5
- **Cost:** 450¥/charge

If you suspect magic was performed in an area and want to know what went down, this is the item for you. Corpsec and investigation firms buy them because they can send a mundane out, have them say some magic words, and bring back a report on what magic (if any) was in use. All this without putting their own arcane assets at risk and at the same time expanding “arcane” investigations with mundane resources.

The scanner looks like a commlink, with an intricate pattern of scrollwork in an old-school circuitry pattern. While touching the commlink (or pretending to read it), touch the object or person whose aura and arcane residue you want to read, say “reveal the unseen” while tracing a five-pointed star on the target, and let the knowledge of the aura wash over you.

Be warned: Trying to relate the intricacies of auras and magical signatures requires training. If you haven’t been properly trained, you’re going to have a hard time relaying descriptions.

NO JOB TOO SMALL, NO JOB TOO BIG

- **Formula:** Wreck [Wall] or Demolish [Wall], Verbal
- **Drain Value:** 7 (Wreck); 9 (Demolish)
- **Cost:** 500¥/charge (NJTS); 600¥/charge (NJTB)

Looking to do a little home or office remodeling? Look no further. This handy preparation may look like an ordinary hammer, but it is so much more. Choose the section of wall you want scrapped, utter the phrase “instant remodel,” and watch as the walls come a-crumblin’ down.

ONE LESS IN THE WORLD

- **Formula:** Slay or Bane, Verbal
- **Drain Value:** 6 (Slay); 6 (Bane)
- **Cost:** 450¥/charge

Custom casting is the name of the game here. This particular design faces restrictions and legal hurdles in numerous jurisdictions due to its potential lethality. The execution is simple: Pick a target, say the magic words (custom for each design), and watch the instant effect.

PAIN STICK

- **Formula:** Agony, Verbal, Somatic
- **Drain Value:** 5
- **Cost:** 450¥/charge

This was originally marketed as a self-defense item, but a lot of pranksters realized that the lack of permanent damage from the pain made them perfect practical jokes. The stick looks like a cylindrical ten-centimeter rod, and it needs to be pointed at the target while saying “no pain, no gain.” There are always warnings and precautions regarding the use of this preparation, as individuals could suffer coronary issues or drop valuables while under the effect.

PAY NO ATTENTION

- **Formula:** Disregard, Verbal
- **Drain Value:** 8
- **Cost:** 150¥/charge

For those people who just want to be left alone, this little blurry glass ball is the key to keeping interruptions away. Pick an area, touch the glass ball, choose anyone you want to not be affected (including yourself), and say “nothing to see here.” The spell creates a little bubble of disinterest where everyone inside just doesn’t really care what’s going on.

PETSPY

- **Formula:** Animal Sense, Material (Saliva)
- **Drain Value:** 6
- **Cost:** 450¥

Pop this little pill and pet your pup, and you could find out how it is they keep sneaking out of the complex. This pill works with all sorts of pets and creatures (and you don’t really have to pet them; just get close to their aura), allowing you to select a sense to borrow from them. Most people choose sight, but the PetSpy pill has been reported as a rather niche circle item for flavor-oriented people, allowing the users to taste odd and exotic things through the perceptions of an animal.

Touch the animal in question (be careful if you go after wild or dangerous animals), pop the pill in your mouth, and think of the sense you want to take over. If the animal is particularly ornery it may not work, but it usually does.

PLANT SUPERFOOD

- **Formula:** Vine, Verbal
- **Drain Value:** 7
- **Cost:** 500¥/charge

Many people enjoy plants. Many of those same

people are terrible gardeners. For those folks, we bring you this preparation that enhances plant growth at an amazing rate and gives you that beautiful, fully grown plant look in no time. After the growth, maintenance is still handled by you, but for at least a little bit you have a healthy plant.

Using our patented “magic word” design system, you simply pick a plant you can see, tap the mystical growstick, and say “green thumb” to get the desired growth. Effects vary by plant species, and using the preparation on old trees is not recommended, as a few months’ or even years’ worth of growth often has little noticeable effect on such plants.

We should note that plants need to be willing participants in this preparation and effect; if you are always mean and yelling at your fern, it may ignore you.

PRIVACY PILL

- **Formula:** Mindlink, Material (Saliva)
- **Drain Value:** 5
- **Cost:** 400¥

This little two-part wafer is an ingenious way to have private conversations or just be able to communicate in a loud bar. The activation is simple. Two parties snap the little wafer in half, and each eats their section while making contact with one another. After the spell is active, they can move apart, but they need to be touching to initiate the mental link.

PRIVATE EYE ON THE SLY

- **Formula:** Passenger, Verbal
- **Drain Value:** 8
- **Cost:** 550¥

Jurisdictions around the world have outlawed this little crystal eye preparation, and for good reason. The spell behind this is all about violations of privacy. Touch the eye, touch your subject, say “If only I could walk a kilometer in your shoes,” and you create a psychic connection that allows you to ride along with their senses. You can’t control them, but you have every one of their five senses. The sales department focuses on sales to private investigators who use them to catch embezzlers, cheaters, and all sorts of corrupt individuals. They have to use the info as background or blackmail since it’s not admissible in any court, but once they’ve gone for a few sense rides, they can usually find hard evidence if they need it.

PRIVATE PROPERTY, NO PETS ALLOWED

- **Formula:** Foreboding (PP) or Disquiet (NPA), Verbal

- **Drain Value:** 7 (Foreboding); 6 (Disquiet)
- **Cost:** 400¥/charge (PP); 350¥/charge (NPA)

This small warning symbol sign is a handy trinket that does a much better job of warning people off than a “Keep Out” or “All Pets Must Be Leashed” sign. Select a location you would like made uncomfortable to hang out in, speak the phrase of power, “unwelcome mat,” and you will fill that region with a sense of deep unease, occasionally to the point of complete terror. The Private Property design is intended for sapient subjects and does not discriminate friend or foe, while the No Pets Allowed variant is directed at simpler life forms all the way from insects to elephants (terrifying elephants is not recommended).

REMODELING RING

- **Formula:** Ram [Wall], Verbal, Somatic
- **Drain Value:** 4
- **Cost:** 400¥/charge

Often the only thing between defeat and victory is a poorly placed wall. This preparation, made in the form of a ring, is a decent solution to that problem. Lay a hand (wearing the ring or having it on your person) against the wall, utter the activation phrase, “make a hole,” and poof! Obstacle overcome.

REMOTE SLAPPING GLOVE

- **Formula:** Clout or Blast, Verbal, Somatic
- **Drain Value:** 5 (Clout); 6 (Blast)
- **Cost:** 400¥/charge (Clout); 450¥/charge (Blast)

Pick one or pick many, this is the ultimate dueling slap to start a nice kerfuffle at a distance or drop a pesky security guard who just won't look the other way. The glove can be worn or balled up in your pocket (we prefer worn, as they are made with style in mind); it just requires our patented “stare, speak, and slap” maneuver to offer that long-distance love tap on a person or area.

RUNFLAT, MY HOOP; ON FOUR BALD TIRES

- **Formula:** Melt [Tire] or Sludge [Tire], Verbal
- **Drain Value:** 6 (RMH); 8 (OFBT)
- **Cost:** 350¥/charge (RMH); 450¥/charge (OFBT)

Slashing someone's tires is so last century, especially with the number of runflats that would require a dikote blade to pierce the wall. This handy little “knife” can do it better and without ever needing to risk getting caught in that incriminating kneel-

ing position and needing to claim you're tying your shoes. The verbal command is simple: Say “slash the tires,” and poof! A tire is flat, shredded, or melted to the pavement, depending on the mojo behind the scenes. The On Four Bald Tires version can hit all the tires at once on any standard ground vehicle.

SATAN'S LEFT NUT

- **Formula:** Hellblast, Delayed Verbal (1 Combat Round), Material (sulphur)
- **Drain Value:** 11
- **Cost:** 750¥

This preparation looks like a large lug nut on a dark red bolt. The trigger is activated with a quick twist that breaks the sealing wax over a thin layer of sulfur, the activating chemical, followed by the phrase “hell's bells.” Once the nut has been twisted, the user tosses the whole thing toward the desired location of ignition. The thrower needs to make an Athletics + Agility (1) test or the bolt and lug fly wild (feel free to use Scatter diagram, p. 114, SR6) and don't erupt in flame. The Left Nut is not consumed on a failed toss and can be recovered, but the spell is active and must be used at the desired location with a successful toss. It cannot be used anywhere else.

SECRET HANDSHAKE

- **Formula:** Babble or Thieves' Cant, Verbal, Somatic
- **Drain Value:** 5 (Babble); 6 (Thieves' Cant)
- **Cost:** 450¥ (Babble); 500¥ (Thieves' Cant)

Find an associate or associates (group versions of this preparation are sold for a small additional fee), start the meeting with a simple handshake, activate this amazing preparation with a quick “I call this meeting to order,” and all of a sudden, no one else will be able to eavesdrop on your private chat. Feel free to discuss raunchy, embarrassing tales or exchange insider trading information. Everything you say stays between you and your confidants, and anyone outside gets an earful of news on the local weather, a tragic tale of a lost puppy, or a discussion full of complaints about how you were treated growing up.

THE SIZZLER

- **Formula:** Fireball, Delayed Verbal (1 Combat Round), Somatic
- **Drain Value:** 9
- **Cost:** 700¥

This etched red ball, about the size and weight of a lacrosse ball, is trouble with a capital T. Whisper the command phrase “great balls of fire”

and then toss the ball toward the desired eruption location. A lacrosse stick can offer some good distance and speed. The thrower needs to make an Athletics + Agility (1) test or the ball flies wild (feel free to use Scatter diagram, p. 114, SR6) and does not erupt in flame. The Sizzler is not consumed on a failed toss. It can be recovered and tossed again, but it cannot be used anywhere else. The spell is active and waiting to hit that target location.

SLEEPING POWDER

- **Formula:** Knockout, Verbal, Somatic
- **Drain Value:** 4
- **Cost:** 400¥

This powder is tossed in the air around a target or in their face while the verbal trigger phrase “night-night time” is spoken. The spell affects only the individual targeted by the spell and does not get diminished or resisted by gas masks or chemical protection gear. The powder is just a show.

SLOWING THE COMPETITION

- **Formula:** Decrease Attribute, Material (Saliva)
- **Drain Value:** 5
- **Cost:** 450¥

Cheating or weakening opponents is a staple of corporate espionage and military conflict. The fact that a preparation would be created in order to reflect this is not at all surprising. When these are designed and prepared, they are specifically blended to affect different aspects of the target. Some make the target physically weaker or slower, while others make them mentally more malleable or less attentive. Purchase and use the right mix for whatever job you need done.

Using the powder is easy. Get someone to put it in their mouth. The preparation activates on contact with saliva. This means it can be sprinkled on food or placed into a drink.

SPELL SHIELD

- **Formula:** Mana Barrier, Verbal, Somatic
- **Drain Value:** 7
- **Cost:** 550¥/charge

If you see the mojo starting to fly, you’re going to want this handy token nearby. The preparation looks like a miniature glass wall. To activate the spell, a pattern of nine strokes needs to be traced while saying “arcane protection.”

STUFFER SHACK SNACK STOPPERS

- **Formula:** Fast, Material (Saliva)
- **Drain Value:** 6
- **Cost:** 450¥

These handy pills cut off cravings and leave you feeling full and satisfied without a stop at the local Stuffer Shack. Originally designed for elite corporate forces looking to pack light for operations, they’ve been shifted over to the civilian market to help those folks who find it hard to resist those late-night cravings that keep those pesky extra pounds on.

STUMP REMOVER

- **Formula:** Rot, Verbal, Somatic
- **Drain Value:** 7
- **Cost:** 550¥

It takes quite a bit of hard labor to get a stump up from a cut-down tree. This handy powder will make that pesky stump (or any other organic matter) break down into a fine powder or puddle of goo. As with most powdered preparations, simply sprinkle the powder over a target, mutter the magic words—in this case “safer than some dynamite”—and wait for magic to make your problem disappear.

STRAIN BREAKER

- **Formula:** Treat, Verbal, Somatic
- **Drain Value:** 6
- **Cost:** 500¥

Sometimes the hits hurt for longer than just the initial punch. When the fires keep burning, the poison keeps the nausea going, the chill sticks in your bones, or a myriad of other maladies strike, this simple, white, etched stick is the solution. Get close enough to connect with someone’s aura, pull out the stick and snap it while saying “on the mend,” and whoosh, problem solved.

SUPER-EPIPEN

- **Formula:** Ephedrine, Material (Blood)
- **Drain Value:** 6
- **Cost:** 400¥

While this may look like your typical emergency allergy pen, it’s a bit of an upgrade. As an arcane alternative, this little sticker does its needlework to get a little blood for activation and then stops allergies dead in their tracks until the mojo runs out. Designed for a single use but so much less chemically intrusive, this is one of our hottest sellers with the allergy conscious and those who want to dine out without worrying about pesky allergic reactions.

SUPERBINDER

- **Formula:** Glue, Verbal
- **Drain Value:** Varies by substance
- **Cost:** 300¥ (Obj. Res. 1–3); 350¥ (Obj. Res. 4–6); 400¥ (Obj. Res. 7–9); 450¥ (Obj. Res. 10–12)

Usually stronger adhesive is better, but this tool can work in a pinch or as a pretty solid practical joke. You need to pick the surface or surfaces you want stuck together, touch them, and say “stuck like glue.” Be warned that Superbinder comes in a variety of strengths based on the substances you want bound. Due to limitations on arcano-technological interaction, more complex and processed substances are harder to stick fast.

Be warned that an exceptionally firm bond that is broken before the preparation expires could result in structural damage including tissue damage if used on a living being.

SWAY THE MOODY MASSES

- **Formula:** Mob Mood, Verbal, Somatic
- **Drain Value:** 7
- **Cost:** 550¥/charge

Sometimes the club just isn't jumping, and the vibe of an event is a few degrees from optimal. This is the subtle touch purchased by many a club owner that puts everyone in the right mood to party (and spend nuyen). There are several jurisdictions that don't allow this preparation to be used on the public, but plenty do, so be subtle and don't get caught. When it's time to shift the mood, make sure the figurine (two people facing each other with arms crossed on shoulders in a V-shape) is in contact with you, select an area of people to lay the spell over, cross your arms over your chest before swirling them out away from you and back to the original pose, then say “make the mood right.”

TRADE-IN TONIC

- **Formula:** Vehicle Mask, Material (saliva)
- **Drain Value:** 6+
- **Cost:** 450¥ (car); 500¥ (truck/SUV); 550¥ (Tractor)

Looking for a fast way to upgrade your vehicle without the time and money needed for a real paint job and those extra body panels? Look no further than Trade-In Tonic. This little bottle of magic juice will get your ride looking like a million nuyen in no time.

Imagine what you want, touch your vehicle, and down the bottle. Your 2067 Honda Spirit can look like a 2082 Eurocar in the blink of an eye.

This preparation is sold in a variety of grades based on the size of the vehicle it will be used on. Those for larger size vehicles can be used on vehicles of a smaller category, but you cannot do it the other way.

TRANSLATION LENSES

- **Formula:** Translate, Somatic, Verbal
- **Drain Value:** 6
- **Cost:** 500¥/charge

Ever wanted to speak any language? These spec-

tacles can make it happen. Put the frames on your face and touch the incscription on the arm while saying, “Tower of Babel.” You and the person you're looking at will be able to understand each other. The effect only works on a living, sapient being—it won't let you read Sanskrit or talk to your pet.

TWINSIES!

- **Formula:** Double Image, Verbal
- **Drain Value:** 6
- **Cost:** 450¥/charge

Need a distraction? Need a friend? Wonder what you really look like in that dress? Wait no longer. You can get all of those with this handy little preparation. Make contact with the adorable little “peace sign” hand, touch a willing mate or yourself, say “It's not a tumor” (heavy accent not required), and all of a sudden someone is twice as fun as they once were. After the preparation is released, you have the ability to slightly control the mirrored image, or you can let it run free as a perfect match for whomever you used it on.

UV CLEANSTICK

- **Formula:** Sterilize, Material (Chlorine), Somatic
- **Drain Value:** 5
- **Cost:** 450¥

This may look like an ordinary glowstick, but our patented process of arcane and mundane merging makes it so much more. To operate the CleanStick, simply crack it like a regular glowstick and enjoy the cleansing glow of the blue light. The spell activates with the exposure of the inner preparation to the chlorine inside the tube.

Disclaimer: The blue glowing light doesn't actually do anything magical, but it provides cool ambiance or a source of light for one hour once activated.

WIZARDING WALL

- **Formula:** Manascape, Verbal, Somatic, Increase Area (4)
- **Drain Value:** 10
- **Cost:** 700¥/charge

It may look like an ordinary shiny black handkerchief, but this little wonder is hot among the young wizards of the world who want to test their skills without inciting a witch hunt. Shake the handkerchief as directed, select a region to provide a field for arcane tricks, then say the magic words, “hidden magic.”

Most magic in your selected area is then obscured from the view of others. It will appear as if nothing is happening. If the spells being slung are packing a major punch, they may override the obscuring effect, so keep things low key.



SEEING AND BELIEVING

The realms of magic are still largely terra incognita seventy years into the Awakening, at least for metahumanity. Why is that so? After all, most magical beings use their powers intuitively, just as mammals pick themselves up and walk right after birth. As everyone knows, it takes metahumans considerably more time to find their feet, and those of us who show innate arcane powers struggle miserably learning to handle them. It seems as if 1.2 million years of evolution have equipped us—well, many of us, anyway—with a formidable brain and at the same time not just alienated us from our intuitions about our physical body, but also stripped us entirely of our understanding of the astral body.

So, learning our ways around magic is an effortful endeavor. Just as we need to realize and comprehend the three-dimensional space around us in order to stand up and take our first steps, we need an orientation system to navigate the uncharted waters of our arcane abilities.

In general, there are two approaches for metahumans to learn magic: the “shamanic” way of interlinking our magic with a guiding belief system, and the “hermetic” way, in which we try to approximate the laws of magic by the use of different, somewhat opposing rationales. Of course, this

is a simplistic presentation, the truth is much more complex than that. So, let’s elaborate and dive into the world of magic traditions.

BELIEVING: TRADITIONS OF FAITH

If you want to see it that way, the roles of religions and spiritual systems have always been to offer support and guidance in the face of phenomena mankind couldn’t explain. Those phenomena manifested themselves according to laws that were, and often still are, beyond the immediate reach of our senses. This is true for natural phenomena like thunder and lightning, but also for the workings of our mind, emotions, and instincts, and certainly for metaphysical questions like the meaning of life. All of them appear mysterious, even frightening at times.

It is obvious to see the Awakening as another manifestation of phenomena beyond our senses, and it holds true for magic that it originates from sources beyond our reach but can also be found within and around us. Consequentially, metahumanity reverted to religion and faith to make sense

of it. And surprisingly (or not), spiritual teachings proved able to lend help and guidance to those who dared to take the leap of faith.

Whenever there is talk about a “shaman,” in most cases this magician is typically not a practitioner of First Nations shamanism, but rather a student of one of the following faith-based traditions.

Note: All Traditions of Faith resist drain with **Willpower + Charisma**

ANCIENT PANTHEONS

It wouldn't surprise you to hear that plenty of shamanic traditions have popped up in relation to ancient religions and gods, of course. Whether or not there's any veracity to them, objectively speaking, people believe, and where there's belief there's power. Tapping into that kind of power can be tricky, and it can certainly be dangerous, but that's never stopped the ones who really want it, has it?

EGYPTIAN TRADITIONS

What we know about ancient Egyptian religion probably hasn't advanced all that much since the days before the Awakening, but if one thing's for sure, it's that the rise of metahumans and magic have definitely lent some credence to the old stories from just about every ancient faith. Shamans who find a connection to one of the gods of Ancient Egypt might not necessarily have a cultural connection to them—that's common enough for many of the traditions derived from belief on this list—but they devote themselves to understanding what we know of the ways and beliefs of Egypt, and how it interfaces with the metahuman soul. Not surprising, given its importance in Egyptian belief.

An individual mage might find connection with a god that represents some aspect of existence that they feel most drawn to. Given that there are so many gods in the pantheon of Ancient Egypt, there's one for just about anything you could imagine. Death, life, freakin' hippos. Can you imagine that? A hippo shaman? I'd pay some good nuyen to see that. We're getting a little sidetracked, though. Members of this tradition place a lot of weight on their actions in this life, drawing on the belief that to enter the afterlife with a heavy heart will result in torment.

ROMAN/GREEK TRADITIONS

There's a lot of similarity between the Roman and Greek traditions, with the ancient Romans having cribbed quite a few of their gods from the Greeks before them. Of course, these respective traditions might get upset about being lumped together, but really. Come on.

Like any polytheistic tradition, the disposition of a given shaman from these traditions is going to

depend heavily on which god they're most drawn to. A magician devoted to Mars is going to be a lot fraggier testier than one devoted to, say, Bacchus. Not that you'd meet a Bacchus shaman on a given run, probably. They're probably too busy having fun. Their practices might use Latin or Greek, of course, depending on which side of the line they fall. What's likewise not uncommon is the usage of ritual practices from pre-Awakening religious reconstructions. Most of the original rites were lost when monotheistic faiths swept over the region. A pity, really, given how much fascinating information must have been lost.

A good mix of Greek philosophy makes its way into these traditions as well, often used as a guiding morality for their art. Given that area of the world tends to be considered the birthplace of philosophy, or at least Western philosophy, this makes a lot of sense.

NORSE TRADITION

Okay, you might be thinking that the sort of people who follow a Norse tradition are all going to be Viking wannabes running around shouting about honor and pillaging the local watering hole or what have you. Those do exist, for sure, and they're definitely an embarrassment to everyone involved. Real adherents to traditions that derive from Norse beliefs are far more nuanced. Odin himself is often viewed as emblematic of a magician, given his sacrifice of his eye for knowledge and the ability to see between worlds.

Many magicians who follow this tradition try to walk this path of wisdom, guiding those around them and serving as protectors of their comrades—though, admittedly, the occasional shaman bound to some of the more unsavory elements of the Norse pantheon can crop up from time to time. Loki, believe it or not, tends to be more annoying than anything else. It's Fenrir or Jormungandr that you've got to watch out for. Given the stories of the world serpent spewing poison into the sky at the end of the world, there's some wonder if the World Serpent-followers fall under the whole 'toxic shaman' descriptor. They certainly sound like they fit the bill.

ABRAHAMIC TRADITIONS

It is remarkable that three of the world's great religions originate from the same small region of the Near East, located in the geographical joint

ANCIENT PANTHEONS TRADITIONS

Recommended Positive Qualities: Indomitable, Mentor Spirit, Quick Healer, Shamanic Mask, Will to Live

Recommended Negative Qualities: AR Vertigo, Representation, Simsense Vertigo.

between Africa, Asia, and Europe. Drawing from a common cultural heritage, these religions share more similarities than their conflict-laden relationship to each other would suggest: the veneration for jointly owned characters like the eponymous Abraham (Ibrahim), sacred ancestor of the Semitic people; common—though not necessarily shared—places of worship; and the characteristic reverence for central, constitutive holy texts that made scholars coin the synonymous term “book religions” for them, to only name a few. The Abrahamic religions are infamously hesitant in accepting female believers into the ranks of clergy—a drawback that not only persists to modern times, but also extends to their respective magic traditions that formed after the Awakening.

Although the return of magic hit the Abrahamic religions unprepared, they quickly recovered. After all, don’t the Holy Texts contain stories of sacred people and sages performing not just miracles but acts that, to the expert eye, are nothing if not magic? Soon, the scholars and gnostics of Christianity, Islam, and Judaism each gathered ancient knowledge from their archives, reluctantly and yet frantically fusing the ancient wisdom into new magic traditions.

All Abrahamic traditions agree that, although their respective God is the ultimate artificer of the world and therefore the creator of magic itself, Awakened powers are in no way to be seen as a gift from God to those who wield them. In fact, all book religions still have ongoing debates on whether man is supposed to have those powers at all. While hardliners in this discussion consider the very existence of mages an act of heretical presumption, there is a consensus among the moderate forces that those who actually wield arcane powers should always feel moral obligation toward God and the community of faith weighing heavy on their shoulders.

So, trembling with uncertainty as to whether their magic finds the goodwill of their Lord at all, disciples of the Abrahamic traditions are rather cautious spellslingers and entirely uncomfortable interfering with the astral spheres and its inhabitants. Caught in a dualistic worldview, scholars can’t quite make out the role of spirits in the eternal fight between the forces of good and evil. Many try to play it safe and refrain from conjuring spirits at all, content with their lot as aspected magicians.

Adepts of all Abrahamic traditions typically accept roles as warriors of faith. The Krav Maga adepts of the Israeli Defense Forces, the Caliphate’s Mujahideen, or the Exorcists of the Catholic Church are only a few examples.

Islamic theurgists are known as excellent arcane theorists, due to the thorough and analytic approach taught in the madrasas (schools) of magic. Depending on their progressiveness, theurgic scholars are more or less hesitant to share their

findings with the rest of the world (or, indeed, with female students). They are even more hesitant when it comes to conjuring djinn. Cunning and deceitful, these spirits are considered to have their own ambiguous agendas and therefore don’t quite fit into the moral compass of the theurgists—in contrast to the ifriit (demons), which are seen as outright evil and are only conjured by the most sinister magicians. A blind spot in the disapproving eyes of the religion police are the practices of alchemy. The effects of alchemic magic tend to be attributed to the intrinsic qualities of the used materials, and less to the alchemist himself. In fact, alchemy has a far greater acceptance in Muslim societies than other manifestations of magic.

Social acceptance has never been a problem for **Qabbalists**: as mystics of Judaism, they enjoy high esteem in Israel as well as in the Jewish communities around the world, though not for their magic powers (which sometimes are even disapproved of), but for their erudition and their (implied) devoutness. Often considered the most learned among all magic traditions, a Qabbalist’s curriculum contains not just the Miqra (also called Tanakh, the Hebrew Bible), but Qabbalah scripts like the Sefer Yetzirah (“Book of Formation”), the Zohar (“Splendor”), the Sefer ha-Bahir (“Book of the Bright”), and the Sefer ha-Razim (“Book of Secrets”). A widespread credo of the Abrahamic religions states that nothing is really earned if not reached through effort—and it is indeed an effort to decipher and comprehend the lore of the scripts, for they are notoriously intangible, mind-blowingly complex and, to add to all existing woes, composed in a variation of ancient Semitic dialects (which have to be mastered first, for the texts are said to only reveal all of their secrets if read in original tongues). However, since the Qabbalah scripts are said to have been passed on to man by the angels, the knowledge they contain is seen as divine revelation, furthering not just the Qabbalists’ understanding of the arcane arts, but also bringing them closer to God.

In past decades, more secular schools of Qabbalism have emerged, following essentially a hermetic approach to understanding magic. Though there has always been an intellectual intimacy between hermeticism and Qabbalism, which should be no surprise—after all, the Qabbalah scripts form a substantial part of ancient hermetic wisdom.

Endowed with the Abrahamic reluctance to conjure spirits, most schools of Qabbalism do not allow themselves to force the *elohim*, as spirits are called, to manifest in the physical world, effectively rendering Qabbalism a possession tradition. Instead, they provide them with prepared vessels, of which the *golems* (“the unfinished”), statues of vague man-like shape made of clay, are the most known. To the rare (and frowned upon) Qabbalists who actually master the conjuring techniques that

allow physical manifestation, the *elohim* appear with angelic features, yet in a more archaic form than the spirits summoned by Christian theurgists.

Speaking of which, of all the Abrahamic traditions, **Christian theurgy**—especially the Catholic Church—has had the rockiest past with magic. In fact, the formidable Holy Inquisition’s sole purpose was to wipe out all superstitious and esoteric practices throughout Medieval Europe, burning countless “witches” and “sorcerers” at the stake. When magic resurfaced, the Catholic Church’s natural reflex was to fan the flames again, but having long lost their once all-pervading power, the clergy once more had to bow to reality and find ways to come to terms with it, as it did with its famous *Imago Dei* encyclical.

Nevertheless, Catholic Theurgists are being held on the leash by their parent church. Tightly set into organizations like the Order of St. Sylvester or the New Knights Templar, the theurgists keep each other in check. With the Vatican archives containing myriads of arcane tomes and mystic artifacts collected over the centuries, the discrepancy between knowledge theoretically available and knowledge actually circulating is rather chastening. Catholic theurgists usually don’t educe brilliant conjurers (although there have been reports of very powerful spirits with distinctive angelic features guarding church sites), but their spellcasting is quite solid, especially in the healing sector. Some theurgists follow mentor spirits in guise of one of the Church’s numerous saints.

Some other branches of Christianity have also developed theurgist traditions, notably the Orthodox churches and the Mormons. While the Orthodox mirror Catholic rigidity, theurgists of Evangelical denominations display a more relaxed behavior.

ABRAHAMIC TRADITION QUALITIES

Recommended Positive Qualities: Analytical Mind (all), Arcane Resilience Training (Logic) (all), Scholastic Mage (all)

Recommended Negative Qualities: Honorbound (all), Possession Tradition (Qabbalists), Pusillanimous Summoner (Islamic and Christian theurgists), Representation (all)

Disadvised Positive Qualities: Mentor Spirit (Islamic theurgists, except Holy Text or Lion), Spirit Affinity (all)

TRADITIONS OF KARMA

Magic has proven itself to be a powerful instrument. Most spiritual communities have accepted or even embraced it to further their causes, be they outward-directed or aimed inwardly, for the spiritual “improvement” of the believers. There is an

abundance of visions about how personal growth is supposed to take place, but the common denominator, even though it is phrased differently, is the concept of Karma. Originating from the Sanskrit language, the literal translation of “Karma” is “deed” or “action.” Every action of an individual is believed to have direct and inevitable consequences—not just the obvious ones seen in the outward world, but also on a purely spiritual level. Accumulating “good” Karma from behavior that qualifies as honorable, skillful, and congruent with the spiritual and moral beliefs of the community, the individual advances toward “enlightenment” (which can be many things, but generally implies a state of higher awareness). Dishonorable, inconsiderate, and amoral deeds, on the other hand, bestow “bad” Karma on the individual, causing them to go astray from the spiritual path. Innate astral powers turn into a catalyst for the magician, fast-tracking the accumulation of good or bad Karma and the way to enlightenment—or doom.

Both **Buddhism** and **Hinduism** are classical examples of Karma-based belief systems. The religions are highly intertwined in their origins as well as in their respective philosophy, so it is no surprise that their magic traditions have similarities. Besides the obvious striving for karmic purity, both traditions stem from Tantric schools of thought. Buddhist and Hindu conjurers alike summon spirits as “*devas*” or “*asuras*” and conformingly employ Yoga asanas and meditation techniques, as well as episodes of asceticism, for mental preparation. Their rituals are performed by the repetition of sacred mantras in the Sanskrit language, which is said to be arcane itself. And finally, both traditions aim to advance through the cycles of death and rebirth toward transcendence.

Of course, there are also differences to be found: Buddhist magicians, for example, have no preference for or against mentor spirits, whereas Hindus often choose to follow one of their pantheon’s numerous deities. While the Buddhist tradition has no real enchanting practice, the creation of protective amulets is a major source of income for Hindu alchemists. And in contrast to Buddhism, which deploys all sorts of magic-users alike, the Hindu tend toward mystic adepts and aspected magicians, with relatively few full-scale magicians (all of whom are members of the Brahman caste).

Students of the **Zoroastrian tradition** witness the world in constant battle between the dualist forces of good and evil. With each of their actions, with every choice they make, they inevitably contribute to one side of this conflict. Although the tradition explicitly postulates that every follower only has to answer to their own conscience (with regard to moral implications, that is), it aims to motivate the faithful to intrinsically strive for the promotion of goodness in the world.

The tradition derives from the ancient Persian religion of Zoroastrianism, which in turn is also

the antecessor of most monotheistic religions (including the Abrahamic religions). Apart from a common edifice of ideas, the followers share no official infrastructure of any kind. Here again, the tradition encourages the believers' self-initiative to build communities around the world and to teach and learn from each other. Shaped by their belief of constant conflict, Zoroastrians can be on the belligerent side, sometimes acting as "concerned third parties" to promote the cause of the faction they regard as just. However, as much as they like to see the good prevail, they see it as a matter of course to spare a beaten enemy. To outsiders, their poise of archaic chivalry is irritating at best.

Practitioners of the Zoroastrian tradition are predominantly mystic adepts and excel in combat spellcasting. If they choose a mentor spirit, they prefer abstract concepts.

If you want to see it that way, the **Path of the Wheel** is also a Karma-based tradition, although it displays fundamental differences. For instance, the individual's spiritual enlightenment is achieved by traversing a set of five successive paths, which correspond to roles in the Tír's society: Warrior, Steward, Bard, Druid, and Righ ("Lord").

The tradition is practiced in the elven nation of Tír na nÓg and is open only to elves. The five paths simultaneously represent the nation's social order, and as the students advance along the paths, they also increase their social status. For every path, there is a highly rigid and formalized curriculum, which is only available to those who have qualified for them. (Sharing knowledge with outsiders is a crime punishable by death.) The followers of the Path of the Wheel are highly committed to the Tír. The whole tradition is set to protect the nation against enemies from outside—as well as from within.

Since mages can only advance by achieving mastery on their current path, they are very focused on improving their abilities. Proficient conjurers, they treat spirits like any other member of their society—neither with deference nor with superiority. Mentor spirits are chosen transitionally, matching the respective path.

KARMA TRADITION QUALITIES

Recommended Positive Qualities: Arcane Resilience Training (any Attribute) (all), Honorbound (Path of the Wheel, Zoroastrism)

Recommended Negative Qualities: Representation (all except Path of the Wheel)



TRADITIONS OF THE ANIMISTS

When the world Awakened and the first spirit sightings were reported, the believers of Animist religions were less than surprised. They have known for a long time that all things—living beings as well as objects of all kinds—have an individual soul (“anima” in Ancient Greek, hence the name). And what else could spirits be, but those souls coming into shape?

Animists have always strived to live in harmony with the spirits surrounding them. While ordinary believers could only commune with the animae in an indirect way, making offerings in shrines or temples, the priests mastered elaborate rituals of cleansing, worship, and communication with the spirits, which they passed to one another and on to their successors. After the Awakening, their knowledge proved most useful in understanding magic, rendering Animist priests the Sixth World’s first users of magic.

The **Shaman tradition** practiced by America’s First Nation Tribes is not just the best-known Animist tradition, but arguably the best-known magic tradition in general, giving an entire system of traditions based on faith and intuition its name. There is a distinction to be made between traditional shamanism, embedded in First Nation lore and taught on a teacher-student basis, and modern shamanism, which adapted the basic Shaman teachings, amplified it with external concepts and transferred it to the mindset of Western culture. However, all Shaman schools maintain an undogmatic, hands-on approach. They never cease to state that magic, in its complexity, must be experienced, not studied in books, as it overcharges the intellectual mind. All efforts to encompass magic scientifically are regarded as futile and self-limiting, adding to the tense relation between shamanistic and hermetic Traditions (though not necessarily between their disciples). Paradoxically, this rift has not prevented some modern shamanist schools from embracing the Unified Magic Theory and teaching their approach to magic in major universities worldwide.

Shinto, the state religion of the Japanese Empire, has expanded likewise—but only within the Japanese communities that formed themselves when the Empire’s megacorporations spread around the globe. The vast majority of Shinto believers, however, are still found in Japan, where they worship the “kami” (“gods” or “spirits”) in innumerable shrines. The official status of the underlying religion provides the **Shinto Tradition** with a high reputation in the Japanese corp world. This is remarkable for a “shaman” tradition, since corporations normally prefer the more logical, and therefore predictable, hermetics. (Of course, the individual competence of Shinto practitioners—typically conjurers, but also ritualists, spellcasters, and a few adepts—has helped the wide acceptance, too.) Shinto magicians are said to be experts for protective wards (*ofuda*) and amulets (*omamori*). Correspondingly, their combat magic tactics are fundamentally defensive.

The tradition’s relationship toward spirits is shaped by reverent respect: a kami is asked, not expected, to do the conjurer a favor. As all kami are to be honored equally, it is considered improper for Shinto magicians to choose a mentor spirit.

Followers of the Chinese magic tradition of **Wuxing** refrain from worshipping individual spirits. To them, the animation of the world occurs through a sacred, all-permeating force called *qi*. The underlying philosophy, the “teaching of the five transitional phases” (the literal translation of Wuxing), is no religion, but a daoist system of understanding and describing nature. The five elements—fire, earth, metal, water, and wood—are seen as fluid, alternating phases of matter. The Wujen, as the shamans of the Wuxing tradition are called, use their understanding of nature to shift their surroundings away from a chaotic, turbulent state (*yang*) toward order and harmony (*yin*). To an outsider, the Wuxing thought system may appear very neat and pointlessly bureaucratic, but for the Wujen, this order means control. Applying *feng shui* principles to optimize the flow of *qi*, as well as the movement meditation techniques of *qi gong* or *tai chi*, the wujen are famous for manipulating the surrounding mana flow in their favor. The Wuxing tradition’s superior knowledge of background count cleaning and tapping into ley lines turns their magic-users into sought-after specialists in that field—not just for the Chinese megacorp of the same name but throughout the world.

Wujen see spirits as emanations of *qi* and use them like tools—highly regarded and respectfully applied tools, of course. Their holistic view on *qi* makes following an individual mentor spirit pointless. However, they might cherish an abstract moral concept or a historic Wuxing master, which effectively fulfills that task (although the wujen would never call them their “mentor spirit”). Deeply influenced by the Wuxing philosophy, they dislike chaos and loss of control, trying to regain the upper hand in every situation before facing the problem itself. Wujen spellcasters and adepts are formidable healers and fighters.

ANIMIST TRADITION QUALITIES

Recommended Positive Qualities: Aptitude (any Magic Skill) (all), Focused Concentration (all), Shaman Mask (Shamans)

Recommended Negative Qualities: Representation (Shinto, Wuxing)

TRADITIONS OF THE ANIMAL SPIRITS

Although the traditions of this group have otherwise greatly diverging features on display, they

have one great feature in common: the belief that shamans are incomplete without an animal spirit by their side. This companion is the one through which they channel their arcane powers—not just the access to the spiritual world but also the key to understanding oneself.

The **Aztec tradition** is usually seen as synonymous with the magic of Aztechnology. And no one can be blamed for that mistake—in fact, Aztechnology itself, feigning to be the sole representative of the “true” Aztec renaissance, likes to portray it that way. However, while the *nahualli* (magic priests) in the ranks of the AAA state corporation are outwardly seen as affiliated with the Aztec tradition, most of them actually tread paths that are far more sinister.

A “real” *nahualli* believes that every self-aware being—even every god—has an animal spiritual twin that shares some of its traits and complements others. The search for a compatible animal twin is the first spiritual endeavor for a student of the Aztec Tradition, and once found, the animal twin assumes the function of a mentor spirit. Maintaining spiritual contact with their mentor spirits is essential for *nahualli* (which proves to be easier outside the cities, in the animals’ original habitat).

While conservative schools attach importance to ritual magic, traditional garbs, and ancient ceremonial weapons, liberal proponents employ more practical approaches, prioritizing spellcasting and allowing any resources that prove helpful with connecting to the astral world to be used. Conjured spirits (even the elemental ones) typically appear as Aztec warriors or in a suitable animal form, honoring the duality of man and animal.

In the shamanic **Tradition of the Sioux**, animal spirits are not individual companions; instead, they form a pantheon of powerful entities that exert influence on the life of man. Among the multitude of characters are Iktomi the spider and Mica the coyote, both sly tricksters, Ptesan-Wi the benevolent White Buffalo Calf Woman or Wakinyan the powerful thunderbird. (Notably, the animals’ traits sometimes differ hugely from the characteristics attributed to them in European folklore.)

Although they all follow their own respective agendas, the animal spirits embrace their role as arbiter between man and Wakan Tanka, “the Great Spirit,” the all-encompassing power of life itself. Also called “the Great Mystery,” its ways are far beyond human comprehension. In order to cope with the spiritual powers within themselves and in their environment, shamans of the Sioux Tradition

have to rely on the hints and clues left behind by the animal spirit arbiters. This makes them attentive and receptive observers of their environments, reading the auras around them without prejudice, always willing to react to a more-or-less-friendly pointer—even if that makes them seem to act erratically from an outward perspective. Most magics feel an inclination—a special bond—to one of the animal spirits and choose them as mentors. Whenever disputing with spirits, even with their own mentors, Sioux shamans tend to be on their heels, though not resentfully so. They allow for the fact that other beings may legitimately follow their own interests, and accept that, to some extent, both the physical and spiritual worlds will always remain mysteries to them.

Magicians of every form can be found in the Sioux tradition, though their adept scouts, experts in reconnaissance and survival, probably have the highest profile.

Lacking both the lore and refinement of the Aztec and Sioux teachings, **Red Magic** is yet arguably the oldest of the Animal Spirit traditions. An archeological outfit called Tzuri Group introduced—or as the corp’s researchers insist, reintroduced—Red Magic to the world a few years ago, claiming to have discovered it on one of their dig sites. Followers of the Red Magic tradition believe that, for magicians, the instinctive understanding of one’s magical powers may well be blocked, but can nevertheless be accessed, by reverting to the “animal mind,” their animalistic side within, communicated best by the spirit of a congenial (often wild) animal, which becomes their mentor. Through the mentor spirit, they gain access to what they call the Domain of Red, which is not an actual place but rather is a force that connects all animal life in this world and throughout the universe. (Metasapients and metahumanity are generously included in their definition of “animal life.”) Red mages do not “learn” to use their magic, but instead try to “unlearn,” intermittently ridding themselves of their rationale.

Although the archaism (and the name) of this tradition may suggest otherwise, the proponents of Red Magic actively oppose blood magic, regarding these practices as a contamination of their domain of Red. They either choose to adapt to urban life, keeping their disgust for the degenerated ways of an over-domesticated mankind to themselves, or outright refuse any “charade,” openly celebrating their animalistic side and stubbornly facing the consequences. Magicians of all kinds can be found among them. The spirits they conjure display a wide variety of animal forms.

ANIMAL SPIRIT TRADITION QUALITIES

Recommended Positive Qualities: Mentor Spirit
(Animal Spirit) (all),

Recommended Negative Qualities: Representation
(garb) (Aztec)

TRADITIONS OF GAIA

“The Awakening” is a widely accepted term for describing the return of magic, although a few people actually question its meaning. What—or who—had been sleeping for the last millennia?

Followers of numerous eco-spiritual religions offer (or, in some cases, uproariously call out) an answer to that question: the sleeper was Mother Earth herself, also called Gaia, the primordial goddess of Ancient Greek creation mythology. The anthropomorphic manifestation of nature and all life forces, Mother Earth is believed to be the ultimate source of all magic. (Truth be told, the eco-believers don't really stand alone with that theory. In fact, modern science has coined the term "gaia-sphere" for a complex ecosystem with the ability to create and sustain arcane energy.)

Some eco-spiritualists have come up with explanations as to *why* Gaia has woken up: man-made pollution and the destruction of the world, they say, has put her under siege. If humanity can't revert to a more sustainable form of living, the more radical followers proclaim, it is doomed to extinction—and the extinction of humanity is regarded as preferable to the destruction of Mother Earth (which would also include the extinction of humanity, anyway).

Eco-believers revere Gaia in her pure form, gathering with the like-minded in unperturbed nature and planning for ways to further Nature's cause. The shamans among them are confronted by high expectations: Mother Earth needs healing, and those she blessed with arcane powers are particularly mandated to rid her from the threats posed by over-industrialization, war, and greed.

The **Druidic traditions** are a confraternity of highly different Druidic schools: the civilized, almost Masonic English druids of the British nobility, the far less civilized, primeval wild druids, and the bulk of classical Celtic druid lineages, just to name the biggest groups. All schools, though otherwise highly varied, share a very territorial behavior (which is, as malicious tongues claim, caused by the male predominance within this tradition). Druids tend to claim "a land," which can be a classic grove for the Celts, a small, otherwise uninhabited island for Wild Druids, or the quite large, densely populated British Isles for the English druids. They form a deep bond with that land and defend it fiercely against any interference from the outside, shielding it from pollution of any kind, whether mundane or astral. Territorial as they are, druids impute the same inclination to spirits. In their lengthy rituals, they assure themselves of the cooperation of the locals among the spirits. In combination with their intimate knowledge of the surroundings, they are a force to be reckoned with on their home turf.

Druids usually need very good excuses for leaving their grove, most of which would sound absurdly ancient to outsiders: an errand on behalf of their circle's elders, a sacred quest to save their home grove, or an agonizing vision that needs further exploration. The majority of druids are apt conjurers. While their spell-slinging abilities are above average, their skills in influencing background counts and ley lines are matched only by the Wuxing tradition's wujen. Adepts hold subordinate positions in

a druid circle's organization, tasked with guarding and protecting the community.

Lacking territorialism and reversing male dominance, the **Witchcraft tradition** cherishes Mother Earth by exploring her life forces to the fullest. Their nightly gatherings in secluded meadows, celebrated with ecstatic dances and intoxicating potions, are the stuff of legends. Besides their meetings, witches tend to live in solitude or in small communities, practicing their magical skills. Their enchanting abilities surpass most other traditions. Having undergone centuries of cruel persecution, they prefer to keep low profiles. Witches are often accompanied by a mentor spirit, typically an animal, which they call their familiar and confer with at eye level. Witchcraft is a possession tradition.

Instead of scorning the urbanized chaos of the Sixth World city molochs, the **Street Witches** own it. They witness Mother Earth's life force in the abundance of human energy that pulsates throughout the sprawls, holding their gatherings at orgiastic rave parties, feeling at home under the neon lights of the city center as well as in the littered back alleys. The majority of street witches are adepts, ranging from the thievish slum rat to the high-profile con artist, always ready to tap into the city's human energy to earn their livings. Some traditional witches shun their cousins from the city, even accusing them of following a toxic path (which is not the case).

The philosophical distinctions between traditional witchcraft and **Wicca** are rather blurred. The main difference being the openness of Wicca covens toward mundane believers. In fact, the mundane coven members often surpass the Awakened by far, experiencing Wicca as a religion only. Wiccan magic-users usually follow Mother Earth as their mentor spirit. Apt conjurers and solid ritualists, they excel at magic healing.

No report about eco-believing magic traditions would be complete without mentioning the hard-line, dogmatic **Green Magic tradition**. Contemporaneously (re)discovered with Red Magic by the mysterious Tzuri Group, Green Magic believes in the Domain of Green, a force that connects all plant life throughout the universe. Though seemingly complementary to the Red Magic's concept of the Domain of Red, the archeological evidence from the Tzuri Group's dig sites suggests that there had once been conflict between the two traditions. Claiming the absolute precedence of herbal life, Green shamans are usually less than amicable, and often described as "strange folks."

GAIA TRADITION QUALITIES

Recommended Positive Qualities: Aptitude

(Enchanting) (Witches), Mentor Spirit (all), Shaman Mask (Witches, Wicca)

Recommended Negative Qualities: Pusillanimous

Summoner (Druids, Wicca), Uncouth (Green Magic)

Mandatory Negative Quality: Possession Tradition

(Witches)

SEEING: TRADITIONS OF LOGIC

So, we've talked about traditions that stem from faiths, be they old or much, much newer. It's easy enough to fall back on faith when the world around you is hard to understand, right? Still, that's not everyone's cup of tea. Some prefer a path based around knowledge—which isn't to say that faith-based paths aren't, just that some of these traditions rely less on gods and religion and more on something else that provides a grounding-point for the practitioner. If shamanism is more free-form and fluid, traditions like the ones we're going to talk about are more regimented and structured.

That's probably why most wage-mages are of the hermetic variety, when you think about it. It's a hell of a lot easier to teach someone with the knack for magic something with some tried-and-true processes rather than something that every practitioner has a different approach to. Doesn't mean that these sorts of traditions can't have an air of spirituality to them, either. Far from it, really. In a world with the different strains of meta-humanity running around, why not believe in a god or two?

Note: All Traditions of Logic resist drain with Willpower + Logic.

SCIENTIFIC TRADITIONS

Traditions that value scientific methods aren't only limited to the hermetic, of course, though that particular tradition is the most well-known. Many of these paths share a deep root in science, as well as a disdain for those paths that operate on superstition and simple belief.

CLASSICAL HERMETICISM

When you think of a mage, or a wizard, the classical hermeticist is usually the sort of spellslinger that comes to mind. Of course, in the modern day, they're hardly all pointy hats, staves, and ratty ink-stained robes like you see in the fantasy trids. Rather, they are mages who rely on formulas and the scientific method to develop their ways of tapping into their power. Study, experimentation, and careful planning are all keys to developing hermetic magic, and if you attend just about any magical college around the world, this is the most likely style of magic you'll be instructed in. This, of course, means you'll run into hermeticists of all stripes, since there's very little morality wrapped up in the instruction they receive. Each and every mage of this tradition uses their own moral compass to guide themselves. That's probably why they're some of the most common spellslingers to wind up in the employ of the big corps. Not that

most have much choice in that matter, when you really get down to brass tacks.

To hermeticists, magic is a tool. Neither good, nor bad, but determined by the intent of the user. It's a reasonable stance, but one that also tends to result in some noteworthy abuses when a mage gets too caught up in the thrill of power to realize what they're doing wrong, or simply doesn't care. This tends to be one of the reasons the public at large tends to be wary of magic types. Can you really blame them?

CHAOS MAGIC

This one gets complicated. Chaos magic is a broad category that breaks from the hermetic tradition in a few notable ways, namely that it tends to be a lot more open-minded when it comes to taking bits and pieces of other traditions outside of the rather rigid structure of hermetic practice. A particular variant of Hermeticism that relies on a "Unified Magical Theory" is often said to have drawn heavily from the practices and beliefs of Chaos magic, or at least have developed along the same lines. So, what do they believe, exactly? Well, in Chaos Magic, magic is often viewed as a method of altering the code of reality—some take this phrase more literally than others. Reality itself is a code, a series of equations, and mages of this tradition put forward that when one casts a spell, it invariably alters that code to make the user's will manifest, the way a hacker might exploit programs for the same reason. The more studied and regimented of Chaos magicians may be indistinguishable from their hermetic cousins at first blush, but some of their unorthodox methods tend to quickly make the difference clear.

Of course, there's a more hands-on variant to Chaos Magic that doesn't tend to get as much attention, often because it tends to be cobbled together by street mages learning whatever they can, wherever they can. This tends to be looked down on by their more traditionally taught brethren. But at the end of the day, the result is largely the same—a broad, scientifically rooted tradition not afraid to adopt whatever methods work to further itself, whether from techniques drawn from other traditions of magic or the application of technology.

BLACK MAGIC

Much maligned and poorly understood by most, Black Magic is a tradition that descends from the hermetic but draws on a measure of hedonistic emotion and excess. "Do what feels good, as you're only beholden to yourself"—that's the general drive of the typical Black Magic practitioner. Of course, this is usually mixed with a hefty dash of nihilism, which can lead to its users viewing the world rather callously. Given that, it's not surprising that they tend to be viewed so negatively. Still, like other her-

metic traditions, Black Magic is more a tool than a force with actual moral leanings. The world is never as simple as good versus evil, and Black Magic falls somewhere into those various shades of grey that things are really made of. Black Magic is motivated by the self, and whatever that ends up meaning is up to the individual user, for good or ill.

SECULAR QABBALAH

While heavily related to its Abrahamic cousin, and drawing on many of the same traditions, the more secular arm of Qabbalah at least deserves a footnote here. Largely divested of its religious leanings, it's far easier to relate it to the hermetic traditions listed before. That said, there isn't a huge difference outside of their less religious approach.

FOLK TRADITIONS

Of course, not every single tradition that might fall on the "practical" side is so heavily rooted in science. Some are built on pragmatic teachings from different cultures and societies throughout the ages, or at least claim to be, and thus fall into their own category. As previously mentioned, the sort of Chaos Magic cobbled together by street mages who had to teach themselves definitely falls into this category, which sets it apart from its science-rooted cousin, but there are many, many more. Let's cover just a few.

PRACTICAL THEURGY

Tied into pagan practices that you might find among certain reconstructions of shamanic cultures, Practical Theurgy draws quite a lot from these roots while incorporating lessons learned from their experiences while being disconnected to a degree from the gods or spirits that guide their less-secular kin. Their rituals and spells often have some tinge of spirituality to them, but they usually lack the patron spirit that a pagan shaman would serve.

ROMANI TRADITION

The Romani have their own practices. We won't go too deep here, since trying too hard to describe their abilities without being immersed in that culture is, well, a fool's game. Let's not do that. The Romani have always had strong beliefs that have guided their people since before the Awakening, and they continue to do so even now. They also tend not to teach this sort of magic to anyone not of their kin. What we do know is that there is a very strong connection to the spirit of their people, and their magic reflects this. The art is taught orally and never recorded in grimoires or any sort of permanent text.

STORYTELLER TRADITION

Said to tap into the power of the collective unconscious, the Storyteller tradition draws on tales that share commonalities between cultures. Images and stories are seeded deep within the cultural understanding we have of the world around us, creatures such as dragons, ghosts, and other supernatural beings existing in stories in many cultures. The Storytellers claim to use this commonality to fuel their magic, and they attempt to trace a "great narrative" through these tales, while also trying to track new leads and elements that surface in more modern stories. When dealing with mentor spirits, they often choose those that represent heroes of legend or protagonists of great stories from decades past.

LOGIC TRADITION QUALITIES

Recommended Positive Qualities: Analytical Mind (Secular Qabbalah), Astral Chameleon (Folk Traditions), Focused Concentration (Scientific Traditions), Mentor Spirit (Folk Traditions), Spirit Affinity (Folk Traditions)

Recommended Negative Qualities: Astral Beacon (Classical Hermeticism), In Debt (Scientific Traditions), Spirit Bane (Any)

NEW QUALITIES FOR AWAKENED CHARACTERS

POSITIVE QUALITIES

ARCANE RESILIENCE TRAINING

(ATTRIBUTE)

Students of magic learn the standard techniques of their tradition to resist the exhaustion that kicks in after using their arcane powers. However, some teachers provide routines that cater to the individual needs of their students and help them to reduce the tiring effects of magic more effectively.

Cost: 7 Karma

Game Effect: Magicians may define Logic, Intuition, or Charisma as their new tradition Attribute, using that attribute in all drain resistance tests.

SCHOLASTIC MAGE

A considerable share of mages—especially in the hermetic traditions—do not undergo training with a personal teacher but attend university classes instead. Granted, an academic education costs a considerable amount of money,

but it certainly pays off in terms of mediated knowledge.

Cost: 1 Karma or 1,000 nuyen per Knowledge skill

Game Effect: During character creation only, mages can buy Knowledge Skills for 2 Karma each. They can also buy Knowledge skills with their starting nuyen (p. 68, SR6) at a cost of 1,000 nuyen per Knowledge skill.

This quality can be combined with the In Debt quality; however, this raises the cost per Knowledge skill to 2,000 nuyen.

SHAMANIC MASK

Some magicians channel their arcane powers through their mentor spirit. In turn, as part of their action, the totem begins to manifest itself through a visible, temporary transformation (animalistic features, elemental effects, etc.). The transformation is mana-based, so only living beings catch the transformation. The more successes in the magic test, the more pronounced the transformation and the more identifiable the totem is to even the mundane.

Cost: 4 Karma

Game Effect: The mage defines one effect (e.g., a translucent wolf's face covering their features, their eyes glowing in arcane fire). This effect accompanies the use of any skill involving magic (or for adepts, every activation of an adept power).

Investing a Minor Action (in addition to the action required in using the corresponding magical skill), the magician gains one Edge. This Edge is only temporary and can only be used for the test (Adepts: for the first test involving the activated Adept power).

There's a downside, too: the Shamanic Mask inevitably exposes the mage as Awakened. This may draw the enemies' fire towards them, putting them in mortal danger.

NEGATIVE QUALITIES

PUSILLANIMOUS SUMMONER

Be it because of an unpleasant experience in the past, or the peculiarities of their arcane upbringing—whenever summoning a spirit, the magician is stricken with awe. Sensing the discomfort, the spirit gains the upper hand and tends to execute the conjurer's demands precisely by the word—no more, but, if it feels like it, considerably less. (Along the way, the spirit will display either a very twisty or snotty behavior, depending on the magician's tradition.) A pusillanimous summoner has to be very precise about their wording, unless they don't mind being given the runaround by the spirit.

This quality can only be taken by characters who qualify for the Conjuring skill.

Bonus: 8 Karma

Game Effect: Spirits summoned by the magician try their best to misinterpret the summoner's orders

(at the gamemaster's discretion). If the magician wants to be sure there are no loopholes in their instructions, they have to sit down *before* the conjuring and perform a Conjuring + Intuition (8, 5 mins) Extended test to think those instructions through.

POSSESSION TRADITION

The conjurer has never learned to summon spirits in a way that allows them to manifest in the physical realm, or, for some reason, consciously abstains from doing so.

This quality can only be taken by characters who qualify for the Conjuring skill.

Bonus: 10 Karma

Game Effect: Spirits summoned in this tradition have their Materialization power replaced with the Possession power (p. 69).

REPRESENTATION I/II

Some arcane teachers offer their students auxiliary techniques, called representations, to support their learning. While many students, becoming more and more confident, overcome those techniques little by little, others decide to maintain them, finding them comforting and helpful. This quality is not available for adepts.

Bonus: 5/8 Karma

Game Effect: The magician defines a clearly visible or audible act—gestures, spoken words, chants, and the like—that must be performed whenever they use arcane powers; alternatively, there's a special garb or outfit (or even the total lack of any textiles) that must be worn. The act or garb can't be casual or misinterpretable (e.g., as colloquial clothing or a fashion statement) but should raise suspicions, even with mundane people, that something mojo-related is going on.

In the quality's simple form (I), the magician can abstain from using their representation, but they have to accept a -4 dice pool penalty on all Astral, Conjuring, Enchanting, and Sorcery rolls when not wearing the representation.

In its more pronounced form (II), if the magician is unable to use their representation (e.g., because they are gagged, hands are tied, or the garb is removed), they are effectively hindered from performing any magic and cannot use the Astral, Conjuring, Enchanting, and Sorcery skills.

Another drawback of this quality is that it points out to the magician's enemies that they are the "dangerous one," and if the enemies follow the old credo "kill the mage first," this puts the magician in mortal danger.

Along with all those downsides comes an upside; once per day, when the magician uses their representation while using arcane powers, they gain one point of situational Edge that can only be spent for that test.



RUNGS OF POWER

POSTED BY: CANIS

- > Who better to bring us up to speed on the nature of initiate-level magic than an actual professor, especially one from our own community? Canis—a.k.a. Professor Vincent Grisome, Th.D., Ph.D.—is an accomplished combat mage who ran the shadows in the 2060s and '70s, and he's held the Burton Chair for Practical Thaumaturgy at Seattle University since 2074.
- > Bull
- > So the “friendly neighborhood warmage” has returned to the shadows. Get tired of looking into the abyss?
- > Elijah
- > When the wolf who would be shepherd ranges close enough so the flock can see it, the sheep are right to be scared.
- > Many-Names

Thank you for that warm intro, Bull. Yes, as His Orkness said, I'm a legitimate professor at Seattle University, and though I only joined the faculty in '74, I've been teaching much longer. Such is the nature of the shadows; those of us with a rep for being able to do a certain thing are often approached by others looking for instruction.

When I started running the shadows, the majority of magicians didn't even know initiation was a thing. It was new and mysterious, and certainly not mentioned in high-school-level magic classes. Now, roughly ten percent of new undergraduate freshmen will already have initiated before coming to college, as opposed to roughly the same proportion of first-year post-graduate students when I started teaching officially in '74. But even post-grads nowadays don't fully appreciate what being an initiate is all about. Somewhere along the way, the message got lost.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PARADIGM

Forgive me for starting with the basics, but at its most basic level, magic is the manipulation of energy—which we call mana—to achieve a certain outcome. We do this by channeling the mana through ourselves, acting as sort of a lens to extract what we need from the ambient mana all around us. So when a magician uses magic, they draw mana from the Gaiasphere through themselves and manipulate it into the desired result. One of the reasons I hate Unified Magic Theory with a passion is that in seeking to mass-produce cookie-cutter magicians, it neglected the very foundation of wielding magic: that lens is your paradigm.

- Oh, here we go—another anti-UMT rant. Grab some Nuke-n-Pop, everyone, and get ready for a show.
- Winterhawk

Each magician has a unique paradigm. It is a complicated combination of our life experiences and education, our tradition, our mentor spirit/totem, our moral code, and so much more. It is literally and metaphorically everything a magician is and knows, and neglecting the place of the paradigm is one of the reasons UMT is floundering in certain circles.

Have you ever met a magician who, after a traumatic event, can no longer manipulate mana? It's a known phenomenon, and modern science (of which UMT is part) constantly looks for external or medical reasons for this when in truth it is so much simpler—and complex: The trauma has altered the magician to the point that they are at odds with their paradigm, and only through careful counseling—patiently deconstructing and rebuilding their sense of self—can they hope to reconnect to it. In some cases, that connection is lost forever, and those magicians must relearn themselves and their magic to shift their paradigm.

- If it were that simple, we'd see a whole lot more recovered burnouts than we currently do, and not all of the people offering to treat them would be shysters.
- Lyrn
- Stripping yourself down to the roots and building a new self is hardly easy.
- Fianchetto

BEING AN INITIATE

As we develop our magical potential, our minds and bodies grow and adapt, which affects our paradigm. But initiation is a far more radical change than this steady, everyday growth. The process of initiation—especially the first time—fundamental-



ly challenges our identity. No magician emerges from initiation quite the same, and our paradigms adjust accordingly.

Initiates aren't just "more powerful," though. Initiation is a deeply personal experience, even when it involved submitting to an ordeal or joining an initiatory group. Two of my students, who have now become teaching assistants within my department, are identical twins. Both of them recently completed their first initiation. I asked them to describe their experiences, and they returned two very different answers. They each had a unique encounter with their avatar, learning different lessons and drawing different conclusions as a result. This demonstrates just how personal an initiation is—it's literally birthing and nurturing our paradigm. At the end of the process, we are never quite the same again.

THE NATURE OF AVATARS

I mentioned avatars a moment ago, and I know from countless questions in class that many magicians (initiated and uninitiated alike) don't know what an avatar is. It's simple—it's a powerful spirit that has taken a liking to your paradigm.

- Some academics believe that avatars are a metaphysical manifestation of an initiate's paradigm and not a true spirit.
- Winterhawk

Every initiate has an avatar, but many don't realize it. I have not been able to formulate a solid theory as to why that is, but my working hypothesis is that UMT is utter bullsh*t that has poisoned and crippled an entire generation of magicians. But my research is ongoing on this matter ...

Back to my point—whether they know it or not, every initiate has an avatar. Magicians with a mentor spirit/totem often have an easier time identifying and communing with their avatar, but I've thus far not failed to help an initiate do so. Each avatar is as unique as the initiate, though they will likely have a similar outlook on magic since traditions are such a huge part of our paradigms, and it will be related to one's mentor/totem, if the initiate has one. Back in '62 when I first initiated, I was told that my avatar was an "aspect of Wolf, used to better communicate with me," and while I've found that to not be the case for every initiate, in my case it is as good a description as any I can think of.

I could speak for hours on avatars and their nature, how they influence metahumanity, and the benefits of communing with them. But that's not what Bull asked me here to speak about, so I'll keep that particular keg of powder dry for now.

METAMAGIC TECHNIQUES

I've broken metamagic techniques down by school of magic, as used by the faculty of thau-

maturgy at SU. Before anyone asks: Yes, my TAs and I are willing to teach any of the techniques we know to denizens of the shadows—for the right price. Everything in the Sixth World has a price, chummers—you just have to decide if you're willing to pay it.

ASTRAL/ METAPLANAR STUDIES

This school is concerned with studying the astral plane and metaplanes, including: metaplanar exploration and mapping; astral impressions, signatures, and auras; and the effects of metahumanity on the ambient manasphere. Almost all academic magical programs include classes from this school.

CLEANSING

This metamagic is favored by geomancers, geomasons, feng shui masters, and forensic magicians. In its purest form, cleansing allows an initiate to cleanse astral impressions of an item or area, like those created by strong emotions (such as those from a concert, a traumatic/happy event, or a rousing religious service).

GAME INFORMATION

To cleanse an object or area of astral impressions make an Astral + Magic + Initiate Grade test against a threshold developed using the Cleansing Table using the frequency and recency of the event that caused the impression.

Cleansing is also the means by which metahumanity is able to cope with astral pollution and taint. When in a mana ebb (p. 167), the magician makes an Astral + Magic + Initiate Grade test against the threshold shown in the Cleansing Table. (Cleansing astral impressions and mana ebbs must be done separately.) Every two net hits the magician gets on this test reduces the impact of the ebb by one level, to a minimum of no impact. The magician must also resist a Drain Value equal to the threshold of the ebb. The cleanse lasts for a number of Combat Rounds equal to the magician's Initiate Grade; during that period, for every use of magic by the character (where Magic is included in a dice pool), one die in the pool becomes a wild die.

DIVINATION

Since the dawn of history, metahumanity has tried to predict the future. In recent decades, many have looked to Matrix models to try to predict the outcome of various endeavors, ranging from the simple algorithms used in Matrix dating services, to the complex models the corps use to predict which products are going to succeed and thus are worth investing in. It might surprise many that

CLEANSING TABLE

MANA EBB	THRESHOLD
Low	4
Medium	6
High	8

CAUSAL EVENT FREQUENCY	BASE THRESHOLD
Daily	10
Weekly	8
Monthly	6
Yearly or less	4

TIME SINCE LAST CAUSAL EVENT	THRESHOLD
1 day	+2
1 week	+0
1 month	-2
1 year	-4
1 decade	-6
Each additional decade	-2

NATURE OF ITEM	DICE POOL MODIFIER
Nature of item has a strong connection to the impression (wedding ring, beloved toy, etc.)	-2
Initiate had a strong connection to item when impression was formed (friend's toy, school building, etc.)	-2
Impression recorded violence or powerful emotions	-3
Impression recorded violent and/or sudden death	-4
A place of more than 50 square meters	-2
More than one significant impression	-1 for each

the value of the nuyen and the total worth of the megacorps is largely based on Matrix models so complex they are beyond the comprehension of all but the most gifted minds metahumanity has to offer.

- > The corporations spend trillions of nuyen on their so-called “expert systems.” And the hosts they run on are a sight to see.
- > Vixen

This is a treatise on magic, so several readers might be wondering what Matrix-based expert systems have to do with magic. I mention it here as an example of the lengths metahumanity will go to in order to predict the future. Plus, the corps use information obtained through magical means as a data source for these models.

The method used by those corps that bother, and by many others around the world, is divination. Divination is the art of using information from the astral plane and the auras of living beings and places to try to predict the future. Divination and psychometry are two sides of the same coin in many ways—one looks back, the other looks forward.

I, personally, am not a great fan of divination. I've always found the visions it provides to be confusing

and difficult to interpret. Much like the so-called prophecies of Nostradamus, finding a relationship of a saying to past events is easy, but making a relatively clear prediction before the event happens is one of the most difficult tasks a magician can ever try to accomplish. But I would be a fool to not avail myself of every opportunity, and so it is something I've dabbled in over the years. At SU, we have a small but dedicated group of diviners of various kinds from several parts of the world; and while I find their methods mystifying, I cannot argue with their success rate (if anyone is curious, it is roughly sixty-two percent). Magic is not an exact science, and divination is even less so. I know my colleagues would agree that foreknowledge of future course of events can change the course of those events in often unpredictable ways.

Divination can be used in many ways, and magicians and scholars mistake many uses for rituals. Augury and Sortilege are the most common of several rituals used by UMT practitioners. They are not the only options, and the one I personally favor is far quicker but often not as detailed. Also, since learning the divination technique, I have found that I possess an almost sixth sense when it comes to danger, which, after extensive testing and discussions with some of my adept colleagues, would appear to be akin to one of the abilities adepts are capable of learning.

GAME INFORMATION

Magicians who learn the metamagic technique of divination have a sixth sense for danger, instinctively knowing when it's nearby and preparing for it. Initiates gain a point of situational Edge before making Surprise tests. They also have access to divination rituals, such as Augury and Sortilege (see sidebar, p. 119). Additional rituals will appear in future tomes.

To use divination outside of a ritual, the magician must study a subject astrally (this can be a place, an object, or a living being) for several minutes while allowing themselves to be open to the energies surrounding the subject. The magician then makes an Astral + Magic + Initiate Grade test against a threshold of (10 – number of minutes spent examining the subject; minimum threshold of 3). If the magician rolls any net hits on this test, they receive a vision of a future event that pertains to the subject. The more net hits the magician gets, the more detailed the vision is. The magician must also resist drain with a Drain Value equal to the number of hits they rolled (not net hits). If this is greater than the magician's Magic rating, the drain is Physical; otherwise, it is Stun damage. Some magicians who use this method have a fetish, often in the shape of a crystal ball, which helps them open themselves to these energies. These fetishes reduce the drain of divination by 2 before the Drain Resistance test.

Should the magician fail to meet the threshold, they do not receive any visions but must still resist drain. On a glitch, the vision is misleading, and on a critical glitch the Drain Value is doubled.

Gamemasters can choose to allow the magician an Astral + Logic test to decipher the visions that result from any use of Divination, with a threshold that fits the subject and the story that surrounds them.

AUGURY AND SORTILEGE RITUAL (MATERIAL LINK)

Threshold: 8

Requires: Divination

To use this ritual, the magician must be able to assense the subject (person, place, or object) or have a viable material link. Within the foundation, the initiate enters a mild trance and interprets the symbolism and metaphors presented to them through the aether. Sortilege is the use of specific reagents (casting bones, reading tea leaves, etc.) or fetishes (tarot cards) as part of the divination ritual. If the magician exceeds the threshold, they may ask one question about an event in the subject's future for every net hit. This ritual takes 8 hours to complete. Failure to meet the threshold results in a useless answer; they might as well have used a Magic 8-Ball.

DIVINATION TABLE

Gamemasters must consider both the subject of the question and the time frame to determine a question's level of specificity and use the higher value to determine the threshold.

DIVINATION QUESTION	THRESHOLD
Vague (Are my enemies catching up to me? Will I make any friends this month?)	3
General (Will I get hurt shadowrunning? Will my enemies catch up to me this week?)	4
Specific (Will Mr. Johnson take a bribe? Will I get hurt on this run or in the next few days?)	5
Very specific (Will Mr. Johnson take an offer from the Yakuza? Will Mr. Johnson be willing to take a bribe today?)	6

DURABLE ASTRAL FORM

A new technique recently discovered while on a vision quest to an undisclosed metaplane, this metamagic allows an initiate to fortify their astral form to better resist damage during astral combat. The technique has become very popular with metaplanar explorers, exorcists, and security magics and adepts.

GAME INFORMATION

Durable astral form enables an initiate to add their Initiate Grade/2 (round down, minimum 1)

to their Willpower for Damage Resistance tests while in astral combat.

EXTENDED MASKING

PREREQUISITE: MASKING

This advanced technique lets you extend your masking to include sustained or quickened spells cast by you on yourself and others, or cast on you by another magician, or alchemical preparations that are in your possession.

GAME INFORMATION

The magician may mask a number of spells or preparations up to their Initiate Grade (this is in addition to bonded foci). Each aura masked in this way must have a Drain Value or Potency less than the magician's Magic rating. As per the masking rules, an Opposed Assensing test is required to view such items. If the observer fails to gain any net hits, the masked items appear to the observer as normal fluctuations in either the local ambient mana or the masking magician's aura. Net hits provide detail on the aura of the spell/preparation as per the Assensing Table (p. 159, SR6).

IMPROVED ASTRAL FORM

A magician draws energy from their body to create the astral form, leaving their physical frame in a sleep-like state in the process. Those who take this technique have learned to draw more energy, putting their frame in a deeper slumber in exchange for more time away from it.

GAME INFORMATION

This technique allows the magician to add their Initiate Grade (in hours) to the duration that they can safely project. If this technique is used, the deep slumber means that it takes one minute for a magician's body to wake up after they return to it, during which time they are considered Unconscious.

PARADIGM SHIFT

As I discussed earlier, a magician's paradigm is both complex and deeply personal. However, in recent years I've come across more and more undergraduates (and some postgrad or doctoral students) who seem to have problems with certain fundamental magical concepts and practices. I personally blame this on the rampant spread of UMT.

This isn't so much a learned technique as a process that can take months to complete. The magician must analyze and unpack their paradigm in order to change one of its foundational elements—their tradition. I've found it best to do this with an experienced magician who can counsel the initiate so as to reduce the risks, but that isn't necessary.

PSYCHOMETRY TABLE

TIME SINCE IMPRESSION*	DICE POOL MODIFIER
1 day	+0
1 week	-2
1 month	-4
1 year	-6
1 decade	-8
Each additional decade	-2

NATURE OF ITEM	DICE POOL MODIFIER
Nature of item has a strong connection to the impression (wedding ring, beloved toy, etc.)	+2
Initiate had a strong connection to item when impression was formed (friend's toy, school building, etc.)	+2
Impression recorded violence or powerful emotions	+3
Impression recorded violent death	+4
Item is a bonded focus	+ (Force)†
Place of more than 50 square meters	-2
More than one significant impression	-1 for each
Astral signature has been erased (p. 159, SR6)	-1
Cleansing metamagic has been used	-net hits on Cleansing test
Each subsequent attempt to read the item	-2

INFORMATION

HITS	INFO GAINED
0	None
1	Flashes of insight, superficial and disjointed impressions
2	Longer and deeper insights, though visions are still disjointed
3	Greater details, multiple sensory feedback, more coherence
4+	Lengthy sequences, multiple senses, coherent visions, significant information

* Items isolated from other auras or from being disturbed (tombs, basements, abandoned towns) can keep their impression for much longer. It is suggested that items within the Gaiasphere—such as underground items—retain such impressions longer. The gamemaster can reduce the time modifier to that of a week, month, or year for these kinds of items.

† Modifier only applies to impressions related to the person to whom the focus is bonded.

GAME INFORMATION

Paradigm shift allows a magician to set aside their old tradition and choose a new one. Once chosen, this new tradition defines their use of magic, and they lose all access to their old tradition. This metamagic can be taken multiple times, shifting traditions each time.

Paradigm shifts are often accompanied by changing or taking a mentor spirit, but that is not required. Roleplaying the shift often is the perfect time to look at a magician's relationship with men-

tors, but that can be done at any time. The one exception to this is Insect Shaman tradition, as they are required to take the appropriate insect spirit as their mentor (who will often teach this metamagic and gift the Initiate Grade needed to learn it as a reward for joining them). In all cases, this shift is permanent. Toxic mages often have shifted their paradigms to a toxic version of their tradition, but this is not a hard-and-fast rule.

PSYCHOMETRY

Psychometry is like experiencing flashbacks, a flood of sensory data and emotions that can be uncontrollable. Everywhere the magician goes and everything they touch has an astral impression of some kind. Do you really need to know the life story behind every shot glass and barstool? Magicians who practice psychometry learn not to focus on the astral impressions around him to avoid distractions while going about their daily lives.

GAME INFORMATION

To read an impression, the magician makes an Astral + Intuition + Initiate Grade test; see the Psychometry Table for modifiers and results. When reading an impression, the magician has a -4 dice pool penalty to all other actions. Unfortunately, the magician has no control over how long the reading takes and cannot stop until the reading is done. Readings generally take 1D6 minutes, but the gamemaster can alter the duration based on the psychometric experience.

SENSING

This technique taps into the initiate's innate connection to the surrounding ambient mana field and allows them to become more sensitive to it, both subconsciously and consciously. The magician has learned to attune themselves to the Gaiasphere and discern details of how the ambient mana within the surrounding area is behaving without having to use astral perception or projection. This is incredibly useful in the wilder regions of the planet and has saved my hoop a few times over the years.

GAME INFORMATION

The magician uses the Observe in Detail Major Action (p. 43, SR6) and makes a Perception + Intuition (4) test. Success means the magician can feel mana flows, ebbs, and voids (p. 140, *Slip Streams*) within (Initiate Grade) kilometers. If the flow or ebb is aspected toward the magician's tradition, they receive +2 dice on this test. Adepts without the Astral Perception power can learn this technique. Sensing cannot be used to sense astral forms, spells, mana barriers, spirits, or foci. Gamemasters may also give the character a chance to

sense some unusual change nearby even if they are not actively using sensing; in this case, the game-master should make the Perception test in secret to not give anything away.

PRACTICAL CONJURATION

This school of magic focuses on spirits and conjuration. I won't bore you with a full list of courses, since that's all publicly available on the Matrix, but suffice to say that this is one of the more theoretical of the main schools of magic.

CHANNELING

Ah, channeling. This metamagic has gotten me out of some serious clusterfrags over the years, to the point I owe my life many times over to the kor-adj who taught me the technique back in '62.

- > Our line protects his line, because a Childe of Wolf never forgets a life debt.
- > Torch

GAME INFORMATION

Channeling can be used by magicians of any tradition, so long as they can use the Conjuring skill, to draw a spirit into themselves. This strengthens the magician's physical form and allows access to the spirit's powers, but at a cost. While channeling, the magician and spirit combine into a single dual-natured entity with the magician retaining control.

To channel a spirit, a magician makes a Conjuring + Magic vs. Force x 2 test to summon the spirit as usual (and resists the drain of the summoning). Then, as part of the same Major Action, they make a Conjuring + Magic + Initiate Grade vs. Force x 2 test. Net hits from this second test add to services the spirit owes the magician, and the spirit's hits (not net hits) becomes the Drain Value the magician must resist when the channeling ends and the spirit leaves the magician's body (regardless of cause). Failing the test means the summoner gets no extra services but must still deal with the designated amount of drain.

While channeling, the magician gains the Dual Natured critter power (p. 223, SR6) as well as any powers the spirit has with a duration of "always." The magician can also use any other powers the spirit has, but at the cost of a service each time a power is used (but they can't use Materialization or Engulf, natch). In addition, any physical attribute of the summoner with a rank lower than the spirit's Force is increased by (Force/2, rounded down, maximum of +4 to any attribute rank applies as normal), and the magician ignores a number of points of wound modifiers equal to the Force of the spirit. Don't let all this fool you, though: You're not invulnerable.

So far this sounds pretty wiz, huh? Well, there

are some downsides. First, the spirit is inside your body with you, just suppressed by your magic, and so it can take damage. Because your body acts as a living vessel, damage from physical sources applies to you and you alone, but damage from mana-based combat spells and astral combat applies to you and the spirit equally. And while you might not feel the sweet caress of the pain that damage causes, if you are knocked unconscious or the spirit is disrupted, the channeling ends and you must immediately resist the drain from the second Conjuring test made to channel the spirit. The spirit returns to its home metaplane under any of the following conditions: after one sunrise and sunset (or vice versa) as per usual for summoned spirits, when the magician goes to sleep, if the magician uses astral projection, if the spirit is driven from your body by Exorcism, or when the magician chooses to release the spirit.

If another magician assesses the channeling magician and gets 3 or more net hits, they can see where the host ends and the spirit begins within their combined aura. This allows the use of banishing on the spirit; add the channeling magician's Initiate Grade to the spirit's dice pool as the magician's body tries to hang on to the spirit within it.

EXORCISM

Exorcism allows an Awakened individual to pull a spirit from its vessel, so if a spirit isn't in a vessel—as is the case with materialized spirits—then this metamagic isn't going to help. Just so I'm clear (and yes, I have had a third-year post-graduate student ask me this), it only affects spirits that use possession or inhabitation to interact with the physical world. It also works on channeled spirits, as I found out to my detriment quite a few years ago when facing off against a group of Templars.

GAME INFORMATION

Using exorcism requires physical contact with the vessel and is a Major Action that can only occur on the magician's initiative. The exorcist makes a Willpower + Charisma + Initiate Grade vs. (spirit's Force x 2) Opposed test to force the spirit out of its vessel. A magician with the Conjuring skill may add their Willpower to any subsequent attempt to banish the spirit. The exorcist suffers a Drain Value equal to twice the number of hits (not net hits) that the spirit achieves in each attempt. Magicians resist this Drain as per their tradition; adepts resist with Body + Willpower.

Successfully forcing the spirit from its vessel requires an accumulated total of net hits equal to the spirit's Force, which leaves the spirit in astral space. Net hits from each exorcizing attempt last until the next sunrise or sunset, whichever is later, so the exorcist does not have to force the spirit from its vessel in a single attempt.

GREAT FORM CHANNELING

PREREQUISITE: INVOKING, CHANNELING

I can hear you all asking “but Canis, what happens if you channel a great form spirit?” What happens is you have to be fragging careful, and you’ll likely end up with a headache the size of the ACHE.

GAME INFORMATION

Channeling a great form spirit is the same as channeling any other spirit, with two key differences. First, the spirit must be invoked like always, which happens between the summoning and channeling. That means you have to resist drain twice before the channeling occurs. Second—and this is the biggest reason why some try to use this technique—you gain Immunity to Normal Weapons.

Immunity to Normal Weapons: The magician gains Immunity to Normal Weapons as if their Essence is equal to the spirit’s Force/3 (round down, minimum 1), regardless of the summoner’s actual Essence.

INVOCATION

This metamagic allows an initiate to summon great form spirits. These spirits are almost always meaner, more willful, and have more powerful materialized forms. It takes a practiced hand and strong will to even consider dealing with these potent entities. Many initiates have learned this technique on their own, but I would offer a word of caution: should invoking the spirit go wrong, the newly invoked great form will always become uncontrolled—and they are almost always very angry. To that end, I would recommend invoking a spirit inside a lodge, and have another spirit or magician ready should you get knocked unconscious.

GAME INFORMATION

Summoning a great form spirit is very similar to summoning a spirit normally, except as part of the same Major Action, the magician must invoke the spirit by making a Conjuring + Magic + Initiate Grade vs. (Force x 2) Opposed test; note that one of the dice added to the pool by the magician’s Initiate Grade is always a wild die. If the magician gets any net hits, those are added to the net hits from the summoning test to determine how many services the great form owes. If the magician does not get any net hits, the great form spirit goes berserk and attacks anything and everything within (Force x 10) meters for a number of combat rounds equal to the spirit’s net hits. Either way, the magician must resist drain equal to the number of hits (not net hits) the spirit rolled. This is Stun damage unless it is higher than the character’s Magic

rating, in which case it is Physical. If the drain is enough to knock the summoner unconscious (or dead), the spirit goes berserk for additional 1D6 combat rounds.

MASTER SUMMONER

The shift in spirits of late means that they don’t stay controlled well and are more ... feisty. This first became apparent within the confines of the Boston Lockdown, and more evidence has made itself known across the world in years since. I blame the influence of UMT on the majority of the world’s Awakened.

To counter this, a new metamagic is needed to make binding spirits possible. Some chummers at MIT&T, my old alma mater, came up with this particular technique as a way for initiates to better cope with the rigors of dealing with spirits.

GAME INFORMATION

An initiate with this metamagic can control more spirits through binding than the average conjurer. A master summoner can control a total Force equal to (Magic + Initiate Grade) x 4.

APOTROPAIC MAGIC

This is the more defensive side of the school of sorcery, and most definitely where my own aptitude lies. Frag, the first time I was ever asked to teach something, a young SINless mage asked me to teach them Shielding back in ’62.

Don’t let anyone fool you: Defensive sorcery isn’t just a passive means to protect your chummers from hostile magic users, though I’m the first to admit that’s a large part of it. But my learned colleagues and I are constantly working on ways of expanding upon the techniques below to make metahumanity safer from magic in general and sorcery in particular.

ABSORPTION

Prerequisite: Shielding

If reflection can be likened to parrying a spell, absorption is blocking it.

GAME INFORMATION

When a spell is targeted at someone that the initiate is protecting with Boosted Defense, the initiate can take an anytime Minor Action to try to absorb the mana within the spell itself. Roll Sorcery + Magic + Initiate Grade. Each hit on this test counters one hit on the original Spellcasting test, taking a little mana from the spell and creating a “mana charge” within the initiate’s aura. If the initiate reduces the caster’s hits to zero net hits, the spell fails; reducing the caster’s results to zero

hits also means that the initiate has completely absorbed the spell.

Mana charges are quite volatile, so they must be used quickly or else they damage the physical form of the initiate's aura: their body. Charges last for Initiate Grade combat rounds, after which they go critical. When this happens, each charge causes drain with a Drain Value equal to the number of charges stored within the initiate's aura. This drain is Stun damage unless the damage taken after the Drain Resistance test is more than the initiate's Magic rating; in that case it becomes Physical damage. A word of warning: This technique can be used while astral projecting, but due to the lack of a physical body to reinforce the astral form's integrity, the Drain Value is twice the number of mana charges.

Mana charges are useful though, as they provide a little extra boost to the initiate when using their own magic. Each charge reduces the Drain Value of the next action the initiate makes, be it spellcasting, conjuring, or any other use of magic that causes drain. All charges are used on the next Drain Value, with each charge reducing said drain by 1 (to a minimum of 2) before making the Drain Resistance test. Absorption and Reflection cannot be used on the same spell.

REFLECTION

PREREQUISITE: SHIELDING

This technique is one of my favorites; it's an active spell defense that, as the name suggests, allows you to reflect a spell back at its original caster.

GAME INFORMATION

When anyone or anything an initiate is protecting with Boosted Defense is targeted by a spell, the initiate can make a Sorcery + Magic + Initiate Grade Opposed test as an anytime Minor Action versus the caster's original Sorcery + Magic test to cast the spell. Any net hits the initiate gets count as Spellcasting hits for the spell as it is reflects back at its caster; the original target does not have to resist the spell. The initiate must resist drain with a Drain Value equal to the spell being cast (including modifiers from adjustments) + 1.

If the spell is an area spell, only those protected by the initiate's Boosted Defense do not have to resist the spell on a successful use of Reflection; all other targets of the initial spell must resist as normal. The one exception to this is an area Indirect Combat spell, as the whole spell is reflected on a successful use of Reflection.

Reflected spells can be reflected again, with the Drain Value increasing by +1 each time. This can lead to "sorcery tennis," at least until one of the magicians runs out of Minor Actions or is knocked unconscious from drain.

SEVERING

PREREQUISITE: SHIELDING

One of the scariest aspects of magic is ritual magic, especially ritual sorcery. I'm sure everyone has an anecdote about how a chummer got geeked in their sleep or safely inside a locked panic room or bunker. I personally know several people who've had it happen to them or seen it happen before their eyes. And I might have done it a few times myself.

There are measures that can be taken to mitigate the risk of ritual magic, such as wards and mana barriers, and being ultra-careful with ritual links. But none of them are guaranteed to protect you if someone sends a spell at you across the astral plane.

I'm not going to claim Severing is a guarantee, but it's a good start.

GAME INFORMATION

This technique allows an initiate a chance to detect what is called a "sending." This is where the mystic link needed to target a spell is formed, and it happens during Step 5: Perform the Ritual (p. 143, SR6). And once you've detected the sending, you can take steps to defend yourself properly.

Severing allows an initiate to detect a sending directed at them, or someone else within (Initiate Grade) meters, regardless of whether a spotter or a material link of some kind is used. To do this, roll Astral + Intuition + Initiate Grade against a threshold of (4 + the number of hours the ritual usually takes – the number of hours spent on the ritual at the time of the attempt). If the initiate is asleep during the sending, apply a –6 dice pool penalty on the Severing test. This test happens automatically, once during each hour of the ritual, and the gamemaster can roll in secret if they wish.

Once a magician has detected a sending, they have several choices. The sending can be assensed (needing 2 net hits to determine the spell type and the astral signature of the leader of the ritual), the magician can use Boosted Defense or other defensive sorcery to help resist the incoming spell, or astral tracking (p. 161, SR6) can be used to trace the sending to the ritual's foundation. If the magician chooses to use a spirit, the spirit does not need to detect the sending. If the initiate asks another magician to track the sending, they must get 3 net hits on their Assensing test of the target of the sending to see it.

SCHOOL OF ENCHANTING

We're all familiar with the foci and alchemical items and preparations that result from this school of magic.

SEVERING EXAMPLE

Rikki Ratboy has fragged off a former Mr. Johnson by not dying. Mr. Johnson decides to sic a ritual team on Rikki using a material sample left behind at the scene of the ambush. Once the ritual team uses the material link to Rikki (a blood sample) in Step 4: Spend Reagents, a tiny tendril reaches out across the astral plane linking Rikki to the foundation of the ritual.

Rikki's Astral + Intuition + Initiate Grade is 14 dice. However, those sneaky Azzies have caught Rikki asleep, so a -6 penalty applies, making a total pool of 8 dice. The gamemaster rolls against a threshold of 4 + 4 (base time of the Prodigal Spell ritual) - 0 as it is the first hour of the ritual and gets 5 hits. No joy.

An hour later, Rikki's gamemaster tries again. This time the threshold is 7 (1 hour has passed), and Rikki gets 3 hits. Time is running out for Rikki, so the gamemaster allows a third try. This time the threshold is 6, and the roll comes up with 6 hits.

Rikki wakes with a start and knows a ritual is targeting him. He knows the Shielding metamagic, so he sets up Boosted Defense to help him resist whatever is coming. He then assenses the sending and gets 4 hits, which lets him know that it is a powerful Illusion spell is heading his way. Rikki manages to resist the urge to flee and calls a chummer who owes him a solid.

Before Rikki finishes the commcall, an astrally projecting mage appears in his bedroom; it's his chummer, Torch. Rikki gives her the lowdown, so Torch assenses Rikki (Rikki has dropped his masking since Torch is a true pal) and gets 3 hits to detect the sending. With a wicked grin that displays the enlarged canines of her astral mouth, Torch calls up several spirits that owe her services and zooms off to track the sending.

Rikki now has nothing to do but maintain Boosted Defense and wait. He grabs a soykaf and tries to not shudder at what Torch will do to the ritual team when she finds them.

RESILIENT ARTIFICING

Weaving mana into a telesma can be dangerous; one wrong move and it can blow up in your face and rip away at your aura to the point of permanently damaging your holistic integrity.

- > And you know all about permanently damaging your holistic integrity, don't you, Canis?
- > Lyrán

The first time isn't usually super critical to an artificer, but it can easily snowball and lead to major problems ... especially for the overworked artificers in corporate sweatshops.

GAME INFORMATION

With this metamagic, an initiate learns to better protect themselves from this kind of mana backlash. It's not perfect, but it helps. On a critical

glitch during Step 5: Craft the Focus, the Essence lost is reduced by Initiate Grade x 0.1 (to a minimum of 0).

APPLIED THAUMATURGY

Some educational institutions distribute ritual magic among several different schools, but here at SU, we found that the best solution for us was a more homogenous approach—the School of Applied Thaumaturgy. So be warned, when you do your legwork on a magician and you see they have a Th.D. in Applied Thaumaturgy, you should be worried.

- > I'll say! Ritual sorcery is some scary shit to be on the wrong side of.
- > DangerSensei

ADVANCED RITES

This technique was discovered and codified right here at Seattle University, by one of my TAs no less. Needless to say, I'm very proud of her accomplishments.

- > Why thank you, honey; that means a lot, coming from you.
- > Covenant

She found a way to synchronize the magic of ritual teams by sidestepping some of the inconsistencies created by the individual paradigms of the members of the team.

GAME INFORMATION

If the ritual team leader knows this metamagic, no member of the team suffers penalties for being of a different tradition, but if the initiate is not the team leader, then they are the only one to benefit from this technique.

EFFICIENT RITUAL

Ritual magic takes time, but sometimes you need that Circle of Healing or Prodigal Spell effect right this fragging second!

GAME INFORMATION

If the ritual team leader knows this metamagic, reduce the time it takes to perform a ritual by half (rounded down).

SYMPATHETIC LINKING

Every runner should know about material links. Period. For those who slept through Magic for Mundanes 101, I'll elaborate.

Material links are tissue samples that can be used to target you with ritual magic. Usually these are blood samples, but it can be any bodily fluid except sweat. (And I do mean *any* fluid, so always

put your gloves on before hooking up with that novahot whoever in the bar).

- > Oh, the irony here ...
- > Vixen
- > Hush you! It was your fragging fault after all, babe.
- > Canis

Material links can also be parts of structures or other objects. And they work both ways, too, so slipping a chunk of plascrete into a mark's pocket before they bolt will work as a material link so long as you perform your ritual inside the building the chunk came from.

Now that we've learned to mind where we leave our bodily fluids and what detritus we pick up on our travels, I'm going to scare the drek out of you again with two words: sympathetic links. This can range from something of sentimental value to you, such as a treasured possession, to something you've only used or handled for a few minutes.

GAME INFORMATION

An initiate who knows the Sympathetic Linking metamagic can use sympathetic links to target rituals with the Material Link keyword; increase the ritual threshold by 2 if using a sympathetic link.

SYMPATHETIC LINKING

MATERIAL

A material link is an integral part of the target. For an inanimate object, the material link must be something that is an essential part of its structure. A brick from a wall would be a material link to that building, but a decoration in the building would not. If the target is a living being, the material link must be a tissue sample. However, tissue samples decompose eventually and cease being viable as a material link. Blood and other bodily fluids are viable for a few hours, and a tissue sample that's a finger or larger can last a few days before losing its usefulness. A simple Biotech + Logic test can give a more concrete estimate of how much time the sample has left. Chemical preservations destroy the sample's viability as a material link.

SYMPATHETIC

A sympathetic link can only be created for sentient beings, as inanimate objects lack sympathy. The subject for the link may be something the target uses frequently or that holds sentimental or personal value. If an item has been used by the target for more than five minutes (a pen, a wrapper for a McHugh's burger, etc.), then it can also be considered a sympathetic link. Sentimental objects can last as a sympathetic link for weeks; frequently worn items are viable for days, and objects used continuously for more than five minutes are viable as a link for twice the amount of time the target held them during their most recent usage (of five minutes or longer). Bonded foci are considered sympathetic links.





CONCLAVES AND COVENS

Since the Awakening, people who can use magic have banded together to learn and to protect themselves from the non-magical people around them. From mystic dojos full of physical adepts to local university magic study groups to Awakened eco-activists, there is bound to be a group that suits your needs.

While the main focus of magic groups (also known as initiation groups, magic societies, lodges, conclaves, cliques, or a million different words that mean “group”) is ostensibly on developing and supporting the magic knowledge of their members, a lot of groups get side-tracked by other goals. As organized groups, many get involved in politics at some level, and others serve as a central focus for a wider non-magical group.

This file exists to help the newly Awakened understand what groups are out there, what benefits they bring, and how to join one. Shadowrunners may find it a useful primer on these eccentric groups.

As for me? I’ve been around the traps and used many names over the years, and I have been on a

long personal journey. I prefer now to be known as Many-Names. You know me, and now you may know me differently.

- Don’t most people know you? You’re even more of an old-timer than me.
- Slamm-O!
- You’ve finally realized you’re an old timer now?
- Bull
- I hear myself telling Jack some of the same things you tell me, so yeah, it makes me feel old.
- Slamm-O!

CREATING A GROUP

Making a new magical group is not difficult in and of itself. A group of magically active people get together, and spend a few hours building a magical link between them. For some groups, this

MAKING, JOINING, AND LEAVING GROUPS

To make a new group, at least four people need to spend five Karma each over the course of a gathering or ceremony that takes at least an hour per member. This ceremony takes the form of something that binds the group together, and the ceremony creates a bond between the members of the group. Most groups make it an all-nighter.

Strictures (see below) are added when the group is created, and they reflect the group ethos. There is a minimum of one stricture for any group, but the group can add as many as they feel reflect their core goals. A practical limit is six; beyond that, it becomes difficult for any person to adhere to the strictures.

Each new member needs to spend six Karma to join an existing group, and their membership must be approved by at least half of the local members of a group, or at least six members, whichever number is smaller.

When joining a group, you gain that group as a contact, starting with Loyalty 3.

A group can have a wider organization, as well as local groups. Becoming a member of a local group means that the member is also a member of any wider organization that exists, with no additional Karma cost. The only difference between a local group and a wider organization is that it is technically possible to leave (or be ejected from) the wider organization without leaving the local group, although this can lead to the entire local group being ejected from the organization.

A member can leave a group voluntarily at any time by spending one Karma and meditating for an hour. A member can be expelled from an organization if more than half of the organization agrees that they must leave. Note that some magical groups may have a governing structure in which a council, committee, or inquisitor can claim the ability to eject members. In this case, the council has this ability as long as more than half of the organization agrees that they do. Members can disagree in specific cases. If a well-beloved member of a society is kicked out of a group, but most people believe the ejection is unfair, that member doesn't actually leave the magical bond of the group, even if they are now a political pariah.

A local group can also leave their larger organization, or may be ejected, in the same way that an individual can leave. This will have little effect on an individual member, other than not being able to call on the wider group for assistance.

There is no limit on the number of members. All members of the society are considered part of the same group for initiation and ritual purposes.

Most groups require that members attend gatherings, events, ceremonies, and rituals on a regular basis. Some groups encourage commuting by astral projection for initiated members.

involves a circle where they pontificate on obscure parts of magical theory, for others it's a day of intense sparring at a dojo. Corporate groups are assigned "team-building" days, and a few of the more relaxed traditions chill out with pizza and spirits for a day or two (why stop, just when you're having fun?).

At the end of this time, the group is linked together. Members of the group find it easier to work with each other and bounce magical ideas off other members of the group. Members claim they can feel a difference when the bond happens, that it becomes easier to collaborate. Like a "I was just thinking about you when you called" effect. Members who carefully observe their astral auras can tell the difference when they join a group as well, as their aura takes on a different tinge.

Deeper than the magical syncing-up that happens, most members of the group find that their differences become just a little bit blunted, and their desire to work together kick up half a notch. There are still (many) disagreements, arguments, fights, and politics in these groups, but for the most part, this mystic bond pours just a little oil onto the troubled waters. This may be why most groups that fall apart tend to do so due to external pressures rather than infighting. It might also generate some sort of astral energy. This may be why spirit guides are often willing to work with magical groups.

It is technically possible to be a member of more than one group. In fact, some groups require that a prospect already be a member of another group, but in most cases, each group takes too much time to make membership in more than one or two viable.

When disagreements get too big to contain, people can be ejected from the group, or whole local groups can be denounced and ejected from a wider magical group. This can lead to employment opportunities for shadowrunners in hunting down rogue former members of a group or eliminating a former coven that has decided to go its own way.

- I've seen plenty of hermetic organizations where one person becomes a rogue but is still a member of an organization. Quite a few adepts go against the dojo as well. I've seen groups split based on how they think a person has been treated. The more relaxed groups don't seem to get so much politics, but that might be because we don't attract the power-hungry crazies so much.
- Stalker-of-Behemoth
- NOT ONE YEAR AGO YOU WERE COMPLAINING ABOUT SOMEONE GETTING KICKED OUT OF YOUR GROUP FOR STIRRING SHIT! YOU SHAMAN TYPES ARE JUST AS POLITICAL AS THE REST OF US! AAARGH!
- Neon Fireball

MENTOR SPIRITS

Just as mentor spirits occasionally guide awakened individuals on their magical journeys, some agree to guide groups of people. Most of the time, this is more of a consultation role. The spirits will talk about where the organization should go, and what it ought to do. Naturally, over time, some members also develop a direct relationship with mentor spirits.

Groups that attract mentor spirits usually do so by interacting with the spirit and persuading it to join. There is no binding ritual, just a mutual agreement, although that agreement can certainly have penalty clauses built into it.

Spirits can depart if the group gravely offends the spirit or violates the the agreement. Groups gain and lose mentors as the membership and goals of the group change, but mostly the mentor is a stable and reliable member. Even mentors who leave the group often keep in contact with individual members long after they officially depart.

MENTOR SPIRITS AND MAGICAL GROUPS

While a member of a magical group is with a mentor, a player may buy the Mentor Spirit quality at a cost of 2 fewer Karma than normal.

Members who have the same mentor spirit as the group gain a point of situational Edge during social interactions with other members.

Players who do not buy the mentor spirit quality can still talk to the spirit and receive general advice, in the same way that they might talk to any other member.

INITIATION

The magical link that binds members of the group together also helps each gain deeper insights into the manosphere, I guess it's like climbing a cliff while roped together with friends. If one missteps, others are there to keep them from falling too far off track. This works well—until you get that one member who falls so hard and fast that they take everyone else down with them. It's definitely a downside to welding your soul to others. Of course, even if you fall off the cliff into the gulf of toxic magic, it doesn't break the bonds of the magic group. If people don't notice that you've gone over the edge, you might be able to corrupt the whole group on your way down ...

INITIATION COSTS

Being a member of a magical group reduces the cost of initiation by the Loyalty rating of the group. This represents members of the group giving up their spare time to help a magician work through their Awakening.

Being a member of a group also halves time it takes to initiate.

CALLING ON YOUR GROUP FOR HELP

Once you are a member, calling on your group for help is as easy as picking up the phone or sending a message. Groups are generally pretty well disposed to help each other out, where possible. Loyalty is, however, a two-way street: improved when people work on their relationship with the group and lowered when the group feels it has been ignored.

- So, these people will have my back if I sign up for their weekly poetry readings, or whatever? Sounds pretty sweet!
- River Fish
- Yes ... but you do actually need to turn up, support *them*, and help out. It's like having friends; you can't just ask them for stuff all the time—you need to sometimes give back.
- Phantom Mix
- nvm then.
- River Fish

The exact benefits that a group brings will depend on what they believe in and the makeup of the group. Most groups are sources of magical training, reagents, foci, arcane knowledge, ritual support, and research support. Some groups have benefits such as the ability to smuggle items across borders, a good reputation with spirits, supplies of mundane weapons, or even venture capital. In the same vein, most members appreciate having access to shadowrunners.

BENEFITS OF A GROUP

A group will have a selection of benefits that it can provide. In most cases, these provide an additional point of Edge while attempting a certain task or when trying to procure an item. In some cases, the group may provide a discount on goods (usually about ten percent), or the ability to fence something obscure or arcane.

In any case, a runner can only call on a group a certain amount before its good graces run out, the amount is equal to the loyalty of that group.

GAINING AND LOSING LOYALTY WITH YOUR GROUP

As with most other contacts, gaining and losing Loyalty is decided by the gamemaster. Magical groups come with additional considerations. The strength of a magical bond is partly determined by the closeness of the group and how well they work together. Loyalty also stands in for a member's rank and standing in a group.

Like any relationship, the loyalty of a group can survive the occasional rough patch. If there is a serious or egregious breach of the group's principles, such as an attack on another member, sabotaging a long-term goal, or attacking a group's ally, the group will usually eject the member, and vengeance-minded members may choose to exact a measure of payment for the betrayal.

Members can lose Loyalty for less-grievous acts. The Loyalty of an organization will normally only move by a maximum of 1 in a game month. Note that many smaller acts can boost or degrade Loyalty, just as well as one large act. Making a large donation might temporarily cancel the fact that you don't turn up for meetings and never tidy up, but you aren't going to progress far in the organization if you do things that way.

To maintain Loyalty, a member must put in at least minimal effort. This means a member should:

- Attend all required ceremonies and meetings;
- Help members when they call on the member for a task of two hours or less; or
- Volunteer for one or two tasks per month, which might include organizing meetings, representing the group to other people, doing the books, or cleaning the meeting hall.

These tasks can be completed during downtime. Conversely, Loyalty is lost if a member starts to:

- Miss more than one meeting a month;
- Refuse to help out when called on; or

- Spend more time arguing than pursuing the goals of the group (this is group dependent).

Increasing Loyalty generally involves going above and beyond for the group. Shadowrunners are uniquely positioned to rise quickly through the ranks when they perform significant tasks that benefit the group or invest heavily in the group's goals. For example:

- Paying a significant amount toward the group's funds (about what a runner would expect to be paid for an average run);
- Dedicating a significant amount of time to the group, for runners who don't have day jobs or other significant commitments;
- Attaining a strategic goal for the group (while the exact goal may be more or less appropriate to the group, even the "magical bookshop owners society" can appreciate suddenly owning three hundred Ares Alphas); or
- Helping another member with their research, perhaps supplying reagents or knowledge.

In addition to the minimum requirements listed above, a shadowrunner will lose Loyalty if they break the group's strictures. Breaking one or two strictures actually echoes through the astral bond of the group. Even if there are no witnesses to the breach, the group will find itself turning away from the violator. Each stricture broken in a month will generally cost a point of Loyalty, and if there are credible witnesses or evidence, there will usually be one or more additional points of Loyalty lost.

This means that recent initiates need to be on excellent behavior, and long-term members are generally given a few chances to redeem themselves.

STRICTURES

When a group forms, they will have a core set of beliefs that drew them together in the first place. To stop groups from drifting too far from their original purpose, most groups adopt a few formal strictures, which are habits and actions the group believes an ideal member of their group should follow. When you hear that the Order of St. Sylvester has sworn an oath of poverty, or that the Ordo Maximus will never help the weak, these are examples of strictures. These are important for dealing with a group, because it will tell you what the group won't help you with, and it's very important when joining a group—at least, if you want to stay a member.

MAGICAL GROUPS

There are many magical groups in the world. Some last only a few months, others have lasted

GROUP LISTING

These groups can be used as-is for Awakened runners, or as protagonists or antagonists in your game. They also make great templates to base new groups on.

since the early days of the return of magic to the world. I have included a selection of groups that you might run into, but be aware that there are many more out there.

AES SIDHE

SIZE AND LOCATION

Dozens of members, spread around the world in twos and threes

GOALS

- Provide magical support and training for people of the Seelie Court who are on Earth

STRICTURES

WHAT IS A STRICTURE?

Most groups will have two or three lines in the sand that a member must not cross if they are to be a productive member of the group. In theory, almost anything could be a stricture, but in practice a broken stricture is a fundamental betrayal of the group and should be defined as such when the group is formed. Some example strictures are:

Vow of poverty: No member can live at medium lifestyle or above.

Charity: A member will always listen to someone in need and will help if they are able.

Focus: A member will never complete another task that is not part of their central mission.

Novelty: A member will never pass up an opportunity to try something new.

Profit: A member will never take an action that they know will lead to lower profits for the group.

BREAKING A STRICTURE

A stricture is broken if the intent of the stricture is broken, no matter the specific wording of the agreement. (Swearing a vow of poverty doesn't count if you've set up a trust to "own" your luxury mansion) It is important to write a few words around what is and isn't acceptable to avoid confusion later. Each time you break a stricture, your group's Loyalty to you will decrease whether or not anyone finds out about the transgression right away (see the Gaining and Losing Loyalty sidebar).

A person who breaks strictures on a regular basis should probably consider whether they really are a good fit for the group, or whether they would be happier in another group more aligned to their personal ideals.

MODIFYING OR ADDING STRICTURES

A stricture can be modified or added if three-fourths of members agree to do so. This is much easier to do in smaller local groups than in large multinational organizations.

STRICTURES

Succor: Never turn away another member from your door.

Secrecy: Never talk about your organization with outsiders.

SPECIALTIES

- Seelie Court magic and lore
- Astral space

DESCRIPTION

Not many people outside the shadows seem to know what's happening with the thing in Yellowstone Park. There are people who have come out of there who never went in, and it looks like some of those have banded together for magical support.



This is a pretty cagey group, so much so that it is unclear whether there is a leader, or whether it is more of a loose network of Awakened people from somewhere called the Seelie Court. It's not clear what the relation is to the elves of the Tírs, despite the Gaelic origin of the names.

This is a fairly new group, and its members vary in magical power from those who are very learned to those who know a few cantrips. In fact, it seems to be as much a social group as a magical initiates group. With that in mind, members have been spotted investigating sites around the world. Most of the members I know about are people who have been spotted on the site of Dunklezahn's rift, around the Shattergraves, and at least one of the volcanoes that erupted as a part of the Great Ghost Dance. Not many people at all want to take a tour of the most massive magical disasters of the last hundred years, but it seems members of this group are fascinated by these sinkholes of chaos.

To me, it looks like this group has banded together for mutual support but has found a shared interest in investigating significant events in the manasphere. In any case, they don't stay to conduct detailed experiments, preferring to check out the space and depart before they are noticed. They don't seem to have run afoul of any major players just yet.

- As it happens, I think one of these folks popped onto my radar when looking to get visiting permission to Zurich Orbital. They didn't volunteer why they wanted to get there, and I didn't press them, but if they are looking for magic stuff around the world, going up into the mana void would probably be interesting to them, too.
- Bull
- It's a good way to die—the void ain't exactly friendly.
- Painted Horse
- Yeah, I pointed them at some old paydata from when Ares did all those orbital experiments. They paid a bonus, but I haven't heard from them after that.
- Bull

BEAR DOCTOR SOCIETY

SIZE AND LOCATION

Dozens of Salish (Bear totem) shamans

GOALS

- Healing the sick
- Healing the land

STRICTURES

A friend in need: Never allow someone to suffer if you can help them.

Preserve the old ways: Educate people on the ways of the Salish, the path of Bear, and the goals of being a doctor.

SPECIALTIES

- Magical healing
- Native American Nations lore and traditions
- Woodland survival and foraging

DESCRIPTION

The Bear Doctor Society was formed not long after the Awakening and has weathered the magical surges and growth during the return of magic. To start with, the society was a small, local magic initiation group whose members supported each other through the very beginnings of the Awakening, reminding each other of the stories their grandparents told, and applying those stories. They spoke of their own magical journeys to heal the sick and the value of looking after each other. In many ways, the goal of the society haven't changed in all that time.

The group has grown slowly over the past forty years. It seems not many people are altruistic, or perhaps Awakened people are snapped up by corporations much more quickly, but even so, there are dozens of members spread through the Native American Nations and Seattle.

The Bear Doctors are apolitical, not given to meddling in the affairs of outsiders. In fact, the Bear Doctors feel that it is easy to fix the body, but fixing the soul is harder—almost impossible in a sick society. Unlike other magical and non-magical groups, the Bear Doctors are not crusaders for change, preferring to work behind the scenes, and act as role models instead of critics. This has drawn occasional criticism that the society is pandering to those in power, or that they are tacitly agreeing with the way things are.

As one of the few stable magical groups that have lasted for decades, the Bear Doctors have amassed significant expertise and knowledge about magical healing, astral essence, the effects of living in mega-sprawls, and the use of Awakened plants and animals. Non-members can't approach the society as a whole, but individual members are very useful for putting your insides back on the inside. Most members still charge for the service, but even people who cannot afford treatment will be seen. This isn't to say that every member will patch you up for free—they aren't fools—and people who take advantage of a Bear Doctors' generosity will be patched up enough so that they will live and given cab fare to the nearest hospital.

One other thing to note is that almost every member follows Bear as their totem.

On the whole, it's a good group of people to know.

- So, these old sawbones will patch you up? For free, if you can't afford it?
- River Fish
- If you're a friend, sure. Just be aware that between their medical outreach, magical research, and regular lives, they may not be able to drop everything and haul your hoop out of a fire. If you can limp to their door, you'll normally be back on your feet not long after.
- Bull

THE DRUIDIC CIRCLE

SIZE AND LOCATION

A couple of hundred members, mostly in the former British Isles, but with a significant group in Brittany

GOALS

- To promote druidism, regenerate the planet, and resist urbanization.

STRICTURES

Devotion: Members must be druids.

Environmentalism: Members must not make the planet a worse place to live and must repair damage where they can.

Solidarity: Members must not publicly disagree with other members (internal disagreement is fine).

SPECIALTIES

- Lore about the spirit world, especially in Europe
- Healing and divination spells, foci and fetishes
- Herbalism

DESCRIPTION

Modern druidism in the Sixth World is very different from the solemn, robed druids of the old Celts. For one, their magic works, and two, they really believe in thinking globally and acting locally. Note that the Druidic Circle is quite different from the Oxford Grand Lodge, another druid magical group. The Oxford Grand Lodge is more of an old boys' network for smoking-room influencers. The Druidic Circle has political activists, politicians, and urban renewalists.

The Druidic Circle follows the Druidic faith and is focused strongly on living in partnership with the world rather than living by sucking the marrow out of the world. Ideally, they would return to a pre-technology symbiosis with the land, but in the meantime, maybe we should stop choking the skies and puncturing the land to have another polystyrene soykaf cup.

Well-organized from a central Druidic Circle council, and well-connected to communities that aren't encased in corporate enclaves, the Druids hear about ecological disasters pretty quickly and are often on the scene of illegal dumping or toxic chemical overflows pretty quickly. Once there, they often try to clean it up and find out who did the dumping so they can enact revenge. In Europe, the Druids often help guide and support Terra-First! which makes both organizations much more effective. They are not enough to stem the tide (there are just too many people who are willing to wreck the environment for a cheap buck), but they are increasing the cost of dumping and slowly decreasing the number of people willing to do it. Whether this is having an effect on the bottom line of the corporations or just hurting the minimum-wage truck drivers hauling the toxic stuff around is a point of fierce disagreement within the organization.

Aside from their strong eco-activism, the Druidic Circle serves as a think tank for the Druidic faith. Without a grand high druid active, the Druidic Circle is one of the few well-connected and influential groups thinking and talking about the faith.

- These are the old men in white robes, right?
- River Fish
- That's definitely their reputation, but the ones I've met have mostly been in old woolen jumpers at the back of the pub, talking about magic and summoning spirits. And they can be any gender. I've never seen one in a robe, but hey, given what I wear, it's not like I'm judging. Maybe they do it when they're alone?
- Neon Fireball

GLITTER PARTY PEOPLE

SIZE AND LOCATION

About twenty Awakened, mostly in New York

GOALS

- Paaaaaaaarty!
- Also, investigate the effects of mood manipulation magic.

STRICTURES

Open arms: Help people out where you can.

Glam it up!: Never hide what you are, always have some sparkly makeup, an awesome hat or some other eye catching sartorial detail

Consent: Don't use magic to take advantage of anyone

SPECIALTIES

- Mood-manipulating magic and drugs.
- Making a great first impression.
- Hiding from the authorities.
- Hunting down people who abuse mind magic.

DESCRIPTION

Okay, so a couple of years ago, there were two ex-corporate brats who dropped out of a corporate magic academy. Not hurting for money, they started messing around with magic to spice up their parties. Starting with light shows and summoning spirits for entertainment, they quickly hit the New York club scene and made a splash. This was great—they had all the drugs, booze, and attention they needed. One night, when buzzing, they used some mood manipulation spells on the crowd, which went wild, but their actions did not go unnoticed.

Soon after, the mob had a quiet word with the dropouts, some money changed hands, and some clubs really hit the big time, right up until they were raided by the Lone Star Awakened Response unit and charged with unlawful magic use. Each person affected was a separate charge, and their new mob friends left the dropouts swinging in the wind. Brought to trial, the dropouts heard hundreds of victim-impact statements and realized with horror of what they had done. After they were released from Rikers Island, the two swore to never again to manipulate people with their magic.

They did not swear to never party again, and soon they gathered some like-minded shamans and hermetics who love a good blow-out. When they work, they make sure that anyone they use their spells on knows exactly what they are getting in for. These dropouts are still trying to make it up to their victims. They may never fully be able to, but founding and directing this group looks like a step in the right direction.

The group is united by their desire to party by night, but it turns out they are pretty good at magical research by day. It may be that the Glitter Party People eventually lose their drive to live it up all night at the club, but for now they are holding on.

They also make it their business to hunt down people who abuse mind magic and make it clear that it's not acceptable. If people persist—well, that's when their large network of friends comes in.

- › For party people with such a cool name, they are hardcore on not messing with people's heads. I like them, and they take all types. Also, they are pretty big on giving people second chances.
- › Neon Fireball

MANA

SIZE AND LOCATION

100 to 200 members, spread across most major North American sprawls.

GOALS

- To support street magicians who don't have the money, skills, or power to make it on their own.

STRICTURES

Pax: Always give another mage a chance to talk.

Life: Discourage your gang from killing where you can.

SPECIALTIES

- Help, when no one else will offer it.
- Getting enemies to talk to each other.

DESCRIPTION

No one now knows who put Mana together—some forgotten Halloween wiz, probably long ago chewed up and spat out by the barrens—but the idea has kept on. They are a group of street hermetics, urban shamans, and civil adepts who formed a loose support network on the streets, a group of Awakened people you can talk to. They help others feel not quite so alone on the streets, even if your gang is fighting another member's gang. Gang leaders can be a bit touchy if their mage is hanging out with their rivals, but they know better than to mess with their wizzer. Mostly.

Being a member is a pretty good way of making sure the groups can get messages to each other as well—if you're in Mana, you should always listen to someone else from Mana. That's not to say rivalries and outright fighting and murder don't happen—they do—but most of the time membership is enough of a hook that you can spit out what you have to say and have it listened to.

While most of Mana lives in the Redmond Barrens, the Los Angeles, Chicago, New York and Amarillo chapters are pretty well entrenched at this point. It's mainly growing when two or three members happen to set up shop in a new city. It is really attractive for people who have no support to abruptly have a little.

- › What, gangers get wizzer support now? Weak.
- › River Fish
- › I think it's nice. It can get pretty lonely out in the rubble of the DMZ.
- › ManaTwister



Local chapterhouses are normally not much more than pretty secure buildings that has a couple of different back doors. They are normally pretty well warded, though, and many have spirit guardians set up. Street shamans in the group are also pretty good at making friends with free spirits and Awakened animals—entities that often don't like hanging around gang headquarters – and these can find a home in the chapterhouse. Given that there are not normally a lot of Awakened gangers and street people around, they often have arrangements with local talismongers, in which the gangers can bring any exotic magical animals that get in the way of the gang, and in return the talismonger slips some used foci or reagents to the ganger.

The main reason to join Mana is that the group will have your back if you are in a tight spot in the barrens. By the same token, members will be called on to help out other members from time to time. Members are expected to let each other know if they hear of any work that others might be interested in.

THE MOONLIGHT THORNS

SIZE AND LOCATION

Dozens deployed to hot zones around the world.

STRICTURES

Brotherhood: Never leave a soldier behind.

Focus: The client gets what they want.

SPECIALTIES

- Bodyguarding techniques and equipment
- International travel

DESCRIPTION

The Moonlight Thorns started as a part-business, part-mercenary magical group, with the goal of using their adept powers to make a lot of money by acting as bodyguards-for-hire. They have been around for a long time and built themselves up from a handful of dedicated adepts to a real franchise, and they make real money. It turns out that there are a lot of people willing to pay good money to have an adept guard their body. Sometimes, these clients are being unfairly targeted for political or personal reasons, but most of the time clients are very bad people.

The group has no real focus other than to build their magical talents and use those talents for money, which means they are quite happy to work for some of the worst people in the world if the pay matches the risk. However, warlords, toxic sha-

mans, major criminal figures, and drug producers are not the only people willing to pay for this service. The group also takes on short-term missions for visiting corporate managers who have the budget to hire them, including some of the wealthiest players around. I've heard that the Princes of Tir Tairngire believe in hiring the best, and I've seen a few of the Thorns on "holiday" south of Seattle. Could be a connection there.

Despite the knowledge and power of these physical adepts, personal protection is a very risky business to be in. The pay is excellent, however, and adepts who survive a few missions often have enough to retire, leading to a very high turnover. There always seem to be more recruits out there who are willing to put their body on the line for enough pay. The group has several former members who are active, a few of whom are trying to organize into a rival organization. I've never tried to muscle in on the territory of a well-armed group of magical mercenaries, but if anyone could, it would be former members. As for me, I'll be watching the fireworks from a long, long way away.

- > They sound hard as nails. Maybe good backup on a run.
- > Scintillating Stitches
- > If you can afford them. Which most can't.
- > Harley

ORDO MAXIMUS

SIZE AND LOCATION

Hundreds, spread through almost every major city in Europe and North America.

GOALS

- Supporting wealthy and influential hermetic wizards and following the orders of the Inner Circle

STRICTURES

Obedience: Always follow the orders of a higher-ranked member.

Secrecy: Never share details of members, goals, or research outside the Ordo Maximus.

In For Life: Members cannot voluntarily leave.

SPECIALTIES

- Obedient juniors to follow orders
- Dark and forbidden magic

DESCRIPTION

Ordo Maximus has been around for a long time. For many mages, it is an excuse to social-

ize with other wealthy, influential people and try their hand at a bit of magic. Sure, every now and then you need to dress in a black robe and chant along with a large ritual in the woods, or summon some significant spirit for undisclosed purposes, but most of the time it is money, influence, and socialization with peers.

Ordo appears to be a recruiting ground and source of power for a group known as the Inner Circle. A secret, even to those inside the order, the Inner Circle carefully grows the influence of the Ordo Maximus in order to have magical support when internal plans come off. Occasionally, a few of the members decipher the power structure and attempt to wrest control from the Inner Circle. This hasn't worked yet, and attempted rebels either disappear or suddenly stop agitating. It could be that the inner Circle recruits these go-getters, but it's more likely that they intimidate, blackmail, bribe, or outright magically control them into submission.

Good news, though: members of the order tend to be high-society types, and very corrupt, which means if you get good blackmail material on them, you can squeeze members for all kinds of secrets. The only risk is that if you squeeze too hard, they will come clean to the group, and you'll have a lot of motivated mages out to squash you.

- > You can find a lot of their activities in the archives. Suffice it to say, these guys are bad news.
- > Slamm-O
- > A good way to power, for those with the ambition to seize it and the will to hold it
- > Master of Mysteries
- > Sure, that's worked out well in the past; let us know how that turns out
- > Bull

THE INNER CIRCLE

Ordo Maximus is involved in a lot of shady stuff throughout the Sixth World, but the outer circle of mages really serves as patsies for the people in charge. Those in charge are striving constantly for large, world-changing magics, or fighting bitterly with each other for absolute control of both groups.

In the past, the Inner Circle has been infiltrated by vampires, dived into Blood Magic, and experimented with toxic magic, all while using the money and influence of the Ordo Maximus outer circle members to implement their plans. Occasionally, different factions eliminated each other, leaving unexpected people in charge. The goals of the Inner Circle change every time a new player takes control, but they are almost always destructive, corrupting, and ambitious.

Runners with money are welcome in Ordo Maximus, but it is unlikely that a runner would ever be invited to join the Inner Circle. Becoming a member would be outside the scope of most runs, but a nakedly ambitious hermetic mage might well be manipulated by having the possibility dangled before them ... before having their dreams crushed.

THE PAINTED HORSE LODGE

SIZE AND LOCATION

Hundreds across the Americas

GOALS

- Support the magical practices of the people of the Native American Nations.

STRICTURES

Fellowship: Support fellow first nations practitioners in their journey

Spiritual relations: Remain on good terms with spirits (other than toxic spirits)

SPECIALTIES

- Knowledge of the many traditional and modern first people's magical traditions
- Mythical spiritual knowledge

DESCRIPTION

One of the better-known magical societies in the Native American nations, the Painted Horse Lodge welcomes shamans from across North and South America to share their knowledge. The Painted Horse Lodge has a strong following in the Ute, Pueblo, and Tír Tairngire nations, and it has small lodges in every other country in the Americas, including Aztlan. Even the newly independent Seattle has a lodge on the edge of the Redmond barrens.

From its origins as a single magical group, the Painted Horse Lodge has cemented its place as the Pan-American shaman society. The various local chapters are fractious but usually work together when the chips are down. It also acts as a point to push back against the relentless hermetic tradition that seems on the rise in the Americas.

Lodge members are often anti-authoritarian with a chip on their shoulder. This leads to problems on the rare occasions that the Lodge leadership attempts to issue a directive or policy. The Lodge strongly promotes the place of the shaman in society, although the rebellious nature of the individual members can overshadow this goal. In areas where lodges are close to collections of other mages, members try to recruit and antagonize those other magicians.

Becoming a member of the Lodge requires a prospective member to live with a current member, their sponsor, for one full cycle of the moon, at the end of which the current member will give their opinion of the worthiness of the prospect to the local elders. At the next full meeting of the local chapter, the potential member will undergo a vision quest with their sponsor. The rest of the chapter summons a spirit who can take the uninitiated to the metaplanes. During this quest, the chapter

will discuss the member and come to a consensus on whether to admit the new member. When the prospect returns from the metaplanes, the nature of their quest and its outcome is the final deciding factor on whether a member can join. After the meeting, one of the elders will approach the prospect and welcome the new member or make it clear that the prospect is no longer welcome.

Each chapter has a council of elders that runs the day-to-day business of the Lodge. It is a mark of esteem among Lodge members to be asked to sit on the council, although the member can turn down the offer without loss of prestige. Many members serve some time on the council, and then take a break while they focus on other matters, serving again when they are able to.

The Painted Horses have many contacts with TerraFirst!, the anarchists, gang members, and other groups of people at the edge of society, and are often willing to put fellow members in contact with their friends. The Painted Horse Lodge has a patron spirit of a Painted Horse, as does each magical group within the Lodge. Reagents and ingredients that can be found in the wilderness are often available to members, as many of the members spend time communing with the spirits on the plains and mountains.

- › How come I never heard of these chummers?
- › River Fish
- › Did you ever look?
- › Runes
- › How the hell am I meant to know to look for something like that?
- › River Fish
- › You read files like this one
- › Grok

THE SPIRIT DANCERS

SIZE AND LOCATION

Dozens across the CAS and Aztlan

GOALS

- Support and give space to Mesoamerican physical adepts

STRICTURES

Spirit ally: Never knowingly attack a non-toxic spirit, except in self defense

SPECIALTIES

- Possession knowledge
- Aztlan and Mesoamerican martial arts

DESCRIPTION

Possession magic seems to have fewer adherents than the larger traditions, and even fewer physical adepts seem to follow the path. The Spirit Dancers aim to rectify that by creating a group to support the diverse and varying possession traditions. The group grew out of the Voodoo practitioners in the CAS but quickly adopted Aztlan adepts, as well as members in many of the Caribbean League. With such a variety of members, the group doesn't conform to one particular spiritual tradition, but instead looks to link members of similar traditions where they can; where they cannot, they look to support them however they can. It is, therefore, not unusual for a practice circle to have a Voodoo practitioner from Louisiana next to a follower of the Popal Vuh and a priest of Tlaloc. Initially drawn together through personal connections and a desire to build a support network, it became quickly apparent that the traditions and rituals of the different groups vary widely.

Unwilling to throw away the only support group many of the adepts have ever known, many still choose to maintain an association anyway. This means that research and development of techniques is hampered by a lack of widespread focus through the organization, but at least members get to talk to other possession adepts.

It seems likely that this group will eventually grow big enough to split into separate groups, each focused more on their individual traditions, so look for that in the next few years.

So, while the group might not be able to get you the particular herbs and other ritual materials right away, they probably know someone who knows someone who can help you. They might even be able to act as an intermediary if you are having a spirit problem of your own.

- > I've seen lots of groups this size split up and form other groups. In my experience it leads to one shadowy master manipulating hundreds of people to do their twisted bidding.
- > Plan 9
- > Sure, not just old friends catching up, even though they are in new societies?
- > Neon Fireball
- > That's what they want you to think!
- > Plan 9

TURGAN MAGNU

SIZE AND LOCATION

Dozens of orks, trolls, dwarves, and humans in the Ork Underground

GOALS

- *Rekart and reken*: Train people in the underground to use their talent safely

- *Nroto*: Make sure magical nasties in the Feral Underground don't make trouble for the rest of the Underground

STRICTURES

Greeah: Find training for any newly Awakened Ork Underground resident.

Grumoge: Answer every time that someone calls for help against a dangerous magical entity from the Feral Underground.

SPECIALTIES

- Magical effects of HMOV
- Weaknesses of Awakened threats
- Education and training beginners

DESCRIPTION

Not every person who Awakens is a rich hermetic in a corporate office or living a communal shamanistic lifestyle. Some are born in the Seattle Underground and want to develop their magical skills while protecting the people around them.

The Seattle Underground is starting to show the results of decades of hard work, but people who grew up there often grew up hard. There are other files that talk about the Underground itself, but today I want to talk about the Turgan Magnu, a group of mostly orks who were just beginning to Awaken without training, terrified of what they were going through, and feeling all alone in the darkness.

The good news is that, though the Underground didn't have much in the way of resources, they had a lot of community, and people who thought about how to put things together. Many public meltdowns later, a few grandmothers metaphorically grabbed the ears of their grandkids and found an old garage for them to "sort out this magic stuff." It didn't work. A bunch of magically active kids were never going to suddenly turn into a smooth magical machine. Then some toxic spirits set up camp near a medical clinic, and once again the grandmothers dragged their kids out and said "no one else can deal with it." Two people died, but the toxic spirits were destroyed. By the time a coven of vampire witches had set up near the main water supply pipes, the grandkids had a working model of how to deal with some magical threats. It's amazing what some motivated grandmothers can do to advance the knowledge of magic. The grandmothers remain interested in what's going on in the group to this day, and often offer "helpful advice" and "a few tips." A blessing and a curse, it means that the group suffers a lot of well-meaning, but uninformed meddling, but it also means that whenever the Skraacha make noises about absorbing the Turgan Magnu, they first have to deal with a motivated group of grandmothers.

The Skraacha have been warned.

- > I don't get it—this bunch of tough ork wizkids gets pushed around by their grammas? They are Awakened! They don't have to put up with this crap!
- > River Fish
- > It's obvious you've never met a grandmother from the Underground.
- > Bull

OTHER GROUPS

Okay, so there are too many groups out there to keep track of, and I won't give a detailed write-up about every group out there, but when I was hanging around in the chat channel the other day, some old timers asked me about groups they had worked with once upon a time. I've collected my first thoughts about each of them here—hit me up if you want more detail about any given one.

- > How often does Many-Names check their messages?
- > River Fish
- > Last login was just after this file was posted, hopefully they'll check in every now and then.
- > Slamm-O!

THE AMAZING BLASTERS

They want to ...: Use magic to become racketeers

Current status: Oh, these people ... they went down fast when they ran into serious people who could see through their drek. Fun to watch it all happen, though. Another group that thought they were the smartest people in the room and got nailed because they didn't think mundanes could see through their crap.

BENANDANTI XXV

They want to ...: Draw on their diversity to serve dragons

Current status: Their cult leader died a few years back, but they seem to still be going. I heard they were trying to contact Sea Dragon.

BROTHERHOOD OF DARKNESS

They want to ...: Fight shedim and corrupt mages

Current status: This group has suffered losses in their rivalry with Ordo Maximus. They are now looking to rebuild, and they have amassed a large collection of magical artifacts in their quests.

BROTHERHOOD OF THE IRON CRESCENT

They want to ...: Support Awakened mercenaries

Current status: Went bankrupt, got absorbed by Ares and broken up to support different deployed units.

CHILDREN OF THE DRAGON

They want to ...: Worship and serve great dragons, explore metaplanes

Current status: With new metaplanar rifts opening, they have renewed hope of finding Dunkelzahn. So they're looking hard.

CÓDIGO

They want to ...: Use magic to make money off crime in the Amazon

Current status: Código ran afoul of another gang of drug runners a few years back, and the war got hot. They won the war, but they need to rebuild fast to survive. Unfortunately, there just aren't that many mages and shamans willing to sign up to a criminal group for the pay they are offering.

COUNCIL FOR MAGICAL DEVELOPMENT

They want to ...: Use magic to protect the environment

Current status: The Council is in the slow process of fracturing. Numbers are falling as people drop out and join the druids, TerraFirst!, or local action groups.

CRACKING THE BONES

They want to ...: Develop Voodoo and build communities

Current status: Stronger and more motivated than ever, they are taking a more active role in local politics, and using their magic and knowledge to fight back against the corps, but just on the edges of society.

DAUGHTERS OF YEMAJA

They want to ...: Stand up for Yoruban women in the Kingdom of Nigeria

Current status: Their profile is as low as ever—the leaders and number of members of the group aren't known, but the violent deaths visited upon misogynistic predators they learn about show them to still be active in their part of the world.

DEAD WARLOCKS

They want to ...: Be the best wizkid gang

Current status: They got wiped out when they got too cocky and underestimated a mundane gang with big guns. Turns out you can kill mages if you try hard enough. The name is now super-appropriate, I guess.

GATE OF ISHTAR

They want to ...: Research hermetic magic and build the power of their members.

Current status: They appear to be beginning a friendly rivalry with the Hermetic Order of the Auric Aurora. It's such a stuffy society that everything they do takes forever.

GLADIO

They want to ...: Reduce discrimination around magic

Current status: Still working behind the scenes, as the focus has moved off magic and onto technomancy. They aren't getting the traction they used to get, but on the other hand, people seem a bit more accepting of magic now, so that's working for them.

HERMETIC ORDER OF THE AURIC AURORA

They want to ...: Support and develop hermetic magic

Current status: They almost killed themselves with internal politics, but they seem to have recovered over the past year. Still probably the easiest to join and least likely to kill you of the hermetic groups.

ILLUMINATES OF THE NEW DAWN

They want to ...: Promote mages to places of power in the world

Current status: Struggling to make any headway in the chaos of the Sixth World, and losing members, but still going.

JAMIL ISLAMYAH

They want to ...: Use magic, forbidden by Islam, in service to Islam

Current status: Very active across the Middle East, as Islam is becoming slightly more liberal, they are becoming more accepted in the Islamic world.

MAGICAL INVESTORS GROUP

They want to ...: Make lots of money from magically augmenting investors.

Current status: Their name has been attached to some pretty radical and possibly inhumane types of magical experimentation. Either the walls are going to collapse on them, or they're going to see a big uptick in power.

MITSUHAMA RESEARCH UNIT 13

They want to ...: Develop magic and train for their corporation

Current status: Turning out some good research nowadays. Have kinda lost their drive, though.

MYSTIC CRUSADERS

They want to ...: Guard the Atlantean Foundation

Current status: These folks have seen a lot of action and have become rich by standing in the crossfire. They have also lost a good number of members.

NEW KNIGHTS TEMPLAR

They want to ...: Protect the world from existential threats

Current status: The New Knights Templar are overworked. There are so many threats to the world that they have trouble addressing them all, but they are holding back the tide in some places.

NEW LABOR MOVEMENT PARTY

They want to ...: Use magic to unify people

Current status: Idealism is pretty good, but they don't seem to be getting much done. I mean, are people united where you are?

ORTHODOX EXARCHS

They want to ...: Research Orthodox magic

Current status: Oh yeah, this group of old men are still doing their thing. They seem to be watching the Sorcerers Institute carefully. Maybe they are going to reform themselves somehow?

THE OXFORD GRAND LODGE

They want to ...: British Druids interfering in British politics

Current status: They have survived the intense politics of the last few years and are still working to mesh magic and the mundane. They seem to completely ignore the Druidic Circle, and vice versa.

PATHFINDERS

They want to ...: Improve and train shamans

Current status: This group is slowly expanding—they don't seem to be in any hurry.

THE RAT PACK

They want to ...: Use their urban shaman magic to make life a bit better on the streets

Current status: I had heard that they had split into two groups. One is still doing the urban shaman thing; rumor is that the other is going down a much darker path.

SEATTLE UNITED CORPORATE COUNCIL CONTRACTOR SOCIETY

They want to ...: Become magical consultants

Current status: No longer contracting for the city of Seattle directly, they are now consulting

with several companies in Los Angeles about the effects of alchera on businesses.

SHRINE OF THE SOUTHERN WINDS

They want to ...: Promote Shinto and eliminate local Yakuza control

Current status: Unfortunately, the efforts of this group against the local Yakuza were exposed, and the Shrine didn't survive. There are some individual members still kicking around, but they aren't active as a group anymore.

SISTERHOOD OF ARIADNE

They want to ...: Promote Wicca

Current status: Still kicking around. They have cycled through a few members but still push Wicca. A few members have been seen in rural towns, but I can't tell if they are there to recruit or just for a holiday.

THE SMOKING MIRROR

They want to ...: Use magical power in service to Aztlan

Current status: This group is bad news. Being sponsored by a nation and a megacorporation has given them significant resources. They are definitely into blood magic.

SOCIETY OF THE PHOENIX ARISEN

They want to ...: Return magic to burnouts

Current status: This group is still kicking and is still the best way to get clean if you've messed up your magic somehow. Their big rivalry with the Aleph Society seems to be on hold for now.

SONS OF THUNDER AND SEA

They want to ...: Hunt ghosts and demons

Current status: They went out with a glorious last stand against the shedim invasion a few years back. The Brotherhood of Darkness seems to be the last group standing with this kind of mission.

SORCERERS INSTITUTE

They want to ...: Study magic and release their knowledge to the world

Current status: They are still putting out magic research for free on the Matrix! They have attracted a few more researchers to their cause, but they are pushing against the limits of academia.

TECHNOMAGICIANS

They want to ...: Integrating with technomancers

Current status: There is definitely some interesting stuff that they are working on, but nothing concrete yet. Still growing, and really getting a solid footing now that technomancers are being

hunted less. There seems almost equal interest from the technomancer side as well. I haven't actually seen any technomancer-magic happening, but everyone seems very excited.

TREASURE HUNTERS, INC.

They want to ...: Use magic to loot tombs for items that belong in museums.

Current status: They keep hitting big archaeological finds and retiring. They are now getting a lot of stick from the people whose tombs they are looting, but wealthy people don't worry about that sort of thing, apparently.

VIGILANT IRON SCHOOLING HOUSE

They want to ...: Provide training for adepts on the streets

Current status: Growth has slowed—there just aren't that many physical adepts out there—but they have healthy numbers and seem to be doing well. Dojos are now open in most mega-sprawls.

VIGILIA EVANGELICA

They want to ...: Use magic to spy on people and organizations

Current status: Who knows? These folks are so secret, their secrets have secrets. I assume they are still around, but they could have fallen to some sort of shadow-war.

WESTPHALIAN THEURGISTS

They want to ...: Root out heresy from their branch of the Catholic Church

Current status: Not too many of these around. I admire their fanatical dedication to wiping out heresy, but just about everything is heretical for them. They don't have enough focus to be a threat at the moment.

- > Whoa! So many groups out there!
- > River Fish
- > That's just the surface; they didn't even mention the Black Lodge, the Ash Unions, the Shujenka of Yomi, the Universal Brotherhood, the Aleph Society ...
- > Plan 9
- > These are just the ones that Many-Names was asked about in the chat, but I heard the Ash Union is doing fine. They are thinking of changing their name, apparently, but Lothan wants to keep it the way it is.
- > Bull
- > I know the Shujenka are doing ok, I was hunting down some asshole in Neo-Tokyo, and suddenly I had to deal with half a dozen orks and trolls. Quickly became too risky for the pay.
- > ThatsYamatoSanToYou



TOIL AND TROUBLE

THE PATH OF BLOOD

POSTED BY: CANIS

- > With all the magical weirdness going on of late, I figured it was time we got an update on blood magic. So I turned to our resident professor, who happens to be a blood mage himself. I would like to take this opportunity to remind everyone of the rules of JackPoint, and that they apply to Canis just as much as anyone.
- > Bull
- > I always knew there was something wrong about him.
- > /dev/grrl
- > Yeah, he triggers my uncanny valley too, /dev/. But that's due to all the 'ware, not the stain of blood magic.
- > Winterhawk

Blood. That one word sort of sums up life in the shadows and conjures a whole host of mental images. For many, it's blood on the sidewalks, spilled from ourselves and our teammates as well as our opposition. For some, it's the way the corporations try to bleed us dry with their mass marketing and extreme controls on society. And for others, it's fountains of blood erupting from some poor slot as a blood mage cuts his throat and uses that same blood to throw a killer Manabolt at you. It's that last mental image I want to talk about.

I'm not going to pretend that picture of blood magic doesn't happen, because many of us have lived it, myself included. You run the shadows long enough, and you'll eventually run afoul of a blood-magic-using nutter, or a team of Aztechnology's Bloodpanthers or Bloodwolves, someone who can turn your pain and injury into power for their magic.

- > I've heard of Bloodpanthers but not Bloodwolves.
- > Slamm-O!

- Strain II-Infected equivalent of the Bloodpanthers. Mostly mystic adepts, but some other Awakened in the mix too. Not as well respected and revered, but still high up in the food chain.
- Pyramid Watcher

But blood magic isn't all about huge gouts of blood and flashy spells. Red, EB, and others did a great job of covering the groundwork in the *Forbidden Arcana* upload, so I won't retread that ground. I will, however, give you a small idea of what life with blood magic in your pocket is like for someone who doesn't want to damn their soul.

THE NATURE OF TOOLS

First some fundamentals, since not all of you know me and how I view things. I view magic like I view everything else in this world: It's a tool. Sure, it's a very useful tool (the ultimate multitool in some ways), but a tool nonetheless. Magic is not, as some of the hoopfraggles or drekwits in my Theory of Thaumaturgy 101 classes would have you believe, the be all and end all. Using the right tool for the right job is one of the greatest things about metahumanity—we can use magic or 'ware or plain old-fashioned sweat to achieve our goals. I know many in the cheap seats will want to chime in here, but I've made my career out of that belief, and it's kept me alive this long, so I am not going to change my tune now.

If we look at anything we need to do and analyze the tools that can get the job done, we can almost always come up with a means to employ magic. And in some cases, that's the best tool, but far from the only one. Now, let's translate that to weapons: Is magic the best weapon to employ in any given situation? In my experience, the answer is often no. It has its place, but shooting a firearm doesn't drain you like a spell can. I don't care how good you think you are, how mentally tough, how good a conductor and wielder of mana you have been in the past, or how many times you've initiated, I can tell you that there is one immutable law: You will get drained by magic. Add that into a situation where Murphy raises his head, because he always does, and you get geeked 'cause you picked the wrong tool.

- Or worse, one of your packmates gets geeked 'cause you fragged up.
- Torch
- Finally, mages who speak my language!
- DangerSensei

Let's now go one step further: You've analyzed the situation, and magic is indeed the right tool for the job. But if it's a big job, it's going to need something *big* to get it done—maybe you've a horde

of feral ghouls chasing you, or a Renraku Red Samurai is about to decapitate your chica, or some poor innocent child is about to suffer. You have one shot, so you pull up your socks and put on your combat boots and let it rip. It's still a numbers game whether it works or whether you survive.

What if I said you can play with the percentages? What if—and this is still a thought experiment here—I said I could show you how to make that last-gasp “do or die” act almost guaranteed to count? With no reliance on Lady Luck (because she's a fickle slitch)? In that moment, when it's you or them and the consequences of failure in that moment will haunt you for the rest of your days, what would you be willing to do?

If the answer is along the lines of “I'd trade my life for theirs,” then I can possibly guide you to a tool that can do that.

THE POWER OF LIFE AND DEATH

We do things in the shadows that some of us would rather forget. Every time we tac up or strap in we hold the power of life and death in our hands, and if all goes smoothly we never have to even consider using it. The principle applies to wetwork, too.

- How does wetwork not result in killing?
- Whippet
- When you only kill your target, and no one else.
- Balladeer
- Bunch of bleeding hearts.
- Clockwork

When it comes to magic, there's more to it than just lives and deaths. There's actual power. Real tangible power we can wield—if we know how. We each focus our magic through our personal paradigm, and what's important to us plays a role in that paradigm. That's why the intent of a magical act can, and often does, impact the outcome—and vitally for us, the flavor of the signature that use of magic leaves behind.

The blood magic that I've used a handful of times over the years (yes, I'm speaking from first-hand experience here) allows me to take that intent and shove it into my paradigm. I still get the power I need for that do-or-die moment, but I don't run the risk of staining my aura. I've heard many terms for it, but I still call it what I was taught: life magic. When I use my own life to empower my magic, when the consequences of failure are so terrible that I would rather bleed myself dry than allow it to happen if I can help it, my sense of self—filtered through my intentions—enables me



to (almost) freely tap into the power within my blood and achieve my goals. Now, I'm not saying we each need to be pure of heart and as virtuous as the driven snow, because I don't believe anyone in this world comes close to that ideal. But in the moment, if your heart is prepared to bleed for your cause, you can use that.

The other side of blood magic, the side we all think of initially, is what I know as death magic. It and life magic are different sides of the same coin; and you cannot know one without the other. But here's the rub: Many people who learn to use the power of blood do so for the wrong reasons. To them, it's a quick route to greater power. And that leads to a slippery slope from which there is no return: madness, a psychological need for that power in your hands, arrogance, seeing yourself as better and your fellow metahumans as cattle to be used as you see fit. In short, true damnation.

LIFE MAGIC IS NOT FREE

Everything in this world has a price, and life magic is no different. Yes, you can, if the need is truly great and the results of failure are exceedingly dire, bleed to empower your magic. But it's not quite that simple. First, the gruesome part—

life magic is done on yourself. Yes, you need to cut yourself and draw enough blood for it to flow from the wound. I use my hand razors or cyber fangs, but I've seen people use sharp rocks and all sorts of things. The point is, you need to deliberately cut yourself as part of using magic. I can already hear the soynut gallery saying it: "Well, I'll just use a Heal spell!" Sorry omae, that just doesn't work. The wounds inflicted when using blood magic of any kind are very similar to drain in that there is an arcanophysiological barrier preventing healing magic from restoring your body; it's like the magic remembers and is all "no cheating me out of my kilo of flesh!" On the bright side, the wounds can be treated with medical technology—principally blood transfusions and IV saline and clotting agents (all of which are found in a medkit you can pick up at any PharmaFarm or Stuffer Shack), and of course resting. Sure, all that takes longer than a Heal spell, but if the drek hit the ventilator bad enough that you needed to bleed out the big guns, you're likely going to need to use a medkit and rest a few days anyway.

The other risk that comes with life magic is addiction. It's not as severe a risk as with death magic, but it's still a risk. After all, it's not unheard of for metahumans to become addicted to pain.

- Flagellants and other religious types have done so over the years. And then there are those who use pain as a sexual stimulant.
- Butch

But even if pain doesn't do anything for you personally, the rush of power can. It's not unlike focus addiction in many ways; just as a plethora of foci can become a crutch (top tip: don't let that happen), so can the rush of power that comes from tapping into your veins.

- I have to ask Canis, have you ...
- Bull
- No, chummer, I've never become addicted to blood magic. I took the words of my teacher to heart, and my mates won't let me go down that path. And ghost knows what they'd do to me if I even dreamed of using death magic.
- Canis

As with anything that is habit-forming, minimal exposure is the key. In the years I've known the sacrifice metamagic, I can count on one hand the number of times I've used it. But it is a tool I keep hold of because it's useful. In the right situation.

DEATH MAGIC IS NOT LIFE MAGIC

To the uninformed, all blood magic is the same. And all magicians who use blood magic are "blood mages" and should be hunted down and killed, as they're all evil. Well, that's just not true. Like many things in life, it's a gross oversimplification of the situation, exacerbated by ignorance and lack of understanding. I have had to intervene on no less than three occasions after what was effectively a lynch mob attempted to kill or capture a magician who used life magic. In one case, it was a street witch, someone who'd taught herself to use magic and learned to use blood magic in order to heal those around her and lessen their pain and suffering. I had to stare down a man who wanted to kill the very person who'd saved his son's life less than twenty-four hours previously because he thought she was an evil blood mage. It ended well, but only barely.

Observing a magician's use of magic cannot give you definitive proof, yet that's what people do when trying to identify blood mages. The only way to be sure is to assense their aura to see if they have the stain of death magic upon them. The first few times a magician uses death magic, the stain is quite subtle and can be hidden using the masking metamagic. But beyond a point, there is no way to hide it—you proclaim you are a blood mage to anyone and anything that can assense your aura. The Draco Foundation has done some studies and

found that even metahumans with the most rudimentary level of magical power and skill at reading auras can identify the stain of death magic, as the overriding sensual impression it gives off is the sickly sweet stench of death. So if you see someone with that stain walking down the street, I suggest you be worried.

Frag, we should all be worried in that situation anyway, because of the other side effects of death magic use: addiction and a total lack of sanity. One of the major differences between life magic and death magic is that the latter is always addictive. You could use life magic a handful of times, as I have, and not become addicted. But use death magic once, and you're most likely hooked. And those hooks can go in awful deep, far deeper than soykaf, novacoke, or hot-sim ever could. Those addictions affect your body by way of your physiology. Blood magic affects your very soul.

Death magic users still need to get a fix just like the barrens rats that are addicted to BTLs, but whereas a BTLhead can sit back and relax away from anyone else (for the most part), a death-magic-addicted mage has to use that magic to get their fix. And that means causing pain and suffering on some poor unsuspecting son of a slitch!

The other side effect of death magic, one I touched on briefly above, is insanity. I don't know if it's the addiction itself causing some degradation of the magician's aura that impacts their mental state or if it is a correlative and not causative effect (and to be honest, chummers, I don't want to get close enough to these kinds of fraggers to carry out a proper study), but as an initiate becomes more and more addicted to death magic, their sanity goes down the drekker faster than the evidence of last night's bender.

Magicians who are addicted to death magic display many psychoses, from superhuman psychosis and narcissism to full-blown psychopathy and other disorders. There is no rhyme or reason, the only constant being that they seem to view metahumanity—perhaps even all sapient species—as little chunks of power that are there for them to use as and when they wish. They also tend to display a phenomenal level of self-confidence, to the point that defeating one in combat is seen as a fluke or waved away in some other manner to reinforce their god complex.

- Bit rich isn't it, Canis, you talking about narcissists with god complexes?
- Haze

THE FIRST STEPS

The first steps on any journey are always the most dangerous, and blood magic is no exception. I think this is partly due to it being the new thing, and we all want to show it off and use it. But there

is the potential that there's something more to it than that. Something that draws us toward using blood magic.

It is for this reason that I've been very careful who I teach the sacrifice technique to. I'm not the world's greatest judge of character, and I've had to clean up more than one mess over the years caused by misjudging someone, but each and every time I've striven to take every precaution I could to ensure that I'm not accidentally releasing another blood-magic-crazed psychopath on to the world. There are more than enough of those as it is (thanks, Aztechnology).

My own first steps on the road of blood magic took place in 2062. I was in Australia on a job, supposedly a simple job to locate someone who had gone missing. It ended up being a protracted nine-week stay in the Australian Outback chased by some very determined individuals. My team and I were caught by a mana storm one night shortly after entering the Outback proper, and I was damn near the point of collapse due to the extreme lengths I was pushing my apotropaic abilities just to keep us alive. Then, in the nick of time, a man walked out of the darkness and into our little camp. We damn near shot him, wandering in like that unannounced and appearing as if by magic less than two meters from us. The man was a koradji, an aborigine magician, whose totem had sent him a message through the dreaming that we were in peril. This man helped us survive the night and helped guide us through his tribe's lands.

He and I (I'll call him Bruce) spoke at length about magic in general and the magic he practiced as a koradji. Bruce's totem was Kangaroo, who takes all in need within her pouch, and he was keen to show me the wonders of his land. I learned a great many things from Bruce, and my team and I agreed to help the tribe with some problems of their own ... in the way that Wolf often helps those in need. Bruce saved our hoops several times that job, and he taught me the channeling technique that has saved my life on numerous occasions.

But what Bruce did was open my eyes. I'd been blinkered by my training as a magician, and through his help I was able to start removing those blinkers and see what was. Even if it didn't make sense to my way of understanding magic. He also showed me that blood magic could be used—not safely, but without undue risk to one's self. I'd encountered some Azzie blood mages and held the belief that all blood magic was evil and caused you to become tainted and insane.

In 2063, I returned to the Outback as part of an initiatory ordeal and spent two lunar months with Bruce and his tribe. During that time, I was shown the right way to use blood magic. I was told of the difference between life and death as it pertains to magic, and I even got to see the effects of death magic firsthand. Bruce wasn't sure whether he

should teach me sacrifice: it's a dying art amongst koradji, as not many can pass the tests demanded by the dreaming and the ancestors, and as an outsider I couldn't even speak to the ancestors. But he eventually did. I'm still not sure what made him change his mind, but I suspect Kangaroo had something to do with it.

WALKING THE WALK

Once you've learned sacrifice, things change. It's not unlike the way things change after you've learned a new spell, or bonded a new focus, or bought a new firearm or another piece of wiz gear. But it's also different. That is because of the subtle temptation I spoke of earlier. Blood magic is an almost unlimited power that you can use almost at will. But like magic itself, blood magic is just a tool, and when I've needed it, it's been there. Hurt like a muthafragger each time I sliced my own forearm open or took a chunk out the inside of my mouth, but for me personally each use has been warranted.

Sacrifice is not a metamagic I admit to knowing often, because people don't understand what blood magic truly is. And the last thing I need is a bunch of nuyen-happy fraggers busting in on one of my lectures trying to capture me to claim a bounty offered by the Draco Foundation and others. It doesn't apply to me anyway, since I've never used death magic, but the uninitiated don't know that. I would hope that Big D knew the difference, and the fact that he wasn't more specific in his will baffles me.

- Perhaps he wasn't deliberately. Dragons always have a reason for doing anything.
- /dev/grrl

Sacrifice is not something I am willing to teach just anyone who comes into my office and asks nicely while waving a credstick in my face. All magic can be misused, but blood magic especially, so while I evaluate any perspective student regardless of what it is that I've been asked to teach, the evaluation process for sacrifice is much more stringent. In every instance, I've made sure the perspective student knows the rules and guidelines of blood magic and the difference between life magic and death magic. I also look into the perspective student's life and background and try to get to know them before I agree or not. And if I do agree, it's not unheard of for students to decide that my methods don't suit them and the price I'm asking isn't worth it. Knowing the sacrifice technique brings a greater responsibility than being Awakened. Not only because you have the power of life and death in your hands, but because you have the ability to draw power from life itself. And from death, too.

BLOOD MAGE BOUNTIES

The Draco Foundation offers bounties on live blood mages based on their power and infamy. In game terms, this is determined by their Magic rating and level of addiction to blood magic.

Bounties paid on minor blood mages, whose Magic rating + addiction rating is 5 or less, are typically in the five thousand to ten thousand nuyen range for a living mage; however, due to several instances of life magic users being turned in for a bounty, the Draco Foundation now refuses to pay out on bounties before a qualified magician can assense the so-called "blood mage" and verify they are a death magic user. They no longer accept eyewitness accounts or footage as sufficient evidence. Unfortunately, many law enforcement agencies worldwide aren't as yet taking this precaution, which may have led to the incarceration of mages whose only crime is using blood magic.

More powerful blood mages, whose Magic rating + addiction rating is 6 to 9, might be worth from twenty thousand to fifty thousand nuyen. This is almost always for the mage to be brought in alive and is offered by the Draco Foundation or a megacorporation interested in the mage's capture.

Truly powerful blood mages, whose Magic rating + addiction rating is 10 or more, are often seen as too dangerous to be taken alive and so are accepted dead. In these instances, proof can be provided in the form of eyewitness accounts, reliable footage (perhaps from a third party), or magical forensics. These are some of the toughest bounties in the Sixth World, each responsible for the deaths of multiple bounty hunters and shadowrunners who tried to collect. But there are always those who'll risk their lives for a bounty between seventy-five thousand and three hundred thousand nuyen.

- > With great power comes great responsibility. Sorry, had to say it.
- > Slamm-O!

I know what the next questions are: How many mages have I taught to use blood magic, and how many have gone mad? I won't divulge the exact numbers, but I will say that more than ninety-five percent of the time, my judgement has been correct. And in the cases where I was wrong, I cleaned up the mess, because that was my responsibility too. But those are stories for another time.

- > So Canis, are you in the process of teaching or evaluating right now?
- > Winterhawk
- > I won't say who, for obvious reasons, but in the spirit of openness, I will admit to having recently found a mage I'm willing to lead onto the path of blood. She is deciding whether the price I'm asking is too high.
- > Canis

FINAL THOUGHTS

Blood magic is no more inherently evil than a gun, augmentations, a cyberdeck, or any other use of magic. It's who is wielding it and their actions that could be evil. Just as we look at a gillette or a hacker or any other mage to determine if they're someone we want to do biz with, we should look at the Awakened who know sacrifice. Many of us didn't learn the technique for power's sake; we learned it so that we would have an additional tool in our toolboxes so we could meet the needs of the world we live in. If you see someone cutting someone and using their blood, don't jump to conclusions. Remember that old street proverb about assumptions and straight up ask. And do your fragging legwork!

I am *not* trying to drum up business by writing this. What I *am* trying to do is prevent some poor slot from being arrested or geeked just because they recognize that sometimes their magic needs a little extra oomph to get the job done. And sometimes, the only thing that will give you enough mana for that killer Manabolt or nova-hot Heal is your own blood. Because self-sacrifice is one of the things that sets metahumanity apart from the rest of the animal kingdom.

Oh, and one last thing. If you encounter a blood spirit, Lone Star's DIPS, Ares Firewatch (though I wouldn't trust Ares as far as I can throw the moon right now), the Draco Foundation, and some interested corporations will lend assistance if they can. Or call me. Because we cannot allow the souls of the poor creatures used to summon such an abomination to remain trapped within it longer than necessary. But whatever you do, for ghost sake be fragging careful!

CREEP AND CRAWL

POSTED BY: RED

It's funny to look back on the past thirty years and think how far we've come, insofar as the invae are concerned. I can remember a time when no one knew about the bugs. No one sane or alive, anyway. The concept of giant, pan-dimensional insect invaders was the realm of mid twentieth century schlock cinema, and the world had bigger problems. Corporate war loomed on the horizon, rumblings of Dunklezahn maneuvering to run for president of the UCAS ... we had a lot on our plate. Those were the days of wirejacks and AI rumors. Not simple times, but retrospect makes it feel like it was simpler. History, however, shows us that simplicity is usually an illusion borne of ignorance. Makes you wonder, or worry, about tomorrow.

- > I don't believe in tomorrow anymore.
- > Pistons

- > Hell with that, tomorrow is a rest day.
- > Baka Dabora

The funny part, as far as anything is funny about this, is that bugs were totally unknown back then. An urban legend, a conspiracy theory, a crackpot rant in the subway, but not real. Now? You can buy Ares Bugjuice in a lot of corner stores, tune in to any number of documentaries about the Chicago Breakout, and hell, there's a musical genre based on the PTSD of the era. Bugs aren't a secret or a conspiracy anymore—they're very open, public knowledge. But the fact is, most folks don't really know more than that. They get their information from the trid, and it basically says, "Bugs are bad, bugs are scary, upgrade your Knight Errant contract to include special Firewatch Protection Packages." When you're the boots on the ground like we are, you need to know how they move, how they operate, how they think, and how to kill them.

With Sticks gone, and Many-Names being ... let's say, cryptic, I might be the new top authority on bugs here on JackPoint. Believe me, that's not a good thing. Yeah, I've been around, and I've had some exotic experiences, but if you're the smartest one in the room, that means you haven't got anything new to learn, and that's never where you want to be. Especially since, like so much else in the past ten years or so, bugs have been changing more and more. So I hope you'll understand that, while I'll do the best I can, I've invited a few experts here to give their varying perspectives and insights. Knowledge is power, and when it comes to invae, you want that power just as much as bugjuice grenades and serious wards.

- > Knowledge is of greater value when discovered for oneself. The wise teacher merely opens a door and waits for the rain to bring the student inside.
- > Many-Names
- > Glad to know you're willing to help.
- > Red
- > I'd be more encouraged if it felt like it made sense before it was hindsight.
- > Lyrn
- > Welcome to my whole world.
- > Ethernaut
- > I'm looking forward to offering as much insight as I can into hunting my kin. And remember: I'm more than willing to pay for any live specimens brought to me. Unlike Ares, you can be assured they'll be dead in very short order. You can even watch, if you like.
- > Praxis

- > I appreciate the opportunity to plead the case of my people and to help further understanding as to why we are not like the invae you have faced in the past. We are here to help, and we will earn our keep as new members of this world we cherish together.
- > Ellis
- > I anticipate many fresh successes from this collaboration. Are we ready, young ones?
- > Mamelu

JACKPOINT USER ASSISTANT: ONLINE

User Profile Search: Praxis, Ellis, Mamelu

User: Praxis
Status: Probationary, consultant poster
Referral Member: Red
Community Score Average: 3.5/10

A self-identified mantis "good merge" insect spirit. Specializes in insect hunting. Membership association with Desolation Angels go-gang. Personally motivated, goals unknown.

SNOPES.BOT>

Unverified posts—72%. Debunked posts—0.02%

User: Ellis
Status: Probationary, consultant poster
Referral Member: ACCT DELETED
Community Score Average: 2.1/10

"Good merge" beta queen spirit ostensibly fused to Ares researcher Dr Aubrey Ellis. Leader of the Detroit Freehive. Extensive knowledge of Ares insect research operations and metagenetic fusion. Politically motivated, seeks acceptance for the Freehive.

SNOPES.BOT>

Unverified posts—86.8%. Debunked posts—0%

User: Mamelu
Status: Probationary, consultant poster
Referral Member: ...Loading...
Community Score Average: 8.8/10

Great Feathered Serpent known as Arleesh. Relatively young for a great dragon. Specializes in hunting metaphysical threats. Personally motivated, seeks the destruction of supernatural invaders. Activity verified from Shadowland. Note: Cryptic, but less so than most dragons.

SNOPES.BOT>

Unverified posts—13.8%. Debunked posts—0%

HAVE YOU HEARD THE BUZZ?

POSTED BY: PRAXIS

I understand your own Many-Names once described what we are to a famous reporter, a long time ago. Forgive me, but I would dare to surpass you with a more intimate understanding of what you are hunting ... or who you are hunting with.

- > Wisdom comes of experience. Bias springs from intimacy.
- > Many-Names
- > And intimacy breeds wisdom, my friend.
- > Praxis
- > I know life well enough to shun purity.
- > Many-Names
- > Then color it with your own insights, as any painter understands every work changes by a new day's light.
- > Praxis
- > Light is knowledge.
- > Many-Names
- > Perspective is shadow, shadowrunner.
- > Praxis

What you call insect spirits are known in the old tongue as *invae*, a class of spirits native to a deep metaplane known as the Hive. What is the Hive? A place so far removed from your own as to make existing there toxic, a vast and expansive dimension of infinitely winding tunnels and chambers, stripped of resource and overpopulated with massive alien beings in formats not too different from your own Earth insects.

I cannot account for the correlation between bugs and *invae*. I, myself, am a mantid, and our psychology and lifecycles share a number of similarities with the Earth praying mantis. More than that, many types of *invae* and insects appear synchronized between dimensions—and therein lies a rather fascinating line of theory regarding the relationship between our two worlds, especially considering that they are so very anathematic to one another.

- > Meaning you don't know?
- > Ethernaut
- > Meaning there are ancient connections between this world and far-flung metaplanes. Is it not possible the Earth is, in fact, a crossroads of distant worlds? Certainly there is a unique nature to it, combining so many aspects of different worlds that have far more unity of purpose and expression.
- > Mamelu

- > So our world is just the crunch between alien dimensions?
- > Ethernaut
- > Or the runoff pit?
- > Lyrn
- > I prefer to think of it as a melange of the best and worst of the whole universe. We are quite lucky.
- > Mamelu
- > Yay.
- > Slamm-O!

ENTOMOLOGICAL ECOLOGY

The Hive, being as overcrowded as it is, needs room to grow. Consider that the whole metaplane is filled to bursting with *invae*, and *invae* have a psychological need to breed and expand like any other lifeform. We do not come to Earth out of hate, but hunger. We need room, and we need breeding stock. The Earth is a perfect place for us.

Breeding is a tricky concept. In the Hive, we do not require hosts. But existing here, in an otherwise hostile metaplane, we require you in order to adapt. The hostility is called *evanescence*, while the adaptation takes the form of *inhabitation*.

Evanescence is the effect on an astral body in an environment to which they are not accustomed. You might consider the dissolution of a metahuman soul into the aether when separated from their body too long as a form of this. I like to theorize that you belong here as much as we do, and simply have the benefit of being born into a body built for it from the start. We must acquire our own, and you are not supplying us with viable clonal bodies to inhabit. For a more terrestrial example, it would be akin to living in a place with too little oxygen and slowly suffocating, or even in an airless environment. You need to adapt, or you will perish.

- > I'd bet that the "viable" clone hosts she's talking about are the same ones infected can feed on, and that have the ability to wake up and be fully sapient.
- > Doc Fangs
- > It's fine to simply consider them viable at all. Anything less is waste material and constitutes perhaps seventy percent of all clonal attempts. It's a very inefficient industry, but for the moment, irreplaceable.
- > KAM
- > Oh, so Tamanous is a cottage industry, now? Home-grown organic produce?
- > Bung
- > Just stop.
- > Hannibelle

Inhabitation is the means. By wrapping a meta-human host into an egg cocoon, a queen or mother spirit can invest one of her children into the egg, where it consumes the metahuman soul, replacing it. The more cooperative the being, the more likely we are to obtain its appearance, skills, and memories as a “flesh form.” The more resilient of will can deny their flesh to the invae, but it will not save their life or their soul. They hatch as a true form, the spirit as it once was in the Hive, but now adapted to exist in your world. The most common compromise is what you call a hybrid form, a meta-human body with a some degree of mutation into the shape of its claimant spirit. Some mutations are minor and capable of being concealed, such as sunglasses covering compound eyes, or chitinous dermal plates hidden under a shirt. The more extreme mutations often express in what you would likely consider monstrous forms, twisted but strong.

- How can you talk about this so calmly? It's disgusting.
- Chainmaker
- I've seen your account. For someone who stands up so vigilantly for metahuman rights, you seem painfully unaware of the autocannibalistic nature of your species. Is there much difference between us?
- Praxis
- It's unnatural.
- Pistons
- Nature is far greater than your one little world. In fact, I daresay it teaches us horror, at times. The botfly lays its eggs in the eyes of still-living creatures, including metahuman children. It eats its way out. This is the nature you defend? If that is the standard to which we are judged, I say you are mad, and I am innocent.
- Praxis

THE INVITATION

It's worth noting that it requires metahuman complicity to come to this world. We require hosts and cannot come here to pave the way for others without help. A shaman is required to bridge the gap between worlds, to prepare the space that will become the hive or nest, to prepare the hosts for the firstborn of the newcomers.

- Who in their right mind would ever make that deal?
- /dev/grll
- There is, to date, no documented insect shaman who would be considered in their right mind. Insect avatars tend to reach out to those with a fragile psyche, exploiting a crisis of faith or a personality imbalance to offer a sense of belonging. Extant shamans see their avatars consumed by the precipitating swarm, while more hermetic styles see their thoughts consumed

with alien formulae which redefine their sense of reality.

Regardless, as far as I know, the closest any healthy Awakened individual has come to being contacted is a strange dream, easily forgotten. Those who become Insect Shamans never wake up from it.

- Ellis
- How come they can't make the journey without a shaman?
- Beaker
- It's a long, long way. Longer than you can imagine. And across that vast gulf, to travel into greater danger, without a beacon in the storm. It is very easy to get lost. I can promise you, many are the invae who make the pilgrimage from the Hive, overflowing into the aether seeking new lands and opportunities. Here, we must make contact first. The spirit who could make the journey on its own, without aid, connection, or guidance, would be of unimaginable power at its outset, and arrive winnowed and weak, and with no host to shelter it.
- Praxis

The slow beginnings of a hive have their roots in the limitations of a proxy like a shaman. The ritual to summon an invae can take weeks to complete, and they take their toll on the shaman. One by one, servants of the hive are made. The shaman's work is slow but faithful, and this slothly pace makes them hard to detect. The odd missing person from the unwanted of metahumanity is easy to disguise. Once the queen is summoned, the possibilities for mass investment are realized. The shaman's abilities pale in comparison, but the broken limits increase the ambition of the hive, and more vanish at once, almost brazenly in some cases. This is the most likely time for metahuman hunters to discover it and still have a chance to take it down.

The shaman is the de facto leader of any hive or nest until enough power and knowledge is gained to summon the queen/mother, at which point the shaman usually becomes a pawn, puppet, catspaw, or simply expendable. More than a few queens devour their shaman as their first fleshly act. After all, their purpose has been served, and they become more a liability than anything. The queen can do everything the shaman could do and more, and eliminating an unstable element, no matter how loyal, fits into the plan easily.

- I heard mantids are different.
- Rifleman
- For us, the shaman is a partner. Every female can breed, so a mother is unnecessary. Once we have fed upon enough rival invae, we can birth a new mantid ourselves. And we find sympathetic hosts much easier to acquire, meaning many of us need not bother with true forms.
- Praxis



- › Curious. That feels similar to the path we follow. Do you believe alliance is possible?
- › Ellis
- › With all respect, your highness, it is difficult to see any other invae as anything but prey. But who knows? Adaptation is the hallmark of survival, and your kind certainly are ... different.
- › Praxis
- › Then there is hope.
- › Ellis
- › Mom, Dad, the monsters are plotting in the parlor!
- › Bung

The goal of any hive is to expand. It is a natural instinct, and it drives every action of the majority of natural insect spirits you may encounter. The form of this expansion is dependent on the breed and the queen or mother guiding them. Some maintain a relatively militant stance, while others seek integration or subterfuge. Some seek mortal influence, while others desire isolation and hunting. Some work in cells, others in massive hive complexes. Philosophy and ability define the tactics of the invae, so that fighting a roach is different from fighting a firefly, and fighting two different wasp nests may require very disparate strategies.

- › With that all in mind, let's give a brief synopsis of the history of bug spirits in the Sixth World. Large portions of this text will be posted by our contributors, just so you know the format going in.
- › Glitch

THE UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD

POSTED BY: RED

For most metahumans, the first real encounter, knowingly or (more often) not, with bugs was the Universal Brotherhood. A multi-national charity organization formed in 2043, it offered a fresh start for those at the end of their rope. For everyone from disillusioned corporates and jaded celebrities to shell-shocked, chromed-out samurai and burned-out mages—and an ocean of the dispossessed, the homeless, and the SINless—the UB had food, shelter, rehab, and counseling for a world of people reeling from the rush and crush of the past few decades. The Awakening, Goblinization, the Matrix, cyberware, and any number of national and corporate identities rising and falling took a toll on the world's psychological well-being, and the UB positioned themselves to address the needs that created.

For many, there was the eternal question: who profits? For most, it was easy enough to see

that their political clout and extraordinary connections at all levels of society gave them enormous resources. Employment of folks looking for a second chance, whether it was a homeless chiphead or an executive looking for greater meaning, meant they commanded extraordinary manpower, and their charities and public works events equaled an income that turned even AAA corp heads. That was answer enough for the average salaryman, but niche cultures like conspiracy boards, shadow networks, and investigative reporters wanted to know what was behind the curtain. The UB had crashed onto the scene with significant resources and manpower to start with, and their leaders were experts at turning conversations away from their origins to their padded résumés of benevolent intent.

It was in that last group that the case would first see a crack. By this time, the Universal Brotherhood had over three hundred chapterhouses in North America, with another one hundred across the world, and a membership that had grown from one hundred to more than 35,000 in just seven years, with more joining every day. NewsNet journalists Zebediah Wanderly and Frederick Davitt uncovered the Brotherhood's roots as an invae-worshipping cult born from a neo-psychology commune. Assisted by a few shadowrunners, they barely survived an encounter with several of the Brotherhood's hybrid protectors and enforcers. Their escape was short-lived. Davitt was silenced first, as the partners were preparing their exposé, then Wanderly was killed while uploading their discoveries—now known as “Universal Brotherhood: A Web of Deceit”—onto Shadowland. Even then, it was widely disregarded as delusional conspiracy ranting, muckraking, or plain libel, and very few took it seriously. The Universal Brotherhood, through their connections, discredited Davitt and Wanderly, burying the tale at the source. Investigations were covered up by UB forces working within Lone Star, and it would be some time before another group of runners would discover a hardcopy backup and upload it.

- Hey, Many-Names, you were part of that whole thing, if I recall correctly?
- Slamm-O!
- We all have parts to play. I knew the swarm was coming and knew to avoid its path.
- Many-Names
- I can't tell if that sounds like you're a traitor or a coward.
- Clockwork
- You are a fool, regardless.
- Many-Names

Five years would pass until 2055, when several incidents across the world, such as Project Hope in Seattle, would reveal the existence of insect spirits, their hives, and their connection to the Universal Brotherhood to the intelligence agencies of the world. Rapid sharing of this information with other government entities led to a unified effort to shut down chapterhouses, arrest personnel, and seize assets as quickly as possible, while Ares, who seemed to have prepared for this in advance, deployed Firewatch teams to deal with the direct threat of bug spirits and hives. The truth of the Brotherhood was kept concealed from the public to avoid panic and private reprisals, and likely to keep from tipping their hand against the bugs in charge of it all. Despite their best efforts, the truth would out in the most disastrous fashion that same year.

- How did it take so long for people to figure it out? You'd think that many missing persons would raise some alarms.
- Chainmaker
- Weren't you paying attention? The UB had bureaucracy to lose people in. It had lots of good merges who could keep existing, never vanishing but taking their place and spreading the gospel. And a lot of the ugly true forms could be hidden in the hives.
- /dev/grrl
- And for all that, their greatest asset was patience and plausibility. That's all it takes to get in. Patience and a good excuse. It was revolutionary for the invae, an absolute masterstroke, and were it not for shadowrunners like you, it might have continued until it was far too late.
- Mamelu
- And it nearly was.
- Praxis

THE BREAKOUT

2055 was the year we lost Chicago. For me, it is a very personal loss. I grew up there, before the world you all knew existed. Standing in its ash and shadow, I still feel the echoes of what once was.

Forgive me. It's hard to see what home has become.

Chicago had seen more than its fair share of tragedy by that time. The Alamos 20K bombing of the Sears Tower, resulting in the Shattergrave hauntings, the unofficial rechristening of the Loop into the Noose, and the struggles of the Cabrini Green Ghouls Community under the leadership of the visionary Tamir Grey had lent the city an air of despair and struggle for a long time. The Brotherhood had taken root deep in that wound, and their numbers were significant. No one could have known the hive that was buried beneath the surface was the largest yet encountered in North America (perhaps the world), or that a massive effort to invest thousands of new bugs was currently

in progress. The Ares Firewatch team sent to eradicate the megahive was unprepared for the opposition they would face. Insect spirits overwhelmed the troops, swarming out of the hive and across the city in a killing frenzy. Government reaction was simultaneously too much and too little—and regardless, too late. The UCAS Army established the Containment Zone around central Chicago, using barricades, weapon emplacements, and armed patrols to restrain the chaos. Ares forces trapped inside the zone finally wiped out a gathering of queens with a sub-tactical nuclear device, but the real damage was already done—and no degree of spin or influence could cover it up.

The world now knew about insect spirits.

THE HIVE WARS

In the years that followed, bugs may have become public knowledge, but the war against them took place in the shadows. The average salaryman didn't want to think about alien bug beings, not with corporate war on the horizon and every other ounce of weirdness they'd already been through. Chicago was, for most, far away, and the distant hive towers in Africa, Australia, and remote regions of Asia and the Amazon were someone else's problem. Better to listen to the news and hear that Ares has successfully bagged another bughouse. Yay, Ares!

I won't steal the glory of the Firewatch teams who cleared out the egg chambers, but the world will probably never know that runners like us were responsible for a lot of that success. From private investigators to mercenaries to vigilantes to plain old street scum shadow assets, we were the ones called in to find the missing people and magic the bugs had run off with. The rumor mill only further muddies the waters. Some wanted a piece of the glory or to tell a tall tale to stretch the shadow of their rep, while others wouldn't know an invae if they saw one, and thought putting two in the head of a wyrd mantis or even a bug-like proto-changeling meant they were bughunters, now. Personally, I believe several groups of runners got inside the Octagon, the Seattle UB chapterhouse, before the breakout, and no one believed them. Street legends say the Emerald City Ripper was linked to the bugs, that classic simflick star Euphoria got snatched by them and *Against the Hive* uses actual footage from the runners who tried to save her, that Renraku got taken for a ride with Project Hope, that Kyle Haeffner colluded with the bugs after his wife was turned into a queen, that Amber Gel was actually some kind of insect nectar to prime hosts for inhabitation, that the Fuchi Collapse was a cover for ousting the now-invested board, that the 2057 election had interference from wasp spirits, that *Donna Allegra Fuselli* of the Calabrian N'drangheta is host to a Wasp or Ant Queen ... the list goes on and on.

- > Anybody ever notice Amber Gel was blue? Why even call it Amber Gel if you're going to make it blue?
- > Bung
- > I'm never going to believe that Renraku didn't know about the bugs when they teamed up with the UB for Project Hope. Turning all those homeless folks into drones ... sounds just like them.
- > Pistons
- > Cut 'em a break. Aneki was calling the shots back then, and he was more interested in utopian corporate societies in arcologies led by mega-AIs.
- > Renraku Fox
- > One hive or another.
- > Many-Names
- > By any other name, eh?
- > Bung
- > Eh?
- > Bung
- > What, nobody?
- > Bung
- > No, we heard you.
- > Netcat
- > I didn't miss you.
- > Bull
- > Yes you did. *You all did.*
- > Bung
- > More rumors said Dunklezahn had an idea what was coming and tipped off Knight. That or he straight up made him take action in exchange for his help with the Nanosecond Buyout.
- > Mr Bonds
- > Why do you think he was so ready with the Firewatch deployment? Or had the idea to buy the Aegis prototypes of weaponized FAB from Telestrian?
- > MDG
- > Now how did you know about that?
- > Nightfire
- > 2058 saw the Ares deployment of Strain 3 FAB (Beta or Delta, depending on your source) to combat the infestation in the Chicago Containment Zone. Of course, it didn't really work as well as intended and not only lingered for years but killed off a lot of the ghouls taking shelter in Cabrini. The area's astral is still fucked beyond belief, despite steady reclamation efforts.
- > Hannibelle

In the time since, the bugs have never been able to gain another foothold like they had with the UB. The Brotherhood was a massive political and social station from which to gain unparalleled access to influence, resources, and hosts. Once they were outed, everyone had their eye out, and no few witch hunts took place, with people accusing one another of being bugs in disguise. It can be argued that they don't have the advantage anymore, and they're only able to take root in places of desperation and isolation, such as Kowloon Walled City or the Australian Outback. The odd attempt is made here and there to establish a new stealth front from which to operate in the open, but if any have taken root, they've stayed relatively quiet or have found ways to integrate in the open.

- > In the open? How?
- > Pistons
- > Sometimes it's an alliance of convenience, which is by far the greater share of reputable association. Consider the Desolation Angels. They (sometimes we) have a vested interest in hunting more aggressive and invasive invae, and our hosts are willing to offer themselves for a chance to strike against our shared enemy. Alternately, some breeds, like bees, have been known to make a show of symbiotic existence, but I stress it's a show.
- > Praxis
- > The lost and the desperate have been known to accept merging at the thought of a better life, but that's a whole lotta loss and desperation. Kowloon, as they say, but also pockets in Chicago, just to name one more, where hunger and isolation led to a mythology of ascension rather than consumption. It's lies, but a lie tastes better than nothing for some people.
- > Chainmaker
- > Now we all get to choose how to feel about those people: disgust or pity?
- > Kay St. Irregular
- > Maybe what we *do* for those people is more important, hmmm?
- > Sunshine

THE DETROIT CONNECTION

In the '50s and '60s, rumors (reports, if you believe their sources) put Ares "in control" of several queens and shamans of varied types. Their intention was to brainwash the shamans and even the bugs, investing animals to create a new breed of manufactured and engineered paracritters that might be used against the insects and other Awakened threats.

- > Ares had other, far more secure facilities at their disposal for direct raids into the Hive, including mana bubbles with sustained portals on Daedalus Station.
- > Ellis

- > They've got sustained manaspheres—in space—just for raiding the hive?
- > Ethernaut
- > Can you imagine a safer place to stage from, should the bugs counterattack?
- > Lyrax
- > Ellis, I think you better take over from here. You know the story better, insofar as Detroit is concerned.
- > Red

ALPHA, BETA, EVOLUTION, ADAPTATION

POSTED BY: ELLIS

The Ares projects for the taming of invae have been in operation for decades, beginning with the first captured flesh form hybrids. The concept of turning the enemy into a weapon is an old one, and repurposing a self-manufacturing foe into a fighting force is logical, if infinitely more complicated when it is an alien metaplanar lifeform. Still, Damien Knight is, or was, nothing if not unambitious.

My project received its major breakthroughs from two events. First, the capture of a good merge, revealing the insect capacity of absorbing metahuman knowledge from a host, including their skillsets and training, expanding our portfolio of potential uses for invae agents. Second, the death of the great dragon Dunkelzahn. His loss saw a sudden boost of funding for the taming programs. I can only assume that the loss of such an asset motivated Knight to fill in the gap with the power he saw even the president feared.

- > His fear was for all of you. We have survived the invae before, and they did not represent a significant threat to us then, at least in the open. It is their ability to subvert and conquer from within which represents their greatest danger, and Dunkelzahn had the greatest respect and optimism for metahumanity. It was a noble concept, and perhaps he will be proven right. But that's on all of you to fulfill.
- > Mamelu
- > You folks just don't know how to be anything but condescending, do you?
- > Bull
- > Are you so nice to the devil rats and dogs of the world? You may become great, but from this vast difference of perspective, you are very temporary, and very foolish. I hope you do not see this as an insult, but rather as a challenge. Prove me wrong. Prove

the old Loremaster right. Improve your world and seize your destiny.

> Mamelu

The project began with the investiture of animals. ASIST and psychopharmacological conditioning for the captured insect shamans made them loyal to Ares, if in a twisted form. The shamans would then make investitures of low-volition/intelligent spirits into animals, which nigh-universally manifest as flesh forms, lacking the capacity to submit to inhabitation but also the will to fight to the point of manifesting a true form. These were the first of our bio-weapons.

> Can you extrapolate on “twisted?”

> Red

> Certainly. We found that the loyalty of the shamans was absolute and all-consuming, so supplanting it resulted in mental breaks, up to and including catatonic depression, fugues, extreme dissociative disorder, and personality fragmentation. The last was where we made our breakthrough, finding ways to re-integrate personalities with loyalties to either Ares or their queen. The result did not subvert Hive loyalties but instead painted Ares as a sympathetic faction that would assist in the expansion of population and control.

> Ellis

> Not entirely untrue.

> Lyrn

> It was a ruse to get them to cooperate, but I can understand that perspective. The results certainly support it, with bleak irony.

> Ellis

It was only in the past few years that raids into the Hive had revealed that just as invae inhabit metahuman hosts to stave off evanescence, so, too, can metahumans “invest” into invae in their home plane, rendering the former metahuman immune but in full control of their abilities and immune to metaplanar aural dissonance syndrome. Some would become, effectively, flesh forms, but with a human in control, while others would manifest as true form humans now immune to the Hive’s deep metaplanar frequency. The “best” were the true forms, who could integrate seamlessly with the population of a hive and infiltrate their ranks for research and sabotage.

I have documented in a previous posting about Detroit exactly what took place after, and how I came to head the Beta Project, which was designed to create infiltration agents. The mission had a secondary protocol: to find a way to use the merge attunement protocols for Hive raiders to effectively use invae to “Awaken” metahumans. A metahuman might be co-opted into becoming a good merge host and used for infiltration, while a

bad merging would result in an insect spirit who gained nothing more than an attunement to this plane, and that meant a bad “reverse-merging” with an insect might result in a human, still in their natural form, but augmented with invae abilities.

> Holy shit, that’s the Holy Grail. Awakening on tap. Marketable immortality.

> Lyrn

> I ... can’t ... I just ...

> Plan 9

> 9? 9?

> Plan 10

> Welp, there it is: Reality turned out to be so strange, it broke Plan 9.

> Snopes

The project might have been a success, except for several side effects that were never a part of the original paradigm. The merging process does not overwrite the original consciousness or personality of either the human or invae, but instead truly merges them into a singular identity. Neither soul dies, but instead hybridizes into a new form. This has resulted in numerous abilities manifesting, with no reliable means to design which one will come to be in any given merge.

From my supervisor’s perspective, this was almost an insurmountable design failure, but for Dr Ellis, and the queen who would eventually become a part of her, we saw the need for the invae to evolve. Metahumanity is too powerful, too clever to be treated as a resource. We cannot be a predator or parasite and hope to survive. Instead, we must become a symbiotic member of society and civilization.

The fall of the UCAS, beginning with Detroit, gave us a chance to emerge from the shadows, and we have since done our best to prove our good will toward metahumanity. This will be a long road, but it is one worth walking. Speaking as a scientist, humanity is spiraling. Speaking as a Queen, horrors are coming. Speaking as Ellis, I pray we stand strong together against the coming darkness and stand together in the light of a new day.

GAME INFORMATION

Note: The magics described in this chapter are considered dark and obscure practices, which is why they are separated into their own chapter. Gamemasters and players should agree that these are elements they want to include in their game, and the view the world has of these powers and phenomena should be a part of the ongoing story. These are not powers that people simply see and

accept; if the use of these powers is noticed, people will react.

NEW METAMAGIC: SACRIFICE

This metamagic technique allows an initiate to walk the path of Blood, commonly referred to as blood magic, and can be learned by magicians, aspected magicians, and adepts. At its core, this technique allows a magician to tap into the power of blood by inflicting physical wounds on a living victim to generate Blood Magic Points (BMP) and then use those points to enhance and empower their use of magic. It is the when, who, how, and why that determines which variant of blood magic is being used, and the kind of magic the practitioner uses determines what can be done. Sacrifice can only be learned from another initiate, or from a spirit that knows it; it is never self-taught.

Blood magic is split into two flavors: life magic and death magic. Which is used determines how Blood Magic Points are obtained and the results of using them, as well as whether the initiate risks damnation.

GENERATING BLOOD MAGIC POINTS

To generate Blood Magic Points, the initiate must inflict physical damage, which must be done with a melee weapon. Knives and other bladed weapons, as well as claws and fangs, are the norm, but so long as it's a melee weapon that inflicts physical damage, it can be used. Any living creature with a physical body can be used to generate BMP, including spirits with the Inhabitation power (such as bug spirits).

Melee attacks to generate BMP can occur as part of the magic use Major Action or on their own—even as the result of an Anytime action. BMP last for two combat rounds plus the turn they were generated in, after which the power seeps out of the initiate with no negative effects (aside from being covered in blood).

Willing Victim: To generate BMP from a willing victim, including yourself, no dice roll is necessary for the attack and the initiate can inflict a number of boxes equal to the Damage Value of the weapon they are using. However, due to the nature of living bodies, a Damage Resistance test is still made—unless you are inflicting the wound on yourself. This means that using a willing victim other than yourself is risky. For every two boxes of physical damage inflicted, a blood mage generates 1 BMP, but the initiate can always choose to inflict a single box of damage on themselves to generate 1 BMP.

Unwilling Victim: Generating BMP from an unwilling victim is more fruitful, but it is always death magic and comes with all the risks associated with using blood magic in that manner. If the target is restrained in some way, the initiate gets a +4 dice

pool bonus on their melee Attack action, and the test is unopposed as the target cannot defend themselves. Otherwise, it is a normal melee Attack action. For every box of physical damage inflicted, the mage generates 1 BMP. The initiate can choose to use less than the full number of net hits rolled to reduce the final Damage Value the target must resist with Damage Resistance, but this can reduce the final number of boxes inflicted and thus generates less BMP. In the case of a victim that is restrained, as commonly occurs during various religious ceremonies in Aztlan, treat the victim as unwilling for purposes of generating BMP. Non-sapient critters are always considered unwilling victims.

Death of the Victim: Sometimes, the victim dies, even willing ones. It's the way of the world, after all. Drawing power from blood can be a final act. This means if the initiate uses all of the boxes of damage inflicted to generate BMP and it is enough to push the victim beyond Overflow, the victim dies a final death as their soul is ripped from their body and instantly expires, and the number of BMP generated is increased by the victim's Essence (round up, minimum 1). If the magician controls the level of damage enough so that the victim is not pushed beyond Overflow, the victim can be stabilized and healed as per normal.

USING BLOOD MAGIC POINTS

Blood Magic Points can be used in various ways, though some have more risk associated than others.

- Reduce the Drain Value of a usage of magic by 1 for each BMP spent (to a minimum of 0), before the Drain Resistance test.
- When comparing the final amount of drain after a Drain Resistance test, each point of BMP spent raises the magician's Magic rank by two for purposes of determining whether drain is physical or stun.
- Pay for adjustments to spells such as Amp Up or Increase Area, one adjustment per BMP spent. Any use of BMP to pay for adjustments changes one of the dice in the Sorcery test to the wild die. If all dice have been changed to wild dice, no further BMP may be spent on that spell.
- Reduce the threshold for Health spells (or any spell where Essence is a factor) by 1 for every 2 BMP spent, to a minimum of 0.
- (Adept only) As a Minor Action, increase any physical attribute by 1 (the maximum of +4 per attribute applies) for every 3 BMP spent. The adept can boost multiple physical attributes with the same Minor Action, and the boost lasts for (Magic x Initiate Grade) combat rounds. If the adept pays Karma equal to the number of points of attributes boosted, the boosts last for (Magic x Initiate Grade) days.

- Transfer to an athame (below).
- Power spells, rituals, and preparations with the Blood descriptor. Unless otherwise stated, this use of blood magic is death magic.
- (Death magic only) Summon a blood spirit (p. 159)
- (Death magic only) Use instead of Edge as partial or full payment for Edge Boosts or Actions at 1 BMP = 1 Edge.

LIFE MAGIC

An altruistic use of blood magic can be considered life magic, such as a healer who uses it to power a healing spell or a protector who uses it to power a combat spell to eliminate a threat to a loved one. When declaring the use of blood magic, the player must explain why they believe the use is altruistic, but the gamemaster has final say.

Life magic is almost exclusively used by the magician on themselves, as they give of their own life force to power the spell; in rare occasions a willing subject with a strong connection to the target or purpose of the spell can be used. These are typically a family member (such as a mother willingly accepting injuries to help her child) or someone with a strong emotional bond (such as a lover or very close friend). Gamemasters are encouraged to consider the actions of the player character toward a contact when determining whether an NPC fits the bill, though a contact with a Loyalty rating of 9 or more would be the most likely to qualify. Determining if a player character would fit the bill is subject to gamemaster approval, but the roleplaying of the players should shape that decision.

Using life magic does not risk staining the magician's aura, but it still carries some small risk of addiction. After a scene or encounter in which an initiate used life magic, make a Logic + Willpower test, with a +4 dice pool bonus on the test (due to it being life magic). The threshold is the total number of Blood Magic Points earned in the scene divided by 4, rounded up, minimum of 1. If the character fails to meet the threshold, they gain the Addiction (Blood Magic, 1) negative quality without receiving any bonus Karma. Each time a person fails this test, the level of the addiction increases by 1—but on the sorta plus side for them, they'll just come across as a flagellant.

KICKING THE HABIT

Rules for getting and staying clean, and thus removing addictions, will appear in a future book. And even then, addiction to Blood Magic has a mystical element to it which will make it more difficult. If you get addicted to Blood Magic, take it as a sign to ease off the juice.

DEATH MAGIC

Ripping tendrils of blood from an unwilling victim at the same time as casting killer combat spells left and right: this is the use of blood magic most people in the Sixth World are familiar with (if they even know about blood magic to begin with). Death magic is the sole province of NPCs, and any player character that uses it instantly becomes an NPC.

Death magic has two very significant downsides: It stains the aura of the magician that uses it, and it's highly addictive. The first use of death magic automatically causes the character to gain the Addiction (Blood Magic, 1) negative quality without receiving any bonus Karma. Additionally, after a scene/encounter in which an initiate used Death Magic, make a Logic + Willpower test, with a -4 penalty on the test (due to it being death magic). The threshold is the total number of Blood Magic Points earned in the scene divided by 3, rounded up, to a minimum of 2. If a magician fails to meet the threshold, the level of the Addiction (Blood Magic) quality goes up by 1 and can exceed the usual limit of 6 for this negative quality—those with addiction levels of 6+ are stark raving lunatics—whatever sanity they once had is gone, possibly forever. Most NPCs should be considered to have Addiction (Blood Magic, 3) at least, with gamemasters choosing the level of addiction to give their NPCs as befits their background and the story.

Practitioners of death magic must also contend with a stain on their very soul, which can be detected through Assensing. To detect the stain of death magic, a magician needs 6 - (level of the Addiction negative quality) net hits on the Assensing test; it is net hits since death magic users can attempt to hide it with the masking metamagic technique.

HEALING BLOOD MAGIC DAMAGE

Physical damage inflicted during the generation of Blood Magic Points cannot be healed with magic or first aid, but medkits and rest are able to heal this damage without any long-lasting physiological side effects—as is Edge, of course.

NEW METAMAGIC FOCUS: ATHAME

Athame is the name given to a kind of focus used exclusively by blood mages. Traditional athames were ceremonial daggers or knives, and the first modern foci took this form. Aztec blood mages were among the first to be seen using them since the Awakening, in the form of sharpened daggers made from obsidian. Lately, blood mages of other traditions have been making athames

in forms more keeping with their own traditions, such as the razor-edged flint axes of the Native American blood shamans or a sickle used by some blood mages in India. An initiate must know the sacrifice metamagic to bond or craft an athame.

An athame must take the form of a melee weapon that can inflict Physical damage, and it functions the same as a weapon focus (p. 155, SR6) of the same Force. However, athames have an added element that weapon foci do not have: They can be used to store Blood Magic Points. To store BMP in an athame, the focus must have been activated (and is thus active in the astral plane) at the time the magician uses the sacrifice metamagic to generate BMP. The initiate can choose to store up to the athame's Force in BMP, and they can transfer the points at any time before they expire by taking a Minor Action on their turn. This one action can transfer as many points as the athame can hold.

Blood Magic Points stored within the athame last for as long as the focus is active; if it is disrupted or deactivated, any BMP are lost. The points within the athame can be used at any time by the initiate as per the normal rules for using BMP.

It is possible to determine whether an athame is charged using assensing. Once a magician has identified that another Awakened has an athame, they can assense the focus' aura specifically to learn more about it. With one or two net hits on an Assensing test, the magician believes it to be a normal weapon focus; three net hits lets the magician know it is an athame; and four net hits tells the magician if it's charged—that is, if any BMP are stored within the focus (but not how many). This is in addition to the usual information obtained from a focus' aura when assensing (see **Assensing Table**, p. 159, SR6).

ATHAME

BONDING COST (IN KARMA)	AVAILABILITY	COST
Force x 4	(Force + 4) I	Force x 12,500¥

BLOOD SPIRITS

Perhaps the most chilling use of blood magic is summoning blood spirits. These spirits often take the form of twisted parodies of life, such as clouds of clotting blood drops with anguished and dying faces shifting within their form, or hideous amalgamations of animal characteristics with claws or teeth dripping with gore. Perhaps the most frightening are the twisted metahuman forms with gaping, bleeding mortal wounds and an eerily familiar face to those who know the metahuman sacrificed to bring this abomination forth.

Blood spirits are transient things that slowly de-

grade over time as the energies employed in their initial (very violent) summoning begin to fade. In order to replenish their energies, blood spirits have the Essence Drain power. While they can replenish themselves from any living creature, blood spirits prefer the Essence of metahumans and rarely venture far from where metahumans can be found. Blood spirits will almost always stay within (Force x 100) meters of metahumans.

The maximum Force of the spirit depends upon the creatures being sacrificed, as multiple creatures can be used to power a single spirit summoning. Consult the **Blood Spirit Table** for the Force generated based on the sacrificial victim, then add them all together to reach the maximum Force the victims at hand can summon.

BLOOD SPIRIT TABLE

SACRIFICE	FORCE
Small animal (cat, rat, chicken)	1
Medium animal (dog, ocelot)	2
Large animal (jaguar, horse)	3
Huge animal (elephant, hippo)	4
Awakened critter	+1
Mundane sentient	Essence
Awakened sentient	Magic or Essence, whichever is higher

SUMMONING BLOOD SPIRITS

The act of bringing forth a blood spirit is not quick, and it must include a ritual sacrifice of some kind, as the unleashing of mystical energies in the sacrifice provides the spark that brings the spirit to our world.

In order to summon a blood spirit, a magician who knows the sacrifice metamagic must find one or more living creatures to sacrifice. These creatures do not need to have the Sapience power; in fact, most creatures used are not sapient, but they have to meet the prerequisites for generating Blood Magic Points from drawing their blood. Outside of Aztlan (the only nation where this is not highly illegal), it is rare to find willing victims, so most victims will be restrained. These restraints need to be good, as the rite to summon the spirit will take several hours, and the victims must be conscious throughout—their fear is an essential part of the summoning.

Having prepared their victims, the blood mage can then begin the summoning. This takes a number of hours equal to the Force of the spirit being summoned, and at the end of this time the victims are sacrificed. Should the blood mage wish to extract some Blood Magic Points from the victims, they may do so, so long as they do not kill one of the victims prematurely.

Having made the sacrifice, the blood mage rolls Conjuring + Magic vs (Force x 2) and then must resist a Drain Value of twice the spirit's hits (not net hits). This is Stun damage unless it is higher than the blood mage's Magic rank, in which case it is Physical. Blood Magic Points may be used on this summoning as per the normal rules for death magic.

If the blood mage is knocked unconscious, the spirit goes uncontrolled, which is very bad news as the spirit will likely drain the summoner of Essence in order to survive. If the blood mage is still conscious after the summoning, the spirit owes a number of services equal to the magician's net hits on the Conjuring test. Blood spirits aren't time-limited; they remain in this world until they are disrupted, banished, or the blood mage who summoned them dies and they go free. Blood spirits, once summoned, can be re-summoned by making another Conjuring + Magic vs (Force x 2) test, again resisting a Drain Value equal to twice the spirit's hits, with net hits increasing the services owed to the magician. No new living victim need be sacrificed (though most blood mages do so), but Blood Magic Points equal to the Force of the spirit must be spent. Blood spirits are bestial things, so no other spirit cares how they are treated; actions by the summoner toward a blood spirit do not affect the blood mage's astral reputation in any way. The act of summoning a blood spirit impacts the blood mage's astral reputation, reducing it by the Force of the spirit summoned.

A blood mage can only have one blood spirit at a time, and its Force counts toward the maximum a magician can have summoned at any one time.

INVOKING GREAT FORM BLOOD SPIRITS

A blood mage who knows the Invocation metamagic can attempt to bring forth one of the most terrifying abominations known to metahumanity: the great form blood spirit. If a great form spirit is mean, these are Meaner (capital M is deliberate!).

When invoking a great form blood spirit, at least one of the victims sacrificed must be an Awakened metahuman or an Awakened critter with the Sapience critter power (such as a sasquatch). The summoning then follows the same rules as above to summon the spirit, and invoking it into a great form follows the rules for the Invocation metamagic (p. 122).

BLOOD SPIRIT STATS

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	M	ESS
F+4	F+2	F+1	F+3	F+1	F	F	F-1	F	F
AC		CM		MOVE					
A1, I3		(F/2)+8		5/10/+2					

Initiative: [(F x 2) + 1] +2D6

Astral Initiative: (F x 2) + 3D6

Defense Rating: F+4

Skills: Astral, Athletics, Close Combat, Outdoors, Perception

Powers: Astral Form, Binding, Engulf, Enhanced Senses (smell), Fear, Materialization

Weaknesses: Essence Loss (1 point per day)

Optional Powers: Concealment, Confusion, Guard, Movement, Natural Weapon (claws/bite), Noxious Breath

Attacks:

Optional claw/bite [DV (Force/2)P, Attack Ratings (F x 2) + 2/-/-/-/-]

Engulf [(DV (F + 2)S + Fatigue I, Attack Ratings (F x 2) + 1/-/-/-/-]

BLOOD MAGIC RITUALS AND ALCHEMY

This tome does not include specific rituals or alchemical preparations that have the Blood descriptor and are thus automatically death magic.

When blood magic is used with alchemy and ritual magic, Blood Magic Points can be substituted for reagents on a one-for-one basis. Whether this is Life Magic or Death Magic comes down to intent and where the magician gets their Blood Magic Points from. As always, the Gamemaster has final say.

BLOOD MAGIC SPELLS

The spells below require one Blood Magic Point to be spent, with no other benefit than being able to cast the spell. than to cast the spell in question. This BMP is not used for any other purpose.

BOIL BLOOD

(INDIRECT COMBAT, BLOOD)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV	DAMAGE
LOS	P	I	7	P, Special

The blood mage calls forth a gout of blood from the target and excites it before hurling it back at them, weakening them as well as doing Fire damage. This spell applies the Burning status with a rating equal to the number of net hits on the Spellcasting test, as well as the Bleeding status for (net hits) combat rounds. Amp Up spell adjustments may be applied.

BLEEDING STATUS

Whether you've been hit so hard your internal organs are damaged or you've been shredded with shrapnel (or just plain magic), this status reflects some form of ongoing internal or external bleeding. When you are Bleeding, you take 1P unresisted damage (at the end of the initiative round as with all other damaging statuses) for a period of time indicated along with the status (duration will be specified by the affect that applies this status). To cancel this status, some form of medical treatment (First Aid, medkit, any Heal spell) must be applied. Platelet factories bioware or the Regeneration critter power provide immunity to this status.

CHILLED CLARET

(DIRECT COMBAT, BLOOD)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV	DAMAGE
LOS	P	I	4	S, Special

The blood mage chills the blood running through the target's veins, slowing the target to allow easier capture as well as inflicting Stun damage. This spell imposes the Hobbled status for (net hits) Combat Rounds. If net hits are greater than Body or Willpower (whichever is higher), the target gains the Dazed status for 1 Combat Round. Amp Up spell adjustments may be applied.

CLOT

(HEALTH, BLOOD)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV	DAMAGE
Touch	P	L	4	—

The blood magician draws on the power of blood to magically enhance the blood's ability to clot and reduce injuries. The caster rolls Sorcery + Magic (5 – Essence); net hits on this test are the spell's maximum duration in combat rounds. When the target takes 2+ boxes of Physical damage, reduce the damage by 1. This spell eliminates (and provides immunity to) the Bleeding status. This spell does not stack with platelet factories bioware and cancels the Anticoagulant spell. Use of this spell can be considered life magic.

ANTICOAGULANT

(HEALTH, BLOOD, NEGATIVE)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV	DAMAGE
Touch	P	L	4	—

The blood mage enchants the blood of the target to increase damage. Caster rolls Sorcery + Magic vs Body + Willpower; net hits count as the maximum duration of the spell in combat rounds; the target gains the Bleeding status while the spell is sustained. When the target takes Physical damage, increase the number of boxes of damage by 1. This spell cancels the Clot spell.

BLOOD PUPPET

(MANIPULATION, BLOOD)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV	DAMAGE
LOS	P	L	4	—

The spellcaster calls out to the blood of the target, bewitching it to obey their commands. The caster may impose statuses on the target with a maximum duration of (net hits) combat rounds; they can switch statuses as the spell continues, though this does not change the duration. The sta-

tuses that may be imposed are: Bleeding, Burning 1 (cannot be countered or eliminated by physical means, though magical means may be used), Chilled, Fatigued I, and Panicked.

VISCERA WEB

(MANIPULATION, BLOOD)

RANGE	TYPE	DURATION	DV	DAMAGE
LOS	P	S	6	—

A horrific spell, this causes widespread rupturing across the target's body as their veins shoot out to adhere to the environment surrounding them, although non-living material—including clothing, gear, and cyberware—is not affected. This incapacitates them with extraordinary damage and pain, plus the fact that their living veins stick to the floor, walls, and ceiling. The caster rolls Sorcery + Magic vs. Willpower + Agility. If successfully cast, this spell applies the Immobilized status; if the caster's net hits are greater than the target's Body rank, this becomes the Stilled status instead.

The target of this spell may spend a Major Action on their turn to roll Body + Strength to break free, but doing so applies the Bleeding status with a duration equal to the caster's net hits in combat rounds, and inflicts (net hits) Physical damage (resisted normally). Alternatively, a friend can cut the character away, thus removing Stilled or Immobilized statuses—but doing so also causes the Bleeding status and damage as if the target had broken free. Should an ally use appropriate care to free the target of this spell (succeeding in a Biotech + Logic (4) test), the target suffers no damage and does not gain the Bleeding status. This takes 1 minute and requires medical supplies (such as a medkit).

EVANESCENCE

Across the vast stretches of metaplanar space, there exist incalculable forms of life. Generally speaking, the further from “home” one travels, the less hospitable the environment becomes. For deep metaplanar entities such as insect spirits, the Gaiasphere is a hostile place. For every day such spirits reside in the local astral space, their Force is permanently reduced by one as the plane tears away at them. Complete dissolution results in it vanishing from the Gaiasphere (this may mean death or simply being ejected back to their home plane; none know for sure). The only means of self-preservation is to anchor oneself through Inhabitation or Possession. For some beings, this can mean existence within an object or reliquary, or, in the case of insects and their ilk, living hosts.

Spirits subject to Evanesence can slow this degrading by first being summoned or bound by a mage, resulting in losing one point of Force perma-

nently for every week instead of a daily loss. This protection is retained even if the spirit goes free.

As a beneficial side effect of their alien nature, evanescent astral forms are harder to detect via as-sensing while in full astral form and find greater ease in bypassing magical barriers. Thresholds for tests to assense them are increased by 1, and Edge Boosts costs 1 less when they attempt to bypass magical barriers.

While an exorcism of an inhabiting insect spirit is currently thought impossible, should such an event occur and the spirit is ejected, it is immediately subject to Evanescence decay again.

INSECT TRADITION

Insect shamans are usually recruited from extant Awakened, erasing and consuming their original paradigm of magic in favor of the ways of the Hive, and specifically the queen or mother spirit connecting to them. While more experienced insect shamans may develop their patrons' peculiar perks and perils like any other mage with a mentor spirit, the psychic shock of adapting to a new tradition leaves most of them without any advantages or disadvantages.

- **Combat:** Soldier
- **Detection:** Scout
- **Health:** Caretaker
- **Illusion:** Nymph
- **Manipulation:** Worker
- **Drain:** Willpower + Intuition

Insect shamans have no ability to purchase spells commercially. The nature of one insect mentor's magic is different from another, especially between different breeds. To the outsider, their casting looks like a nonsensical collection of sudden, spasmodic movements accompanied by clicks, whistles, and chitters, made all the more alien by their use of a metahuman mouth clearly not designed to generate them, though the spell becomes horrifyingly clearer if they manifest their shamanic mask (see p. 114). These spells are acquired purely through their queen/mother patron, with the formula's cost spent as ritual equipment to commune for the knowledge.

Players are strongly discouraged from playing insect shamans. The nature of their conversion is a jarring, sanity-rending experience. To be an insect shaman is to surrender your volition to the Hive, abandoning all freedom and becoming an instrument of the invae. Unless the player enjoys doing nothing but following the orders of an antagonist run by the gamemaster, there is little room for long-term play. Their mission is to acquire host bodies for insect summoning, the construction

of a hive or nest for the eventual conjuration of a queen or mother spirit (each respective of hive or solitary spirits). When this mission is complete, they are often consumed by the queen/mother they have brought forth, and rarely resist, instead ecstatically dreaming of their new purpose for the hive's glory and growth, dying with that thought. Those who survive the psychic feedback shock of the death of their queen are always left stripped of all magic, irreparably insane, and usually catatonic. Also note that verified insect shamans command a bounty from corporations and the Draco Foundation ranging from 15,000 to 75,000 nuyen or even more. You'll get rewarded if you bring them in dead, but even more if you bring them in alive.

An insect shaman's ritual lodge is the hive/nest space they are constantly adding to. Its construction is composed of insect bio-material—chitinous, pulped or resinous, with a yeasty smell. Fetishes and foci are often made from the same materials; aside from corporate experimentation, they are useless to any terrestrial magician. It should be pointed out that while these materials have some value on the black market as dangerous curiosities, they are extraordinarily illegal.

RULES AND ROLLS FOR INHABITATION

In order for insect spirits to exist on the physical plane and halt the deterioration brought on by Evanescence, they must be invested into a living vessel—preferably one prepared in advance by a shaman. The intended host is placed in a cocoon that is either created by the queen/mother (if present) or constructed by the shaman from suitable organic material.

In order to undergo Inhabitation, the spirit needs a vessel to be prepared in a magical lodge whose Force is equal to or greater than its own. The Inhabitation process takes time based on the rules on p. 68. The sheer length of time and effort involved in the summoning often takes a physical toll on the shaman, which is often countered by magic, drugs, and obsessive faith.

At the end of the Inhabitation process, the insect spirit rolls its Force x 2 vs. the vessel's Willpower + Intuition. The insect shaman who conjured the spirit (assuming there is one) can assist by adding their Conjuring skill to either the spirit's or the vessel's dice pool. If a queen or mother spirit is present, she may either assist by adding her Force as a dice pool bonus, or she may add her Force as a dice pool bonus to either the Inhabiting spirit or the vessel. If the spirit is attempting to Inhabit a nonliving vessel, it makes the same roll opposed by the vessel's Object Resistance. Note that insects can only invest in living hosts, though other kinds of inhabitation spirits may not have this limitation.

If the vessel is removed from the lodge before the Inhabitation process is complete, both the spirit and the host generally die (though exceptions may be made for hosts at the gamemaster's discretion, with possible permanent side effects and mutations). When the process is finished, the spirit takes full control over the host. The number of net hits achieved on the test by either the spirit or the vessel determines the form that the spirit will take (see p. 68).

BREEDS

HIVE

ANT

Ant hives are home to massive colonies that are populated with numerous members of all insect spirit types—caretakers, nymphs, scouts, soldiers, and workers, all organized around one queen. Ants never work alone, being the most social and cooperative of Insect spirits, and they are always in groups of at least two. Ants typically dedicate a large number of their workers to any effort, but queens or shamans will send a smaller group to complete a task in cases where more subtlety is desired. Ant spirits are also extremely defensive of their territory and will attack any invading metahumans or other insect spirits with overwhelming force.

UNIQUE QUALITIES

- All damage done by ant spirits is considered Acid damage.
- Ants are highly dependent on their hive mentality. If an ant spirit is separated from all other members of its hive, or if the hive's shaman or queen is killed, the ants take a -2 dice pool modifier to all tests.

LOCUST

While other hive species form a physical hive in a single location, locust spirits form a migratory swarm. Locust swarms move from place to place as their queen directs, devouring nearly everything in sight and only stopping to replenish their numbers.

UNIQUE QUALITIES

- Locusts have a flying speed and the Devouring power (see below).
- Locusts are incredibly single-minded. When feeding or fighting an enemy, all locusts except the queen take a -3 dice pool modifier to all Perception tests.

DEVOURING

TYPE	ACTION	RANGE	DURATION
P	Complex	Touch	Sustained

Insect spirits use this power to consume organic material. Some do it to sustain themselves, others regurgitate the material they consume and use it to build their hives. When using this power, the spirit makes an Opposed test, rolling Force x 2, against the Object Resistance of each type of object within (Magic) meters. The spirit is able to devour any object that it gets any net hits against. While the insect spirits sustain this power, magical barriers and barriers made of organic material (e.g., wood) lose 1 point of structure rating per combat round. This power does not affect characters or other living beings.

TERMITE

Like ants, termites are also highly social but have a more stratified hierarchy, with the older members of the hive holding authority over the younger ones. Termites build large hives above ground using a concrete-hard material composed of sand and their own saliva, typically in abandoned buildings in isolated urban areas such as barrens or ghettos.

UNIQUE QUALITIES

- Termites have the Reinforcement power (see below).

REINFORCEMENT

TYPE	ACTION	RANGE	DURATION
P	Complex	Touch	Special

The spirit strengthens the resistance of natural and constructed materials. The spirit makes a Force x 2 (number of square meters, 1 hour) Extended test. If the test is successful, the spirit adds its Force to the Structure rating. Only the highest effect of this power can be applied to a structure; multiple applications of it do not stack.

WASP

Wasp spirits form a matriarchal society in their hives. While their workers and soldiers aren't terribly smart, the nymphs and queen are extremely intelligent and devious; they're known to use spies, lay traps, and deceive and confuse their opposition. Wasp hives, which are built in high places like upper floors of tall buildings, are smaller than other spirit hives but are much more densely populated.

Though the name "wasp" applies to all spirits of this type, they frequently manifest as other similar insect species such as bees or hornets.

All wasp spirits have a flying speed and the Venom power (p. 228, SR6).

SOLITARY

BEEBLE

Though beetle spirits come in various forms representing different species of beetle, they tend



to have the same behaviors and characteristics and are considered to be the same type of spirit. They occasionally gather in hives, which are overseen by one or more mother spirits, and over which they are extremely territorial, attacking intruders with little to no warning.

UNIQUE QUALITY

- Beetles have a chitinous hide that gives them the Armor and Mystic Armor powers (p. 221 and 226, SR6, both at rating 4)

CICADA

Cicada spirits travel in swarms searching for food, with a strong preference for plants and organic material. They're marked by their ability to produce a loud buzzing noise that exceeds 100 decibels (about the volume of a power tool), which they use as a sonic weapon.

UNIQUE QUALITIES

- **Sonic Projection:** A deafening, distracting buzz that affects everyone within earshot, excluding any spirits of the same type. The spirit makes an Opposed test using its Force x 2 against each target's Willpower + Body.

The rating of any area-effect sound-dampening devices, personal sound-dampening devices (such as cyberware, or earbuds with sound dampening), or hits scored by Hush or Silence spells is added to the target's Opposed test, with only the highest single modifier applying. Each net hit achieved by the spirit will contribute to a negative modifier on the target's dice pool for all tests until the buzzing stops.

- Cicadas have flying speed.

FIREFLY

Fireflies are soft-bodied flying insects, known for the bioluminescent glow they produce intermittently. They glow only for specific reasons: agitation, communication, and proximity to their mother spirit. When being infested into a new host, firefly spirits glow faintly but constantly, which makes them vulnerable. As a result, mother spirits tend to be evasive and hide their young, moving between locations to reproduce instead of committing to one particular hive. Fireflies are largely non-aggressive in comparison to the other insect spirits and tend to behave evasively, making scouts and nymphs the most common types of firefly spirits.

UNIQUE QUALITIES

- Fireflies have the Confusion power (p. 222, SR6), and use hypnotic flashes of light to disorient their victims.
- Fireflies have flying speed.

FLY

Fly spirits are scavengers, drawn to waste and decay, thriving in unclean areas and spreading disease. They are mostly independent, but they can gather to form nests where food supplies are abundant.

Fly spirits have a flying speed and the Pestilence power (below). They are immune to disease.

PESTILENCE

TYPE	ACTION	RANGE	DURATION
P	Auto	Touch	Instant

The critter carries non-magical, contagious infections that may afflict characters that come in contact with it (or its secretions). Treat this disease as a toxin with the following attributes:

VECTOR	SPEED	PENETRATION	POWER	EFFECT
Contact	1 Day	-2	8	Stun damage, disorientation, nausea. Disease effects last 1 full day.

Each day the disease starts with a Power above 0, its Power increases by 2. The character must then make another Toxin Resistance test until the disease's Power is reduced to 0.

MANTID

Mantids are atypical bug spirits in that they enforce stringent matriarchal gender roles that are reflected in the genders of their hosts. Male mantids, invariably workers and caretakers, exist only for females to mate with and then devour. The female mantids reproduce by eating other insects—both the males of their own species, as well as other insect types—and converting their life force into energy, which she uses either to enhance her own force or to invest a new mantid into a host vessel (Inhabitation, p. 67). Mantids form nests but cannot become mothers, as all females are capable of reproduction. Nymphs are rare and revered, with the other mantids regarding them as visionaries, leaders, and oracles.

Mantids tend to hide among metahumans, blending in as much as their alien nature permits them to. Mantid flesh forms infiltrate metahuman society in order to hunt and reproduce.

Because mantids don't need shamans to reproduce, they are notoriously difficult to summon and control. There have been no accounts of male mantid shamans, and it is believed that mantid spirits are only amenable to women.

UNIQUE QUALITIES

- Energy Drain: When a mantid consumes another insect spirit, the Force of the consumed spirit is converted to Karma. This Karma is used to increase the mantid's force.
- When a female mantid spirit accumulates enough Karm to raise its own Force, it births a new Force 1 mantid spirit that will inhabit a new vessel.

ROACH

Though they are not hive spirits, roaches frequently build nests, which are inhabited by "family" units organized around the mother spirit or shaman who "birthed" them. Just like real roaches, roach spirits are hardy, omnivorous scavengers that can survive radiation, extreme temperatures, long periods without food or water, and other conditions that would kill a metahuman.

UNIQUE QUALITIES

- +2 to all damage resistance tests
- Allergy (Insecticides, Mild), as opposed to the Severe allergy that other bug spirits have.

SPIRIT TYPES

CARETAKER

Caretaker spirits look after the hive and the spirits that are undergoing inhabitation within, protecting them with wards and fending off intruders or predators. They are common among hive spirit types, less so among solitary ones.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	M
F	F+1	F+1	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
AC		CM		MOVE					
A1, I3		(F/2)+8		5/10/+1					

Initiative: [(F x 2) +1] + 2D6

Astral Initiative and Actions: (F x 2) + 3D6, A1, I4

Defense Rating: F + 3

Skills: Astral, Close Combat, Influence, Perception

Powers: Animal Control (Insect Type), Astral Form, Guard, Hive Mind, Inhabitation (Living Vessels), Innate Spell (Physical Barrier), Sapience

Optional Powers: Binding, Confusion, Enhanced Senses (Smell, Thermographic Vision, or Ultrasound)

Attacks:

Attack Ratings (F x 2) +1/-/-/-/-

Weaknesses: Allergy (Insecticides, Severe), Evanescence

NYMPH

Nymph spirits resemble smaller, less-developed versions of their species and will eventually grow into queens or mothers. Though they lack the size or power of a full-grown Queen, they still assist the hive with the use of their pheromones and spell-like abilities. Nymphs usually inhabit female

hosts, as shamans find they tend to be more successful that way.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	M
F-1	F	F+3	F-1	F	F	F	F	F	F
AC			CM			MOVE			
A1, I3			(F/2)+7			5/10/+3			

Initiative: [(F x 2) + 3] + 2D6

Astral Initiative and Actions: (F x 2) + 3D6, A1, I4

Defense Rating: F + 2

Skills: Astral, Athletics, Close Combat, Perception, Sorcery

Powers: Animal Control (Insect Type), Astral Form, Enhanced Senses (Smell, Thermographic Vision, or Ultrasound), Hive Mind, Inhabitation (Living Vessels), Innate Spell (any one Illusion Spell known to the summoner), Sapience

Optional Powers: Compulsion, Fear

Attacks:

Natural weapon (claw/bite) [(F x 2) + 1/-/-/-/-]

Weaknesses: Allergy (Insecticides, Severe), Evanescence

SCOUT

The most subtle of insect spirits, scouts use stealth and subterfuge to seek out and report threats outside the hive or discover expansion opportunities. Queens and shamans prefer to make good merge scouts when possible.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	M
F	F+2	F+2	F	F	F	F	F	F	F
AC			CM			MOVE			
A1, I4			(F/2)+8			5/10/+3			

Initiative: [(F x 2) + 2] + 2D6

Astral Initiative and Actions: (F x 2) + 3D6, A1, I4

Defense Rating: F + 3

Skills: Astral, Close Combat, Perception, Stealth

Powers: Animal Control (Insect Type), Astral Form, Hive Mind, Inhabitation (Living Vessels), Innate Spell (Physical Barrier), Movement, Sapience, Search

Optional Powers: Confusion, Guard, Enhanced Senses (Smell, Thermographic Vision, or Ultrasound)

Attacks:

Natural weapon (claw/bite) [DV (Force/2)P]

Attack Ratings (F x 2) +1/-/-/-/-]

Weaknesses: Allergy (Insecticides, Severe), Evanescence

SOLDIER

Fierce predators and staunch defenders, soldiers are second only to the queen as the most feared of all insect spirits. They are more resistant to physical attacks and insecticides than are other insect spirit types. In hive species, soldiers coordinate to eliminate threats to the hive and protect its members, while soldiers of solitary types act as lone hunters.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	M
F+2	F+1	F+1	F+3	F	F	F+1	F	F	F
AC			CM			MOVE			
A1, I3			(F/2)+9			5/10/+1			

Initiative: [(F x 2) + 2] + 2D6

Astral Initiative and Actions: (F x 2) + 3D6, A1, I4

Defense Rating: F + 3

Skills: Astral, Athletics, Close Combat, Con, Perception, Stealth

Powers: Animal Control, Astral Form, Fear, Hive Mind, Inhabitation (Living Vessels), Natural Weapon, Sapience

Optional Powers: Binding, Concealment, Noxious Breath, Venom

Attacks:

Natural weapon (claw/bite) [DV (Force/2)P,

Attack Ratings (F x 2) +1/-/-/-/-]

Weaknesses: Allergy (Insecticides, Moderate), Evanescence

WORKER

Workers are the most common of insect types. They carry the responsibility of building, expanding, and maintaining the hive, as well as acquiring the necessary resources for its survival.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	M
F	F	F	F+1	F	F	F	F	F	F
AC			CM			MOVE			
A1, I3			(F/2)+9			5/10/+1			

Initiative: (F x 2) + 2D6

Astral Initiative and Actions: (F x 2) + 3D6, A1, I4

Defense Rating: F + 1

Skills: Astral, Athletics, Close Combat, Perception, Stealth

Powers: Animal Control, Astral Form, Enhanced Senses (smell, thermographic vision), Hive Mind, Inhabitation (Living Vessels), Movement, Natural Weapon, Sapience, Search

Optional Powers: Concealment, Enhanced Senses (ultrasound), Venom

Attacks:

Natural weapon (claw/bite) [DV ((Force/2)

Weaknesses: Allergy (Insecticides, Severe), Evanescence

QUEEN/MOTHER

The queen is the terrifying force around which the hive is organized, and her ability to summon more of her kind through an astral gateway makes her an extremely powerful and dangerous foe.

All queen/mother spirits are free spirits. They are also capable of investing multiple spirits into vessels at once—up to (Force) at a time—in contrast with a shaman's ability to only invest one at a time.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	M
F+5	F+3	F+4	F+5	F+1	F+1	F	F	F	F
AC			CM			MOVE			
A1, I3			(F/2)+10			5/10/+2			

Initiative: [(F x 2) + 4] + 2D6

Astral Initiative and Actions: (F x 2) + 3D6, A1, I4

Defense Rating: F + 5

Skills: Astral, Athletics, Close Combat, Con, Influence, Perception, Spellcasting

Powers: Animal Control (Insect Type), Astral Gateway, , Compulsion, Enhanced Senses (Smell, Thermographic Vision or Ultrasound), Fear, Hive Mind, Inhabitation (Living Vessels), Sapience, Search, Spirit Pact, Wealth

Optional Powers: Concealment, Guard, Noxious Breath, Venom

Attacks:

Natural weapon (claw/bite) [DV ((Force/2) + 2), Attack Ratings (F x 2) +9/-/-/-/-]

Weaknesses: Allergy (Insecticides, Severe)

ALPHAS (NPC MONSTERS)

Alphas can breed in unwilling victims, only manifest in physical hybrid forms, have monstrous expressions, basic cunning but low to no sapience, berserker ranges, and their breeding techniques are usually futile and lethal to the host.

Alpha merges are horrifying monstrosities, half amalgamations of various grotesque insectoid features and half twisted metahuman flesh that looks like it was rent and reassembled inartfully and inaccurately. Unlike typical bug spirits, alphas have no queens, no castes, no hierarchies, and no need for shamans at any point in their creation. Too divorced from their true forms to exist on the astral plane, alphas are hybrid forms bound to the physical plane. They're the worst kind of hybrid form, too; they're big, nasty, hungry, and want to take over your body to turn you into one of them.

All alphas have the ability to breed and do so in a horrific and violent manner that rarely results in success and is usually lethal to the host they are attempting to Infest.

B	A	R	S	W	L	I	C	ESS	M
F+3	F+2	F+2	F+3	F+1	F-2	F+1	F	F	F
AC			CM			MOVE			
A1, I4			(F/2)+9			5/10/+1			

Initiative: [(F x 2) +3] + 3D6

Defense Rating: F + 4

Skills: Astral (Perception only), Athletics, Close Combat, Con, Influence, Outdoors, Perception, Stealth

Powers: Animal Control, Enhanced Senses (smell, thermographic vision), Fear, Hive Mind, Inhabitation (Living Vessels), Movement, Natural Weapon, Sapience

Optional Powers: Binding, Concealment, Noxious Breath, Venom

Attacks:

Natural weapon (claw/bite) [DV [(Force/2) + 2]P, Attack Ratings (F x 2)
+4/-/-/-/-]

ADDITIONAL DETAILS

INFESTATION

When an alpha gets within melee range of a metahuman opponent, it may attempt to Infest it. Unlike the slow and gradual Inhabitation process, Infestation takes place over a matter of seconds and almost

always kills its host. The alpha forcibly injects the host with its eggs, which quickly hatch into a swarm of voracious larvae that begin immediately battling for dominance and the right to consumption.

The alpha must first succeed in a melee attack that does at least 1 point of Stun or Physical damage after any resistance rolls. The alpha then must spend a Minor Action to attempt the Infestation.

The host rolls Body and Willpower separately against the Infestation attempt, with a threshold of the alpha's Force / 2, rounded up. If the host fails on both rolls, their soul is consumed, their original consciousness completely destroyed, and their body becomes the host for a new alpha. If they fail either save, they still die, but their body is not inhabited by a new alpha.

When the host fails the Willpower save, their soul wasn't strong enough to survive the merge in the first place. If they succeed on the Body save but not the Willpower save, it's at least enough to feed the ravenous larvae, but they fail to evolve and injure each other too much to do anything but shatter themselves in frenzy.

When the Body save fails, the host's physical form cannot sustain the larvae, and what little assimilation takes place is not formed well enough to take on new life. The half-consumed, horrifically mutilated and mutated body simply dies, leaving only the clues of what caused its death, and the terrible psychic resonance of an agonizing death.

Succeeding on both rolls fends off the attack, and the host survives.

BREEDING FRENZY

After Infesting a new host, the alpha goes into a frenzy that lasts [Force] combat rounds. It ignores injury modifiers, gaining +1 to all physical attributes and taking a penalty of -1 to all mental attributes for the duration of the effect.



APPENDIX

MANA EBBS AND FLOWS

Various conditions can contribute to the mana levels of certain spots changing, either increasing the available magic or making it more difficult to channel. Intense events (emotionally intense, magically intense, whatever) can leave a residue in the the manasphere, twisting or enhancing the manasphere. Mana shifts are aspected, meaning they respond to a certain tradition. Those who are not of that tradition do not experience any changes due to the aspected mana shift, except for the mana void, which affects all Awakened individuals. There are seven forms of mana shifts:

HIGH MANA FLOW

High mana flows are aspected toward a particular tradition, and any Awakened individual of that tradition using the Magic attribute in the area automatically gains a bonus Edge before a test.

MEDIUM MANA FLOW

Medium mana flows are aspected toward a particular tradition, and any Awakened individual of that tradition using the Magic attribute spends 1 Edge less on Edge actions and Edge boosts than normal (to a minimum of 1 Edge).

LOW MANA FLOW

Low mana flows are aspected toward a particular tradition, and any Awakened individual of that tradition using the Magic attribute in the area gain 1 bonus die on any test where Magic is part of the dice pool.

LOW MANA EBB

Low mana ebbs are aspected toward a particular tradition, and any Awakened individual of that tradition using the Magic attribute in the area receives a -1 dice pool penalty on any test where Magic is part of the dice pool.

MEDIUM MANA EBB

Medium mana ebbs are aspected toward a particular tradition, and any Awakened individual of that tradition using the Magic attribute spends 1 Edge more on Edge actions and Edge boosts than normal.

HIGH MANA EBB

High mana ebbs are aspected toward a particular tradition, and any Awakened individual of that tradition using the Magic attribute cannot gain or spend Edge on tests using the Magic attribute.

MANA VOID

No magic at all can be performed in these areas, including use of alchemical preparations.



FIN

The background of the entire page is a stylized illustration. In the upper right, a woman with long dark hair and glowing purple eyes looks intensely forward. She wears a dark, sleeveless top with a pentagram-like symbol on the chest. In the lower right, a man's face is shown in a state of extreme agony or rage, his mouth wide open in a scream. He is surrounded by swirling blue energy or lightning. The overall color palette is dark with vibrant purple and blue highlights.

POWER SURGE

The power to shape the world can also tear it apart. The power to summon spirits and gain allies can also conjure enemies and lead to your own destruction. And the power to fill objects with magic is also the ability to make them blow up in your face.

Shadowrunners learn about power the hard way—by being on the wrong end of it. That means they often gather it to them however they can, consequences be damned. *Street Wyrd* is a guide to all sorts of Awakened power, from spells to adept powers to new spirits to enhanced enchanting rules. It also gives runners the power to make their own spells to unleash on their enemies. Because runners know that the power you grab for yourself is the only thing that stays with you.

Street Wyrd is the core magic rulebook for *Shadowrun, Sixth World*.



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