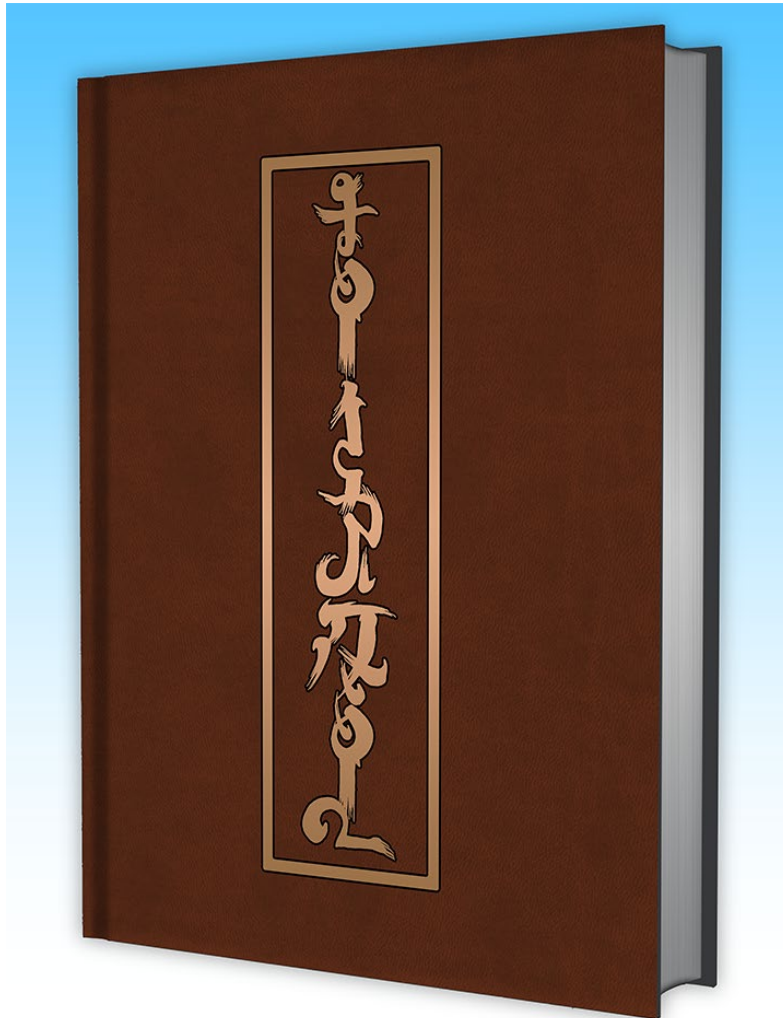


ALCHEMICALS

FORGED BY THE MACHINE GOD

Compiled Draft Manuscript



NOT FINAL DESIGN

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Introduction

"You are not obligated to complete the work, but neither are you free to desist from it."

— *Pirkei Avot*

There is a world beyond Creation, a world alive with the endless motion of titanic machinery. This is Autochthonia, the Realm of Brass and Shadows, the world that is the living body of the Machine God. No green thing has ever grown here; no sun's light has ever touched its vast metal expanse. It is haunted by alien machine gods and stalked by monstrous nightmares of flesh and steel. Survival here is all but impossible — and yet, the Eight Nations still stand.

The people of Autochthonia live within the body of their god, toiling to maintain the Great Maker's industrial organs and world-machinery. It is a harsh existence, ever on the precipice of disaster. It is only by the incalculable effort of millions and the divine power of the Alchemical Exalted that the people of Autochthonia thrive.

The Alchemical Exalted are the Chosen of the Machine God, biomechanical demigods forged from divine metal and heroic souls. They do not rule the Eight Nations, but serve as Champions of the people, a sacred duty greater than any ambition. The eldest of Alchemicals transcend their human forms to become metropoli, living cities that offer the Eight Nations a stronghold against Autochthonia's perils.

The Realm of Brass and Shadows is unforgiving, and the Eight Nations find themselves faced with many challenges: cataclysmic upheavals of Autochthon's world-machinery, incursions of gruesome techno-organic gremlins, and the ever-present threat to their livelihoods. All the while, the slumbering Autochthon grows ever sicker, his corrupting Blight metastasizing throughout his world-body. Despair not. There is work to be done.

This Book at a Glance

Chapter One: The Alchemical Exalted introduces the Chosen of the Great Maker, the machine-heroes forged to stand against the enemies of the gods and the divine Champions of Autochthonia's Eight Nations.

Chapter Two: Autochthonia explores the Realm of Brass and Shadows, the vast realm of world-machinery within the Great Maker's body that the Eight Nations call home.

Chapter Three: Character Creation provides rules for creating Alchemical player characters.

Chapter Four: Traits details the unique traits used by Alchemicals, including their Castes and the cold, inhuman Clarity of their Great Curse.

Chapter Five: Charms provides an extensive panoply of Alchemical Charms, along with rules for the Rite of Reconfiguration that lets Champions install and remove new Charms.

Chapter Six: Martial Arts and Sorcery contains new martial arts styles that are prominently practiced in Autochthonia, like Thousand Wounds Gear style and Crystal Chameleon style, along with sorcerous spells and initiations from the Realm of Brass and Shadows.

Chapter Seven: Artifacts provides a variety of Autochthonian technology and artifacts, including signature Alchemical weapons like beamklaves.

Chapter Eight: Quick Characters provides traits for Alchemicals, machine spirits, and gremlins,

including information and templates that Storytellers can use to create their own machine spirits.

Lexicon

Alchemical Exalted: The Chosen of *Autochthon*, artificial humans wrought from clay and metal and catalyzed by a heroic soul.

Autochthon: The Great Maker, The Machine God, the King of All Craftsmen, the ancient Autochthon turned on his kin in the Divine Revolution, lending aid to the traitorous gods and creating the *Alchemical Exalted*. In time, Autochthon departed Creation, taking his faithful with him. The Machine God slumbers now, but the *Eight Nations* descended from his faithful still dwell within his vast world-body, *Autochthonia*.

Autochthonia: An entire world of industrial machinery and impossible technology that exists within *Autochthon*'s body. It is the home to the *Eight Nations*, a world set apart from Creation and the rest of the cosmos. Also known as the Realm of Brass and Shadows.

The Blight: A corrupting, techno-organic sickness that festers within the Great Maker, spreading through *Autochthonia* with disastrous consequences.

blight zone: Regions of *Autochthonia* afflicted by the *Blight*.

Clarity: The Great Curse of the *Alchemical Exalted*, a state of increasingly inhuman rationality and utilitarian efficiency. The Alchemicals are aware of Clarity as a phenomenon, though not of its cursed nature.

colossus: An *Alchemical* of great experience and power who has undergone a full-body reconstruction to become a vast, mechanical titan through the *Rite of Reconfiguration*.

The Eight Divine Ministers: These powerful *machine spirits* are the foremost of *Autochthon*'s souls, akin to the Third Circle demons of the Great Maker's Yozi kin.

The Eight Nations: The foremost states of *Autochthonia*, with the resources and expertise needed to create new *Alchemical Exalted*. The Eight Nations are also known collectively as the Octet.

The Far Reaches: The strangest and most distant corners of *Autochthonia*, far from the *Eight Nations*.

The Five Sodalities: Within the *Eight Nations*, the sodalities are elite trade guilds of artisans, savants, and engineers, entrusted with the secret of creating new *Alchemical Exalted*. The sodalities are one of the three governing institutions that make up the *Tripartite* of the *Eight Nations*.

gremlin: A being corrupted by the *Blight*. Many of them are warped *machine spirits*, but the most dangerous are the corrupted Alchemicals known as **Apostates**.

industrial organ: A great mechanism of *Autochthon*'s world-body, each unique both in its divine power and critical function.

machine saint: An *Alchemical* who serves one of the *Eight Divine Ministers*, rather than acting as a Champion for the *Eight Nations*.

machine spirit: One of *Autochthon*'s souls. The greatest of these are the *Eight Divine Ministers*, while the least of them are minor custodians that tend to the myriad mechanisms of *Autochthonia*.

metropolis: An elder Alchemical that has become a living city, one of the greatest sanctums and strongholds of the *Eight Nations*.

Municipal Charm: An infrastructural-scale Charm installed in a *metropolis*.

The Olgotary: The *Eight Nations*' political class, made up of administrators and bureaucrats who form one of the three governing institutions that make up the *Tripartite*. The Olgotary consists of **plutarchs**, who form its bureaucratic, deliberative, and diplomatic branches, the **regulators** who carry out law enforcement, and the **adjudicators** who pass judgments on crimes. Each metropolis' Olgotary is headed by an **autocrat**, while a **grand autocrat** oversees them at the national level.

Populat: The working class of the *Eight Nations*.

The Rite of Reconfiguration: The sacred technological ritual by which the *Alchemical Exalted* can install new Charms and customize their panoply of transhuman power.

The Seal of Eight Divinities: A mystical barrier between *Autochthonia* and the rest of the cosmos, forged by *Autochthon* himself.

soulgem: A vital component in the creation of the *Alchemical Exalted*. Citizens of the *Eight Nations* have one of these jewels implanted in their foreheads shortly after birth. Upon death, members of the *Five Sodalities* can assess a soul's potential for catalyzing Exaltation before releasing it from its soulgem to be reborn.

subminister: A *machine spirit* that emanates from one of the *Eight Divine Ministers*, comparable to a Second Circle demon.

The Theomachracy: The priesthood of *Autochthon* and the clerical administrative class of the *Eight Nations*, making up one of the three governing institutions that make up the *Tripartite*. Within the Theomachracy's ranks, **lectors** preach the Maker's doctrine and offer spiritual guidance, **preceptors** enforce orthodoxy and root out heresy, while **clerics** see to matters of administration, bureaucracy, and doctrine. Each metropolis' Theomachracy is headed by a **celebrant**, while a **grand celebrant** oversees them at the national level.

The Tripartite: The governing body within each of the Eight Nations, drawing from the political leadership of the *Olgotary*, the clerical authority of the *Theomachracy*, and the expertise of the *Five Sodalities*. The *Alchemical Exalted* support the Tripartite, but they don't belong to it — they are Champions, not leaders.

Tunnel Folk: A term used by the *Eight Nations* to label other human societies that exist in *Autochthonia*'s reaches, lacking the protection of *Alchemical* Champions and *metropoli*.

Suggested Resources

The following media may offer inspiration for players and Storyteller interested in stories centered around Autochthonia and the Great Maker's Chosen.

Fiction

***I, Robot*, by Isaac Asimov:** Asimov's famous Three Laws of Robotics don't apply to the free-willed Alchemicals, but these classic short stories offer plenty of inspiration, particularly for Alchemicals engaging with transhuman perspective of Clarity.

Movies

Ghost in the Shell*, directed by Mamoru Oshii:** Cybernetically-enhanced agents of a morally questionable state, political intrigue, and cyberpunk philosophy make this a keystone for Alchemicals and Autochthonia. The same is true for its 2002 incarnation as an anime series, ***Ghost in the Shell: Stand Alone Complex.

***Metropolis*, directed by Fritz Lang:** One of the original inspirations for Autochthonia, Lang's expressionist masterpiece presents a dystopian vision of futuristic technology and class conflict that laid the foundation for the Eight Nations.

Television

***Star Trek: The Next Generation*, by Gene Roddenberry:** Lieutenant Data's struggle to understand humanity and discover his own isn't a typical story arc for the Alchemical Exalted, but he's still the most influential android in fiction, and among the original inspirations for them.

Manga

***BLAME!*, by Tsutomu Nihei:** This classic cyberpunk manga's Megastructure is one of the greatest visual inspirations to be found for the world of Autochthonia, while the robotic Safeguard and the cybernetic Silicon Life offer inspiration for machine spirits and gremlins.

Video Games

***Final Fantasy VII*, by Square Enix:** A game that needs no introduction, Final Fantasy VII's combination of magic with technology in a industrialized society makes it a great inspiration for the aesthetics of Autochthonian technology.

The shape of rubble rose above the ground, beckoning and inviting, like an obstacle course demanding to be conquered. *Foremost Fist of Righteousness* never backed away from a challenge, but especially not one written so plainly in the scenery. Sure, there were probably more important things to focus on at the moment. She could hear the voice of her Circlemates in her mind, chiding her for making everything and anything into a competition. Such was the talk of unambitious people.

Stern Whip of Industry was, similarly, not motivated by a desire to chase the taste of victory. The massive, staid man directed the workers with an irritating calm. Where was his sense of joy? His verve? His taste for life? *Fist* had met propaganda posters with more energy.

"I bet I can clear more rubble than you can, and I bet I can open the way through faster than you." She spoke aloud, her low voice echoing off the maintenance tunnel's walls.

"It is not a competition," he replied in his pleasantly deep voice. "We are here to make sure this area is safe and accessible again."

Predictable. *Foremost Fist* stifled a groan. "C'mon, Big Red, don't you want to have fun with it?"

"My designation is *Stern Whip of Industry*," he said humorlessly, "and we are here to save lives. It isn't for fun."

At this, *Foremost Fist* placed the bulky width of herself between him and the collapsed tunnel. She squared her shoulders and pumped Essence through her reinforced heart to give her an air of leadership. His attention fell upon her, even though annoyed.

"Listen here, Big Red," she said and made a gesture to silence the protest he started voicing. "It is equally important to enjoy oneself as it is to do the work. There's no point in being heroes if we aren't having a good time about it. So bearing that in mind, **I bet I can clear more rubble than you.**"

The raw charisma of her words moved the big red lunk to heave a gusty, defeated sigh. She'd take it.

"Very well," he said with what she decided was a hint of a smile. "I shall soundly defeat you in this endeavor if this means you will take the task seriously."

"I am always taking things seriously," *Fist* retorted but *Stern Whip of Industry* had already launched into motion.

He moved like an unchained machine as he turned aside hefty chunks of reinforced plastic and steel and pushed away debris with wide sweeps of his massive arms. *Stern Whip of Industry* pressed the heels of his thick palms together and shoveled away dirt and detritus like a shovel in the form of a man. Furious at possibly being outdone, *Foremost Fist of Righteousness* fired a tether beam from the hidden compartments of her wrist, hooked into a spar of concrete, and sailed past his head. He looked up placidly as she soared by. *Fist* winked and made a saucy gesture with her free hand. If the other Alchemical reacted, she didn't see, as she landed several yards away and launched into her own fervent work.

She lifted and threw; she dug and delved; she carried rebar and rubble until a pristine path was clear. Sweat gathered around her collar and itched in the joints of her mechanical physique. It glistened on the studs of orichalcum and jade that stuck from her chest, biceps, and thighs. When she glanced back, *Stern Whip of Industry* leaned on a shovel, having done twice the work she'd managed in the same amount of time.

A small, self-satisfied smile played across his otherwise stern and unremarkable face.

"I think I win," he said.

Chapter One: The Alchemical Exalted

The Alchemical Exalted are the Chosen of Autochthon, the Great Maker. They are human, but they are also machine, wrought from sacred clay and divine metal and animated with the souls of heroes. In Autochthonia, they are Champions of the Eight Nations who dwell within the Machine God. A scarce few remain hidden in Creation, heroes forged to fight the enemies of the gods, but never deployed.

History

Before the first moment of time, they arose. They created themselves from chaos and nothingness, and ushered in the dawn of reality. Primordial, they named themselves in the crude language of the gods they created, older than the oldest things. At their command, the seas of chaos froze into law. Among their number was Autochthon, the Great Maker, a tinker and a trickster among the titans.

In the time before, the Great Maker and his kin roamed the endless possibilities of the Wyld. They fashioned splendors unimaginable and horrors fearsome even to themselves, scattering ephemeral worldlets like stepping stones before them. They warred against the devouring legions of the ancient Fair Folk; consorted with the poisoned flame that was not yet the Scorpion Empire; laid siege to a castle that doesn't exist, and found themselves defeated. There was the grand folly that was Zen-Mu, and the bitter war that came after.

Soon, the Primordials would undertake their greatest work, the making of Creation. Autochthon delighted in it. He hammered out mountains and welkin-glass on his forge, brought life to the Jadeborn and the gigantes, and invented several very useful prime numbers. He worked from beyond the world as the Primordials raised Heaven over Creation, the architect of their impossible spatial geometries. He raised factory-cathedrals and starspires like sandcastles, shaping and reshaping the world.

But Autochthon was scorned by his kin, who had long mocked him as a sickly, ugly runt. The cruelest of them delighted in tearing down his greatest creations, leaving him to grieve over the ruins. Loathe as he was to endure this, the Great Maker could not stand alone against the other Primordials. He could not make them love him or fear him, but he could make himself useful to them. He offered them wonders from his forge, played on their vanity, and learned to make their hatred for him into a tool. Even then, this reprieve was a paltry thing, lasting only as long as he could keep his hateful siblings so distracted.

Estranged from his Primordial kin, Autochthon sympathized with those gods who plotted to overthrow their makers, offering them what succor and counsel he could. When the Celestial Incarnae discovered the secret of Exaltation, it was Autochthon who showed them how such power might be fashioned into a weapon. He crafted his own Exalted alongside them, the first Alchemicals, demonstrating both the power of the Exalted and his dedication to the cause. He forged weapons and armor for the gods and their Chosen and revealed to them great mysteries of artifice, the many secret methods of refining the magical materials to build weapons of war. But Autochthon still feared his Primordial kin, and struggled to keep his labors hidden from them. He created only a scarce few Alchemicals compared to the other gods' Chosen, and awoke only a few of their number to fight.

The gods waged their terrible war against the Primordials and won, though not before staining Creation with the blood of slain titans. The gods claimed Heaven for themselves, and the Exalted host reigned ascendant over Creation, but Autochthon knew there would be no place for him. He knew that he would forever be a reminder of the Primordials' cruelty, and that the Exalted would never forget his own treachery. For a while, he thought he could bear to linger, but in time, this hope gave way to his fears. Thus he took himself beyond Creation, accompanied by his faithful and followers, and sealed the path to

those who might attempt to follow.

Now the Machine God slumbers, still sickly as he once was. The mortals he brought within him dwell within a world that is his flesh, the ever-shifting engine-realm of Autochthonia. There, they founded the Octet, eight great nations that labor in worship to the Great Maker. Taught by the Great Maker himself, the Eight Nations hold the secret of creating new Alchemical Exalted. These Alchemicals do not rule, but serve. They are exemplars of national service, inspiring people and aiding the governance of nations. They are conduits between mortals and the divine, interceding with the machine spirits that inhabit Autochthonia's reaches. As their power grows, they become the very cities that house their people. Their strength and innovation of the Eight Nations and their Champions hold back the creeping Blight, the sickness of their Maker, that threatens all who dwell within him.

The Creation of an Alchemical

The Alchemicals are a gift from the Great Maker to his people. They are born of matter, motion, and miracle: the precious reagents needed to shape their body and Charms, the exacting skill and sublime artistry required to create them, and the spark of the Great Maker comingling with mortal souls. After months of work, ritual, and sacrifice, Autochthon's Essence courses through the flesh of his newest Chosen, and the people rejoice in welcome of their fledgling Champion.

When a nation commissions the creation of a new Alchemical, the work falls to the five Sodalities, technologist-guilds who preserve the secrets of Exaltation handed down by the Great Maker, each safeguarding one part of the process. Work begins with the Surgeons, who shape the Champion's body from sacred clay and wax. The Harvesters concoct the catalytic vat-broth in which a nascent Alchemical gestates, but it must be heated and tended in precise rites known only to the Luminors. The Scholars craft the Alchemical's Essence reservoir and the Charms that will imbue the Champion with its divine might. Finally, the Conductors attach the soulgem to the nascent Alchemical, quickening the connection between body and soul. The Great Maker's will works through the artisans in that final moment, and the Alchemical awakens...if the soul is worthy.

Kanesh puts his palm to the clay to warm it. His hands are anointed with the sacred unguents, and he is a Surgeon of meticulous skill, but still — the clay must be warm. Today, he shapes the Champion's face, and gives it his mother's high cheekbones. Much of his work may be undone when the Alchemical wakes from the broth and the holy clay of their form is Essence-fired into their self-image, but sometimes they keep what they are given. They are children with many parents — the Sodalities, the souls of heroes, the nation, the Maker — and he plays his part in that tender work.

Mortal souls are the key to Autochthon's miracle of Exaltation, requiring a heroic legacy forged over past lifetimes to catalyze a Champion's Exaltation. Each of the six Alchemical Castes has its own criteria, and the Autochthonians' understanding of them is imperfect, though guided by millennia of trial and error. The souls they choose must be exceptional to have any hope of attracting the unconscious attention of the Great Maker, and so they keep meticulous records of each soul's deeds and distinctions. While those souls marked as candidates for Exaltation have usually distinguished themselves over multiple incarnations, some are selected after a single lifetime of truly exceptional heroism.

"Have I lived well?" Dargen asks, but no one can hear. The skirmish continues, even as his blood pools from the wound. He will die in these tunnels with gremlin bile on his pike, die for his city and the other warriors of his battalion. The fatal blow hadn't been meant for him, but he made his flesh a bulwark for...who was it? Jadia? Lyzed? It doesn't matter. It bites at him that his last thoughts are selfish. Was his sacrifice real, or vainglorious? Who was he to think his

death had to mean something? As the light goes out of his eyes, he dreams that when his soul next stirs, it will be in the body of a Champion.

If all is successful, the newly Exalted Alchemical emerges from the vats. They are not a resurrection of any past self, but a wholly new entity, greater than the sum of their mortal parts. The Champion understands who and what they are, and has skills and knowledge drawn from memories of their previous incarnations. Many new Alchemicals dream with curiosity about previous lives or feel phantom affections for lost loves; some make lifelong studies of their prior lives.

None see her as she darts through alleys, despite the flashing moonsilver that adorns her flesh. She has to see. She has to know. She can't remember her previous life — so recent that her children still live as honored elders! — but she can make new memories. She watches them for days in the moments she steals away from duties, spying on their private moments and happy gatherings. She is invisible to them, and they are invaluable to her.

Nations waste no time in putting their newly made Alchemicals to work. They are equipped with all haste and expected to step seamlessly into whatever role their nation created them for. Most are eager to act straight from the vat, fired with a patriotic fervor of Essence. But Alchemicals are not built for compliance. If a new Champion questions her mission or her cause, it's a problem that her nation has a vested interest in fixing. Too much is invested in an Alchemical's creation to risk losing her to disloyalty or disaffection.

Principle of Harmony opens his eyes as the broth drains from his vat. When it's all sluiced away, a door cracks open with a pneumatic hiss and he emerges, his broad-muscled body a gleam with adamant. He knows much, but remembers little. Fragments of a dozen lives buzz in his head like static, but purpose? Purpose sings like a clarion call. The attendants explain quickly, but Harmony already understands. When they have dressed him, he hurries to calm the riots that have nearly reached even these holy vats, and hopes that his first words will be a persuasive hymn for peace.

Most nations seek to offset the fabulous expense of creating an Alchemical by producing them in small batches, traditionally known as Circles, that benefit from economies of scale. The availability of suitable souls and magical materials doesn't always allow for this, and choosing the right moment to create a new Alchemical is often especially contentious for a nation's governing Tripartite Assembly. The must weigh the need for a single Champion today against the benefits of a Circle tomorrow — a decision made all the more difficult by the fact that the cost of an Alchemical hero is sometimes better spent on municipal infrastructure and defenses.

Exaltation Beyond Autochthonia

Creating a new Alchemical in Creation would be an unprecedented feat, unless the recorded histories are mistaken, but not impossible. The knowledge needed to create one is Autochthon's alone, but it may be that the ancient schematics of the first Alchemicals can still be found.

Then there is the question of the soul. Soulgems are rare in Creation, and not used as they are in Autochthonia: the gigantes of Dis use them to bind mortal wills, while sorcerers may use them in bizarre metaphysical experiments. Finding a way to seal a suitable soul within a gem, or to find an alternative to the soulgem, is an adventure unto itself.

The ancient Alchemicals created by Autochthon before his departure bear

soulgems of their own. Some of these Champions have stirred from their stasis in the centuries since. Should they fall, their soulgem might be the key to creating a replacement.

Once all is in place, all that remains is the Great Maker's will. If all is right, the sleeping Primordials' power suffuses the souls and labors of the new Champion's creators, catalyzing the Exaltation.

Clarity

Although the Alchemical Exalted never saw battle in the Divine Revolution, the death-curse of the fallen Primordials fell upon all the Chosen. The Alchemical's Great Curse, also known as Clarity, is rooted in the tension between the Alchemicals' humanity and the cold logic of the machine. Empathy, emotional needs, and irrationality wane until they fade away entirely, replaced by a cold logic that prizes a utilitarian efficiency in accomplishing one's goals above all else.

Clarity doesn't override an Alchemical's goals and agendas, but refines her ability to accomplish them. It is cold, but it is not cruel or sociopathic. A commander may spend the lives of her soldiers without hesitation, but only after carefully calculating cost against benefit. A physician allocates limited supplies so as to save the greatest number of lives, and euthanizes those deemed beyond aid. An advocate of the Populat still advances their cause, but increasingly views them as a bundle of statistics to be improved than as individuals. Where rewarding mortals improves their productivity, the Alchemical does so; where punishment is necessary, she dispenses it without passion or hesitation. Irrational emotions and unnecessary distractions such as love, anger, hedonism, and pity are abandoned as unproductive.

Autochthonia's Champions are aware of this phenomenon, but understand little of it, believing it to be an intrinsic aspect of Alchemical Exaltation. Some deliberately cultivate it, seeking to attain an inhuman perfection at the cost of their emotional bonds to humanity. Others avoid it, unwilling to sacrifice that which makes them human, or avoid maintaining high levels of Clarity for extended periods.

Essence Fever

An Alchemical's Essence pushes her to action as a Champion of her community. Filled with the Great Maker's purpose, her Essence fever imparts a sense of duty upon the Alchemical, urging her to become the hero that her people need. Outside of Autochthonia, Alchemicals are still Champions, attaching themselves to their adopted community with fierce dedication.

When an Alchemical sees a need in her community, she feels moved to meet it, driven to bold and heroic action. They struggle to accept "good enough" when improvements can be made, satisfied with nothing less than the perfection their Essence inspires them to strive toward. In the Octet, Alchemicals have a clear path to fulfilling this duty by acting at the Tripartite Assembly's direction in service of national interests. But their Essence fever urges them to action, not mere obedience: the same patriotism that drives an Alchemical to follow orders one day might urge him to take a stand against a corrupt regulator's overreach the next.

Newly built Alchemicals must work to master their Essence fever's impulses, asserting control over them and channeling them into longer-term strategies. Inexperienced Champions sometimes act without thought for consequence or practicality, while those who embrace Clarity may be driven to brush aside mortal morals in acting on their Essence fever's impulses.

Alchemical Life Cycle

Alchemicals are human, but they are not flesh and blood. Their bodies are fashioned from sacred clay and magical materials, catalyzed by the soulgems in their brows, and transformed by the god-machinery of the Charms installed within their flesh.

A newly Exalted Alchemical awakes as a physical and mental adult, taking their first steps on steady legs and opening eyes that already see more than any mortal could. Unless something has gone wrong, she is born understanding who and what she is, with a keen insight to their power and purpose. Her personality and is a composite of traits from her past lives, particularly those that strongly resonate with her Caste, as are the skills and expertise she possesses. She has a patchwork of memories from her past lives, though few Champions can recall their past lives in clear detail.

For some, this composite identity is a struggle. A new Champion might find herself serving a nation that she remembers fighting against, or caught between two conflicting ideologies held with equal passion in different past lives. Some Alchemicals can take years to sort out their identity and truly feel like a full person, not just a jumble of long-dead heroes' opinions.

Colossi

As a Champion's Essence grows increasingly powerful, she becomes capable of transforming into a colossus, a vast, mechanical titan, standing dozens of feet tall. The Colossus-Class Upgrade Installation is an Alchemical Charm on an industrial scale, requiring a full-body reconstruction. Colossi make for some of the most dramatic demonstrations of Alchemical power and the Octet's might: battling massive gremlins, leading the nations' war efforts, supporting mass construction projects, laying siege to enemy metropoli, and even grappling with the world-engines of Autochthonia itself if need be. Powerful as they are, they're rare compared to most Champions. Most Alchemicals don't reach the height of power needed to become a colossus until they're centuries old, and the amount of magical materials needed to construct their expanded frames is immense.

For many elder Alchemicals, their place among the colossi is a core part of their identity. The transformation can be reverted, but the role of the colossus holds a great cultural significance in Autochthonian society. Younger Alchemicals and mortals alike view colossi with awe, and the Eight Nations laud their deeds with triumphant propaganda.

Such a change in scale radically changes a colossus' personal existence. They find themselves assigned missions of great scope that are often lonely, and almost always perilous. They can't grab a quick meal at their favorite cafeteria or lie with their lover without first undergoing extensive bodily reconfigurations. Even the most personable of colossi often struggle with maintaining their mortal relationships, and it's common for colossi to tilt toward higher Clarity.

The Metropolitan Ascension

The Great Maker's Chosen are not only his people's Champions, but their very homes. The eldest and most powerful Alchemicals can embark on the final stage of their life cycle, taking root in the machine world and transforming from self to city. The would-be metropolis abandons human form entirely, unfolding her mechanical form into the foundation of a living metropolis. Her transhuman power takes the form of infrastructure-scale Municipal Charms integrated into her superstructure. Avatar-Launching Silos deploy colossi-scale drone bodies. A Thousand Elixirs Crucible's processing facilities synthesize innumerable alchemical and organic reagents from the contents of nearby conduits. The Perpetual Singularity Collapse Engine exerts titanic gravitational force with precision sufficient to drive city-wide industry.

This metropolitan ascension is extraordinarily rare and extraordinarily demanding, taking months or even

years of preparation and logistical planning. An Alchemical must live for time beyond mortal imagining before they can cultivate sufficient Essence and spiritual preparation for this change, in addition to undergoing the colossus upgrade. Plans must be made for the relocation of the new metropolis' populace and their safe transport through Autochthonia, a challenge often entrusted to Circles of younger Alchemicals or guardian colossi. Construction materials and other supplies must also be transported, and transported in great numbers. Much of a metropolis' structure emerges directly from the Alchemical's body, the construction of additional buildings and core Municipal Charms begins almost as soon as the ascension is complete.

Within Autochthonia, the metropolitan ascension also connects the Alchemical to the greater mechanisms of the machine-world. Some Alchemicals undertake their ascension at damaged industrial organs or other disruptions in the Great Maker's systems, upholding his inner structures with their own. In the absence of a pressing crisis, most Alchemicals receive guidance from the Eight Divine Ministers, seeking a place where they might best serve Autochthon. Some receive their answer in vivid dreams or visions of the city they'll become, waking with geographic coordinates imprinted in their memory. Others hallucinate streams of complex geometrical diagrams and mathematical equations that might take them years to decipher. Most receive this call near the time they attain their Essence's apex, though some receive it long before — some Champions have stepped out of the vats already knowing where they must take root. Other Alchemicals petition the Divine Ministers to approve a location that will serve only a nation's own interests. Though their approval is not necessary for the metropolitan ascension, acting in defiance of them would be a politically disastrous blasphemy.

These great labors are but one part of the process. For the Alchemical, the metropolitan ascension may be the most important decision of her life. Almost all of them experience eager anticipation to become something new: a part of Autochthon and haven to their citizens. Many rejoice in their ascension as an expression of their individuality, especially those seeking to distinguish themselves from the metropoli they've grown accustomed to living in. An aspiring metropolis' days become a feverish whirlwind of planning: meeting with urban planners to discuss the layout of her superstructure, consulting demographics analysts and social engineers to identify her new populace, and designing novel Municipal Charms in whatever free time she can find. Most nations encourage them to embark on a final pilgrimage across their nation, accompanied by the Sodalt technicians assigned to her ascension and the first of her citizens to be chosen. This entourage travels to each of the nation's other metropoli, where the Champion seeks council from her city-siblings and is celebrated in grand national festivals to celebrate her.

The metropolitan ascension proper begins once the Alchemical reaches the ordained site of her new urban core and begins her final Rite of Reconfiguration before ascending to cityhood. Her colossus frame reconfigures itself into a chrysalis-like core of clay and metal, helped along by teams of Sodalt technicians. Within it, the Alchemical's form and Essence are melted down and reconstructed into the heart of a metropolis, and the city's foundational structures extrude outward from it over a period of days. Populart construction crews begin building the vast superstructure of the city's first Municipal Charms, with Sodalt technicians directing their labor and seeing to the most complex, meticulous tasks needed to bring the metropoli online. The ascension's completion is marked by a dramatic burst of Essence as the awakened metropolis' iconic anima banner flares visible for miles in every direction.

During this transformation, the new metropolis is helpless in the Great Maker's embrace, depending entirely on her community to defend her, whether from gremlins, natural perils, or foreign enemies. It's all but unheard of for a metropolis to ascend without at least a Circle of Alchemicals to stand guard, and nations that can afford to deploy colossi do so. And not just Alchemicals — every citizen of the nascent

metropolis stands on the frontline of her defense. Autochthonian history celebrates episodes in which Alchemicals of foreign nations have worked together to see a metropolis through a difficult ascension, putting aside national differences in service to the Great Maker.

Not every elder Alchemical chooses the metropolitan ascension; many find themselves happiest or most effective as Champions or colossi. Some face a subtle pressure toward cityhood, though this rarely rises above the level of gentle suggestion — it's hard to browbeat an Alchemical who's already powerful enough to become a metropoli.

Metropoli in Creation.

Achieving the metropolitan ascension in Creation is challenging, but not impossible. Instead of integrating into the Machine God's world-body, a nascent metropolis must lay her own foundation. Manses could be reconfigured to enable a metropolitan ascension, linking the Alchemical into Creation's geomancy, and some First Age ruins may hold wonders that could be repurposed for such use.

The Mind of a City

New Alchemicals may see the metropolitan ascension as an ending, but elder cities see it as the moment their lives began. Metropoli act on a scale their citizens have trouble imagining. Individuals are simplified into numbers; time is measured in years and centuries rather than minutes and days; and the complex balancing of city infrastructure becomes as natural as drawing breath. Focused in on the big picture, most metropoli are deeply immersed in Clarity, a mindset that may be better suited to existence as a city than a human one. Not all cities are cold or unfeeling, though. A particularly personable metropoli can interact with her populace through hologlyphic projections or drone bodies, all the while overseeing the entirety of her city-self.

Much of a metropolis' time is spent in labor, overseeing the myriad processes unfolding throughout herself. "Leisure time" becomes occupied by personal projects on a grand scale, including the city's own growth and evolution through the installation of new Municipal Charms. Some metropoli explore and express their transhuman identity through innovative Municipal Charm designs: gilded entertainment domes, libraries filled with adamant record-crystals, mass surveillance grids of unblinking soulsteel sensors, vast metal-smelting furnaces, or other industrial wonders that give the city its character.

Some metropoli involve themselves in civic life even beyond their duties, particularly cities that are still young or that pointedly resist Clarity. Like all other Alchemicals, Metropoli are still excluded from governance and leadership, but they can exert significant influence without crossing that line. Particularly lucky citizens often speak of being in the city's favor, attributing any fortunate happenstances to metropolitan intervention. Woe betide a citizen who angers their metropolis — while rare, many who even suspect they have angered their city request reassignment elsewhere in the nation. Few wish to keep their lives in even the autonomic functions of city they rely on, as any resident of Lux would attest to before stepping to the gravitational beams their city uses to allow transport between the floating obelisk districts.

Elder metropoli tend toward a higher-level perspective, having seen firsthand that not every single detail *has* to be micromanaged. They might still play favorites with some citizens or take an active role in advising the Tripartite, but such things often lose the novelty that made them so appealing to a young city. Some elder metropoli go dormant for centuries, maintaining their Municipal Charms and programmed routines autonomously while their consciousness communes with Autochthon in abstract and esoteric dreams incomprehensible to all but other metropoli. Rousing an elder to action in times of crisis can be a

challenge in and of itself. As their Essence grid expands, they increasingly install Municipal Charms designed to sustain Autochthonia's machine-ecology alongside Charms that provide for the citizens' needs. The oldest cities are not unlike industrial organs, sustaining the Great Maker when his own mechanisms falter and fail.

Most of a metropolis' lasting relationships are with their fellow Alchemicals. A metropolis can be a powerful mentor to a young Champion, and cities of every age seek out Alchemical proteges from among the Alchemicals built within them. Young Alchemicals benefit not only from the city's advice and expertise, but from the insight it offers into their future as potential metropoli. The city, in turn, gains not just new allies, but a chance to remember what life was like before the ascension.

Close relationships between metropoli and mortals are rare, but most cities maintain cordial working relationships with at least the city's officials. Some may take an interest in any citizen who happens to catch their attention, taking them on as a student, friend, lover, or more. Such citizens may occasionally find themselves in the delicate position of being responsible for a measure of the whole city's emotional wellbeing.

A metropolis' oldest and most stable relationships are often those with other cities. Friendships, rivalries, and romances play out over the course of decades, their correspondence transmitted through long-range broadcasting Charms, diplomatic assemblies, and the occasional drone-body visit.

Champions of the Eight Nations

The Alchemical Exalted are the Champions of the Eight Nations, born from the effort, sacrifice, and dreams of their nations. Their loyal service to the people honors that unpayable debt. In the most archaic dialects of Autochthonic, the word for "Champion" does not mean warrior or hero — it means a holy servant of the people.

Within the Octet, Alchemicals occupy a social status equal to members of the Tripartite. The scope of their service affords them a level of autonomy, privilege, and sometimes even luxury that is available to few other Autochthonians. Senior Alchemicals enjoy tremendous latitude in their duties to the nation; their requisitions are given special priority and generous leeway. Champions who've served long enough to build century-spanning epics may rival city autocrats for influence and privilege.

Despite these advantages, the Alchemicals are also a half-step removed from the people they serve. Their lives and decisions are the subject of propaganda, mythmaking, and scandal; their successes and failures live on in the songs of their people. Such intense celebrity is isolating, often flattening the Champion in the eyes of her nation — she is not a peer, not a countryman. She is an icon.

New Champions may struggle with these expectations, seeking support and guidance from older Alchemicals, who may become lifelong mentors. Some mentors take their pupils on national tours that border on pilgrimage; others arrange for exhaustive meetings, orientations, and internships to immerse the new Champion in public affairs.

Most Alchemicals have a portfolio of routine duties that they attend to between assigned missions, gathering additional responsibilities as they rise in seniority. Unless they have proven unreliable, they are trusted to prioritize these standing obligations at their discretion and may request passion projects as part of their official docket. Champions generally treasure the normalcy of their peacetime duties, whether contributing to underperforming shifts at a local factory, collaborating with Theomachracy exorcists, conducting fungal harvesting experiments, or serving as advisors to high-ranking Tripartite officials.

Throughout these duties, the Alchemicals do not rule over others: governance is the duty of the Tripartite

alone. Instead, Champions are servant-leaders, setting an example for others to emulate and offering wise counsel. They are attached to missions more than offices. The Soulsteel Caste tactician *Eupraxia Advocate* has served alongside Nuradi regulators for decades as part of a standing directive to investigate voidbringer heresies, but she isn't a regulator, nor can she exercise a regulator's authority without a superior officer's approval.

Routine duties are quickly set aside when a nation calls its Champions to action. Missions are handed down from the local or National Tripartite Assemblies, or authorized by high-ranking Tripartite members in urgent circumstances, such as invasion or natural disaster. Alchemicals may be assigned to bolster an expedition into the Reaches, lead sorties against foreign armies, oversee complex civil construction projects, or conduct high-stakes investigations. Diplomatic missions are common, both in earnest and as pretenses for espionage. Whatever the nation requires, the Champions achieve.

While Alchemicals take their highest missions from the National Tripartite Assembly, most retain strong ties to the metropolis they call their birthplace. Its people are their family, and some Alchemicals bend the rules with small acts of favoritism or press their privilege to secure long-standing duties there. Hometown Champions are synonymous with their metropolis, the subjects of murals, plays, and songs. The Tripartite welcomes the positive impact this has on morale, but Champions are expected to curtail this favoritism if it creates a real or perceived conflict of interests between their city and nation.

Though their responsibilities are many, Champions are afforded opportunities for leisure and personal pursuits. They may set aside their standing duties for brief periods as needed without too much scrutiny, and requests for more extensive are rarely refused except as punishment for past infractions. Negligence still comes at a high price, however. Champions who fail at their duties, injure morale, or misappropriate resources find themselves under immense social pressure from the Tripartite and their fellow Alchemicals to mend their behavior. Senior Alchemicals offer stern coaching or correction to wayward Champions; those who still fall short find themselves shut out from opportunities. Official censure burdens the offender with unwanted and onerous duties, alongside the forfeiture of privileges. In extremis, exile is an option, usually in the form of onerous missions — the Moonsilver Caste *Congruence of Intent* cannot return to Estasia until he has slain a hundred Apostates, and perhaps one day he may succeed. The Starmetal Caste *Deliberate Provocation* has been banished from Jarish until she maps every conduit in the shifting labyrinth of the Fold Space, a provably impossible task.

An Alchemical's duty of service is not an unthinking one, however. A Champion's conscience may sometimes bring her into conflict with her nation's interests, and there may not always be a right choice. Criticizing political policy, opposing corrupt leadership, or pointing out her nation's hypocrisies and failings can all be censured as disloyalty unless the Alchemical navigates it deftly. She must be certain that she can persuade instead of alienate, that her words will be seen as voice of the nation's conscience speaking through her. Even success brings consequences. The testimony of *Chatoyant Corollary* set off a firestorm of investigations that ousted hundreds of corrupt Kamaki officials. His reward has been years of burdensome duties, ensuring that the public knows that the face of righteousness is also the face of service.

In addition to their national service, the Alchemical Exalted bear a second mandate as the Chosen of the Great Maker. The Eight Divine Ministers, supreme emanations of the Machine God's soul, must at times call upon Champions for their aid. Most National Tripartite Assemblies dutifully clear the Champion's docket to make way for these divine imperatives, but these objectives can't always be reconciled with other national interests. Alchemicals caught between their patriotic and divine duties must make impossible choices, triumphs or failures that will echo forever in their legends.

Machine Saints: Operatives of the Divine Ministers

While the majority of Alchemicals are dedicated to the safety and defense of the Octet, a handful serve different masters: the Eight Divine Ministers themselves. While they have no official designation, these Chosen operatives are called Machine Saints in the legends that follow them. They take their assignments directly from the Divine Ministers, performing sacred duties in service to the Maker's will and the Ministers' complex agendas.

The Machine Saints operate outside the view of the public. The Populat knows of them only through rumors, apocryphal angels of the Reaches and mysterious Champions who serve no nation. Across the Eight Nations, the Tripartite treats their existence as a state secret, in accordance with longstanding agreements with the Divine Ministers. The Eight Nations' Alchemical secret police strike terror into the hearts of saboteurs, voidbringers, and gremlins, but the Machine Saints are a threat above even them, a holy order that knows no distraction. They move easily in secret through the Eight Nations, seeming no different than any other Alchemical — at least, until they reveal the Eightfold Emblem that proclaims them an agent of the Divine Ministers.

Machine Saints answer to all Eight Divine Ministers equally, though most tend to work more closely with one or two Ministers whose agendas or ideologies they favor. Each Minister has their own agenda, a facet of Autochthon's eight-part will, and each has their own uses for the Machine Saints. Runel often dispatches Machine Saints to defend the downtrodden, tend to the sick, and raise up those in need, assigning compassionate missions that are rarely glamorous. Debok Moom calls his Saints to violence, testing the Great Maker's greatest weapons in battle. Ku, most secretive of the Divine Ministers, wields Machine Saints as tools of fear against voidbringer cults, tyrants, and heretics, particularly those that the Eight Nations are unwilling to deal with.

Some Machine Saints are created to fill that role, built in one of the hidden theopoli that cluster like temples around Autochthon's Core. Ancient orders of priest-engineers and machine spirits take the place of the Octet's Sodalities in this process. For others, the Divine Ministers sometimes contact the Eight Nations to request a Champion's services as a Machine Saint in perpetuity, sending an orichalcum-inked missive or omens of steam and steel. Not all Champions accept such a request — to be called upon by the Divine Ministers is an honor beyond measure, but it means abandoning the nation they call home and everyone they know there. Finally, some Machine Saints volunteer for the role, petitioning the Divine Ministers and undergoing a series of increasingly esoteric quests to verify the extent of her commitment. Challenging or refusing the Minister is expected as part of these tests — the Divine Ministers want loyalty, but not unthinking obedience. National Tripartite Assemblies feel the loss of a Champion to the Ministers' service keenly, but only the utmost desperation could drive them to interfere in this sacred matter

Champions in Creation

During Nexus' Time of Red Markets, a strange man of powerful stature took to the streets, striking down criminals and petty tyrants with enormous white jade fists. In the waning years of the Shogunate, a stranger arrived in a small farming village and warned them of oncoming danger, her skin traced with wires that glittered like the night sky. Across the Dreaming Sea, folklore speaks of a woman of living quicksilver who once loved an ancient sun-king. When he perished, she threw herself into the sea, where she grew and unfolded into a great city in silver, a city no explorer has ever found.

When Autochthon created the first Alchemical Exalted, he awakened only a few among them, leaving the rest sealed in stasis within his hidden forges and laboratories across Creation. The Great Maker has left,

but his Chosen still remain, and not all have remained in stasis in the millennia since his departure. How and why they have awakened remains unknown, whether by Autochthon's design or unintended malfunction. Such Alchemicals have never experienced life before, remembering only the faintest traces of her soul's past lives. They know little of the world around him, but they know what it is to be a Champion.

Emerging from long-sealed ruins or hidden laboratories, Creation's Alchemicals find themselves utterly alone at first. Few remain so for long, driven both by human need and Alchemical Essence fever. With no nation to serve, these Champions forge their own communities, and their own place within them. Some might seek to rule, unfettered by Autochthonian taboo, while others might be content as nothing more than a strange guardian to a fishing community. Some find their place within an organization, whether as a merchant prince of the Guild or as an ascetic monk of the Immaculate Order.

Alchemicals are human, but no one in Creation would take a Champion for one. She might be taken for an automaton, a God-Blood wielding strange artifacts, a strange Exigent, or an unknown god, unless she conceals her Exalted nature. Such an Alchemical might struggle to see her own humanity, coming to terms with it in a strange journey of self-discovery. They might find a natural rapport with others who stand apart from most of humanity, joining forces with young Solars, Silver Pact Lunars, outcaste Kinships, wandering Exigents, or even stranger company.

The passageway was dark, unusually so for this bustling district within Trantec. *Faultless Conciliator* wondered if perhaps the Luminors had failed to perform maintenance here for some reason, but they quickly dismissed the notion. As twisty and confusing as Trantec's streets might be to outsiders, the local Luminors surely knew every route and the whereabouts of every lamp.

No, this darkness was intentional. *Conciliator* waited a moment, listening to the sound of cheering reverberating from somewhere distant — a sporting event, perhaps, or someone performing a rousing recital of “The Great Slurry Flood.” But beneath the crowd noise and the passersby hurrying home from their shifts, *Conciliator* heard the ragged breaths of a human desperately attempting to get their nerves under control.

After a moment, a dark-haired woman stepped slowly out from an alcove. She stood straight, chin high, shoulders back. Only the tightness around her eyes and at the corners of her mouth gave away her fear. That, and the pounding of her heart, which was like a drumbeat to *Conciliator's* heightened senses. She gripped a long needle file as though it were a dagger.

Conciliator had had all manner of tools driven into their arms and chest and back before, teaching them to approach these situations with caution. Broken tools (for those instruments never survived the encounter intact) could be replaced. Humans were a more delicate matter.

“I won't hurt you,” they said softly. “I just want to talk.”

Her fingers flexed around the file's handle as she sized up the Jade Caste Champion. *Conciliator* considered releasing a cloud of soothing pheromones to reassure her, but before they could, she lowered the file. “How can I help you, Lector?” she asked.

Conciliator held up a button-sized device and squeezed it. A recording played, the speaker asking questions that would make a preceptor or a regulator come running. But *Conciliator* was neither of those, and the words — though shocking and bold — called out various members of the Tripartite for increasing their own rations while reducing those of the Populat. It called for workers to walk off their shifts within the Petroleaginous Nutriment Synthesis Engine if previous allotments weren't restored.

The woman didn't wilt at the sight of the leaflet in *Conciliator's* pale green grasp. Her eyes searched their face, and a storm of emotions crossed over her own: apprehension, beseeching, defiance, and, finally, hope. “Every word is true,” she said. She might have denied knowledge of it, and even if *Conciliator* had admitted they'd followed her since she'd hidden one behind a message board outside a cafeteria, she might still have tried some fumbling lie to convince them she'd been doing something else. That she didn't attempt it was impressive.

It also made her a voidbringer. The work she was calling for a stop to was essential to feeding not only Trantecans, but citizens throughout Kamak. Hunger would lead to even more civil unrest, and its effects would cascade throughout the nation.

Protocols existed for this; *Conciliator's* mind reeled with Programmed Catechism Rebuttals for every point. Yet they held their tongue until the urge to act hastily subsided. The woman was part of a community, and a community was at its strongest when its members felt safe, secure, and cared for. The workers here in Trantec were going hungry *now*. How could they feel cared for if those whose job it was to keep them fed were diverting food from their mouths?

Healing began with trust. Perhaps this cult wasn't so far gone. Perhaps there was something *Conciliator* could do to help.

“Tell me,” they said.

“I will, but not here. Will you follow me?”

Conciliator nodded, and followed the woman deeper into the gloom.

Chapter Two: Autochthonia

Autochthonia is the living world-body of the Machine God, an industrial, unforgiving realm full of technological miracles. The Realm of Brass and Shadows is a frightful world, where omnipresent dark and claustrophobic spaces hide limb-rending gears, scalding blasts of steam, and merciless industrial machinery. Yet it is a beautiful world, too, a world of impossible, inorganic perfection: vast megastructures and cavernous chambers illuminated by the heat of blinding god-forges and bolts of discharged lightning. It is not a place humanity was meant to survive in — but with Autochthon's gifts and their Alchemical Champions, the Eight Nations have found a way to endure its omnipresent hazards.

Autochthon's flesh is iron, brass, and steel, and the anatomy of his world-body is terrifying industrial machinery. Screaming buzz-saws three men tall, vast slabs slammed in staccato by rock crushers, labyrinthine conveyor belt systems carrying chunks of molded plastic — humanity lives in proximity to all this and more. They're accustomed to some hazards as a part of everyday life, those that can be kept at bay by basic safety measures, a well-placed walkway, or simple know-how. Most spaces in Autochthonia lie in total darkness. The illumination of the Eight Nations' metropoli and man-made light sources are a departure from this norm, though even caliginous spans are sometimes intermittently lit by luminescent minerals, radiant conduits, are bolts of lightning, and vast industrial organs.

Most of Autochthonia is a warren of cramped corridors, crawlspaces, and tunnels, dotted with recessed chambers and foundries, maintenance docks, and access hatches. Sometimes catwalks, ladders, and open floors provide clear passage through his interior spaces, but most paths require navigating around sprawling tangles of cables, wall-mounted conduits, brass plugs and valves that protrude like stalagmites and stalactites, and other obstacles.

Autochthonia's interior is lined with Essence-powered tubes called *conduits*, which carry countless industrial substances that flow through the Great Maker's world-sized circulatory system. Some are hazardous if breached, but capable of being put to industrial use: those that carry industrial chemicals, teravolt electric currents, and hyperpressurized steam. Others spit out noxious fumes, dangerous fluids, and other toxic waste products. The most precious are those that carry life-giving water and the nutrient slurry that feeds the Eight Nations. Human life depends on tapping these conduits like sap from trees; expert conduit tappers are valued for their ability to do so safely, or to tell if rerouting has turned a safe conduit into a dead one or one that'll spew molten slag.

Where it isn't cramped, Autochthonia is massive beyond comprehension. Cyclopean vistas loom at a scale that turns humans into insects, yawning or sprawling in every direction. An acid-washed staircase, wide enough for a dozen men, sways within the dark void of a gaping chute. Magnetic aurora illuminates the walls of a granite storage-chamber the size of a hollow mountain, filled with machine spirits maintaining the Great Maker's most vital subsystems.

Temperatures and air pressure vary depending on the area. Some segments are pressurized and require passing through vein-locks to get into. Others have no atmosphere at all, or exist at other extremes incompatible with human survival. Chambers of unbelievable cold stand in contrast to gigantic foundries and scalding steam clouds. Silence is rare. One can always hear the boom of machinery, the hiss of pneumatics, or rarely even the low creaking pops of the Great Maker's world-hinges.

The Octet

Eightfold are the Great Maker's instruments, the Eight Nations of the Octet said to be among the finest.

The Octet are the Eight Nations that serve the Great Maker, founded by eight heroes who led their tribes into the Realm of Brass and Shadows. The Octet has changed, crumbled, and been renewed many times throughout Autochthonia's long history, but the lectors preach that the eight shall always serve Great Maker, even as their manifestation changes. Each of the Eight Nations' capitals is an Alchemical metropolis, the first eight Chosen in Autochthonia.

In modern times, the Eight Nations have much in common in their religious practices, culture, and societal structures. Autochthon's tectonic inner movements have pulled them together and split them apart over the centuries. This has caused intermingling of peoples, spread of practices, and great wars over resources, doctrine, and grudges. Now, all eight come together again for the first time in centuries. Whether this convergence heralds a new golden age, or a time of strife will be decided by the Octet's people, both mortals and Champions.

A Shifting World

The machine that is Autochthon is ever-changing, perpetually reordering itself in divine industrial homeostasis with changes large and small. Tunnels twist, rotate, expand, and contract. God-foundry chambers slowly jettison their atmosphere over the course of hours before expanding into a thin oblong, vacuum-cooling the metal into slag. Continental modules, including those housing the nations and major industrial organs, shift in relation to each other, temporally opening vast rifts and crushing external chambers. Some places might go years with only minor changes, but nowhere outside the nation-chambers is ever static for long.

The signs heralding Autochthonia's divine reconfiguration are legible to those in tune with the Great Maker's will and their environment. Atmospheric fluctuations in pressure or temperature can be heard in a sing-scream of pneumatics; acid-wash monsoons are heralded by a piquant aroma; deployment of hazardous machinery is often preceded by the deployment of klaxons and sodium-orange lights.

These changes have cataclysmic repercussions for the Eight Nations, lasting weeks or even years. Pneumatic networks disconnected from the Engine of Steam leave whole regions without regular water or steam, white jade reality-nodes deprived of Essence malfunction, and lack of electricity from ruptured conduit lines plunge entire areas into perpetual dark. The shifting nature of Autochthonia renders travel incredibly variable. A trek that normally takes years might be reduced to days by a leagues-spanning conveyor belt, or what used to be a quick jaunt might see travelers deposited within an ever-shifting clockwork labyrinth.

Periods of time where travel between all the nations is easy are referred to as **convergences**. The current convergence process began 30 years ago and has connected nearly all eight nations, heralding an era of increased exchange, cooperation, and competition.

The constantly shifting and reconfiguring insides render Autochthonia's geomancy volatile as its dragon lines — known to the Octet as demiurge lines — are consistently disrupted and reordered. The shifting energies pool as unstable demesnes that fade as the machine world continues to shift, rarely lasting more than short decades. The steadiest concentrations of elemental power are around industrial organs, in chambers that are unusually stable, and in vast deposits of magical materials.

The nature of Autochthonia inflects its elemental geomancy. Air demesnes are often filled with dark smoke, or crackle with arcing lightning. Earth demesnes manifest in metal and crystal. Fire demesnes play host to goutts of rupturing plasma alongside infernos of furnace-flame. Water demesnes are full of oil, steam, and water-based chemicals. Wood demesnes are lush with techno-organic flora.

The Great Expanse of Metal

The Octet is located within Autochthonia's central region, **the Great Expanse of Metal**, considering it synonymous with the realm entire. The Expanse forms a rough toroid of interlocking mechanical organ-continents that shift in semi-regular biotectonic orbits, with abutting segments touching the other parts of Autochthonia. Each of the Eight Nations is centered in a nation chamber embedded in one of these organ-continents, a region of sufficient stability and size to support human life on a national scale. Leaving these safe zones without proper guidance or equipment risks being crushed between the organ-continent and everything it scrapes along.

The **Reaches** lie beyond the safety of the nation chambers. They come in every configuration of space, size, and material, most often like a patchwork combining traits of industrial factories and deep caves. Chambers are linked together by tunnels lined with clockwork and circuitry, ranging in size from needle-thin openings to corridors whose edges are wider and taller than the eye can see. Glass or grate floors overhang rivers of slag and abyssal drops. Steam vents shroud passages along twisting, uneven paths. Deadly as they are, the Reaches are inhabited by the so-called tunnel folk, largely nomadic societies that exist beyond the Eight Nations, without the benefit of Alchemical Champions.

In the darkest parts of the Expanse, the husks of dead metropolises lay shattered. When a metropolis dies, the mechanisms anchoring it to Autochthonian begin to falter, leading some to be ejected from their nation chambers by biotectonic drift. These corpse-cities are carried away in tumbled heaps, though still full of valuable magical materials, equipment, and other resources. They're inauspicious and dangerous, often afflicted with blight zones, anomalous Essence fluctuations, malfunctioning Municipal Charms, and stranger threats. They're avoided by all but the most desperate of scavengers, exiles, and refugees, whether Octet or tunnel folk.

Industrial Organs

Autochthon is a living machine, and certain structures inside the titan comprise the critical divine infrastructure that uphold the world. These miraculous theomorphic engines function as the Machine God's industrial organs, resting within holy sanctum-rifts in the Reaches. Hundreds of industrial organs operate in great networks, ranging from continental engines that drive the tectonic movements of Autochthonia's segment-modules to the refinery-pump megastructures that dot the Sea of Oil. Machine spirit subministers and their subordinate souls tend to industrial organs, working tirelessly to prevent failure and subsequent disaster. Each is uniquely vast, numinous, and awesome to look upon at work. Their energies are often inimical to human life, but their functions are critical to humanity's overall survival within Autochthonia. They're holy sites to the Autochthonians. The Theomachracy monitors and guard access to them, Sodalt scholar-engineers study them, and some pilgrims make the rare journey to see one in person.

The World-Engine of Lightning

Lightning is said to carry the Great Maker's thoughts, embodying his divine inspiration, destructive power, and ability to illuminate. The World-Engine of Lightning then is a colossal monument to awe: a shining cylindrical mountain rumbling beneath a thick carapace of pearlescent fulgurite and shrouded in auroras, electric discharges, and ozone. Within writhe gargantuan dynamos and tiers of Essence capacitors stacked in vertically rotating rings; apocalyptic blasts of lightning leaps between them in city-spanning arcs. Miles of neuroelectric circuitry rise from it to the sanctum-rift's roof in a thunderhead-shrouded web that channels electricity to conduits connected to the rest of Autochthonia, leaking blasts of thought-lightning where insulation frays. Static urchins, torso-sized spiny machine spirits crackling with

energy, roll across the Engine to siphon excess power and discharge it explosively where it needs to go. After the fall of Tamarak Met to the Blight, they're now overseen by the Subminister Logeron, the Fetters of Mog, a hundred-handed wheel of brass whose presence brings calm and touch is entropy.

Air demesnes capped by white jade-and-soulsteel tower-manses surround the Engine to contain its volatile Essence field, their interiors filled with the detritus of a long-dead civilization advanced in energy manipulation. For millennia, artists and Sodalts have joined pilgrims in temporary colonies within these manses seeking inspiration from the World-Engine and to study the ruins, leaving behind layers of art objects and experimental technologies. Legend tells ancient automatons stalk the area with a vengeance; two rival expeditions of Sodalts have recently encamped in neighboring tower-manses, yet blame vanishing members on each other.

The World-Engine of Steam

Water's uses are many: powering pneumatic machines, enabling industrial processes, regulating temperature, and sustaining organic life. All water within the God-Machine is said to cycle through the reactor known as World-Engine of Steam, an enormous glowing tank of impossible heat and pressure at the center of a labyrinth of colossal steel pipes. Its bottom is a boiling ocean of city-smashing pressure and whirlpool-typhoons; the upper parts are no less heinously lethal, filled with pellucid warms of purifiers, jellyfish-like machine spirits that devour foreign contaminants. Blue jade coolant pillars that protrude from the World-Engine chill the cloyingly humid and hot sanctum-rift, so that clouds occlude its cylindrical heights, a lake pools at the bottom that flows outwards, and violent thunderstorms and frigid monsoons sweep through all. Their glow casts the entire sanctum-rift in a gentle, unearthly cerulean glow.

Organic life flourishes within the sanctum-rift, including a handful of species not found elsewhere and large mutants, rendering it a singular treasure of resources for pharmacology, poisons, and the like. Vast curtains of moss hang from the coolant pillars' grating floors, home to fireflies; carnivorous flowers bloom atop chinampas and terraced gardens, fed upon by enormous centipedes; mushrooms grow from lichen-covered walls in horizontal forests. Attempts to transplant this life invariably fail; generations of exposure to the World-Engine's life-giving Essence has rendered its inhabitants unable to survive elsewhere.

Although Tunnel Folk bands come by regularly to harvest the sanctum-rift's bounties, few dare stay overlong for fear of the World-Engine's Subminister, Kushkala. Called the Ventilator of Runel and resembling an air-inflated bakelite cephalopod, Kushkala finds humanity a dire disruption to its workflow *and* to preserving other, better behaved organic life. Kushkala dispatches purifiers to chase humans away wherever it finds them.

The Materium Tabernacle

The Materium Tabernacle is a forbidding octagonal pyramid of cast iron, suspended upside-down over a desert of metal sand dunes. Red, purple, and pink quartz crust its surface with a baroque lattice of spines. This, savants tell, is where the Great Maker recycles techno-organic matter and machine spirit corpses. Raw material falls from chutes into vast piles, where sixteen-legged brass bier-crabs load them by the ton, swarming like ants through the crypt-plant's dimly lit interior. They descend a sloping labyrinth of rough-hewn walls before reaching the Tabernacle's main chamber, a holy workshop-cavern of nightmarish wonder overseen by the Subminister Auvua (p. xx).

Incense burns above tanks of consecrated oil and acids that preserve and dissolve. Amid hydroponic gardens of translucent organic flowers, assembly lines disassemble corpses into constituent parts and pile machine anatomy into stacks. Rejuvenation vats wreaking of ammonia birth machine spirits anew, and

techno-organic matter is turned into flesh for them. Below, Auvua holds a secret workshop lit by plasma-light walls, full of requisitioned parts, tools, and abominable creations.

Poachers hunt machine spirits for parts for components. Champions sometimes seek out Auvua to sift through a machine spirit's thought-wiring for specific memories, in return for help dealing with poachers.

The Crystalline Sanctum of the Godhead

The Crystalline Sanctum of the Godhead is the holiest place in Autochthonia, the path to which is only revealed in times of dire necessity to the worthiest of pilgrims. The Godhead itself is the repository of Autochthon's will, while the Crystalline Sanctum that encloses it is a vast, glittering sphere the size of a nation chamber that replicates the Primordial's world-form in microcosm. Millions of mineral inclusions and technorganic growths cover the Sanctum's surface, arrayed in a perfectly symmetrical pattern of sublime geometry. It blazes with light of every color and the lightning of divine cognition, which sings as it leaps from hill-sized crystal neurons. This radiates heat against the chilling cold that pervades its surroundings: the surface is well below freezing, with temperatures plummeting beyond what humans can stand as one travels inward.

Embedded within the Sanctum are the Consecrated Theopoli, five hidden metropoli — Om, Tethwat, Valu, Henem and Zo — who sought a closer communion with the divine in their metropolitan ascension. Scarcely populated and eerily quiet, their only residents are machine spirits who tend to the Godhead's essential functions, Champions who serve the Divine Ministers directly as the Machine Saints, and the rare few pilgrims who chase rumors of these sacred cities. Some are Alchemicals who make pilgrimage to the theopoli without becoming Machine Saints, like the legendary sorcerer-ascetic *Ungrinding Mandala Gears*.

At the Sanctum's heart lies the Godhead, the exact center of Autochthonia and the living divine Core of the Machine God's being. The seat of his divinity is a vast toroidal chamber that spans miles, filled with forest-like formations of exotic galvanized ore and gems that ring its central pillar. Sublime mathematics play out upon it in the portentous abstract patterns of the Grand Design. Thought-lightning blazes upon the tesseract ceiling spun by thunderstorm-dense groupings of the design weavers that ring the Core in constant worship. Below this, a thick layer of ozone perfumes the space like holiest incense. Within the central pillar, guarded against all by the mightiest of machine spirits and wards, lay the Basilica Axiomatic: an echoing cavern where Autochthon himself can be petitioned directly and potentially roused from his slumber. In thousands of years, nobody has ever been allowed within.

The Grand Design

Autochthon took inspiration from the Loom of Fate, seeing how the threads of destiny fulfilled strengthened the weave of Creation's reality. Seeing how he might be better ordered, he etched the Grand Design into the crystal of his Core, reconfiguring the seat of his own cognition, and created the design weavers to spin and maintain it. The Grand Design is a mechanistic order of causality that parallels the Loom's weave of fate, or a fork of that cosmic order, patterning Autochthonia's internal physics on the same causal laws as Creation. Machine spirits tend to the Design just as they do any other part of the Maker's systems, and Autochthonia's reality is strengthened against the Blight by their labors.

Should the Seal of Eight Divinities be breached, the Grand Design would ensure that Autochthonia and its people would align with Creation's system of fate, finding a place within it as naturally as drawing breath.

The Geyser Primordium

In the lower depths of the Great Expanse of Metal, there is a perpetual nova of Essence, white-hot, pulsing like a divine ember at the heart of a perfectly spherical chamber. The light builds, strobes: then the world is brightness and vaporized metal, emitted in burning founts for hours before finally guttering again. This is the Geyser Primordium, the enclosed star of Autochthon.

Over the last ten years, the Geyser Primordium has been studied in secret by a multinational conspiracy of Sodalts, known internally as the Charism Concern. Its leadership have risen to prominent status within their nations, deriving new inventions, innovative research, and large amounts of magical materials from the Concern's exploitation of the Geyser. The cooled metal ejecta discharged from the bottom of the Geyser's chamber is caught in a sprawling jade net built by one of the Concern's Alchemical co-conspirators, *Discrepant Parametric Explicator*. It's harvested by Lumpen workgroups, whose requisition orders go unquestioned, and smuggled back into the Octet by Concern members returning from resource-gathering expeditions.

While the Geyser emits a variety of metallic substances, the most precious is a pale, yellow material, that the Concern calls cirinitas. It possesses numerous exotic qualities. Chief among these is the theochemical process by which it can be transmuted into the magical materials. Manufacturing even small quantities of magical materials requires significant quarries of cirinitas, enough of the magical material in question to seed the process, and the discreet use of specialized Municipal Charms like Omnimaterial Synthesis Crucibles or Metaxanthosis Sieves, but it's well worth the effort for the Concern's members. Untransmuted cirinitas is used in a variety of miraculous inventions, and the subject of extensive research.

The Concern is prone to vicious internal feuding over cirinitas apportionment, but it's unwaveringly unified in protecting its secrets, leveraging politics and legbreakers to ward off the curious. Exposure would risk more than just their own power and influence — control of the Geyser could be a flashpoint that could reignite the war between nearby Sova and Yugash, both desperate for the material advantage it would yield.

The Lumpen workgroups used to harvest cirinitas rarely survive long enough to threaten the conspiracy's secret. The protective gear they use is inadequate for exposure to the noxious fumes and pulsing Essence that they're exposed to when they enter the Geyser chamber, making sickness and mutation common. This has only worsened over time as Concern members grow increasingly willing to sacrifice safety for increased cirinitas production. Some even seek to agitate the Geyser's inexorable growth, experimenting with carefully controlled alterations to its underlying mechanisms and testing the effects of seeding it with magical materials, cirinitas, and other exotic substances.

Ecology

Life of a type thrives within Autochthonia's industrial landscapes, most of it inorganic. Lush machine-flora, alien and beautiful, flourish where conditions are right, like temperate chambers within the Reaches and Municipal Charm-gardens. Rubber tubes with silicone flowers curtain walls and ceilings like vines. Crystal shrubbery burrows through metal with diamond-sharp roots, connecting in hidden thickets the size of hills. Nanofiber spores drift through the air, birthing forests of pale, spiral-shaped metal trees with glassy purple extrusions and oil-drinking capillary tubes wherever they land.

Organic fauna is primarily made up of cockroaches and rats, the overwhelming majority of which live in proximity to humans. Exposure to Autochthonian conditions can result in dramatic mutations, like those of Sovan honeyrats or iron-shelled cockroaches, and the Octet breeds and trains them for a variety of purposes. Surviving populations of other animals are rare in the extreme, though there are some mollusks,

insects, and small mammals that persist in tiny numbers. More lived in Autochthonia, once, brought over by the Great Maker alongside humanity, but have since died out. Their preserved remains are prized by Sodalite scholars, and fossil revivification experiments have seen some success.

Organic flora is sparse, found primarily within the Reaches. Algae, lichens, mushrooms, and some extraordinarily hardy plants from Creation have endured in some climes, and are used for food, weaving and dyes, medication, and other purposes by those with access to them. Truly rare areas even have a small amount of soil, after thousands of years of decomposition amid mineral substrate.

Mystical beings known as machine spirits, spiritual emanations of the Great Maker, exist throughout his world-body, maintaining the techno-ecology of his industrial organs. These machine spirits carry out specific tasks to maintain environmental homeostasis: servicing heating coils to preserve a chamber's precise temperature, trimming growths of techno-organic sheet metal so they don't choke maintenance tunnels, or eating growths on the inside of oil-tubes to prevent clogging buildup.

Machine spirits largely avoid human settlements, though metropolises near the Reaches still employ Municipal Charms that ward against them. Despite this, the Octet has learned much from observing the machine spirits, fellow laborers in service of the Great Maker's systems. Such study has taught them how to trim lithium-blossoms that bloom within ore-fields, bolt sheets of copper over metal-melting thermal sinks, siphon excess charge from lightning conduits to prevent overcharge, and more.

Perils of the Reaches

The only reliably safe way to traverse Autochthonia is through pneumatic trams. Player characters might encounter the following environmental hazards, difficult terrain, and other environmental obstacles and misfortunes. Many of these can be spotted in advance and navigated around. Even apart from these perils, environmental conditions are rarely ideal in the Reaches — penalties from darkness, excessive light, and other poor conditions are common.

Characters foraging for food must typically tap conduits, though they might hunt for rats or cockroaches instead. Tapping a conduit is a difficulty 3 (Wits + [Appropriate Craft or Survival]) roll with the appropriate equipment. It's difficulty 5 for those without it. Appropriate Crafts depend on the local terrain — if accessing the conduit requires going through metal plates, a metalworking Craft could apply. Botching usually results in tapping the wrong type of conduit, exposing characters to a one-time environmental hazard out to close range of variable difficulty and damage.

Challenging Perils

One-time Hazards: Cables snapping and flying, walkways breaking or retracting, passing by exposed industrial machinery, synthetic flora shattering like shrapnel.

Recurring Hazards: Toxic smog, a ruptured conduit spewing hazardous material, broken gears flying out of machines.

Obstacles: The floor becoming a conveyor belt running the opposite direction, finding and scaling a badly corroded maintenance ladder, fitting through a crawlspace.

Deadly Perils

One-time Hazards: Flammable gas igniting, fast-moving machinery, jets of boiling

steam, a chamber turning upside down.

Recurring Hazards: Ventilation fans pushing travelers to fall a long distance, huge droplets of molten slag falling from above, poisonous gasses.

Obstacles: Swimming through submerged tunnels, constructing or finding a bridge over a river of slag, descending the iron walls of a cavernous chamber.

Extreme Perils

One-time Hazards: Tunnels dramatically contracting, organ-containers smashing together, anti-gremlin wards malfunctioning.

Recurring Hazards: Acid or molten rain, rapid depressurization, extreme heat or cold, arcs of discharged lightning.

Obstacles: A vast gulf separating walkways, a flood of oil, a pneumatically sealed vault door.

The Maker's Blight

Every inhabitant of the Great Maker's world-body knows one fundamental truth: Autochthon is and always has been sick. The Tome of the Great Maker names it the Blight, a sickness that crops up in pockets within Autochthonia and corrupts everything it touches. It has worsened since the Great Maker's exodus, as his long slumber and his separation from external resources have left him depleted of resources needed to keep his constant illness at bay. He depends greatly on the labors of the Eight Nations, the proper functioning of his machine spirits and industrial organs, and the metaphysical order of the Grand Design.

The Blight is not a constant disease, erupting in spontaneous outbreaks. The world ripples and distorts as oil-smeared tears open within the fabric of the Maker's world-body and waves of tainted Essence spill forth, infecting the terrain itself for miles around. These tainted regions are known as blight zones, though they take on myriad grotesque forms.

Organic life the initial outbreak of a blight zone — organic or otherwise — experiences painful techno-organic transformations. Flesh, blood, and bone become metal and glass; intestines become a mess of cables while nerves twist into wires. Machine spirits and automatons are instead corrupted by flesh, developing hideous patches and growths of circuit-ridden viscera, perpetually rotting cancers, and grotesque bony knobs. The same fate befalls Alchemicals unfortunate enough to be tainted by the Blight.

Exposure to the Blight isn't always fatal, though survivors face a difficult life and a greatly shortened lifespan. Mutation and disfigurement stigmatize them, for any exposure to the Blight bears the risk of gremlinization, corruption of the mind and soul. The most common gremlins are machine spirits, as death is far more common for mortals than corruption. Not even the Alchemicals are immune, corrupted into the dreaded Apostates.

The Eight Nations take steps to prevent Blight outbreaks inasmuch as this is possible. Some can be predicted, heralded by ill omens and strange behaviors in the Maker's body, a method refined to perfection by Yugash's blight-augurs. Despite these efforts, the Eight Nations often find themselves forced to focus their efforts on containment and sterilization rather than prevention. After the initial outbreak, the Blight can spread further still via humans, animals, and machine spirits that pass through the blight zone. Even a single vector of contagion can quickly spread the Blight if not safely contained. Alchemical rapid response teams mobilize to cordon off blight zones, rescue those of the infected for whom recovery is still possible, and mercifully euthanize others. Containment must be swift and precise,

lest those Champions risk succumbing to Apostasy. In the Reaches, machine spirits are deployed to enact similar measures.

Small blight zones can be stamped out entirely before they spread, but cleansing them grows exponentially more difficult and energy-intensive as they expand. The largest of them are beyond what even Municipal Charms like the Axiomatic Mandala Array can eliminate, making containment and routine gremlin hunts the only option available.

The Eight Nations don't know whether Autochthon's sickness might be fatal, and the Eight Divine Ministers seem no better informed. In times where the Blight is at its worst, apocalyptic whisperings of the Great Maker's death break out, before being suppressed as voidbringer heresies. The truth of this may be tied up in the nature of the Blight, a mystery not discussed in the Tome of the Great Maker.

Blight Zones

Each blight zone is a titanic lesion upon Autochthonia, horrific in its diseased profanity. They manifest in countless different forms, many of them unique. The atmosphere is oppressive, assuming a blight zone has an atmosphere at all. Temperatures range from extreme heat and cold to choking humidity to hazardous fluid leaks or gusts of steam laced with razor-sharp bits of debris. Whatever the gremlins don't kill, the environment will.

Sodalt researchers study blight zones, classifying their manifestations and seeking improvement methods of prevention, containment, and purification. While most blight zones are *sui generis*, these researchers have developed a shared vocabulary to describe common features.

Biotransformation causes elements of the Great Maker's world-body to exude living tissue and transforms artificial materials into gruesome organic tissue. It's what most Autochthonians imagine when they think of the Blight, by far its most common manifestation. Metal bulkheads wrench apart, pressed by raw and pulsing sheets of muscle. Conduits feed complex organ-cysts that vaguely resemble human anatomy. Blood weeps from metal surfaces, while bile and marrow pour from valves and refineries. This technorganic grotesquerie is extremely contagious, capable of spreading the Blight through shed layers of cancerous meat and the seeping flow of corrupted fluids.

Rust holes tear the world open like corrosion through a sheet of metal. The edges of reality turn a dull red, then fray, then implode open, leaving behind a gaping hole. Most open into floors or other surfaces, but sometimes the air itself yawns into a fractal hole. Anything that falls into a rust hole vanishes, never to be seen from again. Metal begins to corrode as a nascent rust hole takes form, a warning sign that allows for mass evacuations.

Gravity pits have a core of Blighted Essence at their center that draws everything towards it, exerting an incredible pressure that's easily capable of crumpling metal. The formation of a gravity pit starts with hairline fractures appearing in buildings, infrastructure, or the air itself, followed by a heavy sense of foreboding. The core forms soon after, drawing anything within its vicinity into contact with the initial wave of Blight.

The Static is a unique blight zone, which appears without warning and vanishes as mysteriously as it came. It manifests as a shimmer of prismatic distortion, visible in the air only at a distance that's much too close. Everything within its perimeter of becomes distorted as the very machinery of reality begins to malfunction. Directionality ceases to work as expected, with walls or passageways suddenly appearing or disappearing. A person may walk fifty paces straight in one direction only to find themselves back where they started. Memory degrades while within the Static, becoming increasingly fuzzy and distorted the with long exposure. Some memories vanish entirely, replaced by things the person has never experienced

— often memories and emotions seemingly taken from machine spirits. After some time, the Static degrades and vanishes, leaving a deep-rooted taint of Blighted Essence in its place.

Blight Exposure

The effects of exposure to the Blight manifest in a variety of awful ways, from the slow plasticization of organs and muscles to brain matter transforming into crystal and violent eruptions of wire and steel from open lesions. The severity of its effects increases with the amount of time spent in contact to the Blight, and the strength of the Blighted Essence that one is exposed to.

Characters can resist Blight exposure with a (Stamina + Resistance) or (Wits + Integrity) roll. Many metropoli have Municipal Charms capable of manufacturing efficacious wards against the Blight under Sodalt supervision. Such protective measures can add bonus dice on these rolls, as can certain esoteric safety measures developed by the Sodalities. The effects of Blight exposure are nothing like any other known disease, and are considered Shaping effects rather than conventional sickness for purposes of magical defense and treatment.

Minor Exposure (Difficulty 3): This level of exposure results from spending more than a few hours within a blight zone. It may take as much as a full day at a blight zone's edges, or a single hour near a blight zone's center or in especially powerful blight zones. It can also result from close contact with victims contaminated with the Blight. On a failed roll, characters suffer transformations that are either temporary or not significant enough to carry mechanical downsides. Examples include temporary visual or auditory hallucinations, joints that swell or stiffen as bone and cartilage are streaked with inorganic material, metal plates growing out of skin, or nails and hair turning to filthy, cracked glass.

Moderate Exposure (Difficulty 5): Spending more than a day within a blight zone results in moderate exposure — though again, this may vary depending on how deep in a blight zone a character is. Close contact with characters infected by a full-on Blight outbreak can also trigger major exposure in the first few hours after the outbreak. On a failed roll, characters suffer permanent and undesirable consequences — a good default is a -2 penalty on a limited range of actions, or a Minor Derangement (**Exalted**, p. 167). Limbs transform into clumsy masses of cable and rebar; paranoia breeds a violent fear of organic life; blood becomes oil, greatly slowing natural healing.

Severe Exposure (Difficulty 7): Spending more than a few days within a blight zone triggers severe exposure, though this can be avoided by keeping close to the edges. A Blight outbreak is itself severe exposure. The consequences of a failed roll are life altering, defaulting to a -3 penalty on a broad range of actions or a Major Derangement. Digestive tracts become nothing but vinyl tubing, requiring intravenous feeding to survive. Limbs turn to crystal or corroded metal and then violently shatter. Gruesome impulses arise from techno-organic growths inside a character's brain.

Blight exposure can result in gremlinization, but there's no specific mechanical representation for this state — it's the sum total of a character's mutations and Derangements, as well as any Blight-twisted Charms the Storyteller wishes to grant to corrupted machine spirits or Apostates (see p. XX for examples).

Storytelling Blight Exposure

These rules are primarily intended to be used for player character exposure to the Blight or for significant nonplayer characters. There's no need for the Storyteller to roll before describing the gruesome fates of mortals caught in an outbreak of the Blight.

Gremlins

The Maker's sickness drives anyone it touches to a unique madness. Gremlin syndrome comes for everyone exposed to the Blight: mortals, spirits, and the Exalted. Unfortunate mortals lose their rationality and humanity as wires and crystals puncture through their brains and their organs shift into grinding, miniature replicas of the Great Maker's divine machinery. Machine spirits feel gremlin syndrome the most acutely, as they are the closest to Autochthon himself. It unspools their consciousness, turning them from beings of orderly Essence to monsters of tangled chaos. Gremlinization is always painful and disgusting, whether it manifests in a rapid onset or develops progressively over the course of weeks.

Gremlins pose an even greater threat to Autochthonian civilization than the blight zones. Horrifying, repulsive, and vicious, gremlins pose as a serious threat to Autochthonian life, and the average resident of Autochthonia spends plenty of her life learning how to identify, avoid, report, and flee from these threats. Some desire the white noise of nothingness, lunging to destroy anything that disrupts the blissful silence of emptiness. Others behave like a haywire immune system, targeting anything and everything they believe to be intruders. Still others remain fully in control, but develop a zealous awe of the Blight, clinging to extreme and destructive beliefs. Some gremlins can be reasoned with — particularly corrupted Alchemicals — but with many, containment or destruction is the only viable option.

Gremlins have a number of horrible forms and shapes, though corrupted First Circle machine spirits of the same design generally take the same form, or one of a few common forms.

Ichneumon Vectors: Ichneumon vectors look like tall cylinders of black crystal, motored along by four to eight pointed, polygonal legs. At the top of the cylinder spins a sweeping, frenzied eye, and from the base of the vector's body extends an appendage somewhere between a drill and an ovipositor. Ichneumon vectors spread the Blight to their victims through this gruesome spike infecting them with a slow, degenerative illness that hardens the victim's flesh into brittle plastic. Once this polymerization is complete, a new vector hatches from the victim's corpse. When killed, the corpse of an ichneumon vector dissolves into stinking tar that still carries this contamination. Most vectors use their dying moments to make their way into water or nutrient conduits or other location that would rapidly expedite the spread of the Blight.

Neural Spiders: These corrupted fix beetles emerge from gremlinization as knots of steel cable, wiring, and brain matter encased in a distorted bubble of glass. They're barely fist-sized, but still pose a significant threat, slipping into hidden spaces such as cracks in habitation walls, plumbing and sewage lines, or unmonitored crawlspaces. When an unsuspecting victim approaches the hiding spot, the neural spider strikes. Neural spiders swarm when present in large numbers, attacking in the hundreds. They burrow into the skin of its victim and extrude filaments into the victim's nerve endings. Once a neural spider is fully embedded in a host, it drives them to act in erratic and destructive ways, as if they'd been gremlinized themselves. They're exceptionally difficult to remove safely, with failed attempts causing severe damage to the patient's nervous system if they aren't outright fatal.

The Apostates

Alchemical Exalted are not immune to the ravages of gremlinization. Even their hale and purpose-built bodies succumb to the Maker's sickness. An infected Alchemical becomes an Apostate: a twisted and corrupted version of their axiomatic Exaltation. Gremlin syndrome transforms their mechanical form into a chaotic mess of machine parts and gruesome organic tissue. Neural pathways become snarled passages that amplify thoughts of violence and emptiness.

This corruption varies in severity. Not every Apostate becomes a shifting mass of organic machinery, nor

does every Apostate feel the siren call of nothingness. Once an Alchemical is infected, both mental and physical symptoms intensify over time. Those who fight against its compulsions, avoid further Blight exposure, and take steps to cleanse themselves of Blighted transformations can hold this degeneration at bay, and potentially cure it if it's yet to reach its full strength.

Ferretting out Alchemicals who may or may not be infected by the Blight is a source of significant paranoia within the Octet. Symptoms of gremlinization may not be obvious at first. By the time the infected show their true colors, it's often far too late and incalculable damage has already been done. Alchemicals tasked with finding and eliminating Apostates face intense challenges of social intrigue and deduction as they piece together who the threat is.

Apostates that escape the Octet's efforts at extermination often flee to the Far Reaches, establishing voidbringer cults and carving out bloody fiefdoms beyond the reach of the Eight Nations. They tame or recruit gremlins as bodyguards, minions, and deadly pets, sometimes enslaving and gremlinizing entire tunnel folk clans. The Octet sends occasional expeditions into the Far Reaches to hunt down such Apostates, and the Divine Ministers sometimes dispatch their Machine Saints to hunt them down.

Open Gate of Annihilation is an Apostate colossus, an abomination that has long since abandoned her human shape. She takes the form of a braided ring of the magical materials — the center of which opens into yawning blankness. She made herself known to the Octet when she appeared above a settlement at the edges of Jarish' territory. A few seconds later, the settlement vanished without trace, and the Apostate with it. Preceptors in Jarish exposed a voidbringer cult dedicated to *Open Gate*, whose leaders preach that the Apostate will return to deliver them to the paradise of Tekun, the Lost City. Its members seek to attract *Open Gate* with gruesome offerings and bizarre experiments — and evidence suggests that this blasphemy has spread along pilgrimage routes to Gulak and beyond.

All Things Changed is unusually warm and personable for a Soulsteel Caste. No sign of techno-organic corruption mars their body — only their mind is corrupted. They are singularly obsessed with the gremlinization of all life within Autochthon, believing this the only way to survive the Blight's inevitable triumph. *All Things Changed* moves unseen within the Octet, carrying disease and destruction with them. An insidious threat, their arguments seem reasonable at first, and sometimes succeed in persuading citizens and Alchemicals alike of the grim necessity of their plan. At times they withdraw to the blight zones of the Far Reaches, where gremlins and other Apostates flock to them to hear the teachings of a master who has gremlinized their very soul.

Veins of Emptiness, an Adamant Caste, is the leader of the Adherents to Desolation, an ascetic voidbringer cult whose tenets revolve around the emptiness of the self. *Desire nothing and become nothing*, he preaches, calling desperate and disaffected Populat members to abandon the pleasures of the flesh. His most faithful disciples eventually abandon even the necessities of life, ceasing to eat or sleep as they give themselves over to death. *Veins of Emptiness* is also dying, his own ascetic practices deliberately worsening the Blight within him far beyond what most Apostates suffer. When his sickness finally overcomes his Exalted vitality, he teaches, he will spread the enlightenment of nothingness through the Great Maker's own Essence.

Erlik, the Apostate Metropolis is a burrowing monstrosity that tunnels through Autochthon's world-flesh, consuming everything it comes into contact with. The Blighted city rarely comes into contact with the Octet, though any tremor or rumbling stirs panic nonetheless. Children are told frightening stories that when the ground shakes, Erlik is nearby, and coming to gobble them up if they don't behave. Sodalt researchers monitor seismic activity, especially when it occurs in proximity to Blight outbreak, but have yet to locate the rogue city or identify any consistent path that it follows. Significant activity warrants

investigation by Alchemical-lead expeditions, hoping to find and eventually subdue Erlik.

History

The Octet preserves history to serve the purposes of the state — legends that build unity, stories to inculcate moral lessons, remembrances to aid future generations in avoiding the same missteps as their forbearers. All Autochthonians know that Octet has served the Great Maker since the exodus from Creation, while Sodalts and lectors maintain more detailed records of the past few centuries. Only the eldest metropoli remember the long march of years across the millennia — the rise and fall of nations, disasters barely survived, and wars that tore nations asunder. While they share this knowledge with the Octet, their individual experiences of events are far from a complete historical record. Those in the modern era project their views on identity, culture, and their social order onto the Octet of the past, believing it to be much like the Eight Nations of today, and harken to past triumphs when describing future innovations.

The Great Exodus

The Tome of the Great Maker, Autochthon's holy text, describes the lost homeland of Creation, though even the most learned among the Octet understand little of these details. They know only the scarcest details of Creation's Exalted and their Old Realm, and of the dooms foreseen by Autochthon. Autochthonia, the Tome says, was the Great Maker's promise to his worshippers, a world where they could live and work and create, free of the Exalted's yoke. The Great Maker's chosen people followed him into exile, eight tribes who would become the Eight Nations. Behind them, Autochthon closed the path with the Seal of Eight Divinities, a great wall raised between the Realm of Brass and Shadows and the cosmos beyond.

Few in number, the eight tribes of Autochthonia first made their home in a single vast chamber the size of a nation, known today as the Sacred Creche of Origin. They did not dare the tunnels and gear-ways of the Machine-World, keeping close to the safety of the creche-chamber. The mechanisms of the Great Maker and a host of machine spirits saw to their needs, and they had little need to explore the vast, perilous expanses of Autochthonia beyond.

For a time, they were content to be free from the struggles of life in Creation. Autochthon's chosen people were industrious, and they thrived and multiplied and the tribes began to fill the Sacred Creche. But as time dulled the memory of their troubles, some among them became listless and without purpose. Old divisions stoked new resentments and conflicts among the eight tribes began to divide the community. As their population flourished, the space and resources of the Sacred Creche were stretched thin, exacerbating tensions.

In answer to this, the elders of the eight tribes chose a delegation of heroes, one from each tribe. The heroes braved the reaches of the Great Expanse of Metal, seeking out Autochthon's Core and the Divine Ministers to petition them for broader dominion in the Realm of Brass and Shadow. They returned with the secrets of soulgems and Exaltations, the sacred rites by which they might forge Champions to guide them out of the cradle chamber. The returned heroes sacrificed themselves, that the soulgems newly set into their brows might bring forth the first of Autochthonia's Alchemical Exalted. The tribes adopted the names of the heroes to honor them, names the Eight Nations still use today.

The Seal of Eight Divinities

The Seal protects the Great Maker and Autochthonia from those who would follow from Creation, cutting the Machine God off from the world. Its very nature means

no power in Creation can reach it — not even the will and Exaltations of the Celestial Incarnae. The Seal likewise prevents Autochthonians from leaving the Realm of Brass and Shadows, yet the Great Maker made it possible to open the Seal from the inside. He could open it himself, if he woke from his slumber, as could the Eight Divine Ministers, the greatest of his souls. Other powers might be capable of breaching the Seal, though doing so would take the efforts of an entire nation, if it's even possible.

Impenetrable as the Seal is, there have been rare fluctuations and fleeting anomalies throughout Autochthonia's history. A Circle of Exalted might find a shifting, unstable rift that draws them into the Realm of Brass and Shadow, while Alchemicals might likewise find themselves stranded in Creation. Some whisper that this was the fate of the lost city of Tekun, an entire metropolis that vanished without trace centuries ago.

The Formation Era and the Era of Autocracy

The first generation of Alchemicals lead their tribes out of the Sacred Creche to find new homes where they could flourish. Guided by the Tome of the Eight Maker, each of the tribes found a nation chamber that would support their settlement. Life was hard in the Reaches of Autochthon but through hard work, solidarity, and faith in the Great Maker, the people persevered and thrived. While the tribes attempted to maintain contact with each other, the tectonic movements of Autochthon's world-body inexorably divided them.

The first Alchemicals strove to lead their tribes to greatness. Awed by the Chosen, tribal elders deferred to them, and for a time the nascent Eight Nations enjoyed an almost utopian peace. In time, though the Champions' all-too-human flaws led to conflict. For some, the harsh logic of Clarity led to cold, austere oversight, while the impetus of Essence fever drove some to bold but unwise action. As the nation chambers cycled close again, cold logic and hot tempers drove the Champions to war. In the period sometimes called the Era of Autocracy, *Luminous Exarch* of Estasia may have been the first to lead his people to war, but each of the heroes took to the fighting and each of the tribes spent blood and send souls back to the Great Maker. Each of the tribes created more Chosen to fight their battles and lead their forces though decades of brutal raids and tunnel fighting.

The wars only ended when the gears of Autochthonia's continent-plates wrenched the nations into isolation. The world-body of the Great Maker shook and industrial organs shifted as the Expanse of Metal expanded, drawing the nations further than their previous parting. Many functions of the world-body broke down, succumbing to the spreading Blight and depriving the Autochthonians of infrastructure on which they had once relied. Resources once dedicated to war were turned to survival. Stockpiled food prevented mass starvation, though times were still lean. The Octet learned well the lessons of this first Crucible Era, seeing the Alchemical Exalted take their place as Champions in service to the nation's leaders.

The Metropolitan Era and the First Grand Conclave

The ascension of the first Alchemicals to become metropoli marked the beginning of the Metropolitan Era. Alchemical cities could shelter and support thousands, allowing the dispersed populations of the tribes gather together to become nations. *Thousand-Handed Triumphant Ordinator's* ascension to Thutot in Gulak occurred first, but Yugash was faster to adapt to urban life after *Kaleidoscopic Armiger's* ascension to Kadar, and many nations followed their example. Over the next few centuries, each of the

tribes became nations with the ascension of their first Champions.

The metropoli transformed Autochthonian life as no other innovation has. Essence-powered streetlights could illuminate entire cities, lifting settlements out of the Realm of Brass and Shadows' pervasive darkness. Nutrient processing facilities and storage centers reduced instances of famine by orders of magnitude. City walls and fortified Municipal Charms drove back foreign invaders, allowing the Eight Nations to increasingly devote their resources and efforts to public works and technological innovation.

As the nations drew closer once again, raiding parties and diplomatic delegations crossed the great expanse of Autochthonia. All feared that this convergence of the Octet would recapitulate the violence of the pervious era, a fear punctuated by a series of transnational conflicts known as the Seven Wars Era. Eventually, a diplomatic assembly of representatives from all the nations united in Claslat's capital. This Grand Conclave forged the first social order of the Octet of Nations, recognizing each other as one people despite their differences. The Conclave established a shared social order drawing on norms and policies from across the Eight Nations. They recognized the status of the Elevated, the political leaders of each nation who stood above majority of the population, and that of the Mechanics' Guilds and the priests of Autochthon as their peers, the precursor of the modern Tripartite.

Crucible Eras

As metals calcined within a crucible emerge stronger and purer, so too do the trials of Autochthonia strengthen the Octet. The movements of Autochthon and the affliction of his Blight occasionally result in periods of intense deprivation and hardship when the nations cannot rely on the bounties of the Great Maker for their survival. Some are short-lived, more Crucible Event than Crucible Era. At their extreme, such Crucible Eras can last decades and affect the entirety of the Octet. Each nation and city prepares vast stockpiles so that they might survive these disastrous times, accounting for as much as half of Octet production in some periods.

The Forgotten Epoch

The middle epoch of Autochthonian history is poorly recorded by the Octet, having neither the immediacy of recent eras nor the legendary resonance of the founding eras. Stories and morality plays from this era focus on a few key events, while the rest is all but forgotten.

The Wars of Dynasty and the Second Grand Conclave

The ascension of the Elevated led to the formation of hereditary dynasties across the Eight Nations. Amassing influence over generations, these family lines consolidated power, first in their home cities, then in national assemblies, and finally with blood ties spanning the nations. They turned the wealth and might of the nations to their own power and luxury. The Octet labored not for survival or devotion, but for the glories of the highborn. Slightings and rivalries turned to grudges and vendettas, and the Elevated dynasties dragged their nations into a series of civil and transnational wars that spanned generations.

The conflict ended with the Crucible of Blightflame. Hordes of blightflame gremlins, whose touch burned metal to caustic ash, swept through Octet, devastating the environs of the Expanse of Metal. With their stores depleted from a century of warfare, the nations were ill-equipped to face the disaster. No longer able to keep hold of power, the Elevated dynasties were declared traitors to the nations they once ruled and torn down by Populat uprisings — often aided by Alchemical Champions.

As the dynasties collapsed, the forces opposing them called upon the nations to forge a new order, one

that would not fall to the same infighting that marred the previous era. Second Grand Conclave was held, where representatives of the Octet agreed to a plan laid out by the Mechanics' Guilds. The new order would rely on measurements and records of souls to order society by merit, judged by the history of a citizen's soul. A newly formed Olgotary replaced the Elevated as the Octet's ruling class, the beginning of the transition to the modern Tripartite.

Dynasty Cults

Occasionally, members of the Tripartite conspire to maintain family bonds and nepotistic influence, particularly in nations that allow parents in nations like Yugash and Jarish to interact with their children within the crèche. Such conspiracies are known as dynasty cults, most nations root them out as voidbringer dissidents. Those dynasties that survive do so in utmost subtlety, waiting for new opportunities to rise again.

The Great Nations Era

The era following the Second Grand Conclave was a golden age for many in the Octet. Invigorated with national purpose, the stolid Populat and newly formed Tripartite expanded their nations. Resources recovered from the hoards of Elevated dynasties gave the nations the magical materials and general surpluses needed to build new metropoli, some taking root even beyond the traditional boundaries of the nation chambers. Long periods of convergence let many nations benefit from exchange with their neighbors. When the nations did clash, Alchemical Champions often succeeded in settling battles through limited engagements and formal duels, while diplomats brokered treaties and mediated disputes to the benefit of all. The very world-body of Autochthon hummed with the bounty of the time.

Or so it is remembered.

No matter how greatly the modern Octet exaggerates this era's glories, none can surpass the immensity of its doom. The Era's ended was heralded by the horror called the Viator of Nullspace, a devastating god-machine whose spiked carapace was studded with cracked soulgems torn from the heads of slaughtered Champions. The Eight Nations deployed their Exalted to stand against the Viator, but the Dread Gear's power cut down the Champions like no terror the Octet had ever encountered. Cut off from their parent nations, far-flung metropoli were the first to fall, their gremlin-infested ruins still dotting the dark places of the expanse of metal. Finally, in the holy nation of Jarish, a combined force of Octet Alchemicals and Machine Saints defeated and bound the Viator, banishing it to the conceptual nullspace from which it had emerged.

The Parting Era

A long period of relative isolation followed the devastation that ended the Great Nations Era. The pathways the nations followed stretched over vast distances as Autochthonia recovered and reconfigured. While lengthy expeditions were able to maintain limited communication between the nations, periods of proximity that allowed broader exchange were scarce, forcing the Octet nations to turn inward. A succession of Crucible Events resulting from the damage wrought against the Great Maker's world-body and industrial organs added to the hardship of recovery, with most nations pulling back from their outlying settlements for the safety of their nation chambers. The ruins of those settlements, even metropoli stripped of all but the barest infrastructure to allow their survival, still dot the reaches, their positions lost to Autochthonia's tectonic churn.

The New Convergence Era

The cycles of Autochthon have grown long and the Expanse of Metal vast, and so it has been near a thousand years since all the nations were joined as they now come together. For the last century and a half, the nations have increasingly come into closer proximity, with each maintaining direct contact with one or two of their neighbors for decades at a time. Thirty years ago, the Sodalts predicted a the coming of a full convergence of all Eight Nations, though it won't be complete for several years.

A Crisis of Souls

Autochthonia's cycle of reincarnation is centered around the industrial organ known as the Radiant Amphora of Celestial Accumulation, more commonly as the Ewer of Souls. When an Autochthonian dies and her soul is released from its soulgem, it returns to the Amphora, renewing the industrial organ's wellsprings before it is reborn once again. But not even the impregnable Ewer, nestled deep in Autochthon's core, has gone unscathed by the passage of time.

The cycle of reincarnation has shifted within Autochthonia. Souls returned to the Great Maker for recycling sometimes experience anomalies that disrupt the Eight Nations' social order. The most common anomalies are vivid but scattered dreams of past lives, or a soulgem engram degraded to unreadability as though consumed by the reincarnation process. Other anomalies have been recorded — such as underdeveloped or overdeveloped lower souls, or two higher souls in one body — but they're vanishingly rare. Some see this as a manifestation of the Great Maker's sickness, or a consequence of the Eight Nations' failures to hold back the Blight. Others attribute it to voidbringer cults, controversial practices such as soul-gouging (p. XX), or unwise experimentation by the Sodalities. One theory posits that the slumbering Great Maker sustains himself by feeding on portions of souls that pass through the Ewer, though this is proscribed as a voidbringer blasphemy/

Soul anomalies have proliferated over recent centuries, affecting reincarnation for Octet leaders and masses alike. Luminors track those who display soul anomalies, and assign newborns with unreadable engrams to the Populat. As the proportion of newborns assigned to Tripartite castes dwindles due to lost engrams, fewer leaders become responsible for more work. When desperate, plutarchs and Luminors conspire to falsify a promising Populat child's engram and soul record to justify reassigning them to the Tripartite.

Some fear that the soul anomalies are only a symptom of something far worse to come. If the reincarnation process can consume a soulgem engram, what of other traces left on the soul? There is currently no evidence that any Alchemical Exaltation has failed as a result of a soul anomaly, no evidence that a soul could be stripped bare of whatever legacy of heroism remains imprinted on it. Those who study such mysteries pray it remains that way.

The War of Ashes

Hopes that the convergence would be a new golden age for the Octet were shaken by the devastating war between Sova and Yugash. Sparked by national disasters, spurned calls for aid, and misplaced resentment, the bloody war cracked the social foundations of both nations. The fighting only ended when sudden and unexpected movements wrenched the nations apart, followed by a series of world-quakes felt across the Eight Nations. Other Octet nations, led by Claslat, intervened to keep the peace and provide aid. Even seven years after the fighting ceased, Sova and Yugash have not formally recognized the war's ends. Sodalts and Champions are still working to figure out the extent of damages to the world-body of Autochthon cause by the war and the biotectonic quakes that ended it.

Hopes for the Future

Hope for the future is not lost in the Octet. The nations may face crises, internal and external, some driven

by forces beyond their ken. Together, the nations and their Champions have defied unimaginable disasters in the past and many believe the current era will be no different. Calls for unity, whether those for a new Grand Conclave, the rebuilding of Sova, or those to push back the Great Make's Blight, resonate more to the Alchemicals than any voices of discord. The faith, doctrine, and tools of Autochthon equip the Eight Nations and their Champions to build a better future.

Other Exalted in Autochthonia

The Eight Nations have no concept of Exalted that are not Alchemicals. The Seal of Eight Divinities stands between Autochthonia and Creation, and the Celestial Incarnae cannot see past it to find those worthy of their Exaltation. But the blood of the dragons flowed through veins of humanity across Creation, and Autochthon could not help but bring it with him. Dragon-Blooded are rare in Autochthonia, but they occasionally Exalt within the Octet or among the tunnel folk. The Octet view the dragon's blood as an inexplicable hereditary mutation, expressing primal elemental forces untempered by Autochthonian machine-nature.

Dragon-Blooded are rare enough that the contemporary Octet doesn't have any established protocol for dealing with them. Their elemental might marks them as potential threats to the state, and the hereditary nature of their power evokes the old Autochthonian stigma against hereditary rulership. As long as a Dragon-Blood does absolutely nothing at all that could threaten the state, she might be left alone, apart from constant surveillance. Some Tripartite Assemblies might try to recruit a Dragon-Blood as an agent of the state — though few would trust them to act without an Alchemical handler's supervision. Dragon-Blooded who present a threat are deemed voidbringer renegades by the Tripartite, which dispatches all Alchemicals to exterminate them by any means necessary.

Some Dragon-Blooded succeed in escaping this meticulous hunt, seeking shelter amid tunnel folk clans and the Far Reaches. Their legacies persist, sometimes for centuries. A Dragon-Blooded child or two is still born into the Intifanex clan in each generation. Huxari Banshar, an elder Dragon-Blood and former regulator in exile from Yugash, has made a fortress out of the labyrinth of jade-plated bulkheads that surround the aperture of the Great Maker's Theomorphic Eidolon Genesis Chambers. He's accompanied by a coterie of voidbringer renegades, fellow ex-regulators who departed with him, and a handful of other Octet exiles and tunnel folk. The first of Banshar's children to Exalt is now fourteen years old.

God-Blooded descended from Creation's spirits are just as rare as Dragon-Blooded, and treated essentially the same. The same is true for any Exigent Exaltations that pass by heredity, if any came with the Great Maker's faithful in their exodus. There's no precedent for dealing with other, unpredictable forms of Exigent Exalted. The legendary daiklave Infinite Fractal Edge, which turns its desperate mortal wielders into sword-saints of killing geometry, is one such Exaltation, though it's long been lost to the Octet.

Life in the Octet

While each one of the Eight Nations has its own culture, history, and priorities, they all share a common social structure, traditions and institutions said to have been handed to them directly by the Great Maker. Everyone has a place and a function, ordered by caste and job. The Populat, by leaps and bounds the largest caste, is the workforce of society. Their labor provides everything a city needs to survive and thrive. The Tripartite are the elite few who oversee the functionality of the cities, from governing to religious leadership and more. Those incapable of serving society in their preordained role are demoted to the ranks of the Lumpen, a purely punitive caste. In its ideal form, the caste system ensures the people of the Octet work together as a great machine for the survival and benefit of all. In reality, human foibles lead to inefficiency, inequity, and injustice.

Cogs in the Machine

Castes are determined at birth, with children filtered into a birthing crèche and educational system specifically designed for their function in life. Castes are assigned on the basis of merit and virtue, measured across lifetimes. After a child draws her first breath, Luminor technicians read her *engram*, a unique Essence pattern stamped on the soul by her last incarnation's soulgem. Cross-referencing it against national soul records, stretching back thousands of years, lets the Luminors identify a specific soul and all its known prior incarnations, along with their castes and noteworthy achievements. Using this information, Luminors determine her present caste and set the newborn on her life's trajectory.

Luminors implant a *soulgem* — a soul-tracking crystal — into every Octet-born infant's forehead within a week of birth. Caste determines the soulgem's color and shape. At the moment of death, the soulgem captures its bearer's soul and imprints a revised engram on it. Most of the Octet observes strict funerary rites in which the soulgem is recovered from the dead and deposited into the Dead Gears, mechanisms that return the soul to the Radiant Amphora of Souls to reenter Autochthonia's closed cycle of reincarnation.

The caste system is a rigid and inflexible one. It's said that a citizen's merit determines the heights within her caste to which she can rise in her lifetime, and that the greatest virtue is found in striving to better oneself within these bounds. Intercaste mobility is nearly unheard of; only in the next life can the Luminors reassess a meritorious soul and assign a new caste. Excellence in one life may bring rewards in the next; likewise, failure may relegate your next incarnations to a lower caste.

Soulgem Caste, Shapes, and Colors

Caste determines a soulgem's shape and often the color, though these vary slightly between nations. Populat soulgems typically resemble round cabochon-cut, often black onyx. Olgotary soulgems are rectangular-cut, with orange topaz as the most common color across most nations. Theomachracy soulgems are square-cut, and usually blue sapphire or green emeralds. Sodalt soulgems are diamond-shaped purple amethysts or clear diamond. Children are educated to identify caste by soulgems and adjust etiquette accordingly. Impersonating another caste is exceedingly difficult; impersonators are assumed to be saboteurs and are punished by exile.

Castes and Education

After determining a newborn's caste, the Luminors send her to a communal crèche, where she's raised by

trained caregivers, wetnurses, and educators raise children. Here, children are provided with uniform care and socialization and taught basic language skills. Once they can speak fluently, children pass into separate crèches according to caste and areas of need. Aptitude tests and engram analysis are used to sort children into appropriate occupational tracks, training them to start work at 15, the age of majority.

Autochthonian society values the crèche, not the family. Children bond with crèchemates and the aides who raise them, forming bonds that last a lifetime. A pair of crèchemates may see each other as what others would call brother and sister, treating each other as such forever more. Few Autochthonians know their birth parents or the identity of any of their biological relatives.

Most early education occurs within the crèche, from basic education in reading, writing, and arithmetic to specialized work training and history. As children grow older, they're encouraged to gain practical education by shadowing members of their assigned occupation. Tripartite children receive the most individualized attention, with strictly regulated teaching group sizes. Teachers assigned to Populat children may be responsible for much larger numbers of students, depending on both local and national circumstances. While children aren't confined to their crèches, they view these places as home, returning there even after reaching adulthood to visit the educators they view as parental figures.

Days are spent in lectures, hands-on instruction, and physical training, interspersed with meals and recreational activities. Roommates of the same caste aren't necessarily assigned to the same occupational tracks, so they may see little of each other during the day as they progress into occupational specialization. Instead, they socialize in the evenings, helping each other study and play games.

Maintaining efficiency is a core value of Autochthonian work life. From an early age, Autochthonians are taught to value endurance, diligence, and patience in work. Aided by the wonders of the metropoli, most workstations require the precise repetition of tasks, which is drilled into children in their crèche.

Monthly coming-of-age ceremonies celebrate youths who've recently turned 15. In the crèche's largest assembly hall, lectors play music and lead the newly fledged workers in dances and games. In some settlements, visiting shift chiefs from nearby factories dine with crèche educators to discuss where to assign the youths. Other settlements use more impersonal methods to determine new workers' futures, allotting them randomly to understaffed work groups.

Parenthood in Autochthonia

In most of the Octet, social contact between parent and child is discouraged; the Octet values soul lineage over blood ties. Sympathetic supervisors may reassign new parents as aides in their child's crèche to personally nurture the child, though this informal arrangement can be denied or withdrawn at any time.

Some nations diverge from this norm. In Jarish, the Theomachracy sanctions practice of the birthbond, where parents may raise a child of their own caste to the age of majority, using their free shifts to supervise their child's rearing in the crèche. Its proponents argue that the body and mind are tools like any other, and their makers are most apt to instruct their use. Contemporary Jarishite theology has found a compromise between this rationale and the policy behind the crèche system itself, though it has and continues to be a matter of some controversy.

Yugash adopted the "victory crèche" in response to the challenges of its recent war with Sova. Faced with the threat of insufficient personnel and caretakers, offers special privileges to parents in targeted metropoli, including nursery-adjacent housing and one of their three daily work shifts assigned to childrearing. Unlike

in Jarish, this remains a charged issue both theologically and politically, though few can outargue economic necessity.

Outside of Jarish and Yugash, such alternative forms of childrearing are much rarer, usually found only in minority communities who are often targeted for this deviation. Claslát with its glot economy has made the furthest inroads, as the practice of letting parents spend glots for an assignment to their child's crèche has been de facto legitimized. In other nations, metropoli may still make changes in policy on a case-by-case basis or even offering parenting incentives in response to social and economic conditions, especially in times of plenty.

The Populat

Physical labor forms the backbone of Autochthonian industry and occupies an overwhelming majority of the populace. Within the Populat, the caste is subdivided among laborers, aides, shift chiefs, supervisors, and directors. Each of these roles is important for the whole to work, but attaining a leadership role within a work group or occupation is a sign of diligence, merit, and a long history of positive work engagement.

Populat *laborers* toil daily in factories throughout the Eight Nations. Depending on their assignment, occupations might include skimming slag from molten metal, cleaning public spaces, preparing communal meals, extracting material from conduits, weaving fibers, welding, riveting, or any of the other myriad tasks their cities and nations require.

Some in the Populat work not as laborers but as *aides*. Their occupations include inspecting products and procedures, organizing supplies, distributing and collecting tools between shifts, cleaning, performing first aid, rearing children in community crèches, and carrying messages. A few directly assist Populat managers and the Tripartite — especially lectors — with their work. Most aides are drawn from those who demonstrate a greater faculty with cerebral or social activities than physical labor, or those for whom age or disability precludes a laborer's duties. Sometimes these assignments are temporary, as in cases of injury or pregnancy.

Every factory has eight *shift chiefs*, each overseeing an entire work shift. Chiefs are promoted from laborers with excellent records and organizational skills. Their duties include managing individual workers, coordinating shift changes, and implementing the plans of Tripartite managers. They oversee the factory as a committee, with meetings overseen by the senior-most shift chief.

Supervisors oversee each sector of a city's industry. These include food production, power distribution, waste disposal, and other key functions. Their duties include ensuring the overall functioning of their industry within their city, promoting and overseeing new shift chiefs, and presenting long-term planning for Tripartite approval. Two *sub-supervisors* cover a supervisor's free shifts.

Each city has a single *director* who reports directly to the local Tripartite Assembly. Directors are constantly busy administering matters of policy, intervening in challenged sectors, promoting and overseeing new supervisors, and mollifying the Assembly. Two *sub-directors* cover a director's free shifts.

Workgroups

Octet settlements assign laborers and aids to workgroups. People sleep, eat, and work with their assigned group for their entire life. For most Autochthonians, their workgroup is their primary source of social and familial bonds. Workgroups are often assigned to a single factory, facility, or installation, and rarely interact with others from outside it. Not all laborers work in a single place: maintenance, construction,

shipping, and various other tasks entail city-wide projects, and even travel between cities.

Each workgroup selects one of the senior and respected members as *foreman*, who exercises leadership both at work and in the barracks, ensuring order and smoothing over disputes. While codified into law, the position of the foreman began as a Populat tradition, giving it a particular political significance in times of heated class struggle.

While transfers between workgroups are rare overall, most Populat experience at least one during their lifetime. Workers can request transfer to another workgroup to resolve irreconcilable conflicts; laborers who become aides switch work groups accordingly; workgroups disrupted by industrial accidents or other disasters are dissolved, transferring their members elsewhere; and so on.

The Tripartite

The Great Maker gave three gifts: doctrine, faith, and tools. Through doctrine, people form consensus, working in unison across distance to achieve things no one could alone. Through faith, people believe in a better world, and through that belief, make it real, enduring any hardship along the way. Through tools, the power of a single individual is multiplied a thousandfold, enabling an iterative process of perpetual improvement.

These three gifts form the philosophical foundation of the model of Tripartite governance. The Olgotary manage civil governance, the Theomachracy oversee religious and moral concerns, and the Five Sodalities develop tools and technology that makes life safe and comfortable in the Octet. Across Autochthonia's history, a variety of governments have risen and fallen, but the Tripartite structure has outlasted all others since its adoption throughout the Eight Nations during the Second Grand Conclave.

Members of the Tripartite live a considerably more privileged life than that of the Populat — and most Populat members have no idea of how well the Tripartite live. They have access to private quarters, private baths, individualized meals, and a variety of other benefits as a reward for the hard work their station requires. Junior Tripartite members are still assigned to workgroups like those of Populat laborers, but these groups are much smaller and far more fluid, allowing for greater social interaction between Tripartite members in unrelated fields of work.

The privileges and elite position accorded to the Tripartite are justified as a reward for the meritorious conduct of past lives, but they are also seen as a safeguard against corruption and abuse of power. When much is given, much can be taken away. For some in the Tripartite, this threat may be enough to silence disloyal thoughts or selfish urges. On a practical level, though, the Tripartite recognizes that they are the ones who issue such punishments, and that they can get away with quite a lot without repercussions.

Crisis of Souls and the Tripartite

The impact of soul anomalies has been felt strongest in the Tripartite castes, creating a dwindling number of suitable children to take up new positions. Unwilling to assign an unreadable engram to the Tripartite, they have begun upgrading Populat children in greater numbers. Sometimes they use language which indicates their previous life requisites such a reward, but other times they simply fudge the books to advance them before their time.

The Olgotary

The Olgotary is the civil service that governs secular matters within Autochthonia. They measure, record, organize, and govern for the continued survival of all. Doing so requires a consistent set of doctrines, laws and rules built out of experience and careful study of humanity. They have a sacred duty to guide and

safeguard the resources of their cities and nations, including the human resources of the Populat.

From a young age, future members of the Olgotary undergo rigorous aptitude testing to place them in one of its branches as plutarchs, regulators, or adjudicators. After an initial rotation of assignments and a final placement, transfers are unusual. Such requests are accommodated, when possible, but they mean forfeiting seniority and facing the disdain of both your former comrades and your new branchmates.

Plutarchs: Making up the clerks, bureaucrats, and legislators of Autochthonia, plutarchs propose new laws and policies, prepare schedules and quotas, oversee Populat managers, assign and allocate the results of production, and conduct diplomacy between cities and nations. Plutarchs often consult Alchemicals for planning and management, but depend on them most strongly for matters of diplomacy. Diplomatic delegations are almost always accompanied by at least one Alchemical. As is usually the case for diplomats, plutarchs also act as spymasters and agents of espionage, despite their vehement denials.

Regulators: The police force of the Octet, the regulators are tasked with dealing with crime, unproductive behavior, and sabotage. Regulator patrols are an omnipresent reminder of the Olgotary's authority. Regulators can arrest Populat at any time on suspicion of criminal activity, with resistance to arrest becoming another charge. Arresting Tripartite members is more complicated, requiring authorization from the adjudicatory branch or a city's autocrat. Arrested criminals are brought before an adjudicator for sentencing and punishment. Senior regulators may specialize as detective-investigators, counterintelligence operators, or internal affairs officers. In most nations, they also organize militias to raid neighboring nations' settlements, repel foreign raids, and exterminate gremlins. Many Alchemicals work with the regulators at some point: hunting fugitives, detecting and foiling spies, and military operations.

Adjudicators: Acting as judges of both the law and the people, adjudicators determine a person's guilt or innocence in criminal cases, decide on punishment, and mete out their sentence. Adjudicators operate in an inquisitorial fashion, interrogating the problem from every angle before deciding a verdict. Adjudicators also act collectively as a check on the plutarchy's legislative function, empowered to declare a law void if it fails to meet key requirements of fairness, clearness, or conciseness. In theory, a lone adjudicator is empowered to reject a law and return it to the plutarchy for further deliberation, but in practice, any significant decisions of this kind are a matter of extensive talks behind closed doors. Adjudicators are the least likely of the Tripartite to call upon Alchemicals as they view this as too close to the taboo of Alchemical leadership. When they do, it's to find the truth of a charge, or to locate some forgotten precedent that enables the just outcome.

Autocrats: A single autocrat leads the Olgotary in each city, keeping them in line and functioning as expected. Elected by their peers within the Olgotary, they speak for the entire caste at Tripartite councils, and help ensure smooth governmental function. Duties, powers, and election methods vary across cities and nations. Some autocrats can overrule any Olgotary branch, enabling swift resolutions, for others, the title is more of a recognition as first among equals, requiring diplomatic effort and political acumen. Autocrats are elected by the Olgotary, but election methods vary by nation. Autocrats almost always make a point of working closely with their city's Alchemicals, whether seeking guidance in statecraft and diplomacy or seeking out-of-the-box solutions to tensions within the Olgotary or the Tripartite as a whole. Nevertheless, autocrats take care to maintain a formal distance from Alchemicals, lest they risk being seen as being nothing more than puppet-leaders.

Grand autocrats represent an entire nation's Olgotary. They are elected from either current or past autocrats, and only senior branch members can vote on them. One power is reserved for grand autocrats alone; the authority to declare war or accept peace.

The Theomachracy

The Theomachracy manages the spiritual and emotional well-being of society, promoting a vision of a better world that everyone should strive toward. One thing unites the Theomachracy: faith. Not just faith in the Great Maker, but faith in themselves, their fellows, and the vision of a better world. Without faith in the Great Maker's design and vision of a better world, teaches the Theomachracy, society would be lost in despair and drown in chaos, darkness, and death.

The Theomachracy is made up of three branches: lectors, preceptors, and clerics. Unlike with the Olgotary, children selected for the Theomachracy receive a more general course of education rather than a focused course of training. Membership in any branch is porous, and it's common, if not expected, for individuals to move between the branches over the course of their life.

Lectors: Acting as the shepherds to the flock, lectors are the direct line of faith to the Populat. They preach to small groups, usually a neighborhood or factory, ensuring faith in the Great Maker. They give animated sermons full of heroic parables about the Eight Heroes or fables illustrating the ineptness of poor moral character. They oversee not only religious matters, but matters of psychological wellbeing and artistic expression for their communities. They make time to speak individually with their congregation members, and arrange plays, music, and holiday displays. Lectors make a great public showing of honoring any Alchemical passing through, while reaching out privately to Champions when they discover unusual patterns of distress or malcontent.

Preceptors: Preceptors ensure that society remains alloyed in purpose through faith. They identify, uncover, and eliminate heresies that threaten the state and carry out the reeducation of former heretics. Preceptors work incognito, disguised as members of the Populat to monitor factories, cafeterias, and even bunk houses. Even the Tripartite is not beyond their watch. Preceptors often work closely with local lectors, consulting them to ensure that everyone has the right beliefs. Some specialist preceptors analyze patterns in recurring heresies, often working with peers in other nations to study widespread blasphemies, or those just making inroads in a new community. Such cooperation is sometimes fraught, as some national philosophies, traditions, and practices could easily fall under the analytical profile of a major heresy. Preceptors call upon Alchemicals to assist investigating politically powerful individuals, sensitive topics, subtle religious violations, and rarely — but most dangerously — their fellow Champions.

Clerics: Clerics oversee the Theomachracy's administration and its theological decision-making, and serve the priesthood of the various machine spirits that live within Autochthonia. In their administrative role, they guide the Theomachracy's operations on the local, metropolitan, and national levels, set religious holidays and festivities, and coordinate with other Tripartite castes for religious events. Clerics set the approved doctrine, and work closely with lectors and preceptors to ensure all three of the Theomachracy's branches act as one in such matters. When the Populat is discontent and chafes against the Theomachracy's doctrine, clerics work to help public understanding of doctrine and build acceptance for orthodox views. Just as important is their role as intercessors with the machine spirits found throughout Autochthon's living body. Clerics request Alchemical assistance in recovering lost relics of faith, forgotten lore, and dealing with particularly dangerous gods and machine spirits.

Celebrants: Just as autocrats govern the Olgotary, celebrants govern a city's Theomachracy. They speak for the caste at Tripartite meetings, and ensure the faith is aligned between all members of the caste. They approve clerics' doctrines, lectors' sermons, and preceptors' heresies. Some even have preceptors — or sometimes even Alchemicals — working directly for them to investigate heresies among the Theomachracy. A celebrant is chosen by the highest-most members of the Theomachracy's three branches. A single candidate is put forth from each branch, then tested in matters of faith, wisdom,

fortitude, and devotion. The most devout of them becomes the celebrant.

High Celebrants: The high celebrant speaks for a nation's Theomachracy. Like their municipal equivalents, a high celebrant is chosen in a test of faith and fitness that pits the most prominent, respected, and influential figures within the three branches of a nation's Theomachracy against each other. High celebrants meet with their counterparts from other nations regularly to align doctrines and define heresies. Of course, that doesn't always go as planned, and more than one war has broken out over disagreements on matters of faith. Alchemicals sometimes accompany high celebrants to serve as a neutral party in such meetings — and as a bodyguard, or perhaps even an assassin, should things fall apart.

The Five Magnificent Sodalities of Penultimate Truth and Intransigent Gospel

The Five Sodalities are the oldest societal institutions of the Octet, tracing their origins to the Technician Guilds who received the knowledge to craft the Alchemical Exalted from Autochthon himself. Dedicated to understanding the Great Maker's world-body, the Sodalities forge the tools necessary for the Octet to survive and thrive. Each of the five concentrates on a different aspect of engineering and expertise, and the nature of their work dictates that they must wholly and completely devote themselves to this caste for life. There is no movement between Sodalities, and there is no information shared among them. Each of the Sodalities guard their knowledge as a holy gift from Autochthon, a mystery meant for their sole understanding.

Children assigned to the Sodalities leave the crèche before those assigned to other Tripartite castes. They receive only a brief communal education before being sorted into individual units based on desire, aptitude, and community needs. Once there, they gain immediate hands-on training as apprentices, moving to journeyman, and then master within their field as they grow in age and understanding.

Members of the Sodalities work directly with the machinery that is Autochthonia, and their labor is often difficult and sometimes dangerous. They take pride in their work, but are closest to the Populat in both function and demeanor. Sodalts dress similarly in functional work clothing, with only small embellishments such as insignia and pins to differentiate their status. They sometimes take meals with members of the Populat, having no energy to return to their private homes and clean up before eating. And most importantly, they take on Populat laborers as apprentices — never allowed to rise above such a rank — in order to fill in their lower tiers and perform more grueling work.

Glorious Luminors of the Brilliant Rapture: Autochthonia is dark, save for intermittent blinding arcs of electricity or bursts of exhaust flames. This smothering darkness is smothering and deadly in a world of strange mechanisms and dangerous pathways. Life is only possible thanks to the efforts of the Luminors, who bear the secrets of light. This is their most prominent duty in Autochthonian society, and many would argue their most important one, but they have many others, experts in all matters touching on light and heat. They grind glass to create eyeglasses and other forms of magnification, and devise safety measures for fire use handheld lamps, and oil spills. When such safety measures fail, Luminors charge in to fight fires, clad in with flame-retardant outfits, tight-fitted gas masks, and flame-smothering chemical reagents. They keep the secret wisdom of implanting and reading soulgems, assigning each new infant to their caste and identifying those souls capable of catalyzing Alchemical Exaltation. Luminors rarely have official interactions with Alchemicals outside of civic festivals celebrating the light, but might recruit Alchemicals to assist in gaining control of a dangerous blaze, keeping people away from a dangerous fire, or similar emergency situations.

Illustrious Conductors of the Consecrated Veins: Beneath the stone and metal skin of Autochthon is a complex interplay of wires, tubes, pipes, and ports, carrying everything needed for life. But this river is

the blood and fluid of the Great Maker, and tapping into it is risky. Hitting a line of super-heated liquid or explosive gas is all too often fatal — and even if it isn't, it's sure to bring machine spirits to repair the damage and destroy the source of harm. The Conductors are experts in finding and assessing Autochthonia's conduits, determining which contain lifegiving materials and which are dangerous. They determine where to tap and how deeply they can draw, and can tell a vein that's been blocked from one that's run dry. They often work beyond the metropolis' walls, whether heading up a Populat work crew tapping veins, monitoring the health and stability of nearby taps, or documenting illegal taps installed by factory workers looking to meet quotas or tunnel folk. Their expertise in hydraulic and pneumatic engineering also makes the Conductors responsible for maintaining and operating the network of tram lines that links the Octet together. They alone know the secret of controlling the trams, driving them across the nation and through the Reaches with eye-watering speed. Conductors often request Alchemical escorts when venturing beyond their metropoli, whether to scout new veins in dangerous places, or to track down tunnel folk who are tapping their veins.

Pious Harvesters of the Hallowed Flesh: Autochthonia is a dry, arid void, offering little to sustain life beyond the unpalatable nutrient slurries found within the Machine God's veins. Harvesters know the secrets of chemical engineering necessary to transform barely-edible slurry into appetizing forms and textures, as well as the arts of fermentation and distillation that create alcoholic beverages. They prepare food mixtures to be served in cafeterias, regulating outside preparations to prevent accidental poisonings or undue waste. Harvesters are also responsible for determining what can be recycled and reused, ensuring nothing that can be repurposed goes to waste. They oversee Populat crews cleaning away broken machinery, trash, and even the bodies of the dead, ensuring that each reclaimable item is sifted, sorted, disassembled and processed into raw materials and chemical catalysts needed for new creations. The Harvesters' most important and sacred responsibility is releasing souls from soulgems, returning the citizens' spirits to Autochthon through the rite of the Dead Gears. They rarely have need of a Champion's assistance, unless something, or someone, important has gone missing.

Prolific Scholars of the Furnace Transcendent: Autochthonia is filled with technological wonders, from perfectly interlocking gears to mechanical organs powered by arcing lightning. The Scholars see these wonders and know with certainty that there is no technology that cannot be improved upon. These engineers and artificers take the raw materials that Autochthon gifts them and turn them into technology that make life bearable. They make everything from work tools to musical instruments, timepieces to plumbing, repeating crossbows to children's toys. They offer their technical expertise to adjudicators and plutarchs in drafting and enforcing regulations, and consult clerics for historical wisdom that might reveal lost technologies. Most importantly, the Scholars are the only mortals permitted to work with Alchemical Charms. Every Scholar hopes to have an Alchemical who trusts her alone with his Charms, allowing her to test the bounds of his godlike body, and achieve new technological heights.

Meticulous Surgeons of the Body Electric: Surgeons monitor the Great Maker for signs of sickness, measuring rust, fungal growth, and temperatures, and studying the reports provided by the Conductors. They ease the Great Maker's suffering where they can, applying industrial quantities of oil to free trapped cogs or overseeing the replacement of ground-down mechanisms. Surgeons are also responsible for the health and wellness of the people, monitoring public health and providing a comprehensive range of treatments. They administer needed medications, advise shift chiefs when workers need forced rest, and perform surgeries — sometimes with the benefit of anesthesia. At the end of a citizen's productive life, it's the Surgeon's hands that administer the Elixir of Rest, bringing a painless euthanasia. They often use Populat aides for lesser tasks, such as filing reports, sorting records, comforting the ill, and running errands. Surgeons work with Alchemicals when faced with medical crises beyond their skill to manage — whether in the body politic of the Eight Nations, or the body of Autochthon.

The Sodality Council: Each metropolis has its Sodality Council, which represent the interests of a the city's Sodalities within its Tripartite Assembly. The Council is made up of one councilor from each Sodality, elected from among senior members and advised from within. Most councilors spend the majority of their time allocating tasks and resources, building relationships with the autocrat and celebrant, and looking for opportunities for collaboration among the other Sodalities. The council organizes city-wide conventions where Sodality members come together within the city to exchange news, ideas, and work to maintain unity and conformity across time and distance. Councils also act as mediators in conflicts between members of different Sodalities. Councilors may reach out for Alchemical to convey pressing concerns within their Sodality or seek aid with particularly dangerous or unusual matters. When mediating inter-Sodality disputes, they also find that Champions facilitate back-channel communication that would otherwise be politically difficult.

The Great Sodality Council: The national body of the Five Sodalities is akin to a metropolitan Sodality Council, but on a greater scale. Its members come from across the nation, and its common for a Great Councilors' native city to become a political stronghold for the Sodality she represents. Greater Councilors typically serve for life. When one passes, all other councilors from her Sodality meet to vote in one of their number.

Conduit Tapping

Conduits contain nearly every raw material necessary for life in Autochthonia. Conductors learn to identify every resource they can, and how to access them. Helical sets of conduits contain separate pipes for enzymes, blended hydrocarbons, and more complex organic compounds which are then processed into lubricants, catalysts, and medicines. These conduits tend to be much smaller and are often flammable making their tapping and handling the most delicate the Conductors undertake.

Some regions are rich with conduits coated in a fibrous, regenerating insulation around transport tubes which creates a rough analog of wool. This is harvested seasonally as removing too much can trigger an immune response or shut down the conduit. Most other fibers come from the petrolooms that weave very light and durable fibers from available polymers in undyed white, yellow, or blue. Colored dyes are rendered from conduit products often otherwise unusable to humans.

Conductors work with Harvesters to find necessary organic materials used to create complex blends of flavors for foodstuffs. While the Harvesters guard the exact chemical reactions necessary to ply their craft, the conduits hold their treasures, and they require Conductors to help them gather them.

Lumpen

The system works when everyone has a place and keeps to it. Lawbreakers, troublemakers, and other miscreants who stubbornly refuse to work within society are relegated to the Lumpen caste. Most are Populat workers found guilty of repeated minor infractions — insubordination, wasting supplies, starting fights, disrupting public morale, and the like. Others are branded Lumpen for more serious offenses: aggravated assault, stealing critical work-related materials, knowingly endangering fellow workers, or publicly espousing minor heresies. Even Tripartite and high-ranking Populat can become Lumpen through disastrous blunders in the course of their duties.

The Lumpen lose all privileges and status of their former caste. Three colorful concentric rings are

tattooed around each their soulgem, branding them as undesirables and divulging their specific offenses. Maintaining relationships with former friends is virtually impossible due to distance, prejudice, and fear of drawing regulator and preceptor attention. Octet culture treats the Lumpen as a natural part of life. Most Autochthonians ignore and even shun Lumpen, taking for granted that they deserve their miserable conditions. The Tome of the Great Maker assures that, through such toil, even the Lumpen will find a place in the great machine that is the Octet. Sympathetic views toward the Lumpen and efforts at reform have been persistent but heavily suppressed, never nearing the mainstream of political discussion.

Most are assigned to penal workgroups overseen by regulators, putting in six shifts of hard labor each day. Outside the factory, penal workgroups cannot engage in normal societal recreation and must keep to the designated Lumpen areas, isolated districts that offer little more than a barracks, a cafeteria, and a single undersupplied requisition depot for recreational materials. If Lumpen workgroups must interact with other castes to perform their duties, they must keep to themselves and not speak to anyone else, or risk harsh punishment. Regular reassignment of Lumpen to new barracks minimizes long-term social connections among their new peers, making it more difficult to plan rebellions. Still, spontaneous riots and breakout attempts remain common, with entire workgroups occasionally escaping into the Reaches.

More serious crimes warrant expulsion from society entirely: murder, major heresies, industrial sabotage, or agitating for revolution. Lesser offenses might result in exile if they involve particularly high-ranking Tripartite members. Exiles rarely last long in the Reaches on their own. When groups of Lumpen are exiled, such as criminal gangs or failed rebels, they're deposited in the Reaches miles and weeks apart to keep them from finding one another. Some exiles find aid from tunnel folk clans or other outcasts, but this is rare — with few exceptions, most in the Reaches give strangers a wide berth, accepting them in extremis and only with constant wariness and mistrust. Apart from that, an exile's best-case scenario might be finding their way to another nation, hoping to sell information on her homeland to earn Lumpen status in a new nation.

Some nations have experimented with a more gruesome punishment, called soul-gouging or soul-flaying. Reserved for the very worst offenders — serial murderers, traitors, rebel leaders — the controversial punishment sees the criminal's soulgem removed in a ritual procedure that siphons off all but a few dregs of their soul. The soul-flayed lose most of their volition, obeying orders without resistance or thought. Their life expectancy is fleeting as they're given the most dangerous work in Autochthonia with no concern for their own safety. Soul-gouging grows ever more controversial, as many blame it for the growing number of anomalies in newborn souls. Some of the nations that have adopted the practice have now banned it in favor of execution.

Society and Culture

Autochthonia's castes are the tools that maintain the engine of the Eight Nations' society.

Shifts

The Octet divides the day — typically called a work cycle — into eight shifts named for the Eight Divine Ministers, each lasting three hours. In ideal times, laborers are assigned four to five work shifts per day, but as many as six work shifts a day may be necessary in times of crisis. Supervisors and directors often work irregular shifts, taking on an additional shift a few days in a row, and receiving extra free shifts to recuperate for a day or two before going back.

Citizens are typically allotted two home shifts to recuperate and prepare for the next work cycle, and two free shifts for health, leisure, social, and religious activities. The free shift's scheduling varies from city to city — either before work, after work, or as a siesta in the middle of the work cycle. Several weeks each

year serve as extended holidays; their number and themes vary between nations and cities. On each day of a holiday week, 10% of the workforce replaces all work shifts with free shifts. Public spaces throng with holidayers and resound with public music and dance.

Efficient, dependable workgroups may replace one or more work shifts each week with free shifts. Conversely, antisocial workers and unproductive workgroups are assigned mandatory education or team-building exercises during free shifts. Some cities revoke poorly performing workers' free shifts entirely. Populat leaders deploy such punishments sparingly to minimize overwork-induced poor performance and injuries, not to mention civil unrest.

The Autochthonian Calendar

After the First Grand Conclave, the Eight Nations replaced various local calendrical systems with the modern calendar's 14 thirty-day months, each divided into 3 ten-day weeks. The year ends with a 5-day Recalibration period, when machine spirits swarm around machine-organs and metropoli to perform annual maintenance, and Autochthon's dream-figments emerge from the Reaches. Most citizens stay indoors during Recalibration, as machine spirits and mechanisms alike are unpredictable.

The current year is 4878 DA (Dawn of Autochthonia).

Recreation

Health and happiness are cornerstones of productivity, and free shift time is as important as work shift time. Some workgroups structure their free shifts to engage in collaborative activities such as competitive team-based sports, theatrical activities, group artwork, and communal cooking and eating. The Populat are allowed to spend their free time however they wish, but most spend their time with their workgroup, no matter what they're doing.

Religious dramas serve as popular diversions, and in some cities, the free shift is nicknamed the "lector shift." Though audience members are expected to be quiet and attentive, many plays invite them to move around the performance space, aligning themselves with characters or setting elements to better engage with their allegories. Popular morality plays include *Diligence and the Leisure Gremlin*; *Logis, the Metropolis of Folly*; and *The Marriage of Noi and Ku*.

Many Autochthonians practice some kind of craft or art, which they see as a way to commune with the Great Maker. Painting is the most prevalent visual art among the Populat, and settlements typically provide paints or colored chalk for each barracks' recreational facilities along with sheet metal which can be scrubbed clean between use. Some locales permit workers to draw murals on their barracks' interior or exterior walls. Populat with special talent may be reassigned as aides to create public murals or religious-drama scenery. City cleaners constantly battle unauthorized public paintings — in other words, graffiti. Symbols and pictograms painted by worker graffiti-artists are sometimes used for discreet communication, particularly in poorly surveilled areas.

Music, songs, and written epics are not discouraged, but they are far more controlled. Enjoying approved works is always available and quite popular, but creating new songs, stories, or poems risks regulators investigating your entire workgroup if their content is deemed undesirable. Music without lyrics is one of the safest creative outlets for most Populat members, though underground groups pass potentially illicit materials among themselves, often detailing epic stories of local Champions.

Romance and Sex

The free shifts and home shifts facilitate time for romance, usually among workgroup peers. While procreation may be crucial to the state, there's no stigma against recreational sex, which is regarded as just another form of group exercise. Lack of privacy makes discreet relationships unheard of. The culture around relationships and sex is extremely casual, with most liaisons occurring openly in bathhouses and barracks. Group sex, same-gender relationships, and multiple partners are all common to varying degrees within the Octet, being a matter of preference and desire. Easily-synthesized contraceptive compounds are freely available in most metropoli, though changes in circumstance and policy might vary this.

Social norms around romantic and sexual attraction vary widely across the Eight Nations, but certain broad elements hold everywhere. Ingenuity and skill are ideal in potential partners, while physical fitness and a heavyset build suggest extra rations and thus productivity.

The Octet's government rarely intervenes in citizens' romantic lives. As a rule, the Eight Nations do not formally recognize marriages or other forms of long-term relationships, as most nations dispensed with the concept of marriage when dynastic practices were outlawed. Regulatory and punitive measures typically come into play only when a relationship appears to threaten social order: sexual harassment, domestic violence, coaxing excessive gifts or favors from partners, courting lovers from another caste, and chronic public strife between ex-lovers.

Housing and Possessions

With space and resources at a premium, property and accommodations are privileges in the Octet. Workgroups live in communal barracks near their workgroup's factory or occupational work center. These places are not permanent, and if the worker changes workgroups, she changes housing. In especially cramped areas, workgroups may need to hot bunk with another who works an opposite shift.

Nothing in Autochthonia is considered disposable. Possessions are recycled, reused, and patched for future use. Most Populat have few possessions. Working clothes and tools are public property and issued as part of work assignments. Most own nothing more than a couple of plain off-shift outfits, and a small box of private items. City storehouses loan out recreational items like musical instruments and sporting equipment. Where demand exceeds supply, requisitions take days or weeks to process. Requests from individuals or workgroups with strong service records take precedence.

The most productive workgroups receive better accommodations as a reward for their service. Similarly, Populat leaders have the option to move into two-person suites offering a modicum of privacy, though many continue to reside with their former workgroup. Laborers and aides, who never see Tripartite living quarters, view these accommodations as the height of luxury. Suites have space for more personal possessions, along with broader access to recreational items like art supplies, games, and reading material. Directors earn many of the same luxuries as the Tripartite. They don elaborate garments to meet with plutarchs over sumptuous cuisine, and reside in individual apartments furnished for comfort, aesthetics, and personal recreation.

Money and Trade

Because city administration and workgroups provide for individual needs, there is little need for a monetary system anywhere in the Octet. Informally, citizens engage in trade within their workgroup, swapping favors, extra provisions, artwork, and handicrafts. Illegal trade occurs along the same lines, with higher stakes: illicit drugs, higher-caste luxuries, proscribed texts, restricted equipment and weapons, and more. The punishment for possessing a restricted item is almost as harsh as the penalty for dealing in them, though the administrators and managers responsible for such items entering the black market in the first place are punished far less frequently than Populat dealers and buyers.

The exchange of resources between cities isn't a matter of trade, but of resource allocation on a national scale. This process can be complex and contentious, with disagreements over what takes priority and who gets the credit. Every metropolis' leadership seeks to emphasize the national and strategic significance of the goods, services, or other advantages it supplies, and to ensure that these are taken into consideration when determining how valuable a priority the metropolis' needs should be.

Some Olgotary bureaucrats have experimented with economic policies making use of state-recognized barter, scrip, or similar methods of allowing for uniform trade. Claslast's glot economy (p. XX) is both the most famous and the most enduring of these, and Claslati diplomats — and others — point to it as a possible model for transnational trade.

Language

The contemporary Octet speaks Autochthonic, a tongue derived from the ancient Old Realm language. Once an ecclesiastical and academic language used by theologians and Sodalts for international correspondence, it became the Octet's official language after the Second Grand Conclave, displacing a patchwork of national tongues.

Autochthonic has no formal writing system, using Old Realm characters instead. Following the Second Grand Conclave, a simplified pictographic script was developed, suitable for use in signage, training manuals, and the like. Everyone in the Octet is trained in this script, while the Old Realm script needed to understand more complex texts, such as ancient ledgers, pre-Conclave texts, and high-minded epics, is reserved for Tripartite members only.

While the Tripartite is taught to read the Old Realm's script, few among them actually speak the language. The Theomachracy's clerics all learn the fundamentals of Old Realm; those actually assigned to negotiate with machine spirits receive more rigorous training. Sodality members learn basic Old Realm if their work might involve machine spirit encounters, with a few linguistic specialists delving deeper into the language.

Despite Tripartite purists' efforts, the Populat uses various spoken argots and unsanctioned slang, both as a form of self-expression and as a means of secrecy and discretion. These often borrow from tunnel folk traders and the foreign dialects of immigrants, while some incorporate persistent remnants of pre-Conclave national tongues.

Ancient records written in various dead languages can be found in Tripartite archives. Few scholars study these languages, and it's sometimes necessary to reach out to another nation's savants for assistance.

Religion

The Cult of the Great Maker is the Octet's state religion and universal faith. From quiet prayers over meals to raucous work songs on the factory line, from lectors offering childhood instruction in the crèche to Harvesters overseeing funerary rites, the Cult permeates every aspect of Autochthonian life.

Worship

By law and creed, Autochthonians worship only the Great Maker himself, and venerate his Divine Ministers as his emanations. Lectors direct prayer to the Ministers and their subgods according to meticulous devotional calendars optimized for efficiency. Laborers pull levers and turn wheels to the rhythm of work-hymns. Entire factories adjourn each day for hour-long religious assemblies, carefully scheduled to minimize disruption to production timetables. The Populat find respite in this period of contemplation, music, and prayer.

Plays and devotional comedies are a fixture of Autochthonian culture. Lectors requisition enthusiastic Populat to assist in performance or setup; those who demonstrate particular piety, creativity, or need are occasionally transferred from their workgroup to serve as lectoral aides.

The Tome of the Great Maker

The Tome of the Great Maker says: “Doubt begets apathy, apathy begets sloth, sloth begets neglect, neglect begets chaos, and chaos begets death.”

Autochthonian religious doctrine centers on the Tome. Written in Autochthonic’s Old Realm script, it’s privately perused by the Tripartite and memorized by the Populat through group recitation. The Octet’s eight founding heroes are said to have written the Tome’s first few chapters; these detail Autochthonia’s early moral history, urgently conveying the message that citizens require faith and unity to survive in the Realm of Brass and Shadow. The numerous remaining chapters detail procedures of worship, ethical philosophy, and practical steps needed to promote the Great Maker’s well-being and the faithful’s own spiritual growth. They contain extensive guidelines for almost every facet of Autochthonian life, from properly tapping conduits to interacting safely with custodians and other machine spirits. Countless versions of the Tome exist thanks to millennia of revisions and clerical findings. Lectors often consult multiple editions when making religious judgements.

Pilgrimage

A once-in-a-lifetime experience, pilgrimage is a sacred tradition throughout the Octet, reaffirming one’s faith in the Machine God through a journey across the Realm of Brass and Shadow. Each Populat is entitled to undertake a single pilgrimage, though it often takes years to process their request. Tripartite may take multiple pilgrimages, though scripture discourages taking more than three.

Pilgrimage sites abound in every nation’s metropoli, though some are scattered instead among outlying settlements, machine-organs, or even the Reaches. Each marks the site of some holy occurrence — birthplaces of ancient heroes and prophets; sites where Alchemical champions were born, communed with the Maker or a divine subminister, or performed some heroic deed; cenotaphs marking where some revered figure died. The oldest, most sacred sites are attributed to the original mortal hero-founders of the Eight Nations.

Citizens freely attend local holy sites during free shifts, but true spiritual journeys demand travel. Pilgrims may walk to distant corners of their nation, take trams to nations in convergence, or journey into the near Reaches on foot. Some choose destinations considered traditional in their neighborhood; for others, a former pilgrim’s anecdote or a poetic verse from the Tome of the Great Maker fires their imagination. Many simply feel a personal affinity for a specific spiritual figure that they wish to explore.

Each of the Eight Nations organize pilgrim processions. The lectors oversee those traveling within their nation, or visiting a neighboring one via tram. Populat exposed to foreign cultures risk bringing back foreign ideas that breed dissidence and heresy. Accompanying lectors’ sermons serve not only to educate pilgrims and to reinforce their faith, but to contextualize their experiences outside of their home nation, framing unfamiliar ideas and customs as exotic and outlandish, pursued out of perversity or ignorance. Pilgrimages always welcome Alchemical companions.

Conductor guides and regulator escorts are required to pilgrim into the Reaches. As such is time consuming and moderately dangerous, they only do so at intermittent intervals. Those unwilling to wait months — or, in the current resource shortage, years — for the next Reaches procession may seek tunnel folk guides, a more dangerous-seeming prospect.

Nations must balance resources and security concerns against faith in permitting pilgrimage from their

neighbors. Denying pilgrimage has been a source of religious conflict between nations in convergence throughout Autochthonian history. As a center of pilgrimage, Gulak receives offerings from their neighbors to help support the tide of pilgrims. Jarish, where plutarchs took great pride in the influx of pilgrims to their holy sites at the beginning of the New Convergence Era, now begrudges the food and lodging required to support them. Despite the hardships inflicted by the War of Ashes, the new religious fervor of Yugash's unorthodox Sirinite sect leads the nations to welcome pilgrims with open arms.

Voidbringers

Anyone who threatens the fabric of Octet society strengthens the Blight and harms the Great Maker himself. Such people are called voidbringers. While the Tome of the Great Maker and the histories of the Octet often describe voidbringers as a singular force for entropy and destruction, there's no unified voidbringer faction. The Eight Nations apply the term to anyone who rejects fundamental premises of Autochthonian society. In truth, those proclaimed voidbringers hold a dizzying variety of beliefs, ideals, and goals.

The Eight Nations aren't wholly ignorant of this, but they consider it an ancillary detail. Instead, the Theomachracy's categorization and classification of heresies focuses on the commonalities among voidbringer cults. Based on this analysis, the Octet pigeonholes voidbringers into four neat categories of escalating severity: dissidents, heretics, renegades, and blasphemers.

Dissidents

Few dissidents would consider themselves voidbringers. The label is applied to those who foment chaos by deviating from civic norms, and often used as a weapon against reformers and revolutionaries. Some are Tripartite functionaries dissatisfied with the social order they themselves maintain; others are charismatic or highly placed Populat steering their fellows toward revolutionary change. How, they say, could the Great Maker oppose a fairer society? Such questions are the danger that the dissident pose to society.

Such a judgment is harsh, but the Octet doesn't apply it rigidly. An accusation of dissidence can easily encompass multiple workgroups or entire factories. It's often preferable to avoid even greater outbursts of civil disorder by offering concessions, seeking middle ground between Populat demands and national security. After suppressing open rebellion and making an example of dissident leaders, adjudicators pardon most rank-and-file dissidents, saying that they were simply misled — though such forgiveness often accompanies Lumpen status.

False accusations of dissidence are a notorious political tactic within the Tripartite, with simple policy disagreements or theological debates used as a pretext to brand one's rivals as voidbringers. Such efforts are met with harsh discouragement from senior lectors and preceptors, both to preserve the Tripartite's institutional legitimacy and to avoid detracting from the threat of genuine dissidents.

Heretics

Deviation from religious orthodoxy is deemed heresy, and a sure sign of a so-called voidbringer cult. Few heretical sects live up to the gruesome expectations many Autochthonians have of voidbringers. Most religious nonconformity centers around heterodox views of Autochthon or the Eight Divine Ministers, arising from unsanctioned interpretations of the Tome of the Great Maker or oral doctrine. One heretical cult might believe that Autochthonia isn't actually the Great Maker's body, but a testing-place he built for humanity. Another teaches that belief in the Great Maker himself isn't necessary, so long as one follows orthodox religious practice. Other heresies turn on unconventional religious practices, such as attempting to divine the future with the Tome of the Great Maker.

More dangerous heresies arise when cultists interact with or outright worship lesser machine spirits and odd prodigies of the Reaches. Even the most benign of such beings risk disrupting the societal order as they exert control over the cultists through favors, extortion, or deceit. Even worse are gremlins who secretly harbor the ever-spreading Blight, making unwitting traitors of their heretical cult. Such voidbringer cults are often concentrated beyond a metropolis' walls, repurposing remote factories, barracks, settlements, and outposts for their meeting places.

The inextricable ties between Autochthonian political and religious life sometimes make it difficult to draw the line between a dissident movement and a heretical cult. The distinction is a crucial one: the calculated mercy that the Tripartite offers to dissidents doesn't extend to heretics, no matter how sympathetic their cause. Regulators investigating potential voidbringer activity often loop in preceptors to determine whether a group's activities and ideology rises to the level of a formal heresy.

Noteworthy heresies include a widespread Jarishite folk belief in the divinity of their nation's celebrants; a recent Kamaki superstition that the Great Maker manifests through the bodies of soul-flayed Lumpen; the Rusted Claw, a Claslati cult that propitiates Ku through terrorist acts that spread fear; and apocalyptic movements in Nurad and Sova that construe prophetic verses in the Book of the Great Maker as foretelling the end of the world.

Renegades

Those who reject the social order of the Eight Nations are worse than heretic, treacherous renegades who loom large in the Octet's imagination. They're far rarer than other stripes of voidbringer, limited largely to fugitives from justice and to those bold outcasts willing to forsake a metropolis' security in the name of freedom. Whether they actively oppose their former nation or not, the very prospect that unhappy citizens might leave threatens the Eight Nations. However, there's little punishment to be done: a renegade's lot in life is much like that of an exiled Lumpen.

Some theological extremists view all tunnel folk as renegades, though the label is more commonly applied to tunnel folk clans that are perceived as being notoriously violent, or whose religious beliefs are considered heretical. Even then, accusations of harboring renegades, Lumpen exiles, or other undesirables can serve as pretexts for violence against otherwise-tolerated clans.

In ancient times, nations often called their rivals renegades, characterizing differences in social order as dissidence writ upon the largest possible canvas. The Eight Nations no longer direct such accusations at their peers, but history still describes various historical or mythical fallen nations as renegade states.

Noteworthy renegades are a matter of much gossip, though it's nigh-impossible to confirm which of them still survive. The so-called Celebrant of Water, Yekeris, a charismatic Populat advocate of caste abolition, is said to have joined a tunnel folk clan (never mind which one), where he surely continues spreading his dangerous ideas. Sefrul, a genius Surgeon who fell into disgrace for his unethical experiments on the Lumpen, fled to the Reaches accompanied by the shambling, still-living bodies of his last victims. Kamaki debate the fate of the the Verdigris Spore Expedition, a conspiracy of Sodalts who fled the nation laden with gear and supplies to settle the purportedly idyllic region surrounding a poorly-understood industrial organ. Estasians speak instead of Expeditionary Force Zero, a rogue Militat patriotic society that commandeered several vehicles and escaped past Rekad into the Reaches, now rumored to hire out as mercenaries to other nations.

Blasphemers

Worst of all voidbringers are those who go beyond heterodoxy to reject the Great Maker outright. The worship of gremlins, Apostates, or the Blight itself is unambiguous blasphemy, but it's also applied to

those who believe that Autochthon is malevolent, or proclaim his teachings to be utterly meaningless. In some nations and cities, the label is also applied to those who choose not to worship Autochthon even if they blaspheme him no further, while others would regard such voidbringers as heretics.

Blasphemers have committed some of the most dreadful crimes in Autochthonian history, and the Octet takes allegations of blasphemy very seriously. Merely belief in blasphemous doctrine warrants harsh penalties — and even harsher if the voidbringer doesn't recant them. Acts of blasphemy that harm the nation and its people are routinely capital offenses.

Real and rumored blasphemers abound. Rarata Senak is particularly controversial, a senior Gulaki lector who publicly desecrated a relic of Estasia's founding hero to protest Estasian militarism. When *Concussive Jewel of Incandescence* became the Apostate *Thousand Spreading Fractures*, it's said that her technician Rejem deliberately exposed himself to gremlinization to join his Alchemical lover in the Reaches. Urban legends in the Claslati metropolis of Arat attributes factory breakdowns to the gremlin-worshipping cultists of the Spiral Stain. The elders of the mining settlement Kardun perform an annual human sacrifice to the machine spirit Usinkal Jun, the Abacus of Debok Moom, in exchange for protection and good fortune. In Sova, the legendary espionage network known as the Vent, used by rival root lineages to spy on one another, ultimately serves to the Apostate called *The Herald of the Black Engine*.

Technology in the Eight Nations

Technology runs life in the Octet. It exists at manifold scales, from a regulator's repeating crossbow to the vastness of a nation's tram system. From mundane to magical, every bit of life is punctuated by the staccato notes of machinery. Much of this technology is mundane, differing from Creation's technology only in the materials, tools, and expertise used to create them. The chronometers worn by Populat shift chief are perfectly ordinary clockwork, but few in Creation have access to the equipment needed to perform such fine-scale engineering.

The Octet's engineers make use of a variety of exotic compounds, materials, and reagents found within Autochthonia. Some of them can be found in Creation as well, like the lightweight metal feathersteel (**Exalted**, p. 591). Others are unique to the Realm of Brass and Shadows, such as the petrochemical compounds that can be tapped from Autochthonia's conduits. Autochthonian technology also benefits from the industrial power of metropoli, whose Municipal Charms aid in manufacturing or maintaining such equipment. Synthesizing volatile chemical compounds is far easier with access to a Thousand Elixirs Cauldron's processing technology, even if the final product could have been brewed in a flask.

Alchemical artificers exceed many of their peers among Creation's Exalted, and have forged many wonders in service to the state. However, only a scarce (and heavily regulated) few can be used by mortals. Most personal-scale artifacts find their place in an Alchemical's individual panoply, though larger-scale artifacts can be integrated into public life.

The grandest of Autochthonian technologies are the Municipal Charms installed in its metropoli. Health-Promoting Filtration Baffles filter impurities and microcontamination from nutrient slurry on a city-wide scale, drastically improving public health. Autonomic Civic Defense Emplacements turn a besieged metropolis into a terrifying battlefield of electrified streets, lashing moonsilver lighting installations, hidden artillery turrets, and worse. Each Municipal Charm a factory-complex unto itself, a vast physical infrastructure that typically requires extensive mortal involvement to maintain and operate. Thousands toil in Yugash to weave the theoalkaline filter media used in the Purified Inhalation Matrix that keeps the Grinding Archipelago's air clean. If this workflow were interrupted, the Charm's operations would grow increasingly less efficient, eventually rendering it nonfunctional if nothing is done.

Some Municipal Charms act as a hub for smaller-scale machinery, powering technologies beyond any mortal craft. The Hologlyphic Projection Station allows a metropolis to manifest a luminous avatar of herself at one of any number of stations throughout her city-self, letting her carry on direct realtime talks with her Tripartite leadership or chat with passersby on particularly scenic promenades. The Ansible Hypersignal Relay links together numerous pieces of site-scale and personal-scale communications equipment, extending their signals for miles beyond the city's walls. Equipment and infrastructure linked to such Charms could be mistaken for artifacts in their own right, but they're wholly dependent on the Municipal Charm that powers them.

Energy

Most of a metropolis' basic energy demands can be met with the Alchemical city's own Essence. Any additional power needed typically comes in the form of electricity, steam, and heat diverted from nearby sources within Autochthon's world-body. Strategically-positioned metal contact brushes allow for electricity to be leached from conduits and circuitry, maintaining contact even as the titan's world-body shifts and moves. Boiler sleeves placed around supercritical steam conduits siphon off heat, which is stored in massive paraffin blocks, salt, or liquid metal ponds to later provide working heat.

Bold leadership or desperate times may see a metropolis tap directly into the Machine God's technocirculatory systems, extracting energy or rerouting the flow of its power directly. While potentially rewarding, such a venture carries steep risks if the work is anything less than perfect. Overdrawing power may damage Autochthon's systems or deactivate other processes linked to that system. A metropolis that delves too greedily into might be caught in a vast blight zone if its efforts disable the diagnostic and self-maintenance systems that had been holding the Blight at bay. Direct Essence capture from the slumbering Primordial is possible, but such technology has always suffered from unreliable outcomes and uncomfortable theological questions.

Environmental Control

Many metropoli find themselves within proximity of the perilous environmental forces at play within Autochthonia, relying on Municipal Charms for shelter against blasts of superheated air, acid rain, or vast congeries of ball lightning. In some cases, protection is a secondary consideration to controlling an environmental phenomena, harnessing or redirecting it for industrial purposes with Municipal Charms such as Climate-Sculpting Manifold Lathe. Not all of Autochthonia's perils require such extensive defenses, though. A metropolis could prepare for an approaching stannous hydrodynamic storm simply by providing all residents with diamagnetic umbrellas.

Even where Municipal Charms and other technology prevail in repelling environmental hazards, extensive maintenance may be necessary in their wake, generally overseen by one or more Sodalities. A metropolis' Theomagnetic Negation Cage may repel a corrosive storm of Blighted Essence, but every exposed surface will still need to be de-rusted guided under the guidance of the Meticulous Surgeons of the Body Electric.

Medicine

The Surgeons' Sodality defines the state of modern medicine in Autochthonia. Most of the medical issues encountered involve injury, disability, or mental distress — infectious disease is kept well-controlled through regular health screenings and a paucity of animal vectors. (Even fewer in metropoli with Rat-Slaying Electrification Grids). Every Octet citizen learns basic first aid, and every shift has at least one Surgeon's aide who can stabilize larger injuries until the Surgeon arrives to oversee medical care.

Medications, salves, ointments, and other reagents are synthesized from the output of conduit taps,

sometimes supplemented with organic components procured by the Harvesters' Sodality. Most metropoli have several Surgeon-operated dispensaries. When faced with more exotic ailments, such as glassbrain fever, Surgeons must turn to more powerful reagents, often requiring an Alchemical's aid to obtain: components taken from machine spirits, the ejecta of industrial organs, or mithridatic inoculations of Blighted Essence.

Surgery, limb grafts, organ transplantation, and other forms of surgical body modifications are more common and more sophisticated in Autochthonia than Creation, owing largely to the sophisticated tools and sterilization systems maintained by the Surgeons. The most impressive examples of this medical technology are the works of Alchemical Exalted: microsurgeries that require dedicated Charms to perform, or artifact prosthetics as powerful as any daiklave.

Most metropoli also monitor the large-scale mental health of their populace, filtering information collected from lectors, medical facilities, and periodic surveys through advanced probabilistic modeling Charms. Such simulations provide information on the level of the workgroup rather than the individual, allowing the Tripartite to arrange for increased rations, improved quarters, or other morale-bolstering measures. At other times, redistributing the workgroup's members is deemed the most effective surgery — particularly if the Tripartite suspects that seditious elements are at work.

Warfare

Most Autochthonian soldiers carry arms and armor that would be familiar to their counterparts in Creation. Swords and pikes are the most common hand-to-hand weaponry fielded in war, while crossbows, including repeating crossbows, are the predominant ranged armament. Truncheons, bolas, and mancatchers see use as nonlethal weaponry. The Eight Nations boast impressive siege engineering, including access to artifact siege weapons (**Arms of the Chosen**, p. 127).

The most sophisticated Autochthonian weaponry is wielded by the Alchemical Exalted: beamklaves that project solid Essence into a cutting edge; huge industrial drills converted into direlances; implosion bows that fire fusillades of unstable gravitational singularities. Alchemical colossi can easily become living weapons platforms, bristling with Essence-fueled artillery emplacements, while the offensive power of a metropolis whose Municipal Charms have been fully reconfigured for war is almost unspeakable. Lux, Estasia's, is fond of recounting the time he crushed a Jarishite army by dropping one of the great metal wedges that make up his body on them.

Media Technologies

Autochthonian visual culture is known for paintings, murals, mosaics, bas-reliefs, and graffiti. Most artists make use of an existing surface, whether a wall of their dormitory or of the metropolis. While some metropoli produce paper-like polymer sheets, using them in art would be an almost wasteful luxury for any but the Tripartite. The most technologically sophisticated visual media uses simple mechanical zooscopes to project near-microscopic etchings made in hyperdense quartz beads, able to project the equivalent of a technical manual in still images or a few seconds of silent animation. Given the effort required to create such etchings, any animation is generally limited to brief instructional displays for the workforce.

In the darkness of the Realm of Brass and Shadow, light takes on great significance. Luminous paints, phosphorescent gel, and bioluminescent bodypaint are mainstays, while many performers don costumes outlined in glowing gas tubes or festooned with sparking devices.

Octet musicians play a variety of stringed and bass instruments, as well as percussive instruments made out of metal, crystal, or glass. Some Autochthonian instruments are far stranger than any known in

Creation, such as the theremins favored in Gulak. Nurad's national instrument is the pyrophone, though they've suffered a precipitous drop in use as the troubled nation seeks to conserve the flammable gas they use. Many have been refitted to function as steam organ.

Alchemicals who've installed a Radiant Iconography Array can project images and music from pure imagining — a function that's expanded to the metropolitan scale by the Omipresent Radiance Broadcast Locus. Its resonant projector-panels can transmit concert, speeches, or dramas for citywide viewing, or project the metropolis' latest work across her walls. Other Municipal Charms have musical and aesthetic effect, even if it isn't their primary function. A metropolis' Industrial Harmony Optimization Acoustics can convert industrial noises to pleasant tones via register shift manifolds, making a properly running factory sound like a symphony where dissonance aides in troubleshooting.

Transportation

Many metropolis have some form of mass transit, whether installed as a Municipal Charm or by other means, though pedestrian traffic is still by far the most common. Some are modeled on the pneumatic tram systems used to conduct international travel, used for both passenger and freight traffic. Designs vary widely from city to city and nation to nation. Some run on cog rails or gyroscopically stabilized monorails, while others employ self-assembling track, magnetic levitation, or geomantic relay lines. In some metropoli, they hang on cables from a roof above as open gondolas. The best are optimized with submodules like the sensor systems of the Stations' Perfect Synchrony Array and the Ordained Impeccable Movement Abacus.

Personal transportation is rare, though some metropoli boast Municipal Charms linked to fleets of small transports, from small hovercraft to spider-like automated palanquin. Alchemicals often make use of windblades and similar artifacts for rapid travel within cities or in the Reaches.

Not all Eight Nations make great use of aircraft, but aerostats, zeppelins, and blimps are a common sight — though not all of Autochthonia's chambers are open enough for them to take flight. Such aircraft see the most use as bulk material transportation, used to carry back materials harvested from the Reaches, and have been turned to military purposes in times of war. The most sophisticated vessels are artifact airships, which typically require an Alchemical pilot. These ships boast everything from gravity-altering singularity cores to intricate insectile wings.

Transnational Affairs

While the nations of the Octet share a common culture, their interests and agendas are often at odds. They struggle for control of limited resources, raiding and being raided in return. Trade agreements between nations let them balance surplus and shortage, but can breed conflict as easily as they resolve it. Doctrinal disputes and theological argument set souls of nations in opposition. In the face of this, diplomacy is a necessity for survival.

Each nation trains a diplomatic corps within its Olgotary's plutarchs, responsible for negotiations and staffing embassies. Supported by members of the other branches of the Tripartite, these diplomats and ambassadors act for and answer to their National Tripartite Assemblies. Embassies house diplomatic staff, support pilgrims from their home nations, and incidentally serve as hubs of espionage.

Most nations maintain embassies with at least their closest neighbors. Claslat claims the most. It keeps an embassy in continuous operation in each of the other Eight Nations, and has agreed to bear the expense of hosting embassies from other nations as part of its push for greater transnational unity. Gulak hosts an embassy from each of the other nations to oversee the continuous pilgrimages to the capital city, Thutot. Since the War of Ashes, Sova and Yugash have expelled each other's diplomats.

National Tripartite Assemblies frequently assign Alchemicals to aid in tense negotiations — though the final decision always remains in the hands of a nation's mortal diplomats. Even when the Champion in question has little diplomatic ability, her presence projects the authority of her home nation and underscores the importance of the mission. That her presence might give pause to the other nation's Alchemicals goes unspoken. Champions also act as bodyguards, protecting diplomats both at the embassy and during the long journeys through Autochthonia, especially when the nations are out of convergence. Alchemicals are sometimes sent to assist diplomats not in negotiations, but in matters of espionage — and they may be given ulterior clandestine assignments of their own.

The Eight Nations

The Octet is founded on a shared cultural legacy, but the Eight Nations each have their own unique national character. Each of them has its own culture, societal norms, political intricacies, and independent history. Each nation differs from typical Octet culture in its own way, with these differences often seen as points of national pride.

Claslat

Claslat stands as the shining example of Autochthonian prosperity. Situated in the Sacred Crèche of Origin, the massive chamber where the first Autochthonians once dwelt, it holds itself out as the seat of Octet culture, society, and propriety. Its vast caches of resources are the greatest in Octet — enough to rebuild a lesser nation, the Tripartite says. Once the center of all Autochthonian civilization, Claslat seeks to unify the Eight Nations through diplomacy. That Claslat would be the natural leader of a more unified Octet goes unspoken, for now.

Claslat is divided into two regions: the core of Central Claslat, within the Sacred Crèche itself, and the surrounding ring of Outer Claslat. The Crèche is a massive chamber over a thousand miles long, unusually rich in conduits, magical materials, and life-sustaining industrial organ sites that inhabitants take as signs of Autochthon's benevolence. Outer Claslat occupies a ring of smaller chambers radiating outward from the Crèche, varying in size from a warehouse to subcontinental chambers.

Even as Claslat seeks to forge bonds of transnational unity, it faces turmoil from within internal turmoil. Potential supply shortages, glot-boss warfare, and supply chain failures strain the nation's economy, while the emergence of soul anomalies threatens their social order's foundations. Has its ambition outstripped its wisdom? Perhaps. But still, Claslat has vast storehouses overflowing with resources, bold plans for the future, and a dominant international position.

Claslat has everything.

History

The history preached by Claslat's lectors begins in the Sacred Crèche, the cradle of humanity where all Autochthonian civilization began. This is the foundation of Claslat's worldview: Octet culture is Claslati culture. The Second Grand Conclave that defined modern Octet society only further its hegemony, as the Tripartite system pioneered in Claslat became the norm throughout all Eight Nations now use to achieve an orderly society.

A Troubled Ascendancy

Claslat rose to new heights of international prominence at the Second Grand Conclave, but no amount of political power could protect it from the tribulations to come. As it passed through an unstable region of the Expanse of Metal, a series of theotectonic quakes and accidents destroyed multiple metropoli. Making matters worse, Claslat came within proximity a failed industrial organ whose malfunctioning air filtration systems spread the debilitating Weaver's Sickness through Claslati settlements. These tribulations made the limits of diplomacy clear to the Claslati as they rebuilt and renewed their society. Claslat's allies are its strength, but dependence upon them is weakness/

An Age of Glass

Three centuries ago, Claslat created the innovation that would go on to define its party. In the midst of great national turmoil and high-profile requisition scandals, Claslat's Tripartite devised the glot as a sop

to the Populat, hoping to prevent threatened work stoppages and sabotage. The glot is a token cut from colored scrap glass, awarded to individuals and workgroups for delivering ahead of schedule, above quota, or under dangerous circumstances. Thus, the hidden dynamo of the glass markets began to churn, as this system of rewards has evolved into an informal monetary system.

The ripple effects of the glot have spread throughout Claslat. Populat is striated their caste into the haves and have-nots. Criminal glot-bosses hire Populat workgroups as labor, bodyguards, or legbreakers. The most prominent glot-bosses even hired small units Estasian mercenaries to raid neighboring glot-bosses' territory or vie for power in Claslati townships.

The Triumph of Diplomacy

In the modern day, Claslat has distinguished itself as an exemplar of diplomacy. It negotiated the Treaty of Harmegis that ended the devastating War of Ashes between Sova and Yugash. and brokered the formation of the Sovan Rehabilitation Committee. The internal Committee provides provisions and resources for the reconstruction of Sova — in exchange for Sova's submission to the Octet orthodoxy that the nation has long spurned.

The Glass Market

The glass market is the unofficial term for Claslat's trade in glots. Glots are distributed as rewards to exceptional workers and workgroups, based on production targets and performance incentives set by the Trip Hammer Assembly.

Glots can be exchanged for commodities from Olgotary redemption markets, though few are. Instead, glots have become an informal currency, traded between citizens for goods and services.. Individual Populat tend to buy the small, temporary, or portable wares. This may be a piece of salvaged jewelry, an etched portrait of a loved one, or personalized clothing recycled from cast-off scraps, like a fashionable coat with roach-carapace lining. Also popular are synthesized spices, odor-suppressing perfumes and incense, and pictographic tattoos. Service merchants such as barbers, masseurs, portrait artists, and sex workers advertise their services in market districts. Gambling is both a lucrative and dangerous venture, and a popular front for criminal operations. Populat workgroups and dormitory units may invest to upgrade their living spaces, ranging from simple curtains to sound-dampening panels.

Some in the Populat are able to make a full-time living through the glass market, paying others to cover all their work shifts so that they can pursue profitable allowing ventures. This small but thriving group is colloquially referred to as the Glotat, a status that many Populat strive for, but few reach. They're viewed with a mix of suspicion, pride, and yearning, representing an opportunity for self-determination that appeals to some Populat but threatens Tripartite control. Some Glotat offer loans and advances, a practice disfavored by the Olgotary. Creditors harass debtors over missed payments, and hire legbreakers — sometimes bribed regulators — to collect in extreme cases. Some Populat grow so indebted that they flee established cities, seeking to start a new life in a small outlying town or becoming wandering renegades.

Glot-bosses are Claslat's criminal kingpins, a small handful of Glotat who hold disproportionate power through cunning, dedication, and ruthlessness. They take a cut from almost everyone in the glass market, then funnel their glots into illegal gambling operations, materials smuggling, violence for hire and other criminal endeavors. Other funds are earmarked for paying off witnesses and bribing Tripartite members. These glot-bosses' corrupt business conglomerates and organized crime syndicates are often highly influential within towns and metropoli, and open conflict between two can look like urban warfare.

Glots were initially meant for the Populat alone, but Claslat's Tripartite has passed measures affording its members similar — but greater — glot bonuses for good performance. Their glots go to sumptuous

personal finery like dendro-linen suits or rat-fur cloaks, exquisite salvaged jewelry, and sumptuous provisions. Glots also buy intricate office mosaics, and decadent services for after hammer-fall. Tripartite members are set apart from the Glotate, as they're unable buy their way out of their duties entirely, but they're disproportionately wealthy compared to all but the richest glot-bosses.

Culture

Claslati value a strict adherence to hierarchy, believing society functions best when complaints and rewards flowing up and down quickly and efficiently. Errors and accidents are attributed either to unavoidable events or a human failure in interpreting the Great Maker's will. Its regulators and preceptors give little leeway for corruption and illicit dealings, meting out quick punishments...though much less so since the introduction of the glot.

Extraordinary effort is made to make each Claslati feel special and necessary. Size allows specialization and specialization allows growth. Specialization trades against resilience. Claslat chooses to solve problems as they emerge rather than have generalist factories or production spread across cities. Tight supply chains with little redundancy means a greedy or incompetent autocrat can cripple a sector or a region.

The core of Claslati culture is the Sixty-Four Tales, passed down since the nation's dawn in what lectors claim is an unbroken chain. These tales are endlessly repeated in song, play, and poem, depicted in visual arts, and even used as themes for Gladiate bouts. Not all agree — some in the Theomachracy point to sources indicating that there were once seventy-two tales, while others claim that only fifty of the tales are genuine. It matters little for the Populat on the street. The story is more important than the history.

The Gladiate stands out as uniquely Claslati entertainment. Populat pour into special built gladiatoriums to watch combat sports, with a thinly veneer of Claslati ideology painted over the brutality. Between bouts, public announcements are made, municipal and national anthems are sung, and short artistic pieces are performed. Admission is free, but enterprising Glotat sell mementos, banners, and food. Special occasions feature performances by nationally famous troupes, or even Champions.

Claslat believes that athletic competition can be another route to diplomacy. The expense of maintaining the Gladiate means that Claslat has had little success exporting it to other nations, but it sends troupes of gladiatorial war-actors to serve as cultural ambassadors. As convergence approaches, Claslat seeks to hold a transnational tournament, inviting athletes — and Champions — from across the Octet to compete.

Religion

Claslati religion includes the veneration of the first heroes alongside worship of the Machine God, the ancient saints who sought out the Godhead of the Great Maker and became the first Champions. These heroes are the epitome of excellence, and all Claslati look up to them as models for right and proper behavior. These eight heroes hold the greatest importance in Claslati culture, but most children will know tales of another 40, other heroes of the nation's founding myths.

The hero Claslat embodies fortitude and perseverance to her people. She's invoked at the start of new ventures and fought over as icon by leaders, inventors, and soldiers. Her sarcophagus-shrine in Harmegis is visited by thousands of pilgrims each year, and her preserved corpse is rumored to speak with the Theomachrats who tend it.

Clever Maraton is credited with discovering the first nutrient conduits, a popular hero invoked by those who live by resourcefulness and ingenuity — particularly those who ply the glass markets. Memorious Unixis who authored the Sixty-Four Tales is invoked by teachers, diplomats, and archivists. Meticulous

Quenza who developed the first Municipal Charm and considered the greatest mortal machinist, is invoked all who do precision work or oversee the work of others.

The Claslati calendar has an abundance of festival days beyond other nations. Some fall on the same day each year like the year-marking Trip Hammer Feast. Some are moving feasts: Quenza's Alignment occurs roughly bienially, when the three rings of Harmegis. Others, like the Feast of Explorers, are tied to the position of Claslat, as determined by the national autolabe points in Harmegis. Other festival days commemorate the dates the trams first united Claslat with each of the other nations, with recitations and public re-enactments from the Sixty-Four Tales are staged.

Governance

Claslat pioneered the Tripartite system, the superior model upon which the Octet's other nations based their own. The nation's Olgotary, Theomachracy, and Sodalities are likewise the templates of orthodoxy from which the other Eight Nations occasionally stray.

The upper echelons of Claslat's Tripartite call themselves the Trip Hammer Council, taking their name from the hammer that was the hero Claslat's sigil. Claslat's diplomatic agenda has the Trip Hammer Council's full backing, and their informal gatherings often decide more than meetings of the National Tripartite Assembly.

The Trip Hammer Assembly's closed room dealings largely shut out a sizable minority of isolationists, who complain that diplomacy too often comes at the expense of welfare at home. Politically disenfranchised, some among this faction provide covert support to militant dissenters and radical cells who share their opposition to a transnational future.

The Resurrectionists

The Resurrections are a conspiracy among Claslat's Tripartite, seeking to extend their lives through heretical means. Leadership is its own kind of supply chain, all too easily disrupted by the death of experienced Tripartite members. The proliferation of soul anomalies and difficulty in judging souls for Tripartite service has only exacerbated this, threatening the Tripartite's very future.

Thus, the Resurrectionists' solution.. All of them are dead. Using heretical technology and thaumaturgical rites, the Resurrectionists commit ritual suicide, but prevent their souls from migrating from cadaver to soulgem. The result is a walking, thinking, speaking corpse, their flesh preserved by alchemical reagents and occasional maintenance by Resurrectionist Surgeons. The Resurrectionists have little understanding of this process, or its consequences. They're susceptible to the same passion plays and melodramas as Creation's ghosts, as well as the rage of their incompletely severed lower soul.

The Resurrectionists are slow and careful in recruitment, exclusively targeting the useful and powerful. Those who refuse the offer experience a sudden industrial accident arranged by regulators, preceptors, or glot-bosses. In time, they plan to reveal their presence publicly — but not until the Resurrectionists are already in control of the nation.

Metropoli

Blessed with a large and uninterrupted nation chamber, Claslat's metropoli often lie near rich deposits of

magical materials, useful conduits, or important industrial organs. The Sacred Crèche no longer holds the unimaginable bounty that the Tome of the Great Maker speaks of, but it's still far more hospitable than most of Autochthonia.

Internal trams are speedy and well-maintained, while Glotat and Tripartite travel by tread-cycles, mechapalanquins, and the glot-bosses' armored magnetocorvettes.

Harmegis, the Centropolis

Claslat's capital at Harmegis is a place of piety, intrigue, and tension. It's not just the political seat of the National Tripartite Assembly, but also the nation's religious and diplomatic center of Claslat. It's a small city, consisting of three slowly rotating rings .

The highest and smallest ring is known as the Maker's Eye, a thin ring of starmetal studded with ampitheatres and cathedrals. The Trip Hammer Council's ceremonial meeting hall and the high temple of Claslat's Theomachy lie here near the municipal vaults and archives. The Diplomacy where the Second Grand Conclave was held and the Treaty of Harmegis was signed undergoes renovation and refurbishment in preparation for the coming convergence/ All citizens visit the Eye on starmetal pneumatic lifts at least weekly as a religious devotion, looking down on the full sweep of the city and knowing that they are a part of it.

The middle ring is known as the Maker's Hammer, the seat of the Olgotary's power and the site of the Five Sodalities' greatest laboratories, along with the city's vat complexes. It's become the unofficial meeting place of the city's Tripartite and the wealthy Glotate. Glot-bosses bribe functionaries to get early information on production targets to corner markets and ensure profits, while corrupt officials hire glot-bosses to do their dirty work.

The lowest ring is known as the Maker's Anvil, an industrial powerhouse of vast, thundering foundries. The starmetal coils and baffles of the city's Resonant Chorus redirect the clamor of industry away from the city. Harmegis is also the central hub of the glass market. Glot bonuses are nearly guaranteed to those secure a position in the largest and most complicated of these factories and openings are subject to fierce competition. Shift managers lead workgroups in glot collections to improve their workspaces. It's likely the only place in Autochthonia whose factories have plush carpeting.

Arat, Forge of the Nation

The factories of soulsteel Arat ring endlessly as he forges the arsenal of Claslat. Arat is the nation's largest city. Great towering blocks of iron-faced tenements push up out of the press and bustle of the city, decorated with gaudy banners and luminescent paints. Advertisements are affixed to the sides of almost every building, and alleys glow like lurid arteries of glass market trade.

Arat houses Claslat's Munifactory, a Municipal Charm and laboratory-bunker where Scholar's Sodality researches and creates new weapons of war. In its shadow, countless foundries turn out crossbows, armor, and weapons forged by Populat workers. Glots are awarded not just for beating production goals, but also for innovations in weapon-making and warfare. Claslati intelligence agents often have close ties with workhouses and Sodalts in Arat, who providing funding to investigate threats foreign and domestic — which in turn leads to increased order sizes, and increased glot bonuses. Glot-bosses smuggle highly destructive and experimental weapons out of Arat, and occasionally act as agents provocateur on behalf of the city's Tripartite Assembly.

Arat rises in great layers, building over old layers as it expands. Most of the population slowly migrates upwards, but others strike out on their own, whether out of a desperate need for shelter or to salvage and research what lies beneath. Some glot-bosses hire armed bands to scavenge abandoned stratafor materiel

or schematics, selling lethal designs to the highest bidder. Regulators are ill-equipped to intervene with this. By informal agreement, the regulators' patrols avoid the city's deeper strata as long as the glot-bosses keep their violence from spreading upward.

Jandis, the Furnace Unlimited

Claslat's Navel is a churning gyre where a river of coke meets a flow of ore at a magmatic evulsion, causing temperatures that can melt starmetal. Above this firestorm lies a broken column from which Jandis hangs on great adamant chains. The entire city is constructed of shards of heat-deflecting jade making it appear to glow in all colors. Millions of tons of steel spew forth with energy provided by wind turbines that tap potent thermals. Jandis's brilliant backdrop also hosts the largest Gladiate arena in Claslat, which is being expanded in anticipation of the next convergence.

Jandis is protected from the heat by the copper and starmetal pipes of its Thermal Redirection Forge, directing excess heat up to power forges housed in the column above the city. This Municipal Charm operates with such efficiency that taller buildings are rimed with frost. The green jade baffles and odorant catalyzers of the city's Olfactory Relief Systems transform the noxious smells of ore processing into a slightly sweet smell, which lingers on anything forged from Jandiscene steel.

Cinshan, the Moving City

Cinshan completed its metropolitan ascension in Outer Claslat centuries ago. The wandering frontier of Claslat, it's best known for its Urban Mobilization Overhaul Upgrade, a massive assembly of treads, thrusters, and other mechanisms that allow the metropolis to slowly move through the Reaches.

Cinshan has become a hub for glass market activities, particularly those of dubious legality. Ostentatious glot-bosses move about in personal mechapalanquins, while running crowbow battles are carried out on high-speed omnicycles through narrow streets. Regulators and adjudicators alike are paid to look the other way, a corruption that's grown ever more pervasive throughout the city's Tripartite.

Cinshan is Claslat's most cosmopolitan city — both the city's populace, and the metropolis itself. The Outpost's motility brings it into frequent contact with other envoys and expeditions from other nations. Nationalist themes are less pronounced in music and art, and the typical Claslati chauvinism hasn't stopped the city's residents from adapting foreign fashion, cuisine, and entertainment.

Yain, the Fractured Nexus

Yain was once the logistics and manufacturing hub of eastern Claslat, harvesting resources from floating islands magnetically suspended in a pounding waterfall of corrosive saline. In a recent cataclysm, many of these islands fell onto the metropolis, damaging the processing cores and memory banks that make up the city's mind. Yain now suffers from frequent bouts of memory loss, confusion, and aphasia, often withdrawing into herself for long periods. The city's people are slowly rebuilding, but the city's protective Municipal Charms have grown fickle and erratic, sometimes leaving entire neighborhoods bathed in a sticky mist that blocks out light, with every surface rimed with salt.

Yain is a center of Sodalt research, and they've taken the lead in the city's reconstruction efforts, and have begun designing a Municipal Charm whose large turbines could capture the energy of the falling brine to power the city.. Myrand, the metropolis' autocrat, and many others in the city's Olgotary hopes that this project fails and embarrass the Sodalities. Once their plan fails, Myrand plans to bring in a surge of labor hired from glot-bosses in other metropoli, casting the Olgotary as rescuing heroes.

Transnational Relations

Claslati see their nation as the first among the Octet and the model for the rest of the nations to follow, an impression their historical key role in the Grand Conclaves reinforces. Claslati diplomats use their nation's abundance as diplomatic capital, providing when other nations come up short in exchange for promises of future favor. Claslat calls in those favors to shape the Octet in their image. Claslat is the only nation to maintain embassies in every other nation. They also host, at their own expense, embassies from every other nation to ensure continuity of bilateral negotiation. With every nation represented, Claslat also put themselves forward as mediators for disputes between the other nations of the Octet, and intrusion not always appreciated by their fellows.

Among the nations, Claslat offers aid but always on its terms and under its guidance. No transnational disbursement is so small that it isn't accompanied by a plutocrat to ensure the gift is properly received and used. Champions abroad are joined by lectors who record their great deeds and provide songs praising Claslat's obvious magnanimity.

Claslat views **Estasia** as an ally despite the military state's deviations from Octet societal norms, though one that needs to be managed. Estasia's drive for unity often aligns with Claslat's transnational ambitions ideologically, and Claslat frequently trades resources for Militat mercenary service.

A faction among Claslat's National Tripartite Assembly see **Sova's** current ruin and the operations of the transnational Sovcommit as an opportunity to both prove the value of pan-Octet cooperation and a chance to "voluntarily" bring the nation into alignment with Octet cultural norms. For their part, the Sovan Tripartite gladly accept the Sovcommit's aid, but the Sovan people resent its attempts at suppressing traditional culture and religion.

Claslat's Alchemicals

Claslat's understanding of what it is to be a Champion is defined by their first heroes. The process of creating an Alchemical is influenced by the veneration of these heroes, as is the public's perspective of their Chosen. The Sodalts who labor to create an Alchemical do not say "we need a people's Champion," but "we need someone to rally the Populat, like Barandr, the Workhouse Engine". Claslat boasts a disproportionate number of Champions simply to coordinate the massive nation and each part of the Tripartite wants its own Champions.

Foremost Fist of Righteousness: This Orichalcum Caste is an accomplished athletic exemplar and diplomat. She's the face of Claslat's efforts at diplomacy through athletics, and much beloved by the Populat. *Foremost Fist* is a steadfast believer in the supremacy of Claslati culture even as she serves as a diplomat, struggling to comprehend why nations would willfully spurn Claslati innovation. The Luminors' soul records state that *Foremost Fist's* soul is that of the hero Maraton reincarnated, a comparison that fascinates her. She collects stories of his deeds, sometimes reciting or reenacting favorite portions of the Sixty-Four Tales.

Just Distribution of Abundance: This Jade Caste is best known for mitigating disputes between Harmegis' Populat and the city's Tripartite Council. She's well loved by the Populat as a steadfast advocate of their rights, often a subject of popular art, where she's often tied to the hero Vrental, Punisher of Gluttons. However, while *Distribution* strives for equity, her determinations favor the Tripartite more often than not. *Just Distribution* refuses to tolerate most flagrant graft and self-dealing among the Tripartite, but in many other matters, she's easily convinced to side with the status quo.

Perfected Censor of Heretical Works: *Censor* is tasked with rooting out technological heresy, investigating Claslati Sodalities for experiments that might stray into blasphemy and inspecting potentially dangerous technologies coming into Claslat from other nations. The Soulsteel Caste is

incorruptible, but not beyond mercy — they can sometimes be persuaded to overlook a proscribed technology if it's for the good of Claslat. They pause, sometimes for minutes in eerie stillness, before responding. They are a hundred shades of slightly tinted grey and are among the most machine-like in affect of the Claslati Champions.

Notable Individuals

Nalit Theet: Nalit belongs to both the Surgeons' Sodalt and the resurrectionist conspiracy, boasting a prodigious memory that stretches for centuries. Her small frame holds a shifting wardrobe to avoid being noticed across the centuries. She works feverishly to tend her fellow resurrectionists's decaying flesh, and to refine the process to avoid the behavioral aberrations and eccentricities of older resurrectionists. Nalit is more a Populat sympathizer than she'd care to admit, and has advocated for admittign Glotate into the conspiracy's ranks.

Hurkyl Unar: The autocrat of Arat sometimes feels as if he's at war with his own city. Hurkyl believes that the coming convergence is almost certain to result in international war, but not all in the city's Tripartite Assembly agree — nor does the city itself. Hurkyl has plans for dealing with his political opposition, but a metropolis may be an insurmountable obstacle. The autocrat is desperate for a way to turn Arat's focus to the coming war — even if that means staging a false flag attack on it.

Estasia

Estasia is the premier military power of the Octet, the self-appointed guardian of peace and arbiter of warfare. Its ruling martial caste, the Militat, fight as mercenaries abroad and exercise unchecked power at home, all in the name of the Philosophy of Unity. But heavy rule at home foments resistance. As Estasian elites debate how to proceed in this time of great change, rebellion threatens to break the authoritarian grip of the state.

Estasia travels in a wide circuit through the Great Expanse of Metal that takes it close to the World-Engines of Steam, shrouding its nation chamber in unceasing rain. Its towns huddle low within canyons and trenches carved into frost-shrouded plains of crystal and metal. Condensation pools in the vast ceilings of the nation chambers, occluding them as rainclouds begin to form. Their downpour drains into vast bundle of pipes and trenches that prevents the chamber from flooding. Estasia's cities rise high in the gloom atop these plains, above the trench towns and trams. Their towers and spiraled minarets glisten amid the precipitation, raindrops becoming waterfalls that outflow beyond the city walls. Where this water doesn't drain into the trenches, it collects in vast lakes that reflect the metropoli's lights.

Octagonal military encampments hunch atop the Estasian plains, sprawls of cold metal where the Militat train and deploy from. Every encampment is modularly collapsible and able to be moved, allowing Estasians to set up in the Reaches wherever they go with relative security. These encampments serve as mobile towns for Militate at march, and where supply lines can't be set up outside of the country, Estasians take what they need from locals or strip-mine them from the local Reaches.

In the Trenches

Over the centuries, Estasia has mounted expeditions into the network of trenches at the bottom of its nation chamber and the sub-chambers they lead to, and has established towns built into the lower walls as bases for resource-gathering expeditions. Where the cold air from above meets the heat exhaust from these towns, hazardous gusts fill the trenches. Wind tunnel effects can escalate these into deadly winds that rip away everything at lethal speeds, striating even the nation

chamber's walls. The trams connecting these villages run beneath the metallic plains' surface, proofed against wind water by pneumatic pressure locks.

History

In the beginning, the epics say, Old Estasia was the might of the Octet. It began when *Luminous Exarch* proclaimed his rule over Estasia and declared war on the other nations of the Octet, igniting the wars of the Era of Autocracy. *Exarch*'s dreams of conquest and the might of his elite Militat warriors fell in the face of a unified Octet, but Old Estasia's military traditions and spirit remained unbroken.

The Golden Era

Luminous Exarch's ascension to Estasia's capital, the metropolis Lux, heralded the beginning of Estasia's prosperity. Focused on metropolitan matters, Lux stepped down from his self-proclaimed position as Estasia's autarch, relinquishing political leadership to a council of the Administrate, a predecessor of the modern Olgotary. Under their leadership — and with Lux's approval — Estasia became a reaver-state, prospering from daring raids and short-term campaigns of international war.

But Estasia's prosperity could only last so long. Its prioritization of offensive capability came at the cost of long-term infrastructural needs, while counterattacks by other nations left many Estasian cities in ruins — even Lux himself. By the time of the Second Grand Conclave, Estasia was eager for peace, entering into an international non-aggression pact that remains in place to this day. No more would Estasia raid for its own interests — instead, other nations contracted the services of Estasia's Militat to fight in international wars.

The Fall of Old Estasia

The Second Grand Conclave left Estasia on a strong footing, putting it in position to repair the damage and rebuild its forces. As the entire Octet entered into the Great Nations Era, Old Estasia came near to reclaiming the glories of its golden era.

Then came Viator of Nullspace.

Estasian histories tell that it was Old Estasia that rallied the Octet to stand against the Dread Gear, Old Estasia that was the first to stand against the genocide-machine. In the end, a unified Octet succeeded in imprisoning the Viator — but Old Estasia was no more. Its Tripartite Assemblies were shattered, its Alchemicals cut down en masse, its Militat slaughtered.

Old Estasia, Older Estasia

Modern Estasians speak of Old Estasia as a single unified state, stretching from the dawn of Autochthonian society to its collapse. In truth, Estasia's suffered multiple societal collapses, including the failed Second Campaign that came before Lux's metropolitan ascension. Such historical details are passed over in favor of political rhetoric.

The Rise of New Estasia

In the aftermath, the surviving Estasians dwelled in chaos. Mass famine and scarcity followed in the wake of the Viator's devastation as citizens huddled amid the corpse-ruins of fallen metropolises. What remained of the Militat dwindled into militias to defend against raiding parties from neighboring cities, nations, and tunnel folk clans. Many tried to reestablish a national government, but few autocrats succeeded even in uniting a city. Metropolises went to war, pitting their citizens and Alchemicals against one another in periods of cataclysmic violence known as the Long Without.

Then Lux spoke.

The ancient metropolis sent forth gleaming golden drone avatars to the leaderless Estasians, preaching a return to the ancient warrior code of the First Campaign: the Philosophy of Unity. “The fist is stronger than the fingers, and what would break one cannot break five. And through training, the fist breaks all.”

Through the Philosophy of Unity, Lux and his adherents would forge a new Estasia. He subdued the other metropoli, breaking their Champions until they fled or joined his cause. When there were none left to resist, *Exarch* restored Estasian governance, proclaimed his greatest war leader the grand autocrat of unified Estasia, then returned to his city-self.

Lux’s influence saw the resurgence of the Militat, hailed as the second coming of Old Estasia’s now-mythical praetorian warrior-elites. The Militat formed the core of this new Estasian state, amassing a level of political power beyond any they’d ever held in Old Estasia.

Today, Estasia is the sole military superpower of Autochthonia. The new Estasian state embraced its mercenary role under the Second Grand Conclave’s pact, both to renew its exhausted stores of resources and to show the other nations its resurgent might. Since then, nearly every major conflict has seen Estasian involvement: Jarish’s Requisition Crusades against Gulak, spiriting away holy relics in the name of correcting heterodoxy; the War of Ashes between Sova and Yugash, and even in Claslat’s Broken Shards Incident, where a conspiracy of glot-bosses hired the Militat to destabilize Claslati towns in pursuit of expanding their illicit power and reach.

The Philosophy of Unity

I. Existence is conflict. All things desire to live; therefore, all things are made to fight. Only those determined to endure deserve to exist.

II. All souls exist to struggle for the Great Maker’s Design. Those who deny or run from the struggle are abominations, and will surely perish.

III. Virtue lies in the will to triumph and the sharpening of our souls upon the whetstone of Unity. Heed these words, and you will number among the Great Maker’s finest instruments.

IV. Every struggle is one struggle, and we may only triumph together. Your victory is my victory; my failure, your failure.

V. Victory of the human spirit is promised after the Final War, but the unconsolidated will not live to fight in it.

VI. Follow the Unity, make of your heart molten iron, and we will never die.

These are the Prime Tenets of the modern Philosophy of Unity, the state ideology of Estasia. Estasians usually refer to it as just “the Unity”, invoking it in conversation as if it were a sentient force, or another part of Autochthon’s Grand Design. It shapes Estasian culture at all levels; from how the Populat workgroups function as single units, the military-led festivals, and the solidarity doctrine espoused by lectors.

Religion in Estasia is inseparable from the Unity, at times almost subordinate to it. Lectors read from the Philosophy as much as if not more than the Tome of the Great Maker, evoking Lux as an envoy of Debok Moom. Fear of preceptors impels public declamation of the Prime Tenets and other displays of piety. Unity displays are placed before windows and decorated with rat-tallow candles and etchings of local and national heroes. The rest of the Octet considers this borderline heretical — and were it might not for fear of Estasian might, it might be formally pronounced as such. For now, though, diplomatic concerns win

out.

Not all Estasians agree on what the Unity requires of them, but all agree they are called upon to act. Common thought holds that Estasian conquest is justified by its might, and that the current status quo of enforcing mass peace makes Estasia even stronger, teaching the other nations by example. Others argue that this isn't enough, especially as the convergence approaches. Tripartite make impassioned pleas for Estasia to be the sword and shield for all the Octet. High-level Militat discuss the necessity of saving the Octet from itself, an eschatological Final Campaign that will unify all in Estasia.

Militat Nomenclature

"Militat" can be used to refer both to the caste as a whole ("the Militat") or to an individual member ("a Militat"). The plural is Militate.

The Militat

Polished blades and medals that glisten like captured lightning. Disciplined posture and formations like human machinery. Perfectly arranged uniforms and armor donned like a sacrament. The combined pride, might, and resources of a nation and everything it can seize in its fist, all on display when they take the field.

This is the Militat, the warrior-philosopher elites of Estasia. War is their vocation, and Autochthonia knows no finer fighting force. The Militat is a caste unique to Estasia, made up of these elite soldiers and those who serve alongside or assist them. Their mercenary work is the core of the Estasian economy, yet also devours its resources, leaving few supplies for public works, trade, or other ventures.

Ranks

Most Militate function as medium infantry, making up the bulk of the caste's ranks. It also includes the following ranks:

The Evocat (p. Evocate): The evocat are the best of the best, the legendary shock troops of Estasia. Recognizable by their stark white uniforms and fine armaments, each labors full time to maintain their skills and is expected to fully embody and uphold the Unity. They often make use of performance-enhancing drugs, biosurgical modification, and harsh training regimens, rarely seeing the public outside of strict parades.

The Exceptors: Exceptors form the Militat's officer corps, the public faces of the Militat, drawn from the ranks of regulators who pass a rigorous series of aptitude testing for strategic insight and leadership. There's a great deal of corruption involved in this, as exceptors go on to hold enormous power that could be used to repay favors. Although these military leaders are notionally subordinate to the Olgotary's regulator branch, in practice, they're collectively unaccountable to anyone outside their ranks.

The Machinators: Machinators are cross-trained by Sodalts to serve as critical military support, with at least one serving in every squadron. Machinators set up and manage camps, tap conduits and secure supply lines, prepare rations, and practice combat medicine. Sodalts train machinators only reluctantly, accepting few applicants and withholding some secrets to protect their society's mysteries. Machinators working with incomplete knowledge must compensate with sheer inventiveness.

The Militat is ordered hierarchically by Grades, ascending one through five in seniority. Promotions are based on a mix of experience, battlefield accomplishment, and embodiment of the Unity. For most Militant, grades are largely just seniority symbols. They have greater importance for exceptors, who take on additional training duties as they rise in rank. New exceptors make Grade One, rising to Grade Two

after a few years of loyal service and gaining command of a squadron. Grade Three exceptors command platoons or expeditionary forces; Grade Four, battalions and armies. Grade Five as a rank is purely honorary and reserved for the Exceptor Prime, the Militat's Olgotary commander. The current Exceptor Prime is a grave woman named Betanu. A canny political operator, she shields the Militat from Olgotary influence and consequences, prizing Militat power and safety above all else.

Patriotic Societies

Exceptors are extremely insular, congregating with each other in groups called patriotic societies. Officially, they're just social clubs, with names like the Loyal Militants of the Last Call, the Patriotic Officers of the Righteous Bulwark, or the Ordained Scions of the Burning Hearts. They facilitate socialization, recreation, and philosophical and political discussion — which sometimes boils over into sedition. Most exceptors belong to a patriotic society, as they risk being seen as untrustworthy if they're not. Patriotic societies range in size from a handful of exceptors to hundreds, sometimes stretching across armies. The collective manpower they command makes them a force to be reckoned with.

The Militat at War

Militat armies are typically structured in fifteen-soldier squadrons. Three squadrons make a platoon, eight platoons an expeditionary force, three expeditionary forces a battalion, and three battalions an army. There are eight armies total, numbered First to Eighth. Each squadron is led by an exceptor and has its own machinators; scattered throughout the armies are attached Populat labor support and plutarch diplomatic liaisons.

The National Tripartite's authorization is required to deploy or hire out a battalion or army. For anything less, the Exceptor Prime may approve contracts, subject to Tripartite veto — at least in theory. Much of this authority is delegated to Grade Three exceptors, although negotiation in these cases is handled by attached plutarchs, who serve as an embedded diplomatic corps. These plutarchs are deeply unpopular with their Militat, and keep their own regulator guards for safety.

Most armies are stationed within or around Estasia, but the Olgotary ensures that they're regularly cycled between locations for fear of what they might do if left too close for too long. Particularly belligerent armies are sometimes assigned contracts far away from Estasia: missions to fend off the Blight, dire threats spoken of by the Machine Saints, or any pretext that's easy to hand.

Most Militate are raised in their own crèches, separated out even before the children are divided into Populat and Tripartite. Starting young, they receive grueling educations in combat, strategy, ethics, and the Philosophy of Unity, meant to sculpt them into loyal and pious warrior-philosophers. In their late teenage years, they're assigned a probationary period of service in Reach expeditionary forces, after which the young Militate are finally assigned to a squadron. Those unable to serve in the military serve in another way — they become logistical officers, cooks, camp guards, and aides to embedded lectors, plutarchs, or machinists.

In recent years, the proliferation of soul anomalies has disrupted the process of selecting souls for the Militat as well as the Tripartite, making this growing problem all the more painful for Estasia compared to other nations. Younger Militate feel pressure to distinguish themselves lest they be thought of as unsuitable souls and socially isolated, often taking risks to win acclaim.

The Militat are an enormous resource burden on Estasia, sucking up more as they've expanded via raiding, mercenary work, and internal requisition. This comes at the expense of straining Populat labor

and Lumpen rations, as of late. Supporting their continued existence and expansion is a driving impetus behind Estasian mercenary work.

Fighting the Militat

Militate most commonly operate in the unit of expeditionary forces, Size 3 battle groups of elite troops (**Exalted**, p. 497) with elite Drill. When an army gathers, it's best represented as one or more Size 5 battle groups. Expeditionary groups are typically led by Alchemicals, and groups with Reforged units grant their battle groups Might 1. These traits are only the minimum — Storytellers should feel free to modify, add unique powers, or otherwise customize individual companies.

Culture

Estasians are a largely cynical people who love dark humor, seeing the world to be an unfair place where might decrees what's right. Quiet resentment of the government's authoritarianism churns alongside nihilistic acceptance.

Violence has long been glorified in Estasian culture, but Militat propaganda deliberately inculcates it among the Populat. Populat militias perform better in Estasia than any other nation. They're awarded and proudly display medals for efficiency, organization, and productivity, working along to marching songs and patriotic chants. Youths fight (sometimes play, sometimes not) while pretending to be famous Militat heroes; combat sports are a common spectacles; shift chiefs organize tactical games like capture-the-spanner. Leaders and those seeking to make a name for themselves face pressure to be aggressive, bold, and decisive, Dissent risks one being labeled a coward or unpatriotic; denouncing violence or advocating pacifism gets people beaten or vanished by regulators.

Estasians civilians dress in heavy clothing, wearing embroidered ponchos and coats with intricate embroidery made from rat-leather and fur, and nylon. Leaving the barracks underdressed is either grounds for mockery, a bold statement that one wants to challenge the elements, or both.

The Estasian Lumpen are few, with most pressed into service in penal expeditionary forces. These groups embark on strip-mining missions into Reaches for resources that often prove fatal. They must travel far, as Estasia's nearest Reaches are now barren from overuse and wracked with quakes, agitated machine spirits, and other perils. The exceptors who command these battalions are either unlucky or (more frighteningly) want to be here. These Dust Battalion leave nothing nailed down, even taking skilled tunnel folk warriors captive to be indoctrinated and forced into labor in a penal force of their own.

Governance

The Militat dominates the Estasian government, its influence reaching all three Tripartite branches. The Exceptor Prime holds an eighth seat on the National Tripartite Assembly, the most powerful person in Estasia. The grand celebrant votes in lockstep with her; the Sodality councilors are fair-weather allies, bribed or cajoled into mostly reliable alliance. Only the grand autocrat, a tenacious old woman named Kelat, regularly opposes the Exceptor Prime in a meaningful way. She regularly faces veiled threats of violence for her resistance.

The Olgotary are the largest check on the Militat. Its elites see military leadership as usurping their rightful role in society, though there's little organized resistance. An adjudicator sentences a Militat for beating a worker; a preceptor investigates dissent within a small patriotic society; an outspoken plutarch pushes to allocate resources to non-military projects until requisition inevitably turn them to Militat use.

The Theomachracy are wholly entwined with and subordinate to the Militat, exulting the martial caste as Estasia's heart in sermons and propaganda. Where the Militat embody the Unity, the Theomachrats teach it, each legitimizing the other. A growing minority with the Theomachracy doesn't oppose the Militat, but seeks to encourage them to show greater mercy and restraint towards the masses.

The Home Front

The Estasian government is authoritarian and oppressive to an extent unique in the Octet. Domestically-deployed Militat squadrons serve alongside regulators, policing behavior to perpetuate conformism, seed fear, and weed out dissidents. They habitually abuse their power, jackboots on the throat of the people, seldom punished for abuses of power. Even other Tripartite watch themselves, aware their status offers little true protection. The greatest check on them is the intervention of Champions — something best done carefully to not cause more problems. But many Estasian Alchemicals are wholehearted supporters of the Militat, some even seeking membership in its ranks.

The changes of the approaching convergence and suspicion of other nations have turned Estasia into a powder keg primed to explode into violence. Suspected dissidents and troublemakers vanish with increasing frequency. Populat workgroups quietly build mutual aid networks to share rations and defend themselves against Militate, dreaming of fighting back. Patriotic societies dream of establishing a true military dictatorship headed by the Exceptor Prime, while idealistic Tripartite and Militate push for moderation.

The Half-Souled

Most only die once for their country. The Half-Souled soldiers of Estasia die twice: once in truth, and once in spirit when they undergo a soulforging process to transmute their lower souls into implanted soulsteel amulets. A recent innovation, this process is carried out in secret industrial soulforges, where they have at best a 50% chance of survival.

If they live, the Half-Souled's soulgems turn gray. They gain an inhuman strength and stamina, though still inferior to most Alchemicals. But this comes at a cost. Their muscle-corded frames are scarred with horrific gear-shaped burns, and their skin is pallid, even for a people who have never seen the sun. Stripped of their lower soul, there is little of human passion that remains in them.

Half-Souled serve in highly supervised elite strike units, lent out to divisions as needed. They're often recruited from promising specimens among the Populat and Lumpen, coerced by promises of status and privilege for their work groups and likelihood of favorable reincarnation. The process is also used in lieu of capital punishment and the equally gruesome practice of soul-flaying, bolstering Estasia's ranks rather than depleting them.

Metropoli

Estasia has few metropoli, most dating back to Old Estasia and its city states. They have long and rivalrous histories, their streets and walls refurbished with parts scavenged from their dead and abandoned peers.

Lux, the Illuminated Capital

Lux is a splendorous octagonal pyramid of a city. Astoundingly ostentatious, many of Lux's glittering buildings and walls are gilded and acid-etched with intricate geometric engravings. Its eight wedge-

shaped sides are studded with minarets, each separately orbiting a slender needle of orichalcum that ascends miles above the ground. Each wedge is a distinct borough of the city with its own history, neighborhoods, and urban design. they're connected by Lux's Omnifold Paramagnetic Focus. People and cargo are gently propelled through the air at specifically marked transport ports.

Lux is both the oldest and most populous city in Estasia, hosting a plurality of the population. Crime is policed with brutal efficiency to maintain the appearance of order, with protesters and thieves dragged away in plain view by regulators. It's also the religious heart of the country, drawing pilgrims to shrines to the hero Estasia while philosophical Militate discourse about the Unity in athletics arenas.

Lux is inefficient in his splendor, but the patropolis is a hypocritical display tolerated in a nation that prides itself on austerity. The city speaks often, preaching the Unity and exhorting the people to action via audio station broadcasts hosted by avatar-fragments of his mind. He leaves military leadership to the Exceptor Prime, even the most loyal Militat would hesitate to disobey if that were to change.

Rekad, Necessity's Bulwark

The Estasian nation chamber slopes downwards to an escarpment overlooking a desolated stretch of Reaches, where volatile demiurge lines converge atop a blasted lightless field. Here stands grim Rekad, all that holds the door to Estasia and anchors the nation's geomancy. The soulsteel metropolis is an angular thicket of spiraling towers and boxy lithic buildings, ever lashed by foul weather. Forges are cooled by the waterfall of precipitation that roars down off the escarpment roar at all hours, their wan red glow the only light except for when lightning crashes above.

Centuries of war and stripmining in this stretch of Estasia's Reaches nearly incited a calamity during Estasia's Long Without, forestalled only when the Sentinel *Grim Reckoning's Advent* underwent the metropolitan ascension to anchor the haywire demiurge lines with her Geomantic Flux Attenuators. But the Municipal Charm only works so well. Local machine spirits are prone to going berserk, and the complex mechanical wards connected to the Attenuators on the plain require regular maintenance to preserve balance. Moreso than guarding a vulnerable opening into Estasia, preserving these wards is why Rekad exists.

Rekad's inhabitants are a grim folk, respected but unenvied. The city is overpopulated, filled with political prisoners sentenced to dangerous penal labor in the forges or maintaining the wards. Under-provisioned and over-policed, the city faces constantly worsening crime, riots, and dissidence, exacerbated by the cruelty of penal Dust Battalions returning home from their ranging. And hidden under the waterfall is said to hide one of the secret soulforges that creates the Half-Souled (p. XX). Rumor says that one stalks Rekad's alleys as a terror in the shadows, having escaped the Militat's control.

Cidon, the Crucible of Might

Katabatic winds and freezing rain choke the valley dominated by Cidon. The city is a starmetal ring fifty feet high and a dozen miles around, radiating spokes to military encampments and research facilities. Cidon's only municipal constants are its filigreed walls crusted in icicles, and the central plaza — the rest constantly shifts in a regular progression, with roofed streets splitting and sectors of airy architecture rotating to optimize movement of Militat throughout, as calculated by Cidon's Logistical Optimization Core. Steam wafts from grates across the city, making the cold more bearable and casting rainbows in glittering frost.

Ordered and regular, the city radiates a veil of frozen calm that belies the intrigue, diplomacy, and typical Militat dysfunction beneath. Corrupt Tripartite trade favors and broker deals with Militate in rain-lashed barracks; patriotic societies meet in commandeered war-halls and messes; visiting plutarchs from Lux

watch Militate drill in the rain as they negotiate mercenary contracts or meet the Exceptor Prime. Alchemicals who work closely with the Militat often operate out of Cidon.

Transnational Relations

Estasia's relationship to other nations is highly variable. It has few true enemies, but also few close allies. Other nations are wary of the Militat, for all that everyone has need of its services. And Estasians remember how most of the Octet took advantage of them during the Long Without; they tend to take a dim view of the other nations, which was only exacerbated by the ascendancy of the Unity.

Sova is the closest thing Estasia has to a friend in the Octet. Estasians fought hand-in-hand with them in the War of Ashes and still clash with Yugashi raiders in their interstitial Reaches, on their payroll. Though these relations have lasted so far, the continued Estasian occupation of Romos-Autrama (p. xx) has strained them, and will come to a head one day soon.

Claslat is a frequent employer of Estasian mercenaries, deploying them both internally to ensure productivity and externally to deniably harry nations that resist Claslati hegemony. Glot-bosses are also frequent customers, hiring small detachments of mercenaries to attack rivals' factories and holdings, as well as break up attempts at labor organization.

Estasia's Alchemicals

Estasia's Alchemicals are Champions of the people and whetstones of the nation, seeking out and rectifying what is broken, misaligned, and weak. They serve embedded within the Militat in myriad capacities, and as infiltrators, diplomats, peacekeepers and more. Its Alchemicals are taught the Philosophy of Unity, though not all are strict believers.

Some Estasian Alchemicals embrace the nation's authoritarian government, while others exist in a quiet tension with it, painfully aware of the country's tumultuous past. Thus far, no Champion has directly challenged the Militat's dominance, though opposition efforts have succeeded in bringing about incremental change and progress, gentling or restraining the government's harshness against the people.

Aesthetics of Civic Perfection is a composed and scholarly Starmetal Caste. He serves as a military strategist and propagandist, advising the Militat on strategy, leading them into battle, and penning stories that extol the Philosophy's universalism. *Aesthetics* is an idealist, arguing that the Unity calls the Militat to defend all the Octet. He believes every death the Militat could have prevented by action is a waste of workers' lives, and works through subtle networks of influence to strengthen the Olgotary's control over the Militat while at the same time expanding the Militat into a transnational coalition force.

Estasians still tell of ***Fume Stalker***'s guerrilla campaign against Lux after her home metropolis was murdered at the end of the Long Without; the city still bears the scars of her explosive sabotage. Children whisper her name like a boogeyman; propaganda depicts her as a vanquished Apostate, one made corrupt and weak without Unity. In truth, *Stalker* is no Apostate — only a political dissident. She roams Estasia's Reaches alone, wrapped in a mottled cloak of synthetic skin harvested from. Still bitter and jaded, she nurses her hatred of Lux, the Estasian government, and the Unity. She defends civilians in Estasian towns from tunnel folk and gremlins, but also raids and harries Militat expeditionary forces, sometimes leading tunnel folk or Octet exiles.

The Moonsilver Caste ***Singularly Decisive Dragoon*** is drunk on martial glory. A haughty warrior with shimmering silver skin, they descend on opponents with liquid grace. Freshly Exalted, *Dragoon* has already made a name for themselves for leading Militat in ambush raids and rescuing soldiers when operations have gone awry. To keep their star rising, *Dragoon* has begun to run false flag operations,

committing small-scale sabotage and attacks just obvious enough to provoke nations into hiring the Militat for reprisal. When *Dragoon* requests an assignment to such contracts, why would the Militat refuse them? *Dragoon* also works clandestinely with high-ranking exceptors within his expeditionary force, using their authority to approve small-scale assignments to offer other nations contracts that will provoke their own rivals into conflict. *Dragoon* publicly espouse the Unity, but none truly know the nature of their beliefs beyond bloodlust.

Noteworthy Individuals

Grand Celebrant Lenut has long been caught between the Theomachracy and Militat, acquiescing to the latter for practical reasons. Yet the Militat has only grown less restrained as he's aged, and Lenut's fear for the common folk has come to eclipse his self-preservation. A kindly looking man with a wheeled chair, Lenut quietly agitates the Populat through trusted subordinates, helping dissidents escape the authorities and subtly working with other Tripartite to increase restraint on the Militat. Lenut needs the assistance of Champions if he's going to accomplish his goals, much less survive executing them — if he dies, he fears that his replacement would be Lux's Celebrant Kalin, an ardent devotee of the Unity willing to excuse the Militat any excess.

Aldnau served as a Populat laborer attached to a Militat force with distinction, until the unit's exceptor left her and her comrades to die to cover the soldiers' retreat. She survived, only to fall back into mortal peril protesting against the Militat, her will steeled by her brush with death. Now Aldnau is wanted as a voidbringer heretic, organizing revolutionary cells and training them with what she learned watching the Militat. Aldnau is strongly built and carries herself with fiery intensity, which flares to its utmost on the subject of Alchemicals. With personal animus, she declares Estasia's Champions to have failed the people and the Unity both by serving the wrong masters. She directs her cells to find sympathetic Alchemicals to bring into the fold, with the caveat that they follow her orders.

Gulak

Though it's one of the smaller nations in size, Gulak is home to a multitude of subcultures and religious creeds. Pilgrims flock to Thutot — the first metropolis — to pay homage. Over the centuries, Gulak has thrived off of pilgrimage, asking each nation to bring both resources and their holy relics for the privilege of visiting the holy city. These relics are now stored in Thutot, attracting yet more pilgrims. Though raids and wars have taken their toll, Gulak enjoys wealth and prosperity. Visitors bring news and stories from across the Eight Nations. Foreign Sodalts consult on techniques, workarounds, and tools they've devised for working with Municipal Charms or the Machine God's systems. There are many immigrants to Gulak — pilgrims who choose to remain in the holy city, war refugees, disfavored social groups, and others. Each adds their own cultural knowledge and skills to the nation's, creating a cosmopolitan city of culture and intelligence. This in turn draws more visitors, in a cycle that's continued for millennia.

The nation's cities and towns don't occupy a single nation chamber, but a series of spherical chambers clustered like a bunch of grapes. Thutot, the largest metropolis, sits at this cluster's center, while the other cities are scattered throughout outlying chambers. Towns fill the spaces and smaller spheres in between. Within metropoli, stairs and elevators carry citizens to high towers built to make the most of the space within spheres. Bridges and skywalks stretch between, creating avenues high in the air. High-ranking Tripartite officials dine on balconies that offer stunning city views.

Pneumatic trams carry citizens and materials from outlying towns into larger cities and shuttle pilgrims in from outlying nations. Murals and impromptu graffiti adorn the tunnels and stations, providing both beauty and function. Lectors and aides sing popular hymns and festival songs to entertain citizens

awaiting the next tram.

History

Gulak's founder was a priestess of Autochthon who gathered scholars, artists, dreamers, and thaumaturgists from across Creation to join the Great Maker. Her soul-successor, the brilliant *Thousand-Handed Triumphant Ordinator*, became the first Alchemical to achieve metropolitan ascension. Gulak's Theomachrats has ensured that the miracle of her ascension will never be forgotten, cementing Thutot's place as the holiest city in the Octet.

So many relics in one place made Gulak a tempting target. During the Seven Wars Era, other nations set their sights on Thutot, eager to seize its relics and riches. The city never fell, though raids and sieges decimated other cities and towns. The would-be conquerors devastated the nation's essential infrastructure for years before Gulak — with Claslat and Yugash's aid — gathered the nations to broker peace in the First Grand Conclave.

The nation entered into its First Refinement Era, doing its best to rebuild amid wartime scarcity. Gulak fell behind rival nations, forced to prioritize survival over growth and innovation. But what the nation lacked in prosperity, it made up for in stability. Its diminished status left its rivals to focus on other targets, and it never suffered disasters such as the death of Perygra or the reactionary regimes that followed.

In time, Nurad entered its Integrative Era. As the other Eight Nations faced graver perils, Gulaki cities became known for taking in refugees from other conflicts, including Nuradi who fled the Shattered Lamp War, pacifists exiled from Estasia, and other displaced groups. Though Gulak's technological advances during this time were less impressive than those of its peers, the nation began a cultural boom as its citizens shared elements from their ancestral societies. Innovations in art, cuisine, literature, and philosophy defined the period.

Slowly, Gulak's resurgence — and the resources such cultural advances brought with it — made their nation a target worth pursuing once again. Several centuries ago, Jarish hired Estasia's Militat to assist it in the annexation of Gulak. However, once Jarish could no longer afford to maintain an occupying Militat force in Gulak, the occupying regime soon fell to citizen rebellions and resistance forces led by Gulak's Champions and its remaining military.

Gulak currently celebrates its Second Refinement Era. Its increasingly diverse population has kept its cosmopolitan traditions alive, and lead it to adopt the customs, traditions, and ideologies of other nations. Gulak enjoys a wealth of cultural and scholastic resources, but fault lines open among social lines. Corruption and factionalism permeates its governance, threatening an end to its prosperity.

Clades

Most Gulaki belong to a *clade* — a distinct cultural group with its own customs and beliefs. Some derive from the supposed lineages of those who followed the hero Gulak into Autochthonia, but the majority originated with immigrant bands from other nations who brought their traditions with them. Each has its own traditions — even those who hail from the same nation, but may have come to Gulak centuries apart. Clade membership is largely hereditary, though the criteria employed by each clade vary broadly. A small minority allow anyone to enter, or those who pass certain trials, regardless of lineage.

Being part of a clade brings support, mentorship, and a sense of belonging. Members can rely on the clade's connections for acquiring supplies, prioritizing repairs, or other necessities. Clades' insularity also offers a sort of privacy: A person's shortcomings, failures, or scandals don't leave the clade and therefore

are less prone to public scrutiny and gossip. Belonging to a clade grants members a shared sense of history and a cultural shorthand to rely upon in social situations. However, cultural differences and conflicts between clades can be a source of turmoil. Even clades hailing from the same nation may clash over differing interpretations of historical events.

Corruption is endemic to the clade system. A Tripartite official promote members of their clade over more qualified candidates; an adjudicator bases his sentence on a culprit's clade; criminals and regulators alike prey upon members of smaller, less-favored clades. In some towns and cities, prominent clades This consolidate an outsized influence, sparking tensions with the less powerful clades.

Most Gulaki cities are full of people from many different clades, but towns tend to be composed of only a few, sometimes even one. In cities or neighborhoods where clades live alongside one another but aren't well-integrated, friction ensues. Stereotyping and competition for resources leads to distrust and occasional violence. Such conflict often stays within the community — regulators may get stonewalled while investigating regardless of who started it, or even who participated. Any sign of clade favoritism by members of the Tripartite risk escalating tensions with other clades, but the practice remains endemic. Repairs and improvements may be disproportionately focused on neighborhoods inhabited by a particular clade.

The Gulaki display their clade membership proudly. This is most prominent during sporting events. Arenas fill with supporters bedecked in their clade's insignia, rooting for the athletes representing them. Most sports are team-based, with players drawn from specific towns, clades, and religious sects. Fans support their teams passionately; regulators patrol the stands, keeping an eye out for outbreaks of fisticuffs during intense match-ups.

Notable Clades

Gulak recognizes the Sixteen Old Clades, descended from the nation's founder and her inner circle. Members of these clades comprise a disproportionately large percentage of the Tripartite. The stubborn **Rarata** dominate the ranks of Thutot's preceptors and clerics. The **Kedar** are known for culinary feats that are the stuff of legend. The **Amarasi** are known for their generosity, geniality, and eccentric religious practices.

There are many more clades beyond the sixteen. The **Yotiban** and **Yoticar** clades both originate from Ot in Yugash. The Yotiban have integrated into Gulaki society extensively, but the older Yoticar have lived in isolationist enclaves for much of their history. Yoticar are often disparaged as overly individualistic, in part because raise their own children, rather than relying on communal creèhes.

Descending from Estasian pacifists, the **Sahima** hold many influential positions in the Tripartite and Populat alike, acting as mediators when necessary. While the Sahima are pacifists, they practice defensive martial arts that use their opponent's force against them, like Crane style.

Once a band of tunnel folk, the **Oryem** moved into a long-abandoned Gulaki town whose water ran red with contaminants from a nearby blight zone. The local Tripartite Assembly had deemed it unsalvageable and relocated its residents, but the Oryem had developed sophisticated decontamination processes in the Reaches. Not only could they clean the water, they made use of byproducts derived from sludge, including pigments in vibrant shades of red and orange.

Their revivification of the town earned them both clade status and entry into Octet society, though they still face stigma for their tunnel folk origin centuries later.

Culture

Intriguing scents waft from street food carts. Art installations showcase new techniques and revitalize old ones, remixing them into new ideas. Poets recite memorized epics or extemporize poems in complex spontaneous works. The streets are filled with music: the sound of religious festivals, work songs, and the carillons that toll changes of shift. Entertainment is an industry in Gulak. The artists, players, and musicians that pilgrims see are on-duty Populat workers.

Stereotypes between Gulak's urban and provincial populations are common: city-dwellers are seen as leisurely, delicate, and decadent by some, while town-dwellers are disparaged ignorant, boorish, and clannish. This can often lead to flaring tempers when the two meet, especially when differences of clade come into play.

Fashion

Gulaki dress for the cool climate, favoring long-sleeved coats paired with trousers and boots. Turbans and headwraps are common accessories, based on which clade or religious sect the wearer belongs to. From there, clothing styles, decorations, and ornamentation vary. Most wear their clade's insignia on their coats. Often this takes the form of a large, embroidered design on the back, though designers occasionally experiment with other ways to display it, such as incorporating it into brocade or damask fabrics, or replicating it in miniature as a decorative border at the cuff or collar. Visible insignia allow members of a clade to easily identify each other, or give a stranger clues for polite interactions with someone from a different clade.

Other adornments include religious symbols, such as prayer beads, medallions, and amulets. Various badges or small pins signal whether the wearer adheres to a particular paradigmatic school (p. XX). Many Gulaki also bear tattoos. While some are religious in nature or clade symbols, others are more personal, offering the citizen a small, private measure of self-expression.

In formal situations, Gulaki may choose to show their rank by wearing *okina*. These glass "sub-stones" affix to the wearer's forehead, around their soulgem. Most are oval or triangular in shape, with the number of layers or points increasing with the individual's rank. The highest-ranked wearers bear okina with intricate sunburst designs.

Cuisine

Gulaki cuisine builds on traditional dishes from across the nation's various cultures and ethnicities. Harvesters and Populat cooks take regional variations and techniques into account when they devise new recipes, remixing and revising their elements to create something new. Foreign Harvesters travel to Gulak to learn about new innovations in the culinary arts. The Populat eat well here, stopping at street carts for savory bites rather than needing to rely on nutrient paste. Gulak's many religious sects mean that there's almost always a festival being celebrated somewhere in the city. Noodles, dumplings, sweet cakes, and other festival foods are easy to find. Meat is readily available. Rats are bred for size and flavor. Chefs cage-raise cockroaches for their versatility: their meat makes excellent dumpling fillings or kebab components, while their carapaces act as thickeners in soups.

Art

Gulaki art takes inspiration from a fusion of styles throughout the nation's history, incorporating and blending techniques and materials from its various clades. Some Gulaki galleries preserve methods and

processes that other Octet nations thought lost to history, brought to Gulak in centuries past and preserved. Traditional hallmarks of Gulaki art include the use of jewel tones, knotwork, and intricate detail, though trends and popular materials change frequently.

Thutot is a center of religious art. Painters sit before relics for hours, attempting to capture the holiness before them on canvas; composers create hymns with soaring harmonies to praise the Machine God; playwrights craft mystery plays to tell the story of the legendary heroes who founded the Eight Nations and the Divine Ministers.

Religion

Gulak's people are deeply devout, but almost equally tolerant. Unlike in most nations, Gulaki religion is splintered into a number of sects, rather than a singular orthodoxy. Over the millennia, the Theomachrats have recognized the danger of sectarian conflict, whether among clades, directed against refugees, or between city-dwellers and townfolk. Rather than mandating a singular creed, lectors guide citizens toward respectful coexistence. Debating the finer points of religious beliefs and practices is an important part of participation in public life, as long as the discussion doesn't devolve into proselytizing or harassment.

Gulaki orthodoxy views the Divine Ministers as hypostases and emanations of the Great Maker. Devotees leave offerings at a Divine Minister's shrine to seek their blessing, and wear amulets and icons depicting that minister. Nurturing Runel and far-seeing Kadmek draw the most supplicants, but each Divine Minister has shrines in every Gulaki town and city. Lectors preach an eightfold catechism, though some settlements or neighborhoods prefer certain portions over others. Most clades align themselves with a particular Divine Minister, worshipping those ministers that best express the clade's values.

Most significant milestones in a person's life are also sacraments in Gulak. Rituals mark birth and death, implanting and removing soulgems, new jobs, embarking upon or returning home from a pilgrimage, and more. Both these personal rituals and larger religious festivals are sensory-rich experiences. Special foods mark the occasion, as do hymns of praise, sweet-smelling incense, and colorful clothing and decorations.

Gulak tolerates several established heterodox sects. Their practices are unusual and unorthodox, but they have not been condemned as heretical by the Theomachracy's council of legates. The *Aeonists*, offshoots of a Yugashi heresy, believe the Great Maker cycles through periods of wakefulness and rest. Autochthon's slumber is a dark time, marked by chaos, irrationality, and the Crucible Eras are that testing the nations' resolve and determination. When he wakes, he will bring an age of reason, peace and universal bounty. *Soterics* believe Autochthon is divided into two: a physical body, the Expanse of Metal, and a spiritual center, the Godhead. When the Great Maker's physical body dies, Soterics believe all will die with him. However, the virtuous will live on within the Godhead.

Paradigmatic Schools

Paradigmatic schools are loose affiliations of Tripartite members with shared philosophical outlooks. Acting as a collective, they shape policy in accordance with their policy on a local — and sometimes national — scale. Memberships vary from a handful of participants in small towns, to thousands of followers spread throughout several cities. They're officially viewed as a vent for reformist impulses, ensuring that they remain both visible and controllable by regulators and preceptors. The Populat can't join theses schools, though they may adhere to their teachings or offer services to a school's members.

Dozens of schools exist throughout Gulak, but three schools predominate over the rest. The reactionary *Iatric School* believes that the Great Maker's work can't be improved upon. Rather than creating new methods, governance should focus on maintaining what's there: healing the sick, rebuilding what's damaged, and maintain the Great Maker's body. The *Adunatic School* sees Octet society's growth as a

boon to the Machine God's health, aiding him through commerce, labor, and trade. Members of the *Steganist School* believe they have a duty to understand, innovate, and invent, to live up to the accomplishments of their forebearers by discovering the wonders and marvels that the Great Maker left for humanity to find within Autochthonia.

Governance

Gulak's Tripartite is riven by division. In metropoli like Thutot, the Olgotary and Theomachracy vie for supremacy. Olgotary members argue that they should be apportioned the lion's share of resources for the heavy workload of keeping the peace among residents, pilgrims, and visiting officials. Theomachrats argue that any surplus should be allocated safeguarding Gulak against heresy and managing festivals for hundreds of sects. In Mogera and far-flung towns, the Sodalities hold the greatest sway through popular support, as the manufacturing and refining operations they oversee are vital both to the Great Maker's health and the survival of all Gulak.

Political conflict often boils over into turmoil. Demagogues on both sides rally the Populat in favor of their chosen cause, sometimes inciting outbreaks of violence. Regulators and preceptors alike face accusations of overzealous policing, whether of the Populat — or each other. Funds are allocated for reasons of ego rather than efficiency, with wasteful public works projects, religious festivals, and Sodality experiments straining the Tripartite's resources.

The proliferation of soul anomalies is felt keenly in Gulak, especially within the Theomachracy. The nation depends on lectors, clerics, and preceptors to monitor its various sects and stamp out from heresy. In recent years, some hinterland sects have teetered on the edge of heresy because of the Theomachracy's own failures — gone too long without a lector to share revised doctrines, or left without the oversight of preceptors. The grand celebrant Nyosar has thus far avoided political disaster, but knows it's only a matter of time until something slips through the cracks. She's appointed her nephew and clademate Kedar Talak, a regulator, to assist her preceptors in reining in some of the most heretical beliefs, but Talak is out of his depth. He'd rather be concocting new ways to flavor nutrient paste than talk to the Populat, and his lack of etiquette has only made new headaches for Nyosar to handle.

The One Tier Movement

Members of the One Tier movement envision a society based not around caste, but around merit and skill. One Tierists believe the Populat should be socially and politically equal to the Tripartite, including implementing representation in Tripartite Assembly. Some even argue for dissolving Tripartite Assemblies entirely and ruling by popular vote. Some advocate for slowly changing hearts and minds, or conducting experimental pilot programs in smaller towns to see what unseen issues will spring up. Some call for work stoppages to show the Populat's power in numbers, while others argue that such a large-scale change can only be achieved through violent revolution.

One Tierist cells meet in secret and approach new recruits with caution, but they've drawn in several influential adherents, leaning on clade connections to bring Tripartite members and high-ranking Populat into the fold. While it's proven advantageous, not all favor it, as it risks the Tripartite becoming aware of the movement — though many suspect it already knows. Cells disband quickly if a member is under scrutiny, though some have had success with bribing corrupt officials to look the other way.

The clade system has proven the One Tierists' greatest asset. Clades tend to rally around members, shielding them from prying regulators and preceptors, allowing them to act free of surveillance. One particular cell has its sights on recruiting plutarchs and adjudicators from its members' clades, in the hopes of changing laws from within.

Metropoli

Gulak's metropoli are holy places, sites of pilgrimage and worship.

Thutot, the First City

For most of the Octet, Thutot is synonymous with Gulak, the nation's capital and its most magnificent metropolis. It's built like a starmetal spider web, its strands both beautiful and efficient. Born from the first metropolitan, the city is a center of pilgrimage for all nations. Towers, spires, and minarets rise into the air, connected by gossamer skybridges and monorail lines. Wealthy Tripartite members ride in comfort in aircars between destinations. Pod-chambers serve as working-class living quarters, attached like egg sacs to buildings and the undersides of rail tracks.

Thutot's streets bustle at all hours of the day. Pilgrims visit shrines and marvel over relics stored in galleries. Theomachrats travel to the city to study theology and learn at the feet of storied scholars. At any time, one might see an elder plutarch sweeping along, attended by a passel of guards and acolytes. Lectors perform on street corners. Carillons ring out the hours and shift changes, and alert citizens to the activation of Municipal Charms. When the tone rings to signal the Omnifold Paramagnetic Focus' use, people turn their gazes skyward to see what massive objects Thutot might be transporting over their heads.

Mogera, the Hidden Harvest

Moonsilver Mogera is invisible from the outside. It clings to the side of the Great Maker's interior like a burr, slowly digging inward. Pneumatic tube terminals connect to it, their tendrils spiraling out into the Reaches. Inside, Mogera's structure curves and twists like a nautilus, its chambers and passageways confusing to even the most determined pilgrims. If the city's construction had a logic to it, it's been long forgotten. Residents simply learn as they go, committing the path from one place to another to memory.

Mogera's Thousand Elixirs Crucible converts the liquids flowing through Autochthon's conduits into innumerable alchemical reagents, useful both in manufacturing and in food processing. Workers wear filter masks to block the stench that fill the Crucible and ooze into nearby city sectors. A second Municipal Charm, the Petroleaginous Nutriment Synthesis Engine, supplements the nutrient paste supplied by conduits by converting oil into an edible goo. Though the current supply seems adequate for feeding the population, plutarchs worry about oil shortages.

Art abounds in Mogera, with installations taking advantage of the curving corridors and reflective surfaces. Arenas host sporting events daily; the posters advertising famous athletes are works of art themselves. The Thousand Elixirs Crucible makes the city a center to the Harvesters' Sodality, though the Scholars and Surgeons also have a prominent influence here. Clade disputes have recently caused trouble with the city's Luminors: Yotiban Luminors bring light to their clades' streets, while deprioritizing requisitions from their Yoticar rivals' dimly lit neighborhoods.

Vesinal, the Diamond of Gulak

Artists from all nations make pilgrimages to the chiming adamant city Vesinal. The city sits like a dewdrop at the top of the Gulaki cluster, its faceted walls shining for all who approach. Within its factories, workers string prayer beads and shape amulets for the faithful. These are shipped throughout Gulak, with a hefty percentage delivered to the nation's capital. Vesinal is a secondary pilgrimage center to Thutot, where many come seeking divine inspiration. Visitors admire artisans' fine handiwork, trading handsomely for such mementos of their journeys.

The air in Vesinal is cold and crisp, which residents say lends clarity to their thoughts. Luminors ensure

that lamplight reflects off the city's facets in brilliant patterns and colors. Artists meditate upon these, seeking inspiration in the play of light. Musicians listen to how sounds echo off the crystalline walls and recreate those sounds in their compositions. Much of this inspiration comes from the city's natural beauty, but the Fractal Muse Synthesis Array augments the capabilities of those within its vicinity. Those affected often experience a rush of sensations driving them to create: a cacophony of sounds and music; jumbles of brilliant, shifting colors; or strings of mathematical theorems hanging in the air. The Municipal Charm's effects result in not only breathtaking works of art, but philosophical leaps, political insights, and the advancement of scientific theories.

Transnational Relations

Gulak benefits from the offerings of pilgrims coming from the other nations of the Octet, including formal agreements for the other nations to provide supplies in exchange for Gulak hosting pilgrims. With the constant flow of people from the other nation, every nation maintains an embassy in holy Thutot. Galaki leaders favor accommodation to conflict and attempt to maintain neutrality in conflicts between the other nations, which sometimes let them serve as arbitrators.

Gulak maintains a close relationship with **Claslat**, usually aligning with the other nations pan-Octet agenda, but with a softer touch. Relations with **Jarish** never fully recovered after the annexation. Diplomats from that nation report feeling particularly unwelcome in Thutot, as though the Metropolis itself resents their presence.

Gulak has seen a recent influx of refugees from **Sova** and **Nurad**, seeking to escape the disasters befalling their respective nations. This has created some tension among them, though it's yet to rise above a simmer.

Gulak's Alchemicals

Gulaki citizens recognize Alchemicals' elevated status in society, but often view them as near-equals when it comes to interactions: they're to be respected, but not feared. The Champions are there to protect all Gulaki and watch over visiting pilgrims. Citizens readily engage Alchemicals in conversation or debate. While some may grant the Champions' words more spiritual or philosophical weight, someone who disagrees says so without fear of repercussion as long as they're not drifting toward heresy. Certain Alchemicals find this refreshing. Being a Champion can be a lonely duty, after all, and interacting with the very people they've been created to watch over brings them closer to their community.

Others prefer to quietly retreat from streets full of Populat and pilgrims and instead devote themselves to maintaining and safeguarding the metropolises. Such an existence is a quieter one, full of constant hard work and demanding vigilance against saboteurs and spies. These Exalted develop a deep loyalty toward their nation, though they may not warm to the pilgrims who tread its grounds.

Champions stand outside the clades, but that doesn't prevent various clades from courting an Alchemical that they feel a connection to, or whose favor they wish to procure. This might be someone who embodies the clade's values, or even be an Alchemical who was part of a clade before their Exaltation.

Most people who bump into the Soulsteel Caste ***Dreadful Adjudicator of Law*** recall little more than his massive frame, his burning crimson gaze, and how quickly they got out of his way. The Sentinel speaks only when he has to, usually to utter a warning or demand surrender. He follows the letter of the law, and expects everyone she meets to do the same: no leniency, no loopholes. Without his armor, he's a slender youth with bone-white skin, short pale hair, and empty crimson eyes. *Adjudicator's* used this beautiful appearance to infiltrate a cell of the One Tier Movement, posing as a clerk, Janiss. He's gathered more than enough information to bring the cell down, but he's fallen in love with its leader, Harad, who isn't

aware of Janiss's other life as a Champion. *Adjudicator* sometimes wonders if he can make a life somewhere else, away from Gulak and the One Tier Movement, with just himself and Harad.

The Jade Caste Champion **Deft Blade of Fortitude** travels in a circuit around Gulak's smaller towns, defending its citizens against raids. Currently, conflict between the towns of Agate and Vorrán, who sit close together in Gulak's nation-cluster, takes up much of *Blade's* time. Agate has bribed nearby tunnel folk clans with enough resources for them to leave it alone, which sends the clan's raiding bands into Vorrán. Appeals to regulators and adjudicators have failed. *Blade's* digging has uncovered kickbacks from Agate's dominant clade to local Tripartite officials who hail from that same clade.

Notable Individuals

Only six years old, **Sahima Amat** already has the weight of a nation's expectations thrust upon her. She's the crystal-haired, God-Blooded daughter of Divine Minister Kadmek, and her displays of wisdom and prophetic powers have brought her to widespread attention. Amat gently insists that she isn't a god and shouldn't be worshiped as one, but many in the Sahima clade praise her humility and make offerings anyway. Such worship borders on heretical, though most Theomachrats are hesitant to act. How can one gainsay the daughter of the Machine God's own hypostasis? The celebrant Rarata Ivol sees an opportunity to bring some troublesome sects to heel if he can convince her to work with him, but Amat is wise enough to know when someone's seeking to use her.

The spirit **Akumyo** has spent millennia trapped within a yasal crystal in Thutot. Gulaki Theomachrats seek the spirit's advice as an oracle, using its predictions to help shape policy. Akumyo resents its imprisonment, and has done so since it was trapped in the crystal while it was still in Creation. It's attracted a small cult, primarily composed of workers in the gallery where it's kept. Akumyo promises blessings to those who'll set it free, though it's not as easy a job as taking the crystal and smashing it. Those under Akumyo's influence meet in small congregations, plotting to gather the ritual reagents they'll need and fulfill the spirit's cryptic imperative. No one knows what type of spirit Akumyo actually *is*, only that it's definitely not a machine spirit. It may not fulfill its promises in the way its adherents expect.

Istikal Galan hails from one of the Sixteen Old Clades, a lineage whose fierce dedication to Domadamod still guides their philosophy today. Galan continues that tradition, a political theorist who views governance as necessary to large-scale survival, but inherently unstable and cyclical, with no regime ever lasting forever. Having pursued this philosophy to its logical end, he now uses his charm and easygoing nature as a leader in the One Tier Movement. He believes the Tripartite must cede some authority to the Populat, though he remains distanced from more radical agendas. While he's been a person of interest for Olgotary officials, he's thus far used his connections and popularity within Thutot's work groups to evade arrest.

Jarish

Jarish is the smallest of the Eight Nations, but what its people lack in territory or numbers, they more than make up for with their devotion to the Great Maker. Here, faith is bone-deep. Where other nations measure progress in terms of expansion, resources, or improvements on industry, most Jarishites consider maintaining and repairing the Machine God — and their relationship with him — to be their nation's highest goal.

While visitors from other nations look upon Jarish as backwater and rustic, Jarishites don't see themselves that way. Their relationship with the Great Maker, both on a personal and national level, is paramount to all else. Understanding how the Maker's machine-body works takes time, and to truly

fathom its processes and workings can require the study of many human lifetimes. Jarishite methods of their repair outlast the quick patch-jobs of other nations' Populat, and may prevent cascade failures down the line.

As a resource-poor nation, Jarishites have learned to make do with what they have, and build things to last. Their handcrafts are not only sturdy enough to last for generations, they're often also beautiful to behold. Artisans pass their skills on to apprentices. Apprentices may — and often do — iterate on the techniques they've learned, but do so with their years of training and centuries of tradition in mind.

Jarish is isolated, located in a joint of iron and brass in the Expanse of Metal's outer limits. Few veins of magical materials drift nearby, and those that do have either been exhausted over millennia or exist in locations too hostile for mortal miners to survive. This scarcity, combined with the other nations' admiration for Jarishite faith and steadfastness, means that those other powers have traditionally overlooked Jarish when their thoughts turned toward expansion. The nation has little to take, making it a fruitless target for raiders, and military aggression towards it isn't worth the cost in political capital. Jarish's Tripartite leaders are well aware of this dynamic and have, on a few occasions, used their underdog status against their rivals.

History

The hero Jarish was a priestess and mystic of Autochthon. So deep was her connection to the Great Maker, legend says, that the horrors in the Reaches wouldn't harm her, even if she walked in alone and unarmed. Jarish preached that Autochthon's gifts of faith, tools, and doctrine were pieces of a whole, not separate and independent components.

As the hero Jarish returned from the pilgrimage to the Godhead, she found her tribe in crisis, caught in proximity to an erupting cell of crystal magma. Jarish stood between it and her people, armed with nothing but her faith. Her touch halted the destruction. The molten crystal swiftly hardened — but not before it flowed over and around Jarish, encasing her body within. Jarishites praised her for her ultimate sacrifice, but they keenly felt her loss.

Jarish's soul passed into the soulgem she had brought back from the Core, and she was reborn as *Jubilant Evangelist*. *Evangelist* felt a profound spiritual connection with Jarish, perhaps transcending the usual nature of the soul. It drove *Evangelist* to remove Jarish's body from the crystal, after long years spent finding a way to do so without unleashing the disaster the hero had long held at bay. The Jarishites rejoiced; their faith restored.

End Times

A thousand years ago, the Viator of Nullspace wrought havoc throughout the Octet nations. Though most of the events related to his coming have passed into legend, Jarish suffered some of the heaviest casualties, including the near-destruction of Jast. This Crucible Event marked the collapse of the modern Jarish's distant predecessor-state, a crisis from that took centuries to fully recover from.

Five hundred years later, Jarish entered into an era of unprecedented wealth and innovation. Their engineers devised new methods to maintain the Great Maker's systems. Warehouses employed new protocols and implemented cutting-edge machinery to increase productivity. Explorers entered the Reaches looking for resources and returned with carts full of precious materials, singing of their victories. During this era, the city of Tekun was founded. Builders and engineers flocked to it, and for a time, their advancements made it nearly outshine Jast and Qune.

Emboldened by their success, Jarishites saw an opportunity to recover Gulak's relics and claim them for

their own. Clearly, Jarish held the Great Maker's favor, and they'd be the best stewards of such valuable and holy items. Their abundance of resources made it possible to hire Estasian mercenaries to carry out the annexation. Ultimately, however, Jarish faced two unfortunate realities: it couldn't hold Gulak without Estasia, and it couldn't afford to retain Estasia indefinitely. The Militat withdrew from Gulak, while Jarish's already sparse armies were largely recalled, leaving a skeletal force easily overcome by Gulaki rebels and resistance forces.

The Lost City

Several centuries ago, for reasons unknown, the metropolis of Tekun disappeared.

The city's loss destabilized Jarish both at home and abroad. Great stores of magical materials were lost along with the city, as well as a massive number of Populat workers, prominent Tripartite leaders, and a significant number of Alchemicals. Reactionary factions rushed to fill in the void, declaring that the tragedy was a sign of the Great Maker's displeasure. Jarish had clearly reached too far, and was being punished for it. The solution was a return to conservative policies and a rejection of innovation.

The push for conservatism extends into the present day. Jarish's innovations lag behind those of other nations, though their makers draw attention to the quality of their goods and emphasize the virtue of tried-and-true methods.

Culture

Most Jarishites live in towns, which have changed little since the establishment of modern Jast. While the Tripartite Assembly meets in Jast, and pilgrims and lovers flock to Qune, small town life is at the nation's heart. Populations are small enough that most citizens know everyone in their community, making ties especially strong. Workgroup assignments are meted out much as they are in larger nations, but most rural Jarishite workers are jacks-of-all-trades, able to pitch in at other duties if productivity demands an increase in output, or when sickness or industrial accident temporarily disables a factory's regular workforce. Rural Jarishites maintain close ties with the machine spirits that inhabit their area, often treating them as fellow workers in service to the Great Maker.

Visitors who research the nation before traveling find themselves staring at a landscape that's nearly identical to sketches they viewed in a centuries-old publication. For many this is charming, like stepping into an older era. To Jarishites, it's simply practical. Their architecture takes shifts in the Maker's machine-body into account, allowing buildings to withstand quakes and storms. Factory-cathedrals built thousands of years ago still function; when the machines within need maintenance, the workers swap in parts their ancestors designed using tools their parents and grandparents handed down. Everything in Jarish is built to last and be repaired multiple times. When an item breaks beyond repair, workers break it down into components and repurpose them.

Plenty of machines in other nations rely on older technology, though citizens might only rarely encounter them. When something very old breaks in the heart of distant Lux or Shastar, Jarishite Sodalts often answer the call to get it running again. Their preservation of old methods and a centuries-old supply of replacement parts comes in handy in such cases, an asset often overlooked by others in the Octet until something falls apart.

Jarishites' commitment to workmanship, craft, and efficiency has brought them prestige as craftsmen, and Jarishite wares hold a reputation for beauty and quality. The people believe that their work is the Maker's work; what they do is divine.

Religion

Jarishites believe in love's endurance above all else, a romantic belief that's carried them through disaster and tragedy. This concept is partly spiritual: they believe the souls of those they love are still around them, and that they in turn will continue on around their own families after they die. There's comfort in using a hammer whose haft was worn smooth by your mother's hands, or eating at the same table previous generations gathered around for meals. It's also occasionally literal, as the greatest crafters' soulgems may be incorporated into tools to preserve some portion of their mastery beyond their lifespans, until it's time for the soul to be released.

Jarish holds esoteric beliefs about reincarnation, teaching that not all souls are reincarnated as children. Some are consumed by the Great Maker instead and reborn as machine spirits. These beliefs means they fear death less than others, seeing it as an opportunity for union with the Great Maker. It also leads to a closer connection with machine spirits, seeing each of them as a potential family member or lover reborn.

Perhaps because of this, Jarishite clerics are among the Octet's best at dealing with machine spirits here. Communing with the machine-spirits is another form of communing with the Great Maker for some, while others address machine spirits as if they're simply talking to an old friend in a novel way. Many believe this represents a deep connection to the Great Maker.

The Jarishite Theomachracy's access to spirit lore and occult knowledge remains largely unbroken compared to other nations', both in forms of knowledge passed down from mentors and a precious few dreamstones that hold clerics' observations from centuries past, and can still be read using well-maintained (and oft-repaired) devices. These archives record not only the primary functions of local machine spirits, but also a nuanced understanding of what informs their behavior and decision-making processes. When a malfunctioning spirit threatens a town, Jarishite clerics know best how to soothe and redirect it safely and quickly.

A burgeoning eschatological sect views the loss of Tekun as an overt sign of the Great Maker's wrath, and fear that the death of Ixut in Sova may be yet another. Though the sect is new, their activities have caused disruption throughout the nation.

Alone in the Crowd

For all their focus on community, not every Jarishite feels accepted by their peers. Many experience a disconnect from others, whether they don't adhere to the same beliefs, struggle with work, or simply don't fit in. This loneliness is complicated enough in other nations, but in Jarish it's exacerbated by the national focus of tight-knit community. Such disaffected citizens feel left out in the cold, and soon grow tired of others' advice to try harder or change who they are so they can fit in at last. For many, leaving Jarish altogether is easier than trying to stay where they're miserable. Claslat and Gulak have large communities of Jarishite expatriates.

Some eventually gravitate toward religious sects whose members share the same feelings of alienation. Often their leaders suggest that members shouldn't have to sacrifice who they are to conform to the community's standards. Such recommendations can border on heresy, and Jarishite preceptors are especially zealous. Preaching self-acceptance risks being marked as a voidbringer heretic, especially if a cult's members act upon it publicly.

Some of these groups are full-fledged voidbringer sects have risen over the years, largely composed of nonconformist movements and advocates of violent reform. Deeper voidbringer blasphemies centered on the worship of the Blight or Apostates are far less common.

Many disaffected Jarishites don't initially know their peers are voidbringers when they join such groups, finding themselves in the company of like-minded individuals who understand their struggles. Only over

time, as they grow more entrenched in the sect's workings, do those members realize they've been pulled into a voidbringer cult. Cutting ties would leave them vulnerable and alone once more, so they choose to harden their own methods to survive. This may mean keeping their association secret, and performing increasingly dangerous acts to prove their loyalty and trustworthiness.

Societal Norms

Beauty and love suffuse everything Jarishites touch. Their poet-engineers pen odes to the Great Maker's exquisite design, praising everything from the ring of hammer on steel to the way the Light Obelisk catches on a lover's soulgem. Romance abounds in Jarish; pursuing and maintaining relationships is its own kind of art. Both take time, care, and skill. People are free to explore the connections they feel toward others, whether it results in a brief affair, a love story for the ages, or a platonic friendship that endures for a lifetime. Feeling love and empathy for others reinforces the peoples' love for Autochthon himself, and the Great Maker reflects that love back toward them.

Parents in Jarish are involved in raising their children and regularly practice the birthbond. Potential parents select not only one another, but also a small handful of close friends and community members who agree to help raise, nurture, and teach the child until they turn 15. This is another facet of love, as parents and bond-partners receive dispensation to spend work-shifts in the crèche. In infancy and early childhood, they tend to the child's basic needs. Once the child is older, they pass down the skills and stories from previous generations to the new one. Some participants in the birthbond raise their children together, while others split the duties based on work schedules, community practices, or other factors.

Sacrifice is also a form of love to Jarishites. For some, it's the anguish of lovers splitting up because duty requires them elsewhere. For others, it comes in the form of brave and dangerous deeds, such as staying with a machine that's overheating to let others escape when it blows, and speak a final word of consolation before it does. Jarishites don't fear death the way some other Octet nations do. In fact, they're comforted by the idea that they may be reborn as something other than human, their souls potentially becoming the sparks for machine spirits, or returning to the people they loved and their following generations when they're reborn. Often, members of a community say they spot traits from a loved one who's passed on in those born after, exclaiming "oh, he has his grandmother's eyes," or "she laughs just like my friend used to."

Cuisine

Food builds community. To the people of Jarish, cooking for others and taking meals together is an act of love and camaraderie. In times of scarcity, even being together while supping upon nutrient paste is better than doing so alone. However, most people spend at least some of their free shifts helping out in communal kitchens, learning to reliably reproduce staple recipes using simple ingredients. Derived from nutrient paste and the Harvesters' arts, loaves of crusty bread, soup with spicy broth, and simple but hearty stews make for satisfying and filling meals. Cakes and other sweets are considered special occasion foods, but most children know which of their elders has a pocketful of candy they're willing to share.

The Light Obelisk

Hanging high over the nation, the Light Obelisk provides Jarish with a cycle of day and night. The Obelisk was crafted by the Champions *Jubilant Evangelist* and *Quixotic Nexus* before their metropolitan ascensions, taking inspiration from The Tome of the Great Maker's cryptic descriptions of Creation's sun and moon. They gathered adamant, crystal, moonsilver, and orichalcum for their working, and placed it where its light would touch all of Jarish. Prayer powers the Obelisk, causing it to flare to life each

morning — the people’s faith made manifest. Its light glows golden and warm for the “day,” then dims to a gentle silver radiance to signify “night.”

Sparkmoon

The most famous of Jarish’s festivals, Sparkmoon is a three-day religious holiday that celebrates the end of a year of hard work. For its duration, workers’ shifts are shortened and duties kept light. Only workgroups required for vital functions need to report for duty, and supervisors try to ensure that everyone gets some time off to enjoy the festivities. Dancers gather on Qune’s Promenade, covering the massive moonsilver platform in their colorful costumes. People leave offerings for the Divine Ministers and their subgods, and present small gifts and appreciations to one another. Many choose lovers during this period, and such unions are considered a joyful sacrament.

On the third night, Qune’s population swells with visitors from outlying towns and other nations. They witness the awe-inspiring flare of the obelisk as it recalibrates. For a moment, the sky lights up as though dawn has come early. As the light fades back into night, sparks of Essence like fireflies stirred up by the flare swarm into the sky. Their motion against the cavern’s dark ceiling mimics that of Creation’s stars, making something that most view as mythical seem possible, at least for a night.

Governance

Jarish taught that Autochthon’s three gifts were part of a single whole, and her nation view all branches of the Tripartite as one. Historically, this has meant that members participated in cross-training and maintained a high level of collaboration when making decisions that affected the nation. Preceptors and regulators partnered on their circuits to ensure both civil and spiritual harmony. Clerics and plutarchs shadowed one another in their duties and improved efficiency for both branches. Olgotary members and Theomachrats alike spent weeks of each year aiding Sodalts.

In practice, the Theomachracy has increasingly gained power with the rise of Jarish’s religious conservatism. Members of all three branches still cross-train, though visiting Theomachrats also act as supervisors among their Olgotary and Sodalt counterparts, assessing their processes in terms of adherence to the Great Maker’s teachings. Particularly zealous celebrants wield their political power to oppose technological innovation and social reforms proposed by the Olgotary. This keeps the Olgotary’s power in check, forcing its members to either keep to a narrow lane or work with the Theomachracy.

The Theomachracy holds onto its political lead only narrowly, with the Sodalities vying to seize more influence. Should the shortage of magical materials and essential day-to-day resources worsen, the people will look to the Sodalities to keep things stable. Members of the Sodality Council have been making quiet overtures to autocrats throughout Jarish, as their support will be needed should civil unrest spill over. Despite the other two branches’ attempts at subtlety, Theomachrat leaders are aware of their conspiring. Lectors’ recent sermons remind the faithful that the Tripartite is supposed to act as one, planting the seeds for the Theomachracy to accuse the other two of heresy for their actions should the situation escalate.

Economic Structure

Other nations contract with Jarish to provide various parts and necessities, based upon their reputation for speed and quality. While this brings in wealth, Jarish’s durable, long-lasting wares and reliance on machine spirits’ cooperation also help to reduce its costs. This helps to keep cities and towns powered, and gives Jarish surplus energy to store in case of crisis.

More than any other nation, Jarish devotes its labors to producing parts to maintain and repair Autochthon’s world-body and his industrial organs. Their close study of the Machine God’s inner

workings and quality workmanship fetches a hefty price from other nations in need of such vital machinery. Olgotary regulations — based on passages from *The Tome of the Great Maker* — forbid Jarishites from producing tools that could be used as weapons, but that doesn't prevent them from making weapons altogether. Factory-cathedrals supply crossbows, bolts, and swords for trading partners.

Metropoli

Jarish has the fewest major cities of all the Octet. Some of this is simply practical; there aren't enough resources to require them, and the population's too thin to fill more than the ones that already exist. Though centuries past, the loss of Tekun has discouraged any further talk of expansion, though a few elder Alchemicals feel the call of the metropolitan ascension.

Jast, the Golden Span

The bridge-city of Jast spans a great chasm. Made of orichalcum, its longest arc is two miles long and a mile and a half wide. Four towers reach into the sky at its apex, dwarfing the factory-cathedrals below. Through the center runs the Jast Strip, connecting Old Jarish to New Jarish. Most of the time, this road ends at the nation's borders. However, during the convergence, it stretches to connect to roads from other nations. Rails extend from the towers, carrying trams that travel along and beneath the highway. Passengers who look down through the trams' viewports see the crystal river that flows below, filling the chasm with its rushing furor.

Jast draws craftspeople from throughout the nation to share their knowledge and expertise, ensuring their arts are preserved and spread across generations. Teaching is both an act of worship and an act of love, and all who seek to learn are welcome.

Two of Jast's towers and various other structures are encased in hollowed-out crystal. These are the scars inflicted by the Viator of Nullspace, who terrorized the Octet and razed much of Jarish a thousand years ago. This devastation is long past. Today, the city has more than recovered, and Viator's actions are recounted as part of a much larger story, telling of how the Eight Nations banded together in the face of adversity. Jast's Crystalline Defense Matrix has deployed on several occasions since, rebuffing raiders, swarming gremlins, and Estasian mercenaries. Glittering shields form a dome over dedicated civilian shelters, while crystal filaments that spiderweb across the domes emit an excruciating aural assault on approaching enemies.

Qune, the City Beloved

Qune is Jast's lover and counterpart. She perched in New Jarish, until the same attack that nearly destroyed Jast unleashed an earthquake that left the moonsilver city half-submerged and eventually sank. Jast and her people fell deep into despair, but in time, her beloved reemerged, having undergone a second metamorphosis. Now, the renewed Qune is a dam over the crystal fissure, whose soaring crystal towers and spires catch the Obelisk's brilliance morning and night. Qune's lower district streets are built around the crystal flows, the streets twisting around them in an intricate labyrinth. Upper Qune is home to the famed Promenade and soaring vistas of Jarish.

Qune draws visitors from other nations for its romantic reputation. Lovers from Sova and Kamak spend make pilgrimage here, pausing on its bridges to kiss beneath the Obelisk-moon. Many of the nation's diplomats also hail from Qune, the location of the other Octet nations' embassies.

Qune is famed for her Eusocial Luminance Array, a Municipal Charm fusing Jarish's love of beauty with metropolitan puissance. Throughout the city, the light takes on a softer quality for the span of a shift, and those who step into it see the people surrounding them in the best possible light. Lovers see their

companion's most desirable qualities, or remember what drew them together in the first place. Worshipers see how their colleagues embody the Great Maker's will. Politicians find commonalities with their rivals. Qune can't force peace on her people, but she'll foster what harmony she can.

Transnational Relations

Jarish's official policy is to maintain friendly but distant ties with most of the Eight Nations. Its international reputation benefits from the Octet's perception impression that Jarish is especially blessed by Autochthon, a point of pride among Jarishites. . Jarishite Theomachrats sought-after advisors when complicated spiritual matters arise, and the nations' cities are a popular destination for pilgrims. The tiny nation sometimes struggles to provide for large influxes of pilgrimage, occasionally leading to requests for supplies to the other nations.

It's been several centuries since Jarish's attempted annexation of **Gulak**, but the rift it created between the two nations is still felt today. Some among Jarish's devout believe the relics housed in Thutot should be kept in Jast instead, and Jarishite diplomats occasionally present carefully-worded proposals to Gulaki counterparts suggesting the relocation of specific relics.

Jarish's National Tripartite Assembly denounced **Sova** after the death of Ixut, both as a spiritual warning and as political censure of Sova's innovations in conurbation. Many saw similarities between the fates of Tekun and Ixut, though none have any concrete theories. Jarish changed this stance after the War of Ashes' end and has formally joined the recovery efforts in Sova, contributing much relative to their size. Jarish dominates internal oversight of Sova's Theomachracy, and is among most vehement in pushing for compliance to Octet orthodoxy among the Sovan population.

Jarish's Alchemicals

Jarish is home to the fewest Alchemicals in the Eight Nations. Those who are created become holy figures almost from the moment they open their eyes, celebrated for their spiritual connection to the Great Maker. Champions are seen as teachers and scholars, recounting passages from the Tome of the Great Maker and other doctrinal texts. Lessons from their past lives or recent assignments draw crowds, as the faithful bask in the tales of a Champion's heroic exploits.

This reverence creates a divide between the Champions and the people they serve. For some Alchemicals, this is merely their due: as divine beings, it's their duty to stand apart from (and a little above) their mortal charges. However, for community-minded Alchemicals, this practice can be lonely. The people they love keep their distance, and attempting to bridge that gap may only cause it to widen.

Resolute Instrument of Truth is a Jade Caste Champion skilled in traveling Jarish's Reaches. He escorts travelers throughout the nation, aids in deliveries of magical materials, defends outlying towns from tunnel folk raiders, and lends a hand to Conductors who request his aid. He takes to heart concerns about the nation's dwindling resources, and is planning a journey into the Reaches to follow rumors of an abandoned moonsilver vein. The Jarishite tendency to hold Alchemicals at arms' length weighs on his community-minded spirit, and *Truth* views this expedition at least partially as a chance to change that with the companions he selects for this journey.

Divine Axiom Demonstrated has trained many Jarishites in the arts of combat, ranging from regulators and Populat militias to young Alchemical Champions. . Deeply pious and spiritual, the Adamant Caste believes the Great Maker calls her to protect the Jarishite people. Her early assignments defending outlying towns against gremlin swarms shaped her loyalty, making her a dedicated guardian of Jarish's citizens, not the nation. It was, after all, Populat workers who stood at her side and died defending their loved ones, not national exports or civic infrastructure. When forced to choose, she defends people over

Jarish's political needs. Her decisions have earned her some enmity with members of the National Tripartite Assembly, though a number of clerics and lectors within the Theomachracy have lent her their backing.

Notable Individuals

Adjudicator Garudis has served in the Olgotary for 50 years. His rulings keep Jarishite traditions firmly in place, though he increasingly resents the restrictions the Theomachracy's zealots impose upon his ability to perform his duties. He's spent significant free shifts in the company of the brilliant Dereya, a Scholar whose secret inventions rely on Claslati innovations. Garudis knows Dereya's skirting up to the brink of heresy with her designs, and might bring him down with her if discovered, but he's reluctant to end the affair.

Matchmaker Samak is Populat worker in Qune. Her title's an unofficial one, bestowed upon her by friends in her workgroup. Samak doesn't only bring people together for romantic matches — though she excels at that, too — she's also adept at finding resources for those in need, wrangling shift swaps, uncovering restricted information, and more. Her smuggling operation is small enough to be beneath Olgotary notice, but recently she's begun looking to expand her range of clientele, and knows she'll need the right leverage should regulators come knocking.

Kamak

Despite being the second smallest Octet nation, Kamak stands tall among them. It has a wealth disproportionate its population would suggest, controlling some of the richest known veins of magical materials in Autochthonia. Kamak also boasts store of gemstones, exotic materials like frozen lightning, and strange metalloids, as well as animal agriculture built around the rat. These stockpiles are becoming increasingly important as, despite all official records, the veins of magical material that Kamak lives by are beginning to run dry.

Kamak's cities are networks of buildings connected by sky bridges over jagged floors too steep to build upon. Beyond sweeping architecture, the cities are subdued visually, painted in greys and blues with only the barest, most essential informational glyphs visible, and a distinct lack of the propaganda posters popular elsewhere. The nation chamber often strays far from the other nations into dangerously frigid regions of Autochthonia, only remaining habitable through the unceasing efforts of its people to keep the heat on through the coldest seasons.

The Kamaki are a very private people, particularly compared to the other Eight Nations, where privacy is rare to nonexistent outside of Kamak. Thanks to its wealth and low population, Kamak can give every citizen a modicum of personal space. Kamaki rarely speak in public, cover their faces, and hide their emotions except among their closest friends.

History

The hero Kamak was a hunter, a warrior, and an explorer. He traveled through the Great Maker's body, leading the brave and curious alike. After the eight heroes' return and their rebirth as Alchemicals, some created nations in vast caverns that held immediate comfort but few long-lasting luxuries. *Transient Emancipator*, the rebirth of Kamak, led his people in search of somewhere greater. They journeyed deep into the remote Reaches, far from the other nations' journeys — and in the coldest and most barren chamber they had yet visited, the Kamaki found large veins of the six magical materials flowing seemingly without end. This wealth has allowed Kamak to create many Alchemicas over the millennia, Champions to fend off threats and invasions, and to make great the nation in times of peace. Kamak

devoted itself to building its wealth, trading with other nations when they came into contact.

The Age of Exalted Ascendancy

Late in the metropolitan era, a Circle of young Champions declared a coup d'état, ushering in an era of Alchemical supremacy. The ranks of the Tripartite Assembly were purged of those unwilling to support the newly-formed governing body, while Champions unwilling to back such flagrant sedition went to war in the streets of metropoli. The coup's Alchemical leaders were unified in their initial aims, but schisms soon developed among them, rendering their central governing body a hollow façade. Their reign was ended only by the sudden assassination of the coup's leaders. Kamaki history records how the nation's loyal Champions overthrew these traitors, but omit the presence of the Machine Saints fighting alongside the nation's Chosen. The aftermath left Kamak all but shattered, and it would be decades before the nation would fully reunify under the National Tripartite Assembly.

The Communal Revolution

Only a few centuries ago, Kamak's Populat rose up en masse and overthrew the National Tripartite Assembly. They installed the Populat Communal Council. The revolutionary regime lasted only three years before collapsing, riven by internal divisions and assailed from without by counterrevolutionaries within individual city's Tripartite Assemblies. Though the Populat Communal Council did little of lasting impact before the the Tripartite overthrew it, it's had a lasting cultural legacy. Within the Tripartite, it bred a stronger focus on individual city's Tripartite Assemblies over the National Tripartite Assembly, as it was they who brought an end to the crisis. To radical elements within the Populat, it's a reminder than the Tripartite has fallen before, and proof that they can fall again.

Modern Times

Modern Kamak is decentralized, peaceful, and prosperous, but it's come under threat. The legacy of the Communal Revolution lives on in the One Tier Movement, while religious fanatics seek vengeance and the destruction of Estasia. Worst of all, the veins of magical materials that have supported the Nation since its founding are beginning to run out. These dangers are out of sight and out of the minds of most Kamaki, but the Tripartite Assemblies and Champions are beginning to realize just how great a threat they face.

Culture

Kamak's nation chamber is as large as any other, but its population is far smaller. This has led to most Kamaki having the luxury of smaller private homes, even among the Populat, breeding a culture of privacy, secrecy, and isolation. Citizens do not speak to each other in public spaces. They cover their faces, hands, and heads when outside their homes as much to ward off the cold as to create a barrier between themselves. They do not congregate with their workgroups during free shifts, preferring to spend time alone. The city is eerily quiet as people walk through, giving each other a wide berth and barely meeting each other's eyes as they pass.

Noise is kept to a minimum, with sound dampeners common to keep the cities quiet, matching the silence of the citizenry. Not all workplaces can be linked to the Municipal Charm that powers these dampers; these facilities are treated almost as though they were unclean, and the Populat discriminate against others of their caste who work in noisy factories. Noise is considered so foul that raised voices are almost unheard of, even in arguments.

Kamaki assume and respect a certain amount of secrecy with one another. They do not share their given names except with close, personal friends and direct supervisors. They keep their thoughts private, and

even their recreational activities involve personal journal keeping and smaller art projects. Kamaki private spaces are filled with vibrant artwork, mosaics, murals, and stunning visual art. Homes are typically organized into communes of four two-room apartments that usually accommodate between four and eight people, depending on caste. Members of the Tripartite usually have private rooms in their communes, while the Populat might share rooms with other members of their workgroup, with only foremen and shift leaders enjoying private rooms.

This implicit code of privacy is violated only by preceptors. As distasteful as it is, the preceptor's intrusive duties are considered a sacred obligation and a sacrifice they make for the Maker to ensure orthodoxy. Many fall short of this ideal, humiliating citizens — sometimes even high-ranking ones — by questioning them publicly. This leaves them as the least popular people in many Kamaki cities and towns, and preceptors whose identities are revealed to the public often have to switch cities. Regulators, on the other hand, don't dare to invade the privacy of Kamak citizens, leaving it to the preceptors to conduct more unseemly investigations.

Despite Kamak's obsession with privacy, every Kamaki home is open to someone in need when the weather turns. Hospitality is sacred, and preventing death from exposure is among the highest duties the Great Maker demands of them. Despite this, Kamaki are extremely uncomfortable requesting such hospitality, leading to Kamaki hospitality customs focusing on making the visitor feel welcome. Visitors are first shown to the hearthgem, a mass of red jade linked to the city's heating systems. While the guest is warming, the host offers food and drink, and the food is warmed on the hearthgem before serving. Difficulty as asking for hospitality may be, declining is even worse, a grievous insult to one's host. After the meal, business can proceed.

Rats

Kamak's rats are unique, with several unique breeds that have been created through extensive husbandry projects and biological modifications over the course of centuries — and sometimes even millennia. The Ein rat is gigantic, roughly the size of a donkey, and is farmed for meat, fat, fur, leather, and sinew. The Trantec rat is leaner and used as a beast of burden, pulling sleds with heavy loads during snow season and used as war mounts in one disastrous military offensive. The Muvisni rat is terrier-like, hunting feral rats through tunnels, whereas the Rabla rat is a well-respected guard animal.

Kamak is one of the few nations prosperous for citizens to keep pet rats. Despite costing valuable nutritional resources, Kamak's wealth can bear this cost, and pet rats are popular, with most communes having at least one.

Religion

The Kamaki hold the unique belief that Autochthon benefits from the private, silent prayers of individuals rather than the rote recitations of mass worship. Some small prayers and blessings are said quite frequently when a situation moves a Kamak to say them, but there are no situations where saying them is required.

Festivals are frequent but low-key, tending towards small and local affairs, even when the nation celebrates simultaneously. One of the most popular is the Feast of the New Moon, performed monthly with a meal of higher quality food than usual. Aside from feasts, sermons and performances comprise the most common activities at festivals, though none of it is treated with as much gravity as festivals elsewhere. The largest festival is the annual Day of Fire, where Kamaki children train in mock battles against each other using bows and arrows in memory of the weapon Kamak used in the days before

Autochthonia, followed by a communal dance around a bonfire.

The Kamaki eschew the ritual and pomp prevalent elsewhere in favor of simplicity and spontaneity. Despite the vast wealth available to them, their temples are austere and modest, even on the inside. The only objects of value within them are a set of masks made of magical materials, representing the Maker and his Ministers. Rituals performed in the temples tend to be more personal, with meditation particularly popular. Many temples contain sensory deprivation tanks to help those who need help escaping distractions. These tanks are particularly popular among Kamak's Theomachracy, who take advantage of the priority their status grants them to contemplate doctrine and community needs within them.

Marriage

Unique among the Octet, Kamak has a well-developed institution of marriage, formalizing the relationship of two citizens (of any combination of genders) in the eyes of their community and the legal system. Married couples have some privileges, such as living together and being assigned compatible locations, shift schedules, and often even workgroups. The nation views this as a religious necessity, expecting all citizens to eventually marry, reflecting the sacred relationship between the nation and the Maker. Cities often have quarterly marriage festivals, where numerous citizens take vows at the same time as part of a grand celebration.

While marriage is expected, preceptors take an interest in pairings that seem to happen too quickly or without true devotion. Prospective couples must meet with their lector and request their marriage a month in advance. The lector then councils them for that time to ensure they are prepared for marriage.

Monogamy is written into law, with harsh penalties for those who commit adultery. Divorce is deeply frowned upon, but is allowed on a case-by-case basis depending on the issues. Unhappy couples must undertake a year of counseling with a lector before being granted a divorce, while in the case of one member committing a crime or blasphemy, the marriage is immediately annulled. Additionally, being unwed at thirty is considered suspicious and prevents social and often professional advancement. This taboo is so strong that almost all widowed Kamakis remarry, though a year-long wait beforehand is customary.

While marriage is an ancient Kamaki tradition, family is not. The nation places little to no importance on blood ties — particularly after the Wars of Dynasty. It has no equivalent to Jarish's birthbound (p. XX).

Automata

With its vast wealth, Kamak extensively uses expensive self-activated automatons powered remotely by Municipal Charms. They're mainly used for sentinel duty, menial labor, entertainment, and, rarely, combat. Most are simple constructs, lacking sentience; the most complex are capable of full sapience, their mind stored in the city's Consciousness Upload Matrix. Without these automata, the Kamaki economy would collapse; the nation simply doesn't have enough people to maintain the standard of living that they're accustomed to. Most work shifts at factories involve some automatons of some level of complexity, and the Kamaki are extremely comfortable with them, to the point where they barely notice the automatons are there.

Language

Tominic is a percussive code used to communicate by tapping on pipes, originally developed by Conductor survey teams. It's become ubiquitous throughout Kamak, used it casually to communicate between communes, especially when the weather makes going outside dangerous.

Kamak is one of the few nations to have a formalized system of sign language, derived from the complex

and meaningful gestures that have long been used to punctuate Kamaki speech. Widespread fluency allows easy communication in clangorous factories, and makes participation in public life far easier for deaf Kamakis compared to those in other nations.

Governance

Kamak is organized much more loosely a nation than the rest of the Octet. Each city governs its own resources and people without the National Tripartite Assembly's oversight, and rarely has need to trade resources with other settlements. The National Tripartite Assembly's role has been reduced to that of a mediator, settling disputes when cities come into conflict.

Otherwise, even in times of crisis, city Tripartite Councils are the primary source of governance. This structure allows the cities to react to their local conditions, a necessity in the often-extreme environments that Kamak occupies. By the same token, this tendency toward independent response has historically left Kamak ill-equipped to deal with nation-wide crises.

It also allows the cities to hide things from each other. Each city has begun to feel the effects of the magical material shortage, but few are willing to admit it, leaving the National Tripartite Assembly largely ignorant of the greatest threat to the nation. Rather than seeking aid, these cities raid their reserves to make sure quotas are met and keep up the façade of everything going as planned.

Of all the Tripartite, the Sodalities have the most sway in their cities. While the Olgatory are in charge of day-to-day governance, and the Theomachracy keeps the faith, the Sodalities keep the people of Kamak alive. Their efforts directly translate to heat in homes and warm food on plates. Despite the magical material shortages, Kamak's reserves run deep enough that the Sodalities haven't felt the lack in any significant way. They're still given broad leeway for their experiments,

The Sodality of Conductors is viewed as the most valuable of society, as it keeps the flow of magical materials coming into the cities and maintain the steam conduits that keep every home warm. Kamaki Surgeons are the most skilled in the Octet. They are used to handling cold, accidents, machine plagues, and worse. They can treat frostbite and hypothermia with techniques unmatched since the First Age, and Kamaki prosthetics are legendary. Despite the cost, a Kamak who loses a limb in the line of duty always receives one that fully replaces the lost limb or organ and, in some cases, is superior to it.

Kamak's wealth is enough to provide everyone with a higher standard of living than in most of Autochthonia, but these riches are not spread evenly throughout society. Populat workers are still afforded less luxuries than the Tripartites, whose luxurious lifestyles and opulence are the subject of epics and stories throughout the Octet. An ideological import from Gulak, the One Tier Movement, has found a comfortable home in Kamak, taking advantage of the customary privacy and the populist traditions of the Communal Revolution to organize and grow. Taking their inspiration from the Populat, they plan to violently seize control of the nation, tear down the Tripartite Assemblies, and redistribute the nation's wealth to the Populat. They know that Kamak's Champions are their greatest obstacle. The Movement must either be prepared to act quickly and present the Champions with a fait accompli, or they must find powerful allies capable of standing against such opposition.

Metropoli

The metropolis of Ein is the cultural heart of Kamak, but the nation's economy is built on the back of the Hexopoli: six metropoli, one of each Caste. Though the Hexopoli's populations are small and many of the cities occupy less hospitable regions of Kamak, they're extremely well-developed, with massive Municipal Charms keeping them livable and turning them into manufacturing and mining powerhouses. The rest of the cities of Kamak depend on the Hexopoli for magical materials and research products,

making them the most important in the nation.

Ein, the Web

While Kamak is wealthy as a whole, the wealthiest place within Kamak, perhaps the wealthiest in Autochthonia, is the city of Ein, the Web. Ein avoids the geographic challenges of Kamak's chambers in a unique way: it hangs mid-air at an intersection of a dozen mile-wide shafts. It is positioned inside a starmetal egg with graceful buttresses supporting it and connecting it to the sides of those shafts. These buttresses support cables bringing lightning into the city along with pneumatic trams and funiculars to move people in and out and drip with multi-yard-long icicles.

At the core of Ein is the Lightning Regulation Matrix, a Municipal Charm of orichalcum and starmetal, covered in coils and sparks rotating around crystal and white jade shafts. Workers are protected by copper mesh as they operate the Charm, protecting the Maker's neural pulses from dangerous electrical buildups.

The people of Ein revel in their wealth. They have larger homes with nicer accoutrements, the architecture is more intricate and sports decorative glyphs made of magical materials, and they flaunt their automata, having them work nearly every aspect of society, down to cleaning personal homes. Ein even supports a community of Gulaki-trained chefs to maintain a higher standard of food than other cities can manage.

Ein is also a more worldly city than others in Kamak. The Sodality chapterhouses are research centers that produce the best technology in the Realm of Brass and Shadow, bringing diplomats and traders to Ein. The Populat are more aware of other nations, making their pilgrimages out to visit them, or meeting visitors who bring an infusion of foreign concepts and phrases. Social mores are looser as well. Citizens occasionally speak to one another in public, sometimes even within arms' reach. This has allowed the One Tier Movement to take root in Ein. Visitors from Gulak have spread their ideals of destroying the caste system in Ein's private homes and whispered networks throughout the city.

Rabla, the Eternally Reconfigured

Rabla, the orichalcum city, is an oddity in conservative Kamak. Though Ein may be where the Sodalities do their most impressive research, Rabla is where they get implemented. This city is built into the wall of the nation chamber, employing Gravitational Displacement Impellers to allow their citizens to walk its streets unimpeded. Floors and walkways give a dizzying view of jagged cervices below, and many citizens frequently require antiemetic medication. Inside Rabla's factories and buildings, Scholars innovate new technological wonders and train the Populat in their use. This makes Rabla the most advanced city in Kamak, but they're often the subject of bizarre disasters as the latest research goes horrifically awry.

Rabla is defined by change. Their Municipal Charms are reconfigured much more frequently than in any other metropoli, powering down or retracting into the city's superstructure as new Charms come online. They spend much of their time designing and implement new Municipal Charms, occasionally seeking discussion or feedback from other metropoli.

The people of Rabla are used to change, always looking for the next new thing they can work on. All but the most necessary of maintenance is an afterthought, and many minor religious tasks are relegated to automata. The Populat are encouraged to experiment with the tools and methods they use to perform their duties. Those who show great promise might be reassigned to work as a Scholar's apprentice, a highly sought after position.

Transnational Relations

Kamak's physical distance and preference for privacy leaves them isolated from most of the other Octet nations. Their wealth in the magical materials means the other nations embark in trade missions to Kamak whenever the distant nation's proximity allows a safe route through the expanse of metal, but it's rare for Kamak to initiate diplomatic or trade relations.

Gulak is the nation most frequently in contact with Kamak and the two nations are regular trading partners. Gulak is also the most frequent avenue for new ideas to be introduced in Kamak, including the heretical One Tier Movement. The two nations are not aware that the movement is a shared threat, and neither would admit the ideology's presence within their populace to the other.

Estasia occasionally enters long periods of proximity with Kamak, leading to frequent conflicts between them until they move apart once again. Shortly after the ascension of Lux and the dawn of Estasia's Golden Era, it occupied several Kamaki metropoli until Kamak's National Tripartite Assembly agreed to an exorbitant ransom. Now, Militat are more likely to appear under Kamaki pay than as raiders, though the Kamaki remain suspicious, sometimes attributing attacks against outlying Kamaki settlements to their own mercenaries.

The Disciples of Mog

The Disciples of Mog are a religious sect that seeks nothing less than the complete annihilation of Estasia, seeking a reckoning for a long-ago injustice. Some members claim descent from cities that suffered under Estasian occupation, while some are motivated by the brutality of modern Estasia. They agitate for the formation of a Kamaki military and a vast increase in the number of Champions, all for the goal of attacking and destroying their larger often-neighbor.

Kamak's Alchemicals

Alchemicals are more numerous in Kamak than elsewhere — a combination of Kamak's wealth allowing them to make more of them and Kamak having a relatively lower mortal population. This leads to the Kamaki people being far more familiar with their Champions than in other nations. Though Alchemicals are still rare, Kamaki are more likely to know one personally or have a significant relationship with one. Even marriage between Alchemicals and mortals is not unheard of. This familiarity is baffling, or even offensive, to most foreign Alchemicals but can even cause tension or discomfort even for Kamaki Champions.

Silent Absolute Inspector: *Inspector's* appearance is one of the most closely held secrets in the nation of secrets. Their identity-concealing Charms see constant use, and the taciturn Soulsteel Caste goes by many names wherever they go. They investigate inefficiencies and conspiracies among the workers of the Populat, currently focused on rooting out the One Tier Movement's leadership. Never before has it taken *Inspector* thing long to catch their target, and they've grown demoralized and desperate. Whatever it takes, whoever they must ally with, they *will* catch their quarry.

Patched Imperfection: *Patched Imperfection* is one of the best-known Adamant Castes in Kamak, famed for her efforts in organizing disaster relief, fending off swarming machine spirits, or repairing failing infrastructure just in the nick of time. She only demonstrates her specialty after the crisis is over, finding the flaw that made it possible so that it can be fixed. Together with her upbeat, reassuring attitude, she's one of the most popular Champions among the Populat, a symbol that things can be better.

Notable Individuals

Kudrick, Director of Rabla: Kudrick is new in their position, having taken over leadership of Rabla

only six months ago, when the previous Populat Director was tragically lost during an experiment involving compressing Essence through hyper-refined starmetal to produce...well, they're not sure. The last Director gave the go-ahead, and neither he nor any of the Sodalts involved in the unapproved experiment are likely to return. Kudrick tries to take a much more cautious approach in overseeing the metropolis' Populat, though Rabla's drive for innovation pushes them forward much faster than they're ready for.

Otlo, One Tier Movement Advocate: Ein may be the wealthiest city in Kamak, but that only shows the difference between the Populat and the Tripartite more starkly. Otlo grew up in Ein seeing this, and when she heard about the One Tier Movement from a Gulaki traveler, she knew that that was what justice would be. She started spreading the ideology among her cohort and soon became the de facto leader of the One Tier Movement in Ein. She's worked to place her people in critical positions, planning to bring Ein to a halt and defeat the Tripartite as a sign to the other metropoli that they can do it too.

Nurad

Nurad was once at the forefront of Autochthonian technology. Led by its esteemed founder, *Perfected Hydraulic Grace*, it studied Autochthon's god-mechanisms and built wonders in his name. The people of Nurad settled inside a vast hollow metal sphere, and they've benefited from its relatively calm and stable geography ever since. The nation-sphere has reasonable weather and no internal drift. The glowing metropolis of Wisant hangs from the sphere's ceiling, providing an artificial cycle of day and night. Large clans of tunnel folk nomads walk the sphere's great internal surface, while zeppelins and Essence-powered crafts fly between cities.

Nurad's early years were their golden ones. Eight hundred years ago, their founding metropolis Perygra was destroyed in theurgic experiment gone horribly wrong. Since that time, loss and internal conflict have left Nurad struggling for resources. What's worse, the shifting geography of Autochthonia is about to plunge the nation into the least hospitable environment imaginable: a massive blight zone, big enough to swallow it whole. The bounty of Autochthonia dwindles around them as once-plentiful nutrients and raw materials become corrupted by the approaching Blight, producing only poison and sludge. Long paralyzed by indecision and infighting, if Nurad cannot find allies or a return to its former glory, all its cities will soon join Perygra in a graveyard of fallen metropoli.

History

Before her metropolitan ascension, *Perfected Hydraulic Grace* took little part in the nation's affairs, entrusting governance to a body of mechanist-savants that was the distant precursor of modern Nurad's Sodalities. *Grace* focused her efforts instead on the study of Essence and the theotechnological mechanisms of the Great Maker, and put her theoretical knowledge to use designing sophisticated factories and habitations.

The Progressive Era

After *Grace* ascended to become the metropolis Perygra, she became a thriving center of innovation and culture. Efficient factories and complex Municipal Charms kept the working day short, giving members of all castes a high standard of living and allowing art and culture to flourish. While never the largest or most powerful nation, Nurad counted itself as the happiest in the halcyon days of Perygra. Always at the forefront of the forefront of Nurad's technological advances, Perygra saw unprecedented innovations in airship design, bio-engineering, advanced prosthetics, and mind-to-machine contact. It was that progress that ultimately doomed Perygra. A failed experiment to connect the metropolis to the Godhead of Autochthon encased the city in a sphere of crystal, forever freezing it and its inhabitants in their final

moment of horror.

The Silent Century and the Shuttered Lamp War

The death of its founding metropolis casts a shadow over Nurad's history, a transition marked by turmoil and civil war. After Perygra's death, people across the nation lashed out in fear of the damage unchecked progress had caused, plunging Nurad into a technological dark age. Populat workers burned record halls and sabotaged Municipal Charms, aided by the regulators who should have stopped them. Tripartite officials closed factories and banned whole fields of science from study. Record numbers of Sodalts were arrested or became victims of mob justice.

While the people mourned, Perygra's favorite protege was called to her metropolitan ascension directly above the founder's city-grave as the new metropolis of Wisant. The Five Sodalities championed Wisant as Perygra's rightful successor and new capital city, as did the fledgling metropolis' populace, many of them opposed to the Time of Silence's technophobia. The newfound distrust of progress was everything Perygra would have hated, Wisant and her people argued. Only by continuing her great work could Nurad ensure their founder had not died in vain. The elder metropolis of Shastar disagreed, siding with those who now feared Perygra's work, and the clash of cities became the civil conflict now known as the Shuttered Lamp War.

During wartime, the traditional divisions of caste were bent and broken in the name of necessity. Skilled Populat performed roles that would normally have been filled by Tripartite leaders, or labored aside Sodalts with such expertise that the two became nearly indistinguishable at times. Harsh punishments such as exile and execution became almost unheard of, as ever able body was necessary for work at all levels of society.

Nurad has never returned to the heights of its early progressive era. The people lacked the foundation of expertise and technology needed to make great leaps, and wartime had depleted the Tripartite's ranks and left Nuradi society with little centralized authority. The divide that caused the Shuttered Lamp War still leaves an impact on modern Nuradi culture, with leaders throughout the nation's cities described as Wisantian progressives or Shastarian traditionalists.

The Returners

The Returners are among the few Nuradi who go beyond advocating traditionalism to actually calling for a return to the Silent Century. A small and unpopular voidbringer cult, they preach the blasphemy that no one but Autochthon himself should have advanced tools. It draws in recruits from those harmed by technology: injured workers, discredited Sodalts, or people caught in the collateral damage of Alchemical heroism. Some join for vengeance, but the true believers seek to improve the world by ridding it of harmful advancements, returning Autochthonia to a pristine, prehuman state. Returners work in small cells with strict anonymity, so that the exposure of one cell can't threaten the operations of others.

The Approaching Blight

Nurad now faces an existential crisis. It draws ever closer to a massive blight zone first discovered years ago, the size and scope of which could be enough to destroy the entire nation. As it approaches, the signs and effects become increasingly difficult to ignore. Scouts come back gremlinized and twisted machine spirits breach the nation-sphere in miniature displays of what's to come. Beyond its existence, the details

of what's inside the blight zone are hard to pin down, and each new piece information costs lives.

Dying gremlins and captured voidbringers have spat out the name “Athox,” an Apostate metropolis that they claim lies within the encroaching blight zone. Such information is contradictory and unconfirmed. Even the most thorough interrogations produce only babbled nightmares instead of answers. Athox has a hundred million citizens, a thousand citizens, only one citizen living in its heart. Athox’s streets are made from melted steel and flesh, with mouths that open and devour trespassers. Athox sends out tendril-tunnels that burrow like worms and writhe with every step taken inside them. Athox lines its walls with eyes they and sees through all of them. Nurad is desperate for concrete information about the possibility, and has tasked Alchemical expeditions with investigating any evidence of Athox that they may find.

Every Nuradi has an opinion about the approaching Blight and how the nation should react. A slim majority wish to fortify the nation’s cities, stockpile resources, and weather the blight zone until Nurad passes through. This is presently the National Tripartite Assembly’s official approach, though not as set in stone as its proponents would like. The first large Municipal Charm for this strategy, the Inviolable Metropolitan Sphere, is being built around Shastar, a retractable dome that will encase the city in nigh-unbreakable orichalcum alloy. Current projections expect Nurad’s resources are sufficient to construct comparable Municipal Charms for approximately 80% of its metropoli, leaving open the question of who gets left out in the cold.

Outside of this majority view, there are countless opinions on how to solve the problem of the Blight rather than simply enduring it. Some metropoli have begun developing Municipal Charms that are hypothetically capable of cleansing the Blight, while some Sodalts propose great city-engines capable of changing Nurad’s trajectory. A radical fringe speaks of a nation-wide evacuation. The most controversial option would be asking neighbors for aid in any way. While the National Tripartite Assembly struggles to get any kind of unified plan together, some cities’ Tripartite Assemblies have discreetly reached out to neighboring nations in hopes of finding assistance.

Culture

Nurad is a nation of dichotomies. Scientific progressives coexist with reactionary conservatism. Metropolitan citydwellers work alongside visiting nomads. As a matter of survival, Nurad has learned to handle these differences civilly, largely taking an agree-to-disagree attitude for the sake of avoiding another civil war. With the Blight on the horizon, however, long-held differences are beginning to boil over. It’s difficult to live and let live with the nation’s future on the line.

Religion

Ancient scripture from Perygra’s time describes the future as something to be discovered and invented. With guidance from Autochthon, the greatest inventor to ever exist, Nurad would strive for similar genius. Progress would uplift its citizens, she taught, and its citizens would uplift Autochthon in turn.

After Perygra’s death, the Theomachracy reworded her vision: the future would be built, brick-by-brick and bolt-by-bolt, over centuries of hard work. As Autochthon’s great industrial organs thundered and pumped every day, so would his people swing their hammers and work steadily towards a brighter future.

While this doctrinal schism is ancient history, its impact is still felt in the modern day. The orthodox view within the Theomachracy might be considered a compromise between Perygra’s sacred innovation and the subsequent doctrine of sacred labor. All agree that Autochthon is a god to be not just venerated, but emulated. Every act of creation, from drawing up new blueprints to hammering a bolt on the assembly line, pleases the Great Maker when done with skill and care. Nuradi workers weld scrap metal into statuettes of the Divine Ministers, compose stories and poetry about the deeds of their favorite

Alchemicals, and make instruments or write songs to play with workgroups.

In the face of the oncoming blight, Nurad has begun controversial new experiments with the state-sanctioned worship of Champions. The very idea borders on heresy, but Nurad's Theomachracy grows increasingly willing to compromise on the issue if it will strengthen the Champions who stand between them and the Blight. Alchemicals may request to participate in this experiment, though some simply have a state-sanction cult assigned to them, whether for a particular mission or indefinitely.

Castes

The concept of strict castes has always been somewhat fluid in Nurad. Even after the Second Grand Conclave, the formal distinctions between Populat and Tripartite were never as rigid in Nurad as they were elsewhere in the Octet. In the aftermath of Perygra's death, sheer necessity broke down the strict divisions of caste even further, to such an extent that some social mobility between castes is now possible. The Sodalities recruit apprentices known as vocants from promising Populat children, training them as specialists to assist the Sodalts in their labors. The Olgotary and Theomachracy are less porous, but their boundaries would be considered impermissibly blurred by more orthodox nations.

The Eleemosynary

Originating in Nurad's prewar era of art and culture, the Eleemosynary are a sub-caste of the Theomachracy unique to the nation, distinguished by an elaborate luminescent tattoo around their soulgem. Eleemosyne are the living embodiment of worship. Their duty is to live the rest of their life in constant prayer and devotion. Traditionally, this has taken the form of life as mendicants, sometimes performing perpetual recitations of prayer or public acts of self-mortification.

Eleemosyne wander between towns and cities, surviving only off the generosity of others and whatever they can scavenge from the refuse. They contribute no labor to the nation but their devotion, yet they connects Nurad to its ancient roots and sacred traditions. The Eleemosynary inspires Nuradi citizens through their acts of devotion.

In recent times, the Eleemosynary has been opened to members of other castes. A petitioner must seek the blessings of a senior cleric, who consults with peers and prays for guidance before granting the status. Tripartite members of the Olgotary or the Sodalities are far more likely to be admitted than Populat, though the latter aren't excluded entirely.

Historically, there've been few proposals to disband the Eleemosynary or prohibit new members, and all have been wildly unpopular. However, as the Blight approaches, the plutarchy has begun to reassess the value of the sub-caste. Some have proposed prohibiting any new admissions to sub-caste until the Blight is no longer a threat, while others seek to dissolve the sub-caste entirely. Opponents condemn this vehemently, arguing that destroying the spiritual heart of Nurad would all but hand the nation to the Blight.

The Gateway People

The Gateway People are a nomadic group that travels Nurad's nation chamber. Nurad does not see them as tunnel folk — instead, they're viewed as fellow Nuradi, called the gateway folk, the descendants of those who sought to retain their old ways even after *Perfected Hydraulic Grace* led them to their new nation. The route takes them near many Nuradi cities and towns, where they both raid settlements for resources and conduct trade with the sedentary Nuradi. Their nomadic wandering is not just a way of life, but a sacred pilgrimage. They stop to perform sacred maintenance on Autochthon, treat with the machine spirits who inhabit the nation chamber, and and watch for signs of the Blight.

Most gateway people clans live in groups ranging from fifteen to one hundred members, sleeping in modular buildings of lightweight and portable plastics. Typically, a single leader guides each group, often the eldest, the most skilled, or or the most knowledgeable about their path.

The gateway people maintain long oral histories ,which they recite in their rituals. Their faith is far different from Octet orthodoxy, with most worshipping a trinity of Domadamod, Noi and Ku. Many tribes use naturally formed gears, cogs and similar components as a sort of found money. Called biawat, this sacral currency is usually sewn onto ritual garments that are exchanged or transferred, such as wedding robes, pact-forming sashes and funereal shrouds.

New clans crop up in the wake of wars and disasters as the dispossessed wander into the nation ' s wild places to live off of what they can tap from its conduits. This way of life is still far safer than that of the tunnel people, but it ' s frowned upon by the Tripartite Assemblies. These bands rarely last long; once things get back to normal, most of their members desire to return to society, and those who don ' t are easily dealt with by the regulators.

The threat of the approaching Blight poses the most danger to the gateway people, as increased gremlin threats make the paths routes they travel all the more dangerous. Entire camps have gone missing in the night. Some clans see hunting down these gremlins as their duty, while others seek to petition Nurad ' s cities and towns for refuge. Some have considered breaking off from Nurad entirely, taking their chances as tunnel folk in the Reaches beyond the nation chamber taking their chances in the Reaches.

Metropoli

All of Nurad ' s major metropoli are built into the nation chamber so that they face inwards. Most have substantial airship docking infrastructure around their centermost districts, as the nation chamber ' s size makes intercity air transit convenient and relatively safe. In the empty dark between them, each metropolis shines like a star, creating artificial constellations by which to navigate.

Major metropoli in Nurad play a larger role in politics than anyone would like to admit, and Tripartite Assemblies generally agree with their city ' s general worldview. Shastar and Wissant are the thought leaders of Nurad ' s conservative and progressive movements, respectively, though they ' ve taken a far less active hand since the Shattered Lamp War proved how disruptive their involvement could be. Other major metropoli have learned from their example, subtly promoting their own ideological views within the Tripartite and seeking to recruit young Alchemicals who may be sympathetic to their views.

Perygra, the Corpse in Crystal

Nurad ' s former capital lies dead, encased in impenetrable crystal that burns with refracted rainbow fire during the day. At night it gleams coldly from within, lit by ancient Essence discharges still trapped in the crystal. The city itself is broken, its great gleaming engines and bright orichalcum domes shattered by the impossible pressures of its confinement.

Perygra is visited only rarely. Sometimes it ' s a Soldalt, seeking to studying her ruin. At other times, clerics come to speak prayers of morning, or gateway peoples walk round her walls in their own observances. None are so foolish as to try to scavenge from her.

For hundreds of years, Nurad has treated Perygra as a sacred thing, both a tomb and a divine warning. Any talk of a mission to recover salvage resources or recycle materials from the dead metropolis has been met with absolute disapproval. However, as Nurad grows closer to the Blight, the National Tripartite Assembly has approved salvage operations, sending teams of Sodalts guarded by Champions to burrow into the city through the few towers that jut out of the crystal.

Shastar, the City of Stone

Shastar is both Nurad's capital and its oldest surviving city. It's home to Nurad's most conservative elements, who find a political ally in the metropolis himself, for whom the Shuttered Lamp War is still recent history and who still grieves the loss of Perygra.

Shastar spread along the shores of the Dir Reservoir, a great lake of oil. His white jade cliffs, made gray by soot, descend in a hundred wharves for the ships that ply the reservoir, carrying passengers and cargos to towns on islands and the reservoir's far shore. Chimneys belch clouds of soot from his Lithic Condensation Engine, which filters sediment from Autochthon's conduits and compacts it into blocks of a durable, fine-grained black substance that Nurad call "stone."

Perygra's death is an object lesson in the result of unchecked experimentation and advancement for Shastar's people. Progress is still valued, but with a preference for slow, small incrementation over wild leaps. Citizens feel a solemn duty to safeguard Nurad against future disasters like the one that claimed Perygra, and the city's Tripartite Assembly is among the nation's greatest opponents of radical innovations in the nation. Shastar himself has lain dormant in recent centuries, but he awoke when the city received news of the Blight. He's taken an active role in advising the Tripartite and mentoring young Alchemicals to mentor. He hopes to steer the nation toward choosing a cautious, measured path that aligns with his conservative philosophy.

The National Tripartite Assembly that meets in Shastar is much less conservative than the municipal assembly. Several members have reached out to other nations for assistance with the Blight. A large assembly of Yugashi blight augurs has taken up residence in the city, and work with local Sodalts. Nurad Others recruit political allies and Champions who embrace Perygra's philosophy over Shastar's, planning to take bold action from within the city itself.

Wisant, the City Above

Like the fabled sun of Creation, orichalcum Wisant hangs golden and bright from the highest point of Nurad's ceiling. A vast crystal spire, extends downward from her central tower, glowing and fading in time to indicate the passage of the shift cycle. At its brightest, a traveler can walk safely along the nation chamber's floor below without the need for any other light. At the base of the Spear (or its top, depending on your point of view) sits the Infinite Luminance Engine, a sphere of orichalcum and adamant that projects a pulsing light into the Reaches, powering Autochthon's nervous system. Surplus light powers the spire's shifting illumination. Just above this Municipal Charm sits the Collegium of Divine Incandescence, an internationally renowned research hub led by the Luminors.

Wisant is not the nation's capital, but her citizens seem keen to forget that fact. It's a hub of innovation unmatched by any other Nuradi metropoli, a center of airship manufacture, the chemical extraction of flammable gases, and the development of automata. Wisant herself is an ardent advocate for these pioneering efforts, seeing the Shuttered Lamp War as far from the end of the argument. Projects that might meet with censure in other metropoli are easily tolerated here. At times, the metropolis herself has aided in concealing controversial experiments.

Wisant's Tripartite Assembly has reached out to Claslat to little avail, and is actively working to find any other nation that will assist them. Their Scholars are not sitting idly to wait for aid, though, and have begun working with her to design and construct Municipal Charms that could potentially purge the Blight, weaponize the Great Maker's geomancy against gremlins, or any of a number of desperate measures that are still seen as superior to Shastar's orichalcum shell.

Transnational Relations

Nurad has leaned towards isolationism for much of its history, going through periods of aggressive xenophobia. Attitudes have been less extreme for several centuries, especially as the coming convergence brings opportunities for trade, but Nurad has not made any close friends. Its largest export is airships, one area in which Nuradi innovation has never faltered. By keeping the best in fuel and lighter-than-air gasses as well-guarded secrets, but providing them at very reasonable cost, Nurad encourages trade partners to remain friendly to keep the shipments coming. Nurad's conservative outlook has long kept them out of conflicts with the other nations. Nurad's diplomatic efforts today are focused on saving the nation. Many in the National Tripartite Assembly believe that without the help of others in the Octet, their nation is doomed to fall to the Blight.

The Nuradi see **Claslat** as their best hope to unite the Octet to combat the Blight and are frustrated with that nation's apparent distraction rebuilding Sova. Sova's crisis is past (the Nuradi say), while disaster looms in Nurad's future. Redirecting efforts and resources to combat the Blight now would be far more effective than trying to rebuild later.

Yugash has become a vocal advocate for aid to Nurad. They have offered their expertise combatting the Blight, and a delegation from Yugash now resides in their expanded embassy in Shastar. Yugash see the threatened nation as being potentially receptive to its Sirinite heresy, and while it has yet to take root, the creed of Sirin appeals to desperate Nuradi.

Nurad's Alchemicals

Among the consequences of Nurad's long history of tension and civil war, social convention dictates that Champions are to remain neutral on major matters of policy. It may be clear where a given Champion stands, but stating it openly would be gauche, if not outright offensive. Nuradi Alchemicals pursue projects political agendas as often as in any other nation, but go to great lengths to keep their motives hidden.

With the Blight's approach, new Alchemicals are an increasing rarity. The expenditure of so many valuable materials all at once won't be possible for much longer, and cities will have to pull resources to produce even a few new Champions. The next batch of Alchemicals made in Nurad might be the nation's last, and their best hope at finding a way to combat the Blight.

Thunderous Horizon Vanguard, **The Gateway Champion**: In her last incarnation, *Vanguard* was one of the gateway people. Inspired by memories of life among them and her duty as a Champion, she sees the protection of her former kinfolk as her sacred duty. In her most common configuration, *Vanguard* stands over seven feet tall, a broad-shouldered, athletic woman covered in green Charms and plating. She decorates herself with elaborate jewelry made from mechanical debris she's found along the road, and can often be found watching over her compatriots beyond the metropoli's walls when not occupied by her other duties.

Vanguard fears that the Tripartite Assemblies's plans to fortify the nation against the Blight will leave the gateway people unprotected. She's right. She's turned to Perygra, seeking both political allies and the possibility of innovations that might safeguard the gateway people. Given *Vanguard*'s service record, the National Tripartite Assembly is willing to give her some lenience, but it's preparing to order her return and reassignment, unaware of how fiercely she'll fight to protect what she believes in.

Intricately Artful Dancer, **Champion of the Aesthetic**: Nurad commissioned *Intricately Artful Dancer* to be a tactician, to help the nation through the coming Blight. They got an artist instead. The Starmetal Caste stands shy of five feet, with delicate features reminiscent of a sickly child. As clever as he is principled, *Dancer* is frequently underestimated, He is a proud and enthusiastic patron of the arts,

speaking out vehemently against any effort to salvage materials from monuments or artworks. He believes that without the hope brought by “useless” art, there will be no surviving the Blight. Wisant’s lecturers has gathered behind him, which has bordered on illegal civil disobedience in protests against shocking acts of destruction.

Notable Individuals

Saven, Autocrat of Shastar: Among the most influential plutarchs in Nurad, Saven exemplifies the conservatism of his home city. Saven is well into his eighth decade of life, but aging gracefully and prone to vanity in his well-kept hair and fine robes. Despite his politics, he’s no opponent to technological progress in some areas. He lost both legs during a factory visit where he acted to save a group of workers, and now alternates between ingeniously constructed prosthetic limbs and a wheeled chair of starmetal that he can control with a thought. These visual reminders of his heroism has helped advance his political career, and he takes great care to highlight them.

Even in the face of the Blight, Saven holds firm to his convictions and resists change, championing the “wait and see” approach. Careful planning and an absolute refusal to cut corners have made him an effective leader for the last twenty years, and earned him enough friends and favors to give him a firm grip on the city’s Tripartite Assembly. Right now, he’s put the full force of his influence behind the plan to fortify Shastar behind the Inviolable Metropolitan Sphere, and crushing any opposition to his goal. Wisant can do as she pleases, but not if it threatens his city.

Pothal, the Dragon of Nurad: Once nothing more than a worker in Wisant, Pothal’s life was transformed when he Exalted as one of the rare few Dragon-Blooded found in Autochthonia (p. XX). The teenaged Exalt almost immediately began to show up the city’s regulators, preceptors, and Sodalts with his elemental power and Essence-honed intellect.

Before Pothal, Nurad hadn’t seen a Dragon-Blooded Exaltation in any mortal’s living memory, leaving the Tripartite Assembly with little idea of what to do with him. Some have argued for executing him as a voidbringer dissident, but with the coming Blight, Nurad cannot afford to waste such a valuable ally.

Pothal’s fate has become a proxy issue for Nurad’s eternal debate. Pothal has asked that he be allowed to work alongside the Scholars, a request that’s been backed by the Sodality and many progressives in the Olgotary. Conservative voices would like him to be kept as far away as possible from the Sodalts’ innovations, leading to a compromise solution. Pothal is now an asset of the state — strategic, diplomatic, and otherwise — under the close scrutiny of an Alchemical Circle assigned to his oversight.

Sova

Sova is a nation brought to its knees by war and disaster. Its rulers are suborned to the foreign body known as the Sovcommit, which struggles to heal the nation and reshape its culture. Ancient lineages challenge the government’s authority atop a wave of nationalist backlash. The way back from the brink is uncertain. Only time will tell if Sova will recover, or be torn apart.

Sova does not inhabit a single nation chamber, but a score of vast chamber-shafts within an organ-continent and the spaces between. Rivers of molten metal debouch out of the shafts’ outer walls, casting ruddy light and heat as they cascade into slag lakes below. Along and between shaft walls, Sovans make their homes.

Sova is among the more populous nations even after a decade of death, yet geographically almost as small as Jarish. Its architecture is famed for its riotously bright colors and cramped, slant-roofed streets. Networks of heat-sink pipes extend from exurbs along geomantic lines, extruding like spidering vines into

shafts and uninhabited tunnels.

History

O Sova, elden Sova, nation of tradition and tribe. How fervid its climes, how refulgent its treasures — how searing its people's blood burns! Thus begins one of many old ballads about Sova, painting a picture of an exotic and unchanging land for the rest of the Octet to marvel at. Like all such ballads, it tells lies.

Sova has long stood apart from its peers, particularly in its embrace of the family. Eighty-six tribes followed the nation's founder into Autochthonia, and modern Sovans still trace their lineages back to them — though their genealogical records contain many gaps, marking societal collapses or the destruction of records. The birthing crèches used in the rest of the Octet never took hold here, even after the Second Grand Conclave. The prominence of family only grew after the metropolitan ascension of *Inspiring Monument of Virtue*, the nation's reborn founder. Now known as Imtu, her Municipal Charms allow the Sovans to create the *malki*, holy ancestor-automatons called *malki*.

The Era of Strife

The Wars of Dynasty that engulfed the Octet never spread to Sova, whose familial traditions long predated the dynastic influence of the Elevated. After the overthrow of the Elevated, the rest of the Octet condemned Sova, viewing its ancient lineages as state-sanctioned dynasty cults, and its *malki* as blasphemous idols. The Second Grand Conclave that followed in the wars' wake did not forbid Sova its practices, but the Octet's more powerful nations took political and economic steps to subordinate the nation to them and the Tripartite system.

This diplomatic resolution proved unpopular at home, dissatisfied with the reorganization of Sovan society and the concessions made to other nations. An armed coalition of dissident factions staged a coup d'état, assassinating the nation's leader and inciting a civil war that lasted decades.

The Reconstruction Era

In the aftermath of the Era of Strife, Sova turned its focus to rebuilding the damage and expanding its resource-gathering operations, building new settlements deep in the nation's shaft chambers. It seldom had contact with other nations beyond close-by Gulak and periodic proximity with Yugash. For most of the Octet, Sova became a nation known mostly through sensationalist accounts, caricatured as an exotic land forever trapped in the past by peculiar traditions. These stereotypes have lingered on even as subsequent shifts in Autochthonia's tectonics have brought Sova back into contact with old neighbors.

The Conurbation Era

In 4848 DA, the capital metropolis of Ixut activated the first Lined Power Distribution Node, linking its Essence grid to substations many miles away. For the first time in Autochthonian history, villages and resource-gathering camps could benefit from the power and emergency shielding of a nearby metropolis, and Municipal Charms could be installed in these exurbs. This phenomenon became known as conurbation.

Sova hailed conurbation as a tremendous breakthrough, allowing full settlement of areas closer to resource-rich shafts. Before conurbation, dormitories were forced to hot-bunk three shifts constantly, personal privacy was a fevered dream and suffering was abundant. Now, children of the Tripartite are afforded their own rooms. However, conurbation has drained Sova's resources significantly, locking them into a spiral of increasing resource debt. The siphon-towns on the edges of the shafts enjoy greater safety than ever before, but their yield declines even as costs increase.

The War of Ashes

Nine years ago, the city of Ixut died, taking with it fully half of Sova's conurbation network with it. The city's sudden and inexplicable death ended Sova's new fortunes, leaving the nation reeling. Sova sought aid from Yugash the only nation in easy contact — but their desperate requests were refused, without explanation. National grief turned to rage, and some in Sova began to blame Yugashi sabotage for Ixut's death. A desperate Sova resolved to take what they needed for Yugash, marking the beginning of the War of Ashes.

The war was apocalyptic, devastating Sovan exurbs and decimating its population. Sova ranged deep into Yugashi territory, laying siege to its metropoli, but the strife on both sides and the strip-mining that sustained it ultimately provoked an immune response from within Autochthonia, sending the two warring nations drifting in different directions.

Modern Sova

The war's formal end came with the Harmegis Accords, signed in Claslat. Claslat's Olgotary and their international allies saw an opportunity: by joining together to repair Sova, they could foster stronger ties with it while also correcting its cultural deviance with a gentle hand through aid incentives. The multinational Sovan Rehabilitation Committee — colloquially, the Sovcommit — was born, with a mission objective time of two years.

Seven years later, things have scarcely improved in Sova. People are suffering, afraid, angry, and ashamed. Resources are scarce forcing Sovans to rely on corruption and crime to survive. The Sovcommit is massively unpopular, and faces increasing challenges from the nation's ancient lineages.

Almost every Sovan has lost loved ones the past decade, leaving factories understaffed and painfully quiet. Grief, shame, rage, and fear twist in the nation's heart. Reactionary nationalism entwines with calls for autonomy, just as disdain for tradition does with supporting the Sovcommit — the nation stands at odds with itself.

The Sovan Rehabilitation Committee

There was such hope in the beginning. The Octet banding together to save Sova from crisis, to guide it onto a better path — youthful Tripartites' eyes glittered with optimism as they labored, dreaming up plans for a restored, modernized Sova.

That dream is dead. Its corpse drips in the teeth of stalled and broken gears. Hope, too, is nearly gone. What remains is discontent and disappointment as the people live under the compromise for no one called the Sovcommit. Autochthon save Sova.

The Sovcommit is composed of foreign plutarchs that are formally authorized to act by Sova's National Tripartite Assembly. Officially, the Sovcommit's remit is limited to advising Sova's Tripartite and assisting in their regular duties. In practice, it's become inextricably entangled with the workings of Sovan governance. It's a sprawling, dysfunctional bureaucracy, and yet it's responsible for keeping countless Sovans alive.

The Sovcommit controls the disbursement of aid, be it nutrient slurry for a sector or the clearing of machine spirits from broken exurbs. In exchange, the committee also requires a commitment to comply with standards imposed by the Sovcommit: factory productivity thresholds, scoring low on cultural deviance incident frequency, Tripartite compliance with Sovcommit procedure, and more. Sectors that are not in compliance must demonstrate their commitment to improving the situation before they can receive aid, which delays additional requests and often involves heightened Sovcommit oversight.

The Sovcommit was intended to ensure resources would be used as effectively as possible. Overwhelmingly, it fails to do this — the rubrics are unrealistic at best and impossible at worst, flawed both in their design and implementation. Only corruption and painful local mismanagement allow Sovans to regularly meeting standards, and even then, every report must be reviewed then approved by senior members. Other nations could devote greater resources to reforming the Sovcommit, but why would they? As far as they're concerned, it's well within the acceptable margin of era.

The Sovcommit comprises three divisions, each attached to one branch of Sova's Tripartite: the Topaz Division works with the Olgotary in governance, the Amethyst Division provides support to the Five Sodalities, and the Sapphire Division oversees religious orthodox in the Theomachracy. High-ranking members issue assignments, propose policy internally and to Tripartite Assemblies, and elect a leader, the division's Secretary.

Topaz Division: Composed primarily of plutarchs, the Topaz Division Is the linchpin of Sovan bureaucracy, alternatively obstructing and facilitating key processes in accordance with procedure. Bureaucratic outcomes vary widely depending on individual and national influence: At its best, the division save lives en masse through sound policy; at worst, they damn entire communities with austerity measures and harsh requirements for aid. The Topaz Secretary is a Claslati plutarch named Telo, who scrupulously ensures no unflattering reports leave Sova.

Amethyst Division: The War of Ashes hit Sova's Sodalities harder than any other Tripartite branch, leaving the nation largely reliant on the Amethyst Division, composed of Sodalts from across the Octet. They lead exurban salvage and repair operations, and work to repair Sova's supply of nutrient slurry and other resources. As often as not, Sodalite insularity allows AmethystDivision to siphon away magical materials and other components for personal usage, or smuggle them back to their home nations. The Amethyst Secretary is an obsessive Nuradi Harvester named Koban. She funnels resources towards loyal Sovcommit Sodalts building experimental Municipal Charms in abandoned exurbs, enraptured by the technology's potential and how it might benefit her own nation.

Sapphire Division: The Sapphire Division's upper ranks are dominated by orthodox Jarishites. Under their oversight, Sova's Populat fear undercover preceptors in their factories, while lectors recite parables warning against apostasy. Every public demonstration of impiety or cultural deviancy, be it as mild as an old swear, can be a strike against a Sovan or their entire community. Yet the Sapphire Division also works to hold communities together — in a nation as despondent as Sova, its lectors also offer sorely needed joy and spiritual guidance when the Sovan Theomachracy's ranks fall short. The Sapphire Secretary is the former celebrant of Qune, a genial woman named Yrina who believes the greatest charity is to redeem the Sova's soul.

Sovcommit ,embers are recognizable by their brass-colored armbands. They come from all over the Octet, though most are Claslati. Sovan Tripartite that demonstrate loyalty and usefulness are granted junior membership in the Committee, though they remain subordinate to foreign members. The power that comes with that elevation immediately distinguishes such Tripartite from their peers, granting them de facto authority beyond their rank.

Sova's National Tripartite Assembly regularly assigns Alchemicals to assist the Sovcommit with their efforts. Even when not on official assignment, Champions join in Sovcommit missions that truly live up to its benevolent ideals. The Sovcommit mistrusts Sova's Champions on an institutional level, as it has zero direct ability to compel obedience to their internal protocols. Many Sovan Champions work to cultivate influence within the Sovcommit through corruption or humanitarian appeals, with hopes of reforming the organization.

The Price of Cooperation

The byzantine procedures of the Sovcommit have been shaped by political fractiousness. The committee's founders hoped that the Octet would participate in good faith, even as they maneuvered for political advantage. That hope proved overly optimistic.

The result is a maze of vague regulations and special concerns that prioritizes sending pleasing reports to participant nations over efficacy. Sovcommit meetings are battlegrounds for competing national interests, procedures, and strategy, where even the most charitable actors must play politics. Claslati plutarchs falsefy positive reports to bolster the apparent size of Claslat's international cache. Jarishites pursues cultural correction and imposition of religious orthodoxy at all costs, directing aid to encourage this. The Nuradi have their Sodalites run experiments on Municipal Charms in preparation for their impending Blight collision. Even Yugash is present, having agreed to internationally legitimize its newly-installed Sirinite government. They send no resources and only a bare minimum of plutarch diplomats, who are often suspected of being Sirinite spies invested in sabotaging Sova.

Culture

Since the emergence of the the Sovcommit, Sova's culture has come under their bootheel. Practitioners of ancient traditions face intense persecution. Tripartite Assemblies are offered incentives for the suppression of practices proscribed by the Sovcommit, and the promotion of orthodox Octet culture.

Sovan fashion is shaped by the heat. Colors trends towards spiral patterns of white and warm colors. Fashionable Tripartite wear little clothing artfully arranged, often with personal coolant rigs. Populat and Lumpen remove or tie off parts of their work clothing; a safety hazard necessary to avoid heatstroke.

Sovan foods tend to be moisture-heavy. Honey rats — special-bred rodents with abdomens swollen from exotic chemicals — provide the staple food of Sovan cuisine, their honey used in every facet of cooking.

Religion

Sova's emphasis on family carries over to its religious practices. Sovans revere their ancestral dead, though they do not worship them directly. Orthodox Sovan tradition teaches that the living carry their ancestors within their veins, physically inheriting their passions and wisdom. Sovans carry icons of famous ancestors and invoking them at meals and for emphasis.

Other Sovan customs are more a part of everyday life than a conscious religious ovservation. Wordless exclamations are uttered when someone sheds blood, to ward against misfortune. Lectors perform palmistry for anxious congregants. Recreational hallucinogens are prized for communion with ancestors, alchemical formulae derived from the careful study of irreplaceable samples of fungi.

The Sovcommit is patient and methodical in its efforts to reform Sovan orthodoxy, prioritizing those heresies that are actively detrimental to the Committee's goals over more harmless heterodoxies. In time, however, the Sovcommit intends to see Sova fully aligned with Octet orthodoxy.

The Lineages

Sova's lineages trace their descent back to those who followed their nation's founder into Autochthonia,

though many of these claims are more a matter of belief or ideology than fact. Existing outside of the Tripartite system, they have traditionally met in the Caucus of Great Families to resolve disputes, led by an elected figure known as *the* Sova. Over time, the lineages has dwindled in number, assimilated into other families, annihilated in civil war, or emigrating to other nations. The Second Grand Conclave did not fully displace the lineages' power, and family ties contribute a great deal to political corruption, but the National Tripartite Assembly holds the ultimate veto.

The Sovcommit has prioritized the dismantlement of the lineages, seen as a major obstacle to assimilating into larger Octet orthodoxy. Their persecution has dragged Sova's great families back into the spotlight by persecuting members, putting old vendettas on pause as the lineages rally against the Sovcommit's political influence. Some cultivate popular support by outcompeting the Sovcommit's charity — while the Committee has access to greater resources, the lineages are able to deliver what limited aid they can quickly, and without onerous obligations.. Almost overnight, the lineages were reborn as symbols of national pride and autonomy. Nationalist rhetoric exalts them as examples of Sovan excellence, with some among their new supporters argue that the Caucus should lead the country, not the Sovcommit or the National Tripartite Assemblies.

Lineages are notionally families, though a lack of blood ties isn't necessarily an obstacle — some members trace their lineage back centuries, especially if they can bribe a cleric to falsify genealogical records. They're diffuse networks scattered throughout the nation, their members given special exception to meet and socialize across caste lines. They serve as cross-caste networks of power, facilitating favor-trading, nepotism, and collective support and coordination. This disproportionately benefits the Tripartite, who typically make up a minority within each lineage, but Populat members benefit from increased social status and support. Lumpen benefit not at all, disowned upon punishment.

Each seeks Champions to patronize and cooperate with, both for security, influence, and the legitimacy that comes with an Alchemical's favor. A handful of Champions have begun to publicly associate with certain lineages and cooperate with them. Such Chosen have avoided censure thus far only by remaining careful not to criticize in the Sovcommit or the National Tripartite Assembly.

The **Kadurai** are a lineage mostly made up of regulators and Populat miners, known for their martial prowess. The war turned them into heroes with immense sway among Populat who fought in militias. They agitate against the Sovcommit with violent nationalist rhetoric, citing all they've sacrificed as proof of their patriotism. They lead their supporters from connurbated siphon-towns, posing as tunnel folk to rob Sovcommit supply shipments and distribute them to communities deemed uncooperative.

Stories tell of the **Hokural** lineage's mystic teachings and eccentricity. Other Sovans give them a wide distance, as they're said to lay curses on others and possess unsettling oracular abilities. Theomachrats from within the lineage have historically worked against this, but the Sovcommit has renewed the persecution of the Hokural as heretics, with rumors spreading that blame the lineage for sabotaging exurban functioning and wards. The most zealous Sovan nationalists seek Hokural blessings and prophetic advice — sometimes sincerely, sometimes using the lineage as cover for their own activities.

The **Elak** lineage enjoy celebrity as eloquent advocates for Sova, maintaining traditions of robust group debate. Tripartite Elak vie against the Sovcommit through treatises, sermons, and bureaucratic dissent in the tradition of their virtuous ancestors, while their Populat cousins organize and plan mass protests.

Few groups are as corrupt or feared as the **Douwi** lineage. Its plutarchs and shift chiefs are fast-tracked into positions of power by other Douwi moreso than in most lineages. They claim to defend Sova against threats in the shadows, In practice, they're organized criminals who employ spycraft, blackmail, and

intimidation to maintain power and privilege themselves and allies. A number of exurban directors are Douwi, and each keeps their community functioning smoothly. Those who cross Douwi directors or impede them taking their dues often disappear.

The Malki

The petitioner stands in darkness, whispers at the edge of his hearing. A prayer on his lips, he cuts his palm with a knife and raises it, pressing his bloodied hand against something hard. Light, gray and cold, spreading as his blood flows in whirling stone grooves carved across the vast obelisk of machinery. The whispers grow stronger; so too the light. He is in the maelstrom of communion, now, able to receive the wisdom of the ancestors if only his mind is prepared.

These are the ancient malki, Sova's most holy and taboo relics. They are not spoken of to outsiders, nor in public. Each lineage possesses one bearing their family's name, hidden within their sanctums in Imtu.. When *Inspiring Monument of Virtue* underwent her metropolitan ascension, she devised a Municipal Charm capable of mirroring the personalities and thoughts of a lineage's current leaders and synthesizing them into a gestalt intelligence.

Through the malki, the lineages may commune with the collective wisdom of their ancestors. Each malki appears as an indistinct human visage within a flickering screen, surrounded by rows of death masks and half-evaporated libations. Members of their lineage can commune with them through an offering of blood. The process is harrowing: receiving a malki's guidance and omens means being lost in a storm of distorted voices and faces. Many lineages ascribe almost oracular insight to their malki, heeding their guidance in political, cultural, and religious matters of great importance.

Most Sovans commune with their lineage's malki only twice: once upon coming of age and once before death. Great deeds in service to a lineage may be rewarded with additional visitations — a privilege usually reserved for Tripartite. Specially-trained Theomachrats and Sodalts tend to their lineages' malki, performing maintenance and occasionally interpreting their will. Their prolonged exposure is said to sometimes induce supernatural talents, such as oracular nightmares or spiritual sensitivity. Champions who assist the lineages are sometimes also allowed to commune with the malki, but are strongly advised not to observe them using their Cross-Phase Scanners.

More than anything else Sovan, tales of the malki have been sensationalized abroad. They're subjects of dark parables and sensationalist myth, idols that innocent Autochthonians are sacrificed unto. Even the truth would still be shocking, as many find the secret rites that Sovan lineages honor their malki with to be unnervingly heretical.

Government

In addition to suffering losses in the War of Ashes and the calamities that came with it, Sovan governance has been warped by the need to meet the Sovcommit's demands. The Olgotary, itself riddled with the lineages' corruption, now finds itself weighed down by foreign bureaucrats more preoccupied with the appearance of meeting quotas than their actual jobs. The war-ravaged Sodalities are forced to rely on foreign aid. The Theomachracy is all but entirely politically captured by Sapphire Sovcommit, remade as a tool of Octet orthodoxy.

Sova's Tripartite Assemblies overwhelmingly support the Sovcommit for a simple reason: it's been good for them. Before their intervention, the Sovan state was on the verge of disintegration; now, those who cooperate receive flourishing careers and luxuries. For all the Sovcommit's flaws, it's a profoundly effective scapegoat for public resentment, providing cover for the Tripartite's own misdoings.

Conurbation

Before conurbation, most Sovans lived within metropoli because of the pervasive heat of their surroundings. The main exceptions were those unfortunate Lumpen forced to work the siphon-towns that harvest Sova's slag lakes via mining skiffs. The dawn of the Era of Conurbation allowed the construction of safe, exurban communities connected to a core metropolis. Though each exurb was a massive resource investment, they would bring prosperity by ending metropolitan overcrowding and providing greater protection to siphon-towns.

These dividends would never come. Ixut's death devastated the conurbation network, and even those exurbs who escaped this were damaged severely during the war. Some settlements were entirely sheared off into the Reaches by Autochthonia's tectonics, and much of this damage has yet to be repaired. Communities struggle without consistent access to nutrient conduits, lighting fixtures, resources, or even the ability to remove rubble. Many struggle to maintain their conurbated Municipal Charms and to ward off machine spirits, gremlins, and tunnel folk.

Most exurbs are built on hexagonal grids a communal center. Given the Sovan landscape, they're often linked by metallic tunnels with walkways on either side above the tube, each spreading like a sectioned vein towards its neighbors. Conduits and resources route through these tunnels, interconnecting exurbs to each other and the nearest metropolis. Most are constructed horizontally, but some are built in vertical tiers ascending the walls of shaft-chambers.

Like most Autochthonian towns, exurbs are largely led by Populat directors, with few permanently stationed Tripartite members. Instead, Tripartite from the linked metropolis make regular circuits through its associate exurbs. Many try to shirk this duty, viewing it as dangerous drudgery. Consequently, exurban directors are often without adequate oversight or support, required to overstep their prescribed boundaries to fulfill work quotas. Whether people have resources for the month, the lights stay on, and the temperature remains bearable often depends if Tripartite deigned to visit — or to engage in the requisite corruption.

Exurbs today are direly overcrowded or struggling to keep afloat. Conditions are straining in both situations — overpopulated exurbs are cramped and sweaty nightmares full of irritable people, while in desolate communities, loneliness, overwork, and damaged environs make Sovans feel haunted. War veterans struggle in both situations, some applying their skills to rule or terrorize communities as bandit voidbringers. Resource theft has become a capital offense in some settlements, with perpetrators fed to gears by vengeful mobs. Even these harsh measures don't stop crime, whether it's organized criminal syndicates or thieves merely seeking to feed their people.

Metropoli

Imtu, Monument to Glory

Vast cylinders of varicolored jade illuminate the gaping darkness of a dead shaft. Huge pictographs telling the mythohistory of Sova span their breadth, a megalithic lattice interlaced with bustling trams, skiff docks, and pentagonal nexus neighborhoods that terminates in dozens of exurban satellites like twinkling constellations. This is Imtu, the Sovan capital.

Imtu is Sova's most populace city and the ancestral home of its lineages, who maintain forbidding sanctum-crypts at its nadir, where they keep their malki. Sovcommit dignitaries, Tripartite, and visiting diplomats keep to its radiant heights to politic, while dissidents move in the neglected depths of the city where lights malfunction. There in the dark, amid ancient regnal architecture and abandoned temples, they're able to organize safely. Imtu himself, a proud and easily amused metropolis, misses the glory days

of the lineages terribly. He favors their descendants, sometimes realigning city-cylinders to help them evade the law.

The Greater Imtu Conurbation weathered the war better than most, its damages mostly repaired. But relocated Populat have pushed its exurbs to the breaking point, with rioting a regular occurrence as they demand aid assistance from Imtu. The lineages enjoy immense popularity here — foreigners and Sovcommit wearing their armbands dare not walk unescorted.

Geful, Of Blazing Repose

The poet-priest *Refulgent Gemstone Versifier* chose to undertake her metropolitan ascension where three coursing slag-rivers debouche from a shaft walland meet. Compelled by the rivers' majesty, the Adamant Caste became the metropolis Geful. The city extrudes on diamond-encrusted pillars as a cliff of crystal and faceted glass, enclosed against the heat yet filled with wide-open spaces that let in cherry-red light. Each of the rivers — now called the Passions — flows through furrows atop the city's canopy, cascading off in different directions in burning curtains. Geful is called Sova's treasure, its most beautiful and famous city. Little wonder, then, that the Sovcommit has made Geful its home.

In the city square is Sovcommit Command. Once an art museum showcasing works inspired by Geful for all to enjoy, now its halls house only bureaucracy. Pacified and prosperous in the eyes of the Sovcommit, Geful has become the most cosmopolitan cities in Sova: Claslati debate chambers stand across from Gulaki dining halls that service shrouded Kamaki diplomats and Militat attachés. Foreign Tripartite vigorously enjoy themselves, working, politicing, and engaging in transparent corruption. Geful herself remains so distraught from the War of Ashes and the Sovcommit's ascendancy that she spurns all communication, responding only with tears of slag.

Geful's exurbs share their parent metropolis's prosperity and character in the region immediately outside the city, but this quickly abates further from the city. The Sovcommit's backyard is the definition of success in name only. Its exurbs are compliant with every Committee regulation, but beyond its immediate vicinity, exurbs suffer from poor construction, unperformed maintenance, and incompetent administrators, leaving longstanding infrastructural issues like regular lighting unaddressed.

Dead Ixut

Once, Ixut was the pride of Sova. Its vast soulsteel plates were darkly beautiful, boasting artful urban parks and boulevards. It was the birthplace of conurbation and the center of exurban production. Today, it is a mutilated corpse. Vaporized soulsteel swirls in inky screaming clouds that generate crimson lightning. On days when the storm eases, the city's cadaverous blight zone can be seen clearly in all its horror from the ruins of its exurbs.

Only those at the edge of Dead Ixut when the calamity struck survived. They recall a blast, light, and nothing more. Hundreds of thousands died in an instant. Ghosts and gremlinized corpses swarm within the dilapidated, ruins screaming in deafening chorus. Sorcerous wards have sealed the city, but Sodalites petition for an Alchemical expedition, that they might understand Ixut's fate —and if that could happen again.

Romos-Autrama

The devastating quakes that ended the War of Ashes caused the Sovan metropolis of Romos and the Yugashi metropolis of Autrama to collide with each other, caught together and isolated from their parent nations. The people of the two cites continued the war, fighting their new neighbors until Claslati peacekeepers and

Estasian mercenaries arrived to enforce the Treaty of Harmegis. An uneasy peace holds in the combined city but only just. Claslat pushes for expanded cooperation to unite the fractured cities into an exemplar of Octet cooperation, while tempers between the Sovans and Yugash run hot, risking sparking a second War of Ashes.

Transnational Relations

Sova's relationship to the rest of the Octet is complicated: the majority of its people resent the other nations and the Sovcommit, while their Tripartite work to keep Sova in its benefactor's good graces. Tensions are exacerbated by other nations' failure to grasp how far the Sovcommit has fallen short of its goals — it's only recently the idea that the Committee is struggling has taken hold beyond Sova.

The nations most ideologically invested in the Sovcommit are **Claslat**, **Jarish**, and **Estasia**, each assigning great import to the Octet's order. Collectively, they refuse to allow the others to reduce their assistance — Claslat in particular work to extract higher investments, determined to solve the problem with brute force.

Relations with **Yugash** remain cold in the wake of the War. Sovan nationalism is decidedly anti-Yugashi in character, with many characterizing Sirinites as voidbringers. And for all Sovan Tripartite try to get along with all members of the Sovcommit, the mutual animosity is palpable — Sova sends what spies it can spare into Yugash, sabotaging reconstruction efforts and monitoring the universal revolutionary rhetoric of some Sirinite sects.

Sova's Alchemicals

Sova is protective of its Champions, having lost many in recent years and needing each desperately. There are too many problems and too few Alchemicals: each knows their nation needs them in a myriad of ways, be it repair work, defending exurbs, spreading hope, or simply making sure everyone is tended to. They run from problem to problem, making judgement calls on what to prioritize and who best can assist them in serving the people.

Observant of the Order-Conferring Sequence returned from the War of Ashes changed: no longer a frivolous sorcerer-engineer, but a vaunted war hero, somber and resolved to protect Sovans. With their shimmering robes and long technicolor braids, they cut an ethereal figure. *Observant* has given their full support to the Sovcommit, resolved to save lives and prevent war ever happening again. They're uncomprehending of why others value tradition, viewing it as an inefficiency that imperils the well-being of Sova's mortal populace, rather than a source of strength. *Observant* oversees exurban reconstruction, sets sorcerous wards, and works to improve the Sovcommit's image.

Stern Whip of Industry is as quintessentially Sovan as honeyrats. Generations have grown up knowing the Jade Caste's towering red frame and smiling face. Populace tell stories of his selfless labors assisting them and roughly inspiring the undermotivated. Though frustrated with its flaws, *Whip* won't publicly criticize the Sovcommit. Instead he seeks to counter the Committee's influence by inculcating a sense of self-reliance and independence in Sovans through his deeds, believing that the masses can better themselves by following his model of discipline. He views the lineages as embarrassments, tempting Sovans into regression and infighting, and works to break up their power and corrupt influence.

The Soulsteel Caste ***Rot-Scouring Requirer*** collaborated eagerly with the Sovcommit at the start, cowing the uncooperative into capitulation. But after years of dysfunction, she's come to view the Committee as a parasite upon Sova, one she's responsible for exterminating. *Requirer* is a slight, dapper woman of

unnerving intensity, wide eyes glowing gray. She works to undermine the Sovcommit through contriving spectacular failures and false flag operations showcasing its flaws, such as supply shipments vanishing and exposed corruption scandals. Though she once persecuted the lineages, she's entered a strained alliance of convenience with the Kadurai, feeding them information on Sovcommit supply shipments to raid.

Notable Individuals

Elak Osim inherited the position of undersecretary to Grand Autocrat Najarut, a position of soft power that's historically been held by the plutarchs of her lineage. Intelligent and cultured, she has cultivated power beyond her station as a diligent, reliable aide to the grand autocrat, who delegates much of his day-to-day work to her. Osim works to disrupt the Sovcommit through bureaucratic means, aiming to see the lineages' traditional power restored. She liaises with Champions in pursuit of this, hoping that Alchemical backing would help convince the National Tripartite Aassembly to rip out the Sovcommit. Ideally, it will then be replaced with eager-to-cooperate lineages.

Yugash

Yugash is a nation wounded, still reeling from the devastation of the War of Ashes, finding hope and perseverance in religious zeal. It occupies the Grinding Archipelago, a set of irregular plates the size of subcontinents that rotate about each other like gears on a cam set. Sometimes the Archipelago's plates align in a single vast arc, while at other times, it forms a tight mesh of gears. Yugash's metropoli and towns are tucked into narrow, claustrophobic chambers within Autochthon's vast muscular system, connected by tram lines. Most are still marred by damage from the War of Ashes, rebuilding slowly, if at all.

Yugash's movement through the Expanse of Metal is much more erratic than other nation's, sometimes leaving it months away from any neighboring settlement. Yugash relies on resource-gathering expeditions into the Reaches to provide when cut off from other nations. In the tectonic aftermath of the War of Ashes, Yugash was shifted into its current position, deep within a tangle of dead conduits clustered around a failed industrial organ.

History

The hero Yugash was among the rare few who ventured beyond the Sacred Crèche to explore Autochthonia's perilous Reaches. After the eight heroes returned from their pilgrimage to the Godhead, Yugash was reborn as the Moonsilver Caste *Kaleidoscopic Armiger*, who would lead the Yugashi further into the Expanse of Metal than other nations dared and find the Grinding Archipelago.

The Moonsilver Century

Kaleidoscopic Armiger was among the first Alchemicals to become a metropoli, the quicksilver capital of Kadar. They chose the site of their ascension for its proximity to a well-mapped stretch of the Reaches, among the most bountiful and hospitable that Yugash had encountered. They knew it would only be so long before the city drifted away — but Yugash has long known that nothing lasts forever.

Kadar became the heart of ancient Yugash's ascendancy within the Octet. As resource-gathering expeditions launched from the metropolis reaped greater and greater spoils, the nation's political power grew. And with greater access to the magical materials, the ranks of the nation's Champions swelled. Yugash stockpiled much of what it had harvested from the Reaches, ensuring its prosperity long after the Moonsilver Century's end.

Auspicious Alignments

The various configurations of the Grinding Archipelago's plates hold a cultural significance akin to that of Creation's constellations. The study and observation of these patterns forms the backbone of traditional Yugashi divination and superstition.

The War of Ashes

Yugash sees the War of Ashes as an unprovoked and unjustifiable atrocity against their nation, a crime for which Sova can never be forgiven. After the catastrophic fall of Ixut, Sova sought aid from Yugash, but was steadfastly refused. Yugash, facing its own nation-wide shortage of resources, feared the consequences of revealing this weakness, and spurned the increasingly urgent Sovan communiqués.

The Yugashi say that the war began when a xenophobic faction within Sova falsely accused Yugash of sabotaging Ixut. Whatever the cause, the brutality of the war all but broke both nations. Militia squads clashed within cramped tunnels and crawlspaces; colossi laid siege to metropoli; and civilian casualties mounted on all sides.

Both nations engaged in extensive strip mining and conduit overtapping to sustain their forces. The war ended when these operations triggered an autoimmune response from Autochthon's internal defenses. Swarms of machine spirits attacked any perceived threat to the Great Maker, while increasingly frequent quakes rocked metropoli. Both sides grew increasingly desperate, leading to some of the worst atrocities of the war.

The War of Ashes ultimately ended when a catastrophic theotectonic spasm rocked an entire continent-plate, sending the two nations drifting apart, and ejecting the Yugashi metropolis of Kereth from the Grinding Archipelago. Hostilities were finally suspended, and the Treaty of Harmegis was signed in Claslat, formally ending the war.

The Revelation of Sirin

Yugash suffered catastrophic population loss in the War of Ashes, both mortal and Alchemical, and spent dry its stores of resources and materials. Standing on the brink of despair, its people survived by their skill in plumbing the Reaches, mapping the uncharted territory they'd begun to drift into and scavenging whatever resources lay hidden within them.

Sirin was one such explorer, an unassuming Populat veteran of the War of Ashes. He and his workgroup had been salvaging far beyond the safe return distance, and come under attack from flesh-eating machine spirits. Hopelessly lost, they would have never returned but for Sirin's skill in navigating the Reaches.

When Sirin returned, his unconscious comrades stowed safely in a pneumatic tram he'd found, he spoke of a miracle. He claimed he'd found a path to the Core, to the Godhead of the Great Maker. It ultimately grew impassable, but the Divine Minister Kadmkek appeared to him and opened the way back to appeared to him and opened the way back to Yugash.

Sirin called Yugash to seek out the Godhead, to beseech the Great Maker for his aid directly. Sirin's tale rekindled the morale of a people who believed their god had abandoned them. He preached of Autochthon's love for the nation, of Yugash's special purpose in the Grand Design, and of the pilgrimage it must make to the Core.

The Tripartite struggled to quash this threat to the status quo, but soon found themselves unable to take action without the threat of open revolt from religious zealots. Even if they could suppress the Populat, they risked losing the surge of productivity that their sociokinetic calculations attributed to Sirin.

Ultimately, the Tripartite decided that the nation's interests were best served by the unthinkable measure. They declared Sirin a prophet, and elevated him from his Populat caste to the Theomachracy's upper echelons. Clearly, they said, the Luminors had erred when they judged Sirin's soul. He would lead a great pilgrimage to the Godhead, and ask Autochthon for his blessing on the nation.

There was no pilgrimage. Just before it was to begin, Sirin died.

The Sirinite Ascendancy

The martyred prophet's supporters immediately assumed that he'd been assassinated by those in the Tripartite that opposed the Sirinite creed. Perhaps they were right. Either way, Yugash was thrown into upheaval as riots broke out in the streets of Kadar and Champions crossed beamklaves in the Great Maker's name.

Out of this disaster, a political faction of Sirinite devotees within the Tripartite launched a putsch, installing the young and ambitious statesman Kerok as the grand autocrat of National Tripartite Assembly, while purging its uppermost echelons of political opposition.

This is the status quo of Yugash — for now. The nation knows better than any other that nothing lasts forever. Its Sodalts predict that that they have seven to ten more years before they come back into contact with Sova.

Culture

Yugashi culture has grown and developed over the course of the Grinding Archipelago's long circuit through the Expanse of Metal. Most

Religion

Traditional Yugashi religion was shaped by the exploration of the Reaches. Explorers learn prayers for leaving offerings to machine spirits, and there are few sacraments more holy than the extensive rituals for purifying explorers venturing into new regions for the first time. It's far too deeply rooted in Yugashi society for the Sirinite creed to eradicate it — instead, it's swallowed the old ways whole, with the Theomachracy's blessing. Reactionaries make a point of practicing rites once seen as outmoded or antiquated to demonstrate their truth faith.

The Sirinite creed is widespread, but lacks a center without its prophet. Adherents fall into several scattered tendencies, based on varied interpretations of doctrinal questions left unresolved by the prophet. Most believe that Sirin was proof that Autochthon still speaks, and that others might receive the same inspiration, but some believe that only the Tripartite may receive. Some believe the pilgrimage to the Godhead will usher in a new era of Yugashi supremacy over the Octet, while others believe only a united Octet can find the Core. Some believe completing the pilgrimage is only the first step to repairing and reawakening the damaged Machine God.

Sirinite priests arrange song, dance, and scriptural recitations, though spontaneous mass worship on free shifts is more common. Many adherents see it as their holy duty to work an extra shift at least every other day, a fervor welcomed by workgroup foremen and Tripartite Assemblies alike. But Sirinite teachings also pose obstacles to the new status quo. The same populist fervor that swelled Grand Autocrat Kerok's faction to prominence could also support a Populat uprising. There's a self-proclaimed prophet nearly every month, claiming to have been visited by Sirin or Kadmek or Autochthon. Lectors are responsible for smoothing over differences where they can and alerting preceptors of possible dangers.

Art

Music is the thrumming heartbeat of Yugashi culture. Reels, jigs, and line steps at the beginning of work shifts synchronize workers in their tasks, while the operations of major machines are coordinated by call-and-response songs or percussive beats. Even at the upper levels of bureaucracy, there's a rhythm to the finger-tapping and stylus-twisting. Dance is the nation's most popular entertainment by far, often informal and impromptu.

The Symbolary

The symbolary is Yugash's second language, employing of set of hand signals, formalized postures, and vocal inflections. Those skilled in the symbolary can use its rhythmic movements to convey meaning through dance, whether on the factory floor, a Tripartite gala, or the battlefield. Yugashi of all castes are taught the symbolary, though the Populat are instructed in a more limited set of signals, mostly those relevant to manual labor.

Cuisine

Yugash's cuisine incorporates exotic ingredients bright back from the Reaches — including their strange mechanical fauna. Few of them can be rendered edible when by the most skilled Harvester. Instead, these creatures' metallic or crystalline components are soaked in heated vats of nutrient paste, imparting a unique flavor and enriching mineral content.

Fashion

Most Yugashi's everyday clothes would be suitable for wear in the Reaches, prioritizing practicality and protection above all else. Chemical dyes harvested from the Reaches come in an oilslick rainbow of shades. Many wear set of badges and pips that signify distinction in certain skills and proficiencies. The system of symbols and colors was originally devised by Populat workgroups, who created them as a practical method of indicating a worker's level of competency. Since then, they've been adapted by the Tripartite — and Yugash's Alchemicals — as status symbols. Adjudicators strictly enforce the prerequisites for each distinction.

Governance

Grand Autocrat Kerok is the face of Yugash's Sirinite faction, but he's far from the only player in the Tripartite's politics. The Theomachracy holds the blatant heresy's fate in its hands, and Kerok has too much political acumen to think his faction can function without them. As long as the Sirinite faction remains unified, it can continue to suppress conservative elements and reactionaries within the Tripartite, but the slightest sign of weakness could prove fatal.

Plans for a Tripartite-backed mission to the Godhead are under development. They'll remain in development indefinitely, if Grand Autocrat Kerok has his way. Sirin's pilgrimage to the Core inspires him, but such a grand gamble simply isn't sound national policy. More zealous elements within the Tripartite believe such a venture is key to the nation's survival, agitating to increase the resources allocated to it and grumbling overt the latest status reports.

Sociokinetics

Sociokinetics is a discipline that attempts to scientifically predict the behavior of large groups, combining probabilistic modeling Charms with sociological studies and extensive statistical calculations performed by the Sodalts. It began as nothing more than an eccentric pet project by the Starmetal Caste *Seven-Dimension Integral*, but it's been embraced as a tool of governance by Tripartite's Sirinite faction since their rise to power. Sociokinetic science is used to rapidly gauge public sentiment, assess social need, and

identify points of conflict or inefficiency. There's nothing covert about this surveillance — to the contrary, the Tripartite boasts of how sociokinetics finds shifts near their breaking point and weaknesses in enemy morale. It's used in countless aspects of governance: aligning work shifts, setting production targets, creating state-sponsored entertainment, and modifying the contents of Sirinite prayers to improve social cohesion. These predictions are far from infallible, but have greatly expanded Yugash's grasp of sociology and mass psychology.

Populist Zeal

While Yugash's Tripartite has embraced Sirinite zeal, the nation's Populat still place their faith in the saint, not the state. Many Populat favor Grand Autocrat Kerok and his faction, or even more radical voices within the National Tripartite Assembly. A small minority sees the Tripartite itself as obstacle to Sirin's teachings. Was the prophet not born into the Populat himself? Can the nation endure without the Populat's labor? Such questions have stirred with a religious fervor for change that grows increasingly troublesome for Yugash's Tripartite.

Some Populat radicals demand representation from among their own, borrowing political theory and tactics from the One Tier Movement in Gulak and Kamak. Percussive protest dances can spread work stoppages through a factory in minutes, and end them just as quickly when demands are met. In small towns that harbor radical sympathies, elected Populat foremen rival the Olgotary's plutarchs in political power. Some even dare to dream of the day when a metropolis prospers under a Populat autocrat.

Blight Augurs

Yugash's passage through the Expanse of Metal and frequent expeditions into the Reaches have brought it into frequent contact with blight zones (p. XX). The worst have left the nation broken in centuries past, leaving the survivors to rebuild their society. Yugashi Sodalts known as blight augurs have devoted more study to the Blight and its manifestations than those of any other nation, and learning to predict the emergence of certain forms of blight zones.

Metropoli

Yugash has a mere four metropoli that survived the War of Ashes: the capital Kadar, Ot, Het, and now far-flung Kereth. Yugashi are highly civic-minded, and institutions of state and community are lavishly adorned with jewels, ribbons, and decorations — now marked with Sirinite emblems.

Kadar, the Grand Metropolis

Kadar is Yugash's shipping hub and the seat of its political power. It's laid out in a series of six giant, moonsilver discs, stacked one atop another. The layers are linked by pneumatic lift tubes and access ladders bolted to massive support pillars. It's a city of soaring, graceful towers, some of which pierce through two discs, or even three.

Kerok and his faction have created a semblance of order within the city, but it still remains in significant turmoil, its regulators and preceptors pushed to their limits investigating political conspiracies. It's the center of the Sirinite faith, and it's become a seat of transnational evangelism, spreading the prophet's teachings alongside shipments of material. It's also the hub of Yugash's Populat activism, with newly-formed citizen leagues and dissident agitators alike plastering public walls with pictograms and glyphs calling for assembly and action.

Het, the Foundation of Orthodoxy

Het was furthest from Sova during the War of Ashes. Below ground, it has the standard array of maze-like personal facilities and above ground are the forges, foundries, and places of worship that keep a metropolis running. Its forge-churches are precisely timed and regimented, leaving no room for spontaneous worship.

Het never felt the brunt of the war's impact as other metropoli did, and remains a bastion of conservatism in the face of a changing Yugash. It's grown as scattered refugee populations have made temporary shelters and permanent homes. They've brought Sirin's teachings with them, though the creed has met with greater skepticism in Het than Kadar. The Tripartite Assembly's ranks have still felt Grand Autocrat Kerok's purges, but his political opponents hold more sway here than any other settlement.

Het itself greatly admired Sirin the man, though it had little interest in his heresy. It suspects that Grand Autocrat Kerok's faction was at least partially responsible for Sirin's death, and pushes to revive the traditions of Yugash past in protest to the new order as it continues to gather evidence. It promotes traditional performances and dances, keeping the beat with its Multi-Piston Percussion Assembly.

Het holds the Prophetarium, where the cenotaphs of past Yugashi prophets and saints encircle the Tomb of Yugash. The hero's richly encrusted sarcophagus is suspended in a starmetal web, which carries every movement of the Grinding Archipelago so that even in death, Yugash may map the Great Maker.

Kereth, the Lost Sleeper

Kereth was cast away from the Grinding Archipelago, drifting outward from its nation chamber to be ejected into the Far Reaches. Constructed along an almost 45-degree slope, Kereth's soulsteel architecture is all right angles: high buildings with severe lines, streets laid out in perfect grids, and long black-and-red banners. Its walls still shelter its now-displaced populace, who've survived only by daring ventures into the Far Reaches.

The damaged metropolis has fallen silent, retreating into dormancy, though its Municipal Charms still function at full power — for now. Maintaining and resuscitating the metropolis has become the entire city's primary objective. The only alternative would be to abandon their city and make a perilous odyssey back to the Archipelago.

Cut off from direct contact with the rest of the nation, Kereth has been forced to improvise and innovate. The wartime institution of the victory crèche has been expanded to multifamily groups, which provide childrearing and education on their off-shifts. Personnel shortages among regulators and preceptors are made up with recruits from the Populat, tilting the scales of political power. Oliav Hanth, director of the city's Populat, exerts a level of influence on par with an autocrat, unchecked by the Tripartite's enforcers. The Sirinite creed has spread to Kereth through long-range communications with other metropoli, though its yet to gain widespread influence..

Transnational Relations

Yugash's erratic route through the Expanse of Metal means it experiences alternating periods of isolation and contact with neighboring nations, leaving them with few lasting political connections. Now, the National Tripartite Assembly moves to forge new diplomatic ties and trade relations — both out of necessity, and to spread the Sirinite faith throughout the Octet.

Sova was Yugash's only recent longtime partner, making the War of Ashes particularly bitter after decades of cordial cooperation. The Yugashi fear that a rebuilt Sova will reignite the war when the nations paths cross again. Openly, Yugash supports **Claslat's** transnational efforts, but some within the Yugashi Tripartite quietly work to undermine transnational relations, fearing greater cooperation could

lead to renewed support for Sova.

Yugash has fostered diplomatic ties with **Nurad** through its calls for Octet-wide support as the beleaguered nation approaches a catastrophic blight zone. For some, this is a truly charitable cause, aiding a nation in the face of crisis. Others see it as an opportunity to spread Sirinite teachings, or secure political advantage over Nurad. All believe they act in accordance with the prophet Sirin's will.

Yugash's Alchemicals

In the wake of the War of Ashes and the political upheaval of Sirin's death, Yugash's Champions stand as pillars of stability. Yugashi religion has always viewed Champions as having a more direct connection with Autochthon, and the Sirinite fervor over prophetic inspiration has only redoubled this. The fanatical pore over Alchemicals' actions, remarks, and dreams for hidden meanings or secret prophecies.

Perpetual Harbinger of Union: *Harbinger* stands on the precipice of the metropolitan ascension, uncertain of their fate. The Adamant Caste stands thirty feet tall, with multicolored jade armor that makes them look like a walking stained glass mural. *Harbinger* isn't a Sirinite devotee, but agrees with the goal of seeking the Godhead, believing that the Machine God must be roused. They struggle over the question of whether it should be a transnational effort or if Yugash should go it alone...but that may not be their work to do. *Harbinger* never wanted to become a metropolis — and still doesn't — but with the destruction faced in the war and the loss of Kereth, they feel it's their duty to become Yugash's next metropolis. The Divine Ministers have yet to reveal where they will take root — perhaps it will be at the Godhead itself.

Unhesitatingly Loyal Weapon: Among the most decorated heroes of the War of Ashes, this Orichalcum Caste warrior shines like a beacon, built on a bulky square frame. She's an advocate for rebuilding Yugash's offensive capabilities, caring little for the Sirinite fervor and political upheaval that grips contemporary Yugash, but may have little choice in the matter. All sides seek to woo her — Kerok's allies, Kerok's enemies, Sirinite zealots, Populat agitators, and Tripartite conservatives. Famed for her heroism and beloved by the Yugashi people, an open proclamation of her allegiance could easily tip the scales of political power in their favor. She seeks to avoid involvement through devoting herself to her duties as an expert on urban warfare and diplomat.

Excessively Righteous Blossom: *Blossom* is a true idealist, a believer in justice and the Great Maker's benevolence. He's utterly unbending in his convictions, but flexible in his approach, taking on a number of rolls...and encountering a number of disappointments. The Moonsilver Caste has made many accomplishments, but they're overshadowed by follies often born of self-assurance. He has so far failed as a military leader, adjudicator, regulator, and city planner — but he distinguished himself in the War of Ashes as an infiltrator, saboteur, and duelist. The Tripartite would be thrilled for *Blossom* to find a role in which he fits — which his current calling as a lector doesn't seem to be. He's been considered as a part of diplomatic missions as convergence approaches — not for skill in diplomacy, but as a “counterespionage” agent.

Notable Individuals

Grand Autocrat Kerok: Kerok sincerely believes in the Sirinite creed, but he still has doubts as to the purported divinity of Sirin. What he doesn't doubt is the prophet's usefulness. A charismatic politician and a student of sociokinetics, Kerok seized upon the opportunity of Sirin's death even as he wept, believing his leadership is necessary for Yugash's rise to glory. The grand autocrat has little patience for Populat unrest, the one thing he begrudges Sirin. He takes as strict an approach as his sociokinetic calculations deem productive.

High Celebrant Halan: Halan may not be Kerok's match as a politician, but Yugash's high celebrant holds just as much power as the grand autocrat — perhaps more. Despite their high station, Halan wears simple robes and eats only the blandest nutrient paste, a living reminder of the starving times of the War of Ashes. While they tolerate Sirinite practices that are overtly heretical, they're staunchly opposed to a militant faith, loathing the possibility of another war. Halan believes Yugashi culture can save the Octet, and recruits teams of cultural ambassadors to share dance, stories, sociokinetics, and Sirinite evangelism. They see the next convergence as a grand opportunity that could be the dawn of a golden age for Yugash.

Triumphant Reaches Explorer: *Explorer* is an inspiration to Kereth. Her silver skin is covered in moonsilver and blue jade armor, while her appendages are almost liquid making her the perfect explorer of the Reaches where her missions. In the wake of Kereth's displacement, she's focused on scavenging vital resources from the Reaches and make the hazardous journey to the Grinding Archipelago to contact other Yugashi metropoli. She has mixed thoughts on what will happen when Yugash next comes into contact with Sova but she's disturbed by the militaristic strain of Sirinite belief that she sees rising in popularity.

Beyond the Eight Nations

Even beyond the metropoli's walls and the Octet's reach, humanity still clings to survival amidst the harsh Realm of Brass and Shadows.

The Sea of Oil

Those ascending into Autochthonia's upper reaches eventually come to a churning amber sky, looming above. This is the Sea of Oil, greatest of Autochthonia's oceans, a shimmering expanse of synthetic lifeblood dotted with islands that stretches from world-wall to world-wall. Countless towers rise to the floating ocean, pneumatic elevators and vein-pipes varying in thickness from person-sized to wide enough to haul vast vessels, studded in cool green floodlights that illuminated the sea, massive pumping-stations and refineries circulate fluids to the rest of Autochthon. Climbing to the churning sky reveals that gravity within the Sea is inverted, and unpracticed travelers may fall upward into the warm depths. Exposure to the Sea's amber oil induces rashes in humans, but more hazardous tide of caustic and dangerous chemicals swirl and glow in the Sea's depths.

Synthetic life flourishes within the Sea of Oil., Silicone coral reefs grow on the undersides of metal archipelagos or the impossibly vast chamber-walls, hosting a breathtaking riot of flora and machine spirits. Schools of armored lamprey-like spirits swim like glowing clouds, illuminating mats of nanofiber oil-weed and shores covered in mineral trilobites. Lush groves of synthetic trees grow on iron beaches that surround the Sea, stretching finger-like capillaries into the Sea in tapered unison. They play host to flying machine spirits and tunnel folk in these spiraling branches. In the Sea's cold, dark depths, vast beings warped by pressure echolocate with metal shrieks, swimming away from even larger denizens — including gremlinized leviathans.

The Sea's surface is usually gentle and crossed by regular breezes, though sometimes gales and swelling waves wrack it. Those seeking to explore the Sea's depths require specialized dive suits or pressurized vessels. The filtrating vein-pipes that rise from the Sea regulate inflow and outflow. The Sea's oil is the world's lifeblood, circulating through the entirety of the Realm of Brass and Shadow at incredibly high speed. Memorizing these pathways provides a source of quick — but perilous — transportation for canny Alchemicals, as well as other beings that don't need to breathe. Some veins are large enough to be sailed through, though ships capable of plying such routes are rare.

Loran

While the Octet travels the world-body of Autochthon, Loran operates on a smaller scale. The metropolis resides beneath the surface of the Sea of Oil, attached to a tower containing an elevator and assorted conduits. Beyond her hull swirls a realm of machine spirits, exotic substances, and treasures to be studied and explored. Loran is a city of nautical adventurers, ambitious scientists, and hardy workers.

The city is a nautilus-shaped metropolis of gold and silver domes embedded into the tower's, connected to the city's seven Wards by with tubular tram tunnel arms supported by moonsilver scaffolding. Three of these Wards are also anchored to the tower, containing most of Loran's heavy industry. The others float to the Sea's surface, and house most of the city's docks.

Survival in the oil-immersed metropolis is possible only through Loran's Respiration Reclamation Systems. The city's Fluidic Agitation Combines allow it to uproot itself and move through the Pole of Oil, in anticipation of resource shortages or environmental disaster. Taking inspiration from the Sovan's experiments in conurbation, the newly-built Seventh Ward is its own Municipal Charm, the Remote Biosupport Complex. It can detach from the city, operating independently as a self-contained ship. The

district-ship is a prototype designed to scout for resources and serve as a remote dock and support station for the Oil Fleet. It may one day become a template for future Remote Biosupport Complexes, offering a potential path for long-term expansion by deploying them as satellite colonies.

Loran's famous Oil Fleet of submersible craft ventures out to seek the ocean's bounty. Within it they find industrial organs for study, new sources of slurry and Essence, deposits of magical materials, and new substances for experimentation. The Oil Sea holds much for those ready to go out and get it.

History

The Yugashi Champion *Luteous Ancress* was drawn away from her home nation's Grinding Archipelago when she felt the call to the metropolitan ascension. Driven by the urge to make one last grand expedition, she assembled a cohort of volunteers to accompany her to the Sea. She intended for the city she would become to be a trading partner for faster-moving Yugashi metropoli whenever the movements of Autochthonia brought them within proximity.

The Sea of Oil was not a random choice. The location provides stability against Crucible Events, and the unique environment reduces interference from the rest of the Octet. *Ancress* stationed herself within the tower that became the city's foundation and grew outward into the Sea to become Loran. The theotectonic drift of the Parting Era kept the new city away from Yugash for centuries, rather than the decades predicted, and the metropolis began to drift away from Yugashi culture. Its populace diversified as the people of Loran offered shelter to the tunnel folk who dwell near the Sea, while many old traditions and customs have changed as the Loranei adapt to their new circumstances as an independent outpost of the Octet.

People and Society

Much of Loranei culture revolves around the Oil Fleet. The city's industry is either devoted to supporting the Fleet, dependent on materials they bring back, or both. Those who maintain their ships take pride in enabling expeditions, even if their work is stocking rations or arranging duty schedules. Workers and engineers who handle the submersibles' precious cargo get to tell the stories of how the treasures were acquired.

The captains of the Fleet, of course, have the greatest share of the glory. Collectively known as the Captains' Consortium, they are the pilots and crew leaders of the Oil Fleet, having grand adventures in the Sea of Oil to ensure the city's survival and independence from the Octet. They aren't the only ones in the Fleet who can take a ship out or lead an expedition, but doing so without at least a captain's guidance is a major taboo — if you're good enough to risk a ship and crew, then you should be a captain or an apprentice.

Captains usually recruit apprentices from their crews or by petition, prioritizing competence over caste. Since most workers and support staff are Populat, this means most captains come from Populat as well, though the Tripartite still has an outsized presence. While Populat captains have no formal authority outside their ships and the docks, their celebrity gives them a level of respect and influence on par with the Tripartite. They're easy enough to spot out and about, traditionally wearing long blue coats adorned with custom patches that signify their achievements and serve as marks of rank and authority.

Loranei social structures have come to center around their neighborhoods enclosed chambers designed to be selectively sealed to prevent flooding. The sense of firm borders, even between adjoining chambers, combined with the lack of privacy afforded in tight quarters, creates a sense of casual camaraderie. Many citizens refer to their neighborhood communities as "squads," identified either by location (Nautilus-Eight Squad) or their shared workplace (Textile Spinner Squad).

Squads often engage in friendly competition with their neighbors. If their jobs are similar enough, they compare work performance. Others engage in athletic competitions. The most common is a sport similar to soccer, using corridors near or between their districts as impromptu fields, where negotiating favorable borders for your team is part of the challenge. Prizes include favors owed, food rations, or symbolic trophies that pass back and forth. Some teams seek endorsement from their favorite captains, who aren't above playing out their own rivalries via proxies.

Faith in Loran

Worship in Loran is a shared matter that's incorporated into everyday work, whether within the city or on the Oil Fleet. Prayer-songs to the Great Maker accompany the coordinated work of ships' crews as they harvest Autochthon's bounty from the Sea. Isolated from the broader Octet, Loran's Theomachracy believe they are safely insulated from the heresies common elsewhere and few take up the calling of preceptor. They've thus failed to detect a heretical cult to Loran herself, still too young to have a name, that's spread among those who see her as their protector against Autochthon's seeming indifference to human life. Their heretical prayer songs incorporate improvised verses that praise Loran. The metropolitan Populat who form the bulk of the cult incorporate hand symbols and gestures inherited from their Yugashi past into their point-and-call safety procedures, a mark of thanks to their city.

Structure and Leadership

Loran's Olgotary differs little from Yugash's. Their closed environment has resulted in a sometimes-strict approach to resource management, much like that of those of Octet nations are faced with looming resource crises. Under the right circumstances, methods developed by Loran's city planners could help other nations prepare for the future.

After resource management, safety is the Loranei Tripartite's greatest concern — but many Loranei don't see this enclosed. Fully encased in a city that actively cares for their well-being, they sometimes take the stability of their situation for granted. The Consortium's adventurous reputation can be a detriment to maintaining discipline and safety, especially among younger citizens. The free rein that captains are given in the dockyards can sometimes cause major accidents, whether from improper handling of dangerous substances or ship modification experiments gone explosively wrong. Regulators and adjudicators have their work cut out for them dealing with foolhardy captains and those emulating them.

New Formulas

Whether from curiosity or necessity, the engineers and chemists of Loran's Sodalities experiment with everything new brought back from the Sea of Oil. Developing better fuels for ships and other systems is an ongoing project, and they've created a much broader array of synthetic fabrics than is seen within the Octet — a boon for a city without the space for enough rats to provide leather and fur. Plastic and synthetic fiber insulators for ships and city structures are in the design stages. Officially, explosives research is banned as a safety precaution, but at least one Sodalt captain's ship has a private lab for weapon development.

Loran and the Octet

Loran's limited contact with outsiders means little chance to make friends or enemies — they normally have brief, transactional relationships with the Eight Nations. Their parent nation, Yugash, is the exception. When it comes close enough to trade, Loran celebrates with a Reunion Festival in remembrance of their shared history. While Loran has moved far beyond its original purpose as a mining outpost, they still trade extensively with their "cousins" when given the chance. Loran's Sodalities also reach out to Nurad's scientifically progressive communities to share knowledge and discoveries when

they can.

As the Eight Nations draw closer to Loran, they've begun to make plans for harvesting resources from the Sea of Oil. Some nations that are already with vicinity have begun quietly recruiting captains as mercenaries or smugglers. Regulators increasingly dedicate themselves to rooting out such corruption at the instruction of the city's increasingly paranoid Autocrat Larinia.

The Darkest Depths

The Sea of Oil offers what Loran needs, and a great deal of what it doesn't. The ocean's contents can harm or kill those exposed without protection. Pressure-sealed dive suits allow laborers to work under these conditions, but the most dangerous work is performed by the oilkin. They bear the mark of mutagenic chemicals within the Sea, passed down by heredity. Loranei oilkin are found within the city's Populat and Lumpen, particularly among the descendants of mutated tunnel folk who immigrated to Loran in its early days. They aren't explicitly shunned, but their unique condition limits their job prospects to dockyard work or sometimes as a lab assistant.

Oilkin mutations make them resistant to the Sea of Oil's chemical hazards, as well as other toxins. Their diet is unique: they can and *must* drink oil, though not just that of the Sea). Their blood is black and sticky, and when stressed or overheated, they visibly sweat iridescent fluid.

In recent years, Blight-tainted oil has instigated dark urges and visions in oilkin who drink it. Some resist these nightmares, but others have banded together in a voidbringer cult, the rotdrinkers. They believe that Autochthon is already dead, and only they will survive what comes next. They quietly debate whether to let the Blight take its course, or to seize control while there's someone to help run the city.

The Seventh Ward's mobility has allowed the captains to send expeditions deeper to into the Sea of Oil and their exploration is nearing hub of machine spirit activity. Maddak, a subminister of Domadamod, oversees the construction of an unauthorized industrial organ, one that the subminister hopes can filter the Great Maker's Blight out of the sea. The project is kept secret even from the other Ministers, but Maddak is unsure how to keep Loran's Oil Fleet from discovering the secret project. They're unsure of how to react to such intrusions, may resort to drastic measures to drive the Fleet away.

Loran's Alchemicals

Loran has constructed few Alchemicals, due at first to limited resources, and later to few suitable souls. The Tripartite Assemble prefers to keep Loranei Champions close to the city rather than sending them on expeditions with the Oil Fleet. For their part, the Consortium petition the Exalted directly to recruit them for expeditions, but make clear that captains, and not Alchemicals, command their ships. Captains and crews particularly impressed with a Champion's heroics may grant them patches marking their deeds as if they were captains themselves. Alchemicals who receive the honor may command their own ships and crews.

Watcher of Tides was Loran's first Champion constructed from starmetal harvested from a crystal reef discovered by nanocoral miners. *Watcher's* first task was to study the city's social dynamics and resource management procedures, and she never stopped, applying Yugashi sociokinetics to Loranei realities. Her greatest talent lies in understanding the gap between what people want versus what they need, informing her calculations as she adjusts things slurry distribution or climate controls. She's become a vital asset to Loran's Olgotary and Theomachracy, a brilliant advisor and the preserver of its institutional knowledge.

Notable Individuals

Larinia, Troubled Autocrat: Larinia dreads both the opportunities and dangers of the approaching

convergence. While some in Loran hope for an era of peace and prosperity, foreign conflict seems inevitable to the grim, sad-eyed autocrat. She'd rather get involved on her own terms, rather than being forced into an alliance of necessity. She's begun allocating much of the city's resources to armaments and defenses, but knows that Loran can't stand alone. She's secretly made overtures to potential allies in Yugash and Nurad, hoping to negotiate an appealing deal before the more insular members of the Loranei Tripartite find out and put a stop to it.

Captain Lothe, Nascent Rotdrinker: One of the few oilkin invited into the Captains' Consortium, Lothe earned his coat after averting disaster aboard the *Sea Devil*. When a gremlin breached the hull and killed the captain, then-crewman Lothe seized the flooded cabin's controls and got the rest of the crew home. Even more than most oilkin, he seems to have a natural sense for the Sea. It's served him well as captain, until his most recent voyage. Ever since passing through a marine blight zone, he's begun hearing transmissions that others don't, sometimes accompanied by visions of a soulsteel submersible in the depths. It waits for him, but he doesn't know whether he's meant to join its crew or pilot it himself.

The Endless Smoke

All the exhaust, byproducts, and broken machinery created by the Maker's internal systems eventually descends to the Endless Smoke. The bottom-most part of Autochthonia is a single dark cavern with no floor, a machine purgatory covered by a roiling smog that's broken only by the crooked teeth of metal protruding from above. Ceiling chutes jettison scrap and anyone who's indescribably unfortunate enough to be caught in them, while acid rains in drizzles or typhoons, accompanied sometimes by molten hail and lightning.

Eddying currents of gravity arrests falling debris as they plummet toward the void at the bottom, suspending them in a layer of smog below which can be glimpsed fathomless darkness. Debris and refuge accrete into haphazard islands, some barely larger than boats, some comparable in size to nations. Marooned machine spirits and the few mortals who survive here live in small societies of castaways, menaced by gremlins and ghosts that swarm across the bottom. Though much of what comprises these islands is scrap, staggering amounts of riches can be found here — artifacts, magical materials and more — drawing in groups of scavengers.

These refuse islands are sometimes temporarily connected by recombinators, iridescent worm-like machine spirits covered in spiny ridges, tall as a house and spanning in length from a hundred feet to miles. Recombinators crush scrap and swallow it whole before coiling their synthetic muscle in gravity eddies to launching themselves upwards at terrifying speeds. They land on the Zone's walls and pump what they've collected into peristaltic jade veins that line them, the undulations of which make the boundaries seem alive. It's theoretically possible to hitch a ride on a recombinator, though surviving the attempt would be incredibly difficult.

Xexas

Less than half a century old, Xexas is thriving despite its remote location just above the Endless Smoke, housed within an industrial organ, the Eternal Recycling Integration Assemblage. What it lacks in comfort and safety, the city makes up for with the rare opportunity for Autochthonians to strike it rich, attracting the brave and the foolish from every nation. Inhospitable enough to make the Eight Nations seem like paradise, Xexas draws immigrants with its wealth of resources, free for anyone brave enough to pluck them from amid the lightning, acid, and corrosive smoke.

Xexas is an inverted city, hanging from the ceiling of the Assemblage. There's no space for architectural flair, only sturdy railings and soulsteel-reinforced plating over simple geometric structures. Colorful

tapestries and paint adorn living quarters, but barely disguise the bleakness of the buildings. Most citizens learn to appreciate the metropolis' simple, functional architecture — especially after the first time it saves their lives.

A Troubled Metropolis

Exegetical Abraxas was more eager for his metropolitan ascension than many Alchemicals. He first began making plans for the safe and orderly city that he would become almost as soon as he stepped from the vats in Gulak. He honed his Essence diligently over the centuries, but received no sign from the Divine Ministers about where he was to settle. When his unanswered prayers for guidance were finally answered, he scrapped a lifetime of planning to descend to the Endless Smoke.

Despite being such a new city, Xexas is relatively inactive. His Municipal Charms require constant concentration and recalibration, leaving him little time to talk with citizens. Even the Tripartite Assembly can wait for days to get an answer from him. When the metropolis has time to think, he always circles back to the same question: after all my devotion, why would Autochthon condemn me to this place? It's an inefficient, heretical doubt, one that Xexas suppresses with even more work.

Boom Town

Though Xexas originated in Gulak, the nation sent only a small cohort of citizens to the new city. It shares its parent nation's tradition of accepting peoples from the rest of the Octet, but Xexas seeks prospectors, not pilgrims. Anyone can move to Xexas, accept a ten-year commitment as a bounty worker, and return home to their nation with a bounty of raw resources proportional to their accomplishments. Some nations provide incentives for doing so, adding the bounty to their coffers once their citizens return. Prospectors who die on the job have their payout sent back to their home nation, though corrupt officials and criminals sometimes divert these payments. Xexas buy Lumpen outright from other nations to provide cheap labor, paying a set fee per head delivered alive and able to work.

Xexas may have been too generous with its bounties. The small metropolis is now dangerously overcrowded, its resources diffused among countless individuals. Still, there's always more work to be done and more salvage to gather. Turnover through death remains common enough to keep every new arrival busy.

Luxury and Deprivation

Two things make life in Xexas miserable: constant danger and lack of space. Only the city's Atmospheric Purification Web makes it even marginally livable, and any flaw or failure of its systems can be fatal even within the safety of the core districts. Plans to expand Xexas with additional living space would require dangerous and expensive construction projects, and have largely stalled out in the Tripartite Assembly. In the meantime, new arrivals cram hammocks or cots into any spare corner of the factories, hoping to graduate up to hot bunking in a worker's warehouse and eventually, maybe a bunk of their own in a central dormitory. Only senior Tripartite officials and the most successful Scavenger Admirals are granted private quarters, and those only the size of a bed and a desk.

Rich in resources, Xexas offers its citizens the best of life whenever possible — happy workers are productive workers, after all. Rather than try to eradicate crime and disorder, Xexas' regulators and adjudicators takes a pragmatic, permissive approach. Sodalts refine potent reagents from the Endless Smoke into a trio of drugs that citizens are welcome to enjoy while off-duty, seen as the safest way to control antisocial behavior. The ever-popular Ease dulls the senses and brings a gentle euphoria, mild enough in state-approved doses to be used on the job by menial workers. Compound 53, colloquially "Kadmek's Grace," induces hallucinations and vivid dreams. Allshield is a recent formulation, a powerful

anesthetic that completely cuts off the body's ability to feel pain, but can be diluted into a recreational narcotic. Its manufacture is reliant on a reagent that can only be harvested from the Eternal Recycling Integration Assemblage.

Entertainment, even official lector performances, lean more bawdy and dramatic than religious or educational. By-the-hour privacy booths are available to couples, and casual flings are applauded and encouraged. The plutarchs have devoted precious resources to the construction of Visionary Rapport Matrices, which display holographic images in public squares. Here, citizens congregate to enjoy recordings of exciting scavenger runs and daring victories against recycled gremlins.

While Xexas overlooks much of what the Octet considers petty crime, sabotage is punishable by death. Executions are broadcast holographically as both warning and entertainment. The most hated criminals are hanged from the lightning-lashed Storm Spires beneath the city, equipped with breathing masks so the smoke-winds of the Endless Smoke can slowly eat their flesh away.

A Cosmopolitan Backwater

Raised in Gulak, the first citizens of Xexas were used to living among international visitors. Welcoming them as fellow citizens, if temporary ones, was easy enough when they shared the burden of labor. Bounty workers have their national identity added to documents in place of a clade name, and workers from Gulak often use "Gulaki" in place of their clade in ordinary conversation. Nation-clade names in Xexas are placed after the given name, reflecting their decreasing importance in the city.

Ever-busy, Xexans have little time for the nuances of philosophy and religion. So long as the work gets done, exactly how one's fellow factory workers worship the Great Maker is the least of anyone's problems. Expatriate enclaves adapt their native rites and practices to the new environment, usually at a smaller and more personal scale. Major holidays are marked by a bacchanalian conglomeration of festivities, combining the most popular rites from across the Octet with Xexan drugs and alcohol. When lectors need to promote unity, they do so under the shared work of scavenging from the Endless Smoke: Xexas and its citizens have been invited by Autochthon to share in the holy work of recycling, a calling every worker should be proud of.

Food and entertainment are diverse, though both tend to play to the lowest common denominator. The metropolis is not a place for experimental dance and nuanced culinary experiences: the songs are catchy and the food is enticingly full of fats, sugars, and salt, enhanced by a worker's choice of flavorful sauces made with the tastes of home.

The Xexas Glot

Claslat's citizens have long made up a sizable portion of Xexas' populace, and they brought their personal fortunes to Xexas. While the glot isn't backed by Xexas' Olgotary, the Claslati glass market has taken root in the metropolis. A glot can buy someone else's food, a traded work shift, a better bunk, or a personal favor. The biggest Claslati glot-bosses have sent their own agents to Xexas, seeking new markets and chasing down those who seek to escape their debts by running away to the new city.

Xexas' Tripartite Assembly is debating the introduction of an official national currency, but fears the rise of an independently wealthy Populat akin to Claslat's Glotate. Unlike Claslat, the city simply doesn't have excess food and space to hand out. The Tripartite elite would be the first to have their few luxuries removed to back a currency, and they're also the one making the decision. This has left Xexas

vulnerable to Claslat's economic influence, but the Octet's largest nation has yet to make overt use of this leverage.

The Scavenger Fleet

While most of Xexas' work is done in the factories, the hardest and most important job is acquiring material from their unique environment. The Eternal Recycling Integration Assemblage is a massive industrial organ dangling into the Endless Smoke. It's crowned by a thick metal dome dotted with hundreds of chutes, each collecting and depositing waste from a different area of Autochthonia. Xexas hangs from the top of this dome, surrounded by smog and thunder roiling up from the Endless Smoke. Below the city, crane rails and conveyor belts catch debris, moving and sorting it by some unknown metric.

Beneath this ballet of steel are the Reintegration Tanks, secondary industrial organs linked to the Assemblage. The Tanks are irregular floating bubbles of viscous liquid, ranging in size from a few meters across to being large enough to swallow Xexas whole. Each contains its own unique chemical compound, which slowly dissolve and refine the recyclables dumped into them as pieces gradually sink through. The Tanks continue deep into the Endless Smoke, with each layer growing more corrosive and dangerous. Scavenger-drones patrol the space between the Tanks, occasionally stopping to siphon off a Tank's liquid or move some piece of scrap around.

Xexas boasts a fleet of custom-designed armored zeppelins, the only vehicles that can survive the endless storm of the Endless Smoke. Each carries a handful of Sodalt engineers — primarily Surgeons and Harvesters — with a crew picked from the bravest and most skilled Populat. The most senior scavenger captains each ship, regardless of caste.

Scavenger ships descend into the Endless Smoke for days, sometimes weeks at a time, braving the worst of Autochthon's deadly environment and fending off attacks from the occasional half-functioning machine spirit or gremlin. Scavengers wear a unique broken gear pin that commands awe and respect among the populace. Even a Tripartite official feels honored to hold a door or give up a seat for one of the city's heroes.

All the riches of Autochthon can be found in the Assemblage if you're patient enough, from bones infused with the magical materials to the bladders of whale-like transportation gods still filled with liquid reagents from the most distant reaches of the Great Maker. The liquid Regeneration Tanks each contain a unique reagent with potent magical and industrial applications. The deeper the Tank, the more potent its liquid, and the more refined the material floating within it. Scavenger crews make the dangerous gamble between skimming the surface Tanks to pull up sheet metal and useful solvents, or plunging deep to hook up machine-corpses with moonsilver skin and soulsteel bones or siphon up amber liquid with unrivaled medicinal potency. Expeditions into the bowels of the Assemblage bring back untold wonders, but only if they can avoid the caustic smog, turbulent weather, and irate scavenger-drones. Some encounter terrifying gremlins that survive the Regeneration Tanks and emerge more refined and powerful. No expedition to date has found a bottom to the Assemblage or the Endless Smoke it descends into, turned back by the increasingly hostile environment.

Scavenging is dangerous, from the immediate hazard of gremlin attacks to long-term damage from poisoned air and essence-irradiating acids. Six elder captains, four Tripartite and two Populat, have been promoted to the rank of Scavenger Admiral and retired from active duty. The admiralty advises the Tripartite Assembly in zeppelin deployment and strategy, advancing the new field of Tank scavenging with their accumulated knowledge.

Getting to Xexas

Spatially, Xexas is not as far away from the Octet as it seems. The Endless Smoke is a central nexus of the Machine God's systems, with connections across Autochthonia. There are two general approaches when traveling to or from the city, which citizens have nicknamed the Long Way and the Short Way. The Long Way is really several dozen paths, all reliant on the recycling chutes that lead into the Assemblage, where clerics have arranged for safe passage. Each journey takes months to reach one of the Eight Nations, but they see regular traffic from bounty workers entering or leaving the city. The Short Way involves breaching the upper wall of the Assemblage. An experienced navigator can pass through a relatively thin layer of maze-like tunnels called the Quarantine Layer to reach a pneumatic tram line whose current position allows for direct travel to Claslat within a week. Unfortunately, the Quarantine Layer is patrolled by ferocious machine gods that protect the Assemblage's vital systems, and the best efforts of the clerics have done nothing to improve relations. All paths need regular re-mapping to account for Autochthon's slow geographic churn, a high-priority task to ensure the safety of new workers.

The Citadel District

The main body of Xexas is known as the Citadel District, an ironic epithet for its cramped, bland architecture. Sturdy Municipal Charms and the least flammable factories are located towards the edges, while delicate work and living quarters are kept further from the storm outside. Just above the center of the city is its Tripartite Assembly hall. All the grandest rooms have been divided into living quarters as the metropolis' population has grown, leaving top officials to meet in what was once a small office.

Below the hall is the Storm's Eye, a massive hospital. White enamel covers the soulsteel and orichalcum that cocoon the spherical building, a rare decorative touch in Xexas. Dedicated wings treat accident victims and acute illnesses, and research new treatments for trauma and Tank-borne diseases. The very heart of the hospital is reserved for hospice care, treating only those heroic scavengers dying from the dangers of their jobs. Until they're ready to accept euthanasia, those who give their lives for Xexas' prosperity experience the greatest luxury in the city within the Eye's clean, white rooms: peace and quiet.

The Storm Spires

The Storm Spires hang downward from the Citadel District, a mess of thin towers and scaffolding that crackle with frequent lightning strikes. Many of the cities' most vital life-support Charms are installed here. Blue jade threads form the Atmospheric Purification Web that converts caustic smoke into usable oxygen. The Lightning Recycling Array is a series of orichalcum rods that capture electricity from the lightning to power the city's other Municipal Charms. The twinned Calefactive Conversion Matrix and its twin, the Brumal Conversion Matrix, control the city's heating and cooling with input and output vents spread across a dozen different towers. Servicing external Municipal Charms so close to the Endless Smoke requires a full-body life support suit and climbing gear, but it's essential. Without these key life support Charms, Xexas' citizens would have only days to live.

Around the rim of the spires, armored zeppelins are assembled and repaired in the aerial equivalent of dry docks, open spaces secured by Essence shields. With the zeppelins themselves designed to survive the storm, these shields are the first thing to drop in a power crisis, and assembly workers drill daily in evacuation procedures.

Champions

The Sodalts of Xexas have begun building the vats to construct the city's first batch of Alchemical Exalted. In the meantime, the Tripartite Assembly has made an open-ended invitation to other nations' Tripartite Assemblies, offering resources in exchange for the temporary service of Champions. Powerful

nations, especially Claslat, send their best and brightest to influence Xexas towards closer ties and better trade deals. Nations with fewer Alchemicals and a greater need for supplies will simply send whoever they can spare. Champions who are volatile, recently disgraced, or politically inconvenient may also find themselves shuffled off to Xexas.

Kethex Nuradi, Scavenger Admiral: From the day she could tie her own safety harness, Kethex has been working on airships, first in Nurad and then in Xexas. She took citizenship long before her bounty contract ended, addicted to the adrenaline rush of Tank diving. Now the oldest surviving scavenger in the city, her knowledge of the Tanks is unmatched: details about Tank travel patterns, locations for specific reagents, and countless strategies for surviving in the Endless Smoke live only within her head. The Tripartite Assembly would like her to retire from active duty and record her vast knowledge, but she'd much rather shirk meetings and paperwork to go off drinking, or hop aboard a zeppelin for another impromptu expedition. Kethex has publicly derided attempts to assign her bodyguards, insisting she's not that old yet, but might be talked into accepting an Alchemical apprentice who could learn her secrets while subtly keeping her safe.

Avanne Xexan, Local Hero: Among the first Xexas-born natives, Avanne has excelled as a cleric, earning the respect of the Long Way's machine spirits even as a junior. His interference has saved more than one bounty worker caravan from disaster, and stories from grateful new arrivals have made him a well-loved local hero. Many expect his soul to be chosen as a candidate for Xexas' first Alchemical, once he's through using it. This had led Avanne to become fascinated by the Alchemicals his may someday join, and longs to meet one in person. Patriotism and his potential fate push Avanne to work well beyond his limits, fearing that otherwise his soul would be of more use to his beloved city if he were to die young.

Margave Claslati, Glot Boss Enforcer: Claslat expatriates in Xexas know they can't outrun their debts, mostly thanks to Margrave. He was sent to Xexas by a conglomerate of glot-bosses, granted a substantial war chest and armory to ensure he could enforce their rules in the foreign city. By day, he bribes his supervisors to keep his factory job easy and enjoys what simple pleasures Xexas offers. At night, he leads a gang of thugs, mostly Claslati, who track down workers who owe glots back home. Margave isn't unreasonable. If a bounty worker can't keep to their payment schedule, they can sign over the future glot reward that they would receive upon successfully returning from Xexas as a partial payment towards their debt. His gang works on the edge of Xexas' law: using violence to collect debts is illegal, if they're caught, but surveillance and extortionate threats are a gray area.

Margave would be hard to pick out of a crowd. He looks and lives much like any Populat worker. His plain clothes hide finely woven mesh armor and a variety of weapons, but he's left the rest of his fortune back home. On the wall of his bunk in a cramped dorm, he's marking down the days until he can leave miserable Xexas behind once and for all and retire to a life of leisure and comfort.

Tunnel Folk

Mortal clans roam the Reaches, beyond the Octet's life-sustaining infrastructure and Alchemical protectors. The Tripartite designates them "Transient Subjects of the Machine Realm" or "transients." Unofficially, they're "drifters" or "tunnel folk." To plutarchs, they're line items on a balance sheet, one clan's trade goods offsetting another's raids. To preceptors, they're savages wallowing in debauchery, impiety, and heresy. To outlying settlements, some are welcome peddlers, others feared marauders. To urban Populat, they're rumors and folklore. But these external glimpses reveal little of the multifarious tunnel folk cultures struggling to survive in the hostile Reaches.

Octet Renegades

Exhausted Lumpen running from drudgery and shame, persecuted Populat laborers fleeing oppressive regimes, corrupt plutarchs and Sodalts absconding from regulator scrutiny — all such renegades make their way to the Reaches. Most form small bands of Octet expatriates, scraping by despite ignorance of the Machine God's depths. Such bands almost never persist long-term; renegades eventually join extant tunnel clans, return to the Eight Nations, or die in the dark. Only the most precarious clans accept renegades sight unseen. Clan members size up candidates' physical fitness, mental adaptability, and integrity, accepting only those who won't be detrimental. Exceptions can be made for those offering irreplaceable skills or incalculably valuable assets, but survival trumps gratitude should new members endanger the clan.

Tunnel Folk Culture

Most tunnel clans are nomadic, following conduits to gather water and nutrient slurry, supplemented by hunting or rat-herding. They collect valuables — machine parts, ores, salt, sugar, dyes, aromatic oils, etc. — from natural deposits, blight zones, or machine spirit nests, but otherwise travel light. What they don't use or cache for emergencies, they trade to Octet settlements and other tunnel clans, especially for tools, weapons, and clothing.

Only the wealthiest clans accouter every member with Octet-manufactured goods. Most hand-weave textiles from colorful insulation fiber, while footwear and protective gear use rubber sheeting, rat leather, and machine spirit pelts. Scavenged components welded together using portable forges, natural electric arcs, or epoxies yield distinctive equipment — whether Meriv warriors' crystalline crab-claw glaives, Pegraclef water-bearers' brazen hand-drills, or Eka Shali scavengers' bismuth-crust ed ghillie suits.

For most clans, artistic expression revolves around storytelling, dance, and song, accompanied by simple instruments like flutes and castanets. Elaborate murals mark rest sites, their style revealing which clan frequents the area. Tools and jewelry may be intricately engraved or painted. Many clans practice tattooing, piercing, and other body modifications. Eight-sided fluorite crystals, common in the Reaches, serve as dice; metal punch cards are used for card games or peg-and-hole board games.

Most tunnel clans eschew formal social roles. They prioritize independent thought and communal decision-making, while tolerating nonconformity. Even formal roles are rarely permanent. For instance, leaders of Kephod harvesting parties give orders in the field, but have no special authority at home.

Watchful elders try to nip trouble in the bud before anyone gets hurt. Clans forgive most accidents and mischief, and encourage adversaries to reconcile. Punishments for lesser wrongdoings include shaming, restitution, supervision, and withholding of privileges. The truly incorrigible, and perpetrators of major crimes like murder or destruction of irreplaceable tools, may be shunned or exiled.

Most clans practice exogamy, taking spouses and lovers from other tunnel folk clans. Likewise, most allow ill-fitting members to leave for another band. Folding these practices together into exogamous marriage strengthens ties with neighboring clans. Still, inter-clan interaction risks theft or violence, so romantic and commercial negotiations usually involve group rituals. Feasts, dances, and mock combats are common.

Most clans worship Autochthon alongside various Divine Ministers, machine spirits, holy locales, and sacred objects. Eshasper Fanur warriors praise Debok Moom before battle. The Wehusca Fanur call on the subminister Spirsen, the Bell of Ku, to warn them of danger. The Kephod revere the industrial organ that they call home. Preceptors deem such practices heretical, exacerbating tensions between the Octet

and tunnel folk.

Reincarnation features heavily in many tunnel folk religions, but soulgems are scarce in the Reaches. The Alitra Fanur procure them on the Claslat gray market; the Eshasper Fanur deem reincarnation a warrior's prerogative earned by prying a soulgem from an enemy's skull. But most clans, lacking soulgems, substitute other rites. For example, the finned, buoyant Taq'mac people of the Sea of Oil give their dead to the haloconos, sessile machine spirits resembling luminous brass-and-crystal pitcher plants, believing them psychopomps who return souls to the Ewer.

Blight zones, gremlins, elemental hazards, powerful machine spirits, Apostates, and the like are a real and present threat in the Reaches. Tunnel clans maintain detailed oral traditions of these perils. Most proactively warn outsiders away from danger, but withhold methods of bypassing threats to maintain an edge in resource gathering.

The Alitra Fanur

A familiar sight in Claslat's outlying settlements, black-clad Alitra Fanur trade potash, salt, rock sugar, limonene, and cannabinoids, gathered from secret veins and spigots, for assorted Octet goods. Glot-bosses and plutarchs meet them covertly for bigger trades. A largely unearned reputation for sexual indecency and heresy keeps Alitra Fanur visits short and sees them blamed for unrelated troubles. They're nonetheless trusted as guides, accompanying Sodalts and pilgrims to destinations that tram lines can't reach.

Clan life revolves around the lal, machine spirits used as beasts of burden. Each band tames a few of these hexapedal cobalt-scaled camelids. A lal's long neck is topped by a cluster of sensory stalks that can sense heat, light, vibrations, and water down miles of tunnel. Short, thick claws allow it to climb steep slopes and tear conduits open. It can carry a person's weight, but usually hauls provisions and trade goods.

In recent years, a handful of lal have spontaneously gremlinized. Shrieking like buzzsaws, afflicted lal grow numerous flailing barbed limbs and lash out at clanfolk, seemingly intent on drenching their own bodies in gore. Baffled lal keepers speculate about the cause and focus on keeping the machine spirits clean and fit. Elders fear for the clan's way of life should the affliction spread.

Trouble is brewing between the Alitra Fanur and Claslati settlements. Shortages and corruption magnify both sides' desire to get a better deal. Negotiations break down on luxuries; violence occasionally breaks out over necessities. With citizens increasingly offering payment in glots, dissent grows between those Alitra Fanur concerned that glots will become worthless or that glot bosses will cheat them, and those who see only opportunity. And in Depolgat, a Claslat mining outpost where an Alitra Fanur band recently rescued residents from a fire, the band was falsely accused of setting the fire — and was correctly blamed for reckless Alitra youths looting the charred ruins.

The Fanurex

Scattered in a millennia-old diaspora, the Fanurex clans — kin to Nurad's gateway people (p. XX) — spread throughout Autochthonia, becoming the most widespread and numerous of transient cultures. While some abandoned their homeland, others maintain social and commercial ties, visiting when Autochthon's shifting geography allows. These include the Alitra Fanur, Eshasper Fanur, and Wehusca Fanur.

The Fanurex and the gateway people traditionally fostered children with one another, culminating in joint coming-of-age rites in Nurad where adolescents

chose for life whether to remain with their birth people or join their fosterers. Fosterage has grown rare, but remains a safety valve for those ill-suited to their homes — and for occasional overpopulation pressures among the gateway people. Few traditions remain constant among the far-flung Fanurex clans. Some conduct regular pilgrimages as the gateway people do. Most award each member three names. One-year-olds receive a childhood name, used in adulthood only by old friends and affectionate kin. At age 11 they earn an inside name used among Fanurex, and an outside name used with all others. Only outside names are used in the Octet and the Blight; using inside names there is deemed spiritually unsound.

The Clahus

The seminomadic Blood People — called “Clahus” by outsiders — originated with heretics driven from Jarish in a now-mythic exodus. Their creed reveres a nameless true god who birthed Creation: a heaven of flesh with girders of bone and seas of milk. Autochthon is their capricious, uncaring demiurge. Their holy mission involves collecting command codes, which they collectively call “the Machine Devil’s 60,000 secret names.” They believe that one such secret name can compel Autochthon to open a corridor to their heaven.

Clahus herd giant rats for meat; the old and infirm tend mushroom beds along their traditional routes. Nutrient slurry is only consumed in extremis, requiring ritual purification afterward. They ruthlessly hunt minor machine spirits as religious duty and to gather components for practical use and trade. Ritual songs, accompanied by skin drums and bone flutes, thank the souls of the slain, as their creed deems all living things holy.

The Clahus reuse their fellows’ bodies after death to withhold them from the demiurge. They weave hair into cloth and rope, tan skin into leather, carve bone into tools and adornments, and eat Clahus flesh in solemn funereal feasts. Any remnants nourish the mushroom farms.

Unlike most tunnel clans, the Clahus are literate. Their sacred Book of Blood, scribed in blood on human-skin parchment, encompasses laws, parables, founding myths, ancient legends, and recent history. Elders integrate new material at annual gatherings, using orally transmitted ciphers to encrypt newly discovered command codes and other clan secrets into the text. Others tattoo themselves with favorite excerpts.

Rejecting formal leadership, bands make decisions by consensus, giving weight to practicality, group cohesion, precedent, and the Book’s dictates. But erudite, charismatic, or bellicose members often dominate discussions. For instance, the far-ranging Thousand Stairs band sways between the agendas of isolationist elder Brindle Rat, whose eidetic memory and rhetorical gifts encompass both the Book’s intricacies and her juniors’ every past humiliation, and charismatic hunter Split Rib, who rallies his peers to enrich the clan by raiding other clans and Octet travelers.

While the Clahus abhor the Blight, an obsession with its transformation of metal to flesh leads a handful into heresy. Some say the Blight will transform Autochthon into heaven; others whisper that Autochthon’s death will set all humanity free. The Red Ancient, an ancient Clahus-born gremlinized sorcerer, leverages these heresies to woo clan members.

The Eshasper Fanur

Heirs to a warrior tradition, the Eshasper Fanur start combat training when they’re old enough to hold a crossbow. They supplement hunting and gathering — practices imperiled by Estasian strip-mining of

resources — by raiding neighboring clans who won't pay tribute. They occasionally dare to pillage outlying Estasian settlements, trade convoys, pilgrim bands, and Sodality expeditions. Eshasper warriors value the chance to do battle against Populat militias and Estasia's Militat, seeking to earn prestige and win fallen foes' weapons and soulgems. They fade back into the Reaches before any serious counterattack manifests.

In recent weeks, they'd escalated to blowing intercity highway tubes to plunder cargo trams. But an Estasian encirclement has left most Eshasper bands besieged in what they call the Scrap: a cold, darkened industrial organ ruined in a battle between Alchemicals and Apostates. Its colossal brazen gears, tangled with sparking cables and leaking conduits, lie heaped and smashed like children's toys after a tantrum, amid undulating heaps of concrete debris; nameless fluids trickle into pools of stagnant, oil-slicked effluent.

Food runs short without nutrient slurry. The clan pads out dwindling provisions by hunting and trapping vermin, and by looting rations from fallen Militat. Meanwhile, the wounded, elders, and children grow ill from the Scrap's unhale environs and unstable Essence.

The Eshasper Fanur expect no quarter from Estasia. Still, morale remains high. Warriors armed with stolen military hardware conduct hit-and-run strikes on Militat breastworks, aiming to lure the enemy into ambushes. The Scrap's access points are kill zones trapped with deadfalls, electrified tripwires, and half-feral machine spirits, and guarded by warriors equipped with everything from spears and crossbows to semiportable ferromantic mangonels liberated in a tram raid.

Normally, ambitious band leaders — such as vicious ex-Militat armsmaster Rosla, boastful Blight-touched brawler Mursili Steel-Arm, and obsessive shaman Ammuna Spark-Tamer — squabble over prestige and petty slights. For the moment they stand united behind the clan's warleader, the cunning, angry tactician Kiya Mended-Knife. But arguments grow over whether to keep holding out, or when and where to attempt a breakout. Surrender isn't on the table.

The Kephod

The seminomadic Guardian People — or “Kephod” to outsiders — inhabit the Cyst, an industrial organ wherein some forgotten Autochthonian culture founded a settlement millennia ago. Sorcerous rune-circuits provide light and warmth while warding off most machine spirits. Fresh water is plentiful, but nutrient slurry conduits converge every few months at best. Harvesting parties find conduits and simmer slurry into sticky blocks for retrieval. Emergency stockpiles are safeguarded in the Cyst by Kephod who are young, elderly, disabled, or ghosts.

Artisans hone their skills by etching talismans of metal and colorful crystal, traditionally given as gifts and worn in bunches on necklaces and bracelets. For funerary rites, the Kephod cement the deceased's talismans to the Cyst's inner wall, accreting countless varicolored patches that glitter like snakeskin, before reverently dropping the body into the adjoining chasm. Perhaps due to ancient sorcery, dead Kephod tarry more often as ghosts than in other clans. It's presumed they'll join the Maker eventually; they're welcome among the clan until then.

The Cyst erratically orbits Yugash, converging every decade or two. By centuries-old agreement, Yugashi Conductors — distrusting Kephod technical know-how — appraise the industrial organ's mechanisms and perform maintenance rites during convergences. They offer various provisions as compensation for intruding on holy ground. But many clan members resent the indignity and wish to break the bargain, while Conductors regard the Kephod with revulsion, disgusted by their lack of soulgems and their lingering ghosts. Should Yugash's resource shortage lead its Conductors to skimp on gifts at the next convergence, trouble is certain.

Food has run short for over a year. Blight taints nearby conduits; two harvesting parties haven't returned in months and are believed dead. With food reserves critically low, the Kephod debate their future. Revered elder 36 Huya advises petitioning Yugash for aid, knowing this endangers the Cyst's sanctity and Kephod independence. Strong-willed child prodigy 41 Shesh insists on trusting the harvesting parties will return. The maimed hero 39 Weni proposes abandoning the Cyst entirely. And 22 Nofrue, an obsessively traditionalist ancestor, suggests ritual suicide to stretch remaining food supplies — and to increase the ghosts' numbers.

The Cyst

This enormous, hollow bronze hemisphere juts from a sheer metal chasm's flank, accessible by long, narrow bridges. Airborne flocks of glegur — centipedal, piscine machine spirits — wriggle into the Cyst through tiny gaps. Dozens of boxy chambers, webbed with stairs and catwalks, jut from the structure's spherical inner wall. At the center hovers a seething quicksilver mass of glegur, newcomers intermittently replenishing their numbers as older ones slowly burn to ash. Occasional gaps in their coverage reveal an eye-twisting rugose surface that blazes a searing magenta.

Massive wheels and levers control the chamber's heat and humidity. The Kephod keep it hot and dry; they believe an ancient devil is confined by the glegur, which burn away more swiftly in cool, moist air.

The Wehusca Fanur

Life struggles to endure Sova's searing Reaches. The Wehusca Fanur carve out their niche in a maze of ventilation tunnels that pull cooler air into the organ-continent. They spend their lives in these airshafts — traversing steep slopes and narrow girders, dodging ventilation fans, leaping across bottomless shafts with acrobatic grace, and making camp single file as endless winds lull them to sleep.

The airshafts offer water and nutrient slurry conduits, but little else. To pursue traditional crafts and enjoy life's little indulgences, they scavenge from hotter zones of Sova's Reaches. Soaking themselves in water suffices for brief exposure, but meaningful ventures require a full-body heatsuit made from the iridescent, tawny hide of frog-cephalopod machine spirits called ranix. Heat-transfer coils along the suit's spine glow red, venting excess heat as ranix do.

Most Wehusca Fanur practice a craft. Some construct conduit-spigots, hooked ranix-hunting spears, simple mechanical puzzles, or other tools and toys — including votive offerings to the Maker, flung into bottomless shafts or lava pits. Others spin insulation fiber and cure leather, experiment with dyes, or refine flavoring-ester blends. The young hang fearlessly above precipitous shafts to draw swooping murals on airshaft walls.

Heatsuit-clad Wehusca Fanur traders historically visited outlying Sovan settlements, offering handicrafts, scavenged goods, tinkering, and high-steel labor for Octet tools and luxury goods. But longstanding anti-Wehusca prejudice has erupted into wild accusations that they've stolen the Cyax lineage's malki in order to sell it to Yugash. In recent months, most Wehusca bands have been driven to the fringes of Sova's Reaches by Estasian mercenaries in Cyax employ.

Lacking consensus on the clan's future, its bands have split into two groups. The patient, cautious ranix-hunter Zenawi leads many in search of safe haven elsewhere in perilous, unfamiliar Reaches. Others rally to the passionate, charismatic mural-artist Kutre; they refuse to abandon their home over a falsehood, and aim to ambush Cyax retaliatory forces until the enemy grows weary of the fight.

The Yeton For

Long ago, a radical Gulaki clade disgusted by their nation's cosmopolitanism sought isolation in the Far Reaches. Their descendants reside now at the Endless Smoke's upper rim, denizens of a nation-sized plate anchored to titanic rusty spires hanging from the distant ceiling. There, amid smog and acid rain, they sift through mountains of fallen trash to plunder long-buried Logis, purportedly one of Autochthonia's mythical Six Fallen Nations.

Gray-skinned, iron-toothed mutants, the Yeton For eat plastics, rubber, and other synthetics, and comfortably breathe the Endless Smoke's toxic air. Family groups inhabit domes welded together from layers of sheet metal, hundreds of which blister the metal plain. When not searching junkheaps for foodstuffs, raw materials, and mendable Octet goods, they enjoy such recreations as folk-dancing with castanets and pipes, inhaling recreational vapors, and engaging in contests like smog tag, spire climbing, spring-stilt racing, and competitive insult-poetry.

Revering the Divine Ministers, they consecrate jury-rigged mechanisms to Kek'Tungsha, seek Debok Moom's blessing against winged gremlins from the Endless Smoke, and dedicate dross to Ku when tossing it over the plate's edge. Funeral rites invoke Domadamod; the Yeton For accouter their dead with prized possessions and convey them via pneumatic tube to the Expanse of Metal. Those venturing into the ruins petition Noi for insight and luck.

Logis's ruins consist of tapered, three-story hexagonal structures that open onto underground labyrinths. Explorers retrieve ancient devices, texts scribed in dead languages on gold plates, and priceless soulgems. But expeditions are hazardous, as scavengers confront defensive automata, the volatile mechanisms of ruined Municipal Charms, maddened machine spirits, and other perils.

The Yeton For's ruling caste call themselves sodalis, claiming descent from Gulak's Sodalities. They hoard and study Logis' knowledge, oversee implantation of soulgems, negotiate with machine spirits, lead ruin expeditions, and maintain the clan's arc lamps, heat generators, and other sophisticated devices. Each sodalis designates a clanmate as their proctor. Proctors serve as bodyguards and lab assistants, typically for life.

Only sodalist and their proctors may enter the Chalaroch, a towering brazen engine built to power their settlement. There they effect repairs and sacrifice captured machine spirits to maintain the engine's energies. Every few years, they bring a newborn God-Blooded infant back from the Chalaroch. They are raised as sodalis, strengthening the clan's mutant bloodline.

Other Itinerant Groups

A conspiracy of plutarchs and glot bosses bankrolls **the Corcon Syndicate**. This band of glot forgers intermittently relocates within the vast borderlands of Claslat's nation chamber to evade notice. Self-exiled Claslati debtors perform manual labor, unscrupulous Scholars oversee glot production, hired tunnel folk serve as guides, and corrupt regulators stand guard while keeping the rest in line. Syndicate members also launder glots through small transactions; once the counterfeits' efficacy is confirmed, the conspirators have bigger plans.

The masked People of Kryrek — called **“Gubaru”** by outsiders — deemed themselves sacred guardians of the warrens adjoining the Black Rust blight zone. Pledging themselves to Kryrek, the Rasp of Domadamod, they guarded the blight zone's borders, spread sacred abstergents to halt its spread, and battled gremlins alongside machine spirit custodians. But recently, the half-healed blight zone erupted anew. Many Gubaru perished; the rest grieved, and argued bitterly over their devotion to their ancient duty. Deeming such responses inefficient, Kryrek assimilated the most distressed clanfolk as drones,

sparing them the distractions of emotion and independent thought until the crisis passes. But to Kryrek's dismay, this has only made the other Gubaru even more agitated.

The **Trodwelev** navigate among the Sea of Oil's spire-islands in symbiosis with spider-eyed cetacean machine spirits called the odwelev. When odwelev beach themselves to molt, clanfolk peel away feathersteel plates for huts and pontoon hulls, plastic spines for oars and spear-shafts, and so forth. Rats breed inside submerged odwelevs' organ-chambers; the Trodwelev scrub those chambers, make rat jerky, and gather secretions to ferment into mead. Would-be shamans enter an odwelev for an entire submergence cycle, returning with an affinity for machine spirits and strong feelings about rats.

The Far Reaches

Beyond the stable regions of the Expanse of Metal stretch the unpredictable depths of the Far Reaches, home to strange people, stranger places, and even stranger wonders. The Eight Nations occasionally dispatch their bravest explorers, scouts, and warriors to explore these remote parts of Autochthon.

In the Far Reaches the Maker's divine order falls apart. Here, things grow strange and wild: gravity ceases to work as it should, mutagenic Essence seeps up through snarled demiurge lines, and damaged industrial organs trigger cascade failures throughout Autochthon's subsystems. Few machine spirits perform their sacred duties to maintain Autochthon's systems, and the Blight runs rampant. Lost and forgotten experiments of the Divine Ministers and Great Maker himself lay in shrouding darkness. Monsters and heretics thrive where congruency and form dissolve.

Many of the mechanisms found here are no longer necessary to the functioning of Autochthon's world-body, pushed outward to the Far Reaches to make room for replacements and improvements. The Eight Nations believe this is the reason for the Far Reaches' chaos — they have been deprioritized by Autochthon's internal systems, powered down to conserve the Primordial's Essence.

But the Far Reaches are not totally inhospitable to life. Survival demands ceaseless vigilance and mystic knowledge, but the Octet's Champions have braved them time and time again across the Eight Nations' history, doing battle with Apostates or seeking lost wonders.

The Embassy of Glass and Steel

On an island in a lake of oil and grease sits a boxy building of glass and steel, its architecture looming and layered like a crystal of bismuth, with a similar prismatic sheen on its transparent surfaces. It rises above the island and the lake like a beacon to welcome the weary and the lost. This is the Embassy of Glass and Steel and it welcomes anyone who survives the trip to find it. It's operated by the Presbytery of the Reaches, a sacred order of God-Blooded clergy descended from machine spirits. the Presbytery's members view themselves as liaisons between mortals, spirits, and other strange things, tasked with maintaining peace and harmony. It is their sworn duty to care for those who cross their doorstep, feeding and clothing them, so long as guests comport themselves in a peaceful manner and abide by the Embassy's minimal rules: do no harm to your neighbors, and treat other visitors with respect.

Autochthonia's inhuman inhabitants, such as Dragon Kings and the rats of the Scurrying Nation, often number among their guests. Beyond the Embassy's walls, the Presbytery maintain a close relationship with local machine spirits, which shelter the Embassy from the Far Reaches' perils.

While the Embassy offers open doors to travelers and asks that its guests treat each other with respect, it is not always a safe place. Apostates and gremlins crave its destruction. They froth and rail against its very concept, which promises peace among all living and mechanical things. The clergy do their best to defend themselves, but an equal amount of their time is often spent cleaning up after an attack. Any of the Chosen who rest there may find themselves embroiled in danger not long after a moment of reprieve.

The People of the Molten Sun

When Autochthon departed Creation, he took with him a cluster of Dragon Kings, an ancient saurian people from Creation's prehuman past. Their nature is shifting and adaptable. In Autochthonia, they may sport claws, fangs, or scales made of iron; colorful displays of gemstone and crystal, or frills or spines of rubber and silicone.

The People of the Molten Sun are both the descendants and the reincarnations of some of these first Dragon Kings. In the distant past, they allied themselves with the early Octet, but they were driven into the Far Reaches in a long-ago crusade. The Dragon Kings' primal, superhuman might has let the People carve out a safe foothold within the Far Reaches. Their favored pastime is vigorous debates on theological topics both recent and ancient. They worship the Machine God alongside the Unconquered Sun, who they see as a ninth Divine Minister and the sacred patron of their kind. They have infrequent contact with Octet explorers and local tunnel folk clans, engaging in trade or acting as guides for expeditions into the Far Reaches.

The Theophonic Engine

Commissioned by the Divine Ministers Kek'Tungsha and Mog, the Theophonic Engine was once a colossal god-automaton, its form a combination of humanoid, beast, and vehicle. It was made to house the Maker's will and intellect that he might banish the sickness of his Blight with his own. Autochthon never deigned to inhabit the massive monument-body, and so the two Divine Ministers put the great thing to use. It became an engine of prayer and devotion, spouting orisons and praise at every second, minute, and hour of the day. They assembled the Attendants to the Sound, a sacred order of priest-laborers and operator-worshippers responsible for maintaining the great machine. With this, they hoped, they might alleviate the Maker's sickness or, by some miracle, cure it. Neither of these things happened.

Though the Theophonic Engine has not cured Autochthon of his illness, it does keep the Blight from affecting the world around it, creating a safe haven within the Far Reaches. It's become a load-bearing feature of the area, providing stability, soothing machine spirits, and feeding a steady stream of prayers to the Maker. For this alone, a titanic amount of effort is put into maintaining the monument. Now it stands as a sprawling construct, layers upon layers of churning machinery. It spews stability, offers what prayers it can to the Maker, and broadcasts a perpetual reading of the Holy Numerical Sequence for anyone who chooses to tune in.

Nothing outside of the Maker's craft can last forever. After a millennium of running smoothly, it suffered its first catastrophic breakdown, ending its infinite prayer. Dozens of Attendants to the Sound were killed, offering a gruesome and unintended sacrifice to the Maker in the process. A Circle of determined Machine Saints entered the failing machine, extracted the bodies, and restored the Theophonic Engine to functionality, beginning the ever-continuing process of repairing it. Since then, countless efforts have been made to keep the Theophonic Engine operational.

Thanks to the Theophonic Engine's stabilizing effects, a sprawling shanty-city has erected around it. Originally founded by tunnel folk, it's also home to pilgrims, exiles, outcasts, and refugees. Some have nowhere else to go, and the shanty-city provides food, shelter, water, and company. Some in the village join the ranks of the Attendants to the Sound, choosing to give back to the divine engine that saved them rather than die and leave behind no trace.

Unfortunately, this is not a sustainable solution. The Theophonic Engine is slowly collapsing under the weight of its many repairs and reconstructions, and no number of Attendants can stop this on their own. The Attendants to the Sound worry that without outside intervention, another catastrophic failure is on the

horizon — but their prayers have thus far gone unanswered by Kek'Tungsha and Mog.

The Silicate Collective

Birthered from pools of liquid crystal infused with the Maker's Essence, these intelligent, inorganic lifeforms are native to the Far Reaches. These Collectivists share a communal consciousness and memory; all new births within the Silicate Collective arrive fully formed with functional thoughts and feelings. The Eight Nations have had little contact with the Collective, but returning explorers speaking of joining forces with Collectivists against gremlins and the Blight. The Collectivists believe that their communal existence is a facet of the Machine God's own mind, and are thus deeply invested in his health and wellbeing. Collectivists thrive where organic life cannot, unharmed by scalding steam or pools of corrosive oil. They sculpt themselves into whatever form pleases them and grow colorful crystals as forms of self-expression. Some emulate the forms of humanoids or machine spirits, while others take on forms that are monstrous, fluid, or abstract.

The Scurrying Nation

According to the oral history of the Scurrying Nation, they were once but ordinary rats, until they drank deeply from a long-lost well of magic somewhere within the Far Reaches. Rats of the Scurrying Nation are fully intelligent and capable of speech, with as diverse a range of sizes as are found among Octet rats. Keen and empathetic, the rats of the Scurrying Nation enjoy rodentine prosperity, sustained by their foragers, raiders, and gear-witches. The Nation often has dealings with the Embassy of Glass and Steel, delivering nutrient slurry and potable water to the Embassy and assisting with its maintenance and protection. This is both a charitable venture and a boastful demonstration of the Scurrying Nation's resources and ingenuity. They also make occasional pacts and bargains with the Eight Nations, particularly Kamak, for supplies and logistics.

Sagatai

The sagatai are symbiotic beings within the Machine God's body, absorbed into Autochthonia's Far Reaches in an age so long ago that none but the slumbering Maker himself recalls. They are amorphous beings of flesh, crystal, oil, plastic, and metal, ranging from six and a half and nine feet high. They are intelligent, but not in a way that humanity could easily recognize, as they communicate primarily through pheromones and a strange form of telepathy. The sagatai can't remember a time before they were part of the Great Maker's body, as much as the machine spirits are part of his soul. Sacred warriors of the Machine God, they to hunt down intruders within Autochthonia and devour them. Xenophages have come to accept that the presence of humanity within Autochthonia is the Great Maker's will, but they're especially sensitive to the presence of humans, especially where they stray into places where the Maker never meant for them to tread. This leaves gremlins as the sagatai's favored prey, making these strange creatures strange and tenuous allies to Machine Saints and the Eight Nations.

Chapter Three: Character Creation

This chapter details the process of creating Alchemical player characters.

Traits

You'll make a number of choices about your character's system traits in character creation. It may help to skip ahead and read about those traits or reference their description in **Exalted Third Edition**. A quick summary:

Caste: Your Caste is an archetypal role as a Champion of your community. Each Caste has three associated Attributes, which are easier to increase. Your Caste also determines your anima powers. See p. XX

Attributes: Your character's innate strengths and aptitudes (**Exalted**, p. 148). Attributes determine what Charms you can learn. In addition to the discount on Caste Attributes, you'll choose one Favored Attribute to receive the same discount, broadening your character beyond their Caste's archetype.

Abilities: Your character's skills (**Exalted**, p. 149).

Specialties: Your character's specific areas of expertise within their Abilities (**Exalted**, p. 123).

Merits: Miscellaneous traits associated with your character's origin and backstory (**Exalted**, p. 157). Some provide mechanical advantages, while others give narrative benefits, like wealth or minions. If you want an artifact, you'll take it as a Merit.

Charms: Divine god-machinery installed in an Alchemical, providing them with supernatural prowess. Charms are the most complicated part of the game, but you don't need to read them all — just those available at Essence 1. Each Charm requires a certain Attribute rating, so you may want to pick Charms before Attributes. See Chapter 5.

Charm Slots: Unlike most Exalted, Alchemicals can't use all of their Charms at once. Instead, they can only install a limited number of Charms. Each Charm slot can hold a single Charm, and must be purchased separately from them.

Submodules: Submodules are upgrades to Alchemical Charms. They don't require additional Charm slots.

Intimacies: Your character's relationships, beliefs, and other aspects of their personality (**Exalted**, p. 170). It's harder for social influence to sway you against your Intimacies, but it's easier to convince you to do something your Intimacies support. Charms and other magic may also draw on your character's Intimacies.

Step 1: Concept and Caste

Start character creation by talking with your Storyteller about her plans for the game, and discussing character concepts with your fellow players. Think about your character's origin, personality, skills, and the heroic archetypes that inspire her. Determine which of the Alchemical Castes (p. XX) fit her best.

If you're playing an Alchemical in Autochthonia, you should also choose which of the Eight Nations you belong to:

Claslat: The largest of the Eight Nations and unofficial first among equals, boasting enormous wealth and political cachet.

Estasia: A militaristic nation whose mercenary army is Autochthonia's greatest fighting force.

Gulak: The melting pot of the Eight Nations, Gulak's cultural diversity makes it a cultural hotbed. However, its cosmopolitan society is still plagued by discrimination, oppression, and social fault lines.

Jarish: Famed for its populace's piety and work ethic, Jarish is ruled by its Theomachracy, a priestly class that maintains both morale and orthodoxy throughout the nation.

Kamak: Both the wealthiest and the most isolated of the Eight Nations, Kamak's economy are built around its immense surplus of natural resources — a surplus that's begun to wane in recent years.

Nurad: Renowned for innovation and scientific progress, Nurad now finds itself threatened by both the exhaustion of its natural resources and the creeping spread of the blight.

Sova: Sova has expanded its territories into Autochthonia's reaches to combat population density. Its recent war with Yugash has bred paranoia and jingoism.

Yugash: A nation on the edge of ruin, still recovering from devastating losses suffered in a war and the tumult of a Populat revolt.

Step 2: Attributes

Each Attribute begins with one dot. They're grouped into three categories: Physical (Dexterity, Stamina, Strength), Social (Appearance, Charisma, Manipulation), and Mental (Intelligence, Perception, Wits).

You'll choose one of these categories as primary, another as secondary, and the third as tertiary. Distribute eight dots between your primary Attributes, six dots between your secondary Attributes, and four dots between your tertiary Attributes. Attributes can't be raised above five.

You gain three *Caste Attributes*, as follows:

Orichalcum: Charisma, Intelligence, Strength

Moonsilver: Appearance, Dexterity, Wits

Jade: Charisma, Stamina, Wits

Starmetal: Dexterity, Intelligence, Manipulation

Soulsteel: Manipulation, Perception, Stamina

Adamant: Appearance, Perception, Strength

You'll also choose one *Favored Attribute*, based on your character's individual aptitudes. Your Favored Attribute must be chosen from your primary or secondary Attributes.

Step 3: Abilities and Specialties

Divide 28 dots among your Abilities. Each starts at zero, and can't be raised above three without spending bonus points. Abilities can't be raised above five.

Assign four specialties (**Exalted**, p. 123). You must have at least one dot in an Ability to take a

specialty in it.

Step 4: Merits

Choose ten dots of Merits. Alchemicals who belong to one of the Eight Nations distribute five additional dots among the Backing, Command, Contacts, and Influence, and Resources Merits.

Step 5: Charms and Charm Slots

Choose fifteen Charms to fill them. Most Alchemical Charms require a minimum rating in their associated Attribute — if you don't qualify, you'll need to raise that Attribute's rating with bonus points.

You also begin with fifteen Charm slots. Note that Essence 1 Alchemicals can't have more than eighteen slots total, even if they buy additional slots with bonus points.

You can take Evocations, Martial Arts Charms, and spells in place of Alchemical Charms. Learning Martial Arts Charms requires Perfected Style Matrix (p. XX), while sorcery requires Man-Machine Weaving Engine (p. XX).

Alchemicals and Martial Arts

Alchemicals don't need to take the Martial Artist Merit, as Perfected Style Matrix provides it for free.

Step 6: Intimacies

Choose Intimacies (**Exalted**, p. 170) to represent your Alchemical's beliefs and relationships. Intimacies can represent motivations, religious beliefs, worldview, friends and enemies, morals, idiosyncrasies, or other important parts of her life.

Many Champions have Ties toward the community they belong to. Among Alchemicals in Autochthonia, Ties to the Great Maker are also common, as are Principles reflecting an Alchemical's views on the Eight Nations' politics, culture, and economics.

There's no maximum on how many Intimacies you may choose at character creation. Starting characters must have at least four Intimacies. At least one must be Defining, and one must be Major. Likewise, at least one must be positive, and one must be negative.

Step 7: Bonus Points

You have 15 bonus points that can be spent any time during character creation to raise your character's traits.

<BEGIN TABLE>

TRAIT	COST
Caste/Favored Attribute	3 per dot
Non-Caste/Favored Attribute	4 per dot
Ability	2 per dot
Specialty	1

Merits	1 per dot
Caste/Favored Charm	1
Non-Caste/Favored Charm	2
Charm Slot	3
Submodule (3xp)	1
Submodule (6xp)	2
Spell (Intelligence Caste/Favored)	4
Spell (Intelligence non-Caste/Favored)	5
Martial Arts Charm	5
Evocation	4
Willpower	2 per dot

<END TABLE>

It's most cost-effective to spend bonus points on Caste and Favored Alchemical Charms, to raise Attributes from 4 to 5, or to raise Abilities above 3.

Spending bonus points to buy Charm slots, Evocations, Martial Arts Charms, and spells is the least efficient way to use them.

Step 8: Finishing Touches

You begin at Essence 1. Alchemicals have $(11 + [\text{Essence} \times 2])$ personal motes and $(27 + [\text{Essence} \times 6])$ peripheral motes, for 13 personal motes and 33 peripheral motes at Essence 1.

You begin with five Willpower, which can be raised with bonus points.

You begin with seven health levels: a -0 level, two -1 levels, two -2 levels, a -4 level, and an Incapacitated level. You may gain additional health levels with Strain-Resistant Chassis Modification (p. XX).

Legendary Champions

The above rules are for creating Alchemicals who were created or unsealed no more than a year ago. For more experienced Champions, make the following changes:

- Your starting Essence is 2.
- Choose thirteen dots of Merits, in addition to bonus Merits from your nation.
- Choose twenty Charms. (You don't gain additional Charm slots).
- Spend eighteen bonus points.

Character Creation Summary

Step 1: Concept and Caste

- Consult with the Storyteller and other players, and come up with a character concept.
- Choose your character's nation, if playing in Autochthonia.
- Pick a Caste. Note its anima powers.

Step 2: Attributes

- Place one dot in each Attribute.
- Divide 8 dots among primary Attributes, 6 dots among secondary Attributes, and 4 dots among tertiary Attributes.
- Mark your Caste Attributes.
- Select one Favored Attribute, which must come from your primary or secondary Attributes.

Step 3: Abilities and Specialties

- Divide 28 dots among all Abilities. None may be raised above 3 without spending bonus points.
- Assign four specialties.

Step 4: Merits

- Select 10 dots of Merits.
- If you serve a Deathlord, gain them as a Mentor and distribute an additional five dots among their associated Merits.

Step 5: Charms and Charm Slots

- Take 15 Charm slots.
- Select 15 Charms.

Step 6: Intimacies

- Choose at least four Intimacies, including at least one Defining Intimacy, one Major Intimacy, one positive Tie, and one negative Tie.

Step 7: Bonus Points

- Spend 15 bonus points.

Step 8: Finishing Touches

- Record Essence (1), personal motes ($11 + [\text{Essence} \times 2]$), peripheral motes ($27 + [\text{Essence} \times 6]$), health levels ($-0/-1 \times 2/-2 \times 2/-4/\text{Incapacitated}$) and Willpower (5).

Castes

Orichalcum: Orichalcum Castes are built for leadership, whether as visionary politicians, crusading reformers, trailblazing intellectuals, or commanding generals.

Caste Attributes: Charisma, Intelligence, Strength.

Moonsilver: Moonsilver Castes excel in cunning and subtlety, serving their communities as

assassins, spies, explorers, and masters of deception.

Caste Attributes: Appearance, Dexterity, Wits.

Jade: Jade Castes are heroic laborers endowed with superhuman resilience and tenacity, making them closer to Autochthonia's Populat than any other Caste.

Caste Attributes: Charisma, Stamina, Wits.

Starmetal: Starmetal Castes are masters of manipulation and long-term planning, orchestrating events from behind the scenes as intriguers, propagandists, and social engineers.

Caste Attributes: Dexterity, Intelligence, Manipulation.

Soulsteel: Soulsteel Castes are dreaded figures of justice, inquisitors who root out heresy, dissidence, and corruption.

Caste Attributes: Manipulation, Perception, Stamina.

Adamant: Adamant Castes are inspirational heroes, serving as mentors, muses, and spiritual guides.

Caste Attributes: Appearance, Perception, Strength.

Bonus Point Costs

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TRAIT	COST
Caste/Favored Attribute	3 per dot
Non-Caste/Favored Attribute	4 per dot
Ability	2 per dot
Specialty	1
Merits	1 per dot
Caste/Favored Charm	1
Non-Caste/Favored Charm	2
Charm Slot	3
Submodule (3xp)	1
Submodule (6xp)	2
Spell (Intelligence Caste/Favored)	4
Spell (Intelligencer non-Caste/Favored)	5
Martial Arts Charm	5

Evocation 4

Willpower 2 per dot

<END TABLE>

Chapter Four: Traits

The Alchemical Exalted are both human and machine, wrought from clay and metal in place of flesh and bone. This chapter details their unique traits, Castes, Great Curse, and character advancement rules.

Alchemical Physiology

An Alchemical's body is made from clay and magical materials, but their anatomy and physiology are fundamentally identical to that of any other human. They can breathe, eat, and sleep. The crystalline Essence reservoir that is their heart pumps liquid energy through their veins. They're just as susceptible as any other Exalt to poison, disease, and injury. They differ from flesh-and-blood humans in only a few respects.

Alchemicals don't need to eat, drink, or breathe. They're still able to, and typically enjoy it. Nutrients and oxygen are sublimated into pure Essence within their respiratory and digestive systems. Alchemicals must still breathe to speak.

Additionally, Alchemicals are incapable of sexual reproduction. It's unknown what would come of an Alchemical employing a neomah or other magic to have a child.

Not a Robot

Alchemicals aren't automatons. Magic that affects automatons doesn't apply against an Alchemical unless the Storyteller decides it makes sense for that specific effect under the circumstances.

Martial Arts

Alchemicals must permanently install Perfected Style Matrix (p. XX) in order to learn Martial Arts Charms. That Charm provides the Martial Artist Merit for free. Martial Arts Charms don't require Charm slots. Alchemicals don't benefit from the Mastery keyword, but aren't limited by the Terrestrial keyword.

Sorcery and Necromancy

Alchemicals must permanently install Man-Machine Weaving Engine (p. XX) to learn sorcery. They can initiate into sorcery's Celestial Circle. Spells don't require Charm slots.

Apostates have access to a forbidden, blighted Charm that mirrors Man-Machine Weaving Engine, but for necromancy. They can initiate into necromancy's Shadow Circle, but can't use Celestial Circle sorcery.

Evocations

Alchemicals are resonant with the magical material of their Caste, and neutral with all other materials. They can use Resonance Harmonizer (p. XX) to gain resonance with other magical materials.

Adamant and Artifacts

Adamant is a diamond-like magical material, mined from lodes that form among extreme temperatures, isolation, and stillness. It's more common in Autochthonia than Creation, and the Eight Nations' artificers have developed specialized tools for cutting and carving it into superior designs.

Adamant is associated with clarity, precision, keen senses, and graceful action. Its Essence is unyielding, timeless, and eternal. Adamant artifacts magnify, reflect,

and refract, enhancing or distorting traits like light split through a prism. It's also associated with sharpness, fascination, illusion, scrying, logic, order, protection, and extremes temperatures — the heat of focused light and the crystalline luster of ice.

Merits

The following conditions apply to Merits for Alchemicals in Autochthonia.

Backing

Backing is generally limited to the branches of the Tripartite.

Command

This Merit represents military authority granted by the state, with units typically consisting of rigorously drilled Populat volunteers and officers drawn from junior members of the Tripartite. High levels of Command are uncommon outside of Estasia.

Cult

Worship of the Alchemicals is considered heretical and rigorously suppressed — sometimes by the very Champions they venerate. However, this prohibition hasn't been a historical constant within the Eight Nations. In the present day, Nurad has begun experimenting with the use of state-sanctioned cults to empower its Champions.

Demesne/Manse

Autochthonia's demesnes are most often found near large deposits of magical materials in the far reaches. Their inaccessibility and the shifting nature of Autochthonian geography make the Demesne Merit rare among Alchemicals, and the Manse Merit even rarer.

Familiar

In most of Autochthonia, rats and cockroaches are the only animal life. Instead, Alchemicals can gain construct familiars with the Clockwork Companion Template Charm (p. XX).

Followers/Retainers

These Merits typically represent personnel assigned to support an Alchemical by the state or subordinates that she oversees directly.

Hearthstone

While demesnes are rare, many metropoli have Municipal Charms capable of creating hearthstones.

Influence

Alchemicals serve their nations, rather than ruling them. They can't gain Influence 5, barring extraordinary circumstances.

Languages

The native tongue of the Eight Nations is known as Autochthonian, a language that developed from Old Realm. Each of the Eight Nations has its own dialect, as do many cultures outside of the Octet. These

dialects are mutually intelligible, though the Storyteller may require an (Intelligence + Linguistics) roll to communicate or understand to translate certain messages.

Resources

The Eight Nations don't have a standardized monetary system. Instead, this Merit represents the accommodations and luxuries provided to a Champion by the state, and the ability to requisition additional resources.

It's uncommon for Alchemicals to have low ratings in this Merit. This typically results from state-imposed sanctions, interference from political rivals, or deliberate austerity to preserve a nation's resources.

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Orichalcum Caste

Orichalcum is the metal of heroic arete, majesty, and unbridled power. From it, Autochthon forged his Archons, gleaming, golden heroes imbued with the metal's divine glory and overwhelming force. They are the mighty Flames of Autochthon, burning away the terrors that lurk in the Realm of Brass and Shadow's darkness, and illuminating the future, for those with the strength to achieve it. They exemplify force in every action, ever radiant with undimmed glory as they serve the Machine God and his faithful. By their excellence, they exhort the Eight Nations to greater excellence still.

Orichalcum Castes are trailblazers, innovators, and paragons of physical might, always pushing the boundaries of what is possible. Few can rival them in their brilliance, their political acumen, and their devastating martial force. But despite their genius, despite their glory, they do not rule. They exist to show the Eight Nations the way forward, not to force them down that path.

The Flames of Autochthon can only be ignited by heroic souls distinguished by visionary brilliance, larger-than-life ambitions, or unwavering conviction. In one life, they might have been a Theomachy cleric who instituted sweeping doctrinal reforms. In another, the charismatic leader of a mass strike of the Populace that forced major concessions from the Tripartite Assembly. Before that, an engineer whose breakthroughs in design brought about technological revolution.

Orichalcum Caste metropoli are wonders of architecture and urban planning, built according to the Alchemical's own unique, innovative designs. These Utopias' skylines are dominated by towering monuments, laboratory complexes, architectural experiments, and Essence-channeling god-machinery. Some are fortified bastions devoted to advanced weapon design and manufacturing, while others are erudite conclaves where philosophy and scientific research flourish. These metropoli still take an active role in matters of governance, offering the Tripartite guidance from their city-selves' unique perspective.

Anima Banner: An Orichalcum Caste's anima banner is typically brilliant gold, arcing with actinic lightning. They're sometimes accompanied by the pulsating thrum of machinery, peals of thunder, waves of intense heat, or the smell of ozone. Metal touched by the anima sometimes arcs with electricity for a few minutes afterward.

Iconic Anima: An enormous spinning gear, crackling with lightning; a blast furnace lit with golden flame; blueprints and schematics for impossible machinery that gradually take on form; cathedrals of stained-glass machinery.

Anima Effects: Orichalcum Castes' animas can charge their attacks with crackling electricity, amplify the force of their commands, and draw power from their beliefs and convictions (p. XX).

Charms: An Orichalcum Caste's Charms tend toward clean, streamlined designs that favor burnished brass, gold, and orichalcum. Crystal windows might reveal a Charm's interior, revealing bubbling fluids, spinning gears, or sliding pistons.

Caste Attributes: Orichalcum Castes are forceful beings in every respect: immensely strong, confident and brilliant without measure, and undeniably awe-inspiring. Their Caste Attributes are Charisma, Intelligence, and Strength.

Sobriquets: Archons, Flames of Autochthon, Radiant Ones, Utopias (metropoli).

Concepts: Ambassador to the Octet, brilliant general, champion athlete, eccentric artificer, military ethicist, philosophical luminary, prophet of the Great Maker, renowned orator, utopian visionary, weapon engineer.

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Moonsilver Caste

Ever-shifting moonsilver is the most protean and adaptable of all metals, the stuff of secrets and trickery, deft wits and uncanny insights. The Great Maker knew that could not foresee every threat that the gods would face in battle against the Primordials, nor predict the crises that would befall his faithful in the Realm of Brass and Shadows. The Razors of Autochthon were made to stand against the unknown, exemplifying moonsilver's adaptability.

Moonsilver Castes make powerful tools of state intelligence and security, acting as peerless spies, infiltrators, assassins, and saboteurs. They seek out hidden threats from within and without, ensuring that no secrets are kept from the Tripartite Assemblies that they report to. Other Moonsilver Castes guard against the unknown through guerilla warfare, scouting missions into the Far Reaches, works of artifice and on-the-spot engineering, and conspiratorial intrigues carried out in the state's best interests.

Only a heroic soul distinguished by feats of quick-witted ingenuity, cunning, or adaptation to adversity can catalyze a Moonsilver Caste's Exaltation. In one life, she might have been a medic in the midst of crisis, stretching inadequate supplies and improvising solutions to save lives. Before that, an ambitious plutarch's aide who maneuvered herself into a position of political power after years of clandestine intrigue. In another, a Populat laborer who turned the tide of a raid on her metropolis by diverting the flow of her factory's molten runoff.

Moonsilver Caste metropoli can be breathtakingly beautiful, their architecture predominated by flowing curves and almost organic curves that seem to defy gravity. Conspiracies and foreign intelligence operations rarely last long in these Outposts. Few who live in a Moonsilver Caste metropolis notice how its elegant architecture obscures and misdirects the eye, concealing secret compounds and labyrinths of hidden tunnels. Not all Outposts conceal extensive military installations and covert headquarters, lending plausible deniability to those that do.

Anima Banner: Moonsilver Caste anima banners radiate out as shimmering ripples or intertwined tendrils of light, flickering between pale silver and white. They're sometimes accompanied by a sudden drop in temperature or a heavy metallic tang in the air.

Iconic Anima: Raining droplets of sizzling mercury; a whirlwind of razor-edged blades, polished to a mirror sheen; an ever-changing assembly of protean machinery; an intricate latticework of silver wires stalked by machine sentinels.

Anima Effects: Moonsilver Castes' anima powers heighten their speed and reaction times to inhuman levels, grant them greater subtlety when their anima banner is hidden, and allow them to tell lies that are all too easy to believe (p. XX).

Charms: Moonsilver Castes' Charms tend toward smooth, organic curves and shimmering, reflective surfaces, lending these Alchemicals an alluring but alien beauty.

Caste Attributes: Moonsilver Castes are cunning and graceful, masters of quick thinking, espionage, and infiltration. Their Caste Attributes are Appearance, Dexterity, and Wits.

Sobriquets: Enigmas, Razors of Autochthon, Quicksilver Blades, Outposts (metropoli).

Concepts: Agent provocateur, alluring spy, assassin for the Tripartite, counterintelligence agent, deep cover infiltrator, explorer of the Reaches, guerilla warfare specialist, quick-witted engineer, scout behind enemy lines, unpredictable trickster.

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Jade Caste

The five colors of jade embody the harmonious balance of elements, the union of primal forces to birth a greater power yet. Autochthon carved his Arbiters from it that they might bring societies together in harmony, forming a whole greater than the sum of its parts. All Champions serve the people they live among, but the Jade Caste is closer to them any other, the Stone Hands of the Great Maker reaching out to his faithful.

Jade Castes are heroes of industry, leading work crews on enormous public works projects and putting the social policies and economic planning of the Tripartite into action in the face of difficult realities. The Arbiters aren't afraid to get their hands dirty — whether it's taking on ten work shifts, using their bare hands in place of a malfunctioning triphammer, or walking through molten slag to reach the shut-off, they see that the work is done. Other Jade Castes devote their efforts to mediating conflicts, drilling metropolitan defense forces, and leading Populat volunteers on gremlin raids.

Compassion, duty, and self-sacrifice are the foundation upon which a Jade Caste's Exaltation is raised. Her heroic soul's past life might have been an engineer who sealed herself in with a deadly gas leak to stop it spreading any further. A soldier who exposed herself to enemy fire time and time again to rescue wounded comrades. A factory worker who ensured that no shift went uncovered, taking on extra work again and again to keep her fellow laborers from exhausting themselves.

Jade Caste metropoli typically have blocky, geometric architecture that's stable, solid, and functional. These Bastions are centers of industry even compared to other metropoli, abundant with factory complexes, processing facilities, and vast systems of infrastructure. Of all Alchemicals, Jade Caste metropoli are the most predisposed to interacting with their citizens on an individual level, at times taking on a parent-like role toward their populace.

Anima Banner: Jade Castes' anima banners shine with the hues of jade, whether in a single color or a kaleidoscopic radiance, often exhibiting geometric lattices of intersecting polygons. They're sometimes accompanied by the sounds of heavy machinery, like the hissing of steam or the boom of pistons firing.

Iconic Anima: An abstract mesh of interlocking gears and churning machinery; an industrial crucible pouring out molten steel; a deafening assembly of steam-driven hammers; a blossoming tree of metal and polymer with an angular, geometric design.

Anima Effects: Jade Castes' anima powers grant them physical resilience in the face of danger, aid in forging bonds of unity, and make their loyalty unshakable (p. XX).

Charms: Jade Castes' Charms tend toward simple, blocky designs, favoring functionality over aesthetic appeal.

Caste Attributes: Jade Castes are tireless and tenacious Champions, whether leading work crews or commanding Populat militias in battle. Their Caste Attributes are Charisma, Stamina, and Wits.

Sobriquets: Arbiters, Hammers of Autochthon, Stone Hands, Bastions (metropoli).

Concepts: Advocate for the Populat, beloved performer, charismatic morale officer, dedicated peacemaker, even-tempered mediator, folk hero, guardian of the community, labor czar, shock worker, tireless sentinel.

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Starmetal Caste

Starmetal is the stuff of fate and possibility, the metal of mysteries, the ephemeral, and the esoteric. Wrought from fallen stars, the Starmetal Caste are possessed of extraordinary foresight, divining the future from streams of data. Autochthon forged the Plot Weavers to see the grand scheme of things, to prepare for crises long in advance, and to foresee the far-off outcomes of decisions made today.

Starmetal Castes gather, collate, and analyze information on every issue imaginable: economic planning, social analytics, military strategy, trends in Populat culture, and more. The results of their analysis offer information to guide the Tripartite's decision-making, providing information to support or oppose various policy proposals. The Plot Weavers also exercise a subtler hand, acting as spymasters, propagandists, and disinformation agents in service to their nations. Unsurprisingly for a Caste of spin doctors and social engineers, Starmetal Castes are viewed favorably throughout the Octet.

A Starmetal Caste's Exaltation requires a soul possessed of both insight and initiative, the soul of heroes who understood what had to be done and were willing to take charge...even without authorization. A plutarch who pushes for policies that her contemporaries have yet to see the need for, a soldier who disobeys orders to carry the day, a lector who embezzles resources from the Theomachracy to provide for his congregation. Such is the will that tempers starmetal.

Starmetal Caste metropoli often resemble orreries or web-like lattices, smaller in size than other metropoli but making impeccably efficient use of space in all three dimensions. Every aspect of urban layout and architecture is designed with purpose, optimizing their citizens' productivity in a thousand subtle but significant ways. Untold quantities of data are routed through the metropoli's massive cognitive processing infrastructure daily, though citizens scarcely notice anything but the faintest of mechanical hums from this.

Anima Banner: Starmetal Caste anima banners are typically deep blue, green, or purple, shot through with lines of prismatic static. They're sometimes accompanied by the whirring of intricate machinery, synthesized harmonies, or the crackle of encrypted signals.

Iconic Anima: A web-like tracery of prismatic light; a cascade of shimmering glyphs streaming downward; a clockwork orrery of the cosmos; a strobing varicolored light that trails afterimages after the Alchemical.

Anima Effects: Starmetal Castes' anima powers let them act with precognitive perfection and anticipate hidden dangers, while also unveiling the inner workings of others' minds (p. XX).

Charms: Starmetal Castes' Charms tend toward delicate, minimalistic designs, their metallic components often traced with braided coils of starmetal filigree. The loops and whorls of this wirework occasionally sparks with Essence when the Alchemical is deep in thought.

Caste Attributes: Starmetal Castes are calculating masterminds, acting with surgical precision and methodical planning to accomplish their goals through the smallest of acts. Their Caste Attributes are Dexterity, Intelligence, Manipulation.

Sobriquets: Whispers, Ciphers of Autochthon, Plot Weavers, Nexuses (metropoli).

Concepts: All-knowing spymaster, calculating strategist, disinformation agent, excessively scrupulous auditor, eccentric social engineer, genius mathematician, intelligence analyst, patriotic propagandist, planner for every contingency, prophet of Clarity, shadowy mastermind in service to a greater cause.

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Soulsteel Caste

Soulsteel is an accursed thing, a metal tainted with fear, suffering, and above all, death. Its presence in Autochthonia may be a symptom of the Machine God's Blight, or of some unwise interest in the Neverborn's fate. But all things have their use to the Great Maker. The Soulsteel Caste were forged from this tormented to be living weapons, servants of grim necessity. They do not slow. They do not stop. There is no escape for those caught in their sights.

The Sentinels' service to their nations is simple: the elimination of that which threatens society's survival. Their duty is a grim and ugly thing, compared to the heroics that other Alchemicals are known for. Sentinel gremlin hunters pursue techno-organic horrors back to their lairs in the blight zones, returning bloodied, scarred — and at times, twisted. Others are inquisitors and interrogators, rooting out social dissent, institutional corruption, voidbringer cults, and other internal threats through force and coercion. Few Sentinels take pleasure in doing the state's dirty work. For most, it is simply a matter of duty and grim necessity.

Only a soul with a legacy of heroism regardless of cost or consequence can endure a Sentinel's grim duty. Unworthy souls are devoured by a nascent Champion's soulsteel-infused frame, joining the tormented shades within. An uncompromising regulator who pursues a conspiracy to the Tripartite's uppermost echelons. A tactician who sacrifices troops en masse to secure a victory that saves countless more lives. An autocrat who enacts a policy that she knows will end her career, but bring prosperity to her city.

Soulsteel Caste metropoli seem like grim fortresses from the outside, with their architecture defined by clean lines, hard edges, and sharp angles. Some of these Panopticons truly live up to their name: quiet, orderly cities, peaceful with the stifling security of omnipresent surveillance. Others are arsenals and arms factories, manufacturing terrible machinery and biochemical weaponry.

Anima Banner: Soulsteel Caste anima banners are shadowy clouds of smoke, streaked with black and blue lightning. Twisting, indistinct figure can sometimes be glimpsed in their depths. They're sometimes accompanied by the sounds of grating machinery, eerie sirens, or far-off screams, or the smell of smoke, sulfur, or burning diesel.

Iconic Anima: A whirring dynamo that crackles with black and pale green lightning; an eerie procession

of damned souls; coiling chains of barbed metal that twist and writhe like serpents; a larger-than-life silhouette of the Champion, cast by glaring white light.

Anima Effects: Soulsteel Castes' anima powers make them figures of imposing terror and deadly adversaries of those who threaten their communities (p. XX).

Charms: Soulsteel Charms' design favors flat planes, jagged edges, and riveted plates, often incorporating roughly hammered black metal.

Caste Attributes: Soulsteel Castes are implacable hunters, ever-vigilant sentinels, and experts in psychological warfare. Their Caste Attributes are Manipulation, Perception, and Stamina.

Sobriquets: Sentinels, Scourges of Autochthon, Grim Watchers, Panopticons (metropoli).

Concepts: Avenger of the wronged, boastful gremlin hunter, devout inquisitor, foul-tempered detective, philosophically minded sniper, psychological warfare specialist, silent watcher, stoic brawler, troubleshooter for the Tripartite, networks operative.

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Adamant Caste

Adamant is imbued with crystalline clarity, precision, and grace, its facets glittering with light. From this perfect jewel, Autochthon carved his Muses to bring inspiration, beauty, and understanding to the world. They are elegant in action, keen in insight, and magnetic in their allure. Like a diamond refracting and magnifying light, the Adamant Castes inspire others to greatness, showing them the light that was already within them.

The Exemplars' role within the Eight Nations is many-faceted. As philosophers, mystics, and savants, they offer guidance and insight to those facing ethical quandaries, wavering convictions, or crises of faith, whether high-ranking members of Tripartite Assemblies or hard-off Populat workers who catch a compassionate Adamant Caste's eye. They act as muses to artists, propagandists, and other cultural figures, inspiring entire artistic movements that shape the souls of nations. As mentors, they hone their disciples to diamond-like perfection, finding students' every fault and flaw and mercilessly eliminating them.

An Adamant Caste's Exaltation requires a soul that has spent lifetimes in contemplation of deep mysteries and spiritual truths, the soul of heroes made virtuous through contemplating virtue. In one past life, she might have been a factory laborer who spent her work shifts in ceaseless prayer to push through starvation and fatigue. In another life, a pious cleric whose theological epiphanies inspired the Populat to renewed faith even as they drew censure from others in the Theomachracy. A graffiti artist using phosphorescent gel to paint her sacred dreams of another world on a metropolis' walls.

Adamant Caste metropoli unfold outward into faceted, crystalline complexes. They resemble natural formations of crystal, ranging from rough-edged, uncut fortifications to elegantly faceted cathedrals. A Sanctuary's architecture and urban planning provide ample opportunities for citizens to take in the city's beauty, to pause for a moment in quiet reflection, and to ponder the Great Maker's benevolence.

Anima Banner: Adamant Caste anima banners are piercing white auras tinted with shades of purple, blue, or red, casting a radiance like an illuminated stained-glass window. They're sometimes accompanied by a crystalline chiming, a deep resonant hum, or the sound of shattering glass.

Iconic Anima: An endlessly unfolding fractal pattern; dozens of prismatic wings that seem to grow from the Alchemical; a swirling cloud of sparking diamond dust; a surge of kaleidoscopic light refracted through the Champion's body.

Anima Effects: Adamant Castes' animas powers make them inspiring figures, uplifting faltering hearts and guiding allies in battle (p. XX).

Charms: Adamant Castes' Charms tend toward efficient, symmetrical designs, often incorporating faceted glass, quartz, or adamant. Ornamental touches are rare, though there's an undeniable but alien beauty to them.

Caste Attributes: Adamant Castes are creatures of cold, austere glory, inspiring others with their commanding presence, calculated strength, and piercing insight. Their Caste Attributes are Appearance, Perception, and Strength.

Sobriquets: Exemplars, Muses of Autochthon, Diamond Sages, Sanctuaries (metropoli).

Concepts: Beloved guardian of the metropolis, celebrity war hero, eccentric mentor, frontline general, hermit of the Far Reaches, idol of the Populat, incisive cultural critic, moral philosopher, jocular mystic, warrior poet

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Anima Banner

As an Alchemical expends Essence, she becomes wreathed in the radiance of her anima banner. **For every five motes of Peripheral Essence she spends in an instant, her anima banner rises one level.**

BEGIN TABLE

Anima Level Effects

Dim The Alchemical's anima banner is invisible.

Glowing The Alchemical's anima banner outlines her body in light, while Essence sizzles around her soulgem. Stealth and disguise rolls suffer a -3 penalty.

Burning The Alchemical's anima banner flares into aura of radiant light, while Essence crackles across her body. Stealth is impossible.

Bonfire/Iconic The Alchemical's anima banner ignites into a bonfire stretching into the sky, visible for miles around. Her anima completely illuminates her surroundings within short range. Stealth is impossible. Upon reaching bonfire and at suitably dramatic moments, her anima manifests a personalized iconic display.

END TABLE

Anima Effects

Orichalcum Caste

Commanding Authority (5m; Supplemental; Instant): The Alchemical adds (higher of Essence or 3) non-Charms dice on a persuade roll that leverages a positive Tie to herself or a community she serves.

Once per day, she can retry a failed persuade roll without resetting it.

Forged in Righteousness (Permanent): When the Alchemical gains Willpower from upholding a Major or Defining Principle, she may exchange it for (Intimacy + 5) motes. A sorcerer may gain sorcerous motes instead. This also raises her anima to bonfire.

Radiant Glory Nimbus (5m or 0m; Reflexive; Until next turn): Crackling with electric Essence, the Alchemical adds (higher of Essence or 3) to the raw damage and **withering** attacks and doubles up to (Essence) 10s on a **decisive** damage roll. This is free at bonfire.

Moonsilver Caste

Cognitive Overdrive (5m; Reflexive; Until next turn); Supplemental; Instant): The Alchemical can defend against attacks whose successes equal her Defense, and adds (Essence) non-Charms dice on Join Battle rolls and movement actions. She also gains this bonus on any roll involving reaction time or quick reflexes. This is free at bonfire.

Mercurial Facade (Permanent): While her anima is dim, the Alchemical inflicts a -2 penalty on rolls opposing her Guile, Stealth, or disguise.

Quicksilver Cunning (5m; Supplemental; Instant): The Alchemical adds (higher of Essence or 3) non-Charms dice on roll to instill a Principle of belief in a lie. Once per day, she can retry a failed instill roll without resetting it.

Jade Caste

Clay Becomes Stone (5m or 0m; Reflexive; Until next turn): The Alchemical adds (Stamina/2, rounded up) to her soak and gains Hardness (Stamina). Both calculations include bonus dots from Transpuissant Stamina Upgrade (p. XX). She also adds (higher of Essence or 3) non-Charms dice on Stamina rolls to resist environmental hazards. This is free at bonfire.

Hand of Friendship (5m; Supplemental; Instant): The Alchemical adds (higher of Essence or 3) non-Charms dice on a roll to instill positive Ties toward her or weaken negative ones. Once per day, she can retry a failed instill roll without resetting it.

Unbreakable Loyalty (Permanent): The Alchemical gains +2 non-Charms Resolve against influence that would cause her to intentionally harm someone she has a positive Tie toward. This increases to +3 for Major and Defining Ties.

Starmetal Caste

Perfection in Motion (5m or 0m; Reflexive, Until next turn): The Alchemical perceives the optimal course of action in a prismatic halo of colors trailing just slightly ahead of her. She rerolls up to (Essence) 1s on physical actions and ignores up to (Essence) points of penalties caused by external conditions. This is free at bonfire.

Precognitive Foresight (Permanent): The Alchemical adds (Essence) non-Charms dice on rolls to detect hidden dangers.

Social Engineering (5m; Supplemental; Instant): The Alchemical adds (higher of Essence or 3) non-Charms dice when she reads someone's intentions in hope of finding an Intimacy that will help her deceive or subtly manipulate him. Once per day, she can retry a failed read intentions roll without resetting it.

Soulsteel Caste

Inhuman Terror (5m; Supplemental; Instant): The Alchemical adds (higher of Essence or 3) non-Charms

dice on a threaten roll. Once per day, she can retry a failed threaten roll without resetting it.

Screaming Metal Cacophony (5m or 0m; Reflexive; Until next turn): The Alchemical stirs the souls trapped in her soulsteel body. The cacophony of their moans and whispers inflicts a –2 penalty on attack rolls and other hostile actions against her. This is free at bonfire.

Void Hunter's Judgment (10m, 1wp; Reflexive; Instant): Once per day, the Alchemical can add (highest Caste Attribute) to her base Initiative after landing a **decisive** attack against someone who threatens a community she has a positive Tie toward or one of its mortal members. This calculation includes bonus dots from Transpuissant (Attribute) Upgrade. Gremlins, fae, and the undead always count as threats. This power can only be used once per day.

Adamant Caste

Inspiring Guidance (5m or 0m; Reflexive; Until next turn): Allies within close range of the Alchemical gain +1 non-Charms Resolve and add (Alchemical's Essence/2, rounded up) non-Charms dice on attack rolls and influence rolls. The Alchemical doesn't gain this bonus. Outside of combat, this lasts long enough for each of the Alchemical's allies to take one action. This is free at bonfire.

Refracted Glory (3a; Reflexive; Instant): Once per day, the Alchemical can refract her anima into a varicolored radiance that illumines her allies. Each ally within long range of her gains (her Essence) motes and Initiative. Exalted may immediately flare their own animas to bonfire, tinging it with the colors of the Alchemical's anima for the scene.

Scintillating Muse (5m; Supplemental; Instant): The Alchemical adds (higher of Essence or 3) non-Charms dice on an inspire roll to spread positive emotion. She can also add this on an instill or persuade roll against someone who considers the Alchemical to be his mentor, muse, spiritual guide, or the like. Once per day, she can retry a failed influence roll without resetting it.

Increasing Traits

Alchemicals must undergo the Rite of Reconfiguration (p. XX) to spend experience points on Alchemical Charms, Charm slots, or submodules, or to increase their Attributes. This uses the standing training times for the purchased trait (p. XX), requiring the Alchemical to spend extended periods of downtime inactive for the Rite.

Autochthonian Artifice

Creation's First Age artifice is known to the Eight Nations as Autochthonian artifice, wonders worthy of the Great Maker's name. The Octet's magical infrastructure and exotic components harvested from the Great Maker's body allow Alchemicals to craft such artifacts without needing to meet the arduous requirements of First Age artifice. This includes the requirement to use Craft (First Age Artifice) — only Craft (Artifacts) is necessary.

Creating Autochthonian artifice requires access to a metropolis's magical infrastructure. Additionally, the Storyteller may require the Alchemicals to retrieve exotic materials or components, typically requiring an expedition into Autochthonia's reaches.

For more information on First Age artifice, see **Exalted**, p. 243 and **Arms of the Chosen**, p. 116.

Character Advancement

Alchemicals earn five experience points at the end of each session.

<BEGIN TABLE>

TRAIT	COST
Caste/Favored Attribute Current rating x3	
Non-Caste/Favored Attribute Current rating x4	
Ability Current rating x2	
New Ability	3
Specialty	3
Purchased Merit New rating x3	
Caste/Favored Charm	4
Non-Caste/Favored Charm	6
Charm Slot	4
Spell (Intelligence Caste/Favored)	8
Spell (Intelligencer non-Caste/Favored)	10
Martial Arts Charm	10
Evocation	10
Willpower	8

<END TABLE>

Alchemical Experience

Champions can earn Alchemical Experience by fulfilling Experience Bonuses and Role Bonuses, which grant two Alchemical Experience each. Alchemical Experience can be spent on any experience cost, except for Alchemical Charms or submodules. It can be spent on Charm slots.

Expression Bonus

Once per session, a Champion can earn two Alchemical Experience from:

- Expressing or upholding Major or Defining Intimacies in a way that reveals something significant about her or provides character growth.
- Facing significant challenges or danger to uphold Major or Defining Intimacies.
- Facing significant obstacles from Flaws (**Exalted**, p. 167).

Role Bonus

Once per session, a Champion can earn two Alchemical Experience from:

- Intentionally ceding the scene's "spotlight" to another player character to set him up for an

interesting or dramatic moment or directly supporting him in such a moment.

- **Orichalcum Caste:** Serving a community the Alchemical belongs to through leadership; convincing another character to uphold one of the Alchemical's Major or Defining Intimacy in a way that has a meaningful impact; remove a significant obstacle to her or her Circle's goals with a forceful approach, whether physical or social; upholding a Major or Defining Intimacy through innovation or intellect.
- **Moonsilver Caste:** Serving a community the Alchemical belongs to through cunning or subterfuge; removing a significant obstacle to her goals or her Circle's through infiltration, surveillance, or subterfuge; uncovering a hidden threat to one of her Major or Defining Intimacies; upholding a Major or Defining Intimacy through a cunning or unpredictable approach.
- **Jade Caste:** Serving a community the Alchemical belongs to through endurance, persistence, or hard work; enduring great hardship for the sake of a Major or Defining Intimacy; resolving a meaningful dispute within a community; upholding a Major or Defining Intimacy through physical labor.
- **Starmetal Caste:** Serving a community the Alchemical belongs to through planning or manipulation; accomplishing a long-term plan that advances her goals or her Circle's; advancing her goals or her Circle's by concealing or falsifying information; upholding a Major or Defining Intimacy through manipulation or secrecy.
- **Soulsteel Caste:** Serving a community the Alchemical belongs to by removing threats to it; uncovering a hidden danger to one of her Major or Defining Intimacies; removing a significant obstacle to her goals or her Circle's through ruthless or brutal means; upholding a Major or Defining Intimacy by refusing to compromise.
- **Adamant Caste:** Serving a community the Alchemical belongs to through teaching, inspiration, and guidance; advancing her goals or her Circle's by finding a significant flaw in someone or something, bolstering the morale of someone wavering in his duties; upholding a Major or Defining Intimacy through precision or insight.

Training Times

Raising traits with experience points requires training or time spent gaining practical experience. Multiple traits can be trained simultaneously if it makes sense. A mentor can reduce the times listed below, as can devoting one's time fully to training.

BEGIN TABLE

Caste/Favored Attribute (New rating + 1) weeks

Non-Caste/Favored Attribute (New rating) months

Ability (New rating) weeks

Specialty Two weeks

Purchased Merit (New rating) weeks

Caste/Favored Charm (Attribute minimum) days

Non-Caste/Favored Charm (Attribute minimum + Essence minimum) days

Charm Slot One day

Submodule One day

Martial Arts Charm (Martial Arts minimum + Essence minimum) days

Spell (Circle x2) weeks

Evocation (Essence minimum x4) days

Willpower One month

END TABLE

The Alchemical must undergo the Rite of Reconfiguration (p. XX) to increase an Attribute or purchase a Charm, Charm slot, or submodule. She must spend her entire training time this way as her body is augmented and reconstructed.

Raising Essence

An Alchemical's Essence increases once she's spent a certain amount of experience (not including Sidereal experience). She must then cultivate her Essence while meditating in a vats complex or similar infrastructure, though a player character's Essence may increase instantly in dramatic, character-defining moments.

BEGIN TABLE

Essence 2 50 xp

Essence 3 125 xp

Essence 4: 200 xp

Essence 5: 300 xp

Essence 6: Only available at Storyteller's discretion.

END TABLE

When using experienced character creation rules, (p. XX), reduce these thresholds by 50.

Clarity

Alchemicals don't gain Limit or experience Limit Breaks like the Solar Exalted. Instead, their Great Curse manifests as Clarity (p. XX). Clarity affects an Alchemical's Intimacies, strengthening those that align with its efficient, emotionless perspective, while weakening Intimacies that oppose it — primarily those based on emotion. Note that not all Intimacies align with or oppose Clarity; some are simply neutral.

Gaining Clarity

Alchemicals gain Clarity under the following circumstances. They roll a certain number of dice and gain Clarity equal to their successes. She can't roll more than three dice per scene.

- When she violates an Intimacy in a way that aligns with Clarity, she rolls (Intimacy – 1) dice.
- If a person or community that the Alchemical has a positive Major or Defining Tie comes to significant harm as a result of her own failure, she rolls three dice.
- If she goes a full week or a period of downtime without any interaction with mortals, she rolls (higher of Essence or 3) dice.

Losing Clarity

Alchemicals lose Clarity under the following circumstances. They roll a certain number of dice and lose Clarity equal to their successes.

- When she upholds an Intimacy in a way that opposes Clarity, she rolls (Intimacy – 1) dice. She can't roll more than three dice per scene this way.
- If she spends a full week or a period of downtime immersed in interaction with mortals, she rolls (6 – Essence) dice, minimum one.

Accomplishing legendary social goals doesn't reduce Clarity.

Effects of Clarity

Unlike Solar Exalted, Alchemicals don't experience Limit Breaks. High levels of Clarity alter an Alchemical's Intimacies, weakening those that oppose it while strengthening those that align with it.

Clarity also grants an Alchemical a non-Charm bonus on mental rolls involving memory, analytical deduction, or dispassionate self-control. This doesn't apply on rolls involving sorcery or crafting artifacts or manes.

However, Clarity also inflicts a penalty on influence rolls, except for those based on fear. This penalty also applies on read intentions rolls to discern or understand the emotion of others. These penalties don't apply on interactions with Clarity 3+ Alchemicals, machine spirits, or automatons — instead, they're converted to a bonus.

Clarity 0-2: No effect.

Clarity 3-5: The Alchemical gains +1 die on appropriate mental rolls and a –1 penalty on appropriate social rolls. Minor Intimacies that oppose Clarity are suppressed unless they directly aid or oppose the Alchemical in accomplishing her present goals or provide a regular material benefit or hindrance to her. The Alchemical can avoid having a Tie suppressed by shifting its emotional context to one that doesn't oppose Clarity.

Clarity 6-8: The mental bonus increases to +2 and the social penalty increases to –2. Major Intimacies that oppose Clarity are reduced by one step, as above. Minor Intimacies that align with Clarity count as Major.

Clarity 9-10: The mental bonus increases to +3 and the social penalty increases to –3. Defining Intimacies are reduced by one step, as above, while Major Intimacies are suppressed entirely. Minor and Major Intimacies that align with Clarity count as one step higher.

Apostates and the Great Curse

The Blight that corrupts Apostates (p. XX) warps the nature of their Great Curse. Instead of the cold, dispassionate reason of Clarity, Apostates are consumed by Dissonance. Like Clarity, Dissonance diminishes an Alchemical's empathy and

emotions, overriding them with twisted urges to cruelty, needless violence, and destructive sabotage.

Before anything else begins, *Lissome Avid Engineer* feels her technician's thumb brush past her lips. She takes the offered drug, and her mind opens. She sees herself laid bare within the vat: she is inert flesh and machinery; her body is a temple and tool and her technician worships and works here. Then her consciousness joins its holding space, a safe zone positioned just above the vat of her own design. *Engineer* is an oddity. She loves to watch Kasta work. She loves to watch herself be changed.

As if sensing this transfer, Kasta speaks. "Are you ready?"

"I am." Her voice echoes through the divine workspace, tinny and muted.

If the change in her voice bothers Kasta, the technician doesn't show it. Instead, she lifts the anointed ratchet. It clicks and rattles joyously as she tightens the bolts that draw *Lissome Avid Engineer's* body apart to reveal the great and wondrous working within. *Engineer* gasps even though she cannot feel it.

"Is it too cold?" Kasta teases. "We can get hot pot for dinner when we're done."

"Oh, can we please go to the cafeteria in the square," the Alchemical's voice rattles from her speaker. "It's not crowded in the evening, and they have wire-goat and oil-prawn on the menu."

Kasta turns knobs at the bottom of the vat, releasing a new stream of sacred biochemicals. She aims her attention upon the open body of her lover and the exposed holy circuitry of her veins and nerves. *Engineer* thrills at this; Kasta is peerless in her field, and *Engineer* revels in her partner's mechanical touch.

"Wish you hadn't picked something so fucking hard to install," Kasta gripes, but she doesn't mean it. Carefully and reverently she maneuvers a wiry knot of moonsilver through the fluid. "Why a spinal implant? Why not something simple, like a joint or a limb?"

"Do I see with my elbows, Kasta?" *Engineer* retorts. "Do you do a lot of thinking with your legs?"

Kasta rolls her eyes. "You're lucky I like you or I'd disable that speaker and work in peace."

"I dare you to." *Engineer's* staticky voice challenges.

Kasta does not take the bait. "Why do you like being awake during this anyway?"

Lissome Avid Engineer watches the delicate, silvery-white tendrils slide between the columns of her spine, so dangerously close to the base of her skull, and thread themselves with the utmost precision into the starmetal fibers of her nerves. It's horrifying. It's beautiful. She isn't sure how to properly describe this to her partner, even though she knows that Kasta will not be repulsed by her thoughts.

"It's..." *Engineer* pauses, searching for words as she feels the flow of Essence through her body conjoin with the new implant. "It's like nothing else. I feel close to the Great Maker and to you. I feel vulnerable and powerful at the same time. When else can I watch myself change in real time? When else can I see myself become newer, better, stronger? Plus, I get to look over your shoulder while you do it."

Kasta laughs, suddenly self-conscious. Her work pauses: those steady hands hover over the intricate mechanisms for a long, silent moment while she collects herself. Then, a small smile crosses her face and creases the corners of her mouth with soft affection. "I thought you'd say something like that. Now be quiet while I put you back together."

This time *Engineer* obeys. She watches her flesh of clay and her Charms of glittering starmetal stitch back together. The liquid of the vat renews her skin and seals all openings in it as if she'd never been disassembled. There's a loud clicking, and her consciousness fades.

When she wakes, Kasta offers her a hand up, then a towel, and then a gentle kiss. *Lissome Avid Engineer* gratefully accepts all three.

Chapter 5: Charms

The Machine God's Might

Alchemical Charms are wonders of god-technology, divine machinery implanted and installed within their bodies. Charms don't have a uniform appearance. Their basic appearance and design is detailed in their flavor text, but their appearance varies based on an Alchemical's Caste and their player's desires.

Each Alchemical's Charm panoply is attuned only to her Exaltation, custom-built for her body and Essence flows. As such, an Alchemical can't install another Champion's Charms.

Dice Limit

Alchemicals can't add more than (Attribute + Essence, maximum 10) bonus dice from Excellencies or other magic to an (Attribute + Ability) roll. Automatic successes count as two dice toward this limit. They can't add more than half this value, rounded down, to static values.

Excellencies

Excellencies are Alchemicals' raw supernatural might. As intrinsic aspects of the Chosen's power, Excellencies don't take physical form or require Charm slots, though they're considered Charms for other purposes.

Alchemicals gain Excellencies for each Caste or Favored Attribute they have at 3+ and each other Attribute for which they have a Charm installed. Excellencies can add dice to (Attribute + Ability) rolls for one mote per die, or raise static values for two motes per +1 bonus.

The Strength Excellency can also add dice to a Strength-based **withering** damage roll, while the Stamina Excellency can add soak. Both can add up to half the Alchemical's dice limit, rounded down. This must be declared before the attack roll, as usual.

Charm Design

The process of designing and creating an Alchemical Charm is included in the training time for gaining new Charms (p. XX), and doesn't require a separate Craft project.

Only Alchemicals have the intuitive understanding of their Exaltation necessary to design Charms, requiring technicians and attendants to work blueprints or prototypes created by Alchemicals. In Autochthonia's vat complexes, technicians can also consult noetic archives of Charm designs created by past Champions.

Even then, a Charm isn't created by an attendant's skill alone. Autochthon's demiurgic Essence is channeled through the Rite of Reconfiguration, much as his slumbering will takes part in the creation of a new Alchemical.

Submodules

Many Alchemical Charms have *submodules*, upgrades or additional effects that can be added to them. Submodules don't require Charm slots of their own. Most submodules have no cost; those that aren't list their cost or surcharge.

Some submodules have Attribute minimums higher than that of the Charm they enhance. If the Alchemical doesn't meet a submodule's Attribute minimum, she doesn't gain its benefit. This typically results from not installing Transpuissant (Attribute) Upgrades.

Charm Slots

Unlike the other Exalted, the Alchemicals don't have access to all of their Charms at once. Instead, they must install a limited selection of their Charms in their Charm slots during the Rite of Reconfiguration. Submodules, Evocations, Martial Arts Charms, and spells don't require slots.

Essence 1 Alchemicals can have up to twenty Charm slots. Each dot of Essence they gain increases this limit by 3. In other words, Alchemicals can have up to $(17 + [\text{Essence} \times 3])$ Charm slots.

The Rite of Reconfiguration

The Rite of Reconfiguration is both a complex surgical procedure in which the Alchemical's body is reconstructed and a holy ritual of the Great Maker. Uninstalled Charms dissolve into Essence and are subsumed into the Alchemical's anima until she has need of them again. No magic can interfere with uninstalled Charms.

An Alchemical must remain stationary throughout the Rite, requiring another's assistance to perform the modifications. The Eight Nations' vat complexes are staffed by highly skilled members of the Sodalities, but it's still possible to perform the Rite without such expertise. Even for the most complicated of installations, the Alchemical's autonomous functions can aid in integrating Charms into her body, albeit at a slower pace than a vat technician could accomplish.

Assistants aren't the only necessity for the Rite. In order to undergo it, the Alchemical must have access to at least two of the following:

- Access to suitable magical infrastructure, such as Autochthonia's Eight Nations vat complexes, and a suitable ritual space to perform the Rite. In Creation, such infrastructure can be created by modifying a manse. Some First Age wonders, like factory-cathedrals, might provide such infrastructure without requiring modifications if they can be restored to functionality.
- A skilled assistant, trained in the Rite's prayers and possesses the skill and expertise to perform the necessary modifications. Such assistants are rare in Creation, but a supernatural being with Craft (Artifact) or at least a small investment in crafting Charms qualify. If the Alchemical has a positive Major or Defining Tie toward a character—even a mortal—they count as a skilled assistant.
- Sacred reagents and alchemical compounds to be used in the Rite. Autochthonian vat complexes are well-stocked with such supplies. Creation contains raw materials that a character with Craft (Alchemy) can use to synthesize these reagents, often found in places of supernatural power.

User-Friendly Design

The complexities of the Rite of Reconfiguration can make it take much longer to perform for Alchemicals in Creation than those with access to Autochthonia's vat complexes. If this proves problematic in play, the Storyteller should feel free to reduce the time needed

Vat Complexes

Vat complexes are found in every Autochthonian metropolis, built around the city's core. Within a vat, the Alchemical is immersed in a regenerative nutrient broth that doubles the rate at which she heals naturally and regains Essence (**Exalted**, pp. 173-174). It also doubles the rate at which she recovers from crippling effects, and allows her to heal even the worst of them. This takes a few hours for anything short of a severed limb or severe organ damage. Such grievous injuries take a day to repair, in addition to the

time required to install Charms.

Manses can be converted into crude vat complexes. This is a superior project using Craft (Geomancy), with an interval of one week and a goal number of 20 (**Exalted**, p. 241). Such projects have no terminus. This conversion typically doesn't interfere with the manse's other powers, though it's theoretically possible if the Storyteller thinks it's appropriate. This can't affect a hearthstone or manse possessed by a player character unless their player agrees.

Installation Times

The Rite of Replication is typically a lengthy process that's often best done during downtime, though it's only a day's work under ideal conditions. Installing or changing out Charms typically takes X days, regardless of the number of Charms. It's reduced by one day for each of the following:

- The Alchemical meets all three of the requirements for the Rite
- The Alchemical is assisted by a team of skilled assistants, or a single assistant who possesses magic like Craftsman Needs No Tools.
- The Rite is performed under conditions that let the Alchemical's assistants work without distraction or disruption.

The Storyteller can reduce the time needed to only a handful of hours if the Alchemical only changes out one or two Charms, or if she only removes Charms without replacing them.

Identifying Alchemical Charms

Unlike most Exalted, whose Charms are abstracted representations of power, an Alchemical's Charms are physical objects. They're referred to by name and their functions are known, though few Autochthonians besides vat complex technicians are well-versed in the subject.

Because Alchemical Charms aren't uniform in appearance, it's typically impossible to identify an inactive Charm, though some are unmistakable unless concealed—it's hard to miss a Piston-Driven Megaton Hammer.

Characters with both Lore and Occult specialties in Alchemicals can roll (Intelligence + [lower of Lore or Occult]) identify a Charm with an overt effect when a Champion uses it. The roll's difficulty is (Charm's minimum Essence + 3). Alchemicals don't need specialties for this, possessing an intuitive understanding of their Charms.

Attribute Minimums

The Transpuissant (Attribute) Upgrade Charm (p. XX) grants an Alchemical bonus dots in Attributes, which can be used to qualify for a Charm's Attribute minimums. Some Alchemical Charms have Attribute minimums higher than 5, requiring Transpuissant (Attribute) Upgrade to install them at all.

Charms with an Attribute minimum higher than the Alchemical's natural rating can't be installed. Likewise, she doesn't gain the benefit of submodules if she doesn't meet their minimum.

New Keywords

Alchemical Charms use the following keywords in addition to those listed on **Exalted**, p. 253.

Augmented

Augmented Charms include bonus dots of Attributes from Transpuissant (Attribute) Upgrade in

calculations that use the Alchemical's Attributes — including dots over 5. This doesn't affect rolls or static values, only things like gaining (Stamina) motes.

An Augmented Charm's submodules also share this effect. Some submodules are Augmented separately from their Charm.

Internal

Internal Charms have no externally visible components. Characters using magic like All-Encompassing Sorcerer's Sight (**Exalted**, p. 356) can detect their presence with a difficulty 3 (Perception + Occult) roll.

Gremlins

Imbued with Autochthon's axiomatic Essence, Alchemicals smite those corrupted by the Blight. When a Charm refers to a gremlin, it includes corrupted machine spirits, Apostates, and anything else tainted by Blight.

Such Charms are often also effective against the undead, for the Blight is entwined with death. They also affect the fae, whose inchoate chaos is easily shaped by the Great Maker's demiurgic Chosen. While fae aren't found in Autochthonia, such Charms are useful to Alchemicals in Creation.

Universal

Universal Charms are Favored by all Alchemicals.

Transpuissant (Attribute) Upgrade

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Stackable

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Alchemical's body is enhanced to optimize her performance.

The Alchemical's rating in the chosen Attribute increases by one dot, which can increase it above five. This bonus dot is included in her base Attribute rating for meeting Alchemical Charm prerequisites. Dice added by these bonus dots are non-Charm, except for dots over 5.

The Alchemical can purchase this Charm up to (Essence/2, rounded up) times for each Attribute.

Submodules

Clockwork Perfection Nodes (6xp): When the Alchemical uses the enhanced Attribute's Excellency, she can add automatic successes as well as dice, paying two motes per success. She only needs to take this submodule once to enhance all purchases of this Charm.

Calculated Composure (3xp; Transpuissant Appearance Upgrade): The Alchemical can use Appearance instead of Manipulation to calculate her Guile.

Exquisite Proprioception Filaments (3xp; Transpuissant Perception Upgrade): The Alchemical can use

Perception instead of Dexterity to calculate Evasion.

Hardened Body Fortification (3xp; Transpuissant Stamina Upgrade): The Alchemical can use Stamina instead of Dexterity to calculate Parry when she blocks with a medium or heavy weapon or a natural weapon.

Implacable Juggernaut Upgrade (3xp; Transpuissant Strength Upgrade): The Alchemical can use Strength instead of Dexterity for movement actions.

Labor-Hero Reinforcement (3xp; Transpuissant Stamina Upgrade): The Alchemical can use Stamina instead of Strength for feats of strength. This applies both on the roll and for determining whether she qualifies to attempt the feat.

Machine Logic Subroutines (3xp; Transpuissant Intelligence Upgrade): The Alchemical can use Intelligence instead of Wits to calculate her Resolve.

Overpowering Assault Configuration (3xp; Transpuissant Strength Upgrade): The Alchemical can use Strength instead of Dexterity when making non-ranged attacks with heavy weapons or unarmed attacks. These rolls benefit from Transpuissant Strength Upgrade, but otherwise, they aren't compatible with effects that grant bonus Strength dots, double successes on Strength rolls, or replace her Strength with a higher value.

Unwavering Sniper Calibration (3xp; Transpuissant Perception Upgrade): The Alchemical can use Perception instead of Dexterity when making ranged attacks. These rolls benefit from Transpuissant Perception Upgrade, but otherwise, they aren't compatible with effects that grant bonus Perception dots, double successes on Perception rolls, or replace her Perception with a higher value.

Geomantic Essence Grid

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

Jade-plated cables connect the Alchemical's Essence reservoir to hearthstone slots implanted at key conjunctions of her Essence meridians.

The Alchemical has (higher of Essence or 3) hearthstone slots built into this Charm. Socketing a hearthstone into one of these slots lets her gain the stone's benefits as if it were socketed in an attuned artifact. Doing so requires a miscellaneous action, as does removing a hearthstone.

The Alchemical's unarmed attacks benefit from hearthstones that enhance weapons, and her natural soak benefits from hearthstones that enhance armor. This also applies to weapons or tools created by Alchemical Charms like Essence Pulse Cannon, Integrated Arsenal System, and Omnitool Implant, as well as weapons integrated with Technomorphic Integration Engine (p. XX).

If the Alchemical has Transcendent Multimodal Artifact Matrix installed (p. XX), any Evocations she's awoken from a socketed hearthstone gain that Charm's benefits without requiring her to install them in a Charm slot.

Submodules

External Surge Connector (3xp; Essence 2): Hearthstones socketed in the Alchemical also count as being socketed in each artifact she's attuned to. This applies for all purposes: enhancing weapons, powering warstriders, enabling dependent hearthstones, etc. This doesn't use up an artifact's hearthstone slots.

God-Machine Arsenal Engine

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

Orichalcum resonance nodes at the Alchemical's wrist amplify the bonds of Essence that attune her to her artifact panoply.

While the Alchemical has one full-cost attunement to an artifact weapon, she reduces the attunement cost of further artifact weapons by three motes each. This doesn't stack with other discounts.

If the Alchemical ends her full-cost attunement, she must commit enough motes to bring another attunement to its full cost, or else all discounted attunements end.

Installing this Charm doesn't take up a Charm slot.

Intrinsic Evocation System

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

A circuit-etched grid composed of all six magical materials is implanted above the Alchemical's solar plexus, channeling an artifact's Essence patterns through the bond of resonance.

Upon installing this Charm, the Alchemical may temporarily awaken an Evocation from an attuned artifact that she's resonant with, or one whose Evocations she's slotted with Transcendent Multimodal Artifact Matrix. She must meet that Evocation's prerequisites. She can also awaken hearthstone's Evocations. The chosen Evocation can be changed through the Rite of Reconfiguration (p. XX).

Submodules

Essence Pattern Recalibration (3xp): Once per day, the Alchemical can change the chosen Evocation with a few minutes of meditation. The Alchemical only needs to purchase this submodule once to apply its benefit to all installations of this Charm. She's still limited to using this once per day, no matter how many installations she has.

Manifold Transhuman Implants

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

Biomechanical implants, modular components, and extensive bodily reconstruction in the vats allow the Alchemical to redefine her form.

Upon purchasing this Charm, the Alchemical chooses six dots of mutations, representing mechanical upgrades or alterations. She gains those mutations while this Charm is installed.

The Alchemical can purchase this Charm up to (Essence/2, rounded up) times.

Perfected Style Matrix

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Alchemical possesses an infinite capacity library of martial techniques and strategies, socketed into the base of her skull and ringed with diamond-faceted memory crystals.

The Alchemical gains the Martial Artist Merit for free, and doesn't need to meet its Brawl prerequisite. She can learn Martial Arts Charms, which don't need to be installed in Charm slots.

This Charm must be installed permanently. It can't be removed.

Resonance Harmonizer

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Alchemical's Essence is harmonized with one of the magical materials, channeled through a slender torc of that material embedded above her solar plexus.

Upon purchasing this Charm, the Alchemical chooses one of the six magical materials. She becomes

resonant with that material while this Charm is installed.

Submodules

Multiphase Resonance (6xp): The Alchemical gains resonance with another magical material. She can repurchase this submodule to add additional materials, but not exotic substances other than the magical materials.

Vat Surrogate Reweaving System

Cost: 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Metal filaments of the Alchemical's Caste material extend from ports implanted across her body, coiling around her Charms in a cocoon of cables to facilitate rapid reconfiguration.

The Alchemical can perform an accelerated version of the Rite of Reconfiguration (p. XX), letting her install or swap out up to (higher of Essence or 3 Charms) in a matter of minutes.

Reset: Once per story, unless reset by spending at least a full day undergoing the Rite.

Submodules

Optimized Component Integration Protocol (3xp; Essence 2): The Alchemical can swap out an additional Charm. This submodule can be repurchased at Essence 3.

Rapid Reformatting (6xp; Essence 3, Optimized Component Integration Protocol) (+10m): The Alchemical can pay a ten-mote surcharge to complete the Rite over the course of a single scene.

Autochthonic Core (6xp; Essence 4, Optimized Component Integration Protocol): Using this Charm fulfills the Rite's magical infrastructure requirement.

Colossus-Class Upgrade Installation

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 5

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Alchemical's body has been completely reconstructed in the vats, remade as a colossal god-machine by integrating modular upgrades and expansions that interface directly with the nerves and Essence flows of her original synthetic flesh.

The Alchemical gains Legendary Size, granting benefits against smaller enemies.

- Their attacks don't inflict onslaught penalties. (Magically inflicted onslaught penalties still apply.)
- Their **withering** attacks can't reduce her below Initiative 1 unless they have 10+ post-soak damage dice. They still award the full amount of Initiative damage rolled.
- Their **decisive** attacks can't deal more than (Strength + 3) levels of damage. Levels of damage added directly by magic don't count against this.
- They can't grapple her or resist her grapple controls without applicable magic.
- Their smash attacks can't knock her back. She's more difficult to knock back with magic (**Exalted**, p. 274).

The Alchemical can also take a *devastating action* on each of her turns, reflexively attacking a battle group or all trivial enemies within weapon range. She can reflexively use Simple Charms that create attacks to do so. This doesn't count as her attack for the round.

Installing or removing this Charm entails extensive modification of the Alchemical's body, requiring all three criteria for using the Rite of Reconfiguration and a large crew of skilled attendants. This typically takes a month, but can potentially be rushed with a (Wits + Craft [Artifact]) roll.

Submodules

Colossus Warfare Tactics (3xp): The Alchemical can use her devastating actions against Legendary Size enemies.

Enemy Acceleration Protocol (3xp): The Alchemical can forgo two rounds of grapple control to use her devastating action to throw or slam a grappled enemy.

Spatial Panoply Expansion (3xp): When the Alchemical installs this Charm, she may scale any number of attuned artifacts up to a size suitable for her colossal form. They revert to their original size when this Charm is uninstalled.

Elsewhere Compression Mode

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 5

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Colossus-Class Upgrade Installation

Transpatial circuitry wired throughout the Alchemical's colossus frame allows her to shunt her expanded body Elsewhere.

The Alchemical banishes her Colossus-Class Upgrade Installation to Elsewhere, restoring her to normal size while suppressing that Charm's benefits.

Appearance

Influence

Radiant Iconography Array

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Appearance 1, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Orichalcum studs curve around the Alchemical's ribs and back, emitting holographic projections of Essence.

While the Alchemical's anima banner is glowing or higher, she can project sounds and holographic imagery as part of an influence roll or ordinary discussion. This expands the type and amount of information the influence can convey, and can circumvent language barriers, time pressure, or other impediments to communicating complex ideas. She can't create realistic images, only simplified or abstracted figures, nor can she mimic a person's voice or precisely repeat a specific sound.

The Alchemical can project holograms out to close range from her. Individual holograms can be up to the size of a person. They're obviously illusory, and won't block lines of sight or otherwise impede senses.

The Alchemical can use this Charm with Charisma and Manipulation if she has their Transpuissant (Attribute) Upgrade installed.

Submodules

Expanded Projection Field (3xp; Appearance 2): This Charm's range extends to short.

Hologlyphic Verisimilitude (3xp; Appearance 2): The Alchemical can create realistic imagery.

Luminous Divinity Beacon (3xp; Appearance 4, Essence 2): This Charm's cost is reduced by (Anima), minimum one.

Prismatic Illusion Emitter (6xp; Appearance 5, Essence 2, Hologlyphic Verisimilitude, Luminous Divinity Beacon) (+3m, 1wp): The Alchemical can pay a three-mote, one-Willpower surcharge to create convincing illusions. Nontrivial characters can roll (Perception + Awareness) opposing the influence roll to see through this. If the Alchemical didn't use influence, she rolls (Appearance + [Performance or Presence]) to determine the illusions' quality. Characters who fail their roll can't try again unless they're given some new reason to suspect the illusions.

Colossus Magnification Lens (3xp; Appearance 5, Essence 3, Expanded Projection Field): The Alchemical can create illusions of up to Legendary Size.

Social Charms and Written Influence

Alchemical Charms that create influence rolls are incompatible with written influence unless otherwise noted. This limit primarily applies to Simple Charms. Charms that enhance influence apply to both spoken and written influence.

Efficient Interaction Processor

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Appearance 2, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Transpuissant Appearance Upgrade

Orichalcum wires replace key neural pathways involved in interpersonal relationships, allowing the Alchemical to effortlessly multitask her social interactions.

The Alchemical reflexively makes an influence roll on her turn. She can use any social Attribute for which she has Transpuissant (Attribute) Upgrade installed. She can still only make one influence roll per turn.

Special: This Charm may alternatively be learned as a Charisma or Manipulation Charm.

Emotive Aesthetics of the Body Electric

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Appearance 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Alchemical's composure and poise are exactingly calibrated, giving her total control of her demeanor and body language.

The Alchemical can convey an influence roll or a single sentence of ordinary communication through body language. This bypasses language barriers and expands the range of what the Alchemical can convey through body language. This only goes so far — she can't convey abstract or complex information.

Submodules

Expressive Body Dynamic (6xp; Appearance 3, Essence 2): The Alchemical subtly inflame passions when she uses body language to seduce targets with persuade rolls or instill Ties of romantic or sexual desire to herself. Other characters can't tell that she attempted this influence unless they succeed on a read intentions or profile character roll against her that scene.

Patriotism-Provoking Display

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Appearance 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Alchemical activates luminescent glands implanted beneath her skin, casting her in bright light and deep shadows like a figure out of a propaganda poster.

The Alchemical doubles 9s on a persuade roll to convince others to act in support of a group or community that they belong to. She converts bonus dice from Transpuissant Appearance Upgrade to automatic successes. Her targets they can't use Intimacies based on selfishness, laziness, apathy, or cynicism to bolster their Resolve against her influence or resist it in a Decision Point.

The Alchemical can also use this Charm when convincing others to act in support of a community that she serves, even if her target doesn't belong to it.

Submodules

Many-is-One Node (3xp): The Alchemical ignores multiple target penalties on the roll.

One-is-Many Node (3xp): The Alchemical can use this Charm to persuade someone to help a specific member of a valid community, rather than the group as a whole.

Nation-of-the-Heart Node (3xp; Appearance 3): The Alchemical can use this Charm to persuade someone to help a community that the Alchemical has a positive Tie toward, even if that character doesn't belong to that group.

Universal Advisor Comportment

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Appearance 3, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Augmented, Internal

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Patriotism-Provoking Display

A green jade core in the Alchemical's brain regulates her expressions and body language, ensuring they effectively convey her sagacity and trustworthiness.

The Alchemical's carefully calibrated demeanor grants the following benefits:

- Anyone in need of guidance or advice — practical, philosophical, ethical, spiritual, romantic, or otherwise — recognizes the Alchemical as a wise figure whose wisdom they should heed. This counts as a Minor Tie. This only applies to topics where the Alchemical could meaningfully offer some guidance, even if it's not her area of expertise.
- She adds an automatic success on influence rolls with any Attribute to give others advice or convince them to trust her.
- She adds an automatic success on read intentions and profile character rolls to discern whether a character could benefit from her advice, or to find out information about why.
- She gains +1 Resolve against any influence that would cause her to exploit, mislead, betray, or otherwise turn her against those who seek her advice.

Thousandfold Courtesan Calculations

Cost: 1m per die; **Mins:** Appearance 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

A crystal nodule wired into the Alchemical's brain with hair-thin filaments of red and green jade allows her to calculate the optimal strategy for seduction.

When the Alchemical makes a persuade roll to seduce a single character, she can convert up to (higher of Essence or 3) bonus dice from her Appearance to non-Charm successes, paying one mote per success. This also applies on rolls to instill Ties of sexual or romantic desire for herself in a single character.

Submodules

Exquisite Conversation Processor (6xp; Appearance 4, Essence 2): This Charm can enhance any instill or persuade roll. When used for seduction, the Alchemical treats her target's Resolve as one lower to determine how many dice her Appearance adds.

Appearance vs. Resolve

Bonus dots of Appearance — including those from Transpuissant Appearance Upgrade — are included in determining how many bonus dice a character's Appearance adds on influence rolls (**Exalted**, p. 218). The same is true for Charms that compare the Alchemical's Appearance to another character's Resolve.

Lustrous Deception Enhancement

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Appearance 3, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Mute

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Thousandfold Courtesan Calculations

White jade dust embedded in the Champion's skin glitters as she speaks, accentuating her distracting beauty and beguiling charms.

Characters with a base Resolve than the Alchemical's Appearance suffer -1 Resolve against her Appearance and Manipulation-based influence rolls to instill Ties of trust toward herself, weaken Ties of suspicion or doubt toward her, or convince others to believe her lies.

This penalty increases to -2 for characters with a Tie toward the Alchemical based on trust, desire, love, curiosity, or a similar emotions.

Beguiling Aesthetic Perfection

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Appearance 3, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Lustrous Deception Enhancement

The Alchemical's beguiling manner and calculated charm ensure that those who see her know nothing of her true plans.

When the Alchemical makes an instill, inspire, or persuade roll, affected characters suffer a -3 penalty on rolls against her Guile for the rest of the scene. If the difference between her Appearance and character's base Resolve is higher than this, his penalty becomes equal to the difference.

Additionally, affected characters count as having Resolve lower than the Alchemical's Essence when determining whether Lustrous Deception Enhancement affects them.

Submodules

Captivating Cynosure Signal (6xp; Appearance 4): This penalty applies on all Perception rolls, except for rolls opposing the Alchemical's Stealth.

Pheromone Regulation Systems

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Appearance 3, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Internal, Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Transpuissant Appearance Upgrade

Micro-pumps and artificial glands implanted beneath the Alchemical's skin synthesize and disperse psychoactive pheromones.

The Alchemical makes an (Appearance + Presence) inspire roll with double 9s to exude a cloud of pheromones. They extend out to short range from her, though strong air currents may extend this, and characters with a superhuman sense of smell can be affected from even further away. Characters within range are exposed to the Alchemical's influence, and must resist with a (Stamina + Resistance) roll instead of Resolve. Intimacies don't modify this, but targets can use magic that aids in resisting poison. Characters who hold their breath (**Exalted**, p. 232) or don't need to breathe are immune to this influence.

When the Alchemical makes an influence roll against an effected character that leverages the inspired emotion, its Resolve penalty is increased by one.

Submodules

Delayed Release Formulation (3xp): The Alchemical may delay the onset of an inspire roll conveyed through this Charm. She can delay it by up to (Essence + Appearance) days. This is Augmented.

Instinctual Aversion Formula (6xp): The Alchemical can exude chemical repellants, making a threaten roll to drive affected characters away from her instead of an inspire roll. Mundane animals can't spend Willpower to resist. Affected characters also suffer -1 Resolve against any fear-based influence the Alchemical subsequently uses that scene.

Passion-Exciting Pheromones (6xp) (+3m): For a three-mote surcharge, the inspired emotion's Resolve penalty also applies to affected characters' Guile when they try to conceal intentions or Intimacies related to that emotion, or when their emotional state impedes their efforts. The penalty is increased by one against the Alchemical.

Scent-Concealing Synthesis (3xp): The Alchemical can use this Charm to mask her scent instead of influencing others, extending its duration to one scene. Purely scent-based Perception rolls to detect or examine her fail automatically unless enhanced by magic or superhuman senses. Even then, they suffer a -4 penalty. Characters need not breathe in the pheromones to be affected.

Aerosol Formulation (3xp; Appearance 4): This Charm's range increases to medium.

Biochemical Lozengue Machine (6xp; Appearance 4, Essence 2): The Alchemical can use this Charm to dispense a gelatinous pill from a port on her wrist, using it to convey an inspire roll to whoever ingests it. These capsules retain their efficacy for a month. This is incompatible with Scent-Concealing Synthesis.

Sense-Defeating Alchemy (6xp; Appearance 4, Essence 2, Scent-Concealing Synthesis): Superhuman senses no longer bypass Scent-Concealing Synthesis. Magic only works if it specifically enhances a character's sense of smell.

Perfected Concealment Formula (6xp; Essence 3, Sense-Defeating Alchemy): Even sense-enhancing magic can't bypass Scent-Concealing Synthesis. If the Alchemical has Pheromone Trail Dispersion, rolls to track her gain no benefit from superhuman or magically enhanced senses.

Contingent Passion Catalyst (3xp; Appearance 5, Essence 3, Delayed Release Formulation): When the Alchemical uses Delayed Release Formulation, she may set a trigger for the onset of the delayed dose, rather than a set period of time. The trigger condition must be based on the target's physical or mental condition, or something he's actively aware of: "the next time you're worried," "the next time you're in Lux," "the next time you see your wife."

Blinding Strobe Projector

Cost: 7m; **Mins:** Appearance 4, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Radiant Iconography Array

Blinding flashes of light strobe from crystalline lenses in Alchemical's Radiant Iconography Array, blazing with the colors of her anima banner.

The Alchemical rolls (Appearance + [Presence or Stealth]) to unleash a blinding flash, adding (Anima) non-Charm dice. Characters within short range who can see her must succeed on an opposed (Wits + Awareness) roll or be blinded for the rest of the scene. They also lose (Alchemical's Essence/2, rounded up) Initiative.

If the Alchemical has Radiant Iconography Array's Expanded Projection Field submodule, she can pay a one-Willpower surcharge to increase this Charm's range to medium.

Submodules

Concealing Radiance Cloak (3xp): If the Alchemical successfully blinds all enemies within short range, she may reflexively roll Stealth to enter concealment. An Appearance 5, Essence 3 repurchase lets her do so by blinding all enemies within close range.

Glory-Magnifying Pulse (3xp): The Alchemical converts bonus dice from her anima to non-Charm successes.

Prismatic Flashbang Burst (3xp; Appearance 5): The Initiative lost by blinded enemies increases to (Alchemical's Essence).

Perfected Tactical Lens Array (6xp; Appearance 5, Essence 3): The Alchemical gains Initiative lost by blinded enemies, maximum (Appearance). This is Augmented.

Ardor Embodiment Programming

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Appearance 5, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Universal Advisor Comportment

Crystalline implants shine with a pure white light as the Champion upholds her calling, inspiring those who witness her to ecstatic piety.

After upholding a Major or Defining Principle with an overt action, the Alchemical can use this Charm to make an instill roll for the same Intimacy against all observers with the same Intimacy. Extra successes on her initial action are added as automatic successes on the roll.

Affected characters gain +1 Resolve against influence that would weaken the instilled Intimacy, and can't voluntarily weaken it themselves. This lasts until the end of the story, or until another character succeeds on an influence roll to argue against the instilled Principle.

This Charm's Willpower cost is waived when used to instill Principles based on spiritual, religious, or philosophical beliefs.

Submodules

Diamond Sage Curriculum (3xp): The Alchemical doesn't need to uphold a Principle to use this Charm — a sermon or lecture expressing her Principle is sufficient.

Illuminating Inspiration Beacon

Cost: 3m, 1wp; **Mins:** Appearance 5, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Ardor Embodiment Programming

The Alchemical's faith in her students shines through in every aspect of her neon-limned visage, inspiring them with the confidence to fulfill their true potential.

The Alchemical makes an instill roll with any Attribute against a single character as she offers him advice, seeking to create or strengthen a Principle based on her advice. Her student can't choose not to assert his Resolve against the roll. He gains a pool of bonus dice equal to the Alchemical's extra successes, which he can add on social or mental rolls that he makes based on the Champion's advice. They can't be used in combat. These dice are lost if not used within (Alchemical's Essence) days.

While this Charm is often used to advise others facing specific obstacles, challenges, or problems, but it can also be used to provide more general advice. The breadth of such guidance should be relatively narrow, comparable to what might be covered by one or two specialties.

Special activation rules: The Alchemical can use this Charm reflexively to enhance an instill roll made with Ardor Embodiment Programming. She need not speak, demonstrating her lesson by example.

Submodules

Illuminated Icon Alignment (3xp): As long as the Alchemical rolls any extra successes, her target gains an additional two bonus dice.

Radiant Wisdom Beacon (3xp): The Alchemical can use this Charm when she offers advice to multiple characters.

Fearless Paragon Calibration

Cost: 1m, 1wp; **Mins:** Appearance 5, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Internal

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Universal Advisor Comportment

The Alchemical's courage is conveyed through her every movement and expression, inspiring those under her protection to fight back against fear.

Allies who can perceive the Alchemical gain +2 Resolve against fear-based influence, although this can't raise their Resolve above the Alchemical's total Resolve against that influence. If they share a positive Tie toward their community with the Alchemical, that Tie's Resolve bonus is increased by one.

Psyche-Stabilizing Beacon

Cost: 3m, 1wp; **Mins:** Appearance 6, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Illuminating Inspiration Beacon

Adamant nodes embedded along the Alchemical's neck accentuate her comforting presence with soothing harmonics, stabilizing aberrations in mental functioning through repeat exposure.

The Alchemical aids someone suffering from a Psyche effect, mind-altering Shaping effect, or sorcerous curse that affect the mind, as long as it can be resisted with Willpower. This takes a scene of interaction as she unburdens his mind through her comforting, inspiring presence. She rolls (Appearance + Presence) at a difficulty of the Essence of the character who used the effect. Success halves the Willpower cost to resist it, rounded up, and lets the Alchemical spend Willpower on the character's behalf. If an effect requires spending Willpower multiple times to break it, this Charm only applies to one such instance.

Alternatively, the Alchemical can use this Charm to treat a Major or Defining Derangement. This is a much longer process, requiring an extended (Appearance + Presence) action. It has difficulty 5, goal number 20, and an interval of one month. Its terminus is (10 – Derangement's intensity).

The Alchemical need only visit her patient one day for each interval, but repeat visits have beneficial effects. Each time she meets with the character, he doubles 9s on Willpower rolls to resist the Derangement and reduces its Resolve penalty by one for the next week.

Success on this extended action lowers a Derangement's intensity by one, or cures addiction entirely. However, Derangements can only be lowered to Minor intensity, not fully removed. If the Alchemical fails, she can't use this Charm to treat the same malady again.

Alternatively, the Alchemical can aid someone afflicted by a This requires only a scene of treatment.

Submodules

Champion's Compassion (3xp) (+7m): The Alchemical can pay a seven-mote surcharge instead of committing this Charm's cost to treat mortals. If she has a positive Tie to the community they belong to, she adds (Intimacy) non-Charm dice on interval rolls. Regular visits also let her patient add this dice bonus on rolls against the Derangement.

Soul Recalibration Signal (3xp; Essence 4, Champion's Compassion): Champion's Compassion applies to all characters.

Theotropic Veneration Mantle

Cost: 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Appearance 6, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Augmented

Duration: One day

Prerequisite Charms: Ardor Embodiment Programming, Radiant Iconography Array

Delicate orichalcum and adamant circuitry threaded through the Alchemical's skin projects her most ardent desires into the world, a temple to her own will.

The Alchemical chooses one of her Major or Defining Principles, channeling it into her anima banner, which flares to bonfire when she uses this Charm. She gains the following benefits:

- Her iconic anima subtly shifts to reflect her Principle, making it apparent to anyone who sees the Alchemical that she has that Intimacy.
- She adds (Appearance/2, rounded up) non-Charm dice on rolls to instill the chosen Principle or weaken opposing Intimacies. Such influence costs an additional Willpower to resist.
- She adds +3 Guile against read intentions rolls and other effects that would reveal any of her other Intimacies.
- Characters who share the Principle see the Alchemical as a holy figure, even if they know nothing of Alchemicals or the Great Maker. This perception counts as a Minor Tie. Such characters must pay one Willpower to initiate hostilities against her unprovoked, or to oppose her when she takes nonviolent action in support of her Principle.

The Alchemical loses this Charm's benefits if her anima falls below bonfire. This Charm remains active, and she regains its benefits once she reaches bonfire anima again.

If the Alchemical willingly acts in violation of the chosen Principle, this Charm ends and she can't use it to enhance that Intimacy again for the rest of the story.

Submodules

Unbounded Sublimation Icon (3xp, Appearance 8, Essence 5): This Charm's duration becomes Indefinite.

Guile

Clockwork Composure Regulator

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Appearance 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Transpuissant Appearance Upgrade

A grid of moonsilver installed beneath the Alchemical's face allows for conscious control of even the slightest microexpressions.

When a character whose base Resolve is lower than the Alchemical's Appearance makes a roll against her Guile, he must reroll a number of successful dice equal to the difference, minimum one. The reroll can't increase the opposing character's total successes from the original roll.

Mesmerizing Presence Upgrade

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Appearance 4, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Clockwork Composure Regulator

A hypnotic tracery of white jade swirls across the Alchemical's skin like geometric tattoos.

When a character with a Tie of sexual or romantic desire toward the Alchemical makes a roll against her Guile, she can use that Intimacy to bolster her Guile as if it were Resolve. She need not be aware of the Intimacy to do so.

Reset: Once per scene.

Bias-Confirming Mirror Protocol

Cost: 4m, 1wp; **Mins:** Appearance 5, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Internal, Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Mesmerizing Presence Upgrade

Carefully calibrated microexpressions create suggestive ambiguities, causing onlookers to see what they expect to see in the Alchemical.

The Alchemical can use this Charm after a read intentions roll against her fails, as long as it rolled any 1s. The opposing character believes he succeeded — but instead of the truth, he receives a result that confirms his expectations, assumptions, or desires about her.

Submodules

Perfected Mirror Façade (3xp, Essence 3): The Alchemical can use this Charm even if the opposing character didn't roll any 1s.

Shattered Mirror Distortion (6xp, Essence 3): Instead of confirming an observer's expectations, the Alchemical can instead feign whatever he most desires to see, whether it's loyalty, willingness to tolerate corruption, or romantic interest.

Glistening Obsession Nodes

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Appearance 6, Essence 4

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Psyche

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Beguiling Aesthetic Perfection, Bias-Confirming Mirror Protocol

The Alchemical is adorned with arrays of faceted adamant nodules that glow with a hypnotic radiance, mesmerizing those who seek her secrets.

When a character fails a roll against the Alchemical's Guile, she can use this Charm to make a special (Appearance + [Presence or Socialize]) instill roll, doubling 9s. Success inflicts a Minor Obsession with the Alchemical (**Exalted**, p. 169). He must immediately make a Willpower roll against the Obsession. If his base Resolve is lower than the Alchemical's Appearance, he suffers a penalty equal to the difference.

If the Alchemical succeeds with at least (victim's base Resolve) extra successes, she can instill a Major Obsession or strengthen an existing Major Obsession to Defining.

If the Alchemical's Appearance is higher than her target's Resolve, this Charm's mote cost is reduced by the difference.

Subterfuge

Integrated Artifact Transmogrifier

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Appearance 1, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Internal, Mute

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: None

A complex system of internal mechanisms retracts Charms into the Alchemical's body and shift her clay-like skin to cover them.

The Alchemical conceals any number of installed Charms, granting them the Internal keyword as they retract and compress into her body. If all of her Charms are Internal, she may perfectly replicate organic physiology, taking on the appearance of a flesh-and-blood human.

This Charm can't conceal Colossus-Class Upgrade Installation.

Submodules

Essence-Muting Baffles (3xp; Appearance 2, Essence 2): The Alchemical's Internal Charms can't be detected by magic like All-Encompassing Sorcerer's Sight.

Deep Cover Mode (3xp; Appearance 3, Essence-Muting Baffles): If all of the Alchemical's Charms are Internal, she appears to be a mortal for magic capable of sensing the Exalted, such as a spirit's Measure the Wind.

Husk-Sculpting Apparatus

Cost: 3m, 1wp; **Mins:** Appearance 2, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Augmented, Internal

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Integrated Artifact Transmogrifier

The Alchemical activates miniaturized pistons and chemical injectors underneath her skin to reconfigure her physical appearance.

The Alchemical can make one or more of the following alterations to her physical appearance:

- Increasing or decreasing her height and weight by up to 10%.
- Changing skin tone, eye color, and hair color and length.
- Adding or removing sexual characteristics.
- Other cosmetic changes, like adding or removing scars.

This can be used to conceal the Alchemical's identity. She instantly makes a disguise roll with (Appearance + Larceny), ignoring penalties for lacking equipment or altering her apparent race, sex, or body type. Rolls to see through these alterations suffer an (Appearance/2, rounded up) penalty unless enhanced by magic or superhuman senses. However, these alterations lack the precision necessary to impersonate other characters.

This Charm is often combined with Integrated Artifact Transmogrifier, unless the Alchemical doesn't wish to conceal her nature as an Exalt.

Submodules

Cruel Machinery Recalibration (3xp): The Alchemical can gain or remove the Hideous Merit (**Exalted**, p. 162).

Self-Sculpting Upgrade (3xp): When the Alchemical uses this Charm to modify her own appearance, she may make the changes permanent, changing the Charm's duration to instant. If she subsequently uses this Charm to undo these changes, she waives its Willpower cost.

Biochemical Synthesizers (3xp; Appearance 3): Chemical micropumps beneath the Alchemical's skin let her change her body's scent. Superhuman scent and magic that specifically enhances a character's sense of smell no longer bypass the penalty on rolls to see through her disguise.

Identity Distortion Mirage (3xp; Appearance 3): Artificial pigmentation made of moonsilver nanoparticles refines the visual details of the Alchemical's disguise. Superhuman vision and magic that specifically enhances a character's vision no longer bypass the penalty on rolls to see through her disguise.

Vocal Synthesizer (3xp; Appearance 3): A chrome rivet wired into the Alchemical's voice box lets her change the sound of her voice. Superhuman hearing and magic that specifically enhances a character's hearing no longer bypass the penalty on rolls to see through the disguise.

Replicant Metamorphosis (6xp; Appearance 4): The Alchemical can use this Charm to mimic specific characters. A successful roll against her disguise doesn't reveal her identity, only that she's not who she seems to be. This Charm's penalty applies on rolls opposing her Guile that would reveal she's not who she appears to be unless she's overtly acting out of character. This is incompatible with Self-Sculpting Upgrade.

Trans-Divinity Emulator (6xp; Appearance 4, Essence 2): The Alchemical can change her anima banner's appearance to that of a different Alchemical Caste or Exalt type, and manifest Caste Marks and Aspect markings as appropriate. Her iconic anima's imagery remains the same, but assumes an appearance appropriate to her altered anima. Alternatively, she can mimic cosmetic supernatural displays suitable to appearing as a machine spirit or similar supernatural being. This is incompatible with Self-Sculpting

Upgrade.

Meta-Iconic Calibrator (3xp; Trans-Divinity Emulator): The Alchemical can change the appearance of her iconic anima's imagery.

Essence-Warping Simulacrum (6xp; Essence 3, Trans-Divinity Emulator): Divination, magical scrying, magic based on someone's identity, and similar effects can't provide information that contradicts the Alchemical's disguise, giving false results where necessary. Magic that enhances mundane efforts to contest disguises is unimpeded.

Aura-Dampening Component

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Appearance 2, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Internal, Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Alchemical's Essence is diverted through a series of internal moonsilver baffles, dampening her flaring anima.

The Alchemical mutes all motes spent on a Larceny roll, Stealth roll, or a Charm related to subterfuge or concealment, like Husk-Sculpting Apparatus.

Optical Shroud

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Appearance 3, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Mute

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Aura-Dampening Component

Activating a lattice of adamant microcrystals embedded across her skin, the Alchemical wavers like a heat mirage for a moment before vanishing.

This Charm imposes a -2 penalty on rolls opposing the Alchemical's Stealth and lets her enter concealment without needing a hiding place. This stacks with other visibility-based penalties, but not above -3. Trivial characters don't receive an opposed roll unless they have specific reason to look for the Alchemical.

This Charm ends if the Alchemical moves at an ordinary walking pace or faster, or if she moves between range bands combat. Attacking or taking similarly rapid or forceful action also ends this Charm, as does being hit by an attack.

Submodules

Augmented Refraction Field (3xp): The Alchemical can become completely invisible when she uses this

Charm. She can't be detected by sight alone unless enhanced by magic or superhuman vision, and the penalty to detect her increases to -3. However, when used this way, any movement ends this Charm.

Kinetic Compensator (6xp; Essence 2) (+5m, 1wp): For a five-mote, one-Willpower surcharge, the Alchemical can move at a walking pace without disrupting this Charm. Moving faster than this doesn't end this Charm, but she loses its benefits until she slows. In combat, moving between range bands suppresses this Charm's benefits until the Alchemical's next turn. This Charm is incompatible with Augmented Refraction Field.

Dynamic Cloaking Module (6xp; Appearance 5, Essence 3, Kinetic Compensator): If the Alchemical uses Kinetic Compensator, ordinary movement no longer causes this Charm to end, although it still ends if she attacks. Moving at superhuman speeds or crossing multiple range bands in a single tick still suppresses the shroud.

Essence Veil (6xp; Augmented Refraction Field, Dynamic Cloaking Module): The Alchemical can use Augmented Refraction Field together with Kinetic Compensator. She can maintain the cloaking while moving as long as she stays below an ordinary walking pace, with faster motion suppressing the Charm's cloak. It still ends if she crosses between range bands in combat.

(Sense)-Countering Upgrades (3xp; Appearance 5, Essence 3, Augmented Refraction Field) (+3m): Upon purchasing this submodule, the Alchemical chooses one of hearing or scent. She can pay a three-mote surcharge when she uses Augmented Refraction Field to render herself imperceptible to the chosen sense as well. This submodule can be purchased once for each scent. Once the Alchemical's done so, she may purchase it a third time to counter exotic senses, like sensing vibrations or seeing body heat.

Sustained Cloaking Battery (3xp; Appearance 5, Essence 3) (+1wp): This Charm's duration becomes one day. This submodule's Willpower surcharge is waived if it's used with Kinetic Compensator.

Apocryphal Operative Halo

Cost: 2m (10m, 1wp); **Mins:** Appearance 3, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Psyche

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Optical Shroud

Spiky adamant nodes installed around the Alchemical's joints glow with pale blue light as they're with psychoactive Essence, building to a blinding nova of memory-erasing light.

When the Alchemical uses this Charm, it begins to charge a memory-erasing pulse. At the end of the scene, she may pay ten motes, one Willpower to unleash a blinding flash. She makes a special (Appearance + [Presence or Stealth]) instill against all characters within long range who can see her — including her own allies. She converts dice from Transpuissant Appearance Upgrade to automatic successes.

An affected character's memories of the scene are distorted in a way that obscures the Alchemical's identity. He can remember that she was one of the Alchemical Exalted, but not any of her identifying features, including her Caste. He's also blinded for the next hour, although medical treatment can hasten his recovery.

If the Champion conceals her nature as one of the Alchemical Exalted using Integrated Artifact Transmogrifier or Husk-Sculpting Apparatus, affected characters' memories are warped in a way that's consistent with her disguise.

An affected character can pay two Willpower to remember how things truly happened for one scene, before the distortion sets back in. Characters with a Tie toward the Alchemical only need to pay one Willpower. Once a character has done so (Alchemical's Essence) times, his memories are restored completely.

Submodules

Charged Crystal Matrix (3xp): The Alchemical can use this Charm reflexively. She can't wait until the end of the scene to use it, though — she must charge up in advance.

Vectored Refraction (3xp): The Alchemical may choose to exclude characters from this Charm's effect.

Blinding Corona Discharge (3xp; Appearance 4): Characters can't spend Willpower to resist this Charm while they're still blinded by it.

Psychoactive Erasure Array (3xp; Appearance 5, Essence 3): Characters must spend three Willpower to resist, or two Willpower with a Major or Defining Tie.

Amnestic Pattern Projector (6xp; Appearance 7, Essence 4, Blinding Corona Discharge, Psychoactive Erasure Display): Once per day, the Alchemical may completely erase characters' memories of the entire scene. Once she uses this submodule against a character, he's immune to further uses for (his base Resolve) days.

Stormwall Interrupter Circuits

Cost: 3m per level of anima, 1wp; **Mins:** Appearance 5, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Mute, Stackable

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Aura-Dampening Component

An array of lead plates, adamant prisms, and black jade coils suppresses the Alchemical's anima banner, which flickers light a failing circuit before vanishing.

The Alchemical lowers her anima banner by one level for every two motes she commits. When this Charm ends, the suppressed levels return to her anima banner. Once she reaches bonfire anima, she suffers one die of lethal damage for each excess level of suppressed anima. This damage can't be prevented.

The Alchemical can stack this Charm, to a maximum of (Essence + 1) stored levels of anima. If she uses it multiple times in the same scene, she waives the Willpower cost of uses past the first.

Submodules

Essence-Muting Baffles (3xp): There's no limit on how many levels of anima the Alchemical can store.

Grounded Circuitry (3xp): The Alchemical no longer suffers damage from excess levels of anima.

Augmented Anima Capacitor (3xp; Essence 3, Essence-Muting Baffles): This Charm's duration becomes Indefinite.

Overcharged Anima Core (6xp; Augmented Anima Capacitor, Grounded Circuitry): The Alchemical may use suppressed levels of anima to pay anima costs. This doesn't release the motes committed for that level.

Hidden Assembly Conclave

Cost: —(+2m per character, 1wp); **Mins:** Appearance 7, Essence 4

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Optical Shroud

Adamant lenses linked to the Alchemical's Optical Shroud project a visual distortion field to conceal her allies.

When the Alchemical uses Optical Shroud, she may extend its benefit to up to (Essence + 2) characters within close range, paying a two-mote surcharge per character plus an additional Willpower surcharge. The cloaked allies must remain within close range of her to retain this Charm's benefit.

This Charm ends if any character breaks the shroud. However, if the Alchemical uses the Kinetic Compensator submodule, movement that suppresses the shrouding only does so for the moving character.

Submodules

Civilian Concealment Array (3xp): Mortals don't count toward the limit on how many characters the Alchemical can conceal.

Expanded Cloaking Field (6xp): This Charm's range increases to short.

Vapor Mirage Strike Team (6xp; Essence 5, Expanded Cloaking Field) (5m per battle group): The Alchemical may conceal battle groups, paying five motes for each. Battle groups count as three characters toward the maximum she can conceal. This doesn't provide the benefits of Augmented Refraction Field or (Sense)-Countering Upgrades.

Warfare

Semiotic Flare Projector

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Appearance 2, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

A pair of telescoping orichalcum fins extends from the back of the Alchemical's shoulders, projecting pictoglyphic commands to her soldiers.

The Alchemical can flurry a command action, although not with an attack. She ignores penalties due to battle groups being too far away to understand her orders, as well as environmental penalties from conditions that obscure her commands.

Submodules

Inspiring General Iconography (6xp): If the Alchemical succeeds on a command action, she may spend up to (Appearance/2, rounded up) Initiative, granting the battle group two Initiative for each point she spends. This is Augmented.

Morale Enhancement Pattern (6xp; Appearance 3): The Alchemical can flurry an attack with a rally or rally for numbers action, but not with an order action.

Rapid Signaling Relay (6xp; Appearance 3) (+3m): The Alchemical reduces the flurry penalty on both actions by two, and ignores the Defense penalty.

Blazing Vanguard Beacon

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Appearance 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Semiotic Flare Projector

The Alchemical is illuminated by an intricate array of adamant lenses built into the Semiotic Flare Projector, a heroic icon to those who fight alongside her.

The Alchemical doubles 9s on a command action. If she uses this Charm together with Semiotic Flare Projector, she lowers the flurry penalty on both action by one.

Maximized Ambush Processor

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Appearance 4, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Internal, Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Blazing Vanguard Beacon

Tactical processors linked to the Alchemical's hindbrain formulate covert strategies and deceptive maneuvers.

The Alchemical rolls a Strategic Maneuver with (Appearance + [Stealth or War]) and double 9s to enact an ambush stratagem, leading her troops in covert operations. If successful, the stratagem also adds (higher of Essence or 3) dice on Join Battle and Stealth rolls for her and allied battle groups, and an

automatic success on their unexpected attack rolls.

Supreme Icon of Battlefield Glory

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Appearance 4, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Uniform

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Blazing Vanguard Beacon

Red jade rims the lenses of the Blazing Vanguard Beacon, limining the Champion in heroic radiance as she triumphs over her foes.

The Alchemical can use this Charm after crashing an enemy, dealing 3+ **decisive** damage to an enemy, or dealing enough damage to a battle group to empty its Size track. Any allied battle groups who witness this feat add one die on rout checks, and the Alchemical adds (Appearance/2, rounded up) dice on rally and rally for numbers actions.

The Alchemical suffers a –1 penalty on Stealth rolls while using this Charm.

Submodules

Veteran Faith Inculcator (3xp): Affected battle groups gain a Minor Intimacy representing commitment or loyalty to whatever cause they're fighting for. This Intimacy isn't retained by any characters who desert the battle group over the course of combat as it suffers Size loss.

Industrial Conquest Demonstration (6xp; Appearance 5) (+1wp): For a one-Willpower surcharge, enemy battle groups who witness the Alchemical's feat suffer (Essence) dice of Magnitude unless their Resolve is higher than her Appearance, as demoralized troops break away. This is Augmented. If this Magnitude loss triggers a rout check, it's made at +1 difficulty.

Champion-Exulting Propaganda Display (6xp; Appearance 6, Essence 4) (+5m, 1wp): Once per scene, the Alchemical can pay a five-mote, one-Willpower to broadcast a hologlyphic projection of her feat into the sky, large enough to be seen across the entire battlefield. Allied battle groups gain perfect morale for the rest of the scene (**Exalted**, p. 210). If the Alchemical uses this together with Industrial Conquest Demonstration, the rout check difficulty is increased by +2 instead of +1.

Luminous Tactical Overlay Beacons

Cost: 3m, 1wp; **Mins:** Appearance 5, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Supreme Icon of Battlefield Glory

Towering floodlights mounted on the Alchemical's shoulders project her anima banner into tactical readouts, providing real-time combat guidance and coordination to her forces.

The Alchemical's tactical displays grant the following benefits:

- She reduces the cost of Semiotic Flare Projector by (Anima).
- Whenever she succeeds on an order action directing a battle group to make an attack, that battle group adds (Anima) additional dice on the attack roll.
- Allied battle groups add (Anima) dice on rolls to detect hidden enemies or perils.
- If the Alchemical uses this Charm while facing enemies who benefit from an Ambush stratagem (**Exalted**, p. 211), that stratagem's benefits only last two rounds.

The Alchemical loses this Charm's benefits if her anima falls below burning. This Charm remains active, and she regains its benefits once she reaches burning anima or higher again.

Submodules

Rapid Activation Mode (3xp): The Alchemical can use this Charm reflexively if she wins Join Battle.

Perfected Strategic Analysis Readout (3xp, Rapid Activation Mode): If the Alchemical rolls Join Battle while fighting under a stratagem she's enacted, only enemy battle groups are counted when determining if she wins Join Battle to trigger Rapid Activation Mode.

Supreme Battlefield Radiance System (3xp, Rapid Activation Mode): If the Alchemical rolls Join Battle while at bonfire anima, she can trigger Rapid Activation Mode even if she doesn't win Join Battle. If she has Perfected Strategic Analysis Readout and is fighting under a stratagem she's enacted, she can do so while at burning anima.

Tactical Scanning Processor (3xp; Appearance 7, Essence 4): The dice added on battle groups' Awareness rolls are converted to automatic successes. Opposing Ambush stratagems only last one round.

Clockwork Soldier Pattern Projector

Cost: 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Appearance 8, Essence 5

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Perilous

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Luminous Tactical Overlay Beacons

Gridwork patterns of wire stretched across the Alchemical's face radiate luminous patterns of Essence, imbuing her troops with an intuitive understanding of her prowess, her strategy, and their place in it.

Allied battle groups that can perceive the Alchemical gain the following benefits:

- They add (Alchemical's Essence/2, rounded up) dice of post-soak damage on all attacks. This increases to (Essence) if the Alchemical has Initiative 12+.
- They gain +1 Defense, or +2 Defense against enemy battle groups. They gain +2 Defense against all enemies instead of the Alchemical has Initiative 12+.
- They can benefit from the Alchemical's specialties: they add an automatic success on rolls that a specialty applies to, and +1 to relevant static values. This doesn't apply to specialties in combat Abilities.

- They can use the Alchemical's Intimacies to bolster their Resolve against influence and cite them in Decision Points.

This Charm ends if the Alchemical is crashed.

Special activation rules: If the Alchemical uses this Charm together with Luminous Tactical Overlay Beacons while at bonfire anima, she waives this Charm's Willpower cost.

Charisma

Influence

Effective Leadership Algorithm

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Charisma 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Activating microprocessors housed in a tracery of orichalcum over her temples, the Alchemical optimizes every aspect of her speech for command.

Upon purchasing this Charm, the Alchemical chooses six experience points' worth of submodules. This Charm's primary submodules make it compatible with certain actions. When the Alchemical uses it, she rolls an additional non-Charm die for each 10 on the roll.

Submodules

Clockwork Governance Mode (3xp): This Charm is compatible with Bureaucracy rolls that involve leadership, regardless of what Attribute they use. If the roll benefits a community that the Alchemical has a positive Tie toward, she adds (Intimacy) additional dice.

Faction-Building Unity (3xp): This Charm is compatible with instill rolls. She adds a non-Charm success if she instills an Intimacy based on loyalty, trust, or duty.

Overriding Authority Mode (3xp): This Charm is compatible with persuade rolls. The Alchemical ignores multiple target penalties, and reduces other penalties by (Essence/2, rounded up).

Control Code Algorithm (6xp; Charisma 3, any two submodule) (+2m): The Alchemical can pay a two-mote surcharge to roll dice for 9s as well.

Prosocial Response Overtone (3xp): This Charm is compatible with inspire rolls. If the Alchemical succeeds on a roll to inspire a single character with trust, calm, or diligence, he adds a bonus die on social and mental rolls that are supported by that emotion for the rest of the scene.

Synergy-Promoting Upgrade

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Charisma 3, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Effective Leadership Algorithm

The Alchemical's followers act in perfect clockwork synchronicity, her leadership drawing power from a tangle of orichalcum threads surrounding a jade nodule in her chest.

The Alchemical adds a non-Charm die on Bureaucracy a roll that involves leadership. If most of the group's mortal members have a positive Tie toward her, this increases to (Intimacy) dice. She can also use this Charm on rolls where she benefits from the assistance of multiple mortals.

In addition to Charisma, this Charm is compatible with each Attribute for which the Alchemical has Transpuissant (Attribute) Upgrade installed.

Submodules

Communal Supremacy (3xp): For projects and tasks that directly benefit a community, the Alchemical can use her positive Tie to that community instead of her followers' Tie to her.

Lifestyle Cooperation Paradigm (3xp): Mortals who assisted the Alchemical gain a positive Tie toward each other as a group. The Tie's context is chosen by their players. Nontrivial characters can pay one Willpower to resist.

Universal Authorization Chevron

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Charisma 3, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Efficient Leadership Algorithm

An orichalcum circuit-sigil on the Alchemical's chest symbolizes the authority given to her by the Great Maker, resonating with subsonic signals that transmit her divine right.

Anyone who can perceive the Alchemical intuitively recognizes her as a figure of authority. This recognition counts as a Minor Tie of respect toward her — although it may be a negative Intimacy for those opposed to authority or the Alchemical in particular.

The Alchemical's authoritative presence adds (Essence/2, rounded up) dice on persuade rolls made from a position of authority, Bureaucracy rolls involving leadership, and rally and rally for numbers actions. This doesn't apply to rolls that don't involve in-person interactions.

Submodules

Axiomatic Emblem (3xp): Gremlins, fae, and the undead count as having a Tie of wary deference even if they oppose the Alchemical.

Dissent Override System (3xp): Mortals count as having a Tie of respect even if they oppose the Alchemical.

Unlimited Authorization Imprint (6xp; Charisma 4, Essence 2): This Charm's duration becomes indefinite.

Perfected Delegation Emblem (6xp; Charisma 5, Essence 3, Unlimited Authorization Imprint) (+1wp): The Alchemical can use Universal Authorization Cheveron as a Simple Charm for a one-Willpower surcharge to bestow a replica imprint of her chevron on a willing character, granting him this Charm's benefits. Onlookers' Ties reflect their recognition of him as an agent of a higher authority, rather than respect. The imprinted emblem can't be removed by any means other than ending this Charm.

Perfected Union Patterning

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Charisma 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Alchemical's face is marked with bands of her magical material, glowing in a pattern that reinforces her efforts to forge unity.

The Alchemical works to improve relations between members of two groups. They must be roughly similar in size — members of different work shifts, citizens of different nations, etc. She can use this Charm when she instills group members with positive Ties toward the other group, or weakens their negative Ties toward it. If members of both groups are present, this influence instills each group's members with a Tie toward the other.

The Alchemical doubles 9s and ignores multiple target penalties on the roll. She converts dice from Transpuissant Charisma Upgrade to automatic successes. Resisting this influence requires entering a Decision Point and citing at least a Minor Intimacy to resist.

Submodules

Great Maker's Arbiter (3xp): The Alchemical can use this Charm on bargain, persuade, or threaten rolls to resolve conflicts between through groups — convincing both sides of a brawl to stop fighting, deescalating a heated argument, imposing her judgment after arbitrating a dispute.

Icon of Unity (3xp; Charisma 4): Affected characters also gain a positive Minor Tie toward the Alchemical, with emotional contexts chosen by those characters' players.

Unwavering Solidarity (3xp; Charisma 4): Characters must cite a Major or Defining Intimacy to resist this influence.

Heresy Declaration Beacon

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Charisma 4, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Perfected Union Patterning

Luminous nodules in the Alchemical's Perfected Union Patterning lend their radiant emphasis to her warnings and invective in the face of peril.

The Alchemical warns of a threat to the community, rolling (Charisma + [Performance, Presence, or Socialize]) to instill a negative Tie toward the threat. If the threat isn't a valid subject for a Tie, this instead instills a Principle expressing belief in the Alchemical's warning or recognition of the threat. Affected characters also act on this Intimacy immediately, like with an inspire action (**Exalted**, p. 217).

Submodules

Metropolis Sentry Clarion (6xp; Essence 2): If the Alchemical rolls 3+ extra successes against a target's Resolve, she can dictate the action he takes, based on the instilled Principle's intensity (**Exalted**, p. 216).

Unimpeachable Emissary Programming

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Charisma 3, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Augmented, Internal

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Alchemical analyzes etiquette and protocol to calibrate her own speech and manner to the ways of wherever she might find herself.

Once the Alchemical has had at least (6 – Charisma) days of exposure to a culture or society, she can use this Charm to attune herself to that culture's protocols. Any penalties she suffers from being unfamiliar with the customs or etiquette of that culture are reduced by (Charisma/2). This applies to rolls with any Attribute, but always uses Charisma.

Members of that culture with negative Ties toward foreigners or outsiders treat them as one step weaker toward the Alchemical, unless they have a Major or Defining Intimacy that opposes this.

Submodules

Acceptable Response Protocol (3xp): This Charm applies any negative Minor Tie that applies to the Alchemical, except for Ties to her as an individual.

Calculated Diplomacy (3xp) (+1wp): The Alchemical can pay a one-Willpower surcharge to use this Charm after only an hour of exposure to a culture. With Essence 3, she waives this surcharge.

Clockwork Envoy Eminence (3xp): The Alchemical's speech and demeanor make it clear to anyone who interacts with her that she's an expert in matters of diplomacy. This belief counts as a Minor Tie. This effect can be invoked or dismissed reflexively.

Procedural Perfection (3xp): The Alchemical can attune herself to an organization's rules, regulations, and bureaucratic procedure. This reduces penalties from unfamiliarity on Bureaucracy rolls and rolls with any Ability to deal with these procedures.

Radiant Emblem of Integrity

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Charisma 3, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Unimpeachable Emissary Programming

A crackling emblem of orichalcum on the Champion's throat imbues her words with the force of truth.

As long as the Alchemical speaks only the complete truth, her honest is obviously apparent to all who hear her. If she uses Radiant Iconography Array to create an accurate depiction of something she's witnessed in the past, its veracity is likewise authenticated to all observers.

Once per session, the Alchemical may regain one Willpower when she tells the truth when lying would be easier.

Submodules

Icon of Unshakable Truth (3xp): When the Alchemical installs this Charm, she may choose to make its benefit permanent. She can't choose not to apply its effect. She may swap between this mode and the Charm's usual function through the Rite of Reconfiguration.

Programmed Catechism Rebuttal

Cost: 6m; **Mins:** Charisma 3, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Perfected Union Patterning

Crystalline implants in the Alchemical's front lobe contain an exhaustive catalogue of rhetorical technique, letting her generate effective counterarguments on the spot.

When a character makes an influence roll that opposes one of the Alchemical's Major or Defining Intimacies, she argues back with a (Charisma + [Performance, Presence, or Socialize]) influence roll. This instills a Principle that supports the Alchemical's argument in everyone who can hear her, ignoring multiple target penalties. Any bonuses added to her Resolve, like those from Intimacies and Charms, are converted to automatic successes on the roll.

If the Alchemical beats the opposing character's Resolve, his influence fails against her. If her instill roll succeeded against other characters targeted by his influence, the instilled Principle's Resolve bonus increases by one.

Submodules

Guardian Interjection Node (6xp; Charisma 4, Essence 3) (+2m, 1wp): For a two-mote, one-Willpower surcharge, the instilled Principle's Resolve bonus increases by one for every two extra successes the Alchemical rolled.

Electric Fervor Inspiration

Cost: 4m, 1wp; **Mins:** Charisma 4, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Effective Leadership Algorithm, Perfected Union Patterning

Orichalcum electrodes implanted just behind the Alchemical's jaw spark into life, stimulating the language center of her brain to inspire creative new arguments.

Upon purchasing this Charm, the Alchemical's player chooses six experience point's worth of submodules. Each lets her reset a certain kind of failed influence roll (**Exalted**, p. 222). If the influence is supported by one of the Alchemical's Major or Defining Intimacies, she adds (Intimacy) dice on the roll.

Reset: Once per scene.

Submodules

Coruscating Ardor Emitter (3xp): The Alchemical can reset inspire rolls.

Fulminating Champion Charisma (3xp): The Alchemical can reset rolls to instill positive Ties toward her or weaken negative Ties toward her.

Inspiring Loyalty Node (3xp): The Alchemical can reset rolls to instill positive Ties toward a community or Principles based on diligence, trust, or duty.

Lightning Zeal Castigation (3xp): The Alchemical can reset threaten rolls against characters she perceives as a threat to a community that she has a positive Tie toward. This always applies to gremlins, fae, and the undead.

Populart Directive Protocol (3xp): This Charm can reset persuade rolls that are supported by target's positive Ties toward a community or Principles related to diligence, trust, or duty.

Perfected Harmony Amplifier

Cost: 1m; **Mins:** Charisma 5, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Augmented

Duration: One song

Prerequisite Charms: Electric Fervor Inspiration

Ornate orichalcum adornments on the Alchemical's throat or forearms modulate the frequency of her music, imbuing it with inspiring harmonics.

Upon purchasing this Charm, the Alchemical's player chooses one of its submodules. Each submodule provides a supernatural song that the Alchemical can sing or play while using this Charm, benefiting listeners who hear it. She can't take non-reflexive actions during this performance.

Submodules

Battle Anthem of the Alchemical Exalted (6xp): Allies add a non-Charm die on attack rolls, which is converted to a non-Charm success if their attack benefits from an ally's distract gambit or if their target has a -3 onslaught penalty or higher. If they take a defend other action, they gain +1 non-Charm Parry for purposes of defending their ward. Allied battle groups increase the attack roll bonus to (Essence) non-Charm dice, and also add that many dice on rout checks.

Loyalty-Affirming Anthem (6xp): Allies double the Resolve bonus from positive Ties to communities they belong to or fellow group members, as well as Principles related to cooperation, belonging, solidarity, patriotism, or other positive aspects of group membership. Once per scene, they may reduce the Willpower cost to resist such influence by one. They also gain +2 non-Charm Resolve against influence that would weaken such Intimacies or create or strengthen opposing Intimacies, and against any Psyche effect.

Strife-Soothing Harmony (6xp): All characters — both allies and enemies — add (Alchemical's Charisma/2, rounded up) non-Charm dice on influence rolls meant to foster peace, avert conflict, or negotiate an end to hostilities. They suffer a penalty in the same amount on Join Battle rolls and attack rolls.

Thousand Work Shifts Ballad (6xp): Allies ignore penalties from fatigue, deprivation, or harsh environments, and add (Alchemical's Charisma/2, rounded up) non-Charm dice on Stamina and Strength rolls. This doesn't benefit attacks or other hostile actions.

Polyphonic Resonance Emitter (6xp; Essence 4, any two submodules) (+2wp): The Alchemical can pay a two-Willpower surcharge to combine the effects of two different songs.

Programming Language Eloquence

Cost: 4m, 1wp; **Mins:** Charisma 4, Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Effective Leadership Algorithm, Unimpeachable Emissary Programming

A breaker between the Alchemical's frontal and temporal lobes filters unnecessary emotion from her communications, refining the logic of her arguments.

The Alchemical doubles 9s on an influence roll based purely on logical argument and ignores penalties from Clarity. Characters can't use Intimacies that oppose Clarity (p. XX) to bolster their Resolve, though they can still cite them in Decision Points.

Submodules

Machine Code Cadence (3xp): This Charm's Willpower cost is waived on influence rolls that target a

machine spirit, automaton, or Alchemical.

Emergency Logic Override (3xp): If an affected character cites an Intimacy that opposes Clarity in a Decision Point to resist this influence, the cost to resist is increased by one Willpower.

Propaganda Interdiction Signal

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Charisma 4, Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Perfected Union Patterning

A white jade node just beneath the Alchemical's throat vibrates in harmony with her voice, creating inspirational overtones that cut through disinformation and dissent.

Characters with negative Ties toward a community they belong to can't use those Intimacies to bolster their Resolve against the Alchemical's influence or in a Decision Point. They increase the cost to resist influence opposed by such Ties by one Willpower.

Submodules

Void-Quelling Chastisement (3xp): Against gremlins, fae, and the undead, this Charm applies to any Principle that's inimical to peaceful coexistence with mortals. The cost to resist is always increased, even if a character doesn't have such a Principle.

Gossip Inefficiency Regulation (6xp; Charisma 5): This Charm applies to Ties to individual community members.

Vox Populi Broadcast

Cost: 3m, 1wp; **Mins:** Charisma 4, Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Augmented

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Universal Authorization Chevron

Orichalcum amplifiers bolted to both sides of the Alchemical's neck magnify her voice's volume until she speaks with the thunder of a roaring crowd.

The Alchemical makes an influence roll that can be heard clearly out to (Essence + Charisma) range bands. She can also do the same for about ten seconds of regular speech. An influence roll ignores environmental penalties based on distance, and can be heard over even the loudest noises.

Once the Alchemical has used this Charm, she waives the Willpower cost of subsequent activations for the scene.

Submodules

Ally-Signaling Frequency (3xp): The Alchemical can tune her voice to a frequency that can only be heard by select characters chosen by her. She can choose up to (Essence + Charisma) specific targets, or make a broadcast audible to anyone with a Tie of loyalty toward her or a community she serves. Characters with magically-enhanced hearing can overhear this with a (Perception + Awareness) roll at a difficulty of (Alchemical's Charisma + 2). This submodule is Augmented.

Piercing Emergency Broadcast (3xp): The Alchemical's voice can be heard through magical silence, requiring her to make a (Charisma + Presence) roll against the effect's difficulty. If there isn't one, her roll is opposed by the effect's creator, who makes an appropriate (Attribute + Ability) roll. Once the Alchemical succeeds on this roll, she doesn't need to roll for subsequent uses of this Charm.

Enduring Loyalty Inculcator

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Charisma 5, Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Perfected Union Patterning

Blue jade electrodes beneath the Alchemical's tongue reinforce her exhortations by subtly stimulating the part of the brain that recognizes belonging and community.

When the Alchemical makes an instill roll against a single character to create or strengthen a positive Tie toward a community he belongs to, she adds a non-Charm successes. If she has a positive Tie toward that community herself, she also adds (Intimacy) non-Charm dice.

On a successful roll, the Alchemical's target can't voluntarily weaken the chosen Intimacy and gains +2 Resolve against influence that would do so. This effect ends if he or a subgroup he belongs to is mistreated by the community's members, or if he's given some other cause to take offense at the community as a whole.

This Charm can also be used when the Alchemical rolls to overturn influence that opposes a character's positive Tie to a group he belongs to (**Exalted**, p. 221). She waives the Willpower cost for both the target and herself. Success reinforces the Tie as above.

Submodules

Galvanic Loyalty Dispersion (3xp): The Alchemical can use this Charm on instill rolls against multiple characters, ignoring the penalty for doing so.

Populace Assurance Protocol (3xp): This Charm's Willpower cost is waived against mortals.

Spirit-Tempering Solidarity (3xp): If a character chooses not to resist the Alchemical's influence, she may transfer one Willpower toward him. If she has a positive Tie toward the community, she may transfer (Intimacy) additional Willpower. This can't be used in combat.

Martial Regiment Reinforcement (3xp; Essence 3, Spirit-Tempering Solidarity): The Alchemical can use Spirit-Tempering Solidarity in combat.

Surging Loyalty Dynamo

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Charisma 5, Essence 3

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Enduring Loyalty Inculcator, Heresy Declaration Beacon, Propaganda Interdiction System

An orichalcum engine built into the Alchemical's chest crackles with electrical Essence as she urges solidarity.

When the Alchemical witnesses someone making an influence roll against one or more members of a group, she may give the targeted characters the opportunity to instantly form a positive Major Tie toward that community if it would oppose that influence. If they already have such a Tie, they may strengthen it to Defining intensity.

This Charm's Willpower cost is waived if the Alchemical uses it together with Programmed Catechism Rebuttal's Guardian Interjection Node submodule.

Unconditional Imperative Programming

Cost: 1m, 1wp; **Mins:** Charisma 6, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Universal Authorization Chevron

The Alchemical drills her commands into her listeners, suffusing her words with Essence-driven intensity as they pass through a red jade coating inside her throat.

The Alchemical makes a persuade roll or threaten roll that aligns with one of her Intimacies. The Willpower cost to resist is increased by one unless it's opposed by an Intimacy whose intensity equals or exceeds that of the Alchemical's Intimacy

Submodules

Incarnate Law Speaker (6xp) (+4m): Once per story, when the Alchemical makes a roll that upholds a Major or Defining Intimacy, she may pay a four-mote surcharge to increase the Willpower cost further. Up to (Essence/2, rounded up) 10s on her influence roll increase the cost to resist by one point. She can reset this submodule by upholding that Intimacy.

Motivational Vocoder

Cost: 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Charisma 6, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Unconditional Imperative Programming

A delicate half-torc anchored by a rivet in the Alchemical's throat lends an awe-inspiring radiance to her exhortations.

The Alchemical makes an instill roll to give a single character a Major Principle that reflects one of the Alchemical's long-term goals or ambitions, or strengthen an existing Intimacy to Defining. This costs two Willpower to resist.

Reset: The Alchemical can't use this Charm against a character more than once per story.

Submodules

Noetic Signal Booster (3xp): The Alchemical's influence costs (Essence) Willpower to resist.

Singular Dedication Upgrade (6xp): If the Alchemical succeeds, any Minor Intimacies that oppose the instilled Tie are weakened by one step.

Industrial Champion Icon

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Charisma 7, Essence 4

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Surging Loyalty Dynamo

A rosette pattern of magical materials surrounds the Alchemical's soulgem, signifying her status as a Champion of faith and hierarchy.

When the Alchemical makes an influence roll, targets who have a positive Tie to a community that the Alchemical also has a positive Tie toward treat its intensity as one step higher. If it's already Defining, the cost to resist increases by one Willpower. This doesn't affect Intimacies whose intensity is greater than or equal to that of the Alchemical's Tie.

Submodules

Counter-Dissonance Stabilizer (3xp): This Charm also applies to negative Ties toward gremlins, fae, and the undead. The Alchemical doesn't need to share the Intimacy.

Ideological Override Circuitry

Cost: 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Charisma 7, Essence 5

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Industrial Champion Icon

The Alchemical's rhetorical perfection is routed through orichalcum circuitry etched onto her Industrial Champion Icon, winning over even the most wayward of dissidents.

The Alchemical makes a special instill roll against a single character who has a negative Major or Minor Tie toward a community that he belongs to, or Major or Minor Principle based on dissidence, resistance to authority, or opposition to the status quo. She must leverage an Intimacy of at least the same intensity as the one targeted. If successful, the targeted Intimacy is fully eroded. If it was a Minor Intimacy, the target gains a new Minor Intimacy that's the opposite of the targeted one. This costs three Willpower to resist.

If the Alchemical uses this Charm together with Industrial Champion Icon, she inverts its effective to weaken the targeted Intimacy's Resolve bonus. The Alchemical doesn't need to share the Intimacy.

Reset: This Charm can't be used against a character more than once per story.

Submodules

Schism Resolution Protocol (6xp): The Alchemical can weaken Defining Intimacies if she has a positive Defining Tie toward the target's community, or a Defining Principle opposing his own. Success weakens a Defining Intimacy to Minor. If the Alchemical weakens a Major Intimacy under these circumstances, the target also forms an inverted Minor Intimacy

Warfare

Central Command Beacon

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Charisma 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Augmented, Internal

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

A tactical processing node within the Alchemical's brain allows her to formulate and relay orders with only a bare minimum of conscious thought.

The Alchemical adds (Charisma/2, rounded up) dice on a command action with any Attribute, and converts bonus dice from Transpuissant Charisma Upgrade to non-Charm successes.

Submodules

Tactical Signal Relay (6xp; Charisma 3) (+1m): The Alchemical can pay a one-mote surcharge to make the added dice non-Charm.

Perfected Phalanx Tactic (6xp; Charisma 4, Essence 2) (+2m, 1wp): When the Alchemical directs a battle group to attack an enemy with lower Initiative, she can pay a three-mote, one-Willpower surcharge to convert the added dice to automatic successes.

Void Extermination Protocol (3xp; Perfected Phalanx Tactic): The Alchemical can use Perfected Phalanx Tactic against gremlins, fae, and the undead even if they don't have lower Initiative.

Unyielding Metropolis Guardian (3xp; Perfected Phalanx Tactic): The Alchemical can use Perfected Phalanx Tactic while fighting in defense of a community she has a positive Tie toward, even if those enemies don't have lower Initiative.

Fear Override Device

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Charisma 2, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Central Command Beacon

Strips of red jade along the Alchemical's throat lend heighten the rousing impact of her rallying cries.

The Alchemical reflexively makes a rally roll. If successful, the battle group's morale is also bolstered for the rest of the scene, doubling 9s on further rout checks. Battle groups with poor Drill don't receive this bonus.

Submodules

Morale Reinforcement Protocol (6xp; Charisma) (+2m): The Alchemical can pay a two-mote surcharge to double 9s on the roll.

Panic-Quelling Broadcast (3xp; Charisma 4, Essence 2) (+1wp): The Alchemical can pay a one-Willpower surcharge to make a rally for numbers action with this Charm. The Willpower cost is waived if she uses it together with Hero-Bolstering Signal.

Populart Militia Drive (3xp; Charisma 4, Essence 2, Morale Reinforcement Protocol): When the Alchemical uses Morale Reinforcement Protocol, she doubles 8s while leading battle groups in defense of a community they belong to.

Unifying Resurgence Assembly (6xp; Charisma 7, Essence 3, Panic-Quelling Broadcast) (+5m, 3i): The Alchemical can pay a five-mote, three-Initiative surcharge to use Panic-Quelling Broadcast without it counting against the limit on rally for numbers actions.

Unyielding Militia Protocol

Cost: 2m, 2i; **Mins:** Charisma 4, Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Perilous

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Fear Override Device

Orichalcum circuitry etched into the Alchemical's Fear Override Device amplifies her rallying presence.

If the Alchemical succeeds on a rally or rally for numbers action, the targeted battle group's morale is bolstered. The last level of its Magnitude track can't be filled with damage until the Alchemical's next turn.

Reset: This Charm can only be used on a battle group once per scene. However, this doesn't apply if the Charm's protection isn't triggered.

Homeguard Reinforcement Clarion

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Charisma 7, Essence 3

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Stackable

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Unyielding Militia Protocol

An orichalcum circlet runs across the Champion's brow, glowing with Essence as it stirs feelings of loyalty and uplifted morale in troops fighting for their home.

The Alchemical grants the following benefits to an allied battle group fighting in defense of a community that its members belong to:

- It gains +1 Might.
- Its Drill counts as one step higher. If it already has elite Drill, it increases two bonus dice on rout checks.
- It adds (Alchemical's Essence/2, rounded up) levels to its Magnitude track.
- It gains +1 Resolve against fear-based influence and influence opposed by positive Ties to the battle group's community.

The Alchemical can stack multiple uses of this Charm to benefit multiple battle groups. She waives this Charm's Willpower cost for each battle group past the first.

Submodules

Legion-Forging Champion (3xp): The Alchemical can use this Charm while leading battle groups that are primarily made up of members of a community that she has a positive Major or Defining Tie toward.

Tireless Army of Order (Charisma 6, Essence 3): The Alchemical can use this Charm while fighting against gremlins, fae, or the undead.

Dexterity

Offense

Auto-Calibrated Tuning

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Dexterity 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Internal, Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Transpuissant Dexterity Upgrade

Starmetal conduits sheathe key junctions of the Alchemical's nervous system, implementing signals from her motor cortex with mechanically perfect precision.

The Alchemical adds a non-Charms success on an attack roll and converts dice from Transpuissant Dexterity Upgrade to automatic successes.

Submodules

Efficient Strike Calibration (6xp; Dexterity 4) (+2m): When the Alchemical makes a **withering** attack, she can pay a two-mote surcharge to add non-Charms dice equal to her enemy's onslaught penalty to her attack roll, maximum (Dexterity/2, rounded up). This is Augmented.

Perfected Elegance Mechanism (6xp; Dexterity 5, Essence 2, Efficient Strike Calibration): If the Alchemical adds a full Excellency on a **withering** attack roll, she converts the bonus dice from Efficient Strike Calibration to non-Charms successes.

Magnetic Subdual Coils

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Dexterity 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Transpuissant Dexterity Upgrade

Charging banks of magnetic cores along her inner forearms and palms, the Alchemical separates threats from their weapons.

When the Alchemical makes a disarm gambit against a weapon made of metal, she doubles 9s on the attack and Initiative rolls. (This includes weapons made of the magical materials). This isn't compatible with ranged attacks.

Submodules

Gravitomagnetic Upgrade (3xp): The Alchemical can affect weapons that aren't made of metal, modulating magnetism into gravitational attraction.

Magnetic Pulse Blaster (3xp): The Alchemical can use this Charm with ranged attacks, sheathing projectiles in a magnetic field.

Electromagnetic Field Projector (3xp; Dexterity 3): The Alchemical can make the gambit from short range, without needing a ranged weapon. An Essence 2 repurchase increases this to medium range.

Magnetic Reversal (6xp; Dexterity 5, Essence 2) (+1wp): The Alchemical can pay a one-Willpower surcharge to pull a disarmed weapon to her, letting her reflexively ready it if she has a free hand.

Meta-Resonant Magnetron (3xp; Essence 3; Magnetic Reversal): Using Magnetic Reversal to disarm an

artifact weapon breaks its wielder's attunement. The Alchemical may reflexively commit the artifact's attunement cost. Its attunement cost is lowered by (Essence) for the rest of the scene.

Protosynthetic Ammunition Replicator

Cost: 1m; **Mins:** Dexterity 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

A compartment on the Alchemical's forearm slides open, loading an Essence-forged missile into her weapon with an articulated metal tendril.

The Alchemical creates ammunition to make an Archery attack. This can't provide ammunition for firewands and other flame weapons.

Submodules

Some submodules allow the Alchemical to fire unique projectiles. She can't use more than one type of projectile for an attack.

Hypergolic Incendiary (3xp): The Alchemical can generate ammunition for flame weapons.

Repeating Pneumatic Loader (6xp; Dexterity 3) (+1i): The Alchemical can pay a one-Initiative surcharge to reflexively reload a weapon with the Slow tag before making the attack. This lets her use it with magic that creates multiple attacks if she reloads before each attack past the first.

Dispersive Flash-Chaff Cluster (6xp; Dexterity 4) (+3m): The Alchemical can pay a three-mote surcharge to fire a projectile that unleashes a blinding flash of light upon impact. If she hits, her target and everyone within close range of him must roll (Stamina + Resistance) against a difficulty of (Alchemical's Essence + 2). On a failed roll, a character is blinded until the end of his next turn, suffering a -3 penalty on all vision-dependent rolls.

Fulminating Conduction Charge (6xp; Dexterity 4) (+2m): The Alchemical can pay a two-mote surcharge to fire an electrified stun-round. If she deals 5+ **withering** damage or any **decisive** damage, her target suffers a -3 penalty on all rolls until the end of his next turn. Against enemies wearing metal armor or that are made of metal, this adds one die of **decisive** damage or post-soak **withering** damage.

Solidcore Penetrator Round (6xp; Dexterity 4) (+2m): The Alchemical can pay a two-mote surcharge to fire an armor-piercing projectile, ignoring up to (Dexterity/2, rounded up) points of soak or Hardness. This is Augmented. The penetrating round also reduces Defense bonuses from light or heavy cover by one.

Concussive Overpressure Warhead (6xp; Dexterity 4, Essence 2) (+3m): The Alchemical can pay a three-mote surcharge to fire a concussive projectile, knocking her target prone if she deals 5+ **withering** damage or any **decisive** damage. He suffers a -2 penalty on rolls to rise from prone.

Airburst Grenade Shot (6xp; Dexterity 5, Essence 2) (+4m): When the Alchemical makes a **decisive** attack, she can pay a four-mote surcharge to fire an explosive projectile. If she hits, the projectile detonates in mid-air moments before impact as a one-time environmental hazard, in addition to the

decisive damage roll. The hazard extends out to close range from the target, with difficulty 4 and Damage (Essence)L.

Rapid Barrage Configuration

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Dexterity 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Internal, Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Alchemical's joints are upgraded with a magnetized anti-friction coating, letting her strike with superhuman speed.

If the Alchemical lands an attack against an enemy with lower Initiative, it inflicts an additional point of onslaught penalty. She can use this Charm against enemies with equal or greater Initiative if she moves into close range with them on the same tick she attacks.

Submodules

Clockwork Assassin Efficiency (3xp): The Alchemical can use this Charm against enemies of equal or greater Initiative when making an unexpected attack.

Quicksilver Razor Calibration (3xp): The Alchemical can use this Charm against enemies of equal or greater Initiative when making a **decisive** attack with 12+ Initiative.

Superior Reactive Tuning (3xp) The Alchemical can use this Charm against enemies of equal or greater Initiative when making a clash or counterattack.

Multi-Vector Interception (3xp, Dexterity 3, Superior Reactive Tuning): On clash attacks, the opposing character's onslaught penalty subtracts dice from his attack roll.

Pneumatic Repeater (6xp; Dexterity 3): On **withering** attacks, the target's onslaught penalty subtracts from his soak.

Overwhelming Velocity Upgrade (6xp; Dexterity 4): An affected enemy's onslaught penalty doesn't refresh on his next turn.

Preprogrammed Battle Reflexes (3xp, Dexterity 4, Essence 2, Multi-Vector Interception): If the Alchemical wins a clash, the Defense penalty that the opposing character suffers counts as an onslaught penalty.

Blinding Velocity Actuator

Cost: 2m, 2i; **Mins:** Dexterity 3, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Perilous, Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Auto-Calibrated Tuning, Rapid Barrage Configuration

No mortal eye can keep pace with the Alchemical's augmented speed.

If the Alchemical acts before all enemies in a round and makes an attack, her target must roll (Wits + Awareness) opposing her attack roll to keep pace with her strike. His onslaught penalty subtracts dice from this roll. If he fails, it becomes a surprise attack, inflicting -2 Defense.

Submodules

Blurring Speed Acceleration (3xp) (+1i): Even if the Alchemical doesn't go first, she can pay a one-Initiative surcharge to use this Charm against an enemy who hasn't acted this round.

Rapid Ambush Vector (3xp): While the Alchemical is in concealment, she counts as having acted before any enemies who are unaware of her to determine whether she can use this Charm.

Gear-Driven Reflex Automation

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Dexterity 3, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Counterattack, Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Rapid Barrage Configuration

Motorized gears in the Alchemical's forearms override her motor control in response to an attack, striking back with automated precision.

When an enemy attacks the Alchemical, she makes a **decisive** counterattack.

Submodules

Crossfire Targeting Sensors (3xp): The Alchemical can use this Charm to counterattack from any range.

Sustained Counteroffensive (6xp; Essence 2): If the Alchemical's counterattack hits, her Initiative doesn't reset until the end of the current tick, letting her respond to flurries of multiple attacks.

Perfected Clockwork Reflex Mechanism (6xp; Dexterity 6, Essence 3) (+2m, 1wp): The Alchemical can pay a two-mote, one-Willpower surcharge to clash an attack instead of making a counterattack.

Tactical Reaction Matrix (6xp; Dexterity 6, Essence 3) (+2m, 1wp): The Alchemical can pay a two-mote, one-Willpower surcharge to make a **withering** attack instead of a **decisive** attack. She doesn't gain any Initiative from the damage roll. If she uses this submodule together with Perfected Clockwork Reflex Mechanism, she only needs to pay one Willpower for both of them.

Multi-Strike Accelerator

Cost: 1m, 1wp; **Mins:** Dexterity 4, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Augmented, Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Gear-Driven Reflex Automation

The Alchemical strikes again and again, her augmented muscle and nerves enacting pre-programmed motions.

The Alchemical can use this Charm after a **withering** damage roll that leaves her target with a lower Initiative than her. She reflexively makes a **decisive** attack against him, with a maximum base damage of (Dexterity + enemy's onslaught penalty) dice.

This attack doesn't reset the Alchemical's Initiative. Instead, she loses Initiative equal to her successes on the damage roll, to a minimum of her base Initiative.

Reset: Once per scene unless reset by dealing 3+ **decisive** damage to a nontrivial enemy with Initiative lower than the Alchemical's Dexterity.

Submodules

Augmented Onslaught Actuators (3xp): Onslaught penalties reduce enemies' effective Initiative to determine whether the Alchemical can use this Charm.

Momentum Pulse Driver (6xp; Dexterity 5, Essence 2) (+3i): The Alchemical can pay a three-Initiative surcharge to add her full Initiative to the damage roll. This resets her Initiative normally if she hits.

Unrelenting Advance Protocol (6xp; Momentum Pulse Driver) (+5m): When the Alchemical deals 3+ damage with a **decisive** attack, she can use this Charm to make a **withering** attack against her target. There's no limit on the attack's base damage.

Myriad Assault Sequence (3xp; Dexterity 5, Essence 5, Unrelenting Advance Protocol): If the Alchemical's attack resets this Charm and she immediately uses it again, she waives its Willpower cost.

Gambit Submodules

The following submodules can be purchased for any Simple or Reflexive Alchemical Charm that makes a **decisive** attack.

Automated Feint (3xp): The Alchemical can make a distract gambit instead of a damaging **decisive** attack.

Threat Deescalation Protocol (3xp): The Alchemical can make a disarm gambit instead of a damaging **decisive** attack.

Subluminous Onslaught Missile

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Dexterity 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Dual

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

High-pressure steam lines and bulbous Essence capacitors in the Alchemical's forearms

accelerate projectiles to incredible speeds as she fires across long distances.

The Alchemical extends a ranged attack's range by one band, maximum long. If the attack benefits from aiming, its range is increased by two range bands instead.

With Dexterity 5, Essence 3, the Alchemical may pay a one-Willpower surcharge to remove the limit on an attack's maximum range.

Submodules

Kinetic Launch Catapult (3xp): The Alchemical can use this Charm with close-range weapons, letting her launch them out to short range. This uses the normal combat Ability for that weapon. This includes unarmed attacks: the Alchemical can launch her limbs using multi-directional rockets, retractable metal cables, or similar mechanisms. It's also compatible with weapons deployed using Integrated Arsenal System (p. XX).

Essence Pulse Cannon

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Dexterity 3, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Dual

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Transpuissant Dexterity Upgrade

The Alchemical has a cannon mounted on her forearm or shoulder, charged by banks of Essence capacitors implanted beneath her skin.

The Alchemical makes a **withering** or **decisive** Archery attack with the Essence Pulse Cannon, including gambits. The has the following traits:

- Long range.
- The Accuracy of an artifact Archery weapon (Close -1; Short +5; Medium +3; Long +1; Extreme -1).
- Damage 10L. It uses her Essence instead of her Strength for the attack's raw damage.
- The Mounted and One-Handed tags.
- Its Essence blasts can't be blocked without a stunt.

While the Essence Pulse Cannon is in use, its emitter jewels glow with flickering energy and a low electric hum pulses it. Attacking with it impairs stealth like a glowing anima (p. XX) until the end of the Alchemical's next turn.

Submodules

Concussive Shockwave Pulse (6xp): The cannon gains the Smashing tag (**Exalted**, p. 586), though it can't knock enemies further than medium range from the Alchemical. She can spend motes as though they were Initiative to make smash attacks. She may optionally deal bashing damage instead of lethal.

Discrete Arsenal Installation (3xp): The cannon is reconfigured into a miniaturized version, housed in the Alchemical's eyes or a retractable lens on the palm of her hand. This Charm gains the Internal keyword

and doesn't impede stealth while in use.

Focused Beam Lens (6xp): The cannon gains the Piercing tag (**Exalted**, p. 586). The Alchemical can spend motes as though they were Initiative to make piercing attacks.

Interceptor Spark Emitter (6xp): When the Alchemical uses a Simple or Reflexive Charm to make an attack, she can use Essence Pulse Cannon reflexively to make it.

Pattern Disruptor (6xp): The cannon doubles 10s on **decisive** damage rolls and deals aggravated damage.

Precision Targeting Reticule (6xp): The cannon projects a thin ray of light from a crystalline nodule to aid in targeting. Aiming adds an additional non-Charm die on attacks with it.

Supercharged Capacitor Array (6xp; Essence 2): The Alchemical may pay a one-Willpower surcharge and commit this Charm's mote cost to extend its duration to one scene, letting her make Essence Pulse Cannon attacks for free. This doesn't apply to surcharges from other submodules.

Essence Pulse Detonation (6xp; Dexterity 5, Essence 2) (+3m, 1wp): When the Alchemical makes a **decisive** attack, she may pay a three-mote, one Willpower surcharge to fire a blast that extends out to medium range from her target. She makes one attack roll against everyone within range — friend or foe — and divides her Initiative evenly among all hit characters, rounded up. This ignores Hardness.

Siege Devastator Mode (6xp; Essence 3, Essence Pulse Detonation, Supercharged Capacitor Array) (+5m): The Alchemical may pay a five-mote surcharge when she uses Supercharged Capacitor Array to expand her Essence Pulse Cannon into a siege weapon before attacking (**Arms of the Chosen**, p. 127). Its sheer heft provides her with heavy cover. The Alchemical needs no assistance to operate it, and can still roll (Dexterity + Archery) to attack with it.

Autonomous Assault Processors

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Dexterity 4, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Augmented, Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Multi-Strike Accelerator

Auxiliary processing cores installed in the Alchemical's joints calculate attack patterns in parallel with the Champion.

The Alchemical makes up to (Dexterity – 2) **decisive** attacks against one or more enemies. She doesn't need to use the same combat Ability for each attack. Her Initiative is divided evenly among all attacks, rounded up. It doesn't reset until the final attack is completed, assuming at least one hit. She doesn't lose Initiative for missed attacks unless all of them miss.

If the Alchemical has uses the Automated Feint or Threat Deescalation Protocol submodules to make multiple gambits, her Initiative is allocated to their rolls as usual. Instead of the gambit's usual cost, she pays two Initiative per successful gambit, minimum three.

Submodules

Iterative Efficiency (3xp; Dexterity 5): If the Alchemical adds a full Excellency on the first attack roll, she

reduces the mote cost of her Excellencies by two motes for all subsequent attacks in the flurry.

Automated Assault Pattern (6xp; Dexterity 5, Essence 3): The Alchemical may move one range band toward an enemy before each attack she makes. This burst of speed uses her movement action for the round.

Neural Tuning (6xp; Dexterity 5, Essence 3) (+5i): Once per scene, the Alchemical can pay a five-Initiative surcharge to make **withering** attacks instead of **decisive** attacks. She only gains Initiative from the highest damage roll, although she still receives the full Initiative rewards for hitting and crashing enemies.

Transmodal Rapid Targeting System

Cost: 12m, 1wp; **Mins:** Dexterity 6, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Augmented, Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Autonomous Assault Processors

As the Alchemical lines up a shot, a tattoo-like lattice of augmented nervous clusters and psychokinetic vector begins to glow, vectoring her projectile along impossible trajectories.

The Alchemical launches a ranged projectile to strike up to (Dexterity – 2) enemies, making a separate **decisive** attack against each one. She can redirect the projectile's course in mid-air to change its direction between attacks and bypass any cover as long as an opening exists.

These attacks don't reset the Alchemical's Initiative. Instead, after the first attack, her Initiative is halved, rounded up. After the second attack, it's divided by three, rounded up, and so on. This can't reduce her Initiative below (Dexterity). If she misses an enemy, this sequence of attacks ends prematurely as the projectile veers off course. Once the Alchemical has completed all attacks, her Initiative resets.

Reset: Once per scene, unless reset by landing a **withering** attack that increases the Alchemical's Initiative to 15+.

Transfinite Ultraviolence Drive

Cost: 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Dexterity 8, Essence 5

Type: Simple

Keywords: Augmented, Decisive-only, Perilous

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Autonomous Assault Processors, Blinding Velocity Actuator

Moonsilver implants running along the Alchemical's spine connect to starmetal processing cores distributed through her nervous system. When activated, the Alchemical enters a hyperaccelerated combat mode that makes time seem to stand still for her.

The Alchemical rolls (Dexterity + highest combat Ability). This includes dice from Transpuissant

Dexterity Upgrade, but can't be modified by other effects. She banks a reflexive attack for each successes. Once per round, she can expend one of them to reflexively make a **withering** or **decisive** attack. She can't use banked attacks while crashed.

Reset: Once per scene.

Submodules

Autonomic Intercept (6xp): The Alchemical can use banked attacks to clash attacks against her.

Omnitactical Processing Core (6xp) (5m): The Alchemical can pay five motes when she uses a banked attack to make a **withering** attack with it.

Hypersonic Impulse Relay (3xp): This Charm loses the Perilous keyword. The Alchemical can make **withering** attacks with Omnitactical Processing Core while crashed.

Defense

Accelerated Response System

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Dexterity 2, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Internal, Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Transpuissant Dexterity Upgrade

Starmetal nerve clusters and orichalcum acceleration nodes across the Alchemical's body heighten her reflexes and reaction time beyond human limits.

The Alchemical's Defense ignores onslaught penalties, environmental penalties, and other penalties caused by "external" conditions. It doesn't negate penalties from low visibility and other sensory impairment.

Submodules

Hardwired Reflexes (3xp): The Alchemical's Defense also ignores wound penalties, crippling penalties, penalties from sensory impairment, and other penalties caused by "internal" conditions. It does negate penalties from surprise attacks.

Comprehensive Contingency Programming (3xp; Dexterity 3, Hardwired Reflexes): The Alchemical's Defense ignores all other penalties, except from surprise attacks.

Unwavering Precision Tuning (6xp): If the Alchemical successfully defends against an attack from an enemy with lower Initiative, it doesn't inflict an onslaught penalty.

Onslaught Deflection Analysis (6xp; Unwavering Precision Tuning): When Unwavering Precision Tuning prevents an attack from inflicting an onslaught penalty, that penalty is instead inflicted on the attacker.

Sustained Response Processor (6xp; Dexterity 3): The Alchemical can pay a two-Initiative surcharge to extend this Charm's duration until her next turn.

Casualty-Minimizing Equations

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Dexterity 3, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Uniform

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Accelerated Response System

A processor wired into the Alchemical's sensory cortex controls magnetized servos and gyroscopic swivels in her joints, predicting and countering threats to those around her.

The Alchemical reflexively takes a defend other action (**Exalted**, p. 196). Her protection lasts for this Charm's duration, but her charge must be within close range of her to receive it. This Charm ends if she uses a defend other action on a different character.

Submodules

Clockwork Guardian Upgrade (3xp; Dexterity 4): When the Alchemical successfully blocks an attack against her ward, she gains one Initiative.

Counter-Aggression Protocols (3xp; Essence 2, Clockwork Guardian Upgrade): When the Alchemical gains Initiative from Clockwork Guardian Upgrade, the attacker loses one Initiative.

Machine-God Protector Mode (6xp; Dexterity 4, Essence 2): When an attack beats the Alchemical's Parry, she may force the enemy to direct his attack against her, not her ward. This ends Casualty-Minimizing Equations and prevents the Alchemical from using it again until her next turn.

Omnipresent Guardian Directive (6xp; Machine-God Protector Mode): The Alchemical can protect her ward as long as he remains within short range of her.

Parallel Defensive Geometry (6xp; Dexterity 5, Essence 2) (2m or 4m): The Alchemical may two motes to extend this Charm's protection to another ally within range of her defend other action against a single attack. Against area-of-effect attacks, she may pay four motes to protect all allies within range instead.

Defender of the Populat (3xp; Omnipresent Guardian Directive, Parallel Defensive Geometry) (+1m, 1wp): The Alchemical may pay a one-Willpower surcharge to extend Parallel Defense Geometry's protection to medium range.

City-Warding Sentinel (3xp; Defender of the Populat) (+6m, 1wp): The Alchemical may pay a six-mote, one-Willpower surcharge to extend Parallel Defensive Geometry's protection to long range.

Celerity-Enabling Module

Cost: 2m, 1wp; **Mins:** Dexterity 4, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Uniform

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Accelerated Response System

Implants in the Alchemical's joints connect to her Accelerated Response System, letting her body take greater advantage of her boosted nervous system.

The Alchemical chooses an enemy she can perceive, perfecting her defense against him. She waives Accelerated Response System's cost against his attacks.

Submodules

Multi-Combatant Tactical Matrix (3xp): If the Alchemical wins Join Battle and uses this Charm on her first turn, she applies its effects against all enemies.

Threat Prioritization Unit (3xp): Once per turn, the Alchemical may reflexively choose a different enemy for this Charm.

Light-Etched Interceptor Barrier

Cost: 6m; **Mins:** Dexterity 4, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Celerity-Enabling Module

The Alchemical projects a shaped potentiality field from a bulky, wrist-mounted armature, shielding herself behind a crackling field of radiance.

When the Alchemical blocks an attack, she rolls (Dexterity + Brawl, Martial Arts, or Melee). She adds two non-Charm successes if she benefits from a full defense. If her successes are higher than her base Parry, she uses them instead. This doesn't count as a bonus from Charms.

Reset: Once per scene unless reset by successfully blocking three **decisive** attacks from nontrivial enemies.

Submodules

Essence Absorption Screen (3xp): Against attacks made of pure Essence or energy, the Alchemical adds a +1 non-Charm bonus to both Parry ratings. If she successfully blocks, she gains motes equal to the 10s on the attack roll.

Emergency Overcharger (6xp; Dexterity 6, Essence 3) (+1wp): The Alchemical can pay a one-Willpower surcharge to use this Charm after an attack roll against her.

Autonomous Defensive Drones

Cost: 4m, 2i, 1wp; **Mins:** Dexterity 5, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Perilous, Uniform

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Celerity-Enabling Module

Polyhedral drones deploy from their housings in the Alchemical's back, orbiting the Champion to shield her from attack.

The Alchemical must use this Charm on her turn. The drones provide the benefits of a defend other action, with an effective Parry of (Dexterity + 1). The drones' orbital formation leaves few gaps for an assassin to strike through — their Parry isn't penalized by surprise attacks.

The drones are immune to **withering** damage. Against **decisive** attacks, they have Hardness 4 and (Essence + 5) –0 health levels. If all health levels are filled, this Charm ends. It can't be used again for the rest of the day, as the damage to the drones is repaired.

This Charm ends if the Alchemical is crashed.

Impenetrable Repulsor Field

Cost: 5m (+5m, 1wp); **Mins:** Dexterity 5, Essence 3

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Perilous, Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Light-Etched Interceptor Barrier

Bulky brass power couplings in the Alchemical's shoulders link to crystalline repulsor arrays in her hands, projecting a barrier of solid force.

The Alchemical can parry an unblockable attack. For a five-mote, one-Willpower surcharge, she gains full cover against an attack. This perfectly defending against it unless it's enhanced by magic capable of attacking through full cover. An enemy with such magic can use it reflexively after the Alchemical uses this Charm. Even if the cover is pierced, the Alchemical adds (Essence) non-Charm Parry.

Alternatively, the Alchemical can pay this Charm's Willpower surcharge to perfectly parry source of uncountable damage. If the damage is recurring, she waives this Charm's cost against it for the rest of the scene.

Reset: Once per scene, unless reset by blocking a **decisive** attack made by an enemy with Initiative 20+. Using this Charm against environmental damage doesn't require a reset.

Submodules

Overcharger Module (6xp; Dexterity 8, Essence 5): The Alchemical can use this Charm multiple times on the same tick, which only counts as a single use toward the once-per-scene limit. She waives the surcharge for uses past the first. Using this submodule unleashes a discharge of brilliant energy from the repulsor field, shining like a bonfire anima (p. XX) for that tick.

Precalculated Evasion System

Cost: 3m, 2i; **Mins:** Dexterity 5, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Perilous, Uniform

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Celerity-Enabling Mode

Starmetal nodes lining the Alchemical's spine are wired into an adamant calculation array inside her skull, analyzing enemy's attacks to predict the optimal path of escape.

The Alchemical rolls (Dexterity + Dodge), banking her successes. When she's attacked, she may expend all banked successes to substitute for her base Evasion. Alternatively, she may spend banked successes to raise her Evasion, spending two successes per +1 bonus.

Submodules

Advanced Calculation Arrays (6xp): The Alchemical may use this Charm reflexively after dodging a **decisive** attack made by an enemy with 12+ Initiative, or after going a round without being hit by an attack while within close range of at least one nontrivial enemy.

Infinite Calculation Storage (6xp; Essence 5, Advanced Calculation Arrays) (+2m, 1wp): The Alchemical may pay a two-mote, one-Willpower surcharge to roll twice when she uses this Charm, banking the result of each roll separately.

Omnisituational Evasive Equation

Cost: Varies; **Mins:** Dexterity 5, Essence 3

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Precalculated Evasion System

The Alchemical evades harm with clockwork precision, moving into a perfect defensive position calculated by a cluster of adamant nodes around her soulgem.

The Alchemical uses one of the following defenses:

- For four motes, she can dodge an undodgeable attack (but not an ambush).
- For five motes, one Willpower, she doubles her base Evasion against an attack, as long as it's not undodgeable. She also adds +1 non-Charm Evasion for each installation of Transpuissant Dexterity Upgrade. She can only use this defense once per scene.
- For five motes, one Willpower, she can perfectly dodge a source of uncountable damage (**Exalted**, p. 205), unless it can't possibly be dodged. Against recurring uncountable damage, this defense's cost is waived after the first use in a scene.

Reset: The Alchemical can reset the Evasion-doubling defense by successfully dodging three **decisive** attacks from nontrivial opponents.

Submodules

Hyperspatial Geometry (3xp; Dexterity 6): The Alchemical calculates defense positions that transcend mundane geometry. She can double her Evasion against undodgeable attacks, and doesn't need to pay separately to be able to dodge them.

Perfected Evasion Calculus (6xp; Essence 5, Hyperspatial Geometry): The Evasion bonus added by the Alchemical's Tranpuissant Dexterity Upgrades is doubled.

Mobility

Gyroscopic Stability System

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Dexterity 1, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Internal

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: None

A complex assembly of white jade and moonsilver in the Alchemical's inner ear lets her effortlessly maintain her equilibrium.

The Alchemical gains perfect balance. She can also stand or run on surfaces too narrow to support her without needing to roll, as long the surface is strong enough to bear her weight. She adds (Essence) non-Charm dice on rolls to rise from prone.

Submodules

Controlled Descent Calibration (3xp): If the Alchemical falls, she always lands on her feet and reduces any falling damage she suffers by one level.

Stabilizer Array (6xp): If the Alchemical activates this Charm while prone, she reflexively rises to her feet, rolling if necessary. This doesn't use her movement action.

Augmented Drive-Chain Assembly

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Dexterity 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Essence-fueled actuators in the Alchemical's legs propel her forward in a burst of speed.

The Alchemical rerolls 1s until they cease on a rush, disengage, or a roll made in a contest of speed. She converts dice from Tranpuissant Dexterity Upgrade to automatic successes.

Submodules

Reverse Gear (6xp; Dexterity 3): When the Alchemical disengages, she may spend motes instead of losing Initiative.

Cyclical Velocity Treads

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Dexterity 3, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Augmented Drive-Chain Assembly

The Alchemical's feet bifurcate, revealing moonsilver-rimmed wheels that bear her swiftly across the battlefield.

The Alchemical's wheeled augmentations add a non-Charm die on rushes and reduce the penalty for flurrying them with other actions by one. A successful rush increases this bonus by another die, maximum (higher of Essence or 3). The bonus resets if the Alchemical goes a round without either moving between range bands or succeeding on a rush. It's also reset if she fails a balance roll or is knocked prone.

The Alchemical can also use this Charm in races and other speed-based competitions, applying the above benefit to each interval's roll. The dice bonus resets if an opponent's roll for an interval beats her.

This Charm can't enhance forms of movement other than running, but this can be bypassed with appropriate stunts, like leaping between giant metal conduits while riding down them.

Submodules

Autonomous Piloting Subroutine (3xp; Dexterity 4): The Alchemical reduces flurry penalties on rushes by the current amount of her dice bonus. As long as the bonus is higher than one, she also doesn't suffer the Defense penalty for flurrying.

All-Terrain Upgrade (6xp; Essence 2) (3m): Metal-plated tread lets the Alchemical's wheels cross unimpeded over rough terrain. When the Alchemical takes a movement action while using Cyclical Velocity Treads, she can pay three motes to ignore non-magical difficult terrain and add (higher of Essence or 3) dice on rolls to resist environmental hazards she moves through. This doesn't apply to terrain or hazards that are inherently unaffected by the Alchemical's treads, like a cloud of corrosive acid.

Inertial Charging Gear (3xp; Dexterity 4, Essence 2): Starmetal bearings absorb and store momentum when the Alchemical comes to a stop. This Charm's dice bonus is no longer reset for any reason other than her falling prone.

Oil Slick Dispenser Nozzles

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Dexterity 3, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Augmented Drive-Chain Assembly

Soulsteel nozzles in the Alchemical's calves spray a thick, slippery oil in her wake to throw off pursuers.

When the Alchemical moves between range bands, she leaves an oil slick in her path. This is difficult terrain (**Exalted**, p. 199), and characters who move through it or begin their turn in it must roll (Dexterity + Athletics) at difficulty 2 or fall prone.

If ignited, the oil catches flame, becoming an environmental hazard with difficulty 3, Damage 2L/round. It burns until the end of the scene or until it's extinguished.

Submodules

Anti-Friction Formulation (3xp): The Alchemical adds (Essence/2, rounded up) to the balance roll's difficulty.

Anima Ignition Circuit (6xp; Dexterity 5, Essence 2) (+2m, 1a): The Alchemical may pay a two-mote, one-anima surcharge to instantly ignite the oil.

Volatile Accelerant Admixture (6xp; Dexterity 5, Essence 2): The Alchemical adds +2 to the difficulty and damage of an ignited oil slick's environmental hazard.

Omnidextrous Joint Bearings

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Dexterity 2, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Internal

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: None

Mechanical assemblies and ball-bearing races surgically installed in the Alchemical's joints grant her superhuman flexibility and coordination.

The Alchemical adds (higher of Essence or 3) dice on rolls involving flexibility or contortion, like slipping free of bindings or fitting through a tight space. This includes rolls that she makes to oppose an enemy's grapple control roll, and lets her roll with (Dexterity + [Athletics, Brawl, Dodge, or Martial Arts]).

Additionally, the Alchemical's augmented coordination lets her ignore offhand penalties on attacks, as well as penalties for only using one hand on actions involving precise manual dexterity.

Submodules

Magnetic Articulation (3xp) (2m): The Alchemical can pay two motes to double 9s on a roll that receives bonus dice from this Charm.

Polymodal Reconfiguration (3xp): Against mundane restraints, the Alchemical escapes even on a failed roll. Instead, failure means that a complication occurs, like her captors returning just as she breaks free. This submodule isn't compatible with rolls opposing grapples.

Momentum-Charged Overdrive Engine

Cost: 2m, 2i; **Mins:** Dexterity 5, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Internal, Perilous, Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Augmented Drive-Chain Assembly, Rapid Barrage Configuration

Moonsilver implants in the Alchemical's muscles and joints aid her in performing a preprogrammed sequence of combat acrobatics.

When the Alchemical attacks an enemy on the same tick she moves into close range with him, she adds an automatic success on the attack roll. Once the attack is completed, she may choose to continue her movement in the same direction for another range band. This doesn't count as her move action.

Submodules

Kinematic Trajectory Modeling (3xp; Essence 2) (+1m): The Alchemical can pay a one-mote surcharge to change the direction of her movement after the attack.

Distributed Violence Drive (6xp; Essence 2) (1wp): If this Charm's movement brings the Alchemical into close range with another enemy, she can pay one Willpower to reflexively make a **decisive** attack against him.

Optimized Pursuit Accelerator

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Dexterity 5, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Momentum-Charged Overdrive Engine

The Alchemical fires jets of Essence from red jade nozzles installed in her calves, dashing toward a foe with incredible speed.

The Alchemical rushes an enemy within medium range, instantly moving into close range with him if she succeeds. This replaces the usual benefit of a rush.

Submodules

Reverse Trajectory Propulsion (6xp): The Alchemical can use this Charm to disengage, moving two range bands away if successful. This replaces the usual benefit of a disengage. She doesn't lose Initiative from disengaging.

Sustained Propulsion (6xp): The Alchemical still gains the usual benefits of rush. With Reverse Trajectory Propulsion, she gains the usual benefits of disengaging.

Impulse Booster (6xp; Dexterity 7, Essence 4) (+5m): The Alchemical can pay a five-mote surcharge to increase this Charm's range to long. When used with Reverse Trajectory Propulsion, it lets her move three range bands away.

Recoil Compensation Stabilizers

Cost: 1m, 2i; **Mins:** Dexterity 5, Essence 3

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Perilous

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Blinding Velocity Actuator, Gyroscopic Stability System, Subluminous Onslaught Missile

Automated gyroscopic mechanisms in the Alchemical's hands and forearm let her aim with perfect precision while in movement.

The Alchemical can take a move action and aim on the same turn. She can flurry an aim with a rush or disengage, reducing the flurry penalty on the roll by two.

Transphase Engine

Cost: 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Dexterity 7, Essence 3

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Augmented Drive-Chain Assembly

Starmetal pistons fire in a spherical assembly adjoining the Alchemical's Essence reservoir, shifting her out of phase with reality.

The Alchemical makes a movement action without crossing the space between, allowing her to pass through walls and similar obstructions and to bypass environmental hazards and difficult terrain. She can't cross through barriers that span more than one range band.

Submodules

Phase Shift Apparatus (6xp; Essence 4): The Alchemical can phase through larger obstructions by using this Charm again on each subsequent turn, waiving its Willpower cost. She benefits from full cover while doing so, though appropriate magic or stunts can circumvent this. If she doesn't use this Charm on her turn, she's ejected from the barrier at the point she entered it.

Subterfuge

Digital Precision Effectors

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Dexterity 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Alchemical's fingers bifurcate and deploy customized tips, greatly increasing her manual dexterity.

Upon purchasing this Charm, the Alchemical chooses six experience points' worth of submodules. This Charm's primary submodules make it compatible with certain actions.

Using this Charm doubles 9s on a compatible action, and confers an additional effect based on the submodule used.

Submodules

Clockwork Legerdemain (3xp): This Charm can enhance rolls involving sleight of hand, like poisoning a drink or cheating at dice, and adds (higher of Essence or 3) dice.

Discreet Acquisition Upgrade (3xp): This Charm enhance rolls for pickpocketing and theft. Characters other than the Alchemical's target suffer an (Essence/2, rounded up) penalty on their opposed rolls.

Document Fabrication Mode (3xp): The Alchemical can use this Charm for forgeries, like writing a letter in someone else's handwriting or falsifying official documents. Suspicious characters can roll (Perception + [Investigation or Linguistics]) at a difficulty of (Alchemical's Manipulation) to notice the forgery. This is Augmented. The difficulty may be reduced if the Alchemical lacks familiarity or sufficient sources, maximum -3.

Mechanism Bypass Mode (3xp): This Charm can enhance rolls to pick locks and disarm traps. For mundane mechanisms, if the roll is difficulty 5 or less, she bypasses them even on a failed roll — instead, failure indicates an unfortunate development, like a guard coming to investigate, her lockpicks breaking, a trap being triggered.

Tactical Espionage Mode

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Dexterity 3, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Augmented, Mute

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Alchemical shifts her body into a stealth configuration, diminishing her outline with moonsilver plating along her joints.

The Alchemical adds (Dexterity/2, rounded up) dice on Stealth rolls and on unexpected attack rolls. However, her natural soak is reduced by two while in this stealth configuration.

Submodules

Covert Aegis Reinforcement (3xp; Essence 2): The soak penalty is reduced to one. An Essence 3 repurchase negates it entirely.

Covert Telemetry Nodes

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Dexterity 4, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Tactical Espionage Mode

Moonsilver and black jade data clusters implanted in the Alchemical's spine filter innumerable simulated projections of covert action into instinctual muscle memory.

When the Alchemical makes a Larceny or Stealth roll, she rerolls up to (Essence) 1s and only suffers a –1 penalty for using Stealth in combat.

While using Tactical Espionage Mode, the Alchemical can reroll any number of 1s and negates the penalty for Stealth in combat entirely.

Submodules

Essence-Routing Subexchange (6xp): Once per scene, when the Alchemical's Stealth roll beats all enemies' opposing rolls, she regains up to (Dexterity) motes that she spent to enhance the roll. This is Augmented.

Counterharmonic Scatter System

Cost: 3m, 2i; **Mins:** Dexterity 4, Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Covert Telemetry Nodes

Essence-charged acoustic baffling displaces the sound of the Alchemical's movement, making it seem to come from somewhere else.

When the Alchemical makes a Larceny or Stealth roll, opposing Awareness rolls suffer a –2 penalty unless they rely entirely on senses other than hearing. If a character fails by three or more successes, he believes he's heard her, somewhere within medium range of her true position. The Alchemical doesn't need to pick the same false location for all such enemies.

If a character's Awareness roll relies exclusively on hearing, this Charm's penalty subtracts successes instead of dice. He only needs to fail by one success to be fooled about the Alchemical's location.

Submodules

Essence-Tuned Harmonics (6xp): This Charm can be used to displace the sounds of a physical action using any Attribute, applying the above effects on any Awareness rolls made to determine where they came from. This doesn't distort sounds from the indirect consequences of the action.

Sustained Resonance Scattering (3xp; Dexterity 5, Essence 3) (+1m): The Alchemical can pay one mote to extend this Charm's duration until her next turn, applying its benefits to all qualifying actions.

Synthetic Echo Acoustics (6xp; Dexterity 5, Essence 3) (+2m): For a two-mote surcharge, rolls that

exclusively rely on hearing fail automatically. This doesn't apply to any indirect consequences the Alchemical's action has.

Flicker-Flare Launchers

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Dexterity 3, Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Tactical Espionage Mode

The Alchemical deploys flash charges from miniaturized launchers to create a dazzling distraction.

The Alchemical can roll Stealth to enter concealment without needing a hiding place. Opposing rolls suffer a -2 penalty unless they're exclusively based on senses other than vision.

Reset: Once per scene unless reset by landing a **decisive** surprise attack.

Matchless Assassin Protocols

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Dexterity 4, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Internal, Mute, Perilous

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Covert Telemetry Nodes

Crystalline nodes scribed with moonsilver code-protocols are fitted at the base of Champion's skull, sequencing her timing to move between eyeblinks and moments of distraction.

The Alchemical can use this Charm after a successful disengage roll or distract gambit to reflexively roll to enter concealment, subject to the usual penalties for Stealth in combat.

Submodules

Covert Withdrawal Tactic (3xp) (+2i): The Alchemical can pay a two-Initiative surcharge to use this Charm after successfully dodging an attack.

Null-Sensory Sequencing (3xp): If the Alchemical triggers this Charm with a distract gambit, she adds bonus dice equal to the gambit's difficulty on her Stealth roll.

Hyperdextrous Tentacle Apparatus

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Dexterity 5, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Mute

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Digital Precision Effectors

Flexible metal tendrils extend from ports in the Alchemical's chest to aid in her subterfuge.

The Alchemical extends tendrils capable of fine manipulation out to short range. She can use them to take unrolled actions, like closing a door or picking up an object, and Larceny actions involving manual dexterity, like lockpicking or disabling traps.

Submodules

Prehensile Filament Configuration (3xp) (+1wp): For a one-Willpower surcharge, the tendrils can pass through openings of any size, whether under a door or through the slightest crack in a wall.

Oblique Aggression Drive

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Dexterity 5, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Internal, Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Matchless Assassin Protocols

Moonsilver trceries along the Alchemical's arms links to her Matchless Assassin Protocols, allowing for perfectly calibrated killing strikes.

To use this Charm, the Alchemical must meet the requirements to ambush an enemy. She makes a **decisive** attack against him. She adds (Essence) dice of damage and rerolls 1s and 2s on the damage roll.

Perfected Covert Programming

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Dexterity 5, Essence 3

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Matchless Assassin Protocols

An expanded array of data crystals installed in the Alchemical's Matchless Assassin Protocols optimizes her ability for covert action.

The Alchemical flurries a Stealth roll with another action. She can't flurry it with attacks or other actions that would break concealment.

While using Tactical Espionage Mode the Alchemical ignores flurry penalties.

Submodules

Discreet Assassination Directive (6xp) (+1wp): For a one-Willpower surcharge, the Alchemical can flurry

an unexpected **decisive** attack with a Stealth roll. If the attack succeeds, she must use her reflexive move action to enter a new hiding place before rolling Stealth. She doesn't need to disengage from enemies at close range. If the attack misses, her Stealth roll automatically fails, but she doesn't need to move.

Total Perception Negation Field

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Dexterity 6, Essence 4

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Uniform, Mute

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Perfected Covert Programming

A tracery of moonsilver and black jade emanates a sensory negating field, obscuring the Alchemical's presence from all scrutiny.

When a character makes an Awareness roll opposing the Alchemical's Larceny or Stealth, he suffers a -1 penalty for each of the Alchemical's Transpuissant Dexterity Upgrades. This penalty increases by -1 while using Tactical Espionage Mode.

When the Alchemical makes a surprise attack, she likes adds one die on the attack roll for each installation of Transpuissant Dexterity Upgrade, and an additional die while in Tactical Espionage Mode. On ambushes, she instead adds that many dice of **decisive** damage or post-soak **withering** damage.

Unseen Deathblow Calibration

Cost: 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Dexterity 6, Essence 4

Type: Simple

Keywords: Internal, Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Oblique Aggression Drive

Time seems to slow to a standstill as clustered hyperprocessors overclock the Alchemical's reaction time, her enemies too slow to even move before she cuts them down.

To use this Charm, the Alchemical must act before all enemies. She makes a **withering** or **decisive** ambush attack against a crashed enemy (**Exalted**, p. 203).

Reset: Once per scene.

Submodules

Alpha Strike Protocol (6xp; Essence 5): If the Alchemical wins Join Battle, she can use this Charm on the first round against any enemy whose Initiative is lower than her Dexterity. This is Augmented.

Intelligence

Cognition

Anticipatory Simulation Processor

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Intelligence 2, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Internal, Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

A core of tangled starmetal filaments buried in the Alchemical's brain collates and processes sensory data to model future events.

This Charm's predictive modeling is represented by letting the Alchemical's player ask the Storyteller about the short-term consequences of her actions. She proposes an action in the current scene — “opening this compartment,” “mentioning the ambassador's lover,” “slapping him in the face.” She then asks the Storyteller whether a given short-term outcome would be likely to result of that action. She can't predict consequences that extend beyond the current scene.

Reset: Once the Alchemical predicts an act's outcome, she can't use this Charm again for that act.

Submodules

Outlier Elimination Method (3xp; Intelligence 3): If the proposed outcome isn't a likely one, the Alchemical's player can ask the Storyteller about an additional outcome. She can ask a total of (Intelligence/2, rounded up) questions this way. This is Augmented.

Threat Anticipation Matrix

Cost: 3m, 1i; **Mins:** Intelligence 3, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Internal, Perilous, Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Anticipatory Simulation Processor

Threat-modeling algorithms programmed into the Alchemical's Anticipatory Simulation Processor predict unforeseen dangers.

When an enemy makes an unexpected attack against the Alchemical, she rolls ([Intelligence or Perception] + Awareness) opposing the attack roll. Against a surprise attack, success negates its Defense penalty.

Against an ambush, success lets the Alchemical defend normally, but reduces her Defense to 1. Every two extra successes she rolls increases this by +1, up to a maximum of her base Defense.

Submodules

Enhanced Tactical Processor (3xp): The Alchemical converts bonus dice from Transpuissant Intelligence Upgrade to automatic successes on this Charm's roll.

Hostile Environment Modeling System (3xp): The Alchemical can use this Charm to resist a hidden or unexpected environmental hazard, trap, or similar peril with ([Intelligence or Perception] + Awareness), even if it wouldn't normally be an applicable dice pool. She doubles 9s on the roll.

Intuitive Necessity Algorithm (3xp): This Charm's cost is reduced by one mote, one Initiative if the Alchemical has used Anticipatory Simulation Processor to model a combat-related course of action in the current scene. This removes the Perilous keyword.

Hundredfold Contingency Subprocessor

Cost: 7m, 1wp; **Mins:** Intelligence 5, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Augmented

Duration: One story

Prerequisites: Threat Anticipation Matrix

An artificial secondary brain of folded starmetal is grafted to the back of the Alchemical's skull, constantly calculating plans within plans within plans to ensure she is never without options.

The Alchemical rolls (Intelligence + Lore) after a scene spent analyzing, examining, or contemplating a potential obstacle, enemy, or event. She banks contingency points equal to her successes. Storytellers may allow the Alchemical to roll different Abilities based on the nature of the obstacle being planned for — Medicine for health, Survival for famine, and so on.

The Alchemical may spend contingency points on the following effects reflexively:

1 points: The Alchemical converts bonus dice from Transpuissant Intelligence Upgrade to automatic successes on a roll involving the problem. She can't use this in combat.

1 point: The Alchemical waives Anticipatory Simulation Processor's cost when modeling scenarios related to the problem. She can assess the probable outcomes of an act that she's already used that Charm to predict, allowing her to gauge how far things have drifted from her initial prediction.

1 point: When the Alchemical takes an action that involves the problem using any Attribute, she converts bonus dice from exceptional equipment to non-Charm successes. She also gains this benefit on circumstantial bonuses procured through her foresight and preparation, to a maximum of (Essence) successes. She can't use this in combat.

1 point: The Alchemical resets the once-per-scene limit on introducing a fact, as long as it's relevant to the problem she's dealing with.

3 points: The Alchemical retroactively reveal that she has already foreseen the need for some eventuality, and has laid hands on a piece of exceptional equipment suited to the problem or something of similar usefulness — for instance, paperwork requisitioned in advance from a stubborn clerk.

4 points: When the Alchemical fails a roll that involves the problem using any Attribute, she can reroll up

to (Intelligence/2, rounded up) failed dice. She can't use this in combat.

5 points: The Alchemical gains +2 Resolve and +2 Guile for one scene when facing opposition that's related to or part of the problem.

7 points: The Alchemical can use Prescient Leadership Protocols (p. XX) without needing to spend a scene interacting with the organization that carries out a project related to the problem.

7 points: The Alchemical can use Ineffable Godhead Conduit (p. XX) without needing any preparation when using it to address the problem.

The Alchemical must have a Charm installed to enhance it with contingency points.

Reset: Once per story unless reset by upholding a Major or Defining Intimacy or accomplishing a major character or story goal through long-term planning.

Submodules

Perpetual Mastermind Engine (3xp): If the Alchemical accomplishes her plan before this Charm's duration elapses, she gains one Willpower for every five contingency points she has remaining, rounded up.

Probabilistic Agenda Programming (3xp; Essence 2): The Alchemical can use this Charm to create proactive plans to achieve her own goals, rather than enacting reactive strategies.

Emergent Calamity Prediction (6xp; Essence 3): Once per story, the Alchemical may activate this Charm reflexively when she encounters a challenge, obstacle, or peril, revealing how she foresaw this eventuality and has already made appropriate plans. With Probabilistic Agenda Programming, she can use this submodule at any time to reveal a proactive plan she's enacted.

Lightning Archive Processor

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Intelligence 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Augmented, Internal

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: None

A latticework of orichalcum wires snake through the Champion's brain, allowing her to correlate data with unrivaled precision.

The Alchemical doubles 9s on a roll to introduce or challenge a fact, or a roll involving her passive knowledge. If she's spent at least a day studying a relevant archive, database, or other corpus of information within the last (Intelligence) days, she can do so even if she doesn't have a relevant Lore background. She can only receive this benefit on one roll for each period of study.

Submodules

Archival Database Storage (3xp): The Alchemical retains the benefits of studying relevant information for (Intelligence) weeks. This increases to (Intelligence) months if she has Transpuissant Intelligence Upgrade installed.

Ambient Competence Compiler (3xp, Intelligence 3): Once per session, when the Alchemical uses this Charm to successfully introduce a fact without the necessary Lore background, she may gain that Lore background permanently.

Transcendent Processing Upgrade (3xp; Ambient Competence Compiler): Once per story, the Alchemical can use Ambient Competence Compiler to also gain a free Lore specialty in the same topic.

Comprehensive Cross-Referencing Index (6xp; Intelligence 3, Essence 2, Transcendent Processing Upgrade): If the Alchemical has the benefit of prior study, she doubles 8s on the roll.

Efficient Planning Matrix

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Intelligence 3, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Internal

Duration: One task

Prerequisite Charms: Lightning Archive Processor

Algorithmic efficiency protocols allow the Alchemical to eliminate unnecessary delay and needless waste from a group's operations.

The Alchemical undertakes a project or bureaucratic task, dividing the time needed to complete it by (Intelligence). This doesn't speed physical labor, only the planning, authorization, allocation of resources, and other bureaucratic tasks involved in fulfilling her request. This is limited to projects that occur under the Alchemical's direct supervision or management — it won't impact distant branches of the organization or workers beyond her oversight.

This Charm can't enhance projects that take more than (Intelligence/2, rounded up) years to complete.

Submodules

Sabotage-Suppressing Countermeasures (6xp; Intelligence 4, Essence 2): When a character makes a roll to curse an organization or otherwise interfere with it in a way that disrupts the Alchemical's project, the difficulty is increased by 2. The Alchemical adds two non-Charm successes on rolls with any Attribute to oppose such rolls.

Pattern Realignment Signal (6xp; Intelligence 7, Sabotage-Suppressing Countermeasures) (10m, 1wp): The Alchemical's leadership creates a harmonious pattern of Essence, negating hostile magic. She can use this submodule when she encounters evidence of a curse afflicting an organization while undertaking a project that supports one of her Major or Defining Intimacies. She can pay ten motes, one Willpower to roll (Intelligence + Bureaucracy) opposing an appropriate (Attribute + Ability) roll by the character who used the curse. Success breaks the curse for the portion of the organization that's under her direct oversight. If she fails, she can't use this submodule against the same curse again.

Institutional Analysis Protocol

Cost: 4m, 1wp; **Mins:** Intelligence 3, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Augmented, Internal

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisites: Efficient Planning Matrix

A fibrous bundle of starmetal neurons models organizational behavior in the Champion's unconscious mind, allowing her to root out inefficiency and optimize performance.

The Alchemical constructs a mental model of an organization over the course of (10 – Intelligence) days spent interacting with that organization, studying its records, or conducting other investigations. She rolls (Intelligence + [Bureaucracy, Investigation, or Socialize]) at difficulty 1-5, based on factors like whether the organization is especially clandestine, whether it closes rank against outsiders, whether it's especially large or decentralized, and whether the Alchemical is able to interview leadership and audit records.

Success lets the Alchemical's player ask the Storyteller one of the following questions about the organization plus an additional question for every three extra successes. If the Storyteller doesn't have an answer in mind for a question, the Alchemical's player should provide one, as if introducing a fact.

- What is its top priority?
- Where is it strongest?
- Where is it weakest?
- Are its activities harmful to a community I belong to?

As long as this reveals any useful information, the Alchemical adds dice equal to the number of questions she asked on Bureaucracy rolls with any Attribute that involve the organization, up to a maximum bonus of (Intelligence/2, rounded up). If a piece of information revealed by this Charm is directly relevant to such a roll, she also adds an automatic success.

Submodules

Algorithmic Auditing Protocol (3xp): The Alchemical adds this Charm's bonus on read intention rolls against group members that involve the organization and Investigation rolls to look into it.

Faultless Auditor Mien (3xp): While interacting with group members in an official capacity, the Alchemical adds half this Charm's dice bonus to her Guile, rounded up. If she benefits from a relevant answer, she adds an additional +1 Guile.

Group Dynamic Modeling (3xp): The Alchemical adds this Charm's bonus on bargain, persuade, and instill rolls against group members that involve the organization.

Efficiency Assessment Protocol (6xp; Intelligence 4): The Alchemical's player asks questions about obstacles that the organization might face if it undertook a project. She can ask whether a specific issue would be a problem, ask what the most likely obstacle to the project would be, and ask follow-up questions on the topic. She can also ask these questions about ongoing projects. She adds this Charm's bonus on Bureaucracy rolls to deal with any obstacles revealed by her questioning.

Statistical Consensus Analytics (3xp; Intelligence 4, Essence 2): The Alchemical can ask an additional question for each extra success she rolls, rather than every three.

Comprehensive Psychosocial Profile (3xp; Intelligence 5, Essence 2, Efficiency Assessment Protocol): If the Alchemical spends twice the amount of time studying the organization, her player can ask any questions she likes about the organization, its members, and its activities. Some questions may be off

limits if there's truly no information available, though even the most indirect of inferences can be enough for the Champion's analytical genius.

Rapid Agenda Extrapolation (3xp; Intelligence 5, Essence 2): The Alchemical reduces the time needed to analyze an organization from days to hours.

Stochastic Fault Diagnostics (6xp; Intelligence 5, Essence 2) (5m, 1wp): The Alchemical can sense errors in her model, detecting deviations on a local level. When the organization's local activities or membership contradict any information revealed by this Charm, the Alchemical is alerted to it. She becomes aware of a deviation as soon as she has access to even the barest scrap of information, and may often detect it practically instantly. She can then pay five motes, one Willpower to gain a sense of what this discrepancy is. This won't reveal any individual motivations or underlying reasons behind the discrepancy.

Empire-Modeling Psychohistory (6xp; Intelligence 7, Essence 5, Comprehensive Psychosocial Profile, Rapid Agenda Extrapolation, Stochastic Fault Diagnostics) (10m, 1wp): Once per story, if the Alchemical has reached the maximum dice bonus for an organization, she can pay ten motes and one Willpower to ask the Storyteller for whatever piece of information about the organization would be most useful to her. If that information has been concealed by another character's actions, she makes an opposing roll with (Intelligence + [Bureaucracy, Investigation, or Socialize]). If there's no applicable difficulty or opposed roll, she rolls against that character's Guile instead. The Storyteller can also require a rolls for especially complex questions or questions where the Alchemical has very limited access to relevant information.

Instructive Simulation Needle

Cost: 3m per dot, 1wp; **Mins:** Intelligence 6, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Augmented, Stackable

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisites: Lightning Archive Processor

The Alchemical extrudes a starmetal microneedle into the back of the neck, placing a student into a mental training simulation that uploads knowledge directly into his brain.

The Alchemical grants a willing or helpless character up to (Intelligence/2, rounded up) dots of Abilities and specialties, paying three motes per dot. She can't raise a character's Ability ratings above her own or grant specialties she doesn't have. Her student's training simulation plays out in only a few minutes, though it seems much longer to him.

Granted Ability dots and specialties work the same way as usual and don't count as dice from Charms, although they can't be used to meet Charms' Ability minimums. Her student loses them if she ends this Charm, as the Essence-imprinted knowledge fades away. Eventually, he can purchase these dots permanently by incurring experience debt (p. XX). The amount of time before he can do so is equal to the normal training time for those traits (p. XX), divided by the Alchemical's (Essence + Intelligence).

The Alchemical may use this Charm on multiple characters, paying the commitment cost separately for each.

Submodules

Catechism Encoder (3xp): An affected character gains one of the Alchemical's Intimacies at Minor intensity, uploaded directly into his mind. The Alchemical may choose to link her training to the embedded Intimacy, causing this Charm to end if her student fully erodes the Intimacy.

Embedded Training Engram (3xp): Even after the Alchemical ends this Charm, her students still lose the granted traits, but enough residual data traces remain for them to purchase those dots back with experience debt once the training time is completed.

Synaptic Expansion Simulation (3xp): The Alchemical may grant dots of social or mental Attributes. They don't come with associated specialties, and each counts as two dots toward the maximum she can grant. The Alchemical doesn't count her Transpuissant (Attribute) Upgrades when determining how high she can raise a character's Attributes.

Hyperdense Encoding Algorithm (3xp): The Alchemical adds one to the maximum number of dots she can grant. She can repurchase this submodule at Intelligence 6, Essence 3.

Expanded Database Synthesizer (6xp; Essence 3) (5m per dot): The Alchemical can download skills into up to (Essence) students with a single use of this Charm, granting them all the same set of Abilities and specialties. This increases the cost for each dot granted to five motes, but the Alchemical only needs to pay this cost once, rather than paying separately for each student. Alternatively, she can use it on up to (Essence/5, rounded up) characters, but doing so halves the number of dots she can grant, rounded up.

Ideological Implant Coding (3xp; Essence 3, Catechism Encoder): Intimacies implanted with Catechism Encoder are Major, although a character may pay one Willpower to reduce it to Minor. The Alchemical may choose to have this Charm end if the Intimacy falls below Major intensity.

Simulation Refinement Matrix (3xp; Intelligence 7, Essence 3): The mote cost of each dot the Alchemical grants is reduced by one. She can repurchase this submodule at Intelligence 8, Essence 5.

Theometric Praxis Codec (6xp; Intelligence 7, Essence 3) (3m per ritual, Charm, or spell): The Alchemical can grant Martial Arts Charms, spells, and thaumaturgical rituals to characters capable of learning them. Characters don't gain access to these until their training time is complete, and must incur experience debt in order to do so. Charms and spells count as three dots each toward the maximum the Alchemical can convey, while each dot of thaumaturgical ritual counts as one dot.

Champion-Exalting Upload (6xp; Intelligence 8, Essence 5, Theometric Praxis Codec) (+10m, 1wp): The Alchemical can pay a ten-mote, one-Willpower surcharge when she uses Theometric Praxis Codec to immediately grant a character access to any Charm, spell, or ritual she teaches him.

Experience Debt

Certain Charms let a player character increase or gain new traits by incurring experience debt equal to the normal cost of purchasing those traits. Any experience points she subsequently receives go toward paying off the debt, until it's paid in full. An Exalt's player may choose to pay off a debt solely with Alchemical Experience, Solar Experience, or similar if she could spend it on that trait. Until the debt is fully paid, the character can't benefit from other effects that cause experience debt. Storyteller characters never go into experience debt, but can't benefit from such effects more than once per story.

Imprinted Data Cluster

Cost: —; **Mins:** Intelligence 2, Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

Adamant memory crystals implanted in the Alchemical's frontal lobe provide access to a comprehensive database of expertise.

Upon purchasing this Charm, the Alchemical chooses three specialties. She gains those specialties while this Charm is installed. She can swap out these specialties chosen when she undergoes the Rite of Reconfiguration.

The Storyteller can veto specialties that don't make sense under the circumstances. For instance, an Alchemical in Autochthonia couldn't take an Occult specialty in the Underworld, barring unusual story developments.

The Alchemical can purchase this Charm any number of times, but can only have (Essence) installations of it at a time.

Submodules

Great Maker's Wisdom (3xp): The Alchemical may take Craft dots in place of specialties. This can't raise a Crafting rating about her highest "natural" Craft rating.

Lucid Dream Calibration (6xp): The Alchemical may exchange one of the chosen specialties after a full night's sleep, during which she dreams of subconscious training simulations. She only needs this submodule once for all purchases of this Charm, but can't change more than one specialty each night, no matter how many installations she has.

Metaphysical Enchiridion Implant (3xp; Intelligence 4, Essence 2): The Alchemical may take dots of thaumaturgical rituals (**Exalted**, p. 490) in place of specialties, and gains the Thaumaturgist Merit while a ritual is installed.

Logic-Engineering Lobe

Cost: —; **Mins:** Intelligence 2, Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

Starmetal circuitry covers the surface of the Champion's brain, augmenting her cognition beyond mortal limits.

Upon purchasing this Charm, the Alchemical chooses six experience points' worth of submodules. Their benefits apply to rolls with any mental Attribute for which the Alchemical has a Transpuissant (Attribute)

Upgrade installed.

Many submodules enhance the Alchemical's cognition in ways that are more relevant to a game's narrative than its mechanics. The Storyteller should reward creative use of these submodules.

This Charm can also enhance rolls using Perception or Wits if the Alchemical has the relevant Transpuissant (Attribute) Upgrade installed.

Submodules

Abstract Abacus Implant (3xp): The Alchemical can perform most mathematical calculations instantly and without error. She doubles 9s on rolls involving mathematics.

Auxiliary Processing Nodes (3xp) (2m): The Alchemical can pay two motes to ignore wound penalties, crippling penalties, and fatigue penalties on a roll that doesn't involve any overt action by her. This doesn't apply to Join Battle rolls or any rolls involving sorcery.

Clockwork Calculations (3xp): The Alchemical has an unerringly precise sense of time's progression. She can accurately calculate the passage of time down to the most infinitesimal intervals, and can always tell what time of day it is. She adds (Essence) non-Charm successes on rolls that benefit from her perfect timing.

Eidetic Processing Core (3xp): The Alchemical doubles 9s on rolls that involving her memories, and gains +1 Resolve against memory-altering Psyche effects. She has perfect recall of events that happened while this Charm was installed.

Expanded Input Processor (3xp): The Alchemical can process written information at dramatically accelerated speeds. She can read a page of writing in a second, and longer texts in no more than ten minutes.

Machine Learning Algorithm (3xp): The Alchemical learns at an accelerated pace, doubling 9s on rolls to understand new and unfamiliar concepts. She divides the training time needed for Abilities, specialties, spells, and Martial Arts Charms by (Intelligence + Lore). This is Augmented.

Technological Analysis Engrams

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Intelligence 3, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Lightning Archive Processor, Logic-Engineering Lobe

A metallic sub-lobe grafted onto the Alchemical's brain provides an intuitive analytical understanding of mechanical engineering and mystical artifice.

The Alchemical rolls (Intelligence + [Craft, Investigation, or Lore]) to examine a mundane object or structure, artifact, hearthstone, or automaton. The difficulty is 3 by default. For artifacts and hearthstones, the difficulty is the target's Merit rating if it's higher, or 10 for N/A Merits.

Success lets the Alchemical's player ask the Storyteller one of the following questions, plus an additional question for every 3 extra successes.

- What does it do?
- Where was it made?
- Is it damaged?
- How can it be fixed?

If the Storyteller doesn't have an answer in mind, the Alchemical's player should provide one, as if introducing a fact.

Reset: Once per scene.

Submodules

God-Machine Schematics (3xp; Intelligence 4, Essence 2): The Alchemical can ask an additional question for each extra success she rolls, rather than every three.

Rhetorical Decryption Lattice

Cost: 1m; **Mins:** Intelligence 2, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Miniaturized processors run decryption algorithms at unimaginable speed, allowing the Alchemical to break even the most complex ciphers.

The Alchemical rolls (Intelligence + [Investigation, Linguistics, or Lore]) with double 9s to decipher a code — including breaking magical encryption like Letter-Within-a-Letter Technique (**Exalted**, p. 323). She converts dice from Transpuissant Intelligence Upgrade to automatic success. This takes only as long as it would take for the Alchemical to read the unencrypted text.

The Alchemical can also use this Charm to make a read intentions roll with the above benefits when dealing with those hiding behind semantic trickery, jargon, and word games.

Interpolative Syntax Emulator

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Intelligence 3, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Internal, Stackable

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Rhetorical Decryption Lattice

Artificial synapse webs installed in the Alchemical's brain convert any form of communication into raw numeric data and reconfigure it to mesh with currently understood modes of expression.

Once the Alchemical has had at least (6 – Intelligence) days of exposure to a language, she can use this Charm to gain temporary fluency in its spoken form. Alternatively, once she's spent that much time studying a language's written form, she can gain fluency in it.

Regardless of which mode the Alchemical uses, she can't mimic accents, idioms, and the like, making it clear that she's not a native speaker. She's also unable to communicate or understand abstract or highly complex statements. If she makes influence rolls in that language, her targets still receive the Resolve bonus for lacking a common language.

The Alchemical can stack this Charm to gain fluency in both of a language's spoken and written forms, and to gain fluency in multiple languages.

Submodules

Metasyntactic Processor (3xp) (+1wp): The Alchemical can pay a one-Willpower surcharge to use this Charm after only an hour of exposure to a language. With Essence 3, she waives this surcharge.

Perfected Omniglot Algorithm (3xp): When the Alchemical stacks multiple uses of this Charm, the cost of uses past the first is reduced to one mote.

Machine Language Programming (3xp; Intelligence 5, Essence 3) (+3m): The Alchemical can pay a three-mote surcharge to extend this Charm's duration to Indefinite.

Infallible Fluency Vocoder (3xp; Machine Language Programming): After a week of intense practice or constant exposure to an emulated language, the Alchemical gains full fluency in it, letting her pass as a native speaker. Her social influence no longer faces a Resolve bonus for lacking a common language.

Clarified Data Assimilator

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Intelligence 3, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Thousands of microscopic automata scuttling through the Alchemical's nervous system link their spindly leg in artificial neural chains, augmenting the interconnectivity of thought and memory.

The Alchemical converts bonus dice from Clarity (p. XX) to non-Charm successes on an action with any Attribute. However, for the rest of the scene, she doubles 9s on rolls to gain Clarity, while her 1s subtract successes on rolls to lose it.

Semantic Memory Encryption

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Intelligence 4, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Interpolative Syntax Emulator

Miniscule orichalcum neurons fire a scrambling signal through the Alchemical's Interpolative Syntax Emulator, momentarily encrypting a language so that she cannot understand it.

When a character makes an influence roll against the Alchemical, she encrypts her knowledge of the language it's made in for the rest of the scene, gaining the +2 non-Charm Resolve bonus for lacking a shared tongue.

This Charm can't defend against influence that isn't conveyed through language or that is made understandable by magic.

Submodules

Calibrated Cognitive Disruptor (3xp): The Alchemical may choose to only suppress her knowledge of the language for only an instant.

Prescient Leadership Protocols

Cost: 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Intelligence 7, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Internal, Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Hundredfold Contingency Subprocessor, Institutional Analysis Protocol

Starmetal studs implanted in the Alchemical's brain run predictive simulations and probabilistic models, alerting her to institutional faults and long-term threats long in advance.

The Alchemical can use this Charm to retroactively reveal a project that an organization has completed (**Exalted**, p. 226). She must hold a prominent position within that organization and spend a scene interacting with its activities or membership in order to use this Charm. She makes a difficulty 5 (Intelligence + Bureaucracy) roll. The Storyteller can lengthen increase the difficulty for complicated, risky, or lengthy projects, or for projects impeded by communication barriers, time pressures, or limited personnel or resources.

On a successful roll, the Alchemical's player retroactively reveals that the organization has completed a chosen project. It must be something that she could have feasibly overseen directly on a local level at some point in the past while "offscreen." It must also fit the organization's nature, expertise, and resources — most radical artist's collectives couldn't fortify a metropolis.

Reset: Once per story.

Ineffable Godhead Conduit

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Intelligence 7, Essence 4

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: One story

Prerequisites: Prescient Leadership Protocols

Starmetal and orichalcum antennae extend from the Alchemical's skull like a crown, calculating the distant consequences of her actions and the vagaries of causation with prophetic accuracy.

The Alchemical chooses a specific, concrete outcome that she wishes to achieve, creating a complex, self-updating mental model of the vast web of cause and effect at play. This requires time spent analyzing the situation, contemplating possibilities, and conducting research. This takes only a scene for small projects on a personal scale, like “find my way to Kadmek’s sanctum” or “ensure Miska Jol becomes a lector.” It can take hours or days for objectives with a larger scale or that involve the activities of large groups, like “reform my metropolis’ Ologotary.” or “rout the invading Estasian forces.”

Once per session, when the Alchemical is about to undertake a course of action, her player can declare that she stands at a critical inflection point for her agenda, and that success will significantly further her aims. No matter how disconnected her action might seem from her goal, her calculations have confirmed it. The course of action must always carry some meaningful risk or difficulty: following a rogue machine spirit through a dangerous cavern, making a public speech that will anger a corrupt official, and the like.

If the Alchemical’s action is rolled, she adds a free full Excellency, perfecting her approach through near-future calculations. This can enhance rolls with any Attribute. If she’s successful in her course of action, the far-reaching consequences of her victory advance her agenda. The Alchemical’s player and the Storyteller should work together to make a dramatic edit representing this unforeseen advantage, introducing an opportunity or advantage that provides meaningful progress: a shortcut through dangerous territory, valuable intelligence about an enemy’s position, a trove of valuable evidence, or the like.

The greater the scope of the Alchemical’s action, the greater the scale of the consequences — defeating an army would advance the Alchemical’s goals on a much greater scale than landing a single attack. Likewise, the more ambitious her objective, the more modest her progress. If she seeks to reform the Ologotary within a metropolis, her success will provide more meaningful progress toward accomplishing that goal than if she tried to do so on a national level.

Special activation rules: The Alchemical can use Hundredfold Contingency Subprocessor reflexively with this Charm, waiving its mote cost. Rather than formulating a reactive plan, she can use her contingency points to advance her objective.

Crafting

Optimized Design Algorithm

Cost: 6m; **Mins:** Intelligence 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Alchemical refines her craftsmanship through analysis, eliminating inefficiencies and

correcting design flaws.

The Alchemical the bonus die from exceptional equipment to a non-Charm success on a Craft roll. She also converts dice from Transpuissant (Attribute) Upgrade to non-Charm successes, even for dots over five.

Submodules

Augmented Manufactory Systems (6xp; Intelligence 3) (+6m): The Alchemical may pay a six-mote surcharge to double 9s on a basic or major project.

Demiurgic Engineering (3xp; Intelligence 5, Essence 2, Augmented Manufactory Systems) (+1gxp): The Alchemical may pay a surcharge of one gold point to use Augmented Manufactory Systems on a superior project. This increases to one white point if used with Factory-Cathedral Perfection.

God-Forge Upgrade (6xp; Intelligence 5, Essence 2, Augmented Manufactory Systems) (+1wp): The Alchemical may pay an additional one-Willpower surcharge when she uses Augmented Manufactory Systems in order to double 8s.

Factory-Cathedral Perfection (6xp; Essence 3, God-Forge Upgrade): The Alchemical doubles 7s when she uses God-Forge Upgrade

Compatible Design

Alchemical crafting Charms are compatible with Craft rolls using any Attribute unless they specify otherwise.

Cognitive Architecture Expansion

Cost: —; **Mins:** Intelligence 2, Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Optimized Design Algorithm

The limits of the Alchemical's creativity have been broadened manually.

The Alchemical increases her dice limit to (Attribute + Craft) on basic, major, and superior projects with any Attribute, if it's higher than her usual limit.

With Essence 5, the Alchemical instead increases her dice limit by (Craft/2, rounded up) for such rolls.

Incomparable Efficiency Upgrade

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Intelligence 3, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Relay crystals through the Alchemical's nervous system optimize her ability for rapid construction, moving with clipped, mechanical movements for maximum efficiency.

The Alchemical undertakes a basic or major project, accomplishing it with incredible speed. Most projects can be finished in seconds or minutes if she has all the necessary tools and materials. The most arduous, work-intensive projects can be completed in an hour if basic or a day if major.

Submodules

Creator Fugue Construction Engines (6xp; Intelligence 5, Essence 2) (+5m, 1wp): The Alchemical can pay a five-mote, one-Willpower surcharge to use this Charm with a superior project. Assuming she has the necessary tools and materials, she can complete mundane projects and most artifacts in (6 – Essence) weeks, minimum one. Five-dot artifacts require that many months instead. She divides the time necessary to complete manse by (Essence), rounded up.

Architectural Army of One (6xp; Essence 4, Creator Fugue Construction Engines): Creator Fugue Construction Engines accelerates manse construction as with artifacts. However, the Alchemical halves her Essence, rounded up, when calculating the time needed.

Clockwork Demiurge Protocol

Cost: 4m, 1sxp/gxp per die; **Mins:** Intelligence 3, Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Optimized Design Algorithm

The Alchemical eliminates errors from her handiwork with mechanical perfection.

The Alchemical can use this Charm after making a Craft roll for a major or superior project, letting her reroll up to (Essence + 2) failed dice for one craft point each. This costs silver points for major projects and gold points for superior projects.

Creator Recalibration Circuits

Cost: 6m; **Mins:** Intelligence 5, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Internal, Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Optimized Design Algorithm

Activating orichalcum circuitry embedded in her prefrontal cortex, the Alchemical manually reconfigure her creative faculties.

After five minutes of meditation or sleep, the Alchemical may exchange craft points of one type for

another. She can break down white points into gold points or gold points into silver at a rate of one to two. She can combine silver points into craft points at a rate of two to one, but can't combine gold points into white points. Each activation only allows her to convert one type of craft points.

Conceptual Atelier Matrix

Cost: —; **Mins:** Intelligence 5, Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Creator Recalibration Circuits, Incomparable Efficiency Upgrade

A prosthetic cortex of orichalcum synapses implanted in the Alchemical's brain expands her creative faculties.

The Alchemical gains a superior project slot (**Exalted**, p. 241). This Charm can be repurchased up to (Essence) times.

Champion-Forged Panoply Conduit

Cost: 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Intelligence 6, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Conceptual Atelier Matrix

Orichalcum etchings along the Alchemical's forearms forge an inextricable bond between the Alchemical and the wonders hammered out on her forge.

The Alchemical instantly awakens (Essence) Evocations from an artifact she's created, and may incur experience debt to purchase them (p. XX). This takes (10 – Essence) hours. Alternatively, she can work together with another character, letting him awaken (his Essence) Evocations from an artifact she's created.

Reset: This Charm can only be used on an artifact once per story.

Submodules

Great Maker's Panoply (6xp; Essence 3): Once per story, the Alchemical can spend white points as though they were experience to awaken Evocations.

Epiphany-Inducing Neurostimulant

Cost: 5m, 1wp, 1hl; **Mins:** Intelligence 7, Essence 3

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Conceptual Atelier Matrix

Subcranial orichalcum reservoirs synthesize a dangerous mental stimulant, injecting it directly into the Alchemical's brain in a surge of painful genius.

In order to use this Charm, the Alchemical must have completed a superior project to create an artifact or manse in the current story. When she makes the first roll for a project to create a two-dot artifact, she automatically succeeds with enough successes to immediately complete the project.

Reset: Once per story.

Submodules

Infinite Design Cognition (6xp; Intelligence 5, Essence 5): The Alchemical can use this Charm on projects to create three-dot artifacts.

Theoplastic Engineering Protocol

Cost: 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Intelligence 7, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Until completed

Prerequisites: Incomparable Efficiency Upgrade, Optimized Design Algorithm

Bulbs implanted throughout the Champion's spine and hands glow phosphorescent white as she deploys nanomachines to reshape the world before sublimating into a mist of Essence.

The Alchemical rolls (Intelligence + Craft) to transform, rearrange, create, or destroy natural and artificial features of soil, metal, crystal, and other materials found in abundance throughout Autochthonia. This can move existing features, though the Alchemical can't shift them by more than (Essence) range bands. Relocations and small changes are easiest; significant changes are more difficult; and creation and destruction are hardest.

Changes comparable to what a day's labor by a work crew could accomplish are difficulty 1-2. Other changes are difficulty 3+, based on the size, complexity, and durability of the materials the Alchemical shapes.

The Alchemical can create or alter a feature that spans no more than (Essence/2, rounded up) range bands instantly. Altering larger features is an extended action: redirecting a nutrient conduit, excavating a tunnel through the Maker's flesh, or even moving an industrial organ. The difficulty is the same as above, and while the goal number is (difficulty x5). This interval is one week by default, but more significant alterations may have longer intervals at the Storyteller's discretion.

Aeon-Forging Crucible Core

Cost: —; **Mins:** Intelligence 7, Essence 4

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Conceptual Atelier Matrix

A smoldering furnace of red jade and orichalcum burns within the Alchemical, occasionally venting steam as it stokes the surging Essence of her artifice.

The Alchemical increases the terminus of superior projects by one.

Healing

Comprehensive Diagnostic Algorithms

Cost: 3m (1m); **Mins:** Intelligence 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Alchemical's analytical subroutines and probabilistic modeling protocols reveal every detail of pathology and prognosis.

The Alchemical doubles 9s on a roll with any Attribute to diagnose a patient. She can apply relevant Investigation, Lore, Occult, or Survival specialties on the roll.

This Charm's cost is reduced to one mote when used on mortal members of a community the Alchemical serves.

Submodules

Contagion Deception System (3xp): When the Alchemical rolls to diagnose an ailment she's previously treated or for which she has a relevant specialty, the difficulty is reduced by one.

Machine Fault Diagnostics (3xp): The Alchemical gains this Charm's discount on rolls to diagnose Alchemicals, machine spirits, and automatons. They don't need to be community members.

Expanded Treatment Databanks (3xp; Intelligence 5, Essence 2): The Alchemical doubles 8s.

Multifunction Hypodermic Apparatus

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Intelligence 2, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Transpuissant (Intelligence) Upgrade

The Alchemical extends a slender metallic tendril tipped with a syringe-like needle, injecting patients with a formulary of drugs drawn from internal storage nodes.

The Alchemical injects a dose of medication into a patient within close range. Upon purchasing this Charm, the Alchemical's player chooses six experience points' of submodules, which provide her with formulations that she can use for these injections. She can't combine multiple formulations.

Against unwilling targets, this Charm requires a difficulty 3 (Dexterity + Medicine) gambit.

Submodules

Antiseptic Formulation (3xp): The Alchemical doubles 9s on a roll to treat disease and uses the injection as exceptional equipment for the roll, adding a non-Charm die. She can also use this Charm on a character injured in battle to prevent the risk of infected wounds without him needing to roll (**Exalted**, p. 235).

Toxin-Neutralizing Dose (3xp): The Alchemical doubles 9s on a roll to treat poison and uses the injection as exceptional equipment for the roll. She doesn't suffer any penalties for rushing treatment.

Remote Rescue Drone (3xp; Any one submodule): The Alchemical can deploy a guided hypodermic drone to use this Charm on a character within short range. An Intelligence 5, Essence 2 repurchase extends this to medium range.

Metabolic Accelerator (6xp; Intelligence 3) (+3m, 1wp): For a three-mote, one-Willpower surcharge, the Alchemical injects a golden elixir that speeds the healing process, rolling (Intelligence + Medicine). The difficulty equals the total levels of damage in her patient's health track. Success multiplies the rate at which he heals naturally by (Intelligence) as long as he rests. This is Augmented. A repurchase increases the multiplier to (Intelligence + Medicine).

Regenerative Pluripotency Catalyst (3xp; Metabolic Accelerator): Metabolic Accelerator's healing speed multiplier is doubled when healing from aggravated damage.

Rapid Essence Infusion (6xp; Intelligence 3): The Alchemical can transfer up to (Essence x3) motes through an injection. She must spend the transferred motes in addition to this Charm's cost. Her subject loses these motes if he doesn't use them by the end of his next turn.

Cognitive Enhancement Stack (6xp; Rapid Essence Infusion) (+2m): The Alchemical can pay a two-mote surcharge to transfer up to (Essence) Willpower through an injection.

Great Maker's Mercy Distillation (6xp; Essence 2, Metabolic Accelerator): Give people a painkiller that lowers wound penalties, but clouds their mind

Synthetic Panacea Refinement (6xp; Intelligence 5, Essence 2, Antiseptic Formulation *or* Antivenin Formulation) (+1wp): The Alchemical can pay a one-Willpower surcharge when she uses either of its prerequisites to double 8s on the treatment roll.

Omnipresent Physician Implant (6xp; Intelligence 5, Essence 2, any one submodule): The Alchemical can implant a miniaturized monitoring unit alongside whatever formulation she injects. She can sense the approximate distance and direction to the implant as long as it remains within (Intelligence x3) miles. The Alchemical can make diagnosis rolls to assess their health at any time, albeit at a -4 penalty. The Storyteller should inform the Alchemical's player of any sudden changes in the target's condition that merit a diagnosis roll. The Alchemical can have up to (Intelligence) such implants. This submodule is Augmented.

Biostasis Field Projector

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Intelligence 4, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Augmented

Duration: (Essence + Intelligence) days

Prerequisite Charms: Comprehensive Diagnostic Algorithms

A green jade emitter in the Alchemical's palm projects a pulse of life-stabilizing Essence, placing patients into medical biostasis.

The Alchemical induces a coma-like torpor in a willing or helpless patient after a few minutes. While comatose, he doesn't need food or water. Any bleeding immediately ceases. Poisons, diseases, or similar ongoing maladies that he suffers from are temporarily suspended. This doesn't apply to supernatural maladies.

The Alchemical's patient appears to be dead, although a difficulty 4 (Perception + [Awareness, Investigation, or Medicine]) roll can detect vital signs. He can be woken from this torpor as if from a deep sleep — shaking or slapping him is more than enough. However, surgical procedures won't rouse him, as if he were under deep anesthesia.

Reset: This Charm can only be used on a character once per day.

Submodules

Optimized Treatment Conditions (6xp): The Alchemical adds (Intelligence/2, rounded up) non-Charm dice on rolls to treat the patient in this torpor. This is Augmented.

Blight Suppression Field (3xp; Intelligence 5): This Charm can suspend supernatural maladies if the Alchemical's Essence equals or exceeds that of the character who used them.

Total Metabolic Suppression (3xp; Intelligence 7, Essence 4, Augmented Stasis) (+10m): The Alchemical can pay a ten-mote surcharge to extend this Charm's duration to one story.

Surgical Reconstruction System

Cost: 3m, 1wp; **Mins:** Intelligence 7, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Biostasis Field Projector

An array of surgical equipment built into the Alchemical's arms and chest unfurls to provide comprehensive support for her patient, assisting in even the most complex of surgeries.

The Alchemical treats a crippling effect or similar physical malady through repeated surgeries. This is an extended (Intelligence + Medicine) action. It has difficulty 5 and an interval of one month. The goal

number and terminus depend on the injury's severity, using the same levels as crippling injuries (**Exalted**, p. 201).

<BEGIN TABLE>

Severity	Goal Number	Terminus
1-2 damage	20	N//A
3-4 damage	40	15
5 damage	60	10

<END TABLE>

The Alchemical must spend at least a week each interval operating on her patient. Success fully mends the treated malady. This can't regenerate damaged or missing tissue, like a severed limb. If the Alchemical fails, she can't use this Charm to treat the same malady again.

Submodules

Efficiency Restoration Procedure (3xp) (+7m): The Alchemical can pay a seven-mote surcharge instead of committing this Charm's cost to treat mortals. She only needs to spend one day each interval treating her patient.

Bioregenerative Matrix (3xp; Essence 4, Efficiency Restoration Procedure): Efficiency Restoration Procedure applies to all characters.

Metaphysical

Theurgic Override Matrix

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Intelligence 2, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Augmented

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: None

Holy crystals inscribed with prayers to the Machine God glint with light across the Alchemical's body, proclaiming her authority as Chosen of the Great Maker.

Upon purchasing this Charm, the Alchemical chooses two of its submodules, rendering it compatible with certain types of supernatural beings.

Using this Charm adds (Intelligence/2, rounded up) non-Charm dice on influence rolls against compatible beings, as long as the influence expresses the Alchemical's authority or power as Autochthon's Chosen. She also gains +1 Resolve and Guile against them.

Submodules

Custodian of the Grand Design (3xp): Embedded adamant crystals make this Charm compatible with machine spirits and automata.

Divine Servitor Interface (3xp): Etched with starmetal circuitry, this Charm becomes compatible with gods.

Entropic Pattern Analysis (3xp): Outlined with moonsilver, this Charm becomes compatible with fae.

Subroutine Daemon Interface (3xp): An inlay of Essence-tarnished orichalcum makes this Charm compatible with demons.

Trans-Elemental Calibration (3xp): A five-jade plating makes this Charm compatible with elementals.

Void Attunement Protocol (3xp): Needle-thin spikes of soulsteel make this Charm compatible with the undead.

Celestial Overseer Concordat (3xp, any one submodule): Affected beings can't initiate hostilities against the Alchemical or her companions and must hear her out when she speaks. They must pay one Willpower to ignore her, or two Willpower to initiate hostilities. This protection is lost against all characters if the Alchemical or her companions give offense to the being or initiate hostilities themselves.

Demiurge Access Key

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Intelligence 3, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Theurgic Override Matrix

The Alchemical speaks invocations in a divine machine code, her voice box resonating with crystalline harmonies.

The Alchemical can make a persuade roll to convince a machine spirit or automaton to undertake an inconvenient task (**Exalted**, p. 216) without needing to leverage an Intimacy. This doesn't apply if her target has a negative Tie toward her or an Intimacy that opposes peaceful interaction with her, but it treats that Intimacy's intensity as one lower against the influence.

This Charm can also enhance any influence roll against a mindless automaton, allowing the Alchemical to influence them normally.

Submodules

Maker's Name Authorization (3xp): Resisting the Alchemical's persuade roll requires citing at least a Minor Intimacy in the Decision Point, even if the Alchemical didn't leverage an Intimacy.

Mandatory Loyalty Algorithm (3xp; Intelligence 4): A successful persuade roll also counts as a roll to instill a Tie of loyalty to the Alchemical. This doesn't affect characters with negative Ties toward her or Intimacies that opposes peaceful interaction.

Hostility Dormancy Mode (3xp; Intelligence 5, Mandatory Loyalty Algorithm): Against characters with negative Ties toward the Alchemical or Intimacies that oppose peaceful interaction, a successful persuade roll also counts as a roll to weaken that Intimacy. This doesn't affect characters that have an additional Major or Defining Tie that opposes weakening the targeted Intimacy.

Sacred Engine Consecration (6xp; Intelligence 4, Essence 2) (+3m): The Alchemical can pay an three-

mote surcharge to extend this Charm's duration to one scene, applying its effects to all influence rolls she makes.

Thermionic Orthodoxy Array

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Intelligence 3, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One hour

Prerequisite Charms: None

An array of glowing vacuum tubes slide out of ports in the Alchemical's back and shoulders, shielding her with the stability of the Machine God.

The Alchemical is immune to any environmental Shaping effects that would alter her body, mind, or equipment. She instinctively senses such perils in time to use this Charm, and can use it even while asleep or incapacitated.

If the Alchemical renews this Charm at the end of its duration, she waives its Willpower cost.

Submodules

Axiomatic Regulator (3xp): While using this Charm, each installation of Transpuissant Intelligence Upgrade adds +1 non-Charm Resolve or a non-Charm success on rolls to resist Shaping effects used by other characters.

Order-Asserting Emanation (6xp) (+5m): The Alchemical can pay a five-mote surcharge to extend this Charm's protection to everything within short range, including the terrain. This doesn't include Ontological Stabilizer's benefits.

Ontological Anchor Assembly

Cost: 1wp; **Mins:** Intelligence 3, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Augmented, Internal

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Thermionic Orthodoxy Array

Microscopic design weavers cluster around the Alchemical's Essence reservoir as if it were the Godhead in miniature, making the Champion a Design unto herself.

The Alchemical adds (Intelligence/2, rounded up) to her Resolve as a non-Charm bonus against a Shaping effect used by a gremlin, fae, or undead. Alternatively, she can add that many automatic successes on a roll with any Attribute opposing such a Shaping effect. If she succeeds, she gains one mote for each 10 she rolls, or each 1 on a roll against her Resolve.

With Essence 2, this Charm can defend against unrolled Shaping effects, forcing an opposed (Willpower)

roll. Each installation of Transpuissant Intelligence Upgrade the Alchemical has adds an automatic success on the roll.

Submodules

Reality Stabilization Matrix (3xp; Essence 2): This Charm can defend against all Shaping effects.

God-Ward Projector

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Intelligence 3, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Demiurge Access Key

An array of Essence-emitting lenses housed in orichalcum and starmetal casings projects a barrier of spirit-repelling energy.

The Alchemical emits a ward that extends out to short range from her. She rolls (Intelligence + Occult) to determine the ward's strength. Hostile spirits with Resolve lower than her successes can't cross through the ward. Though those caught within it when the Alchemical uses this Charm can still pass through to exit. Spirits with Essence greater than the Alchemical's can pay one Willpower to ignore the ward for the scene.

Submodules

Chaos-Neutralizing Emitter (3xp): The ward repels the fae.

Death-Ward Calibration (3xp): The ward repels corporal undead, as long as they're unExalted.

Wide-Field Projection (3xp): The Alchemical can project a ward in a horizontal line that spans up to two range bands. At least part of this barrier must be within close range of the Alchemical. Such wards are stationary, and fade away if the Alchemical crosses through them.

Focused Banishment Projection (6xp; Intelligence 6, Essence 2) (+1wp): The Alchemical can pay a one-Willpower surcharge to exorcise a possessing spirit instead. She rolls (Intelligence + Occult) against a possessing spirit's Resolve to exorcise it. If successful, it's driven out and can't possess that character again for a month. Each extra success on the roll increases this by an additional month.

Machine-Prophet Engrams

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Intelligence 5, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Augmented

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Demiurge Access Key

Starmetal circuitry in the Alchemical's fingertips gleam with her anima's colors as she traces the

most holy name of the Great Maker's names on a spirit's brow.

The Alchemical makes an (Intelligence + [Occult or Presence]) persuade roll against a touched spirit or automaton, tasking it with performing a task in service to a community the Alchemical belongs to. She marks it, invoking a sacred obligations to serve the Machine God as if it were a Minor Principle. It counts as a Major Principle if the spirit has another Minor Intimacy that supports the influence.

As long as the machine spirit is making progress this goal, it gains the following benefits

- It treats its commitment to the task as a Major Principle when that's advantageous for it.
- Members of the community that it serves recognize that it's been tasked with performing a sacred duty in their service. Those familiar with the Alchemical can recognize her work if they examine the etching, This recognition counts a Minor Tie — by default, one of awed respect:
- Once per scene, it can add (Alchemical's Intelligence/2, rounded up) non-Charms dice on a roll related to its task.
- Once per day, it can regain one Willpower and (Alchemical's Essence + Intelligence) motes by making significant progress toward that goal.

Reset: This Charm can only be used on a given character once per story.

Submodules

Chaos-Ordering Nomen (3xp): The Alchemical can command fae.

Divine Axiom Override (3xp): The Alchemical can command her target to perform a task that supports one of her Defining Principles.

God-Machine Syncretism Circuitry (6xp; Essence 3): This Charm's duration becomes instant. The Alchemical no longer needs to commit motes to it.

Automaton Override Array

Cost: 1m, 1wp; **Mins:** Intelligence 5, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Psyche

Duration: (1 + extra successes) turns

Prerequisites: Machine-Prophet Engrams

Orichalcum lenses implanted on the Champion's irises display powerful override protocols capable of seizing control of lesser artifice.

The Alchemical makes a difficulty 3 gambit to take direct control of an automaton within medium range, rolling (Intelligence + Craft) gambit against its Resolve. If she succeeds, she takes control of it for its next (1 + extra successes) turns.

On each of the automaton's turns, the Alchemical may force it to take an action of her choice, although she can't force him to use magic. If he wishes to take another action on his turn, he must flurry. He can flurry actions that would normally be incompatible, like two attacks, and compelled actions never count as his attack or movement action for the round. If a compelled action would violate one of an automaton's

Major or Defining Intimacies, it may spend one Willpower to refuse.

The Alchemical must take a miscellaneous action on each of her turns to maintain this control. If she doesn't do so, he acts freely on his next turn, though this Charm doesn't end.

This Charm can also take control of machine spirits with animal-like intelligence, such as fix beetles (p. XX), using Occult for the roll instead of Craft. Flagrant abuses of this power often lead to well-intentioned corrections from fellow Champions or lectors. The few Alchemicals to persist despite this invite formal censure from the Theomachracy.

Submodules

Absolute Command Terminal (3xp; Essence 3): If the Alchemical compels her target to do something that's only an inconvenient task for him on his turn (**Exalted**, p. 216), then it doesn't use up a turn of this Charm's duration. This can't extend this Charm beyond the end of the scene.

Autochthonic Access Codes (3xp; Essence 3) (+4m): The Alchemical can pay a four-mote surcharge to override a sapient machine spirit, or another supernatural beings that's similar in nature to automatons and machine spirits.

Backdoor Access Infiltration (3xp, Autochthonic Access Codes) (+4m): The Alchemical can pay a four-mote surcharge to assume control of a character who's subject to a Psyche effect that the Alchemical used on him or a Derangement she's inflicted.

Theurgic Emulation Converter

Cost: 3m per Charm; **Mins:** Intelligence 5, Essence 3

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Stackable

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Machine-Prophet Engrams

The Champions runs a metaphysical simulation environment on god-crystal lattices throughout her body, analyzing and emulating divine power in a dynamic recompilation processes.

The Alchemical can learn Eclipse Charms from other characters, committing three motes for each Charm she learns. These don't take up Charm slots. She can have up to (Essence) Eclipse Charms at a time, whether from a single use or multiple stacked activations.

The Alchemical may permanently learn these Eclipse Charms accessed for eight experience points each. They still don't require Charm slots, but she can only use them while Theurgic Emulation Converter is installed. She no longer needs to commit motes to use them and they don't count toward the maximum number of Charms she can have. She waives the experience point cost of the first Eclipse Charm purchased this way.

Warfare

Tactical Omnibus Implant

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Intelligence 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Crystalline nodules inserted into the back of the Alchemical's accelerate her tactical planning, giving her time to refine her strategy to perfection.

The Alchemical rerolls 1s until they cease to appear on an order action or a Lore roll involving warfare. Any penalties on the roll are reduced by (Essence/2, rounded up), other than wound penalties, crippling penalties, and similar internal conditions.

Submodules

Tactical Sub-Noetic Transmitter (6xp; Intelligence 3) (+2m): The Alchemical can pay a two-mote surcharge to also reroll 2s.

Wargame Simulation Matrix

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Intelligence 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Augmented

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

A disc of alloyed orichalcum and starmetal implanted in the Alchemical's right temple runs countless simulations of a battle's probable outcomes, guiding the Champion's strategy.

The Alchemical adds (Intelligence/2, rounded up) dice on a Strategic Maneuver roll. For each 10, she rolls an additional non-Charms die.

Submodules

Counter-Strategy Modeling (3xp; Intelligence 3): Complex simulation subroutines negate penalties from the Alchemical's lack of familiarity with an enemy general.

Unit Readiness Algorithms (3xp; Intelligence 3): The Alchemical's strategy incorporates every aspect of logistics and troop morale. She ignores penalties from her troops' fatigue, fear, and similar conditions that can be mitigated through carefully planned logistics and resource allocation.

Industrial Warfare Mode (6xp; Essence 2, Counter-Strategy Modeling, Unit Readiness Algorithms): The bonus dice on the Strategic Maneuver roll are non-Charms.

Parallel Strategy Processors (6xp; Intelligence 4, Essence, Industrial Warfare Mode) (+3m, 1wp): For a three-mote, one-Willpower surcharge, the Alchemical can choose two stratagems with her Strategic Maneuver roll. She can allocate her roll's extra successes to whichever stratagem she wishes. If she rolls enough successes to meet both of their thresholds, she can enact them simultaneously.

Infinite Battle Simulation (3xp; Essence 3): The Alchemical can choose (Essence) potential stratagems

when she uses Parallel Strategy Processors.

Strategos-Commander Synergy Circuits

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Intelligence 3, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Augmented

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Tactical Omnibus Implant, Wargame Simulation Matrix

Metallic circuitry interlaced with crystalline nodules along the back of the Alchemical's neck accelerate her tactical planning, giving her time to refine her strategy to perfection.

To use this Charm, the Alchemical must be fighting under a stratagem that she's successfully enacted. She adds (Intelligence/2, rounded up) dice on order actions with any Attribute. Allied battle groups acting under an order action add an additional three dice on the roll.

Submodules

Ally-Integrating Alchemy (3xp): The Alchemical can use this Charm while fighting under another allied commander's stratagem.

Omnistrategic Contingency Protocol

Cost: 10m, 5i, 1wp; **Mins:** Intelligence 6, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Perilous

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Hundredfold Contingency Subprocessor, Strategos-Commander Synergy Circuits

Blue jade wiring links the Alchemical's Strategos-Commander Synergy Circuits to her Hundredfold Contingency Subprocessor, formulating complex strategies in advance,

The Alchemical makes a Strategic Maneuver roll in battle, revealing preparations she's previously taken. A single enemy may pay one Willpower to oppose this with his (Intelligence + War) roll. If the battle is occurring under a stratagem he enacted, the Willpower cost is waived. If the Alchemical meets her stratagem's threshold, she enacts it and negates any enemy stratagems in place.

Reset: Once per story, unless reset when a significant setback in combat threatens one of her Major or Defining Intimacies: a Circlemate falling, the rout of an allied battle group the destruction of a major defensive measure, etc.

Submodules

Precalculated Formation Deployment (6xp): The Alchemical can reveal the arrival of local reinforcements while fighting in defense of a community that she has a positive Tie toward. A battle

group arrives and Joins Battle at the beginning of the next round in combat. It has Size 1, plus an additional dot of Size for every two extra successes. It has average Drill, Might 0, and the traits of battle-ready troops (**Exalted**, p. 496), although the Storyteller can provide more or less generous troop traits as appropriate to the circumstances. The battle group is willing to fight under the Alchemical's command, though not necessarily loyal to her personally.

Sorcery

Man-Machine Weaving Engine

Cost: —; **Mins:** Intelligence 3, Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

An adamant ring etched with Old Realm glyphs is implanted around the Alchemical's soulgem. When she works her sorceries, the ring begins to spin and spark in a brilliant display of raw Essence.

The Alchemical initiates into Terrestrial Circle sorcery. She learns one Terrestrial Circle spell — her control spell — and one shaping ritual for free. Learning spells doesn't require Charm slots.

This Charm must be installed permanently. It can't be removed. It isn't a replacement for the strange paths of sorcerous initiation. Instead, it reifies the Alchemical's enlightenment and physically integrates it into her Exalted nature.

Theurgic Essence Capacitor

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Intelligence 4, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Man-Machine Weaving Engine

Orichalcum capacitors along the Alchemical's shoulders link into her Man-Machine Weaving Engine, glowing with incandescence as they're charged with stored Essence.

The Alchemical doesn't lose sorcerous motes for going a turn without gathering them. She converts dice from Transpuissant Intelligence Upgrade to automatic successes on Shape Sorcery rolls.

Submodules

Cosmic Machinery Consciousness (6xp; Intelligence 5, Essence 2): When the Alchemical takes a Shape Sorcery action, up to (Intelligence/2) 10s on the roll add an additional sorcerous die. This is Augmented.

Parallel Protocol Cores

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Intelligence 4, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One turn

Prerequisite Charms: Theurgic Essence Capacitors

Adamant discs similar to the Man-Machine Weaving Engine are installed along key meridians across the Alchemical's body, shaping sorcerous patterns in parallel.

The Alchemical flurries a Shape Sorcery action with a non-attack action, ignoring all penalties from flurrying.

Submodules

Metasorcerous Processing (6xp; Intelligence 5, Essence 3) (+4m, 1wp): The Alchemical can pay a four-mote, one-Willpower surcharge to extend this Charm's duration to one scene.

God-Machine Weaving Engine

Cost: —; **Mins:** Intelligence 4, Essence 3

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Man-Machine Weaving Engine, any five Terrestrial Circle spells

A larger ring of adamant encircles the Alchemical's Man-Machine Weaving Engine, spinning in opposite directions in a brilliant storm of arcing sparks as she shapes sorcerous Essence.

With the permanent installation of this Charm, the Alchemical initiates into Celestial Circle sorcery. She learns one Terrestrial Circle spell — her control spell — and one shaping ritual for free.

Manipulation

Influence

Rogue Cell Isolation Protocols

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Manipulation 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Alchemical's eyes are rimmed with chrome and soulsteel plating, turning her steely gaze into a hall of mirrors filled with tortured souls.

The Alchemical doubles 9s on an instill roll to weaken an Intimacy that conflicts with a character's responsibilities, duties, or social position within a group or community. She converts bonus dice from Transpuissant Manipulation Upgrade to automatic successes. She can't weaken positive Ties to communities she serves.

If the Alchemical succeeds, affected characters can't voluntarily strengthen the targeted Intimacy until the next time they regain Willpower from resting.

Submodules

Priority Recalibration Protocol (6xp; Manipulation 3): The Alchemical can use this Charm to weaken any Intimacy, except for positive Ties to communities that she serves.

Instructive Fear Resonator (3xp; Manipulation 4): The Alchemical's influence also counts as a roll to instill a Tie of fear toward herself. This fails against characters with Major or Defining Intimacies that oppose such fear.

Emotional Irrelevance Systems (3xp; Manipulation 5, Essence 2): Affected characters can't voluntarily strengthen the weakened tie until (8 – their base Resolve) days have passed.

Mind-Scouring Erasure (6xp; Essence 3, Instructive Fear Resonator, Emotional Irrelevance Systems) (+1wp): For a one-Willpower surcharge, characters can't use the targeted Intimacy to bolster their Resolve against this influence or resist it in a Decision Point. This is a Psyche effect. The Alchemical can't use this submodule against a character more than once per story.

Heresy-Excising Razor (6xp; Mind-Scouring Erasure) (+1wp): For a one-Willpower surcharge, the Alchemical lowers the level of supporting Intimacy needed to weaken a Major or Defining Intimacy by one (**Exalted**, p. 215). This is a Psyche effect.

Societal Engineering Signal

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Manipulation 4, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Mute, Psyche

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Rogue Cell Isolation Protocols

A transmitter diode just above the Alchemical's ear broadcasts a subliminal pulse, tipping public opinion in favor of her plans.

Upon purchasing this Charm, the Alchemical chooses one of its submodules. Its primary submodules make this Charm compatible with certain influence. She can only use one such effect at a time.

All submodules let the Alchemical make an instill roll to sway the priorities of an organization's

members. It instills a Principle that depends on the submodule used. Affected characters act on this Intimacy immediately, like with an inspire action (**Exalted**, p. 217). Resisting this influence requires entering a Decision Point and citing an Intimacy that's equal or stronger than the instilled Principle.

Submodules

Conceptual Entropy Module (6xp): The Alchemical speaks against one of the organization's current agendas or policies. She instills a Principle of opposition to it or one that expresses the rationale for her argument.

Pattern Facilitation Module (6xp): The Alchemical speaks in favor of adopting an agenda or policy. It must be consistent with the group's existing methods and goals. She instills a Principle of following that agenda or policy, or one that expresses the rationale for her argument.

Agenda Recalibration Protocols (6xp; Manipulation 5, Conceptual Entropy Module, Pattern Facilitation Module): The Alchemical can combine its prerequisites' effects in a single influence roll, tipping opinion in favor of one agenda and away from another. Each effect must be resisted separately, and targets can't cite the same Intimacy in both Decision Points.

Subliminal Directive Programming (6xp; Essence 2, any one submodule): If the Alchemical rolls 3+ extra successes against a target's Resolve, she can dictate the action he takes, based on the instilled Principle's intensity (**Exalted**, p. 216).

Simulated Sincerity Drive

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Manipulation 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Internal, Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Starmetal processing nodes analyze and cross-check the details of the Alchemical's lies, eliminating inconsistencies that might reveal her deception.

The Alchemical rerolls 1s until they cease to appear on an instill or persuade roll and converts dice from Transpuissant Manipulation Upgrade to automatic successes. Any penalties she suffers for making implausible claims are reduced by one.

Submodules

Calculated Deception System (6xp; Manipulation 3): The Alchemical reduces implausible claim penalties by (Manipulation/2, rounded up). This is Augmented.

Perfected Deception Protocol (6xp; Manipulation 6, Essence 3, Calculated Deception System) (+1wp): For a one-Willpower surcharge, the Alchemical perfectly masks all signs of deception. Read intentions and profile characters rolls can't reveal that she lied for the rest of the scene. This can contest magic like Judge's Ear Technique, opposing it with the result of the Alchemical's influence roll.

Consensus Recalibration Mode

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Manipulation 4, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Internal, Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Simulated Sincerity Drive

The Alchemical's carefully calculated deceptions shift others' perception of reality.

The Alchemical makes a special instill roll to convince bystanders that an event is something other than what it appears to be. She could pass off a brutal fight as an athletic competition, make light-hearted conversation seem like a heated argument, or explain away a tryst combat training. This doesn't affect characters directly involved in the event.

The Alchemical's roll ignores multiple target penalties, but the penalty for making implausible claims subtracts successes instead of dice. Affected characters may pay one Willpower to resist if there's a dramatic change in circumstances that undermines the Alchemical's deception. They can also do if their misunderstanding threatens one of their Major or Defining Intimacies.

Special activation rules: This Charm can be flurried.

Reset: Once per scene.

Transcendent Brutality Programming

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Manipulation 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Soulsteel needles running along the Alchemical's spine retract inward, suspending her sense of empathy as she becomes a heartless figure of dread.

The Alchemical rerolls 1s until they cease to appear on a threaten roll. Any bonus dice from Clarity (p. XX) are converted to non-Charm successes.

The Alchemical can use this Charm on threaten rolls with Appearance or Charisma if she has a Transpuissant (Attribute) Upgrade installed for those Charms.

Submodules

Exhaustive Interrogation Programming (3xp; Manipulation 3): The Alchemical rerolls 2s as well if she receives any dice from Clarity or if her target suffers a wound penalty.

Lingering Horror Scars (3xp; Manipulation 4): The Alchemical's roll also counts as an instill roll to weaken an Intimacy based on courage, hope, recklessness, or other emotions that might give her victim the will to resist her intimidation. This fails against characters with Major or Defining Intimacies that oppose this.

Infrasonic Dread Projector

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Manipulation 3, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Transcendent Brutality Programming

Soulsteel transduces mounted on the Alchemical's shoulders emit a sound beyond the range of human hearing, but still deeply unsettling to those who hear it.

The Alchemical makes a special (Manipulation + [Performance or Presence]) threaten roll against a single character within long range. If successful, her target is haunted by an inexplicable feeling of dread for the rest of the scene. He suffers -2 Resolve against further fear-based influence, and a -3 penalty on Join Battle rolls and rolls to detect hidden enemies. Resisting this is the same as with a normal threaten roll.

Other characters can't tell that the Alchemical has attempted to influence the target unless they're capable of hearing sounds outside the normal range of human hearing. They roll (Perception + Awareness) against the Alchemical's influence roll.

Submodules

Infrasound Amplifier (6xp; Manipulation 4, Essence 2) (+1wp): The Alchemical may pay a one-Willpower surcharge to target any number of characters within range. She ignores multiple target penalties.

Terror-Inducing Signal (3xp; Manipulation 4, Essence 2): The dice penalty applies on all rolls that don't help the target safeguard against whatever threats they think they face.

Unobtrusive Repartee Baffles

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Manipulation 2, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Internal, Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Essence-draining soulsteel coils and red jade filtration baffles in the Alchemical's throat conceal the power in her words.

The Alchemical mutes all motes spent on an influence roll with any Attribute, a read intentions roll, or a use of Guile or Resolve.

Covert Communion Apparatus

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Manipulation 2, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Any Transpuissant (Social Attribute) Upgrade

Blue jade transceivers jut from the Alchemical's temples, allowing her to communicate secretly with fellow servants of the Machine God.

The Alchemical can communicate telepathically with other Alchemicals within long range, as well as machine spirits and automata. These characters can likewise communicate mentally with her, though not with any other characters within this Charm's range. They must still share a common language to communicate, and their mental "voices" can be recognized by those familiar with what a character sounds like.

Submodules

Innominate Voice Mode (3xp; Manipulation 3): The Alchemical may conceal her identity in communications, substituting one of several synthesized voices programed into this submodule rather than her own.

Perfected Assembly Network (3xp; Manipulation 3): The Alchemical can activate this Charm in an alternative mode, creating a mental link between her and any number of willing characters within range. Linked characters can communicate with each other in addition to the Alchemical as long as they remain within long range. She can add or remove characters from it reflexively.

Multi-Frequency Broadcast (3xp; Perfected Assembly Network): The Alchemical can still use this Charm's base effect while mentally linked with Perfected Assembly Network. This doesn't allow any other linked characters to communicate with those who haven't been linked.

Neural Transmitter Relays (3xp; Manipulation 4): This Charm can be used to mentally communicate with any character.

Semiotic Compatibility Signal (3xp; Manipulation 4): Mental communication no longer requires a shared language.

Communal Loyalty Linkage (3xp; Essence 3, Perfected Assembly Network): While using Perfected Assembly Network, any positive Ties that a linked character has toward other linked characters increase their Resolve bonus by one.

Gestalt Awareness Security (3xp; Essence 3, Perfected Assembly Network): While using Perfected Assembly Network, as long as one linked character is aware of a hidden threat, all linked characters are. This can negate the effects of unexpected attacks against them and allow them to attack concealed enemies. This doesn't apply to a linked character if the hidden threat is beyond the range of his senses.

Synchronized Tactical Coordination (3xp; Essence 3, Perfected Assembly Network): While using Perfected Assembly Network, each linked character can take a reflexive defend other or distract gambit on his turn to benefit another linked character while in combat.

Transceiver Node Upgrade (6xp; Manipulation 5, Essence 3, Perfected Assembly Network) (+1wp): The Alchemical can pay a one-Willpower surcharge when she uses Perfected Assembly Network to embed a transceiver behind the ears of each linked character. This requires them to be in close range when she uses

this Charm. The range at which they can communicate extends to (Alchemical's Essence) miles. However, the Alchemical can't add new characters to the group, and removing a character requires touching him to detach the transceiver. Only the Alchemical is capable of removing the transceivers.

Network Hub Monitoring (3xp; Transceiver Node Upgrade): While using Transceiver Node Upgrade, the Alchemical can monitor the condition of each linked character. She can determine the approximate distance and direction to any of them, and can identify their specific location if they're in a place she's familiar with. She can also sense whenever a linked character suffers physical pain or emotional distress, though this doesn't reveal its cause. Only the Alchemical receives this information, not the other linked characters.

Subtle Concept Introduction Module

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Manipulation 3, Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Internal, Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Simulated Sincerity Drive, Rogue Cell Isolation Protocols

The Alchemical's social graces and mastery of manipulation are augmented to superhuman levels of subtlety and discretion.

When the Alchemical makes a persuade roll against a single character, she does so without him realizing that she intentionally influenced him. He can't use negative Ties toward the Alchemical to bolster his Resolve against the influence. If successful, the target believes the influence was his own idea.

A successful read intentions or profile character roll against the Alchemical in the same scene can reveal that she attempted this influence.

Propaganda Transmission Relay

Cost: 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Manipulation 4, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Augmented, Internal, Mute, Psyche

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Subtle Concept Introduction Module

A gleaming neutral lattice interweaves the Alchemical's words with hypnotic Essence, spreading contagious ideas among her listeners.

The Alchemical makes an instill roll against members of a community to create or strengthen a positive Tie toward that community. Affected characters are also compelled to spread that influence to others when given the opportunity, although this can't force them to do anything more than an inconvenient task (**Exalted**, p. 216). They add an automatic success on instill rolls to repeat the Alchemical's influence, and gain +1 Resolve against influence that would erode the instilled Intimacy. This compulsion and the benefits it provides only last for (Essence + Charisma) days.

Affected characters don't recognize that this compulsion is a result of the Alchemical's persuasion. Some believe they act of their own free will, while others don't even realize they're doing so, spreading the influence unconsciously through body language, micro-expressions, and nuances of speech or writing.

The Alchemical can use Subtle Concept Introduction Module to conceal this Charm's influence.

Submodules

Agitprop Champion Directive (6xp; Manipulation 5): This Charm is compatible with written influence that has a single target.

Memetic Contagion Engram (3xp; Manipulation 5): The Alchemical can use this Charm to instill any or her Major or Defining Intimacies.

Compliance Assurance Drone

Cost: 3m, 1wp; **Mins:** Manipulation 4, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Transcendent Brutality Programming

The Alchemical implants a miniaturized drone within a victim's nervous system to monitor compliance with her commands and punish deviation from her orders.

The Alchemical makes a persuade or threaten roll using either Charisma or Manipulation against a single touched character. If she beats his Resolve, she also implants a drone within her target, which burrows deep into his nervous system. The drone detonates if the target spends Willpower to resist this influence, dealing (Alchemical's Essence) dice of lethal damage. This ignores Hardness, unless it's from a source whose nature makes it applicable to harm from within. This detonation is also triggered if another character successfully overturns the Alchemical's influence, or if her influence is otherwise terminated.

If the target doesn't resist with Willpower, the drone remains implanted to monitor his compliance. If he takes an action that's counterproductive to completing the task that the Alchemical has assigned to him, the drone stimulates the pain center of his brain with an electric pulse, increasing his wound penalty by one for the rest of the scene. It also alerts the Alchemical to the subject's noncompliance. This isn't limited to direct disobedience, as this typically isn't possible on a successful persuade roll. Instead, the most common triggers are prioritizing another task or goal over the Alchemical's commands, or taking a course of action that's detrimental to his overall goal without intending to disobey.

Once an affected character completes the task assigned to him, the implanted drone dissolves into Essence. The same occurs if the task becomes impossible to complete. If it becomes impossible as a result of the character's actions, the drone instead detonates, as above. Either way, the drone sends a last report to the Alchemical, informing her of whether or not the influenced character was successful.

The drone is all but impossible to detect or locate with mundane means. It can be detected with a (Perception + [Awareness, Investigation, or Medicine]) roll if it benefits from magic or a suitable stunt. The difficulty is (Alchemical's Manipulation). Surgical removal of the drone takes a day and requires an (Intelligence + Medicine) roll at the same difficulty, which must either be enhanced with magic or specialized equipment. Regardless of whether the roll succeeds or fails, the victim suffers (Alchemical's

Essence + 1) levels of lethal damage, which can't be prevented. Each extra success on the Medicine roll lowers this by one, to a minimum of one level. The drone notifies the Alchemical once it's removed, then dissolves into Essence.

Submodules

Dissident Surveillance Protocol (3xp): If a target spends Willpower to resist, the Alchemical may choose to leave the drone embedded in him with its usual effect, rather than having it detonate. When used this way, the drone dissolves once the victim has triggered it (Alchemical's Essence) times.

Remote Coercion Deployment (3xp): The Alchemical can launch a drone at a character within medium range. This requires a difficulty 2 gambit with Archery or Thrown before the Alchemical can make the influence roll.

Stealth Deployment Sheath (3xp): The Alchemical's target can't feel the drone entering into him or otherwise notice the implantation. Other onlookers must succeed on a (Perception + Awareness) roll at a difficulty of (Alchemical's Manipulation) in order to notice the drone as it's deployed. This is Augmented.

Miniaturized Implant Configuration (3xp; Manipulation 5): The Alchemical adds +1 to the difficulty of rolls to detect or remove the implanted drone.

Prudent Redaction Spur (3xp; Manipulation 5): The drone is triggered if the victim attempts to tell others about the drone's presence. The shock prevents him from completing his explanation unless he pays two Willpower to push through it.

Tactical Deployment Upgrade (3xp; Manipulation 5): When the Alchemical makes a gambit to touch a character in combat or use Remote Coercion Deployment, she adds (Manipulation/2, rounded up) dice on both the attack and Initiative roll. This is Augmented.

Aggressive Correction Loadout (3xp; Manipulation 5, Essence 3): The Alchemical's victim suffers one die of lethal damage each time he triggers the drone's corrective shock. This ignores Hardness. Additionally, the Alchemical can choose to remotely detonate the drone upon being notified of a target's noncompliance, in addition to the shock's other effects.

Panic Impulse Harmonics

Cost: 4m, 1wp; **Mins:** Manipulation 4, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Infrasonic Dread Projector, Rogue Cell Isolation Protocols

Soulsteel transducers in the Alchemical's voice box lace her words with undertones of dread beyond the range of human hearing.

The Alchemical makes a (Manipulation + Presence) threaten roll against a single character. It's automatically supported by her target's strongest Intimacy based on fear. She doesn't need to know her target has that Intimacy. If the target's Intimacy is a Tie of fear to the Alchemical, the cost to resist increases by one Willpower.

If the Alchemical's target doesn't any fear-based Intimacies, she's refunded this Charm's Willpower cost.

Submodules

Mass Panic Broadcast (3xp; Manipulation 5): The Alchemical can use this Charm against multiple characters and ignores multiple target penalties.

Personality Override Spike

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Manipulation 4, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Decisive-only, Mute, Psyche

Duration: Until grapple is released

Prerequisite Charms: Rogue Cell Isolation Protocols, Transcendent Brutality Programming

A retractable spike mounted in the Alchemical's limbs injects microscopic automata into an enemy's nervous system, overriding his conscious mind.

The Alchemical grapple gambit with Brawl, Martial Arts, or Melee. If the gambit's Initiative roll succeeds, she establishes grapple control with a special (Manipulation + Presence) threaten roll against her target's Resolve. This isn't compatible with Strength Charms or similar effects that enhance grapples, though the Storyteller can allow certain effects with an appropriate stunt.

The only grapple action the Alchemical can take while using the spike is restraining her enemy, trapping him within his own mindscape. She only needs to spend one round of grapple control to do so. If she doesn't take a restrain action, the grapple ends.

Outside of combat, the Alchemical can use this Charm with a touch, making the (Manipulation + Presence) roll as above.

Many of this Charm's submodules let the Alchemical inflict a Psyche effect when she takes a restrain action against her enemy. She can only use one submodule's effect at a time. Submodules' Willpower costs are waived against trivial characters.

Reset: This Charm can only be used on a character once per story. This doesn't apply if the Alchemical doesn't inflict any Psyche effects with this Charm's submodules.

Submodules

Mind-Ripping Probe (6xp; Manipulation 5): When the Alchemical restrains her victim, she accesses his memories of a single scene's worth of events, downloading them to her own mind. The Alchemical must specify the memory she's looking for — for example, "your meeting with *Excessively Righteous Blossom*" or "whatever you were doing five hours ago." If he has an Intimacy that opposes this, he can pay one Willpower to resist. Alternatively, the Alchemical can detect whether any of a character's memories have been altered or erased.

Psyche Infiltration Spike (3xp; Mind-Ripping Probe): The Alchemical can read her victim's surface thoughts while grappling him, revealing his current train of thought. This is separate from the Psyche effects inflicted by this Charm.

Amnestic Erasure (6xp; Manipulation 6, Essence 3, Mind-Ripping Probe) (5m, 1wp): When the Alchemical restrains her victim, she can pay five motes, one Willpower and spend an additional round of grapple control to erase his memories of a single scene. If the affected character is reminded of the erased memories or uncovers evidence of them, he can pay three Willpower to regain the lost memories.

Memory Implantation Surge (6xp; Amnestic Erasure) (5m, 1wp): The Alchemical can pay ten motes, one Willpower when she restrains an enemy to alter his memory of a single scene or create a false memory of a single scene. Resisting this uses the same rules as Amnestic Erasure. If the Alchemical uses that submodule to erase memories before replacing them with Memory Implantation Surge, the victim only needs to pay the Willpower cost once to resist both of them. Alternatively, if the Alchemical detects erased or altered memories with Mind-Ripping Probe, she can use this submodule to restore them.

Implanted Imperative Engram (6xp; Memory Implantation Surge) (10m, 1wp): When the Alchemical restrains her victim, she can pay ten motes and one Willpower to implant a hypnotic command, consisting of a single short, clear statement. She can expend up to (Essence x2) additional rounds of grapple control to implant an additional command for every two rounds of control she spends. Once the victim is released from the grapple, he immediately begins following these instructions unless the Alchemical included an instruction to wait. He doesn't understand why he does these things, nor does he consciously remember what his orders are. Each time a command is triggered, he can pay one Willpower to resist it, permanently purging it from his subconscious.

Identity Recalibration Signal (6xp; Manipulation 7, Essence 4, Mind-Ripping Probe) (+10m): The Alchemical can pay a ten-mote surcharge and spend additional rounds of grapple control to increase the scope of memories she can affect with Amnestic Erasure, Memory Implantation Surge, or Mind-Ripping Probe. She affects one day of memories for each round of control spent. With Essence 5, if she spends rounds of control equal to her target's base Resolve, she may affect all of his memories related to a single topic.

Subsidiary Personality Implant (6xp; Manipulation 7, Essence 5, Memory Implantation Surge) (10m, 1wp): If the Alchemical releases her victim on her turn, she may ten motes, one Willpower to embed a "backdoor" in his subconscious. He suffers -3 Resolve against subsequent uses, and the Alchemical is no longer limited by this Charm's once per story limit against him. He can't spend Willpower to resist this until he's made aware of it by a subsequent use of this Charm that exploits the backdoor. Once he does, he can pay three Willpower to resist this Psyche effect, although not in the same scene the Alchemical uses it.

Random Access Memories

Using Personality Override Spike to erase, alter, or fabricate memories can only do so much to alter an individual's psyche. They can't alter a character's Intimacies, though he may not understand why he feels the way he does. He may not necessarily believe that altered or implanted memories are real if they're too inconsistent with his other memories or if they're completely implausible. However, characters are more likely to wave this way as the result of alcohol, drugs, or other mundane causes before suspecting psychic tampering.

Living Engram Override

Cost: 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Manipulation 7, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Psyche

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Propaganda Transmission Relay, Societal Engineering Signal

A soulsteel stud in the Alchemical's tongue emits subharmonics that alter the brainwaves of listeners, bringing them in line with the Alchemical's own.

The Alchemical makes an instill roll against a single character to create or strengthen an Intimacy that she has at Major or Defining intensity. As long as her target has an Intimacy that supports her influence, he gains the instilled Intimacy. If he already has that Intimacy, it's strengthened to Defining intensity if he has another Intimacy that supports the Alchemical's influence.

If the Alchemical's target has an Intimacy that opposes her influence, it's suppressed for as long as he retains the instilled Intimacy. This can't suppress Intimacies whose intensity is greater than that of the instilled Intimacy. If a target has multiple such Intimacies, he chooses which one is suppressed. He can't regain or strengthen that Intimacy by any means for as long as he possesses the instilled Intimacy.

An affected character must pay two Willpower to voluntarily weaken the instilled Intimacy. Weakening it with social influence uses the rules for overturning influence (**Exalted**, p. 221).

Reset: This Charm can only be used on a character once per story.

Submodules

Psyche Reformatting Protocol (6xp; Manipulation 8, Essence 5): The Alchemical can commit this Charm's mote cost indefinitely to make it impossible for her target to voluntarily erode the instilled Intimacy unless his adherence to that Intimacy endangers him or brings him into conflict with one of his Defining Intimacies.

Mind-Destroying Pattern Generator

Cost: 15m, 1wp; **Mins:** Manipulation 7, Essence 4

Type: Simple

Keywords: Psyche

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Living Engram Override

Staged arrays of subdermal projectors emit a fractal pattern that is incompatible with life, one that destroys any brain that tries to process the sensation of viewing it.

The Alchemical makes a special (Manipulation + [Performance or Presence]) influence roll against a character within medium range who can see her. If she has a Craft related to visual art, like painting, she can roll with it instead. Her target's Intimacies don't modify his Resolve against the Psyche effect embedded in the fractal display. If she uses this Charm in combat, her Initiative must be higher than her target's.

If the Alchemical succeeds, her victim is infected with a mind-destroying fractal image, precision-tuned to his neural pathways. It has the following effects:

- His perception and motor control occasionally flicker in and out, and his eyes twitch as they attempt to focus and refocus on invisible images. He suffers a –3 penalty on all rolls he makes. This penalty subtracts successes on vision-based Awareness rolls.
- He must make a difficulty 3 (Wits + Integrity) or (Stamina + Resistance) roll on each of his turns, requiring him to flurry if he wants to take any other actions. If he fails this roll, the destructive image continues to cascade through his mind. He suffers (Alchemical's Essence) dice of lethal damage, which ignore Hardness, and loses Willpower equal to the levels of damage he takes.
- If he falls to zero Willpower while infected with this Psyche effect or is incapacitated by the damage from it, he falls comatose. Characters with Exalted healing can awaken from this coma, freed from the deadly image, once they've healed all damage in their health track and reached 5+ temporary Willpower. Those without such supernatural resilience remain permanently comatose, barring potent supernatural intervention, like magically enhanced surgery capable of repairing his damaged brain or Charms that can purge the fractal from his mind.

A character can spend five Willpower to resist this Psyche effect — but if this reduces him to zero Willpower, he still falls comatose. This cost is reduced by one Willpower each time the victim succeeds on a roll, to a minimum of (Alchemical's Essence/2, rounded up).

While using Radiant Iconography Array (p. XX), the Alchemical's Appearance adds bonus dice on this Charm's roll if it's higher than her target's Resolve (**Exalted**, p. 218).

Reset: Once per scene.

Submodules

Fatal Signal Broadcast (3xp): The Alchemical can broadcast an auditory analogue to this Charm's deadly fractal images, a high-pitched signal that destroys the nervous system. She can use this to affect characters who can hear her even if they can't see her.

Psyche-Annihilating Basilisk Image (6xp, Manipulation 8, Essence 5) (+5m, 1wp): The Alchemical may pay a five-mote, one-Willpower surcharge to release the safety limiters that calibrate the killing fractals to a specific target's nervous system. Instead, she displays a mind-destroying image that affects anyone who can see her, friend or foe. She doesn't suffer multiple target penalties on her influence roll. If the Alchemical uses this submodule together with Fatal Signal Broadcast, it can't affect characters beyond medium range.

Guile

Empathy Simulation Engine

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Manipulation 1, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Mute

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: None

Barbed soulsteel wires anchored in the Alchemical's brain run taut along her skin to a riveted implant in her neck. Activating it is excruciatingly painful, though only for an instant.

The Alchemical simulates human emotions to produce a simulacrum of empathy:

- She ignores penalties from Clarity (p. XX) on rolls with all Attributes.
- She doubles 9s on Manipulation-based influence rolls that involve expressing empathy or convincing others she feels empathy.
- She gains +2 Guile against effects that would reveal a lack of empathy.

Using this Charm to simulate emotions leaves the Alchemical more susceptible to clarity. She doubles 9s on rolls to gain it. When she rolls to lose Clarity, her 1s subtract successes.

Submodules

Lifestyle Simulation Processor (6xp; Manipulation 4, Essence 2): This Charm's duration becomes Indefinite. The Alchemical can't lose Clarity from interacting with mortals while using it.

Flickering Enigma Membrane

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Manipulation 3, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Augmented, Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Quicksilver membranes implanted in the Alchemical's ocular cavities coat her eyes with psychogenic chemicals and Essence-doped saline, concealing any hint of her true emotions.

The Alchemical adds +1 Guile and ignores up to (Essence/2, rounded up) points of Guile penalties. This doesn't negate the penalty for being unaware of her observer. Against rolls that would reveal the Alchemical's emotional state or an emotion-based Intimacy, this bonus increases to +2 and is non-Charm.

Submodules

Augmented Emotional Synthesis (6xp; Manipulation 4, Essence 2): The Alchemical always receives the +2 Guile bonus.

Synthetic Personality Subroutine

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Manipulation 4, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Flickering Enigma Membrane

A dedicated subprocessor constantly generates artificial emotions, mannerisms, and quirks that conceal the Alchemical's true intentions.

The Alchemical gains +1 Guile and reduces the Guile penalty for being unaware of her observer by one.

This bonus in non-Charm against mind-reading magic and similar forms of mental intrusion, which encounter only a stream of procedurally generated thoughts.

Submodules

Perfect Simulation (6xp; Manipulation 5, Essence 3): This Charm's Guile bonus increases to +2.

Sequestered Partition Node

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Manipulation 5, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Stackable

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Synthetic Personality Subroutine

Soulsteel filaments threaded through the Alchemical's brain disrupt neural linkages, isolating and encrypting aspects of her personality.

The Alchemical encrypts one of her Intimacies, requiring her to spend an hour in meditation or undergo the Rite of Reconfiguration. The encrypted Intimacy can't be detected by read intentions actions or similar effects, though her behavior may still reveal it. She can't use that Intimacy to modify her Resolve or cite it in Decision Points, but it can't be used to support persuade rolls against her. It can still be used for other purposes, like Charms.

The Alchemical can stack this Charm to encrypt multiple Intimacies.

Submodules

Mnemonic Lock (3xp) (+1wp): For a one-Willpower surcharge, the Alchemical temporarily suppresses all of her memories related to the encrypted Intimacy. The Intimacy is suppressed completely, as if she didn't have it all. She can set a condition that end this Charm, restoring her Intimacy and memories. Otherwise, she can't voluntarily end it except at a story's end or in response to a threat to the encrypted Intimacy.

Persona Encryption Protocol (3xp): When the Alchemical stacks this Charm, the cost of each use past the first is reduced to one mote.

Impenetrable Durant Visor

Cost: 3m, 1wp; **Mins:** Manipulation 4, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Flickering Enigma Membrane

Mechanisms in the Alchemical's brow and cheekbones reconfigure her visage into a faceless metal mask or a constantly shifting pattern that evokes the fear of the unknown.

All characters suffer a -2 penalty from fear on rolls against the Alchemical unless they've succeeded on a

read intentions roll or another roll opposing her Guile this scene. Characters who know one of the Alchemical's Intimacies are also immune to this penalty.

The Alchemical can use this Charm reflexively when a character she's aware of fails a roll against her Guile, instantly wiping her expression.

Submodules

Psychoactive Fractal Visage (3xp) (+3m): For a three-mote surcharge, affected characters also suffer –1 Resolve and Guile against the Alchemical.

Unknown Terror Mien (6xp; Manipulation 5, Essence 3, Psychoactive Fractal Visage): While using Psychoactive Fractal Visage, affected characters also suffer –1 Defense against the Alchemical.

Enigma Aversion Frequency

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Manipulation 4, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Impenetrable Durant Visor

The Alchemical's every word, gesture, and expression has been precisely calibrated to trigger instinctual fears, disorienting those who pay her too close of scrutiny.

When a character with a Tie of fear toward the Alchemical makes a roll against her Guile, she can use that Intimacy to bolster her Guile as if it were Resolve. She need not be aware of the Intimacy to do so.

Reset: Once per scene.

Alter Ego Dissimulation Cortex

Cost: 4m, 1wp; **Mins:** Manipulation 6, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Synthetic Personality Subroutine

A micropartitioned segment of the Alchemical's neural architecture simulates a rudimentary consciousness, maintaining a constant cover identity.

Flavor Text

This Charm houses a simulated “cover identity,” a loosely sketched-out concept of an alter ego. A Soulsteel Caste inquisitor might simulate a Populat malcontent, while a Moonsilver Caste spy might pose as a Nuradi Champion while infiltrating Nurad. The Alchemical can pick a new cover identity when she undergoes the Rite of Reconfiguration.

The Alchemical can use this Charm after a read intentions roll against her fails, as long as the opposing character rolled any 1s. The opposing character believes he succeeded — but instead of the truth, he receives a result that consistent with the cover identity.

Submodules

Expanded Persona Cortex (3xp): The Alchemical can store an additional cover identity. She can purchase this submodule up to (Essence) times.

Collective Unconscious Circuitry (3xp; Essence 3, Expanded Persona Cortex): This Charm's cost is reduced by one mote for each purchase of Expanded Persona Cortex the Alchemical has.

Dedicated Identity Processor (3xp; Essence 3): Once per day, the Alchemical can waive this Charm's Willpower cost.

Programmed Self-Concept (3xp, Essence 3): The Alchemical can use this Charm even if the opposing character didn't roll any 1s.

Subterfuge

Encrypted Communication Protocol

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Manipulation 2, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Alchemical's encryption subroutines allow her to create ciphers that transcend the limits of mortal cryptography.

The Alchemical rolls (Manipulation + [Larceny, Linguistics Lore]) with double 9s to create a coded message, either using an existing system of encryption or create a cipher specific to a single character. The message's recipient need not know this code — the Alchemical incorporates subtle references, psychological priming, and subconscious suggestion so that he can intuitively understand it.

Rolls to break this cipher are made opposing the Alchemical's initial roll. Opposing rolls suffer a penalty of (Manipulation/2, rounded up) unless they're enhanced by magic.

Submodules

Champion-Cryptarch Protocol (3xp): The Alchemical can create a cipher that can be intuitively understood by other Alchemicals.

Ideological Transmission Cipher (3xp): The Alchemical can create a cipher based on one of her Intimacies, which can be understood by anyone who shares that Intimacy.

Vox Populi Encryption (3xp): The Alchemical can create a cipher that can be intuitively understood by anyone who belongs to a specific community that she has a positive Tie toward.

Evidence Alteration Effectuator

Cost: 6m; **Mins:** Manipulation 3, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Augmented, Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Transpuissant Manipulation Upgrade

A complex microassembly of mechanical manipulators and chemical pumps unfolds from the Alchemical's fingertips, making the evidence consistent with her cover story.

The Alchemical makes a roll to conceal evidence or conceal her tracks with only a few moments of effort. She may optionally roll with Manipulation instead of the Attribute normally used for those actions. Characters who fail an opposed roll against a conceal evidence action uncover a false clue consistent with the crime being insignificant, something easily explained and accepted without requiring further investigation. An Alchemical could stage an assassination to look like a tragic accident, or make her sabotage of a foreign nation's industry seems like the work of a discontented work crew.

Similarly, characters who fail an opposed tracking roll believe they've picked up the Alchemical's trail, and that it leads to a location he'd expect his quarry to go to, somewhere that would be a predictable destination, based on his knowledge of who his knowledge is and the surrounding region.

Submodules

Pretextual Hostility Fabrication (3xp): When concealing evidence, the Alchemical leave a false clue that implicates someone or something that the Alchemical believes is a threat to a community she belongs to.

Theophany Simulation Array (3xp): When concealing evidence, the Alchemical leaves a false clue that points to the involvement of machine spirits, gremlins, or other inhuman creatures. When concealing tracks, opposing characters believe her trail leads to a nearby location where such supernatural beings are present.

Culprit Designation Protocol (6xp; Manipulation 5, Essence 2): When concealing evidence, the Alchemical leaves a false clue that implicates a specific character as the culprit.

Simulated Vector System (6xp; Manipulation 5, Essence 2): When concealing her tracks, the Alchemical leaves a false trail leading to a specific location.

Hyperspoliative Perfection (6xp; Manipulation 5, Essence 2) (+1wp: Once per story, the Alchemical may pay a one-Willpower surcharge to create a perfect deception. If an opposing character succeeds on an Investigation roll, he uncovers both the Alchemical's false clue as well as the truth, while tracking rolls reveal both the false and true trails. The opposing character notices the discrepancy, but can't identify which is true.

Vocal Distortion Field

Cost: 1m; **Mins:** Manipulation 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Transpuissant Manipulation Upgrade

A chrome rivet in the Alchemical's throat is wired to her voice box, allowing her to consciously fine-tune the pitch, timbre, and modulation of her voice.

Upon purchasing this Charm, the Alchemical's player chooses six experience points' worth of submodules. Each allows her to distort or modulate her voice, covering about ten seconds of normal speech or a single influence roll made with Charisma or Manipulation.

Characters with superhuman or magically enhanced hearing can make a difficulty 5 (Perception + Awareness) roll to detect many of these submodules' deception.

Submodules

Synthetic Voice Modulation (3xp): The Alchemical can mimic another character's voice for a single influence roll or ten seconds of regular speech. She must spend at least an hour observing a character before she can emulate him with this submodule. Characters with superhuman or magically enhanced hearing can roll to identify the impersonation.

Audio Replay Protocol (3xp, Synthetic Voice Modulation): The Alchemical can replicate sounds other than the human voice: rats squeaking, the grinding of industrial gears, the hum of an Essence Pulse Cannon powering up. She must spend at least an hour paying close attention to the sound before she can mimic it. Characters with superhuman or magically enhanced hearing can roll to distinguish this from the genuine article. This doesn't replicate the volume of a mimicked sound — although Vox Populi Broadcast (p. XX) may help remedy that.

Echo Chamber Vocalization (6xp; Manipulation 3) (+1m): The Alchemical may pay a one-mote surcharge to speak while in concealment without revealing her location, imposing a two-success penalty on Awareness rolls to locate her. Characters with superhuman or magically enhanced hearing ignore this penalty.

Sonic Distortion Device (3xp; Manipulation 3): The Alchemical distorts her vocal frequency, making it impossible to identify her voice. Characters with superhuman or magically enhanced hearing can roll to identify her.

Augmented Vocal Modulation (6xp; Manipulation 4, any one submodule) (+2m): When the Alchemical uses one of this Charm's submodules, she can pay a two-mote surcharge to extend its duration to one scene. She can still use Vocal Modulation Field normally while sustaining this.

Perfected Harmonic Disruption (3xp; Manipulation 5, any one submodule): Superhuman and magical hearing no longer grant an advantage against this Charm's submodules.

Operational Efficiency Reduction Protocol

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Manipulation 4, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Augmented, Internal

Duration: One task

Prerequisite Charms: Transpuissant Manipulation Upgrade

Organizational functions are a pattern easily disrupted, their points of weakness and efficiency easy targets for the Alchemical's algorithmic espionage measures.

The Alchemical carries out a carefully planned sabotage of a project or bureaucratic task (**Exalted**, p. 226), spending a scene interfering with an organization's operations. She rolls (Manipulation + [Bureaucracy, Larceny, or Socialize]), opposed by the project's leader with ([Intelligence or Wits] + Bureaucracy) pool. Characters can use other Abilities if appropriate — undermining military logistics could be resisted with War, while sabotaging a criminal syndicate's drug trade could be resisted with Larceny.

If the Alchemical succeeds, the time needed to complete the project is doubled. The multiplier increases by one for each extra successes the Alchemical rolls, maximum (Manipulation). This applies not only to bureaucratic tasks, but also to physical labor, troop movements, and similar undertakings, as long as the Alchemical's sabotage interferes with them.

The Alchemical must be able to engage with the project on a local level throughout the course of this sabotage, though not with the level of directness required to use this Charm initially. She can't target an organization's operations in a different metropolis, for example. This Charm's effect ends prematurely if the Alchemical is unable to maintain this interference for a meaningful period of time.

Reset: This Charm can only be used on a given organization once per story.

Submodule

Imperceptible Interference Algorithm (3xp): The Alchemical adds (Manipulation/2, rounded up) Guile against rolls that would reveal her culpability in the sabotage. This is Augmented.

Morale Suppression Metrics (6xp): The Alchemical's sabotage is calculated to create increased friction, fatigue, and stress within the affected organization. All rolls made to carry out the organization's official business suffer a -2 penalty. If the sabotaged project fails or is abandoned as a result of delays, then the organization continues to suffer this penalty until a character completes a project to restore morale.

Perception

Offense

Aim-Calibrating Sensors

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Perception 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

A sensory processor on the side of the Alchemical's head is wired into the Alchemical's eyes, compensating for any condition that might impede her aim.

The Alchemical's attack ignores up to (Perception) points of environmental penalties, penalties from poor

visibility, and penalties from ranged weapon Accuracy. If the attack benefits from aiming, she adds a non-Charm die on the attack roll.

Submodules

Inward Focus Refractor (6xp; Perception 3): This Charm can also negate wound penalties, crippling penalties, and penalties from poison.

Efficient Strike Calibration (6xp; Perception 4, Inward Focus Refractor): The Alchemical can pay a two-mote surcharge to either apply the attack roll bonus without needing to aim or add bonus dice from aiming on an attack's damage roll.

Dedicated Harmonic Targeting

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Perception 4, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Aim-Calibrating Sensors

The Alchemical's sensors lock onto an enemy's Essence flows, modulating a projectile's harmonic frequency to match that pattern precisely.

The Alchemical makes a **withering** or **decisive** attack with Archery or Thrown. It ignores cover, phasing through obstacles between it and its target. She can even penetrate full cover, though she suffers a -4 penalty for it. She can reduce this penalty with Aim-Calibrating Sensors.

This attack can't be redirected to anyone other than its original target.

Submodules

Armor-Bypassing Algorithms (6xp; Perception 5, Essence 2) (+1wp): The Alchemical can pay a one-mote, one-Willpower surcharge to halve an enemy's armored soak or Hardness from armor against her attack.

Tactical Analysis Engrams

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Perception 4, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Dedicated Harmonic Targeting

The Alchemical analyzes enemy combatants, routing sensory input through tactical processor nodules clustered around her temples.

When the Alchemical aims, she makes a special read intentions roll with (Perception + [Awareness, combat Ability, or War]) against her target. Success lets her player ask the Storyteller a question about

that enemy, plus an additional question for every three extra successes. For each question the Alchemical's player asks, she converts one die from aiming to a non-Charm success.

The question must be relevant to the fight. Examples include asking what style a martial artist knows, how much of a threat an enemy poses, or what Intimacy motivates him to fight. If the Storyteller doesn't have an answer in mind, the Alchemical's player should provide one, as if introducing a fact.

Reset: This Charm can only be used against a character once per scene.

Submodules

Threat-Modeling Scan (3xp; Perception 4, Essence 2): The Alchemical can ask an additional question for each extra success she rolls, rather than every three.

Motion-Tracking Reticule

Cost: 4m, 1i; **Mins:** Perception 4, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Perilous, Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Dedicated Harmonic Targeting

A crystalline lens covering the Alchemical's dominant eye projects a glowing targeting reticule that locks on to movement.

When an enemy within range of the Alchemical's weapon moves between range bands or rises from prone, she reflexively aims at him. This both adds dice on her attack roll and lets her attack at medium range or beyond.

Submodules

Counter-Ambush Processor (6xp): The Alchemical may use this Charm to aim at an enemy when she succeeds on a roll opposing his Stealth.

Automated Targeting System (6xp; Essence 2) (+1wp): The Alchemical may pay a one-Willpower surcharge to reflexively aim before making a **decisive** attack, rather than needing her target to move first.

Precision Sniping Overlay (6xp; Perception 5, Essence 3, Automated Targeting System): Automated Targeting System's Willpower surcharge is waived against crashed enemies who are at least medium range away from the Alchemical.

Hundredfold Strafing Sensors

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Perception 4, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Augmented, Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Motion-Tracking Reticule

Targeting beams installed in the Alchemical's tear ducts mark her foes for elimination, activating automated combat algorithms that drive the Champion in a clockwork dance of death.

The Alchemical makes a separate ranged **decisive** attack against each enemy in a ninety-degree cone out to medium range. This can target up to one enemy at close range, two at short, and three at medium. The attack has a base damage of (Perception/2) against each hit enemy, or (Perception) against battle groups. The Alchemical divides her Initiative evenly between each hit enemy rounded up. Her Initiative doesn't reset until all attacks are completed.

Counter-Concealment Targeting

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Perception 6, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Motion-Tracking Reticule, Tactical Analysis Engrams

A ring of starmetal in the Alchemical's iris calculates vectors of attack that force hidden enemies into the open.

The Alchemical makes a **decisive** attack against an enemy in concealment. If she succeeds, she may forgo dealing three levels of damage to force her target to reroll Stealth to maintain his concealment. She must still deal at least one level of damage.

Submodules

Covert Threat Elimination Reflex (6xp; Essence 3) (+4m, 2i): The Alchemical can pay a four-mote, two-Initiative surcharge to use this Charm reflexively when she succeeds on an Awareness roll opposing an enemy's Stealth in combat.

Perfected Counter-Sniper Protocol (6xp; Essence 5): The Alchemical no longer needs to forgo damage to use this Charm.

Recursive Fractal Targeting Calculations

Cost: 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Perception 5, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Augmented, Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Dedicated Harmonic Targeting

A web of hair-thin wires stretches from the corners of the Alchemical's eyes down to her jaw line, rapidly processing information with every attack to progressively zero in on her target.

The Alchemical makes (Perception – 2) **decisive** attacks against a single enemy. If an attack misses, she adds a bonus die on each subsequent attack. This bonus stacks, but it resets if the Alchemical hits. Her Initiative doesn't reset on a successful attack — instead, she loses Initiative equal to her successes on the

damage roll, to a minimum of her base Initiative.

Reset: Once per scene unless reset by crashing an enemy with an attack that benefits from aiming.

Submodules

Optimal Firing Solution (3xp): This Charm's dice bonus isn't reset when the Alchemical hits an enemy.

All-Inclusive Targeting Calculations

Cost: 4m, 1wp; **Mins:** Perception 6, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Dedicated Harmonic Targeting

A hologlyphic projector stud over the Alchemical's eyebrow displays anticipatory simulation data for a target's movements, perfectly synchronizing her aim with him to strike without possibility for error.

To use this Charm, the Alchemical must benefit from two consecutive aim actions against an enemy whose Initiative is lower than hers. She makes an undodgeable **decisive** attack, adding her attack roll extra successes as dice of damage.

Reset: Once per scene, unless reset by crashing an enemy whose Initiative was higher than the Alchemical's.

Submodules

Infinite Vector Calculation (6xp; Essence 5) (+1wp): The Alchemical may pay a one-Willpower surcharge to use this Charm with only one aim action.

Senses

Chemical Analysis System

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Perception 2, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Transpuissant Perception Upgrade

A coiling apparatus lined with olfactory microreceptors runs from the side of the Alchemical's nose through her sinus cavity, augmenting her sense of smell.

The Alchemical converts dice from Transpuissant Perception Upgrade to automatic successes on scent-based Perception rolls.

Additionally, upon purchasing this Charm, the Alchemical's player chooses six experience points' worth of submodules for it.

Special activation rules: The Alchemical can use this Charm reflexively together with Optical Enhancement or Tympanic Receptor Nodes.

Submodules

Contaminant Filters (3xp): The Alchemical adds two automatic successes on rolls to detect poison. If she's about to ingest poisoned food or drink, she automatically rolls to detect it before she can consume it.

Long-Range Detection (3xp): The Alchemical can smell scents from (Perception x100) feet away. This is Augmented. A Perception 5, Essence 3 repurchase increases this to (Perception x500) feet.

Residual Trace Analysis (3xp): The Alchemical can determine precisely how long ago the source of a scent was present by gauging its dispersion through the air.

Scent Tracking System (3xp): The Alchemical adds two automatic successes on scent-based tracking rolls.

Pheromonic Sensors (3xp; Perception 3): The Alchemical can recognize individuals she's familiar with by their scent alone. If a character employs a disguise enhanced by magic or specifically devised to mask his scent, she adds two automatic successes on her roll against it instead. With a Perception 5, Essence 3 repurchase, she no longer needs to be familiar with her subject, as long as she's previously caught his scent.

Essence Respiration Filter (3xp; Perception 4, Essence 3, any four submodules): The cost of any Perception Charms the Alchemical uses on purely scent-based rolls is reduced by two motes each.

Trans-Olfactory Detection (3xp; Perception 5; Essence 3, Long-Range Detection, Residual Trace Analysis): The Alchemical can detect the presence of odorless substances through the way they displace air or dilute familiar scents.

Sustained Sensory Augmentation

Sustained Sensory Augmentation (6xp; Perception 4, Essence 3, any two submodules) (+1wp): This submodule can be purchased for any of Chemical Analysis System, Optical Enhancement, or Tympanic Receptor Nodes. A single purchase enhances all three Charms. The Alchemical can pay a one-Willpower surcharge to extend a Charm's duration to Indefinite. If she uses multiple Charms together, she only needs to pay this surcharge once for all of them.

Optical Enhancement

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Perception 2, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Transpuissant Perception Upgrade

The Alchemical's vision is augmented by an array of ocular implants.

The Alchemical converts dice from Transpuissant Perception Upgrade to automatic successes on vision-based rolls.

Additionally, upon purchasing this Charm, the Alchemical chooses six experience points' worth of submodules.

Special activation rules: The Alchemical can use this Charm reflexively together with Chemical Analysis System or Tympanic Receptor Nodes.

Submodules

Diagnostic Overlay (3xp): The Alchemical can complete diagnosis rolls with any Attribute instantly as long as her patient has visible symptoms.

Flash Shutters (3xp): The Alchemical ignores penalties from intense light and similar forms of visual overstimulation. She's also immune to being blinded by them.

Microscopic Lens (3xp): The Alchemical can focus her vision on small details and magnify them. She adds two automatic successes on rolls that benefit her ability to perceive details normally too small to be seen by the naked eye.

Soulgem Transponder Overlay (3xp): Scanning lenses detect and identify soulgems, marking them with bright, geometric symbols. This adds a non-Charm die on vision-based rolls opposing the Stealth of characters with a soulgem. The Alchemical automatically sees through attempts to disguise soulgems unless they're enhanced by magic.

Telescopic Lens (3xp): The range at which the Alchemical can make out small details increases to (Perception x50) feet. This is Augmented. A Perception 5, Essence 3 repurchase increases this to (Perception x500) feet.

Light Intensification Filters (3xp; Perception 3): The Alchemical ignores penalties from poor lighting or darkness. However, there must be some light to amplify, denying her this benefit in total darkness. If exposed to bright light, the Alchemical suffers a -1 penalty on all rolls unless she has Flash Shutters.

Thermal Vision (6xp; Perception 4, Light Intensification Filters): Retractable ruby lenses let the Alchemical see heat instead of light. While using thermal vision, she adds two automatic successes on vision-based Awareness rolls to anything significantly warmer than its surroundings. She can see heat sources even in total darkness. However, she can't make out visual details, like recognizing someone's appearance. The Alchemical can change between modes reflexively.

Ultraperipheral Awareness (6xp; Perception 4, Essence 2): A cluster of jeweled receptors set in an arc around the Alchemical's head affords her 360-degree vision. The Defense penalty she suffers from surprise attacks is reduced by one. This doesn't apply against enemies who are beyond her visual range or entirely obscured from her sight.

Mass-Penetrating Scan (6xp; Perception 7, Essence 3) (5m): The Alchemical can pay five motes to selectively see through solid matter for an instant. She rolls (Perception + Awareness) as a miscellaneous action that can't be flurried. She can see through any obstructions as long as it spans no more than one range band. However, the difficulty to notice things is increased by +2 for any obstruction thicker than a few inches, or +4 for the thickest barriers that she can see through. Magical obstructions, like an artifact container or a manse's walls, add an additional +2 difficulty.

Tympanic Receptor Nodes

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Perception 2, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Transpuissant Perception Upgrade

Bulky implants in the Alchemical's eustachian tube augment her range of hearing beyond mortal limits.

The Alchemical converts dice from Transpuissant Perception Upgrade to automatic successes on hearing-based Perception rolls.

Additionally, upon purchasing this Charm, the Alchemical's player chooses six experience points' worth of submodules for it.

Special activation rules: The Alchemical can use this Charm reflexively together with Optical Enhancement or Tympanic Receptor Nodes.

Submodules

Amplifier Circuit (3xp): The Alchemical ignores penalties for trying to make out quiet sounds, like eavesdropping on a whispered conversation.

Enhanced Sensitivity (3xp): The range at which the Alchemical hear clearly increases to (Perception x 50) feet. This is Augmented. A Perception 5, Essence 3 repurchase increases this to (Perception x 500) feet.

Multi-Frequency Scan (3xp): The Alchemical can hear sounds that are beyond the range of human hearing.

Volume Filter (3xp): The Alchemical ignores penalties from loud noises or other forms of auditory overstimulation. She can't be deafened or otherwise impeded by them.

Vibrational Sensor (3xp; Perception 3): The Alchemical can hear clearly through walls and other barriers, suffering no penalty to do so.

Echolocation Navigation System (6xp; Perception 4, Vibrational Sensor) (+2m, 1wp): The Alchemical can pay a two-mote, one-Willpower surcharge to become capable of echolocation. She can "see" things within medium range, visualizing them as black- and-white images. Poor visual conditions don't penalize the roll, and it extends through walls and similar obstructions as long as they aren't airtight. This Charm's range increases to long if the Alchemical has Enhanced Reception.

Signal Interception Routines (3xp; Perception 5, Essence 2, Multi-Frequency Scan) (1wp): When a character within range of the Alchemical's hearing sends or receives a message through telepathy, prayer, or similar supernatural means, the Alchemical can pay one Willpower to intercept it, rolling (Perception + [Awareness or Occult]) roll to intercept it. The difficulty is 3 plus the highest Essence rating between the message's sender and its recipient. If she succeeds, she can listen in on that channel of communication for the rest of the scene.

Harmonic Essence Efficiency (3xp; Perception 4, Essence 3, any four submodules): The cost of any Perception Charms the Alchemical uses on purely hearing-based rolls is reduced by two motes each.

Expanded Input Processor

Cost: 4m (2m); **Mins:** Perception 3, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Any one of Chemical Analysis System, Optical Enhancement, or Tympanic Receptor Nodes

The Alchemical's sensory enhancements are upgraded with bulky sensor arrays that cover portions of her face.

The Alchemical doubles 9s on an Awareness, Investigation, or Survival roll using the sense enhanced by any of this Charm's prerequisites that she has installed. She ignores wound penalties and penalties from fatigue or deprivation.

While using the relevant prerequisite, this Charm's cost is reduced by two motes.

Submodules

Perfect Focus Calibration (6xp) (+2m): The Alchemical can pay a two-mote surcharge to extend this Charm's duration until her next turn. If she uses the Perception Excellency on the same roll, its dice bonus also applies on subsequent rolls she makes during that duration.

Transhuman Sensory Upgrades (6xp): While all three prerequisites are active, this Charm can enhance any Perception roll. As long as the Alchemical rolls at least one 9 or 10, she adds a non-Charm success on the roll.

Tactical Laser Security Grid

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Perception 3, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Expanded Input Processor

Ruby micro-lenses project beams of Essence-amplified light, scanning the Alchemical's surroundings,

The Alchemical adds two dice on her Awareness rolls opposing the Stealth of enemies within short range, and ignores any penalties from darkness or poor visibility. She also gains this bonus on Join Battle rolls as long as at there's at least one concealed enemy within this Charm's range. She doesn't gain these benefits against enemies who are invisible.

The laser grid imposes a -2 penalty on the Alchemical's own Stealth rolls.

Submodules

Infrared Emission (3xp): The lasers aren't visible, and no longer penalize the Alchemical's Stealth.

Laser Scanning Module (3xp; Perception 5, Essence 3): The Alchemical can discern the approximate size, shape, and speed of anything moving within this Charm's range.

Extended Sweep Protocol (3xp; Perception 5, Essence 3): This Charm's range extends to medium.

Relentless Tracking Protocol

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Perception 3, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Transpuissant Perception Upgrade

Pattern recognition algorithms encoded in the Alchemical's sensorium rapidly analyze her surroundings for traces of her quarry.

The Alchemical rerolls 1s on a tracking roll until they cease to appear, and can roll with Awareness or Investigation instead of Survival. If she's tracking a threat to one of her Major or Defining Intimacies, she rerolls 2s as well.

Submodules

Icon of Implacable Justice (3xp): If the Alchemical is tracking a threat to an Intimacy, she may make that Intimacy apparent to anyone who interacts with her in the course of her pursuit.

Void Hunter Reticule (3xp): The Alchemical always rerolls 2s when tracking gremlins, fae, and the undead. If they threaten a community, she also adds (Intimacy) dice.

Magnetoreceptive Guidance System

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Perception 4, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Augmented

Duration: One day

Prerequisite Charms: Transpuissant Perception Upgrade

White circuitry studded with magnetite crystals at the base of the Alchemical's skull expands her range of senses, allowing her to perceive magnetic forces.

The Alchemical can sense magnetic fields and magnetized objects within medium range. This includes metal objects — including other Alchemicals and metallic machine spirits — as well as anything that creates a magnetic field, which can be found here and there throughout Autochthonia. This sense is independent of other senses, letting her ignore penalties due to poor visibility, blindness, or similar sensory impediments.

The Alchemical adds (Perception/2, rounded up) dice on Awareness rolls to detect metal objects and magnetic fields, and on any other rolls that would benefit from this awareness, even if they're made with

a different Attribute. This includes rolls opposign the Stealth of characters made of metal or carrying any but the smallest of metal objects.

The Alchemical's attunement to magnetic fields also gives her a heightened ability to navigate the Expanse of Metal, and potentially other environs that are predominantly made of metal. She adds (Perception/2, rounded up) on navigation rolls while traveling through such regions, and can always sense the rough distance and direction to Autochthonia's Core.

Submodules

Bioelectric Sensors (6xp): The Alchemical can use this Charm to detect any living creature.

Mobile Sensory Drone

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Perception 4, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Transpuissant Perception Upgrade

The Alchemical's eye socket swings open to deploy a surveillance drone, an ovoid automaton that scuttles out on spindly, needle-tipped legs.

The Alchemical deploys a drone that's linked to her senses. It's mindless and incapable of independent action, but the Alchemical can control it while she's meditating or otherwise inactive. She perceives the world through the drone's senses, letting her notice details its scanners failed to recognize. She can use her Charms to enhance these rolls normally. Otherwise, the drone uses its own dice pools when the Alchemical directs it to act, and she can't use her magic to enhance its actions.

If the Alchemical ends this Charm or the drone is destroyed, it dissolves into Essence. It reforms within the Alchemical after a few hours. If she ends this Charm while the drone is present, it crawls back into its housing instead of needing to reform.

Submodules

Autonomous Subroutine (3xp): Drones are capable of independent action, with intellectual faculties akin to an intelligent, well-trained animal or young child. When not under the Alchemical's direct control, they carry out whatever instructions she gave them last. They lose the Mindless Merit, but their Ties to the Alchemical can't be altered by social influence and they can't form new Intimacies.

Communication Relay (3xp): The Alchemical can broadcast her voice from the drone while controlling it, letting her communicate and use social influence. She uses her own traits for such influence rolls, but can't enhance them with magic.

Extra Drones (3xp): The Alchemical gains an additional drone. She can stack this Charm to deploy multiple drones, but can only control one at a time. Drones past the first only cost two motes. The Alchemical can purchase this submodule up to (Essence) times.

Hover Drive (3xp): Drones are capable of flight, with a pool of seven dice for aerial maneuvering.

Optical Camouflage (3xp): Drones increase their Stealth pool to ten dice. They can enter concealment

without needing a hiding spot.

Rapid Scouting Upgrade (3xp): Drones double 9s on movement actions.

Reinforced Construction (3xp): Drones add +1 soak and gain an additional –1 health level and –2 level. This submodule can be purchased up to (Essence x2) times.

Upgraded Senses (3xp): Drones double 9s on Perception rolls. With a Perception 5, Essence 3 repurchase, they double 8s.

Playback Upload (3xp): Drones record everything they perceive, even when not controlled by the Alchemical. If she ends this Charm by returning the drone to its housing, this recording is integrated into her mind. Reviewing the recording takes the same amount of time as the events themselves, but the Alchemical can pinpoint known events of interest with a (Perception + [Awareness or Investigation]) roll. The recording is lost if the drone is destroyed or the Alchemical ends this Charm remotely.

Sentry Protocol (6xp; Perception 5, Autonomous Subroutine, Playback Upload): If something of interest to the Alchemical occurs within range of a drone's senses while she isn't controlling it, the drone transmits a signal alerting her to this.

Self-Destruct (3xp) (5m): While controlling a drone, the Alchemical may pay five motes to detonate it in a burst of Essence. The blast is a one-time environmental hazard that extends out to close range from the drone, with difficulty 5 and Damage (Perception – 2). This is Augmented. The drone is destroyed, ending this Charm.

Mass Surveillance Protocol (6xp; Perception 5, Essence 3, Extra Drones) (+1wp): The Alchemical can pay a one-Willpower surcharge to deploy all her drones with a single use of this Charm.

Drone

Essence: 1; **Willpower:** 1; **Join Battle:** 4 dice

Health Levels: –0/–1/–2/–4/Incap.

Actions: Climb: 7 dice; Investigation: 7 dice; Senses: 10 dice; Stealth: 5 dice;
Tracking: 7 dice.

Appearance 1, Resolve 1, Guile 3

Combat

Attacks: None

Combat Movement: 8 dice

Evasion: 4; **Parry:** 0

Soak/Hardness: 4/0

Intimacies

Defining: The Alchemical (Obedience)

Merits

Automaton: The drone is immune to poison, disease, fatigue, and fear. It doesn't need to eat, drink, breathe, or sleep.

Mindless: Drones are unaffected by social influence.

Tiny Creature: Drones add +2 Evasion against larger characters. Such characters suffer a two-success penalty on rolls to notice the drone.

Wall-Walker: Drones can move unimpeded up and down sheer vertical surfaces and scuttle across tunnel roofs and other inverted surfaces.

Sensory Overcharge Injector

Cost: 2m, 1wp; **Mins:** Perception 7, Essence 3

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Augmented, Internal

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Expanded Input Processor

Synthetic neurotransmitters flood the Alchemical's sensory cortex. The spent cartridge pops out of a port in her skull as she sees the world with redoubled focus.

The Alchemical makes a Perception roll twice, keeping the higher result. She need only pay the cost of any Charms enhancing the rolls once. She converts up to (Perception) dice added by Charms to a non-Charms bonus. This also applies to automatic successes, which count as two dice each.

If both of the Alchemical's rolls are successful, she gains one Willpower.

Reset: Once per scene.

Scrutiny

Interpolative Situational Analysis Processor

Cost: —; **Mins:** Perception 2, Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

A webbing of internal cables links the Alchemical's sensory organs to an artificial cognitive cluster in her brain, running her sensory data through its logic filter to identify relevant details.

Whenever the Alchemical could gain relevant information from a case scene or profile character action, her augmented senses reveal this fact to her. The Storyteller should give her player a vague description of why it would be useful — for example, that there's a hidden trap she could detect with a successful case scene roll, or that someone present in the scene is behaving suspiciously enough to warrant a profile character roll.

This Charm is limited by the Alchemical's perception — while she need not consciously notice a detail, it must be within her field of vision, or a comparable range for other senses.

Persona-Modeling Simulations

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Perception 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Internal, Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Alchemical has no need for empathy — the soulsteel microprocessors entangled with her mirror neurons are far more accurate.

The Alchemical doubles 9s on a profile character or read intentions roll, and converts dice from Transpuissant Perception Upgrade to automatic successes.

Submodules

Analytical Evidence Sweep (3xp): The Alchemical can use this Charm on case scene rolls by stunting her psychological profiling of the subject.

Discarded Model Recalibration (3xp): The Alchemical can use this Charm on rolls to see through someone's disguise when he acts out of character.

Synthetic Empathy (3xp): The Alchemical's read intentions rolls aren't penalized by Clarity (p. XX).

Clarified Psychodynamics (3xp; Perception 3, Synthetic Empathy): Rolls enhanced by this Charm receive bonus dice from the Alchemical's Clarity.

Behavioral Modeling Processors (6xp; Perception 4) (3xp) (+2m): For a two-mote surcharge, a successful roll also reveals a relevant Intimacy that the target has. For case scene rolls, it only provides a hint at what that Intimacy might be.

Heresy Detection Scanners

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Perception 3, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Persona-Modeling Simulations

Blue jade scanner nodes implanted below the Alchemical's eyes analyze her sensory input, flagging subtle signs of dissidence.

When the Alchemical makes a read intentions or profile character roll, her target's Guile is penalized by relevant negative Ties toward communities that the Alchemical serves. Principles based on dissidence, resistance to authority, or opposition to the status quo can also penalize Guile.

Submodules

Champion's Vigil (3xp): This Charm applies to negative Ties toward members of a community the Alchemical serves.

Antithetical Signal Interception (3xp; Essence 3): This Charm applies to Intimacies that oppose one of the

Alchemical's Major or Defining Intimacies.

Ocular Threat Assessment

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Perception 3, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Heresy Detection Scanners

A soulsteel reticle in the Alchemical's eye bypasses her optic nerve and connects directly to her threat-recognition wetware, heightening her awareness of sabotage and dissent.

The Alchemical evaluates whether someone holds hostile intentions to a community she has a positive Tie for. She makes a special read intentions roll with (Perception + [Awareness, Investigation, or Socialize]), adding (higher of Essence or 3) non-Charm dice. Success reveals if he has any hostile intentions toward it, whether short-term or long-term. This doesn't reveal what those intentions are, but the Alchemical learns whichever of the target's Intimacies is most relevant to his agenda.

If the Alchemical has the Champion's Vigil submodule for Heresy Detection Scanners, she can also scan for hostile intentions toward individual community members.

Submodules

Hostile Recognition Scan (6xp; Essence 2): The Alchemical can use this Charm to evaluate whether a target has hostile intentions toward her.

Panopticon Oversight Array (6xp; Perception 4, Essence 2): The Alchemical can pay a one-Willpower surcharge to target all characters she can perceive with her roll.

Behavioral Profile Library

Cost: 6m, 1wp; **Mins:** Perception 4, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Augmented, Internal, Mute

Duration: One day

Prerequisite Charms: Interpolative Situational Analysis Processor, Persona-Modeling Simulations

A rapid-access disk in the Alchemical's brain sifts through the evidence to better understand her suspect. The subtle whirl of the spinning disk makes her deep attention obvious.

The Alchemical can use this Charm after succeeding on a read intentions or profile character roll. She must spend at least a scene interacting directly with her target, even if other magic would normally waive such limitations. She banks a pool of non-Charm dice equal to her total successes on the roll, plus an additional (Essence) dice. She can bank up to a maximum of (Essence + Perception) dice.

The Alchemical can add up to (Perception/2, rounded up) of these dice when she takes one of the following actions with any Attribute:

- Perception rolls against the profiled character. This can't enhance attack rolls or other rolls for harmful effects.
- Influence rolls against the profiled character that involve the Alchemical's understanding of him.
- Disguise rolls to impersonate the profiled character and influence rolls to pass herself off as him.
- Strategic Maneuver and Naval Maneuver rolls opposing the profiled character.

Reset: Once per day.

Submodules

Profile-Refining Algorithm (6xp): The Alchemical may expend three dice to ask the profiled character's player a question against him. She's limited to information that she could conceivably glean from the evidence she's encountered and the interactions she's had, but with considerable leeway for her superhuman augmented senses. She can only ask one question per scene.

Efficient Behavior Calculations (3xp, Profile-Refining Algorithm): When the Alchemical succeeds on an influence roll, read intentions roll, or profile character roll against the profiled character, she can ask a question with Profile-Refining Algorithm without it counting toward the once-per-scene limit.

Routine Predictive Algorithm (3xp): The Alchemical may expend one die to determine whether the profiled character is present in the scene. The Storyteller should prompt her player when this is an option.

Forensic Reconstruction Modeling (6xp; Perception 5): The Alchemical can use this Charm after a successful case scene roll to examine someone's belongings, physical evidence of their activities, or similar traces. The pool of dice she receives is halved, rounded up, if she doesn't have access to a significant amount of evidence or items of personal importance to the profiled character.

Noetic Profile Archive (3xp; Perception 5) (+4m): Once per story, the Alchemical can pay a four-mote surcharge to extend this Charm's duration to Indefinite.

Deception Recognition System

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Perception 4, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Interpolative Situational Analysis Processor, Persona-Modeling Simulations

A pair of metal nodules just in front of each ear scan for the biochemical signature and telltale vibrations associated with willful deception.

The Alchemical can discern whether someone is speaking the truth with a reflexive read intentions action, rolling (Perception + [Awareness, Investigation, or Socialize]) with (Essence) automatic successes to test a statement. Success reveals whether the statement is a lie. If it's a half-truth, success reveals which parts are false.

Once the Alchemical catches a character lying, she doesn't need to roll for subsequent uses of this Charm against him that scene. He can still resist with effects that would let his Guile automatically succeed, but the Alchemical still makes a roll, though she only adds (Essence) bonus dice.

Imperfection Analysis Module

Cost: 1m, 1wp; **Mins:** Perception 3, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Augmented

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Transpuissant Perception Upgrade

A crystalline implant in the Alchemical's right iris superimposes a targeting reticule in her field of vision, scanning for any flaw in her students' form — or that of her enemies.

The Alchemical can use this Charm when she observes a character make an (Attribute + Ability) roll, use a static value, or train an Ability. She rolls (Perception + that Ability) to analyze that character's technique, at a difficulty of (his Ability + 1). If successful, she finds a flaw in his form.

If the Alchemical uses this insight to help train the character to overcome the flaw, she lets him incur experience debt (p. XX) to raise Ability by up to (Alchemical's Essence) dots. This can't raise his rating above her own. The training time necessary is divided by (Perception) if she supervises him.

If the Alchemical exploits the flaw, she adds an automatic success on rolls opposing that character's rolls and static values with the chosen Ability. If he rolls that Ability against one of her static values, she adds a +1 non-Charms bonus. This applies to actions with all Attributes.

Submodules

Accelerated Technique Refinement (3xp): This Charm divides training times by (Essence + Perception).

Incisive Critique Calculations (3xp): If the Alchemical successfully opposes the character when he uses the chosen Ability, she may treat her roll's successes or her static value as an influence roll against him. It instills a Tie toward the Alchemical, with an emotional context of respect, fascination, or rivalry, chosen by her. If she uses this in response to an attack, it counts as a counterattack. She can do so once per scene.

Meticulous Correction of Error (3xp; Perception 5): The Alchemical's student can purchase an additional two dots with experience debt.

Systemic Imperfection Regimen (3xp; Perception 5): The Alchemical's student can also gain dots of Attributes relevant to the chosen Ability. Each counts as two dots toward the limit on what he can purchase with experience debt. He can also learn any specialties the Alchemical has in that Ability, which count as one dot each.

Encoded Point of Failure (3xp; Essence 2): The Alchemical can use this Charm to attune herself to the flaw of a character she's previously trained with it, without requiring any interaction or roll.

Empathic Espionage Safeguards

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Perception 3, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Internal, Mute

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Heresy Detection Scanners

Adamant-reinforced mirror neurons give the Alchemical a glimpse of herself through another's eyes, granting her insight into her observer.

The Alchemical opposes a roll against her Guile with her own read intentions or profile character roll. She must be able to perceive the opposing character to do so. If she succeeds, the opposed roll fails, and she uncovers information as usual.

Submodules

Predictive Masking (3xp): The Alchemical can use this Charm against characters she isn't aware of, although this doesn't remove the Guile penalty for being unaware of him. Success reveals no information beyond the fact that she's being observed.

Empathic Scanning (3xp; Perception 5, Essence 2, Predictive Masking): If the Alchemical succeeds on a roll against a concealed character, she gains a rough sense of his generation location, adding two automatic successes on her next Awareness roll to spot him this scene.

Panopticon of Mirrors (6xp; Perception 5, Essence 3, Empathic Scanning) (+1wp): For a one-Willpower surcharge, a success roll opposing a concealed character also reveals information as usual for a read intentions or profile character roll. The Alchemical forms this mental model of her unknown observer based on details gleaned from the slightest sensory cues.

Expanded Surveillance Analytics

Cost: 6m; **Mins:** Perception 5, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Heresy Detection Scanners

Augmented sensory systems bolted to the Alchemical's Heresy Detection Scanners allow for wide-ranging scans for signs of heresy and dissidence.

The Alchemical posits an Intimacy or a short-term intention, like "sympathy for dissidents" or "sabotaging the factory," and rolls read intentions against all characters she perceives to discern whether they share that intention or Intimacy.

Reset: Once per scene.

Submodules

Ongoing Surveillance Protocol (6xp): If no character has the chosen intention or Intimacy, the Alchemical can choose another intention or Intimacy to search for, using the results of her original roll.

Machine-Mind Hyperprocessor

Cost: 15m, 1wp; **Mins:** Perception 8, Essence 5

Type: Simple

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Behavioral Profile Library, Expanded Surveillance Analytics, Ocular Threat Assessment

The Alchemical's entire sensory cortex has been replaced with a starmetal neuroprosthesis, its every cell a microprocessor linked into a mind-expanding array.

While investigating a character, the Alchemical can use this Charm once she's uncovered (suspect's Essence) clues with Investigation rolls. She rolls (Perception + Investigation) at difficulty 5. The difficulty is reduced by one for each clue over the suspect's Essence that the Alchemical's uncovered.

If successful, the Alchemical's mind replays all of her sensory input throughout the course of the investigation, analyzing it for previously unnoticed evidence and drawing connections between seemingly unrelated events. The Storyteller reveals a clue that will aid in the investigation, plus an additional clue for each extra success.

This Charm won't necessarily solve the entire mystery with one good roll — the clues she receives should either involve the evidence she examines and how it relates to what she already knows, or take the form of a lead on a person, place, or event around which Interpolative Situational Analysis Processor would lead to relevant information. If the Storyteller runs out of clues to give, the Alchemical's player can propose theories on these topics for him to confirm or deny instead.

Reset: Once per story.

Metaphysical

Cross-Phase Scanner

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Perception 2, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Crystalline lenses etched with starmetal circuitry slide down over the Alchemical's eyes, expanding her perception to higher frequencies.

The Alchemical can perceive dematerialized characters.

This Charm's cost is reduced by one mote for each of Chemical Analysis System, Optical Enhancement, and Tympanic Receptor Node that the Alchemical has active.

Submodules

Conceptual Proximity Alarm (6xp): Even while this Charm is inactive, the Alchemical can sense when a dematerialized character comes within range of her senses.

Essence Sight Oculars (6xp; Perception 4, Essence 2) (3m): The Alchemical can pay three to perceive the world's Essence flows for an instant. She rolls (Perception + Occult) to identify a spell being shaped or an Evocation in active use, at a difficulty of that effect's minimum Essence. This is a miscellaneous action that can't be flurried. She can detect the presence of ongoing spells and workings and identify their function without a roll.

Infected Pattern Scan (3xp; Perception 5, Essence Sight Oculars): The Alchemical can use Essence Sight Oculars to detect possession. The difficulty is the possessing spirit's Essence.

Psyche-Probing Scan (3xp; Infected Pattern Scan): The Alchemical can use Infected Pattern Scan to detect Derangements, Psyche effects, Shaping effects, and sorcerous curses. The difficulty is the Essence of the character who used the effect.

Multiphase Divinity Regulator

Cost: 1m; **Mins:** Perception 2, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Uniform

Duration: One tick

Prerequisite Charms: Cross-Phase Scanner

The Alchemical attunes herself to otherworldly frequencies in a surge of prismatic light, radiating from a nanomolecular coating of starmetal bonded to her skin.

The Alchemical can attack and otherwise physically interact with dematerialized characters. If she can't perceive them, she suffers a -3 penalty on rolls for such actions.

While this Charm is active, dematerialized characters can physically interact with the Alchemical — for example, with counterattacks or clashes. She can't end this Charm prematurely to avoid this.

Submodules

Void Hammer Engine (6xp): A spirit incapacitated by a **decisive** attack is permanently destroyed. However, this can't destroy machine spirits unless they've been corrupted by gremlin syndrome.

Stamina

Offense

Toxin Synthesis Injector

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Stamina 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Augmented, Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Soulsteel microneedles implanted across the Alchemical's skin erupt outward, deploying poison from internal reserves.

When the Alchemical makes an unarmed **decisive** attack, she injects a damaged enemy with synthesized poison. It has Damage 2i/round, Duration (Stamina) rounds, and a -2 penalty.

This Charm can also envenom weapons created with Integrated Arsenal System (p. XX).

Submodules

Envenomed Arsenal Upgrade (6xp; Stamina 3): This Charm is compatible with weapons. The Alchemical dispenses poison and reflexively applies to her weapon.

Concentrated Injection (3xp; Stamina 3, Essence 2): The poison's duration increases by one round. This submodule can be repurchased at Stamina 4, Essence 3.

Lethal Formulation (3xp; Stamina 3, Essence 2): The poison's damage increases by one. This submodule can be repurchased at Stamina 4, Essence 3.

Numbing Admixture (3xp; Stamina 3, Essence 2): The poison's penalty increases by one. This submodule can be repurchased at Stamina 4, Essence 3.

Ultimate Toxin Synthesis (3xp; Concentrated Injection, Lethal Formulation, Numbing Admixture): The poison's duration can't be reduced below one, no matter how many successes the target rolls.

Chemical Fog Generator

Cost: 4m, 1wp; **Mins:** Stamina 4, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Augmented

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Toxin Synthesis Injector

A bulky apparatus in the Alchemical's torso churns out thick streamers of black smoke from vent tubes and exhaust ports across her body.

The Alchemical dispenses a cloud of poisonous chemical smoke, which extends out to close range from her. It imposes a –2 penalty on vision-dependent actions, and a two-success penalty on scent-based Perception rolls. The smoke is an inhaled poison, with Damage 2B/hour, Duration (Stamina) hours, and a –1 penalty. The cloud spreads slowly enough that characters caught within it when the Alchemical first uses it—including the Alchemical herself—don’t roll against the poison until the end of the round.

The Alchemical can use this Charm on multiple successive turns to dispense a greater quantity of smoke, expanding the cloud’s range by one band for each additional use, up to a maximum of medium. She waives the Willpower cost of uses past the first.

Submodules

Clandestine Toxin System (6xp; Essence 2): The Alchemical can dispense poison as a colorless, odorless gas rather than a smoke cloud. It doesn’t impede visibility or smell, but can only be noticed with a successful (Perception + Awareness) roll at a difficulty of (Alchemical’s Manipulation). This is Augmented. Clandestine Toxin System compatible with submodules that let the Alchemical deploy alternative poisons.

Tear Gas (6xp): The Alchemical can dispense a yellowish tear gas, a poison with Damage 2i/round (B in Crash), Duration (Stamina) rounds, and a –3 penalty. The penalty subtracts successes instead of dice from vision-based Perception rolls. Even after the poison’s duration expires and it stops dealing damage, its penalty remains for up to an hour thereafter.

Vectored Toxin Deployment (6xp; Stamina 5, Essence 2): The Alchemical can use this Charm to make a **decisive** attack with one of her ranged weapons, gathering plumes of chemical smoke into a tight ball that surrounds her projectile. If her attack hits, the smoke cloud forms around him. If the attack benefits from aiming, each round of aiming increases the cloud’s range by one band.

Industrial Haze Dispenser (3xp; Essence 3): This Charm’s maximum range increases to long.

Nerve Gas (6xp; Stamina 6, Essence 3): The Alchemical can release a deadly green haze that attacks the nervous system, a poison with Damage 1L/minute, Duration (Stamina) minutes, and a –4 penalty.

Unbound Essence Booster

Cost: —; **Mins:** Stamina 3, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Augmented, Perilous

Duration: Until next turn

Prerequisite Charms: Transpuissant Stamina Upgrade.

A whirring dynamo mounted on the Alchemical’s Essence reservoir is supercharged with anima, flooding the Champion’s body and soul with a surge of divine power.

The Alchemical rolls (Stamina) dice and gains peripheral motes equal to her successes. This includes bonus dice from Transpuissant Stamina Upgrade, but can’t be enhanced by other effects. The Alchemical’s anima banner increases by one level for every five motes she gains.

These motes can only be spent on Alchemical Charms if they’re from an Attributes that the Champion has Transpuissant (Attribute) Upgrade installed for. They can be spent on Martial Arts Charms, Evocations,

and other effects as usual. The motes are lost if they aren't spent by the start of her next turn.

Reset: Once per day.

Submodules:

Machine-God Engine (3xp): The Alchemical converts dice from Transpuissant Stamina Upgrade to automatic successes on the roll.

Anima Stabilizers (3xp; Essence 2): The Alchemical can gain personal motes instead of peripheral. If she does, this Charm doesn't raise her anima unless she wants it to.

Auxiliary Essence Storage Unit (6xp; Stamina 4, Essence 2): The Alchemical retains these motes until the end of the scene.

Godhead Surge Capacitor (3xp; Stamina 5, Essence 3, Machine-God Engine): The Alchemical doubles 9s on the roll. At bonfire anima, she doubles 8s.

Thermoconductive Ignition Sheath

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Stamina 3, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Augmented, Dual

Duration: Until next turn

Prerequisite Charms: Transpuissant Stamina Augmentation

A system of red jade meshing connected to thermal sinks allows the Alchemical to superheat her body.

The Alchemical can use this Charm on her turn to superheat herself, becoming so hot that flammable materials that come into contact with her might ignite. She gains the following benefits:

- Her unarmed attacks add (Stamina/2, rounded up) Overwhelming on **withering** attacks and double 10s on **decisive** damage rolls.
- Successfully grappling an enemy or spending a subsequent round grappling deals one die of lethal **decisive** damage to him, ignoring Hardness.
- Enemies likewise suffer this damage if they spend a round grappling the Alchemical, hit her with an unarmed attack, or successfully block or clash one of her attacks unarmed.
- She adds (Stamina) dice on rolls to resist cold-based environmental hazards.

If the Alchemical suffers **decisive** damage from a cold-based attack or environmental hazard, this Charm ends and can't be used for the rest of the scene. It can be reset with a stunt involving exposure to significant sources of heat, like charging through a bonfire or dodging a thermal blast.

Submodules

Divine Furnace Arsenal (3xp; Stamina 4): The Alchemical can use this Charm with close-range weapons made of metal.

Molten Slag Fusillade (3xp, Divine Furnace Arsenal): The Alchemical can use this Charm with ranged weapons that fire metal projectiles (and that aren't set aflame by her touch). It can also enhance ranged

attacks made up of Essence or energy, like an Essence Pulse Cannon (p. XX).

Rapid Ignition Flare (3xp; Stamina 4): The Alchemical isn't limited to using this Charm on her turn.

Reactive Thermal Countermeasure (3xp; Essence 2, Rapid Ignition Flare): When an enemy attacks the Alchemical, she can use Rapid Ignition Flare to activate this Charm after the attack roll.

Extended Flash Burn (6xp; Stamina 5, Essence 2): Enemies take damage whenever they attack the Alchemical at close range regardless of what weapons they use or whether they hit. This doesn't apply to blocking or clashing the Alchemical's attacks.

Hyperthermal Crucible Core (6xp; Stamina 5, Essence 3) (+1m, 1wp): The Alchemical can pay a one-mote, one-Willpower surcharge to extend this Charm's duration to one scene. This isn't compatible with Rapid Ignition Flare.

Caltrop Deployment Fabricator

Cost: 3m, 2i; **Mins:** Stamina 4, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Perilous

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Transpuissant Stamina Upgrade

The Alchemical launches self-assembling caltrops from retractable panels in her palms and forearms, seeding the battlefield with dangerous spikes.

The Alchemical launches caltrops out to short range from her. The covered area becomes difficult terrain. Characters who fail a movement action while moving through it suffer one die of lethal damage, which ignores Hardness. Battle groups suffer (Size/2, rounded up) dice of damage instead. If a character crosses through the caltrops with an unrolled action, he must make a difficulty 2 (Dexterity + Athletics) roll to avoid taking damage. (The movement penalty from difficult terrain applies to this roll). The Alchemical and her allies aren't immune to this.

A character can spend a miscellaneous action to clear caltrops from an area equivalent to what he could cover by moving a single range band. However, if he does so with his bare hands, he automatically takes damage as above.

Characters wearing medium or heavy armor that covers their feet or who have similarly durable protection can cross through the caltrops more easily. The number of damage dice rolled against them can't exceed the number of 1s on their roll.

Submodules

Adaptive Spike Interface (3xp): The Alchemical, her allies, and any other characters she designates aren't affected by the caltrops.

Barbed Hook Design (6xp) (+3m) For a three-mote surcharge, an enemy damaged by the caltrops suffers a -1 crippling penalty on movement actions for the rest of the scene. This penalty stacks.

Magnetized Coating Fabrication (3xp): If the Alchemical deploys the caltrops on a metal surface, removing them requires a difficulty 5 feat of strength that requires a minimum of Strength 3. Characters

who lack adequate hand protection suffer an additional die of damage if they fail this roll.

Expanded Magnetic Domain (3xp; Stamina 5, Magnetized Coating Fabrication): The Alchemical's caltrops magnetically bind to any surface they're deployed on, not just metal surfaces.

Advanced Area Denial System (6xp; Stamina 5): The Alchemical adds two dice to the damage inflicted by the caltrops, and adds (Stamina/2, rounded up) to the difficulty of the roll to avoid taking damage. This is Augmented. The difficulty increase doesn't apply to movement actions that already have a roll, like rushes and disengages.

Shrapnel Mine Detonation (6xp; Advanced Area Denial System): The Alchemical can use this Charm a second time to detonate any or all caltrops within short range of her. This is a one-time environmental hazard with difficulty (Stamina) and Damage (Stamina/2, rounded up)L. This is Augmented. This submodule's range increases to medium if the Alchemical has the Kinetic Launch Upgrade Dispersal submodule, she can pay its surcharge to extend this submodule's range to medium.

Kinetic Launch Dispersal (6xp; Stamina 5, Essence 3) (+3m, 1wp): The Alchemical can pay a three-mote, one-Willpower surcharge to deploy caltrops out to medium range.

Strategic Deployment Protocol (6xp; Kinetic Launch Dispersal) (+1wp): In strategic combat, the Alchemical can pay a one-Willpower surcharge to use this Charm to enact a unique stratagem with threshold 2. If she succeeds, combat begins with the entire battlefield covered in caltrops.

Acidic Synthesis Spray

Cost: 3m, 3i, 1wp (3m); **Mins:** Stamina 6, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Aggravated, Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Chemical Fog Generator

Tanks of acid jutting from the Alchemical's shoulder dispense a caustic spray of acid through black jade nozzles mounted on her wrists.

The Alchemical rolls (Stamina + [Archery, Resistance, or Thrown]) to attack with acid. She can direct this against a single enemy within medium range. Alternatively, she can unleash a plume that extends out to short range, affecting all other characters caught within it — friend or foe. The attack has a base damage of (Essence) dice of aggravated damage, which ignores Hardness. If the Alchemical directs her attack against a single target, she adds her attack roll extra successes as dice of damage. The damage roll doesn't include the Alchemical's Initiative, and she doesn't reset to base Initiative.

A damaged character suffers an additional die of aggravated damage from lingering acid at the end of his next turn, unless it's washed away before then. For instance, a character near a water conduit might take a miscellaneous action to cleanse himself.

Alternatively, the Alchemical can use this Charm to dissolve inanimate objects, making a feat of demolition with (Stamina + [Athletics or Resistance]) and (Essence) automatic successes. She uses Stamina instead of Strength to determine what feats she may attempt. When used this way, this Charm's Initiative and Willpower costs are waived.

Reset: Once per scene. Using this Charm for feats of demolition doesn't require a reset.

Submodules

Acid Magnet Deployment (3xp): The Alchemical's acid is magnetized, clinging to metallic substances. Enemies wearing metal armor — or those made of metal — continue to take damage at the end of each of their turns that scene until they've washed away the lingering acid.

Defense

Adaptive Armor Technology

Cost: —; **Mins:** Stamina 3, Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Withering-only

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Transpuissant Stamina Upgrade

Patches of metal mesh on the Alchemical's skin reconfigure automatically to repel any force directed against her.

The Alchemical may use the Stamina Excellency to raise her soak against a **withering** attack after it hits, but before damage is rolled.

Metamorphic Reactive Plating

Cost: 2m, 2i; **Mins:** Stamina 3, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Augmented, Dual, Perilous

Duration: One tick

Prerequisite Charms: Adaptive Armor Technology

Layers of woven moonsilver mesh reinforce the Alchemical's Adaptive Armor Technology.

The Alchemical can use this Charm after being attacked and taking no damage. She adds (Stamina) to her soak and Hardness against attacks made by the same enemy. This stacks with other sources of Hardness. Each time he attacks Alchemical again and fails to deal damage, these bonuses increase by +2.

Submodules

Sustained Adaptive Plating (6xp; Stamina 5, Essence 4) (+4m, 1wp): The Alchemical can pay a four-mote, one Willpower surcharge to extend this Charm's duration to one scene. However, after the first tick, she loses the soak bonus from subsequent attacks, and the Hardness bonus can't increase her above a total of 20. This ends if the Alchemical is crashed.

Aegis Integration System

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Stamina 3, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Transpuissant Stamina Upgrade

The Alchemical incorporates armor into her body like a second skin, extending blunt-tipped screws from subdermal ports to connect to her to it.

The Alchemical can use this Charm when she dons armor, or by spending the same amount of time to integrate worn armor. She reduces its mobility penalty by one. If the penalty is already zero, it's reinforced by the integration, increasing its soak by one.

Submodules

Instant Aegis Upgrade (6xp): The Alchemical can don armor in (mobility penalty + 1) turns when she uses this Charm. This also reduces the time needed to integrate worn armor or to deploy armor with Technomorphic Integration Engine (p. XX).

Attunement Resonator Pins (6xp; Essence 2): The Alchemical waives the mote cost to attune to artifact armor she's integrated.

Pristine Shell Upgrade (3xp; Stamina 4, Essence 2): Integrated mundane armor becomes indestructible, as though it were an artifact. The Alchemical's attunement to integrated artifact armor can't be broken or disrupted by magic.

Deployable Bunker Fabricator

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Stamina 3, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Transpuissant Stamina Upgrade

A heavy matter reclamation on the Alchemical's back and shoulders rapidly fabricates modular panels of metal and polymer, unfolding them to form tactical cover.

The Alchemical deploys a fabricated barrier made up of matter reclaimed from nearby scrap materials, sufficient to provide light cover (**Exalted**, p. 199). If she has access to materials that already provide light cover or large objects that are well-suited to the purpose, like loose metal panels or furniture, she creates heavy cover instead. She reflexively rolls (Stamina + [Athletics, Craft, or Resistance]) to take cover behind the barrier.

The Alchemical can't use this Charm if the Storyteller deems there's not sufficient matter for her to recycle into cover. She can't recycle objects being held or worn by another character, and generally can't destroy anything beyond scenery or debris. At the Storyteller's discretion, clever use of this Charm's

matter recycling may be able to overcome meaningful obstacles, though this typically requires a (Stamina + [Athletics, Craft, or Resistance]) roll.

Submodules

Optimized Material Recycler (3xp): The Alchemical converts dice from Transpuissant Stamina Upgrade to automatic successes on the roll to take cover. If she has Tactical Barricade Deployment, she also adds that many successes on the rolls made by her allies to take cover.

Prefabricated Structure Assembly (3xp): The Alchemical can use this Charm to undertake a basic Craft project to construct simple structures, completing it in a matter of minutes. She needs no equipment, and no materials beyond matter to recycle. If she uses this submodule together with Incomparable Efficiency Upgrade (p. XX), she can complete the project in a single turn.

Essence-Fueled Fabrication (3xp; Stamina 4): The Alchemical can fabricate materials for cover out of pure Essence, no longer needing access to other material to make light cover. She still needs sufficient material to make heavy cover.

Tactical Barricade Deployment (6xp; Stamina 4) (+3m per ally): The Alchemical can allow up to (Stamina/2, rounded up) additional characters to reflexively roll (Dexterity + Dodge) to take cover along with her, paying a three-mote surcharge for each character. This is Augmented. The protected characters must be behind the barrier with the Alchemical or otherwise positioned to benefit from it. It can't protect battle groups.

Absolute Fortification Bulkhead (6xp; Stamina 5, Essence 3) (+4i, 1wp): If the Alchemical has sufficient material to create heavy cover, she can pay a four-Initiative, one-Willpower surcharge to create full cover. She must pay an additional four Initiative at the start of each of her turn or the fabricated fortification unfolds, reverting to heavy cover. If the Alchemical has God-Metal Barrier Fortification, she can create full cover out of Essence. This submodule isn't compatible with Tactical Barricade Deployment or Strategic Firebase Deployment.

God-Metal Barrier Fortification (6xp; Stamina 5, Essence 3, Essence-Fueled Fabrication): The Alchemical can fabricate heavy cover out of Essence. If she does recycle raw materials suitable for the level of cover she creates, she reduces this Charm's cost by two motes.

Mass Habitation Assembly (3xp; Stamina 5, Essence 3, Prefabricated Structure Assembly): The Alchemical can use Mass Habitation Assembly for major projects to create structure.

Strategic Firebase Deployment (6xp; Stamina 5, Essence 3, Mass Habitation Assembly) (+3m): The Alchemical can pay a three-mote surcharge to create a barrier that extends up to (Essence) range bands. If she has Tactical Barricade Deployment, she can use it to shelter battle groups for two motes each. Each counts as (Size/2, rounded up) characters toward the maximum number she can protect.

Embedded Armor Plating

Cost: —; **Mins:** Stamina 3, Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Alchemical's body is armored in magical materials, fortified both within and without.

Upon purchasing this Charm, the Alchemical chooses one of its submodules. She can only benefit from one submodule at a time, but can change between them with the Rite of Reconfiguration.

Soak granted by this Charm counts toward the limit on how much soak the Alchemical can add with the Stamina Excellency.

Submodules

Exoskeletal Installation (6xp): A metallic carapace riveted to the Alchemical's flesh adds +(Stamina/2, rounded up) armored soak. This is Augmented. This soak stacks with any armor the Alchemical wears.

Subcutaneous Installation (6xp): A fully articulated mesh of dense subdermal plates adds +2 natural soak. The installed Charm is Internal.

Essence-Grounding Conduit

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Stamina 3, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Decisive-only, Perilous

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Transpuissant Stamina Upgrade

Cables of orichalcum and white jade threaded through chunky ports on the Alchemical's body disperse the force of supernatural puissance.

When an enemy makes a **decisive** attack against the Alchemical, her attacker compares only his Initiative to her Hardness to determine if it prevents damage, without counting damage from other sources. If his attack's damage roll doesn't include his Initiative due to magic, he uses the lower of his damage dice or his actual Initiative.

Submodules

Essence Containment Cage (6xp; Stamina 4, Essence 3) (+2m, 2i): The Alchemical can pay a two-mote, two-Initiative surcharge to use this Charm against a **withering** attack. Her soak can't be reduced, and she can use it even against unsoakable damage.

Barrier Aura Array

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Stamina 4, Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Augmented, Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Essence-Grounding Conduit

Crystalline beads implanted in rows along the Alchemical's forearms project barriers of glowing force, swirling around the Champion as a failsafe contingency.

The Alchemical can use this Charm after being hit by a **decisive** attack, before the damage roll. She rolls (Stamina/2, rounded up) dice. Each success subtracts one die from the damage roll. This Charm can also be used to defend against environmental hazards, traps, and similar sources of damage.

Transitory Invulnerability Engine

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Stamina 5, Essence 3

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Barrier Aura Array

A flash of Essence spreads across the Alchemical's body from a pentagonal plate mounted on her chest, briefly transmuting the clay of her body to solid magical material.

The Alchemical gains Hardness equal to her Initiative against a **decisive** attack. If she already has Hardness, she adds (Initiative/2, rounded up) to it. She can't be affected by any poison, disease, crippling effect, or similar physical ailment conveyed by that attack. After using this defense she resets to base Initiative. If she uses it together with a Counterattack Charm, her Initiative doesn't reset until the counterattack is complete.

Alternatively, the Alchemical can use this Charm to perfectly defend against uncountable damage. This renders her immune to recurring hazards for the rest of the scene, her body hardened against them.

Reset: This Charm's Hardness bonus can only be used once per scene, unless reset once the Alchemical has successfully faced three **decisive** attacks from nontrivial enemies without taking damage.

Submodules

Sustained Invulnerability Engine (6xp; Stamina 8, Essence 5) (+1wp): The Alchemical can pay a one-Willpower surcharge to use this Charm without resetting her Initiative.

Essence Shield Projector

Cost: 5m, 2i, 1wp; **Mins:** Stamina 7, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Augmented, Dual, Perilous

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Transitory Invulnerability Engine

Crystalline lattice arrays across the Alchemical's skin sculpts Essence into an impenetrable barrier, creating a luminous force field only nanometers away from her skin.

A barrier of Essence armors the Alchemical, adding (Essence/2, rounded up) soak and granting Hardness (10 + Stamina). It counts as having heavy cover, adding +2 non-Charm Defense. No physical opening exists within it, requiring magic capable of passing through solid barriers to circumvent it. The barrier glows like a burning anima (p. XX).

This Charm ends if the Alchemical is crashed or if she takes any **decisive** damage, overloading its machinery. The Alchemical can't use it again until she spends an hour manually recalibrating his Charm or undergoes the Rite of Reconfiguration. She can accelerate this process with magic like Incomparable Efficiency Upgrade (p. XX). Attacks that ignore Hardness or otherwise bypass the Essence shield don't overload this Charm.

Submodules

Motic Field Stabilizers (3xp): The Alchemical can project an invisible barrier, though it can briefly flickers back into visibility as it defends her when she's hit by an attack.

Layered Ablation Nodes (6xp; Stamina 6, Essence 4): The Alchemical can use this Charm while it's overloaded, without needing to recalibrate it first. The surge of energy unleashed immediately raises her anima banner to bonfire. Once she's done so (Essence) times, she must recalibrate the Charm before she can use this submodule again.

Endurance

Strain-Resistant Chassis Modification

Cost: —; **Mins:** Stamina 1, Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Augmented

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Champion's body is fortified with armored plates, redundant organs, and reinforcing struts.

The Alchemical gains additional health levels based on her Stamina rating.

Stamina 1-2: Two -2 levels.

Stamina 3-4: One -1 level and one -2 level.

Stamina 5: One -1 level and two -2 levels.

Stamina 6+: One -1 level and three -2 levels.

If the Alchemical's Stamina increases, her health levels change to reflect her new rating. She can purchase this Charm up to (Stamina) times.

If the Alchemical has Colossus-Class Upgrade Installation, she treats her Stamina as one dot higher to determine how many health levels she receives. If this brings her effective Stamina to 9+, she gains two -1 levels and two -2 levels from each purchase.

Biofunction Inhibitor

Cost: 10m; **Mins:** Stamina 2, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Internal, Mute

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: None

Control valves affixed to the Alchemical's Essence reservoirs let her power down her metabolic functions.

The Alchemical enters a state of torpor. The rate at which she heals naturally is multiplied by (Stamina). The suspension of her vital signs makes her appear to be dead, requiring a difficulty 3 (Perception + [Awareness, Investigation, or Medicine]) roll to discern the truth.

Submodules

Metabolic Suspension (3xp): The difficulty of the roll to discern that the Alchemical is alive increases to (Essence + Stamina).

Restorative Stasis Transponder (3xp): The rate at which the Alchemical heals is multiplied by (Essence + Stamina).

Regenerative Torpor Catalyst (3xp; Stamina 3, Restorative Stasis Transponder): This Charm also accelerates the speed at which the Alchemical heals from crippling effects.

Pattern Restoration System (3xp; Essence 2, Regenerative Torpor Catalyst): This Charm also accelerates the speed at which the Alchemical recovers from body-altering Shaping effects and sorcerous curses that affect her body.

Tireless Pneumatic Musculature

Cost: —; **Mins:** Stamina 3, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Biofunction Inhibitor

The Alchemical's upgraded body no longer experiences fatigue.

The Alchemical no longer needs to sleep and ignores fatigue penalties. She can regain Willpower from eight hours of rest or light activity, or from one hour of dormancy using Biofunction Inhibitor.

Submodules

Ceaseless Labor Upgrade (3xp): The Alchemical treats light activity as rest for purposes of natural healing (**Exalted**, p. 174) and for healing magic that requires a character to spend time in convalescence.

Rapid Recovery Systems (6xp; Stamina 5, Essence 2): The Alchemical only needs an hour to gain the benefits of a full eight hours of rest. Using Biofunction Inhibitor reduces this to a few minutes.

Enshrined Divinity Apparatus

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Stamina 2, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Augmented, Internal

Duration: One day

Prerequisite Charms: Transpuissant Stamina Upgrade

Multitudes of microscopic machine-spirits are housed in a miniscule tabernacle of orichalcum and brass in the Alchemical's stomach, tending to her body in exchange for the sacrificial offerings of her digestive processes.

The Alchemical adds (higher of Essence or 3) dice on rolls to resist exposure to disease. She adds that many automatic successes on rolls against the morbidity of diseases she already suffers from. This bonus also applies to Medicine rolls to treat her. She's immune to mundane diseases whose virulence and morbidity are both lower than her Stamina.

Using this Charm requires the Alchemical to eat and drink on a daily basis. She can't use it if she hasn't done so in the last day.

Submodules

Perpetual Adoration Engine (3xp; Stamina 5): This Charm's cost is reduced by (Essence) motes.

Industrial Consecration Altar (6xp; Stamina 5, Essence 3) (1wp): The Alchemical can reflexively pay one Willpower to heighten her resistance to supernatural disease for a scene. She's immune to magical diseases whose virulence and morbidity are both lower than (her Stamina – 3).

Industrial Survival Frame

Cost: 4m (1m); **Mins:** Stamina 2, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Stackable

Duration: One day

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Alchemical's body is optimized for enduring harsh environments.

Upon purchasing this Charm, the Alchemical's player chooses six experience points' worth of submodules. When she uses this Charm, she chooses a submodule to activate, gaining resistance to a certain type of damage and environmental perils, granting the following benefits:

- She rerolls 1s until they cease to appear on rolls to resist environmental hazards based on it.
- She's immune to environmental penalties caused by it.
- She doesn't suffer deleterious effects from exposure, like heat fatigue.

This Charm can be used while unconscious or incapacitated.

The Alchemical can stack this Charm to gain the benefits of multiple submodules. Uses past the first cost only one mote. With all six forms of damage reduction active, this Charm's defense extends to all environmental hazards, even those not encompassed by any submodule.

Submodules

Adaptive Heat Sinks (3xp): When activated, this submodule grants resistance to damage based on flames or heat.

Counter-Catalytic Frame (3xp): When activated, this submodule grants resistance to damage from intrinsically harmful substances, like acid.

Energy-Dispersing Frame (3xp): When activated, this submodule grants resistance to damage based on pure energy, like a lightning bolt or a sorcerous ward of disintegrating light.

Pneumatic Resilience Upgrade (3xp): When activated, this submodule grants resistance to damage from environmental sources that are blunt or bludgeoning in nature, like an avalanche, concussive blasts, or extreme water pressure.

Reinforced Diamond Coating (3xp): When activated, this submodule grants resistance to damage from environmental sources that are piercing or slashing in nature, like spring-loaded blade traps, spike pits, or shards of crystal.

Thermal Regulation Systems (3xp): When activated, this submodule grants resistance to damage based on cold.

Attack Assimilation Mode (3xp; Stamina 3, any two submodules): The Alchemical gains +1 soak and Hardness (Stamina) against attacks based on applicable damage types. Note that Pneumatic Resilience Upgrade and Reinforced Diamond Coating don't apply to weapon attacks — they primarily defend against magical attacks that manipulate or create environmental forces.

Environmental Dominance (6xp; Stamina 4, Essence 3, any two submodules): This Charm's resistance also halves any damage the Alchemical takes from hazards based on an applicable damage type, rounding down.

Hostile Environment Neutralization Field (6xp; Stamina 5, Environmental Dominance) (+4m, 1wp): The Alchemical may pay a four-mote, one-Willpower surcharge to extend this Charm's benefit to all allies and structures within short range. They don't gain the full benefit of Environmental Dominance — instead, it subtracts one level from the damage they take from applicable hazards. The Alchemical only needs to use this submodule once to enhance multiple stacked uses of this Charm.

Sustenance Replication Engine

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Stamina 2, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Miniaturized chemical pumps and green jade recycling baffles synthesize Essence into a nutrient paste, dispensed from a port on her forearm.

The Alchemical dispenses a bland, gray paste that provides enough nutrients for a day's sustenance when consumed. This nourishment adds two automatic successes on Stamina rolls opposing poison, disease, and environmental hazards for the rest of the day.

This paste only keeps for a day, after which its nutrients break down.

Submodules

Morale-Bolstering Rations (6xp; Stamina 3) (+1wp): The Alchemical can pay a one-Willpower surcharge to imbue the paste with fortifying Essence, granting one Willpower to whoever consumes it. Once she's paid this surcharge, it's waived for the rest of the day.

Synthetic Respiration Formula (6xp; Stamina 4, Essence 2): The Alchemical can dispense a soluble pod filled with oxygenated fluid. Biting down on the pod releases this fluid to fill a character's lungs. (This is unpleasant). For the rest of the scene, they can breathe while submerged in water or in other zero-oxygen environments. Outside of combat, this lasts (higher of Essence or 3) minutes. Pods denature after an hour. The pods don't confer Sustenance Replication Engine's other benefits, including other submodules.

Toxicity Filtration Subsystems

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Stamina 2, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Augmented, Internal

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Transpuissant Stamina Upgrade

Foreign substances introduced into the Alchemical's body are processed through a complex assembly of pumps and chemical filters, neutralizing dangerous toxins.

The Alchemical can use this Charm after a roll to resist poison, adding a non-Charm success for each installation of Transpuissant Stamina Upgrade as the filtration systems purge her system. Against mundane poisons, this Charm purges them completely once their duration is lower than the Alchemical's Stamina.

Submodules

Chemical Buffering (6xp; Stamina 4, Essence 2): This Charm's cost is waived against mundane poisons. Against magical poisons, it's reduced by two motes.

System Purge Filtration (6xp; Stamina 5, Essence 3, Chemical Buffering): The Alchemical purges magical poisons once their duration is lower than (her Stamina – 3).

Alloyed Reinforcement of Flesh

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Stamina 5, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Decisive-only, Internal, Perilous

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Strain-Resistant Chassis Modification x5

The Alchemical's body is reinforced with wires and struts, while her bones are plated with her Caste's magical material.

The Alchemical can use this Charm after being hit by a **decisive** attack, before the damage roll. If she takes enough damage to fill all of her –4 health levels, any further damage is negated. She can't use this Charm if she only has one undamaged –4 level remaining.

This Charm can also defend against environmental hazards, traps, and similar sources of **decisive** damage.

Reset: Once per day.

Submodules

Fortified Chassis Overhaul (3xp) (+5m): For a five-mote surcharge, the Alchemical can use this Charm for –2 levels. With a Stamina 7, Essence 3 repurchase, she can use it for –1 levels.

Death-Defeating Processors (6xp; Stamina 7, Essence 4) (1wp): Once per scene, the Alchemical can pay one Willpower to reset this Charm.

Pain Suppression Nodes

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Stamina 5, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Internal

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Tireless Pneumatic Musculature

Crystalline amulets implanted in the Alchemical's major nerve clusters regulate pain signals.

The Alchemical reduces her wound penalties by (Essence/2). This also applies to crippling penalties from effects that cause pain, stunning, paralysis, or similar conditions rather than causing physical injury.

Submodules

Emergency Damage Compensators (3xp): If the Alchemical takes enough damage to fill all health levels of the same type, this Charm's penalty negation increases to (Essence) for the rest of its duration.

Ablative Defense Array

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Stamina 5, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Augmented, Perilous

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Embedded Armor Plating, Tireless Pneumatic Musculature

Reinforced plates deploy from chambers beneath the Alchemical's skin, forming an ablative layer of armor around her.

The Alchemical rolls (Stamina + Resistance) and gains temporary –4 health level equal to her successes, maximum (Stamina). These are filled by damage before any of her other –4 levels, and vanish once filled.

Special activation rules: The Alchemical can use this Charm reflexively when she activates Body-Reweaving Matrix.

Submodules

Metacomposite Armor Upgrade (3xp): The temporary health levels are –2 levels. With Essence 3, they're –1 levels.

Thousand-Layer Reinforcement (3xp; Stamina 5, Essence 3): The maximum number of health levels the Alchemical can gain increases to (Stamina + 2).

Body-Reweaving Matrix

Cost: 5m, 1wp (1i per round); **Mins:** Stamina 5, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Augmented, Internal, Perilous

Duration: (Stamina) rounds

Prerequisite Charms: Ablative Defense Array

Colonies of microscopic automata within the Alchemical's body tend to her injuries from within, mending damaged tissue and knitting wounds shut.

The Alchemical heals one level of non-aggravated damage when she uses this Charm, and another level at the start of each of her turns. She must pay one Initiative at the start of each of her turns or this Charm ends.

Outside of combat, this Charm lets the Alchemical heal (Stamina) levels of non-aggravated damage over the course of a minute.

Reset: Once per day. It doesn't reset if the Alchemical still has damage in her health track at the beginning of the new day or doesn't receive adequate sleep.

Submodules

Self-Repair Protocol (3xp): The Alchemical may forgo a level of healing to reduce a crippling penalty she suffers from by one, to a minimum of one. This can't heal total amputation or destroyed organs, nor does it affect crippling effects that don't involve physical injury or inflict a penalty.

Tissue Regeneration Matrix (3xp; Self-Repair Protocol): The Alchemical can use Self-Repair Protocol to partially regenerate amputated limbs or restore similarly damaged tissue.

Bodily Integration Field

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Stamina 5, Essence 3

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Augmented, Internal, Uniform

Duration: Until healed

Prerequisite Charms: Body-Reweaving Matrix

Faced with a maiming blow, the Alchemical activates an array of psychoreactive crystals laced throughout her skeleton, holding her body together with telekinetic force.

The Alchemical can use this Charm after being hit by an attack that carries a crippling effect, before the damage roll. It can only defend against crippling effects that wound or damage the Alchemical's body, rather than those that stun her or the like.

Any crippling penalties the Alchemical suffers are reduced by (Essence/2). The penalty is reduced by one every (7 – Stamina, minimum 1) rounds. Once the penalty is reduced to zero, the effect is fully healed. Outside of combat, it heals after a scene.

This Charm doesn't apply when the Alchemical's player chooses to take a crippling injury, unless the choice was forced by an enemy's attack.

Submodules

Hardened Integrity Patterns (3xp): This Charm can be used to defend against any crippling effect.

Strength

Offense

Iron Knuckle Suite

Cost: —(2m); **Mins:** Strength 1, Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Dual

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Alchemical's limbs and joints have been reinforced for unarmed combat.

The Alchemical's unarmed attacks gain the Smashing tag and can deal lethal damage. She can parry lethal attacks unarmed. She can pay two motes to add (higher of Essence or 3) to the raw damage of an unarmed **withering** attack, although this counts against the limit on how much damage she can add with the Strength Excellency.

Weapon Compatibility

Offensive Strength Charms are incompatible with weapons that don't use Strength to determine **withering** damage unless otherwise specialized. This includes weapons like crossbows or Essence Pulse Cannons.

Essence Irradiation Corona

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Strength 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Dual

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Collapsible prongs in the Alchemical's limbs unfold as the Alchemical strikes, wreathing her attack in a field of unstable Essence.

The Alchemical adds (higher of Essence or 3) dice of raw damage on a **withering** attack, or (Essence/2, rounded up) dice of **decisive** damage.

Submodules

Field Stabilization Fins (3xp; Strength 3) (+2m): The Alchemical can pay a two-mote surcharge when she makes a **withering** attack to add post-soak damage instead of raw damage.

Optimized Trauma Upgrade (3xp; Strength 3, Essence 2): This Charm adds an additional die of damage.

Integrated Arsenal System

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Strength 2, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Stackable

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: None

Space-folding storage assemblies in the Alchemical's limbs allow for nigh-unlimited weapon storage.

The Alchemical readies a weapon from an integrated arsenal, deploying it from a port in her hand or arms. She can manifest any type of mundane weapon, although integrated weapons can't be used to make Thrown attacks unless they launch a separate projectile. Integrated weapons can't be disarmed. They often have an industrial motif — whips made of lashing cables, fist-mounted drills for khatars, and the like. They're always made of metal, stone, or similar inorganic materials.

The Alchemical can stack multiple uses of this Charm to deploy multiple weapons.

Submodules

Custom Gear Arsenal (3xp; Strength 3): The Alchemical chooses two types of weapons. She waives this Charm's cost when she uses it to deploy one of those weapons. She can repurchase this submodule any number of times.

Material Synthesis Wave Emitter (6xp; Strength 4, Essence 2) (2m): The Alchemical can pay two motes to grant artifact traits to a weapon she's chosen for Custom Gear Arsenal until the start of her next turn. She can awaken Evocations from her arsenal by repurchasing this submodule, which are compatible with any weapon chosen for Custom Gear Arsenal. These Evocations express the Alchemical's personality and the themes of her Caste and her Caste material.

Vibrational Crystal Array

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Strength 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Augmented, Dual

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Adamant resonators implanted over the Alchemical's hands and wrists cause her weapon to vibrate at so extreme a frequency that it cuts through steel like air.

The Alchemical's attack ignores (Strength/2, rounded up) points of soak and Hardness.

Submodules

Piercing Frequency (3xp; Strength 3): The Alchemical waives the Initiative cost and Defense penalty for making a piercing attack (**Exalted**, p. 586).

Sonic Drill Pulse (3xp; Strength 3): If the Alchemical negates all of an enemy's soak or Hardness, any excess points of reduction are converted to damage dice, maximum (higher of Essence or 3).

Resonant Frequency Modulation (3xp; Strength 4, Essence 2): The Alchemical ignores an additional point of soak or Hardness for each attack roll extra successes, maximum (Strength/2, rounded up).

Matter-Tunneling Frequency Shift (6xp; Strength 5, Essence 3, Resonant Frequency Modulation) (+1wp): Against a lower-Initiative enemy, the Alchemical can pay a one-Willpower surcharge to remove Sonic Drill Pulse's limit on extra successes.

Electroneural Subjugation Pulse

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Strength 3, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Champion's knuckles house a cruel set of soulsteel tines that crackle with cruel electricity.

The Alchemical makes a difficulty 3 unarmed gambit to stun an enemy. If she succeeds, he's dazed by the electrical pulse and suffers a -2 crippling penalty on all physical rolls until the end of the scene.

Submodule

Cognitive Scattering Pulse (3xp): This Charm's penalty applies on social and mental rolls.

Sensory Nullification Targeting (3xp; Strength 4, Cognitive Scattering Pulse): The Alchemical can temporarily suppress one of a target's senses instead of stunning him, rendering him blind, deaf, or so on. He suffers a -3 penalty on all rolls that depend on that sense.

Extended Suppression Amperage (3xp): This Charm's penalty lasts until the target has received a full night's rest.

Retractable Threat Mode (3xp): The Charm gains the Internal keyword.

Aligned Assault Configuration (6xp; Strength 4): The Alchemical can use this Charm to make a damaging **decisive** attack instead of a gambit. She must forgo three levels of damage to inflict the crippling penalty. She must still deal at least one level of damage.

Deep Nerve Trauma (3xp; Aligned Assault Configuration, Extended Suppression Amperage): When the Alchemical makes a damaging attack with Aligned Assault Coordination, the inflicted penalty lasts until the target has healed all damage in his health track.

Conductive Link (3xp; Strength 4): The Alchemical can use this Charm with close-range weapons made of metal.

Electrified Subdual Projectile (3xp, Conductive Link): The Alchemical can use this Charm with ranged weapons that fire metal projectiles. It can also enhance ranged attacks made up of Essence or energy, like an Essence Pulse Cannon (p. XX).

Anatomical Disruption Index (6xp; Strength 4, Essence 2, Sensory Nullification Targeting): The Alchemical can temporarily paralyze a single limb rather than stunning her target, inflicting a –3 penalty on all rolls that depend on that limb. If he was holding something with it, he drops it. If he's standing on a paralyzed leg, he must roll (Dexterity + Athletics) at a difficulty of the Alchemical's (Strength) or fall prone. If all legs are paralyzed, he automatically falls prone and can't regain his footing.

Agonizing Voltage Drive (3xp; Essence 3, Aligned Assault Configuration): When the Alchemical makes a damaging **decisive** attack, she only needs to forgo one level of damage to inflict this Charm's penalty. With Strength 5, Essence 5, she doesn't need to forgo any damage.

Piston-Driven Megaton Hammer

Cost: 3m, 1wp; **Mins:** Strength 3, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Transpuissant Strength Upgrade

As the Alchemical strikes, a soulsteel-capped piston housed in her limb slams down with a whistling shriek of steam that ends in an explosive bang.

When the Alchemical installs this Charm, she must choose one limb to install it on. She makes a **decisive** attack using that limb or a weapon wielded with it. She doubles up to (Strength/2, rounded up) 9s and 10s on the damage roll. If the Alchemical makes an unarmed attack, the limit increases to (Strength) and she can deal lethal damage.

If the Alchemical deals damage, she knocks her enemy back one range band, out to a maximum of short range from her.

Submodules

Shockwave Driver Barrage (3xp): The Alchemical can knock enemies back out to a maximum of medium range.

Zero-Range Drive Rail (3xp): If the Alchemical makes a savaging attack or a slam attack against a grappled enemy, she can benefit from an additional round of control for each success doubled by this

Charm, maximum (higher of Essence or 3).

Optimized Demolition Vibration (6xp; Strength 4): The Alchemical can use this Charm to make a feat of demolition instead of an attack. She adds (Essence) to her effective Strength to determine if she can accomplish a feat. If successful, she completes the feat with a single blow, even if it would normally require an extended period of time.

Anti-Materiel Detonator Impact (6xp; Strength 5, Optimized Demolition Vibration): If the Alchemical slams an enemy into an object or surface, she treats her damage roll as a feat of demolition to destroy it, with the benefits of Optimized Demolition Vibration. If she succeeds, she rolls an additional die of damage for each success doubled by this Charm.

Gravitational Impact Hammer (6xp; Strength 5, Essence 3) (+4m, 1i): When the Alchemical attacks from close range, she may pay a four-mote, one-Initiative surcharge to launch her enemy upward with the knockback. He suffers falling damage as usual (**Exalted**, p. 232).

Electrification Onslaught Dynamo

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Strength 3, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Augmented, Counterattack, Uniform

Duration: Until discharged

Prerequisite Charms: Electroneural Subjugation Pulse

The Alchemical's body hums and crackles with electricity in the color of her anima, generated by a blue jade dynamo riveted into her back.

The Alchemical rolls (Strength + Resistance) to charge herself with electricity. This includes dice from Transpuissant Strength Upgrade, but can't be modified by other effects. She banks her successes as dice of lethal **decisive** damage, maximum (higher of Essence or 3).

The next time the Alchemical lands an unarmed attack, this energy is discharged, rolling those damage dice against her enemy — even on a **withering** attack or gambit. The damage ignores Hardness. This Charm also discharges as a counterattack if the Alchemical is hit by an unarmed attack. The discharge ends this Charm.

This Charm ends if the Alchemical is immersed in water or has other significant water contact. It also ends if not discharged by the end of the scene.

If the Alchemical has Electroneural Subjugation Pulse's Conductive Link or Electrified Subdual Projectile submodules, she can discharge this Charm's attack through the appropriate weapons. She can also discharge when she blocks an attack, as long as both her and her enemy use metal weapons or unarmed attacks.

Submodules

Charge Controller (3xp): The Alchemical can choose not to discharge this Charm when a trigger condition is met.

Insulated Conduits (3xp): Using this Charm has no visible effect until it's discharged. However, it's exposed if water comes into contact with the Alchemical, flash boiling it away.

Godhead Bolt Emulator (6xp; Strength 5, Essence 3): This Charm deals aggravated damage. The Alchemical doubles 9s on this Charm's roll and can bank up to (Essence x2) dice.

Voltaic Surge (6xp; Strength 5, Godhead Bolt Emulator) (+1wp): The Alchemical can pay a one-Willpower surcharge to use this Charm reflexively on her turn. This counts as her attack for the round.

Toroidal Shockwave Catalyst

Cost: 5m, 2i; **Mins:** Strength 4, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Perilous

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Transpuissant Strength Upgrade

A pair of spherical crystal capacitors mounted on the Alchemical's shoulders flash with the colors of her anima before emitting a thunderclap and a torus of expanding force.

To use this Charm, the Alchemical must have Initiative 10+. She rolls (Strength + Athletics) opposed by the (Dexterity + Dodge) of all characters within close range, friend or foe. Characters who fail their roll are blasted one range band away from the Alchemical and fall prone.

Affected characters are stunned by the blast. They suffer a penalty on all rolls equal to the number of successes by which they failed, maximum (higher of Alchemical's Essence or 3). This penalty lasts until the end of the affected character's next turn.

Submodules

Shaped Blast (3xp): The Alchemical can exclude characters or objects from the blast.

Concussive Pulse Overcharger (6xp; Strength 5) (+3m): The Alchemical can pay a three-mote surcharge to extend this Charm's range to short.

Gravitational Resonator (6xp; Strength 5): Enemies knocked prone by the blast lose (Alchemical's Essence) Initiative.

Pyroclastic Fury Device (6xp; Gravitational Resonator) (+1wp): The Alchemical can pay a one-Willpower surcharge to superheat the blast. In addition to its usual effects, it's a one-time environmental hazard with difficulty 5, Damage 4L. It ignites flammable materials within range.

Mind-Battering Force Emitter (6xp; Essence 3, Gravitational Resonator): Affected characters who suffer a penalty of -3 or higher also lose one Willpower.

Unstoppable Impulse Engine

Cost: 4m, 1wp; **Mins:** Strength 5, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Augmented, Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Piston-Driven Megaton Hammer

A mass driver assembly installed around the Piston-Driven Megaton Hammer fires with a sonic boom, venting a tremendous surge of Essence.

The Alchemical uses her enhanced limb to make an unblockable **decisive** attack against an enemy whose Initiative is lower than her Strength. She adds up to (Strength) extra successes on the attack roll as dice of damage.

Special activation rules: The Alchemical can use this Charm reflexively together with Piston-Driven Megaton Hammer, waiving this Charm's Willpower cost.

Hyperphase Fuel Injector

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Strength 6, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Dual

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Essence Irradiation Corona, Piston-Driven Megaton Hammer

Tanks of concentrated liquid Essence on the Champion's back flood her system when the Hyperphase Fuel Injector is activated, magnifying the Alchemical's combat prowess.

The Champion adds a non-Charm success on attack and damage rolls. She gains one Initiative at the start of each round unless she's crashed.

Enemies can disable this Charm with a difficulty 5 gambit to disconnect the glowing fuel lines that run from the injector tanks to the Alchemical's neck and arms. A successful gambit ends this Charm and causes the Alchemical to lose three Initiative.

Reset: Once per scene.

Submodules

Shielded Fuel Lines (3xp): The Alchemical adds +2 to the difficulty of the gambit to disable this Charm. She loses this benefit while crashed.

Emergency Actuation Release (3xp): The Alchemical can use this Charm reflexively when she takes enough **decisive** damage to increase her wound penalty.

Absolute Impact Suite

Cost: 4m, 1wp; **Mins:** Strength 5, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Withering-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Unstoppable Impulse Engine

One of the Champion's arms is studded with orichalcum microrepulsor nodes that store potential energy to be released upon an unfortunate target.

The Alchemical makes a **withering** attack against an enemy of lower Initiative. Every two extra successes on the attack roll convert one die of damage to an automatic success, rounded up.

If the Alchemical makes a smash attack (**Exalted**, p. 586), she converts an additional die of damage to a success for each installation of Transpuissant Strength Upgrade she has.

Reset: Once per scene unless reset by being crashed and building back up to Initiative 15+.

Submodules

Algorithmic Contact Optimizer (3xp): When the Alchemical makes a **withering** slam or throw against a grappled enemy that benefits from 5+ rounds of control, each extra success converts one die of damage to a success, rather than needing two extra successes per die.

Kinetic Redistribution Charge (3xp; Strength 7, Essence 4): This Charm resets if the Alchemical takes **decisive** damage.

Transpatial Cannonade Delivery

Cost: 7m, 1wp; **Mins:** Strength 5, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Toroidal Shockwave Catalyst

A space-folding engine linked to the Alchemical's Toroidal Shockwave Catalyst displaces its blast's epicenter.

The Alchemical makes a **decisive** attack. If it hits, a shockwave like Toroidal Shockwave Catalyst's erupts from her target. Toroidal Shockwave Catalyst's submodules apply to this blast as well. Because the shockwave doesn't emanate from the Alchemical, she can be affected by it if caught within it. Prudent Champions use this Charm with ranged attacks.

Coruscating Plasma Flare Emitter

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Strength 6, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Augmented, Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Essence Irradiation Corona, Electrification Onslaught
Dynamo

The Alchemical's Essence Irradiation Corona is upgraded with orichalcum-reinforced prongs and Essence-channeling capacitors, emitting bursts of brilliant, crackling plasma.

The Alchemical makes a **decisive** attack against an enemy with lower Initiative, with a base damage of (Essence + attack roll extra successes), maximum (Strength). If her target's Initiative is lower than hers, the maximum increases to (Strength x2).

If the Alchemical uses this Charm together with Essence Irradiation Corona, she converts the damage dice added by that Charm to automatic successes.

Reset: Once per scene, unless reset by crashing an enemy with a **withering** attack that deal 5+ damage.

Submodules

Chaos-Neutralizing Corona (3xp): Gremlins, fae, and the undead always count as having a lower Initiative than the Alchemical for purposes of this Charm.

Catastrophic Essence Collider Array

Cost: 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Strength 7, Essence 5

Type: Simple

Keywords: Decisive-only

Duration: Until attack is made

Prerequisite Charms: Absolute Impact Suite, Toroidal Shockwave Catalyst

Advisory: Do not stare directly into the aperture.

To use this Charm the Alchemical must be at Initiative 12+. She takes an aim action, opening force-projecting weapon nacelles on multiple parts of her body for a wide-range attack instead of targeting a single enemy. She can choose to extend this by taking additional aim actions before attacking.

Once the Alchemical makes the aimed attack, she projects a destructive wave of Essence against all characters — friend or foe — within a ninety-degree cone. She chooses whether the blast extends to close range or short range. She can extend it to medium range if she aims for another round before attacking, or long range if she aims two additional times.

The annihilating blast is an unblockable **decisive** attack rolled with (Strength + [Athletics, Brawl, or Melee]). Each character hit by the attack suffers (Alchemical's Initiative, rounded up) damage. Battle groups and Legendary Size suffer the Alchemical's full Initiative instead. This attack counts as a Simple Charm activation, preventing the Alchemical from flurrying it or using it with other Simple Charms

If the Alchemical is left unable to attack or chooses not to do so after aiming, she's refunded this Charm's cost.

Special activation rules: The Alchemical can use Piston-Driven Megaton Hammer reflexively to enhance the attack, waiving this Charm's Willpower cost. The Alchemical's arm splits into multiple segments, revealing a revolving cylinder of Essence-charged pistons to focus this Charm's destructive blast.

Reset: Once per scene unless reset by landing a **decisive** attack while at Initiative 10+. The attack made with this Charm doesn't count for this.

Cascade Overflow Capacitor (3xp): If the Alchemical gains 12+ Initiative in a single tick, she can use this Charm on her next turn to make an attack immediately, without needing to aim.

Shockwave Projector Integration (6xp) (+5m): The attack knocks enemies prone and stuns them, inflicting a penalty on all rolls equal to the number of successes by which the Alchemical beat their Defense, maximum (higher of Alchemical's Essence), which lasts until the end of the affected character's next turn. If the Alchemical has Transpatial Cannonade Delivery installed, the Gravitational Resonator, Pyroclastic Fury Device or Mind-Battering Force Emitter submodules installed they can affect the attack.

Grappling

Charged Solenoid Lock

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Strength 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Coils of white jade wire wrapped around the Alchemical's forearms glow with incandescent light as electrical Essence races through them, generating a powerful magnetic field.

The Alchemical adds an automatic success on a grapple attack roll, and reduces the gambit's Initiative cost by one. She also adds one die on the Initiative roll for each installation of Transpuissant Strength Upgrade she has.

Submodules

Magnetized Grappling Array (3xp; Strength 3): The Alchemical also adds a success on the grapple control roll.

Secondary Musculature Bundle (3xp; Magnetized Grappling Array) (+2m): The Alchemical can pay a two-mote surcharge to add extra successes on the grapple's Initiative roll as bonus dice on the grapple control roll, maximum (Strength). This is Augmented.

Comprehensive Pankration Algorithm (3xp; Strength 5, Essence 3): Automatic successes and dice added by Charged Solenoid Lock are non-Charm.

Overcharged Magnetron Pulse (3xp; Strength 5, Essence 3): The Alchemical can amplify the magnetic field to grapple enemies with Legendary Size. She can't drag, restrain, throw, or slam them unless she uses an appropriate stunt.

Pankrator Booster Flare

Cost: 6m; **Mins:** Strength 3, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Charged Solenoid Lock

Red jade booster nozzles on the Alchemical's shoulders and forearms flare with Essence as she slams a foe down, rapidly accelerating his impact.

The Alchemical rerolls 5s and 6s until they cease to appear on the damage roll of a slam or throw attack's against a grappled enemy. She doubles how many rounds of control she can benefit from, and can throw enemies out to short range.

Submodules

Dynamic Impact Calibration (6xp; Strength 5) (+4m, 1wp): Once per scene, the Alchemical can pay a four-mote, one-Willpower to slam a grappled enemy into another foe. She makes one attack roll against both characters. If she hits the second character, he suffers half the damage rolled against the grappled foe, rounded up. His soak and Hardness still apply normally. A **withering** attack's damage against the secondary target doesn't grant Initiative.

Combustion-Driven Launch (6xp; Essence 3, Dynamic Impact Calibration): The Alchemical can use Dynamic Impact Calibration with a throw, flinging a grappled enemy at another foe within short range.

Pulseweb Entanglement Burst

Cost: 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Strength 4, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Charged Solenoid Lock, Essence Irradiation Corona

A golden ring of circuitry on the Alchemical's palm compresses raw Essence into a net-like burst of hyperdense spiritual force.

The Alchemical makes a grapple gambit against an enemy within medium range, rolling (Strength + [Archery, Brawl, or Thrown]) for both the attack and control rolls. Success clinches her target within a web of solidified Essence. The only grapple actions the Alchemical can take are to restrain or release her target, but doesn't suffer the Defense penalty from grappling. The grappled enemy and his allies can spend their entire turn trying to break the web in order to reduce the clinch's rounds of control by two. Attacking or damaging the Alchemical doesn't subtract rounds of control.

Reset: Once per scene unless reset by rolling 5+ extra successes on the Initiative roll for a grapple gambit. This includes the Initiative roll made to fire the net, allowing this Charm to reset itself.

Submodules

Electrified Threat Response (6xp): A grappled enemy suffers one die of lethal damage at the start of each of his turns, ignoring Hardness. He suffers an additional die of damage each time he makes an attack. Both of these increase to two dice of damage if the Alchemical has 5+ rounds of control.

Long-Range Retrieval Beam (3xp): On a successful grapple, the Alchemical may choose to drag her target into close range.

Mass Suppression Pulse (6xp; Strength 7) (+5m, 3i): The Alchemical may pay a five-mote, three-

Initiative surcharge to fire a web that also entangles all enemies within close range of her initial target. She makes a single attack roll and Initiative roll against all of them, but makes a separate control roll for each of them. On each of her turns, she can restrain all of them with a single action.

Mobility

Fluidic Impeller Drive

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Strength 2, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: None

As the Alchemical immerses herself, Intake valves across her body draw in liquid and pump it out of thrust nozzles at high velocity.

The Alchemical adds two automatic successes on swimming-related rolls and can maintain neutral buoyancy regardless of her waiting, letting her float in place while she isn't swimming. She doesn't suffer penalties on rolls with any Attribute for being submerged, except on ranged attacks.

Submodules

Aquatic Navigation Upgrade (3xp; Strength 3, Essence 2): The Alchemical ignores difficult terrain caused by poor swimming conditions.

Parabolic Leap Overcharger Device

Cost: 3m (2m); **Mins:** Strength 2, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Kinetic amplifiers housed in the Alchemical's knees allow for gravity-defying leaps, trailing brilliant contrails of anima as the Champion bounds upward.

The Alchemical can use her reflexive move action to jump one range band in any direction, without needing to roll. If she uses this Charm on multiple consecutive turns, the cost of activations past the first is reduced by one mote.

Submodules

Trajectory Enhancement Assembly (6xp; Strength 4, Essence 2) (+2m): The Alchemical can pay a three-mote surcharge to end a horizontal leap in mid-air. On her next turn, she must use this Charm again to make another leap or fall to the ground. She can choose to descend one range band in addition to her forward movement.

Personal Gravity Manipulation Apparatus

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Strength 2, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: Until next turn

Prerequisite Charms: Transpuissant Strength Upgrade

Essence capacitors and reinforcing components installed in the Alchemical's legs let her modulate the force of gravity.

The Alchemical manipulates gravity to either decrease or increase her weight. Decreasing her weight lets her move over solid surfaces that normally couldn't bear her weight, even liquid surfaces. Increasing her weight makes her more resilient to effects that physically move her, like smash attacks, a grappler's throw, or a Solar's Heaven Thunder Hammer. The distance she's moved is halved, rounded up. Changes in the Alchemical's weight may have additional effects at the Storyteller's discretion.

Submodules

Amplification Node (3xp; Strength 3): When the Alchemical increases her weight, she becomes completely immune to forced movement in the instant she uses this Charm.

Anti-Gravity Calibration (3xp; Strength 3): When the Alchemical uses this Charm to decrease her weight, she becomes light enough to run over liquid surfaces, as long as she continues to use this Charm on each of her turns.

Gravitic Field Modulator (6xp; Strength 3): This submodule adds a third mode to this Charm. The Alchemical can change which direction is "down" for her, letting her move across sheer vertical surfaces, ceilings, and the like. Moving further than close range from such a surface causes gravity to resume its normal effect, but doesn't end this Charm, letting the Alchemical perform feats like somersaulting off a wall to land on the ceiling. If she ends this Charm's duration while somewhere she couldn't normally stand and doesn't renew it, she falls as usual.

Graviton Battery (6xp; Strength 4, Essence 2): If the Alchemical uses this Charm on multiple consecutive rounds, the cost of each use past the first is reduced to two motes. She must use the same mode each round to receive this discount.

Momentum Redirection Pulse Injector

Cost: 3m, 2i; **Mins:** Strength 4, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Perilous

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Parabolic Leap Overcharger Device

Injection nozzles along the Alchemical's legs flare with Essence as channel her momentum into

a burst of propulsive force.

The Alchemical can use this Charm on her turn while in mid-air to leap one range band upwards, without using her movement action. This is typically used to extend the range of a vertical leap or to break a fall, reducing the falling damage as if it were one range band shorter.

The Alchemical can't use this Charm while within close range of an enemy, and she can't use it and make an attack on the same tick.

If the Alchemical has Parabolic Leap Overcharger Device's Trajectory Enhancement Assembly submodule, she can use it to enhance this Charm as well.

Reset: Once per scene.

Submodules

Aerial Strike Configuration (6xp) (+1wp): The Alchemical can pay a one-Willpower surcharge to use this Charm and make an attack on the same tick. The surcharge is waived if she uses it together with another submodule that has a Willpower surcharge.

Inertial Compensator (3xp): The Alchemical doesn't need to be in mid-air to use this Charm.

Reactive Retrograde Pulse (3xp, Inertial Compensator): The Alchemical can use this Charm outside of her turn in response to an attack. As usual, she must use it before the attack roll, and must successfully dodge to leap with it. This doesn't count against the once-per-scene limit.

Vector Improvisation Module (6xp; Strength 5, Essence 2) (+1wp): The Alchemical can pay a one-Willpower surcharge to leap in any direction.

Rapid Trajectory Shift (6xp; Strength 5, Essence 3, Reactive Retrograde Pulse) (+5m): The Alchemical can pay a five-mote surcharge to use this Charm outside of her turn.

Plasma Thruster Assembly

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Strength 5, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Parabolic Leap Overcharger Device, Personal Gravity Manipulation Apparatus

The Alchemical deploys retractable nozzles from her lower legs or back, taking to the air on glowing jets of force.

The Alchemical flies up to (Essence/2, rounded up) range bands in any direction, using her movement action. She must fly at least two range bands — the plasma thruster's force is too great for anything less. She may end her movement hovering in mid-air, though she must reuse this Charm on her next turn or fall to the ground.

If there are any enemies within close range of the Alchemical, she must make a (Strength + Athletics) disengage roll against them to take flight. If she successfully disengages from an enemy and moves directly away from him, he's caught in the plasma thruster's jets, a one-time environmental hazard with

difficulty 5, Damage 4L.

If the Alchemical uses this Charm on multiple consecutive turns, she waives the Willpower cost of uses past the first.

Submodules

Tactical Flight Upgrade (6xp) (+5m, 2i per turn): The Alchemical may pay a five-mote surcharge to extend this Charm's duration to one scene. In this mode, she doesn't fly multiple range bands — instead, she can use her movement actions to travel their normal distance through the air. She must pay two Initiative at the end of each subsequent turn, or this Charm ends.

Travel Efficiency Upgrade (6xp; Tactical Flight Upgrade) (+5m): The Alchemical can pay a five-mote surcharge to use this Charm for long-range travel outside of combat, extending its duration to one hour and letting her fly at up to (Essence x20) miles per hour. Its Willpower cost is waived if she renews it at the end of its duration. If the Alchemical enters combat, she may reflexively swap from this submodule's effect to Tactical Flight Upgrade.

Momentum Conservation Impact Buffer (6xp): If the Alchemical uses this Charm to move into close range with an enemy and lands an attack against him on the same tick, he's knocked one range band in the direction of her flight. If this causes him to impact with a barrier or obstacle, the Alchemical adds an automatic success on the damage roll.

Cooperative Vector System (3xp; Momentum Conservation Impact Buffer): When the Alchemical moves into close range with an enemy, an ally carried aloft by her can benefit from Momentum Conservation Impact Buffer if he attacks that foe from close range before the Alchemical's next turn.

Labor

Hydraulic Musculature Reinforcement

Cost: 4m, 1wp; **Mins:** Strength 3, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Withering-only

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Transpuissant Strength Upgrade

Reinforcing pneumatic musculature is threaded throughout the Champion's body.

The Alchemical converts dice added by Transpuissant Strength Upgrade to automatic successes. Each installation of Transpuissant Strength Upgrade also adds +1 to the Alchemical's effective Strength for feats of strength and +1 to her attack's raw **withering** damage.

Special: An Alchemical who has Transpuissant Stamina Upgrade's Labor-Hero Reinforcement submodule (p. XX) can take Hydraulic Musculature Reinforcement as a Stamina Charm, applying its benefits to Transpuissant Stamina Upgrade. This also applies to other Charms and submodules with Hydraulic Musculature Reinforcement as a prerequisite (or as a prerequisite of another prerequisite).

Submodules

Axiomatic Might Protocol (6xp): The Alchemical can pay three motes to treat the feat of strength as a

threaten roll against any hostile onlookers if she succeeds. Gremlins, fae, and the undead suffer –1 Resolve against it.

Hero-of-Industry Subroutine (6xp) (3m): The Alchemical can pay three motes to treat the feat of strength as an inspire roll against all onlookers if she succeeds. Affected characters are overcome with a spirit of duty and diligence. They add one die on the first roll they make while tending to those duties, though they can't gain this benefit in combat.

Labor-Inspiring Icon (3xp): While the Alchemical performs manual labor, any mortals who work alongside her gain a bonus dot of Strength.

Rapid Demolition Upgrade (3xp): The Alchemical may complete a feat of demolition that normally takes an extended period of time, such as bashing through a brick wall, in an instant, as long as the Storyteller deems it feasible. Even if not, the time required to complete it is dramatically accelerated.

Superior Efficiency Tuning (3xp): The Alchemical multiplies the speed at which she can perform manual labor by (Strength). This is Augmented. This submodule doesn't apply to crafting unless the roll uses Strength.

Paramagnetic Tether Beam

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Strength 3, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Internal

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: None

Coils of Essence-conducting wire inside the Alchemical's hands project a beam of semi-tangible force, visible as a faint distortion in the air.

The Alchemical can use the Paramagnetic Tether Beam for the following purposes. It extends out to short range.

- She can use it to swing through the air, as long as there's a surface within range for the beam to attach to. If she attaches the beam to a surface above her, she can ascend upward with movement actions, "winching up" the beam. She rolls (Strength + Athletics) for movement actions using the beam.
- She can use it to lift or suspend objects within range as a feat of strength.
- She can use it to make disarm and distract gambits against enemies within range, with a (Strength + Athletics) attack roll.
- She can use it to move or manipulate objects within range as a miscellaneous action, although she can't move them between range bands. At the Storyteller's discretion, this may let her perform some actions at range with (Strength + Athletics), as long as they don't involve fine manipulation.

Submodules

Psychokinetic Reinforcement Array (6xp): The Alchemical adds (Essence) to her effective Strength to determine if she can perform feats of strength with the beam.

Ultraviolet Emitter (3xp; Essence 2): The paramagnetic beam is no longer visible.

Cohesion Buffer (6xp; Strength 4, Essence 2) (3m): The Alchemical can pay three motes to extend the beam's range to medium for an instant.

Recursive Force Suspension Array

Cost: 1m; **Mins:** Strength 4, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Augmented, Stackable

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Paramagnetic Tether Beam

A bulky white jade apparatus sheathed in concentric rings is housed in the Champion's torso, projecting an intense gravity well for labor, rescue, and tactical purposes.

The Alchemical makes a feat of strength to lift an object. If she succeeds, it's suspended in midair, enveloped in a shimmering field of gravitational force. Alternatively, she can make a difficulty 2 feat to lift up to (Strength) small objects that wouldn't normally require a roll to lift. She can stack multiple uses of this Charm to suspend additional objects.

Once the Alchemical ends this Charm, the suspended objects drift harmless down to the ground. It also falls if it's acted on by an external force, like a character grabbing it or a strong air current.

If the Alchemical has Paramagnetic Tether Beam's Psychokinetic Reinforcement Array submodule, its effect also applies to this Charm's roll.

Submodules

Force Displacement Emitter (3xp): The Alchemical can take a miscellaneous action to move any number of suspended objects one range band in the same direction. Smaller movements are reflexive. This doesn't let her take actions through suspended objects, and she can't move an object beyond medium range of her. If she has Paramagnetic Tether Beam's Cohesion Buffer submodule, she can use it to extend this to long range for an instant.

Instant Fortification Telemetry (3xp): If the Alchemical suspends an object large enough to provide cover, she can reflexively roll to take cover behind it, or allow an ally to do so instead. This doesn't use that character's movement action. If the Alchemical lifts multiple such objects with Graviton Suspension Coil, she and up to (Essence) allies may do so.

Inertial Negation Field (3xp, Strength 5, Essence 2) (+2m): The Alchemical can pay a two-mote surcharge to intensify the suspension field. Characters other than her must make a feat of strength to move a suspended object, with the same difficulty and minimum Strength as lifting it. The roll is difficulty 2 for objects that don't normally require a roll to lift. Environmental forces can't break the suspension unless they would be capable of moving the object while it's on the ground.

Diamagnetic Surface Charge (3xp; Inertial Negation Field): When using Inertial Negation Field, the Alchemical can magnetically lock an object to a stable surface such as a floor or wall. This increases the difficulty of moving it by (Strength/2, rounded up). This is Augmented.

Graviton Suspension Coil (6xp; Strength 5, Essence 2, Inertial Negation Field) (+5m, 1wp): The Alchemical can pay a five-mote, one-Willpower surcharge to lift any number of objects within short

range of her. The feat has the highest Strength minimum and difficulty among those objects. If successfully, those objects are suspended in mid-air, and the Alchemical may choose to reflexively pull any number of them into close range with her. She can't suspend objects held or worn by other characters.

Orbital Trajectory Matrix (6xp; Strength 6, Graviton Suspension Coil) (+4i): The Alchemical can pay a four-Initiative surcharge when she uses Graviton Suspension Coil to cause the suspended objects to orbit her at high speed. They move with her wherever she goes and form an environmental hazard as long as there's sufficient objects or debris for the Alchemical to suspend. The hazard doesn't affect her. Its difficulty (Strength/2, rounded up) and deals bashing damage equal to half the feat's difficulty, rounded up, to a maximum of (Strength). This is Augmented. If the Alchemical has Force Displacement Emitter, she can use it to move this vortex independently, rather than having it follow her.

Gravitational Slingshot Projector (3xp; Essence 3, Force Displacement Emitter, Orbital Trajectory Matrix): While using Orbital Trajectory Matrix, the Alchemical can use her turn to launch all suspended objects at a single character within close range, making an undodgeable **decisive** or **withering** attack with (Strength + Athletics). **Withering** attacks have Accuracy (Strength/2, rounded up) and a base damage of (7 + Strength). This is Augmented. The Alchemical adds dice of **decisive** damage or post-soak **withering** damage equal to the Strength minimum of the feat used to lift those objects. Using Gravitational Slingshot Projector ends this Charm.

Clockwork Might Configuration

Cost: 6m; **Mins:** Strength 3, Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Augmented

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Hydraulic Musculature Reinforcement

Clockwork gears on the Alchemical's limbs and abdomen reinforce her musculature with mechanical might.

The Alchemical adds (Strength/2, rounded up) to her effective Strength for a feat of strength, and adds that many non-Charm dice on the feat's roll.

Submodules

Maximized Force Calculations (6xp; Strength 4): Both bonuses are increased by one.

Mass Dampener Relays

Cost: 3m, 1wp; **Mins:** Strength 7, Essence 4

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Recursive Force Suspension Array

A revolving cube of white jade and starmetal spins within the Graviton Suspension Coil's central chamber, manipulating gravity to surpass the limits of mere strength.

This Charm's gravitational distortion field doubles 9s on a feat of strength and lets the Alchemical attempt feats whose physical scale would ordinarily make them impossible. A feat of demolition can damage or destroy a portion of a large object extending one range band beyond what she could normally accomplish. A feat of strength can lift objects she'd normally lack the leverage to, as though her grip's leverage extended one range band beyond what she could normally lift.

With Essence 5, every five extra successes extends a feat's scale by one range band, maximum long range. If she has Colossus-Class Upgrade Installation, it's every three extra successes, rather than five.

Reset: Once per day unless reset by performing a difficulty 15+ feat of strength.

Submodules

Gravity Well Projector (6xp; Essence 5): If the Alchemical adds a full Excellency to the feat, she doubles 8s. With Colossus-Class Upgrade Installation, she can attempt it no matter how high its Strength minimum is.

Wits

Cognition

Synaptic Acceleration Node

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Wits 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Augmented, Internal

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Artificial synapses and adamant relay crystals implanted throughout the Alchemical's nervous system vastly speed her thought processes.

The Alchemical can use this Charm at the start of a round, adding (Wits) to her effective Initiative to determine when she takes her turn.

Submodules

Tactical Awareness Algorithm (3xp; Wits 3): If an enemy attempts to ambush the Alchemical in the first round of combat, she can use this Charm reflexively, adding its bonus to her effective Initiative to determine if she can be ambushed.

Meta-Cortex Augmentation (3xp; Wits 5): The Initiative bonus increases to (Essence + Wits).

Dynamic Reaction Enhancement System

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Wits 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Augmented

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Synaptic Acceleration Node

A complex mechanical assembly in the Alchemical's spine relays nerve signals at greatly accelerated speed, heightening her reaction time.

The Alchemical rerolls 1s until they cease to appear on a Join Battle roll. She gains one Initiative for each die that's rerolled into a success, maximum (Wits).

Submodules

Synchronized Reaction Signal (3xp; Wits 3): When the Alchemical gains Initiative from this Charm, she may also grant that much Initiative to one of her allies. Alternatively, she can divide the Initiative among multiple allies.

Thought-as-Action Node (6xp; Wits 3): The Alchemical also rerolls 2s.

Neural Relay Optimization (6xp; Wits 5, Essence 2) (+2m): For a two-mote surcharge, the Alchemical rolls an additional non-Charm die for each die that's rerolled into a success. She gains Initiative for any of these dice that roll successes as if they were rerolled dice, subject to the same limit.

Transhuman Efficiency Relays

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Wits 3, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One tick

Prerequisite Charms: Synaptic Acceleration Node

A secondary nervous skin is woven through the Alchemical's skin in circuit-like patterns, letting her split her attention without losing efficiency.

When the Alchemical makes a flurry, she reduces the penalty on each roll by one. This can enhance actions with any Attribute. If the flurry includes a roll using an Attribute for which the Alchemical has Transpuissant (Attribute) Upgrade installed, the penalty on that roll is reduced by an additional point for each installation.

Submodules

Cluster Action Hyperprocessor (6xp): The Alchemical also negates the Defense penalty for flurrying.

Integrated Tactical Processors

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Wits 5, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Withering-only

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Dynamic Reaction Enhancement System

Moonsilver processor nodes implanted along the Alchemical's joints run autonomous combat subroutines, maximizing her every movement for tactical advantage.

The Alchemical can use this Charm after crashing an enemy with a **withering** attack roll. Each 10 on the damage roll adds one to the amount of Initiative the Alchemical receives for crashing him, to a maximum bonus of (Wits/2, rounded up).

Submodules

Optimized Tactical Algorithm (3xp): Against enemies whose Initiative was higher than the Alchemical's when she attacked them, she benefits from 9s as well as 10s.

Void Slayer Subroutine (3xp; Optimized Tactical Algorithm): The Alchemical gains Optimized Tactical Algorithm's benefits against gremlins, fae, and the undead regardless of their Initiative.

Assault Calibration Program (6xp; Essence 3): The Alchemical can also use this Charm after landing a **decisive** attack that resets her Initiative. Every two 10s on the damage roll add +1 to her base Initiative, maximum (Wits/2, rounded up).

Ancillary Battle Consciousness

Cost: 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Wits 8, Essence 5

Type: Simple

Keywords: Internal, Perilous

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Integrated Tactical Processors, Transhuman Efficiency Relays

Machine architecture implanted in the Alchemical's brain creates a virtual cortex, a simulated sub-mind run on unused neural connections to vastly expand her cognitive processing.

The Alchemical makes a Join Battle roll, using the result to create an ancillary Initiative track. This can't be higher than her current Initiative. The Alchemical still only takes one turn each round, but can choose which track to use for anything where her Initiative is relevant: determining turn order, paying costs, **decisive** attack's damage, gaining Initiative from **withering** damage, etc. If she resets to base Initiative after a successful **decisive** attack or similar effect, she must reset the Initiative track used for that effect. If the ancillary Initiative track is crashed, this Charm ends.

If the Alchemical is knocked unconscious by an effect like Knockout Blow (**Exalted**, p. 278), forced into sleep or a trance state, or otherwise rendered mentally incapable of acting, the ancillary consciousness takes control, allowing her to continue acting unimpeded for this Charm's duration. However, a second use of such an effect disables the sub-mind, affecting the Alchemical as usual.

While using this Charm, the Alchemical waives the base cost of Integrated Tactical Processors, Synaptic Acceleration Node, and Transhuman Efficiency Relays.

Special activation rules: The Alchemical can use this Charm reflexively if she wins Join Battle, using the results of her roll for both Initiative tracks.

Reset: Once per scene.

Submodules

Omnisituational Contingency Matrix (6xp): This Charm doesn't end if the ancillary Initiative track is crashed. Instead, the track falls into crash and eventually resets as usual.

Resolve

Hardened Argument Patterning

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Wits 2, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Alchemical's convictions are hard-coded, reinforced against subversion by precisely calibrated neural patterning.

The Alchemical gains +2 Resolve against influence that opposes one of her Major or Defining Intimacies. This bonus is non-Charm if she's already spent Willpower today resisting the opposing character's influence this session.

Submodules

Expansive Discourse Augmentation (3xp; Wits 3): This Charm can also defend Minor Intimacies.

Persona Imprint Engrams (3xp; Wits 3): This Charm's bonus is non-Charm against influence that would weaken a Major or Defining Intimacy.

Unwavering Champion Protocol

Cost: —; **Mins:** Wits 2, Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Alchemical's thoughts are routed through a white jade processing core, isolating and purging temptations to stray from her duty.

The Alchemical gains +2 Resolve against influence that would cause her to harm, neglect, or abandon a group that she has a positive Tie for.

Submodules

Hard-Coded Loyalty (3xp; Wits 3): The Alchemical gains this bonus against influence that would weaken or alter a positive Tie to a group.

Populat Hero Directive (3xp; Wits 3): This Charm's benefit extends to positive Ties toward individual mortals.

Calibrated Compassion (3xp; Wits 5, Populat Hero Directive): This Charm's benefit extends to all positive Ties.

Will of Steel (6xp; Wits 4) (5m): If the Alchemical's enhanced Resolve is beaten, she can pay five motes to reduce the Willpower cost to resist by one.

Ironclad Solidarity Engine

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Wits 3, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Internal

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Unwavering Champion Protocol

Activating synthetic mirror neurons embedded throughout her brain, the Alchemical manually increases her empathy for those she serves.

The Alchemical instantly forms a positive Minor Tie to a member of a community that she serves. That character must be present in the scene. The Tie's Resolve bonus is increased by one. If the Alchemical makes an instill roll to spread that Tie to others, she adds (Intimacy) dice.

The Alchemical retains the Tie after this Charm ends.

Submodules

Aegis of the People (3xp; Wits 4): This Charm's dice bonus applies on Join Battle rolls when protecting or fighting alongside the character the Alchemical formed the Tie to.

Empathic Anchor (3xp; Wits 4, Essence 2): The Alchemical can use this Charm in a Decision Point, after an influence roll against her.

Inarguable Confidence Booster

Cost: —; **Mins:** Wits 3, Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Hardened Argument Patterning

An assembly of minuscule chemical pumps augments the Alchemical's reserves of will, bathing

her brain in synthetic neurotransmitters that bolster and renew her mental energies.

The Alchemical's permanent Willpower is increased by one, up to a maximum of 11. She gains one temporary Willpower when this Charm is installed.

Subversion Override Protocol

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Wits 3, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Hardened Argument Patterning

Those seeking to sway or subvert a Champion must contend with countermeasures programmed into her subconscious mind.

The Alchemical can use this Charm when following a character's social influence or a Psyche effect brings her into conflict with one of her Major or Defining Intimacies. She enters a second Decision Point to resist that influence. The intensity of the Intimacy she must invoke, the Willpower cost, and any additional conditions are the same as in the first Decision Point.

After using this Charm, the Alchemical gains +2 Guile against the character who influenced her if his roll would reveal that she's shrugged off his persuasion.

Reset: Once per story, unless reset when the Alchemical obtains a significant advantage over the character who influenced her by concealing her defiance.

Submodules

Augmented Defiance (3xp; Wits 5): The Alchemical can use this Charm in defense of Minor Intimacies.

System Purge (6xp; Wits 5, Essence 3) (+6m, 1wp): If a Psyche effect brings the Alchemical into conflict with a Defining Intimacy, she can pay a six-mote, one Willpower surcharge to break free without needing to enter a Decision Point or spend any additional Willpower.

Intensive Security Protocol (3xp; Augmented Defiance, System Purge): The Alchemical can use System Purge in defense of Major Intimacies.

Double Agent Programming

Cost: 3m, 1wp; **Mins:** Wits 6, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Internal, Mute

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Subversion Override Protocol

Bipartite structuring in the Alchemical's neural architecture allows her to feign false loyalties with inhuman perfection.

The Alchemical can use this Charm after successfully resisting influence with her Resolve. The opposing character believes he succeeded, and the Alchemical gains +3 Guile to conceal anything that would contradict this. She adds (higher of Essence or 3) dice on influence rolls to support this lie.

Those most vulnerable to this deception are the ones who believe the Alchemical isn't a threat to them because of their influence. She can attempt to ambush him even while he's aware of her presence (**Exalted**, p. 203). Instead of rolling Stealth, she makes a special ([Appearance, Manipulation, or Wits] + [Presence or Socialize]) instill roll against her target's Resolve.

If the Alchemical succeeds, she also uses that roll as her Join Battle roll. If her victim's Initiative is lower than hers, she can make an ambush against him in the first round. Otherwise, it becomes an unexpected attack. This only applies to the Alchemical's first attack.

This Charm ends if the Alchemical's behavior makes it clear to the influencing character that she's unaffected by his influence.

Special activation rules: The Alchemical can use this Charm when she resists influence with Subversion Override Protocol, waiving its Willpower cost.

Hierarchical Dogma Lock

Cost: —; **Mins:** Wits 4, Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Ironclad Solidarity Engine

White jade circuitry imprinted onto the surface of the Alchemical's brain circumvents its logic centers to automatically reject certain lines of argument.

Upon purchasing this Charm, the Alchemical's player chooses one of her positive Defining Ties to a group. The group must be one that the Alchemical serves, rather than one that serves her, requiring her to act in her role as Champion, not as a ruler. While this Charm is installed, that Intimacy can't be weakened by any means, other than her voluntarily doing so, and any influence that would cause her to act against it is unacceptable (**Exalted**, p. 220).

Characters can undermine this Charm's defense with a special instill roll. If successful, the chosen Intimacy loses this Charm's protection until the Alchemical upholds that Tie. It likewise loses this Charm's protection if the Alchemical voluntarily weakens the chosen Intimacy, or if it's weakened by Clarity. She must raise it back to Defining and then uphold it to regain this Charm's protection.

If the Alchemical has weakened the chosen Intimacy below Defining intensity, she can choose a different Intimacy for this Charm when she undergoes the Rite of Reconfiguration.

Submodules

Multimodal Duty Integrator (6xp; Wits 5, Essence 3): The Alchemical may choose a second qualifying Intimacy to protect with this Charm.

Hard-Wired Loyalty Circuits

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Wits 5, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Hierarchical Dogma Lock

The Champion and her community are inseparable, a hard-coded bond wired into her neural architecture.

When the Alchemical bolsters her Resolve with a positive Tie to a community she serves, it can't be penalized by weaker Intimacies if they're Ties toward individuals or Principles that express the Alchemical's personal agendas, desires, or needs.

Submodules

Indomitable Champion Axiom (3xp; Essence 3): Intimacies of equal intensity no longer penalize the Alchemical's Resolve.

Industrial Hero Imperative

Cost: 1m; **Mins:** Wits 4, Essence 3

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Ironclad Solidarity Engine

The Champion is unwavering in her loyalty. It is a sacred duty, programmed into her very soul.

The Alchemical can use this Charm after her Resolve is beaten by influence that forces her into a Decision Point. Instead of citing an Intimacy, she can cite a relevant ordeal she's overcome or endured in service to a community — rescuing civilians from a burning factory, fighting against an outbreak of disease, battling a formidable enemy. The cited ordeal has the same intensity as the Alchemical's positive Tie for that community, or Minor if she doesn't have one.

Reset: Once per story unless reset by upholding a positive Major or Defining Tie to a community the Alchemical serves.

Submodules

Champion of All (3xp): The Alchemical can cite acts performed for the sake of individual members of a community she serves, and reset it by upholding Ties to them.

God-Metal Golem Devotion (3xp): Against influence that opposes a positive Tie to the Alchemical's community, the Willpower cost to resist is reduced by one.

Infinite Clarity Consciousness Simulation

Cost: 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Wits 6, Essence 4

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Hard-Wired Loyalty Circuits

The Alchemical's mind expands in an infinite instant of perfect Clarity, perceiving and rejecting the imperfections and inefficiencies of flawed arguments.

The Alchemical rejects an influence roll against her as unacceptable, perfectly defending against it unless it's supported by one of her Defining Intimacies that aligns with Clarity (p. XX). She can't use this Charm if she doesn't have such an Intimacy.

This Charm's cost is reduced by five motes against influence that opposes one of the Alchemical's Defining Intimacies based on Clarity.

Reset: Once per story, unless reset by upholding a Defining Intimacy that aligns with Clarity while at Clarity 7+.

Familiars

Clockwork Companion Template

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Wits 2, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

An intricate moonsilver apparatus detaches from the Alchemical's back, unfolding into a clockwork machine-beast that faithfully serves the Champion.

Upon purchasing this Charm, the Alchemical's player creates familiar "templates" that can be created with it, dividing the equivalent of three dots of the Familiar Merit (**Exalted**, p. 161). She can't choose familiars with Legendary Size. Clockwork companions use the traits of the chosen animals — even those not found in Autochthonia — and also have the Automaton Merit (p. XX). Training clockwork companions uses Craft or Lore instead of Survival.

Using this Charm activates the clockwork companion from the Alchemical's anima. If used in combat, the familiar immediately rolls Join Battle. A second use of this Charm allows the Alchemical to demanifest a clockwork companion within close range.

If a clockwork companion is killed, the Alchemical can't use this Charm to recreate it until she next undergoes the Rite of Reconfiguration.

Submodules

Expanded Template Database (6xp): The Alchemical gains an additional three dots to allocate among new templates. This submodule can be purchased any number of times.

Machine-God Patterning (6xp; Wits 4, Essence 2): The Alchemical can create templates based on machine spirits of up to Essence 3. Upon purchasing this submodule, she may erase existing templates and reallocate their dots to new machine spirit templates.

Reinforced Frame (6xp; Wits 4, Essence 2): One of the Alchemical's templates gains two -2 health levels and one -4 level. She may purchase this Charm up to (Essence) times per template.

Armored Chassis (6xp; Wits 5, Essence 2): One of the Alchemical's templates gains +3 soak and +1 Hardness. She may purchase this Charm up to (Essence) times per template.

Clockwork Colossus Upgrade (6xp; Wits 5, Essence 4) (+5m): The Alchemical can create Legendary Size clockwork companion templates. She must pay a five-mote surcharge to manifest them. Upon purchasing this submodule, she may erase existing templates and reallocate their dots to new Legendary Size templates.

Machine-Beast Communion Circuit

Cost: 10m, 1wp, 1xp; **Mins:** Wits 2, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Clockwork Companion Template *or* Transpuissant Wits Upgrade

A torc of green jade detaches from the Alchemical's wrist, expanding to form a bridle or collar for a beloved familiar to make it as much a part of herself as her Charms.

The Alchemical forges a deeper bond with animal familiar or clockwork companion. Its appearance shifts to match the Alchemical's mechanical body and the aesthetics of her Charms, with this Charm's torc integrated into its body. Live animals don't actually become automata, but take on mechanical or machine-like aspects: a Starmetal Caste's favored rat might develop a luminous, circuit-like pattern in its fur, with metal whiskers that glint in the light like starmetal. It gains the following benefits:

Beast-Machine Aspect: The familiar's mechanical aspects grant it +1 soak. Those familiar with the Alchemical's appearance can recognize the familiar as hers by the resemblance.

Clarified Harmony: The Alchemical's Clarity never penalizes her interactions with the familiar (p. XX) — instead, she adds the dice bonus from Clarity on rolls with any Attribute that involve understanding her familiar's feelings, desires, or moods.

Unbreakable Loyalty: The familiar gains a Defining Tie of loyalty to the Alchemical. No influence, other than the Alchemical's, can make it act against this Intimacy.

Void-Stalking Companion: The familiar adds one die on attack rolls and Perception rolls against gremlins, fae, and the undead.

The Alchemical's familiar retains these benefits even while this Charm isn't installed.

This Charm's experience point cost is waived the first time it's used. If an enhanced familiar, the Alchemical regains the experience spent on it.

Rat-Friend Programming

Cost: —; **Mins:** Wits 3, Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Internal

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Clockwork Companion Template *or* Transpuissant Wits Upgrade

The Alchemical is attuned to the Realm of Brass and Shadow's machine beasts, drawing on moonsilver microprocessors in her own animal hindbrain.

The Alchemical adds (higher of Essence or 3) dice on rolls with any Attribute that involve understanding the feelings, desires, or moods of animals and beings with animal-like mentalities, like some lesser machine spirits. She also gains this bonus on rolls to sooth, placate, or train them. As long as she means them no harm, such creatures intuitively sense this, a wary trust that's equivalent to a Minor Tie.

Submodules

Evolutionary Impetus (6xp; Wits 3, Essence 2) (10m, 1wp): The Alchemical can pay ten motes and one Willpower to train a clockwork companion or animal in latent special abilities or Merits (**Exalted**, p. 554) without meeting the normal specialty requirements and shortens the training interval to one week. She doubles 8s when training clockwork companions. With Wits 4, Essence 3, she can pay two experience to teach a magical ability to a familiar enhanced with Machine-Beast Communion Circuit.

Crafting

Omnitool Implant

Cost: 3m (1m); **Mins:** Wits 2, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Stackable

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: None

The Alchemical's hands house adaptive assemblies of pulleys, gears, bars, and bits, letting the Champion reconfigure them into whatever tool she might need.

The Alchemical transforms one of her hands into any of a wide variety of tools. This includes any tool that could be used in a physical roll, but also tools like sextants, musical instruments, abacuses, and the like. She can't produce tools that are too heavy for her to hold in her hands.

These tools can be used for rolls with any Attribute. The tools are exceptional equipment if she has the

applicable Transpuissant (Attribute) Upgrade installed.

The Alchemical can stack multiple uses of this Charm — up to one per hand or similar manipulator. The cost of uses past the first is reduced to one mote.

Submodules

Comprehensive Surgical System (3xp): While using Omnitoool Implant to perform surgeries or similar procedures, the Alchemical adds (Medicine) non-Charm dice. Her patients never suffer more than a single level of damage from the surgery.

Harmonic Entertainment System (3xp): While using Omnitoool Implant to play music, the Alchemical ignores multiple target penalties.

Mechanism Bypass Function (3xp): While using Omnitoool Implant to pick locks, bypass security devices, disarm traps, or the like, the Alchemical rerolls 1s until they cease to appear.

Pneumatic Stylus Automation (3xp): While using Omnitoool Implant as a writing implement, the Alchemical writes with superhuman speed. She can compose a brief note almost instantly, a full-page letter or poem in seconds, or a multiple-page letter or short story in minutes. It doesn't accelerate longer works, which are limited by the speed at which the Alchemical can compose them.

Populat-Sustaining Gear (3xp): While using Omnitoool Implant to prepare food or provide other necessities for mortals, they gain a Minor Tie of gratitude toward her unless they pay one Willpower. A repurchase extends this to supernatural characters as well.

Reconstruction Assembly (3xp): While using Omnitoool Implant to repair things, the Alchemical adds (Essence) non-Charm dice. She reduces the cost of other Alchemical Charms used on the roll by one mote each.

Secondary Telefactor Assembly (3xp): While using Omnitoool Implant for a Craft project, she only needs two extra successes to trigger an increased Craft point reward on basic and major projects (Exalted, pp. 240-241).

Mass Assembly Protocol

Cost: 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Wits 3, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Augmented

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Omnitoool Implant

Parallel processing cores installed along the Alchemical's spine augment the Alchemical's capacity for mass production to superhuman levels of efficiency.

The Alchemical begins a batch of up to (Wits) simultaneous basic or major projects with any Attribute. Each batched project must involve creating or repairing multiple objects that are identical or extremely similar to each other. She must have access to appropriate equipment.

The Alchemical makes a single roll for all these projects and need only pay the cost of Charms that enhance those projects once. Major projects use a single project slot, and the Alchemical only needs to

pay their craft point cost once (**Exalted**, p. 240). She receives craft point awards for meeting basic objectives separately for each batched project.

Special activation rules: The Alchemical can use Incomparable Efficiency Upgrade (p. XX) reflexively with this Charm to accelerate all batched projects.

Reset: The Alchemical can't use this Charm again until she's completed all of the batched projects.

Submodules

Assembly Line Algorithms (3xp, Wits 5): The batched projects no longer need to be identical, but they must all use the same Craft.

Material Reinforcement Matrix

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Wits 3, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Omnitool Implant

The Alchemical deploys self-assembling nanomachines housed in her Omnitool Implant to strengthen and reinforce matter.

The Alchemical makes a touched object more durable, adding +1 to the difficulty of feats of demolition against it and increasing their Strength minimum by (Essence/2, rounded up). Objects so fragile that they normally wouldn't require a roll to destroy instead requires a feat with minimum Strength 3 and difficulty 1.

If a reinforced object's durability is relevant to an action, it counts as exceptional equipment (**Exalted**, p. 580). Once per scene, when a reinforced object's durability provides a significant advantage, the Alchemical gains a gold point.

Submodules

Reinforced Design (6xp; Wits 7, Essence 3): The Alchemical can use this Charm to begin a basic or major project for a surcharge of two gold points, creating an object that that receives this Charm's benefits permanently.

Technomorphic Integration Engine

Cost: 2m; **Mins:** Wits 3, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Stackable

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Omnitool Implant

A space-folding engine built into the Alchemical's torso allows her to internalize her artifact

panoply, retracting them into hidden compartments with a distinctive whirring-clicking noise.

The Alchemical internalizes an artifact, storing it within her body. The space-folding compartments negates internalized artifacts' weight even if they aren't attuned. She can't internalize artifacts that are too heavy for her to hold or wear, or that don't belong to her.

Ending this Charm deploys the internalized artifact. The Alchemical must take any actions required to ready it, like donning armor (**Exalted**, p. 591). If the artifact was unattuned, she can transfer the motes committed to this Charm toward the attunement cost.

Multiple uses of this Charm allow the Alchemical to internalize multiple artifacts.

Submodules

Precursor Technology Absorption (3xp): The Alchemical can internalize mundane objects with this Charm.

Integrated Panoply Upgrade (3xp; Essence 2): This Charm's cost is reduced by one mote.

Hyperspatial Compression (6xp; Essence 3) (+3m): The Alchemical can pay a three-mote surcharge to integrate an artifact too large to hold, as long as it could be lifted with a feat of strength with a difficulty no higher than 10. It takes five minutes to internalize, but can be deployed instantly.

Transcendent Multimodal Artifact Matrix

Cost: —; **Mins:** Wits 4, Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Omnitool Implant

A complex assembly of alloyed magical materials is woven across and throughout the Alchemical's body, transforming her into a living artifact.

When the Alchemical undergoes the Rite of Reconfiguration, she may "install" Evocations that she's awoken from her attuned artifacts or hearthstones in her Charm slots. The installed Evocation takes on mechanical form similar to an Alchemical Charm. If it has prerequisite Evocations, she must install them first.

Installing Evocations grants the following benefits:

- The Alchemical can use the installed Evocations without needing to have the artifact or to attune it. A weapon's Evocations can be used through any weapon, including unarmed attacks and mundane weaponry, while armor Evocations could be used in different armor or while unarmored. The Storyteller may rule out certain Evocations if using them with a given item wouldn't make sense — some of an artifact bow's Evocations may not be compatible with a daiklave, for instance.
- If the artifact has an innate power that's necessary for its Evocations to function, she gains that benefit.
- If she chooses to wield the artifact, its attunement cost is reduced by one mote for each installed Evocation.

If the Alchemical has Intrinsic Evocation System (p. XX), any Evocations she awakens with it count as being slotted for this Charm, though this doesn't actually take up slots.

Synthetic Inspiration Engrams

Cost: —; **Mins:** Wits 2, Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Augmented, Internal

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: None

Delicate clusters of moonsilver and blude jade in the Alchemical's prefrontal cortex amplify her creative faculties.

The Alchemical gains an additional ([Intelligence or Wits] /2, rounded up) silver points when she completes a craft project and accomplishes at least two basic objectives (**Exalted**, p. 240). On a basic or major project, this lets her trigger an enhanced craft point reward with only two extra successes if she fulfills three objectives.

Submodules

Some of these submodules grant access to additional basic objectives. No matter how many objectives the Alchemical fulfills, she can only gain craft point rewards from three of them.

XXX (3xp): This submodule unlocks a new basic objective: creating something that will aid a community in dealing with a threat or problem that it faces.

XXX (3xp): This submodule unlocks a new basic objective: creating something that will aid in opposing gremlins, fae, or the undead.

XXX (3xp): This submodule unlocks a new basic objective: making use of rare, exotic, or supernaturally puissant components.

XXX (3xp): This submodule unlocks a new basic objective: qualifying for a Role Bonus by completing the project (p. XX). This applies even if the Alchemical's already claimed her Role Bonus for the current session.

Expanded Insight Node (3xp; Wits 3): The Alchemical only needs two objectives to reduce the successes needed for an increased reward. With three objectives, she only needs one extra success.

Conceptual Expansion Circuitry (3xp; Wits 4, Expanded Insight Node: If the Alchemical achieves three basic objectives, this Charm's silver point award is doubled.

Ceaseless Champion of Industry (6xp, Wits 5, Conceptual Expansion Circuitry): When the Alchemical completes a superior or legendary project, she gains an additional gold point for each basic objective she completed.

Nation-Forging Endeavor (6xp; Wits 4): Achieving a basic objective grants additional craft points if the Alchemical fulfilled it in a way that positively affects a community she belongs to or a member of that community. Each such objective awards an additional gold point, or two silver points on a basic project.

Perfection of Design (6xp; Wits 5, Ceaseless Champion of Industry, Nation-Forging Endeavor): Once per

story, when the Alchemical completes a craft project, she may claim a greater reward, adding additional silver points equal to her successes on the final roll, as well as an additional gold point for each 10.

Improving on Perfection (6xp; Wits 7, Essence 3, Perfection of Design): This submodule enhances Perfection of Design. If the Alchemical achieves three basic objectives, she gains gold points equal to her successes instead of silver points, plus an additional gold point for each 9 and 10.

Navigation

Hazard-Mapping Plexus

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Wits 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

A clustered tracery of wiring behind the Alchemical's head feeds into navigational implants in her eustachian tubes, accelerating her cognitive processing to map out her surroundings.

The Alchemical adds (Wits/2, rounded up) non-Charm dice on a navigation roll or a roll with any Attribute to detect, predict, or avoid a nearby environmental features and phenomena: finding a nearby conduit to tap, identifying a safe interval to pass through a perilous furnace-chamber, or sensing a local microclimate before passing through it. It doesn't enhance rolls to resist environmental hazards, but aids in rolls to bypass the hazard or circumvent it with cunning and ingenuity.

In combat, a successful roll grants her one Initiative if her stunt describes how it provides a tactical advantage.

Submodules

Comprehensive Navigational Database (3xp): This Charm can enhance rolls to introduce or challenge facts about nearby environmental features and phenomena. The Alchemical can use a Sail or Survival specialty as a Lore background, and rolls with that Ability instead of Lore if she does.

High-Fidelity Mapping Algorithm (3xp): If the Alchemical succeeds on a roll to find a route to a location, she can mark it in her navigation systems, allowing her to intuitively gauge the direction and approximate distance to that location. She can also mark her current location without needing a roll. She can mark up to (higher of Essence or 3) locations at a time.

Universal Pilot Key

Cost: 4m, 1wp; **Mins:** Wits 3, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Pilot

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Transpuissant (Wits) Upgrade

A needle-tipped tendril uncoil from a port in the Alchemical's forearm, interfacing with a ship's control systems.

The Alchemical links herself to an artifact vehicle, entering into a meditative state as her mind becomes one with the ship. She can pilot the vehicle directly through this link and control other systems, like opening or closing doors or speaking through communication systems. She also gains the following benefits:

- She increases the vehicle's Maneuverability by one.
- She can use Lore or an applicable Craft instead of Sail on piloting rolls.
- She converts dice from Transpuissant (Attribute) Upgrade to automatic successes on piloting rolls.
- She reduces penalties from being unfamiliar with the vehicle's controls or from having insufficient or poorly trained crew by (Essence).

Submodules

Naval Supremacy Upgrade (3xp): In naval combat, the Alchemical reduces the Momentum cost of naval stratagems by one.

Prototype Vessel Interface (3xp): The Alchemical can link to mundane vehicles, extruding filaments from the embedded needles that spread from this Charm's needles throughout the vehicle's mechanisms of control.

Ship-Self Consciousness (3xp): The Alchemical can perceive everywhere aboard the vehicle, unimpeded by its walls or other obstructions. She can also extend her perception through any sensors the vehicle has. She must still make Awareness rolls as usual to focus on details, converting dice from Transpuissant (Attribute) Upgrade to automatic successes.

Optimal Pathfinding Algorithm

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Wits 3, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: Indefinite

Prerequisite Charms: Hazard-Mapping Plexus

Calculation engines linked to the Alchemical's Hazard-Mapping Plexus extend her situational awareness even further to map out optimal routes across the Realm of Brass and Shadow.

The Alchemical makes a (Wits + Survival) navigation roll with double 9s to find the way to a location. If she succeeds, she finds a route that's quicker than usual, letting her and up to (Essence x2) companions complete the journey in half the time it would usually take.

Submodules

Hypergeometric Topology Matrix (Wits 5, Essence 3): If the Alchemical rolls 3+ extra successes on the

navigation roll, the shortcut she discovers divides the time needed to complete the journey by $(Wits/2, \text{rounded up})$. This is Augmented.

Divine Axiom Demonstrated moved into a precise crescent step and lifted her toned arms studded with glistening Charms into a basic block. The workers clustered in the harsh light of the community center's gymnasium followed suit. She walked between their ranks, straightening backs and adjusting limbs. Once satisfied with the stances of her students, *Axiom* flowed into a backward-stepping pose and raised her arms before her.

Acutely she recalled gremlin teeth around her forearms; sawteeth of bloodied crystal shredded her artificial flesh to the metallic bone. The buzz of the lighting and the murmur of human voices and breathing disappeared, transforming into desperate sobs and dying screams and vicious snarls and the wet tearing of flesh. The metallic stench of blood filled her nose, commingled with spilled oil and heated steel. Bile rose in her throat. She stabbed a nail into the palm of her hand to banish the torment of the memory and bring her back to the present.

"Weapon forms next," she ordered, and hoped none of the assembled heard the waver in her voice. "We must all learn how to defend ourselves with the tools that we have."

The workers shouted their enthusiastic assent, as she taught them, and filed to the sides of the gymnasium to pick up training picks and hammers crafted to match the heft and swing of the real tool. *Axiom* walked them through basic downswings and showed them how to allow the weight of the weapon to provide its own force so they wasted no energy while fighting.

They would need it. She remembered walking through the carnage of the last attack and the soft, desperate weeping of the injured and the dying. If they'd only had weapons, *Axiom* sharply admonished herself. If only I had been there sooner. If only. Next time would be different, she resolved, and there would be a next time.

Axiom paused to collect herself but kept her demeanor cool. The workers' spirits lifted as their confidence built with every swing. Several split off into groups to spar and practice new techniques. Their laughter and smiles held her in the present for a long joyful moment.

Then she envisioned the future. She witnessed the doors of the gymnasium splintering open and a tide of ravenous vectors surging through. She imagined standing in the midst of it, with all her Exalted might but doomed to watch her fellows die. She remembered the way limbs hung broken and loose and ragged all smeared with gore. *Axiom* clasped a hand over her mouth to stifle a cry.

One of the workers, a broad and ruddy woman with a tangle of dark hair tied back in a grungy kerchief, touched a hand lightly to the Alchemical's arm. *Axiom* glanced down at the wide fingers gently resting on the bend of her elbow.

"Are you all right, Teacher?" She asked. "You looked like you were going to be sick."

The Adamant Caste swept her gaze once more around the room. Sweat and laughter and conversation greeted her. She would give anything to preserve their safety and protect them from the horrors that crawled outside the borders of Jarish.

"I'm fine," *Axiom* replied with more confidence than she felt. Nearby a man split a spar of crystal with his palm while another crumpled plastic bricks with swings of his hammer. They were going to make it. "I was just thinking of the future."

Chapter 6: Martial Arts and Sorcery

Martial Arts in Autochthonia

As in Creation, the Chosen are the foremost masters of the martial arts in the Realm of Brass and Shadow, though not their only practitioners. The Eight Nations maintain martial arts schools where those who qualify for self-defense training are taught sanctioned styles to promote physical fitness and moral rectitude. Other styles are safeguarded by elite groups within the Tripartite, or by independent schools ranging from legitimate communities to voidbringer cults. Tunnel folk masters pass ancient martial secrets within their clans. Some among the more powerful of machine spirits are studied in martial arts, and pass their wisdom down to the Eight Divine Ministers' Machine Saints.

Where Did You Learn That Technique?

Some martial arts styles published in other **Exalted** books have their historical origin at some point after Autochthon's departure from Creation. However, Storytellers shouldn't necessarily make this a barrier to such styles existing in Autochthon, especially a style that a player character wishes to use. Their presence in Autochthonia might be explained by a shared descent from ancient martial traditions of the early First Age, convergent evolution among Autochthonian martial artists, or inspiration experienced by Alchemicals when creating their Perfected Style Matrix.

Crystal Chameleon Style

Crystal Chameleon style is paradoxical, simultaneously stealthy and conspicuous. Its most famous practitioners in Autochthonia are Alchemicals, who weaponize their anima banners to become blinding, brutally effective fighters and assassins. Mortal stylists and Champions alike make use of firecrackers, neon gas bombs, and other gear to generate flashes of light. Its mortal practitioners are thus largely people of means, ingenious alchemists, or those who can otherwise procure such supplies.

Warriors who wish for their work to be noticed prize Crystal Chameleon style, using it across the Eight Nations to brutal effect. It's the style of Alchemical assassins acting as state-sanctioned heroes, but it's also the style of killers who want to send a message: tunnel folk raiders, Sovan death commandos, strike-breaking regulators, voidbringer dissidents, and the legbreakers employed by Claslati glot-bosses.

Rare in Creation, the style is preserved by esoteric masters, particularly in societies proficient in alchemy. Many dwell in the forests of the Northeast and Far East, though their secrets have taken root and spread to other stylists, such as Calin's Five Shades, the enigmatic Forest Witches, and Palanquin rebels. In the South, practitioners use firedust as a form of blinding powder.

Crystal Chameleon Weapons: This style uses ostentatious, flashy kicks and strikes that catch unwary opponents off guard, along with lunging movements that confuse the enemy's eyes. It also uses the meteor hammer, rope dart, short spear and spear.

Armor: Crystal Chameleon is incompatible with armor.

Complementary Abilities: Stealth is key to this style, while Athletics and Dodge are important for battlefield mobility.

Meteor Hammer/Rope Dart

Medium (Damage +9, Overwhelming 1)

Tags: Bashing (Meteor Hammer), Flexible, Lethal (Rope Dart), Martial Arts, Special, Thrown (Short), Two-Handed

Special: After attacking with a meteor hammer or rope dart, a character may pull it back to hand with a miscellaneous action. With 3+ extra successes on the attack roll, this can be done reflexively. This isn't compatible with magic that extends the attack's range, unless the nature of the effect would still let the wielder pull back the rope or chain.

Note: Ranged weapons with the Martial Arts tag can only be used with Martial Arts, as usual. The Archery and Thrown tags are used solely to determine the weapon's traits.

One Wire Among Many

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Compressing her anima into a refracted sheen around her, the stylist dives for cover with light trailing behind her.

The stylist adds (higher of Essence or 3) dice on a Stealth roll to establish concealment in combat. Opposing rolls suffer a -1 visual penalty if the stylist's anima is at glowing or higher, or if she stunts with the use of blinding powder, firecrackers, or the like. This penalty increases to -2 if the stylist is behind cover.

In Creation, this Charm is known as Just-Another-Branch Deceit.

Light-Treading Technique

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 3, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: One Wire Among Many

With a flux of her body's Essence, the stylist bends light around herself to become swifter and step lighter.

The stylist rerolls up to (Anima + 1) dice that roll non-1 failures on a movement action. If she moves while in concealment, this increases to (Anima + 3) dice.

Sudden Radiance Onslaught

Cost: 4m, 1a; **Mins:** Martial Arts 3, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Dual

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: One Wire Among Many

The stylist strikes quickly and brutally in an overawing display, her anima strobing through the spectrum as she attacks.

The stylist adds two dice to an attack's post-soak **withering** damage or **decisive** damage. This increases to (higher of Essence or 3) dice on unexpected attacks, or if the stylist's anima was at bonfire when she used this Charm. If the attack hits, the enemy's onslaught penalty doesn't refresh at the end of his next turn, instead doing so at the end of that round.

Mastery: This Charm's damage bonus is increased by one die.

Crystal Chameleon Form

Cost: 8m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Form, Uniform

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Light-Trading Technique, Sudden Radiance Onslaught

The stylist strikes the light around her, fracturing it into a shifting prism as she assumes a stance hidden within the grandeur.

The stylist gains the following benefits:

- Attacks against her suffer a $-(\text{Anima, minimum } 1)$ visual penalty.
- She ignores Stealth penalties from her anima, and can attempt to enter concealment even when it's at burning or higher.
- When she makes a surprise attack from behind cover, the Defense penalty increases to -3 .
- She adds (Anima, minimum 1) dice to movement actions in combat.

Special activation rules: Whenever the stylist rises two levels of anima in a single instant while in combat, she may reflexively enter this Form.

Shattered Crystal Rebuke

Cost: 4m (2a); **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Counterattack, Decisive-only, Terrestrial

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Crystal Chameleon Form

The stylist's anima breaks into stinging needles of light, striking her enemy's eyes before dissipating.

If the stylist successfully dodges an attack, she can pay two levels of anima to make a **decisive** counterattack. She rolls (Dexterity + [Dodge, Martial Arts, or Stealth]) for the attack roll, and deals (Essence) dice of damage, ignoring Hardness. This doesn't include the stylist's Initiative or reset it.

If the counterattack's targeted is damaged, he's blinded until the end of his next turn, suffering a -3 penalty on vision-based rolls. He must make a (Perception + Awareness) roll opposing the stylist's attack roll. (He suffers the penalty for blindness on this roll). If he fails, the stylist establishes concealment against him, even if she doesn't have a hiding spot.

Terrestrial: The stylist only establishes concealment if her target fails his (Perception + Awareness) roll by 2+ successes.

Shadow Among Shadows

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Decisive-only, Terrestrial

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Shattered Crystal Rebuke

The stylist melts as a blur as she's struck, just another shadow cast by brilliant light.

The stylist can use this Charm after being hit by a **decisive** attack, but before the damage roll. She rolls (Anima x3) dice, unmodified by any other effects. Each success subtracts one die of damage. If she takes no damage from the attack, she counts as having dodged it, and can reflexively roll Stealth to establish concealment.

If the stylist uses this Charm together with Shattered Crystal Rebuke, any anima spent on that Charm is still included for determining how many dice the stylist rolls.

In Creation, this Charm is known as Flashing Leaves Evasion.

Terrestrial: The stylist can only roll to establish concealment if she's at bonfire anima, typically requiring her to be in this style's Form.

Razor-Edged Prism Assault

Cost: 7m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Mastery, Terrestrial, Withering-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Shattered Crystal Rebuke

The stylist lashes her enemies with the razor-edge light of her anima, accelerating into a flickering blur of violence.

To use this Charm, the stylist must be at glowing anima or higher. She makes (Anima + 1) **withering** attacks against an enemy. She can't gain more than (Anima x2) Initiative from any one damage roll, but still gains the full Initiative awards for hitting or crashing enemies. If the stylist attacks from concealment, all of her attacks are unexpected.

Reset: Once per scene, unless reset by falling to dim anima and then rising to bonfire.

Terrestrial: The stylist can only make two attacks.

Mastery: The stylist gains the full amount of Initiative from the highest damage roll.

Flashing Fatal Strike

Cost: 3m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Decisive-only, Mastery

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Razor-Edged Prism Assault

The blinding radiance of the stylist is the last thing her victims ever see.

The stylist makes a **decisive** attack against an enemy within short range, immediately crossing the distance between them in a flash step. She adds (higher of Essence or Anima) dice of damage, plus an additional die of damage for each of the following conditions she satisfies:

- The target is currently suffering visual penalties. (This includes the penalty inflicted by this style's Form.)
- The stylist's anima is at burning or higher.
- The attack is unexpected.
- The stylist is attacking from behind cover.

Mastery: The stylist adds two dice of damage for each condition she meets.

Stepping Beyond Light

Cost: 5m, 1i, 1wp (1i per round); **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 4

Type: Simple

Keywords: Perilous

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Flashing Fatal Strike, Shadow Among Shadows

The stylist floods her anima banner with Essence, expanding into a blinding wave of kaleidoscopic radiance that fills the battlefield.

The stylist gains the following benefits:

- Her anima immediately rises to bonfire and can't be reduced by any means.
- She waives anima costs. This isn't optional — she can't pay such costs to lower her anima banner.
- Enemies within medium range suffer a –2 penalty on vision-based rolls. On rolls against her Stealth, this subtracts successes instead of penalties. This stacks with other vision-based penalties inflicted by Crystal Chameleon Charms.
- The stylist can enter Stealth by vanishing into this light, needing no physical concealment as long as she hasn't taken a movement action this round.

The stylist must pay one Initiative at the start of each of her turns, or this Charm ends.

Special activation rules: This Charm can be used reflexively upon reaching bonfire anima.

Terrestrial: The stylist can only waive three levels of anima costs per round.

Live Wire Style

Live Wire style uses flowing movements and whips to entrap enemies, then delivers painful and debilitating strikes with brutal speed. Most Autochthonians know it as the style of the Flashing Wire Collective, an international fraternity of regulators. Its members wield braided steel cables as whips, fighting in underground tournaments that pit each nation's regulators against each other in fierce competition.

Kamak's Wickedness-Threshing Bureau was originally a regulator task force — and part of the Flashing Whip Collective — devoted to rooting out antisocial conspiracies, but it went renegade during the Communal Revolution, siding against the Tripartite Assembly. Centuries later, its legend has been revived by a cell of the One Tier Movement, whose members keep lengths of precious alloy wire hidden until it is time to strike.

Among the tunnel folk, this style is practiced by the Maker's Flails, who traverse labyrinthine snarls of giant, electrified cables in the Reaches. Their warriors wield filament-thin whips to combat gremlins drawn to these vital conduits of the Maker's electric Essence. They freely share their techniques with outsiders, building a distributed network of gremlin hunters.

In Creation, Strangling Lightning style is a close cousin of Live Wire, though its masters are more likely to wield whips of tanned hide than woven wire. The South's Thunder Children are mercenaries and outlaws, currently in the employ of Rankar VII, despot of the volcano city of Gem. The Sweet Executioners wield glass-studded whips in raids on traders leaving Chiaroscuro, when they aren't protecting them as hired caravan guards. Across the waters of the Dreaming Sea, half a dozen pirates claim to be undisputed masters of the style, denying any association with the others.

Live Wire Weapons: Live Wire style's unarmed attacks utilize flowing movements that suddenly explode into lashing strikes. It's most often used with whips, typically wielded in pairs. Some of its Charms work better with whips, or require the stylist to wield them.

Armor: Live Wire Style is compatible with all armor.

Whistling Analog Signal

Cost: 1m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 2, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Decisive-only, Mastery

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The stylist is never outnumbered, her blows singing outward in all directions as they crash against her enemies.

The martial artist makes two **decisive** attacks. If she uses paired whips to attack, she adds an automatic success on both attack rolls. She divides her Initiative evenly between these attacks to determine their damage, rounding up. If the stylist makes both attacks against the same enemy and hits with at least one of them, that character's attacks don't inflict onslaught penalties on the stylist until the end of that character's next turn.

In Creation, this Charm is called Howling Levin Note.

Mastery: This Charm prevents hit enemies from inflicting onslaught penalties even if the stylist attacks two different characters.

Lightning Supremacy Reversal

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 3, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Decisive-only, Terrestrial

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Whistling Analog Signal

The stylist strikes in a flickering, formless movement, trapping her enemy's weapon within coils of crackling Essence.

The stylist adds one die on the attack roll and Initiative roll for a disarm gambit, or two dice against metal weapons. If she uses a whip and rolls 3+ extra successes on the Initiative roll, she can throw a disarmed weapon an additional range band away.

Terrestrial: The stylist only gains the increased disarm range if her Initiative is at least ten higher than her target's.

Tangled Weaver's Trap

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 3, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Decisive-only, Mastery

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Whistling Analog Signal

The martial artist's whips lashing out in a sizzling helix, ensuring no fugitive can flee beyond her reach.

The stylist uses a whip to make a disarm or grapple gambit against an enemy within short range, adding one die on the attack roll. If she's dual wielding whips, she adds two dice instead. With grapples, her enemy remains in place, entangled by her whip, which works as a normal grapple. Enemies can attempt a difficulty 3 gambit to free him, rolling against the stylist's Parry.

The stylist can use this Charm at medium range while in Live Wire Form, entangling arcs of lightning branching outward from her whip.

Mastery: This Charm's range is enhanced even when the stylist isn't in Live Wire Form.

Live Wire Form

Cost: 8m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Form, Uniform

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: Lightning Supremacy Reversal, Tangled Weaver's Trap

The stylist lashes her whips in jagged zigzag patterns that contrast her fluid movements. Her sudden, vicious strikes crackle and pulse with electrical charge.

The martial artist gains the following benefits:

- When the stylist successfully lands an attack — **withering** or **decisive** — her target suffers two dice of unsoakable **withering** damage from crawling electrical energy after the attack's damage roll, or a gambit's Initiative. He suffers three dice instead if he's wearing metal armor. The stylist doesn't gain Initiative from this.
- She can summon whips of lighting into her empty hands, with the traits of a mundane whips. She can reflexively create one when she uses this Charm, and can create additional ones with ready weapon actions. If disarmed, they dissipate into static.
- She increases the bonus on clash attacks for dual wielding whips by one die.
- She reduces the Defense penalty for grappling by one.

In Creation, this Charm is known as Strangling Lighting Form.

Special activation rules: When the martial artist succeeds on a grapple or disarm gambit and rolls 3+ extra successes on the Initiative roll, she may reflexively enter Live Wire Form.

Charged Coil Surge

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Terrestrial, Withering-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Live Wire Form

The stylist concentrates the spiritual power that coils around her core, then releases it through her limbs in a brutal surge that subdues foes caught in her grip.

When the martial artist makes a **withering** savaging attack against a grappled enemy, she converts one die of damage into an automatic success for each round of grapple control she has, minimum (Essence). She converts an additional die against enemies wearing metal armor.

If the attack crashes the enemy, electrical energy arcs through him, dealing (Essence + rounds of grapple control remaining) dice of lethal **decisive** damage. This ignores Hardness.

If the stylist is dual wielding whips, she adds the bonus dice for clash attacks on the savaging attack's attack roll.

In Creation, this Charm is called Lightning Noose Tightens.

Crackling Arc of Retribution

Cost: 8m, 2i, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Clash, Decisive-only, Perilous, Terrestrial

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Charged Coil Surge

The stylist unleashes electric vengeance on those who refuse to heed her authority, hands and whips moving with impossible speed and crackling with Essence.

When an enemy with Initiative lower than the martial artist's makes a non-ranged attack against her, she reflexively clashes with a **decisive** attack. While wielding a whip, she can clash ranged attacks, but only deals damage if the opposing attack used a projectile that she can redirect.

If the stylist is dual wielding whips, she converts the attack roll dice bonus from dual wielding to non-Charm successes.

Terrestrial: The clash counts as the stylist's attack for the round — or the next round, if she's already attacked.

Unassailable Lightning Dance

Cost: 5m, 2i, 1wp, **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Dual, Perilous, Mastery

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Crackling Arc of Retribution

The martial artist's movements generate arcs of Essence and luminous torrents of power, building like a storm around her. There is escape from the Unassailable Lightning Dance.

The legendary Unassailable Lightning Dance is comprised of three distinct techniques. The stylist gains one of them upon learning this Charm, and can repurchase it to gain additional techniques.

Unassailable Lightning Dance: Inescapable Storm-Cage Technique: The stylist makes a grapple gambit against up to (Strength) enemies within close range. She makes a single Initiative roll with difficulty (enemies hit x2), as well as a single grapple control roll. Her grapple actions are expanded:

- **Savage:** The stylist makes a single savaging attack roll against any number of grappled enemies. **Withering** attacks use the same rules as Thousandfold Fury of the Storm, below. **Decisive** attacks divide her Initiative evenly among all foes, rounded up, to determine the damage rolled against them. This ignores Hardness.
- **Restrain/Drag:** The stylist can restrain any number of grappled enemies or drag them in the same direction. This costs two rounds of control for each enemy.
- **Throw/Slam:** The stylist can throw or slam any number of grappled enemies in the same direction. This follows the same rules as savaging attacks.

Unassailable Lightning Dance: Storm-Smote Iron Strike: The stylist makes a disarm gambit against up to (Dexterity) enemies within close range. She makes a single Initiative roll with difficulty (enemies hit x2).

Unassailable Lightning Dance: Thousandfold Fury of the Storm: The stylist makes a **withering** attack against up to (Dexterity) enemies within close range. She only gains Initiative from the highest damage roll, but can still receive Initiative from hitting and crashing multiple foes.

Whichever technique the stylist uses, if she's dual wielding whips, she adds the bonus dice for clash attacks on the attack roll.

Special activation rules: The stylist can use Tangled Weaver's Trap reflexively to extend this Charm's range — including the range of a **withering** attack.

Mastery: The stylist can use Whistling Analog Signal reflexively with this Charm to let the stylist attack with two different techniques. She must pay Unassailable Lightning Dance's cost twice, but waives the second use's Initiative and Willpower costs.

Conductive Principle of Authority

Cost —(+6m, 1wp); **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Dual

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Unassailable Lightning Dance (x3)

The stylist amplifies the flow of Essence flows through her body in a crackling electric dynamo as bolts of anima-infused lightning arc across her body and along her whips

The stylist may pay a six-mote, one-Willpower surcharge when she uses Live Wire Form to gain the following additional benefits:

- Against enemies wearing metal armor, her **decisive** attacks adds up to (Essence) attack roll extra successes as dice of damage.
- She adds one die to the **withering** damage inflicted by the Form. An enemy crashed by it suffer (Essence) dice of **decisive** damage, ignoring Hardness. This damage is always triggered on a successful disarm or grapple gambit.
- Lightning whips created with the Form gain artifact traits, and the stylist can create them reflexively.
- The stylist can use Whistling Analog Signal to make (Essence + 1) **decisive** attacks. This isn't compatible with Unassailable Lightning Dance's Mastery effect.

Thousand Wounds Gear Style

Thousand Wounds Gear evokes mechanical efficiency and industrial violence, crushing and debilitating foes with brutal unarmed attacks and hurled chakrams. The Alchemical Exalted are Autochthonia's foremost masters of this style, and of its signature weapon, the gyroscopic chakram. It's also practiced by Estasia's elite band of Militat razor-gear rangers, who receive their chakrams only after passing a grueling training regimen. The bejeweled raiders of the Baranek tunnel folk wield diamond-bladed chakrams in their battle-dances, practicing antique forms carried over decades ago by Octet exiles.

In Creation, this ancient style is known as Thousand Wings Murder, a meditation of the passionless majesty of birds of prey and the bleak indifference of nature. The First Age's artificers created few of the gyroscopic weapons that led to this style's convergent development, and most stylists in the Second Age have never heard of a gyroscopic chakram. Elite pekumi warriors of the Randan Smith's Lodge practice it with brightly enameled chakrams, enchanted to respond to the wielder's voice. The monks of Skhandar-Bhal's Silver Dragon Temple synthesize it with an offshoot of Air Dragon Style for truly deadly chakram techniques.

Thousand Wounds Gear Weapons: This style's unarmed attacks focus on circular slashing motions, wrenching joint locks, and finger gouges. It also uses chakrams, which can either be thrown as a ranged weapon or wielded at close range as a light weapon. Unarmed attacks enhanced by Thousand Wounds Gear Charms can be stunted to deal lethal damage.

The gyroscopic chakram (p. XX) is the style's signature weapon. Some of the style's Charms offer additional benefits when gyroscopic chakrams.

Armor: Thousand Wounds Gear style is compatible with all armor.

The Circle Screams

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 2, Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Dual, Mastery

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite None

The stylist goes from chambered stillness to blinding action, unleashing a straight-arm attack or whirling chakram with such speed that the air whistles like escaping steam in its wake.

On a **withering** attack, the stylist adds her base Accuracy bonus to its Overwhelming rating against an enemy with lower Initiative. Against crashed enemies, she also adds this bonus to the attack's raw damage.

On a **decisive** attack, the stylist adds a die of damage against a lower Initiative enemy. If he's crashed, she adds +1 to her base Initiative when she resets.

When the stylist uses a gyroscopic chakram's Recursive Trajectory Cut Evocation (p. XX), she still gains this damage bonus if she turns a miss into a hit with that Evocation.

Mastery: If the target's Initiative is lower than the stylist's by ten or more points, he counts as being in crash for the purposes of this Charm.

Gear-Catches-Gear Defense

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 3, Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Uniform, Mastery

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

The stylist moves with mechanical precision, interposing a rigid grip or the saw-toothed edge of her weapon to catch an incoming strike.

The martial artist gains +1 Parry. If she successfully blocks an attack from close range, she gouges her attacker's exposed flesh, wrenches his limb, or otherwise debilitates him. He suffers a -1 crippling penalty on physical rolls until the end of his next turn.

If the stylist uses a chakram to block, this Charm's Parry bonus is non-Charm.

In Creation, this technique is known as Talons Catch the Sparrow.

Mastery: An attacker who suffers the crippling penalty also loses a point of Initiative.

Thousand Wounds Gear Form

Cost: 10m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Dual, Form

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite Charms: The Circle Screams, Gear-Catches-Gear Defense

The martial artist assumes a posture of cold precision and calculating menace, an industrial engine of violence.

The stylist gains the following benefits:

- Her attacks ignore two points of armored soak and Hardness.
- Her attacks add +1 Accuracy against enemies with lower Initiative.
- She adds an additional +1 Parry when she uses Gear-Catches-Gear Defense. That Charm's cost is reduced by one mote against enemies with lower Initiative.
- She adds (higher of Essence or 3) to her Initiative to determine when she acts on each round, and whether her Initiative is higher than an enemy's for this style's Charms.

In Creation, this is known as Thousand Wings Murder Form.

Special activation rules: Whenever the martial artist makes a **withering** attack that lowers an enemy's current Initiative value from greater than her own to less than her own, she may reflexively enter this Form.

Arc-Blinding Assault

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Mastery, Uniform, Terrestrial

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Thousand Wounds Gear Form

The martial artist mimics the industrial hazards of Autochthonia, throwing out a shower of white-hot sparks in response to an attack.

When the stylist successfully uses a chakram to block an attack from close range with a chakram, her attacker is blinded unless he succeeds on a (Stamina + Resistance) roll at a difficulty of (her Strength + the successes he missed by). If the attacker's Initiative is lower, the difficulty is increased by one. The blindness persists until the target takes a miscellaneous action to clear his eyes.

This Charm's blinding flash can also be triggered by winning a clash against an enemy at close range while wielding a chakram.

In Creation, this technique is known as Clear Skies Lightning Defense.

Mastery: If the stylist uses Gear-Catches-Gear Defense and successfully blocks, she can use this Charm after the attack roll.

Terrestrial: The target's blindness ends at the end of his next turn.

Flesh-Rending Gear Technique

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 4, Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Thousand Wounds Gear Form

The martial artist strikes with remorseless precision, leaving deep and debilitating wounds.

When the stylist makes a **decisive** attack against an enemy with lower Initiative, she adds one die to the damage roll, or two against a crashed opponent. For each three levels of damage she inflicts, her target suffers a –1 crippling penalty on physical rolls for the rest of the scene, maximum (Essence).

In Creation, this technique is known as Flesh-Rending Crescent Technique.

Linear Flight Principle

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Withering-only, Terrestrial

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Thousand Wounds Gear Form

This technique expresses a refined understanding of the methods by which force may be gathered and directed to one purpose.

The stylist makes a **withering** attack, doubling 9s on the damage roll. Against an enemy with lower Initiative, she doubles 8s instead. She also doubles 8s if she uses this Charm to make a **withering** throw from a grapple.

If the stylist deals 5+ damage, the target is knocked back one range band and falls prone. He cannot be thrown further than long range from the stylist. If she deals 10+ damage or crashes her target, he is knocked back two range bands instead.

In Creation, this technique is known as Doomed Nestling Flight.

Terrestrial: This Charm can only be used on enemies of lower Initiative. The stylist can't double 8s on the damage roll.

Rearing Crane Release

Cost: 2m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Terrestrial, Withering-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Linear Flight Principle

The martial artist hurls her opponent at a high-angle trajectory, briefly imparting flight.

The stylist can use this Charm after crashing an enemy with Linear Flight Principle, causing her enemy to briefly float in midair. He floats suspended one range band above the ground instead of falling prone, although he still suffers the penalties for being prone.

A suspended enemy can't take a movement action this round (or the next round, if he's already taken one). After that, he can use his movement action to attempt to break free with a difficulty 3 ([Dexterity or Strength] + Athletics) roll. If the stylist deals **decisive** damage to a suspended enemy before he can make this roll in a round, she adds (Strength) to the difficulty of his next roll to break free.

Terrestrial: The stylist must declare this Charm before the attack roll enhanced with Linear Flight Principle. If she hits but doesn't crash her target, the Charm's Willpower cost is refunded.

Floating Target Lock

Cost: 2m, 2i; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Perilous

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Arc-Blinding Assault, Flesh-Rending Gear Technique, Rearing Crane Release

The stylist zeroes in on her impaired foe, ready to finish the battle conclusively.

The martial artist can reflexively aim at an enemy when she inflicts one of the following effects on him:

- Blinding him with Arc-Blinding Assault.
- Inflicting a crippling penalty with Flesh-Rending Gear Technique or Gear-Catches-Gear Defense.
- Locking him in place using Rearing Crane Release.

If the stylist aims with a gyroscopic chakram and then uses Recursive Trajectory Cut, she doesn't need to forgo the dice from aiming to ignore cover with that Evocation.

In Creation, this technique is known as Predator's Iron Eye.

Reset: Once per round.

Hungry Gear-Tooth Attack

Cost: 4m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Decisive-only, Terrestrial-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Flesh-Rending Gear Technique

The frailty of flesh is nothing against the hungry teeth of the machine.

The stylist can use this Charm after dealing 5+ **decisive** damage to an enemy. If he suffers any crippling

penalties inflicted by this style's Charms, they're subtracted from the total amount of damage the stylist must inflict to trigger this Charm, minimum one.

If the Alchemical's target doesn't accept the highest level of crippling injury possible (**Exalted**, p. 201), he still suffers a less permanent maiming. This inflicts a -3 crippling penalty on all his physical rolls until the end of the scene. He also suffers additional dice of **decisive** damage equal to his total crippling penalty, maximum (stylist's Strength). This includes the penalty inflicted by this Charm.

If an enemy takes a crippling injury in response to this Charm, doing so doesn't count against the once-per-story limit.

In Creation, this technique is known as Hungry Beak Assault.

Reset: Once per scene.

Terrestrial: Targets can take a crippling injury one level lower than the highest possible to negate this Charm's alternative effect.

Thousand Wounds Persistence

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Decisive-only, Terrestrial, Mastery

Duration: Until next turn

Prerequisite Charms: Floating Target Lock, Hungry Gear-Tooth Attack

The stylist's weapon ricochets and maneuvers across the battlefield, striking her foe again and again in a perpetual killing motion.

The stylist can use this Charm after she misses with a **decisive** attack using a chakram. Her weapon reorients in mid-air as it prepares to attack her enemy again, rather than falling to the ground or returning to her hand. It remains locked in close range with him, moving wherever he goes.

On the stylist's next turn, she can reflexively make a **decisive** attack using the chakram against the same enemy. She counts as attacking from close range if this is advantageous for her and ignores cover as long as there's any opening by which her weapon can reach her target.

The chakram can be knocked from mid-air with a disarm gambit, ending this Charm prematurely. Its Evasion is (stylist's Essence + Dexterity).

In Creation, this technique is known as Endless Murder Persistence.

Terrestrial: This Charm's attack counts as the martial artist's attack for her next turn.

Mastery: The stylist's reflexive attack benefits from any non-Excellency Charms that enhanced the missed attack.

Thousand Wounds Disassembly

Cost: 7m, 1wp; **Mins:** Martial Arts 5, Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Decisive-only, Mastery

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Thousand Wounds Persistence

The stylist makes a deadly whirlwind of attacks like the gears of a clanking god-engine, leaving no space to evade.

The martial artist makes an undodgeable **decisive** attack against an enemy with lower Initiative. If she hits, she doesn't immediately roll damage, but instead makes two more undodgeable **decisive** attacks, rolling damage once all three attacks are complete. If the initial attack benefited from aiming, the same benefits apply to these two attacks. Each attack has a base damage equal to the total number of attacks that hit, plus one die. The stylist divides her Initiative equally between them, rounding up, to determine their total damage.

If the stylist uses a gyroscopic chakram's Recursive Trajectory Cut Evocation on one or more of these attacks and turns a miss into a hit, that attack deals its full damage, ignoring Recursive Trajectory Cut's usual limit.

In Creation, this technique is known as Vultures Strip the Bones.

Special activation rules: If the stylist uses Thousand Wounds Persistence after missing with any of the three attacks, the reflexive attack she makes on her next turn with that Charm is undodgeable and adds one die of damage.

Mastery: Non-excellency Charms that enhanced the first attack also enhance the subsequent two.

Sorcery in Autochthonia

The Eight Nations know sorcery as an ancient art, one that predates the Great Maker's exodus. It is spoken of with a mixture of reverence, suspicion, and mystery. Alchemical sorcerers may rightly wield such power, but its rare mortal practitioners wield magics that could threaten the Octet's status quo. Folklore stigmatizes it as a selfish, egoistic power that comes from within, in contrast to Champions forged by the strength of their community. Many sorcerers, Alchemical and mortal alike, see themselves as the heirs to an enigmatic legacy, exchanging scraps of apocrypha from before humanity came to Autochthonia in addition to more recent sorcerous discoveries.

The Alchemical Exalted are sorcery's most numerous practitioners, but even for them, sorcery is often regarded as an esoteric pursuit. Some machine spirits are initiated into the art, including a few especially inquisitive or well-suited First Circle machine spirits. Gremlins are modestly more likely than other machine spirits to acquire sorcery, which adds to a general skepticism about spellcraft among the Autochthonians.

Mortal sorcerers are as rare in Autochthonia as they are in Creation. There are few established sorcerous schools or traditions among the Octet, and fewer still that would admit mortals. Mortal sorcerers most commonly discover the secrets of sorcery through communion with the Great Maker and his emanations. Each nation has its own attitude towards mortal sorcerers, but most expect them to put their talents at the Tripartite Assembly's disposal. In some cities and metropoli, they're assigned labors worthy of their sorcerous talents; in others, they're recruited into unites of elite sorcerer-agents. Those who serve their nation with enthusiasm and dedication may be regarded as minor saints with holy purposes; those who abuse their gifts meet harsh censure, including exile or execution as a Lumpen or a voidbringer.

Necromancy is all but unheard of in Autochthonia, its Essence anathematic to that of the Great Maker. Its known practitioners are almost entirely gremlins, with the mightiest of them being corrupted Alchemical Apostates. For more information on necromancy, see **Abyssals**, p. XX.

The Canon Protocols

Many spells from before Autochthon's exodus are maintained in a text called the Canon Protocols, sometimes included among the chapters of the Tome of the Great Maker. While a recorded spell's names may sometimes depart from Creation's terminology, its natures does not. The Autochthonians know Flight of the Brilliant Raptor as the Missile of Shrieking Flame, but it still conjures a firebird — though even savants might mistake it for some strange insect from lost Creation. Other "common" texts exist, from the esoteric Circle-in-Circle, whose students must first discover how to read it, to the borderline heretical Rathemar Treatise.

Sorcerous Initiations

Autochthonian sorcerers walk strange paths through a Realm of Brass and Shadows, cultivating the clockwork enlightenment of the Machine God or studying the fundamental mysteries of the cosmos and the Grand Design. For Alchemicals, their sorcerous initiation is given form in their Man-Machine Weaving Engine. Designing, creating, and installing it are often the culmination of a sorcerer's path, or the penultimate step before enlightenment.

Storytellers and players should feel free to adapt sorcerous initiations from other **Exalted** books to Autochthonia, altering them as needed to fit the Realm of Brass and Shadows. An Alchemical who studies under the Subminister Murogam, the Living Foundry, could represent this tutelage using the Pact with an Ifrit Lord initiation (**Exalted**, p. 467). Other initiations need no adaptation, like the Soul-Perfecting Elixir (**Exalted**, p. 469). Likewise, Autochthonian initiations can be adapted for Creation.

Demiurgic Communion

In his slumber, the Machine God dreams — and some dream alongside him. Their minds momentarily touching upon his ineffable Godhead, glimpsing the implicate order of the Grand Design. Some seek out this communion out: practicing austerities, consuming psychedelic chemicals, or undertaking dangerous pilgrimages into the Reaches. Others receive this enlightenment like divine inspiration: a Sodalt who glimpses secret wisdom during an Alchemical; a Champion meditating on the Machine God; and, some say, the prophet Sirin.

Shaping Rituals

Gifts of Faith: Once per scene, when the sorcerer succeeds on an influence roll to instill or leverage a positive Tie to the Great Maker or a machine spirit, or a Principle based on faith or religious devotion to them, she gains (Intimacy + 1) sorcerous motes. If the sorcerer has the same Intimacy at equal or great intensity herself, she gains an additional sorcerous mote. She can have up to ten sorcerous motes from this ritual at a time.

Pillars of Dogma: The sorcerer glimpses the Godhead's stirrings and the axioms of the Grand Design. Upon waking from sleep, the sorcerer's player may declare that she's received inspiration based on one of her Principle related to religions that worships Autochthon, the Octet's duties to the Great Maker and the Divine Ministers, or similar axioms that resonate with Autochthon. Once per scene, the sorcerer banks three sorcerous motes when she successfully defends influence that opposes the inspired Principle or

upholds the inspired Principle. These last until the sorcerer chooses a different Principle or the end of the story. She can have up to ten sorcerous motes from this ritual at a time. If she violates the inspired Principle, she loses all banked sorcerous motes.

Mastery of Tools: The sorcerer can create a sorcerous focus as a basic project (**Exalted**, p. 240) that takes a few hours, requiring a difficulty 2 (Intelligence + Craft) roll. Potential foci include arcanometric tuning scepters, theomagnetic detectors, or other devices meant to channel and manipulate esoteric forces. She banks her total successes on the Craft roll as sorcerous motes stored in the focus. When she incorporates the focus into a stunt for a Shape Sorcery roll. If she uses all remaining sorcerous motes at once, she gains an additional (Stunt) sorcerous motes as her focus pushes past its limits before disintegrating. She may have only one focus at a time; previous ones become inactive.

Merits

Theophanous Presence (•): The sorcerer adds a bonus dice on influence rolls machine spirits, and converts up to one bonus die from Appearance to an automatic success against them.

Guided by the Design (••): Once per story, the sorcerer's player may ask the Storyteller for guidance from the Great Maker, receiving it in the form of a prophetic dream, feverish vision, or strange omen. This guidance calls the sorcerer to perform some quest or duty, typically equivalent to an inconvenient task (**Exalted**, p. 216). While the significance of this action may not always be clear, its consequences will serve Autochthon, advance the will of the Eight Divine Ministers, benefit those whose faith in the Maker is true or the stabilizing pattern of the Grand Design, though their purpose or relevance may not always be clear. Fulfilling this task grants the sorcerer two Willpower, which can raise her above her permanent Willpower, and counts as fulfilling a Role Bonus (p. XX).

Spell-Forge Demiurgy (•••): Once per scene, the sorcerer may gain craft points for fulfilling basic objectives when she casts a spell as if she'd completed a basic project (**Exalted**, p. 240) if she uses an a focus created with the Mastery of Tools ritual, invokes a sorcery-enhancing artifact, or otherwise emulates the Great Maker's prowess.. Completing a sorcerous working awards craft points as if it were a major project.

Arcanometric Calculus

The sorcerer-savant *Pursuit of Infinite Accuracy* pioneered this field of esoteric mathematics, the study of impossible mystery-theorems and the gematria of numbers not yet discovered. Its practitioners, known as Calculists, begin their study with a rigorous curriculum of advanced mathematics, focusing on the metaphysical geometries and dynamic, non-linear formulae that describe key patterns of Essence. There is no single formula for enlightenment — each Calculist's initiation is a singular epiphany into the calculus of the cosmos, as months or years of learning and experimentation crystallize into transcendent understanding.

Shaping Rituals

Energy Redistribution Equation: The sorcerer is tattooed with intricate geometric circuit-sigils that can channel and redirect Essence flows. Once per scene, she can charge them with up to (higher of Essence or 3) sorcerous motes by drawing in ambient Essence from a willing metropolis or a demesne, manse, industrial organ, or similar site of power. In the Reaches, this can also be done with a successful roll to tap an energy-bearing conduit (p. XX). These motes last until the end of the scene. She can also charge the circuit-sigils to gain this bonus when she takes damage from an energy- or Essence-based attack or hazard.

Infinite Theorem Recitation: The sorcerer retreats into meticulous calculations, repeating a litany of esoteric formulae and ineffable proofs. After spending eight hours performing these calculations, she rolls (Intelligence + Lore), banking sorcerous motes equal to her successes. She need not perform all eight hours of study consecutively. These sorcerous motes last until the end of the story or her next use of this ritual. The sorcerous mote can add a non-Charisma die on the roll by doubling the amount of time required. She can add additional non-Charisma die by doubling that time, and so on, up to a maximum of five dice after 256 hours.

Sublime Geometric Array: Once per scene, the sorcerer may summon an array of concentric circles and geometric patterns formed from pure Essence when she takes a Shape Sorcery action. This circle extends to close range when she takes a Shape Sorcery action to begin shaping a spell. So long as the sorcerer remains within the circle, she adds a non-Charisma success on all Shape Sorcery actions.

Merits

Demiurge Line Geometries (•): The sorcerer can make a difficulty 3 (Intelligence + Lore) roll after a few minutes of calculation to analyze local Essence flows. Success lets her detect the presence of a demesne, manse, or industrial organ within (Occult x3) miles, along with the distance and direction to it. If she spends an hour performing more complex equations, she can attempt a difficulty 5 roll to sense such sights within (Occult x20) miles. She can attempt to detect a specific site, or search for whichever is nearest to her.

Extraspatial Reasoning (•): The sorcerer has an intuitive awareness of her position and orientation within in a structure or enclosed area. She must be aware of its general shape or layout, whether through her own observation or based on maps or similar information. She also adds an automatic success on rolls that involve navigating or finding her way through such a space, detecting hidden rooms and passages, or overcoming magic that distorts space or direction.

Clarity of Intellect (••): Once per day, the sorcerer can add (Occult) dice on a Lore roll that involves math or a Craft roll that could benefit from an understanding of mathematics, such as architecture. This never applies on attack rolls.

Summoning in Autochthonia

The Seal of Eight Divinities prevents Autochthonian sorcerers from summoning demons, but demon summoning spells can conjure machine spirits — even (theoretically) the Eight Ministers themselves. They cannot be bound as demons can — such servitude is a consequence of the Yozis' oaths of surrender that ended the Divine Revolution. But Champions need not always resort to such compulsion. Summoned machine spirits show considerable deference or lenience to the Maker's Chosen, so long as they're treated

Using Summon Elemental condenses the local geomancy to form an elemental servant, often imparting an Autochthonian aesthetic to its elemental expression. Fire spirits might seethe with plasma or lightning, while wood elementals shape themselves from metallic fungi or living crystal.

The Mysteries of Ixagrad

Deep in the Endless Smoke, there is a perfect pearl of habitability. Inside it dwells the subminister Ixagrad, the Miasmatic Parfumier, who tends to the exact composition of the toxic vapors within her home. She is a spindly creature with limbs of elongated bronze, tarnished by startling purple rust. Her

voice is a choral susurrus, as if each word had ten speakers. Some of her students seek her out in pursuit of the poisonous enlightenment she holds. Others receive visions from her, drawing them along a narrow current of safety into Ixagrad's garden of toxic flowers. There, she teaches them her mysteries — secrets of medicine, poison, doubt, and purgation. When they are ready, she offers a course of increasingly potent hallucinogenic toxins that will burst open the gates of the mind...or prepare their soul for another attempt in their next incarnation.

Shaping Rituals

Enlightened Cruelty Epiphany: Once per day, the sorcerer's player may invoke this shaping ritual to ask the Storyteller for a cruel lesson, a bleak truth revealed by Ixagrad in an omen or nightmare. Some example lessons include "everything ends," "no one is loyal forever," or "what you love will wither.". The sorcerer's player may incorporate that lesson into a stunt, gaining (higher of Integrity or Medicine) sorcerous motes that last for the rest of the scene. She gains an additional (Essence) motes if she takes a Minor Principle embodying this lesson. Each lesson may only be used once.

Toxic Soul Alchemy: When the sorcerer rolls to resist a poison, she gains sorcerous motes equal to its duration, even if she failed the roll. They last until the end of the day. She may bank up to (Essence + Stamina) motes from this ritual at once.

Poisonous Apothecary Delight: Once per scene, when the sorcerer diagnoses or treats an ailing character, she banks sorcerous motes equal to her successes on the roll, savoring her patient's agonies. She gains an additional (Essence) sorcerous motes if her patient had a total penalty of -4 or higher from wounds, disease, poisoning, or similar ailments, or if he suffers a Major or Defining disease. These motes last until the end of the story or the next time she uses this ritual.

Merits

Hidden Face of Dread (•): The sorcerer can reflexively transform her features into a smoky, wraithsome appearance, gaining the Hideous Merit until the end of the scene (**Exalted**, p. 162).

Smog Like Sweet Perfume (•): The sorcerer can breathe smoke as if it was clean air. She adds a non-Charm success on rolls to resist environmental hazards or poisons based on smoke.

Transcendent Miasma Mastery (••): When the sorcerer casts a spell that creates or manipulates poison or smoke, she reduces its cost by three sorcerous motes. If it's her control spell, she may lower its Willpower cost by one once per day.

Terrestrial Circle Spells

Aperture of Rarified Breath

Cost: 10sm, 1wp

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

With a clap louder than the most clamorous factories, the sorcerer pierces a tiny rift in reality from which pours a whistling cloud of superheated steam.

The sorcerer opens the Aperture of Rarified Breath at a point within long range that she can perceive. It constantly expels superheated steam, an environmental hazard that extends out to short range with difficulty 3 and Damage 1L/round. Anyone fails their roll against the hazard is also knocked back one

range band away from the aperture. Objects and structures anchored into the ground are usually too heavy for the steam to push back, but they may still suffer damage from debris and pressure.

The sorcerer may choose to tap a less perilous reserve of steam when she casts this spell. This reduces the hazard's damage to zero, though the hazard still causes knockback. Sorcerers sometimes use this as a source of fresh air and water in otherwise inhospitable regions. A single casting can provide air for up to a dozen people within range, though it's uncomfortably warm and humid. Collecting condensed vapor as potable isn't always possible, but it provides enough water for a few people to drink for a day under optimal circumstances.

Control: A faint vapor rises from the sorcerer's lips when she speaks. She adds (Essence) dice on rolls to resist steam-based environmental hazard, and always succeeds on rolls to resist the aperture opened when she casts this spell. She also adds this bonus on rolls to resist airborne disease, and can add it on a Medicine roll to treat disease if she exhales steam as part of the stunt to do so.

Distortion (8): The aperture contracts, reducing its environmental hazard to close range and reducing the hazard's difficulty by one.

Ceraceous Effigy of Life

Cost: Ritual, 1wp, 1lh

Keywords: None

Duration: One week

The sorcerer shapes an effigy of herself from wax and clay, inscribing it with her name a thousand times over before breathing a spark of her own life into its lungs.

The sorcerer creates and animates a waxen duplicate of herself over the course of an hour-long ritual. It is a perfect semblance of herself, save that its waxen composition is obvious, clearly not of natural flesh. Its consciousness is a perfect copy of the sorcerer's — at least at first — possessing all of her knowledge, memories, and intimacies. It has the same traits of the sorcerer, except as follows:

- It has Essence 1, no mote pool, and no Charms or other magical powers,
- Its health track consists of one -1 level, one -2 level, one -4 level, and an Incapacitated level. It's destroyed instantly if it takes any **decisive** damage from a fire- or heat-based sources.
- It intuitively the nature of its existence, gaining a Major Tie of compliance to the sorcerer.
- The caster may meditate to displace her senses into it, perceiving the world through its senses. She may communicate with it, but only in short impressions — she cannot relay complex orders or technical information, only small, one-word impressions.

If the effigy is destroyed, the sorcerer suffers one level of aggravated damage, which can't be prevented.

The sorcerer can't have more than (Essence + Intelligence) effigies at a time. If the sorcerer creates one past this limit, she must choose an old one to deactivate, though she doesn't take damage for doing so.

Control: Spots of clay forever stain the sorcerer's hands. She may create up to (higher of Essence or 3) effigies with each use of this spell. She may consume a thumb-sized bolus of an effigy's clay to absorb all its memories.

Distortion (10): The effigy is utterly paralyzed. The distorting sorcerer can gaze into its eyes for one

minute to displace his senses into the caster, using the same rules as above, for as long as the effigy remains distorted. The caster is alerted to this and can spend one Willpower to resist it, becoming immune for one day.

Distillation of Artificial Forms

Cost: 8sm, 1wp

Keywords: Shaping (Object)

Duration: Instant

Strange corrosive fluids spill from the sorcerer's mouth as she invokes the name of Ugla Gulgan, the Great Recycler, the Alembic of Domadamod, whose sacred acids render matter down into its simplest forms.

The sorcerer spits sorcerous acid at an unattended mundane object within long range, or a section of a structure that spans no more than one range band. The target is rendered down into usable piles of its component materials — a sword is rendered down to metal ingots, while a factory wall is reshaped into neat stacks of plaster, copper piping, rebar, and powdered concrete. The caster can decide how granular this deconstruction is, such as choosing whether to keep the nails from a deconstructed door or further render them down into raw iron.

Among its other uses, this spell render corpses into useful materials, separating skin, bone, flesh, and the like. Valuable components can be rendered from the corpses of machine spirits, but frivolous use of this may draw the Theomachracy's censure.

Reset

Control: The sorcerer's tears are a dilute form of this spell's acid, dissolving trace amounts of inanimate matter. This is exceptional equipment (**Exalted**, p. 580) on rolls to examine composition of objects or substances, Craft rolls involving chemistry, and feats of demolition by. Ugla Gulgan and the subminister's First Circle machine spirits count as having Minors Tie of friendly interest towards the sorcerer.

Doing Science

While players are encouraged to use Distillation of Artificial Forms in interesting and evocative ways, science in the world of **Exalted** is subject to the logic of myths, not reality. The Storyteller can veto overly technical uses of this spell based on modern chemistry and physics if they're disruptive to the story's genre, mood, or tone.

Lightning Spider

Cost: 15sm, 1wp

Keywords: None

Duration: One day

The sorcerer moves through the steps of an eight-legged dance, electricity crackling around her with her every movement until it extending to form eight limbs of living lightning.

Eight legs of crackling electricity emerge from the sorcerer's back, lifting her from the ground. They're harmless to the touch, passing through others with only an uncomfortable sensation of static. These sorcerer gains the following benefits while using these legs to move

- She rolls (Intelligence + Occult) movement actions using them. However, she can't use Charms or other magic to enhance these rolls unless they're explicitly compatible with (Intelligence + Occult) rolls.
- Movement no physical effort from her, meaning that she suffers no fatigue.
- She ignores difficult terrain if being elevated above the ground would bypass it.
- She can move across horizontal or vertical surfaces, even hanging in place if she desires.
- She can extrude filaments of electricity from them like webbing, allowing her to effortlessly drag or suspend up to (Essence x500) pounds. The filaments dissipate if detached from the lightning spider and are easily dispersed by others, making them of little value in combat, but the Storyteller should reward create uses of this webbing, treating it as exceptional equipment (**Exalted**, p. 580) at bare minimum.

The spell ends prematurely the sorcerer's feet touch the ground, but she may sleep while suspended from the lightning legs if desired. It also ends if the sorcerer is knocked prone or forcibly moved.

Control: Cobwebs of delicate copper and tin wire start to grow wherever the sorcerer spends more than a few minutes in stillness, though they decompose into dross if disturbed. She can spin webs of electric filaments even when the spell isn't active, though this can't carry or hold anything she couldn't normally lift. If a feat of strength is needed, the sorcerer adds

Distortion (12): The sorcerer's electric limbs become sluggish and unsteady, causing all movement to count as being in difficult terrain.

Celestial Circle Spells

Chancel of Lucent Candor

Cost: 20sm, 2wp

Keywords: None

Duration: One day

Conjuring forth diamond ganglia that gleam with thought-fire, the sorcerer weaves them into a fortress sanctified to truth and reason.

The sorcerer creates a crystalline hemisphere that extends out to medium range from her in all directions. Once raised, the chancel's opaque dome provides full cover, preventing any attacks from being made through it and blocking lines of sight. Characters within the dome can pass through it freely as if the crystal was immaterial. To those outside, it's fully solid. Breaking open a point of entry requires a feat of demolition with difficulty (Essence + Intelligence) and a minimum Strength of 5, or comparable destructive force.

Deception is punished within the chancel. Characters who intentionally tell a lie or attempt to mislead others must make a difficulty 4 (Stamina + Integrity) roll. If they fail, crystal begins to slowly encase their body, inflicting a -2 mobility penalty in addition to exposing their deception. Dematerialized characters are rendered visible by the spread crystal. Subsequent attempts at deception stack, with each failed roll

increasing the penalty by 2 as the crystals spread further across the liar. If the spell's penalty exceeds a character's (Stamina + Essence), he is fully encased in crystal, entering a state of suspended animation.

Characters can break free of the crystalline encasement with a feat of demolition, although the penalty inflicted by the crystals applies on the roll as well. Doing so while inside the chancel uses the same difficulty and Strength minimum as breaking open the dome. The crystals grow weaker outside, reducing it to difficulty (Intelligence) and minimum Strength 3. Characters fully encased in crystal can be freed this way, though the difficulty and Strength minimum aren't reduced while outside the chancel.

Characters with Essence lower than the sorcerer's can't use magic to scrying on what happens inside the Chancel or otherwise observe its interior. Other characters can make such efforts, but the sorcerer can roll (Perception + Occult) against the scrying character's Guile to realize that she's being spied on, though not by whom. This ward against scrying also applies to characters fully encased in crystal by the spell, even if they're removed from the chancel.

Control: Filaments of crystal extend to encircle the sorcerer's brow like a diadem. While outside of the chancel, when she successfully realizes someone is lying while he's physically present, she may spend five mote and one Willpower to force him to roll as above to avoid encasement. In combat, this counts as a Simple Charm activation, and the sorcerer must use her next turn to do so.

Distortion (15): The rival sorcerer can pass freely through the barrier and suffers no ill effects the first time he fails a roll against this spell.

Fulminous Discarnation

Cost: 30sm, 2wp

Keywords: None

Duration: One day

The sorcerer's voice sizzles and her flesh burns phosphorescent white as she recites the final prophecy of Zeten Mura, uttered before she joined the Maker's mind as a flash of inspiration. The sorcerer becomes as Mura, her now-unstable form crackling with electricity, held together by will alone.

The sorcerer transforms into a congeries of living electricity, with only the faintest physical presence. She gains the following benefits:

- Although barely solid, she remains physically coherent enough to interact with other objects — and for them to interact with her. However, she's also capable of perceiving and physically interacting with dematerialized characters.
- She subtracts one success from all attack rolls and damage rolls against her. This doesn't apply to attacks that don't have any physical component
- She can attack by projecting electricity, using (Intelligence + Occult) to attack. This is a heavy mundane weapon (**Exalted**, p. 580) with the Lethal, Brawl, Melee, and Thrown (Medium) tags. The sorcerer uses Intelligence in lieu of Strength to calculate the damage of **withering** attacks with this. These attacks ignore up to four points of soak and Hardness from metal armor.
- Any objects the sorcerer is holding or wearing when she casts this spell vanish Elsewhere.

The sorcerer also gains access to the following powers in this form:

Conduit Rider (7m; Simple; Instant): The sorcerer can use this power on her turn while touching a metal surface to travel up to two range bands along it as pure electricity before reforming. This counts as her movement action for the round. Usually, she doesn't need to disengage to use this power, but she must do so if opposed by dematerialized characters or characters capable of interacting with the immaterial. Outside of combat, she may travel along metallic surfaces at (Essence) times her normal running speed without tiring. This lasts until she leaves a metal surface.

God-Bolt Amplitude (3m; Supplemental; Instant; Uniform; Withering-only): The sorcerer grants her lightning artifact traits for a single **withering** attack and ignores an additional (Essence) points of soak.

Striking Lightning Reprisal (3m, 2i, 1wp; Reflexive; Instant; Counterattack, Perilous, Withering-only): Once per round, the sorcerer can use this power after being hit by an attack at close range that used a metal weapon or an unarmed attack. She can also use it when an enemy clinching her takes a grapple action. She shocks her attacker with a **withering** counterattack, using the weapon traits above. She doesn't gain any Initiative her attacker loses, although she still gains Initiative for hitting or crashing him. Instead, until the end of his next turn, he increases his wound penalty by one for each four points of **withering** damage he took, rounded up.

This spell ends prematurely if the sorcerer is submerged in water.

Control: Arcs of harmless electricity play between the sorcerer's fingers like filigreed web. She adds (Essence) soak and gains Hardness (Essence + Intelligence) against attacks based on electricity, and reduces any damage she takes from electricity-based environmental hazards by one level. First Circle machine spirits have a Minor Tie of awe for her, perceiving her as a prophet like Zeten Mura.

Distortion (15): The rival sorcerer destabilizes the sorcerer's form further, causing her to suffer a -3 penalty on to interact with material characters using physical actions or spells. This doesn't impede other characters' attempts to interact with her. Whenever she uses Conduit Rider, she suffers one die of bashing **decisive** damage, ignoring Hardness, as she struggles to dissipate and reform herself.

Hand of the Maker

Cost: 25sm, 2wp

Keywords: None

Duration: One day

Praying to Autochthon, the sorcerer surrenders one of her own hands, which disappears in a slice of bloodless, fractal light. An instant later, a colossal hand of steel flesh and copper sinew emerges to serve her.

The caster summons a construct known as a Hand of the Maker, a floating hand large enough to hold an elephant in its palm. It manifests within close range of her, on the same side as the hand she lost. The Hand doesn't roll Join Battle or have its own Initiative track. Instead, the sorcerer can take a miscellaneous action to command it to do of the following:

Attack: The Hand makes a **withering** or **decisive** attack, suffering a -3 penalty on attack rolls against person-sized targets or smaller. It doesn't gain any **Initiative** from **withering** attacks. **Decisive** attacks deal (sorcerer's Essence + attack roll extra successes) dice of damage, up to a maximum of the sorcerer's Initiative.

Block: The Hand spreads wide and interposes itself, creating full cover across two range bands, extending

out from its current position. This can also be used to bar doorways or tunnels. Characters can dislodge the Hand with a (Strength + Athletics) roll opposing the Hand's Feats of Strength dice pool.

Demolish: The Hand makes a feat of demolition, making a thundering attack against a structure or crushing an object in its fist.

Grapple: The Hand makes a grapple gambit, suffering a -3 penalty on attack rolls against person-sized targets and smaller. It uses the sorcerer's Initiative for the gambit's Initiative roll. She can have it perform the usual grapple actions as her commands for subsequent rounds

Lift: The Hand makes a feat of strength to lift an object or hold it up. It's capable of maintaining such feats indefinitely — holding a broken pillar up for hours, etc. — as long as the sorcerer doesn't command it to do anything else

Carry: The Hand turns palm-up, creating a floating platform that can carry up to (Essence x5) tons of cargo and passengers. While it moves only one range band per turn, it can do so in any direction. It can move up to (sorcerer's Essence + Intelligence) miles per hour outside of combat. The Hand can scoop up its intended cargo as part of this command, but it's slow enough that unwilling characters can easily get out of the way unless they're restrained.

Additionally, the sorcerer can use a reflexive action on her turn direct the Hand to move one range band. This counts as her movement action. It's capable of levitating, though it can't rise higher than short range above the ground.

At the end of the spell, the sorcerer's real hand returns, reattaching harmlessly.

Control: The sorcerer can reflexively cause one or both of her hands to vanish, manifesting a smaller version of the Hand in their places. Unlike with the full spell, she doesn't need to give them commands, using them as though they were extensions of herself to act out to short range. However, she can't use them to take any actions that require a roll. These hands can't go beyond short range from the sorcerer, moving to follow her if she goes out of range. She can banish them and cause her realm hand to return reflexively.

Distortion (12): The Hand's movements become slower and clumsier. The sorcerer can't flurry actions to command it and it suffer a -2 penalty on all rolls.

The Hand of Autochthon

Essence: 1; **Willpower:** 1

Health Levels: -0x7/Incap.

Actions: Feats of Strength: 14 dice (can attempt Strength 10 feats)

Combat

Attack (Strike): 10 dice (Damage 20B/5, see Anvil-Hammering Smite)

Attack (Grapple): 10 dice (14 dice to control)

Combat Movement: 8 dice

Evasion: 5; **Parry:** 5

Hardness: 5

Special Abilities

Anvil-Hammering Smite: An enemy damaged by the Hand's attacks is either

knocked prone or pushed back one range band.

Merits

Automaton: The Hand is immune to poison, disease, fatigue, and fear. It doesn't need to eat, drink, breathe, or sleep.

Eternal Engine: Upon being incapacitated, the Hand heals all damage in its health track at the end of the sorcerer's next turn.

Mindless: The Hand is immune to social influence, heeding only its master's commands.

Steadfast Load-Bearer led the survey team to the blue jade deposit recently uncovered by one of Autochthon's internal adjustments. The expedition that discovered the deposit vanished after sending a scout back to report their findings, and even though the search was ongoing, they still needed that jade. The Reaches were bad enough normally, so *Load-Bearer* had requested extra protection to get everyone to the work site and back. At the time, she'd hoped they'd find her a proper weapon, despite the shortages. She was less than impressed with the single adamant shield she'd been provided, but kept her frustration to herself for her charges' sake.

Sparks danced in darkness below a nearby ledge as they reached the site: a space that had opened up between a giant engine and an industrial organ. The organ looked like a crumpled vertical pipe until it inflated with a loud hum, revealing the surface to be something like fabric. Jolts of what could have been electricity, pure Essence, or something stranger shone through the material as they whirled around the inside like racing rats. It deflated with a whoosh, and bolts of lightning danced among a forest of metal pillars on the far side of it. *Load-Bearer* hoped the lightning would remain over there.

"We're ready to begin, Champion," one of the workers said as the others set up equipment.

She nodded. "The sooner you take readings, the sooner we can return to safety."

Steadfast Load-Bearer stood vigil, looking out into the swirling darkness of shadow and smoke, occasionally broken by blue and white flashes. Her shield, Prismatic Bulwark, hummed in time with the flashes, and she curiously glanced down at the gleaming targe. "*What do you know?*" she silently asked. She relaxed her arm — but not her grip — and the shield subtly pulled towards something in the darkness like a magnet.

She looked ahead, and then down into the pit — and saw what at first seemed like a bright blue lightning bolt coming from below. Her fingers tingled as she brought the shield up to block, a cacophony of shrieks and sparks flying from the adamant targe as its orichalcum circuitry blazed. The sudden blue glow lit up her white jade frame and red jade armor plating.

The bolt continued upward and curved around, and *Load-Bearer* realized she was looking at some sort of draconic machine spirit crackling with lightning, long and winding with teeth too large for its head. It hovered for a moment before diving at her. She planted her feet and raised Prismatic Bulwark as Essence reinforced her muscles and locked her joints.

"Take cover!" she yelled to the survey team as the lightning-dragon drew near. She deflected it with the shield, surprised to feel barely any impact as the energy *splashed* off it like water, scattering into a spray of light and Essence. The spirit spun around and breathed a beam hot enough to melt steel, but even as the force of it pushed her back, she barely felt the heat.

Wreathed in her anima banner, *Load-Bearer* braced herself. The spirit danced and roared above her, and she adjusted her grip now that she knew what to expect from Prismatic Bulwark. The machine spirit charged at her, almost as fast as the lightning it resembled, and she swung. It was so bright she only knew she hit it from the muffled impact in her arm.

Just when she thought it was going to back off, the spirit spun and unleashed a spray of bolts in all directions — with some of the workers still in range!

"No!" *Load-Bearer* yelled, clenching her fist so hard she was worried she'd damage the targe's grip.

The electricity twisted in mid-air to flow into the shield's orichalcum circuits like scrap to a magnet as the monster rippled and twitched with a look of surprise. *Load-Bearer* felt warm Essence flow into her frame from the shield, now lit up brighter than the lightning spirit.

"We can outlast you," she said, raising Prismatic Bulwark. "If you wanna argue the point, I'm right here."

Chapter 7: Technology and Artifacts

Autochthonian Technology

Autochthonians have created many wondrous tools to survive in the Realm of Brass and Shadow. Much of their technology is beyond any found in Creation, wonders that can only be created with access the magical infrastructure of Alchemical metropoli, strange materials found within Autochthonia, and crafting techniques pioneered by Autochthonians or taught to them by machine spirits. Some of these may be found in Creation, but they're tremendously rare, typically the creations of sorcerers and thaumaturgists.

Photo-Resonant Gel (Resources • for a gallon, ••• for a large quantity)

A simple and useful formula mass-manufactured across Autochthonia, photo-resonant gel glows constantly in a deep jewel tone. Its light is weaker than other forms of illumination, but gel-treated accent strips on workers' uniforms provide a convenient backup light source. It's also used for aesthetic purposes: tattooing, fashion, festival banners, graffiti, domicile decoration, and more. Its light lasts a handful of hours, but it can be "recharged" with exposure to a strong light source.

Some photo-resonant gel is treated to glow when exposed to extreme concentrations of Essence, like a Municipal Charm's power capacitors or an industrial organ's mechanism. It's often compressed into a talisman that works as a safety badge, alerting the wearer to high Essence concentrations or marking places with intermittent surges of deadly Essence to allow workers to see when it is safe to proceed.

While the Luminors claim exclusive rights to photo-resonant gel's manufacture, many tunnel folk bands and Populat specialists have devised their own processes. Unauthorized possession is a minor offense, rarely treated seriously except for large quantities.

Arc Protector (Resources •••)

These synthetic leather goggles have black crystal lenses, offering visual protection from extreme light sources, like electrical arcs and plasma furnaces. Any vision-based penalties their wearer suffers due to bright light sources are reduced by one. They're also exceptional equipment on rolls to resist being blinded by bright light (**Exalted**, p. 580). However, they impose a -2 penalty on vision-based actions in normal or low-light conditions.

Shadow Goggles (Resources •••)

Shadow goggles have lenses made of a rare Autochthonian crystal that focuses ambient light, even in the darkest environments. They're invaluable in Autochthonia's darkness, though demand always outstrips availability. Such goggles lower penalties due to darkness or poor lighting by one, though this doesn't apply in total darkness. However, their wearer suffers a -1 penalty on vision-based actions in normal lighting, or -2 from especially bright light sources. This penalty lasts until the end of the scene even if the goggles are removed.

Perpetual Flame (Resources ••••)

Perpetual flame is one of the more horrific weapons the Octet has experimented with. It's a particularly dangerous liquid kept in sealed crystal spheres, made through a dangerous and intricate process that requires rare vapors harvested from uninhabitable chambers. The danger of the process and the expense of

creating it safely has prevented true mass manufacture.

In small quantities, it's an essential component for producing firewand charges. However, in larger quantities, it bursts into flame upon contact with air. When ignited, its intensely hot flame is an environmental hazard with difficulty 5, Damage 4L/round.

Fortunately, removing the air extinguishes perpetual flame, so submerging it in water or similar methods will stop the burning. Less fortunately, it's exceedingly sticky and doesn't wash away in water — and immediately reignites if exposed to air. Removing it requires a thorough, active washing while submerged. It's easy to remove with a few minutes of simple scrubbing while underwater, but removing it quickly requires a difficulty 3 roll with (Strength + Athletics) or (Wits + Survival).

Resources in Autochthonia

The Resource costs listed for these items aren't their actual price — instead, they're a measure of the social status and requisition authority needed for a citizen to obtain them for personal use. By way of reference. Most Populat have Resources 1-2, though the highest-ranking members may have Resources 3. Tripartite members typically have Resources 2-4, with some in the uppermost echelons having Resources 5.

Prosthetics (Resources •• for simple prosthetics, •••• for sophisticated prosthetics)

The Eight Nations have designed many forms advanced prostheses (p. XX). Many draw on insights gleaned by Scholars from constructing Alchemicals and their Charms. Autochthonia lacks the technology to replace eyes or other organs through mundane means.

Injured Populat may requisition simple prosthetics worth Resources ••. Composed primarily of lightweight metal, their designs are functional and utilitarian, though they're often decorated with photo-resonant gel patterns and other aesthetic flourishes. Simple prosthesis replace the functionality of a missing limb, digits, or the like, but doesn't negate any penalties that result from the injury.

The Tripartite have regular access to more sophisticated prosthetics. Their construction incorporates the finest Autochthonian plastics as well as metal. Many are experimental prototypes, sometimes incorporating exotic materials harvested from the Reaches. Designs vary widely and are typically bespoke, but are almost universally ornate, serving as status symbols. Sophisticated prosthetics reduce any penalties from an injury to -1, or negate them entirely if they were already -1.

Note that the Resources values for prosthetics are based on their widespread manufacture, as well as the Tripartite's interest in maintaining the productivity of injured Populat. In Creation, prosthetics as sophisticated as these cost an additional Resources dot.

Topograph (Resources ••••)

A topograph is a clockwork model of a particular region is Autochthonia, large enough to fill a room. Its mechanisms are carefully calibrated based on information collected by the Eight Nations' explorers, though it must be updated each time Autochthonia shifts. Operating the topograph can be used to display the region's configuration across multiple points in time. Simple uses, such as displaying the most up-to-date map or gauging how far a nation chamber has drifted in the last few years don't require a roll from operators who understand how to use a topograph. More complex operations are essentially an introduce fact roll requiring a Lore background in Autochthonia's history, tectonics, or the like. It's exceptional

equipment (**Exalted**, p. 580) for these rolls. Contemporary topographs can display configurations going as far back as the Parting Era, but no further.

Airships

Airships use the same rules as seafaring ships (**Exalted**, p. 246). The Eight Nations employ a wide range of designs for their aircraft (p. XX). However, most fall into one of the following categories:

Cargo Transport (Resources ••••)

These ships are primarily used to transport materials retrieved from the Reaches or to make bulk shipments between towns and metropoli. In war, they're repurposed as troop carriers or transport materiel.

Speed: Propulsion +1, Favorable Air Currents +1, Empty Cargo Hold +1

Maneuverability: -2; **Hull:** -1/-2-4/Incap.

Cargo: The largest can carry up to a hundred tons, though most are built to carry only a fraction of that, as environmental conditions rarely allow for the transport of such heavy loads.

Scouting Ship (Resources ••••)

Small, fast, and aerodynamic, these ships typically hold a crew of one to three, used for exploration of the Reaches and for scouting in wartime. These traits can also be used for the hovercrafts found in metropoli with Mass Transit Fleet Hubs.

Speed: Propulsion +3, Favorable Air Currents +1, Crew of One +1

Maneuverability: +2; **Hull:** -2/-4/Incap.

Cargo: Practically none.

Aerial Skiff (Resources •••••)

Aerial skiffs are passenger craft, though their use is uncommon. Some Tripartite members and other notables between metropoli, while others are deployed on expeditions into the Reaches. They can be converted into terrifying warships, but few chambers within Autochthonia are large enough for military use of these ships.

Speed: Propulsion +2, Favorable Air Currents +1, Empty Cargo Hold +1

Maneuverability: +1; **Hull:** -1/-2-4/Incap.

Cargo: Twenty passengers, or up to three tons of cargo.

Minor Artifacts

Autolabe (Artifact ••)

, These three-dimensional compasses are key to navigating Autochthonia. An autolabe is a crystalline sphere, illuminated from within by soft amber light, containing intricate moonsilver gears that maneuver a jade needle. Each autolabe is linked either to a metropolis or an industrial organ. When attuned for one mote, its needle pointing the way toward it. Its inerrant needle adds two automatic successes on rolls to navigate toward the autolabe's linked location, and one success on navigation rolls that use the linked location as a landmark or point of reference.

Unlike other artifacts, autolabes are designed so that its user can go up to (Essence) months without

having contact with the artifact before her attunement lapses. Expeditions, diplomatic assemblies, and raiding parties are typically outfitted with an autolabe attuned in advance by an Alchemical — often a metropolis.

A variant design can be used to record a path, rather than linking to a location. Doing so requires only the push of a button at the start and end of her path. While traveling along this path, the autolabe's needle will point toward wherever its carrier needs to go to continue moving along it. It adds a non-Charm success on rolls to navigate toward a location along the path or while using such a location as a point of reference. Only one path can be recorded at a time.

Topographical Octant (Artifact ••)

A topographical octant replicates in miniature all the mechanisms of a room-sized topograph (p. XX), a delicate handheld mechanism of filigreed starmetal clockwork and colored jade tiles whose patterns display information. Other than their portability, they function as a standard topograph, except that they're not limited to a single region, encompassing the entirety of the Expanse of Metal to the extent the Octet has explored it. When attuned for two motes, it adds an additional two non-Charm dice on rolls that benefit from it and ensures its user can't botch.

Artifact Prosthetics (Artifact •••)

The most sophisticated Autochthonian prosthetics are artifacts, incorporating magical materials and Essence-powered mechanical systems. They can be used to replace organs, including eyes and hearts, though they can't replace damaged brain tissue. When attuned for three motes, they fully replicate the functionality of the replaced body part, including sensation, and provide their own unique Evocations, often representing advanced technological design features.

Autochthonian Artifice

The § symbol indicates artifacts that require Autochthonian artifice to construct.

Advanced Weaponry

Like the rest of Autochthonia's technology, the designs of artifacts have dramatically diverged from those produced in Creation over the millennia. Among the miracles produced by the divine fabricators of Alchemical smiths and machine spirits are lethal engine-driven saw weapons, blades that fly under their own power, and cutting edges of pure Essence.

The following entries are templates that replace the artifact's normal attunement bonus; all beam and power weapons share the same basic configuration, even though they have different Evocations.

Chain-Engine Weapons (Artifact § •••-•••••)

Chain-engine weapons use motorized moving parts to enhance a cutting edge or spear. Popular examples include autoklaves, daiklaves edged with high-speed rotating or reciprocating blades, and sawcleavers, heavy axes and polearms topped with chewing teeth or circular saws.

A chain-engine weapon can take the form of any hand-to-hand weapon with a cutting edge.

All chain-engine weapons provide the Industrial Violence Engine Evocation for free when first attuned. Their other Evocations can only be used while it's active.

Industrial Violence Engine

Cost: 6m; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Dual

Duration: One scene

Prerequisites: None

The wielder revs the engine of her weapon until the blade is a roaring blur, ready to bite through armor and flesh.

The chain-engine weapon revs to life, with the following effects:

- It gains the Chopping tag if it doesn't already have it. If it already had the tag, the wielder adds a bonus die on attack rolls for chopping attacks.
- **Withering** attacks with it add an additional die of post-soak damage.
- **Decisive** chopping attacks against enemies with lower Initiative add up to (Strength/2, rounded up) extra successes as dice on the damage roll. If it deals enough damage to increase the target's wound penalty, he also suffers a crippling penalty equal to his new base wound penalty on all physical rolls for the rest of the scene.
- The wielder suffers a -2 penalty to Stealth rolls from the sound of the weapon's engine.

Living Weapons

If an Alchemical uses Transcendent Multimodal Artifact Matrix (p. XX) to install Essence Core Ignition or Industrial Violence Engine, she can use them to enhance any artifact weapon she's attuned to, as long as it's compatible with the beam weapon or chain-driven weapon template. This might extend a blade of Essence from a daiklave's edge or transform a grimcleaver's axehead into a sawblade.

Beam Weapons (Artifact § •••-•••••)

These artifact weapons project a glowing blade of Essence rather than a conventional cutting edge. They take the form of intricate cylinders constructed from magical materials, encased in a shell of reinforced alloys, and tipped with a concave crystal disc. Each magical material produces a blade of different characteristics: orichalcum beam weapons are formed from radiant sunlight, blue jade from crackling lightning, and starmetal from prismatic rainbow-hued light. The hilt of a beamklave, the beam version of a daiklave, is typically around a foot long, straight or slightly curved. Other weapons, like beamlances and beamscythes, have staff-like shafts. Beamkhatars and beamclaws instead take the form of alloyed gloves that project the blade from the back of the wrist.

A beam weapon can take the form of any hand-to-hand weapon that cuts or pierces. Many beam weapons have the concealable tag, their emitter-cylinders being small enough to secrete about one's person. Others may lack this benefit, like a beamcleaver with a heavy full-length haft or an unusual beamklave that projects a cutting edge from a solid blade.

All beam weapons provide the Essence Core Ignition Evocation for free when first attuned. Their other Evocations can only be used while it's active.

Essence Core Ignition

Cost: 3m (2i); **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Dual

Duration: One scene

Prerequisites: None

With a hiss and a flare of light, the gleaming blade of the weapon ignites.

The wielder activates the beamklave, allowing her to wield it as an artifact weapon. It has the following effects:

- Attacks with it ignore three points of soak and Hardness.
- When the wielder succeeds on a disarm gambit against a non-magical weapon, she can reflexively pay two Initiative to destroy it.
- The wielder can also pay two Initiative to destroy a non-magical weapon after successfully blocking an attack made with it if the attacker failed by two or more successes. (This doesn't affect weapons that use projectiles). Against an unarmed attack, she can instead inflict two dice of **decisive** damage, which ignore Hardness.
- The wielder adds two automatic successes on feats of demolition when using the weapon to destroy objects and scenery (**Exalted**, p .229). She can complete feats to destroy objects or cause similar personal-scale damage instantly.
- The ignited beam weapon emits light comparable to a glowing anima banner (p. XX).

Gyroscopic Weapons (Artifact § •••-•••••)

Gyroscopic weapons are thrown weapons like chakrams and knives that are fitted with sophisticated self-correcting guidance mechanisms that allow them to seek out and attack enemies. Internal gyroscopic mechanisms stabilize them in flight, while high-speed rotary engines for propulsion and maneuvering. Some advanced gyroscopic weapons also incorporate arrays of Essence-fired rockets, magnetic repulsors, gravity-warping fields, or stranger mechanisms. Any Thrown weapon with a cutting edge can be a gyroscopic weapon.

Gyroscopic weapons always return to the wielder's hand after an attack. Additionally, all gyroscopic weapons provide the Recursive Trajectory Cut Evocation for free when first attuned.

Recursive Trajectory Cut

Cost: —(3m); **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Dual

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: None

As the weapon maneuvers to return to its owner's hand, it adjusts its path to strike again at its target.

When the wielder makes an attack that receives dice from aiming, she can forgo the dice bonus to ignore cover as the weapon arcs around it. She can even ignore full cover, as long as there's an opening for her weapon to pass through and she knows approximately where her target is.

If an aimed attack misses, the wielder can pay three motes to have the weapon strike on its return trajectory, adding three non-Charm successes to her attack roll. This can turn her miss into a hit, but she deals reduced damage. A **withering** attack is reduced to its base damage. A **decisive** attack's base damage equals to the amount of Initiative she lost for missing, ignoring Hardness. This doesn't reset her to base Initiative (**Exalted**, p. 191). The wielder can use this benefit even if she didn't forgo dice from aiming, and can use it with aim actions that didn't provide a dice bonus.

Bygone Predator (Moonsilver Dire Talon, Artifact ●●)

Bygone Predator served the Autochthonian tribes well when they first came to the Realm of Brass and Shadow, a moonsilver falcata in the shape of a now-forgotten tutelary beast. A treasure from a lost homeland, none know who first bore the blade, not even in the Octet's first days. It initially passed between the eight tribes to pay debts or seal alliances, but eventually became a symbol exchanged to celebrate harmonious relations or acknowledge triumph over shared hardship.

In this manner, the Sovan chieftain Yirvia Mak bequeathed Bygone Predator to Claslat's *Beacon of Safety* after she borrowed it to save a diplomatic summit from a gremlin flock. *Beacon* later gifted it to *Warning Whisper*, a Soulsteel Caste who used the Predator's unnatural shrieks to strike fear into the hearts of Jarish's voidbringers. It eventually came to Estasia's *Bravery of Steel*, who used it single-handedly fend off an enemy platoon and secure their squad's retreat during the annexation of Gulak. Thus it continues a migration of sorts through Autochthonia.

Bygone Predator is crafted to resemble a falcon — a mythical creature in Autochthonia. A stylized raptor's face with a sharp, curved beak is etched into the blade itself. Feather-like etchings adorn the grip, and quillon-wings protrude from the hand guard. The pommel twists open into a pair of grasping talons ready to clutch a hearthstone. In the heat of battle, the blade sometimes twists in the wielder's hand, as if to watch the action. In flight, it moves as if alive, the handguard angling itself to better glide through the air blade-first with elegant swoops and dives. It flies with the perfect silence of a swooping predator, save for when it screams out a bone-chilling cry to announce imminent doom.

Attunement: 5m

Type: Light (+10 DMG, OVW 3)

Accuracy (Melee): +5

Accuracy (Thrown): Close +5; Short +4; Medium +3; Long +0; Extreme -2

Tags: Lethal, Melee, Thrown (Short)

Hearthstone Slot(s): 1

Special: When Bygone Predator is thrown, its quillon-wings carry it to the back to the wielder.

Era: Before the Great Exodus

Evocations of Bygone Predator

While Bygone Predator can be wielded in melee, its Evocations can only be used when thrown.

Upon attuning to this weapon for the first time, its wielder awakens Quintessential Raptor Mien for free.

Quintessential Raptor Mien

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Resonant, Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: None

The moonsilver blade evokes the shape and aspect of the beast that inspired its creation.

The wielder invokes one of Bygone Predator's hawk-features to enhance an attack:

Grasping Talon Swoop: The wielder adds one die on the Initiative roll for a gambit as Bygone Predator's claws grip her foe's weapon. If her target is suffering from any onslaught penalties, the blade gains the Disarming tag (**Exalted**, p. 586).

Steel-Piercing Beak: The beast's beak has evolved for sharp, killing strikes, ignoring (Essence + target's onslaught penalty) points of soak.

Swift Silver Wings: Bygone Predator's wings guide it in flight, adding one die on the attack roll and ignoring one point of penalty due to external conditions like wind. She adds her target's onslaught penalty to the total amount of penalty reduction.

Resonant: The wielder treats her target's onslaught penalty as one higher for purposes of this Evocation's effects.

Flickering Feather Burst

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Quintessential Raptor Mien

Bygone Predator's wings beat rapidly as the blade strikes, shedding sharp-edged flakes of silver that spray her enemy's eyes.

The wielder adds (Essence) dice to a **decisive** damage roll. Against enemies with lower Initiative, she also adds damage dice equal to their onslaught penalty.

If an enemy successfully blocks the attack, he still suffers (Essence) dice of lethal damage, ignoring Hardness, as long as the stylist missed by no more than two successes.

A target that suffers 3+ levels of damage he's overwhelmed by the spray of shards. If the wielder uses Quintessential Raptor Mien on her next attack against him, it becomes a surprise attack, inflicting a –2 Defense penalty. This benefit is lost if the wielder doesn't attack by the end of her next round.

Ancient Doom Shriek

Cost: 2m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Decisive-only, Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Quintessential Raptor Mien

Bygone Predator releases an ancient, blood-curdling screech in flight, freezing those who hear it with fear.

The wielder makes a **decisive** attack against an enemy. Her attack roll also counts as a special threaten roll. If it beats his Resolve and he doesn't spend Willpower to resist, he suffers an additional point of onslaught penalty from the attack, or two points if his Initiative is lower than the wielder's. If this causes a battle group to make a rout check, she adds the same amount to the check's difficulty.

If the stylist deals 3+ damage, she also applies this threaten roll against all enemies within medium range, as long as they were able to hear Bygone Predator, with the same effects as above.

Resonant: The screech can affect characters out to long range.

Cacophonous Talon Strike

Cost: 3m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Dual

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Ancient Doom Shriek

Bygone Predator vibrates with its terrifying cry, a screech that disorients those caught in its path.

This Evocation can only be used against enemies with a –3 or higher onslaught penalty. The wielder's attack becomes a surprise attack, inflicting a –2 Defense penalty, and adds dice of damage equal to this penalty. If it's already a surprise attack due to Bygone Predator's other Evocations, the Defense penalty instead increases by one.

Reset: Once per scene unless reset by landing an attack that increases an enemy's onslaught penalty to –3 or higher.

Deadly Quicksilver Murmuration

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Cacophonous Talon Strike, Flickering Feather Burst

One hawk becomes many as Bygone Predator's blade breaks up into a swarm of sharp-edged splinters, striking from every direction as they converge on her prey.

To use this Evocation, the wielder must have 15+ Initiative. She makes an undodgeable **decisive** attack, adding automatic success on the attack roll equal to her target's onslaught penalty. As the attack comes from all directions, it ignores cover — even full cover — unless it fully surrounds the target.

This attack inflicts an additional point of onslaught penalty, plus another point for each 10 on the attack or damage, maximum (higher of Essence or 3).

Resonant: For a three-mote surcharge, if the wielder deals 3+ levels of damage, all other enemies within short range of her target suffer (her Essence) dice of **decisive** damage, ignoring Hardness. Those damaged by this suffer a -1 onslaught penalty

Thousand Razors Flock

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Dual, Resonant, Dissonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Deadly Quicksilver Murmuration, Cacophonous Strike

The Bygone Predator sheds its outmost edge as a feint, casting a foreboding shadow that conceals the true attack.

The wielder makes a **withering** attack against an enemy, which can't deal more than (Essence + target's onslaught penalty) damage.

If this hits, the wielder then makes a **decisive** attack against the same enemy. It's automatically a surprise attack and adds automatic successes on the damage roll equal to the first attack's total **withering** damage, maximum (Essence). If it's already a surprise attack due to Bygone Predator's other Evocations, the Defense penalty instead increases by one.

If the first attack's **withering** damage crashes the target, the **decisive** attack becomes an ambush.

Special activation rules: The wielder can use Deadly Quicksilver Murmuration reflexively to enhance the **withering** attack.

Reset: Once per scene unless reset by landing a **decisive** attack that resets the wielder's Initiative and then reaching Initiative 12+.

Resonant: If the wielder uses Deadly Quicksilver Murmuration, her **decisive** attack becomes unblockable and ignores cover as per that Evocation's effect. It doesn't gain that Evocation's other benefits.

Dissonant: The wielder can't make ambushes.

Luminiferous Wind (Starmetal Gyroscopic Chakram, Artifact § ...)

Treatise on Light assembled Luminiferous Wind during the Plague of Smoke and Shadows, as gremlins of caustic smog and living shadow boiled forth from the Reaches as a terrible living wave. After a gremlin raid cost *Treatise* an arm, they created Luminiferous Wind to bring the fight to the darkness. The starmetal chakram sports a set of gimbed rings encasing a perfectly spherical diamond, allowing the device to rotate freely. Synthetic fiber threads, spun by requisitioned Populat work shifts, provide motive power, woven into a configuration where one unwinding perpetually winds another. For its cutting edge, *Treatise* hammered and folded the starmetal nerves of their lost arm into an infinitesimally thin blade.

Armed with Luminiferous Wind, *Treatise* ventured into the Reaches and sought out the Plague's origin, the Apostate *Perpetual Excruciation Engine*, returning triumphant but grievously injured. They passed it to their most promising student, *Ceaseless Waves Arising*, whose used it to foil an Estasian assassination attempt against Claslat's grand autocrat. Its next bearer, *Webs of Iron and Crystal*, achieved undying glory for Gulak in the martial arts exhibitions of the Four Nation Games, overcoming all competitors with her Thousand Wounds Gear style. Posters and paintings of immortalize her triumph in Claslat's Gladiate arena, depicting her surrounded by the prismatic afterimages that trail after Luminiferous Wind.

Attunement: 5m

Type: Light (+10 DMG, 3 OVW)

Accuracy: Close +5; Short +4; Medium +3; Long +0; Extreme -2

Tags: Lethal, Thrown (Medium), Cutting

Special: Luminiferous Wind returns to its wielder's hand after being thrown.

Era: Plague of Smoke and Shadows

Evocations of Luminiferous Wind

Luminiferous Wind's wielder awakens Recursive Trajectory Cut (p. XX) for free upon attuning it for the first time.

Prismatic Shadow Strike

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Resonant, Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Recursive Trajectory Cut

With each throw, Luminiferous Wind trails more and more glowing afterimages, following in its wake like neon contrails.

The wielder adds an automatic success on an attack roll, or two successes on an attack rerolled with Recursive Trajectory Cut. If she hits, a glowing *afterimage* trails after the chakram, to a maximum of

seven afterimages.

When the wielder makes an attack that benefits from aiming, may spend a single afterimage to add one non-Charms die on the attack roll.

Resonant: The wielder doesn't need to aim in order to add dice by spending afterimages.

Range-Finding Calibration

Cost: —(1+ afterimages); **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Dual, Resonant

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisite Charms: Prismatic Shadow Strike

The wielder makes a last-second adjustment to the gyroscopic mechanism, turning apparent errors into rebounding successes.

When the wielder uses Recursive Trajectory Cut to reroll an attack, she can spend up to (higher of Essence or 3) afterimages, adding that many non-Charms dice on the attack roll and that many dice of **decisive** damage or post-soak **withering** damage. She doesn't need to spend the afterimages until she pays Recursive Trajectory Cut's mote cost.

Resonant: The wielder is refunded all spent afterimages if the rerolled attack crashes or incapacitates its target.

Repeated Statistical Anomalies

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Clash, Decisive-only, Dissonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Range-Finding Calibration

With a precise throw, Luminiferous Wind cuts down an inbound missile with a precise throw as its afterimages distract the attacker.

When an enemy makes a ranged attack against the wielder or an ally within short range of her, she clashes it with a **decisive** attack. If she succeeds, she strikes the opposing projectile from the air, but doesn't roll damage or reset to base Initiative. Instead, she rolls dice equal to her afterimages, and steals Initiative equal to her successes from the attacker, minimum one. If he's outside of this weapon's range, she steals only one Initiative instead.

If the wielder uses this Evocation while aiming, her attack gains the benefits of that action, but her aim still applies to the next attack she makes.

Dissonant: The wielder doesn't gain Initiative lost by the attacker.

Indirect Interaction Principle

Cost: 5m, 1wp, 1 afterimage; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Dissonant, Resonant, Withering-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Repeated Statistical Anomalies

Trusting the starmetal gyroscope to know the path, its wielder sets it loose to strike at a concealed foe.

When an enemy within Luminiferous Wind's range makes a Stealth roll, the wielder can oppose it with a reflexive **withering** attack instead of an Awareness roll. She doesn't gain Initiative from the damage roll, though she still gains it for hitting or crashing her target. Instead, every two points of **withering** damage she deals subtracts one success from the opposing character's Stealth roll, making it easier for her allies to spot him. On a failed roll, the wielder can tell that she's just missed an enemy entering concealment, but not where he is.

If the wielder uses this Evocation while aiming, her attack gains the benefits of that action, but her aim still applies to the next attack she makes.

Resonant: This Evocation's afterimage cost is waived against enemies with lower Initiative.

Dissonant: This counts as the wielder's attack for the round — or the next round, if she's already attacked.

Strobing Ultraviolet Catastrophe

Cost: 1m, 1wp, 0+ afterimages; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Dual, Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Range-Finding Calibration

The wielder's arms blur as Luminiferous Wind and its ever-increasing trail of afterimages fill the air like a deadly rainbow.

This Evocation can only be used against an enemy that the wielder attacked on or after her last turn. She reflexively aims before making the attack and can spend any number of afterimages to add that many dice of **decisive** damage or post-soak **withering** damage.

Resonant: The wielder can use this Evocation against enemies with lower Initiative even if she didn't attack them on her last turn.

Delayed Probabilistic Measurements

Cost: 3m, 2i, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Decisive-only, Dissonant, Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: Indirect Interaction Principle, Strobing Ultraviolet Catastrophe

Overlaying Luminiferous Wind with all of its afterimages, the wielder throws them in a wide arc, trusting the chakram's mechanisms to know who to strike.

The wielder makes a number of **decisive** attacks equal to the number of afterimages she has, minimum (Essence). If she aimed before using this Evocation, all attacks benefit from aiming. If she spends afterimages to add dice or use other Evocations, she only needs to pay that cost once to enhance all attacks she makes with that effect. (She must still pay mote costs and other costs separately for each use).

The wielder divides her Initiative evenly among all successful attacks, and doesn't reset to base Initiative until she's completed all of them. She adds one die to each attack's damage for every two afterimages she spends to enhance these attacks, rounded up.

Resonant: The wielder only needs to pay the mote and Willpower costs of Luminiferous Wind's Evocations once to enhance all attacks she makes.

Dissonant: The wielder subtracts one from the total number of attacks she can make.

Prismatic Bulwark (Adamant Thunderbolt Shield, Artifact ...)

The running battle between *Eternal Harmonious Calculation* and the *Molten Fury of the People*, an Estasian Champion leading early Militat raids against Claslati extraction operations, left the Reaches scored with intense energy blasts. *Calculation* broke off pursuit after a battle within a defective industrial organ whose glowing adamant wall panels refracted and intensified *Fury's* energy weapons.

While *Fury* regrouped, *Calculation* studied the industrial organ and the orichalcum rune-circuits set in its crystal. She harvested the organ's precious materials and from them fashioned Prismatic Bulwark, a shield capable of refracting energy into light and Essence. The adamant targe turned the tide against the Militat raiders when *Calculation* foiled *Fury's* Essence Pulse Cannon, letting Claslati forces decisively rebuff Estasia's aggression.

Since then, the shield has passed through the hands of many Alchemicals, sometimes as token of exchange during diplomatic efforts. *Coruscating Electric Omen* used it to protect one of Yugash's first excursions into the Far Reaches. *Thousand-Voiced Hortator* wielded it to defend the diplomats of the Second Great Conclave from assassination by a voidbringer conspiracy. *Justice Forged in Steel* was the metropolis Rabla's last line of defense against the gremlins of the Five-Day Incursion, fighting to the last to rebuff them.

Prismatic Bulwark is an adamant targe, with a pattern of orichalcum circuit-runes that spreads outward from a central hearthstone socket. As the wielder's anima banner grows in intensity, the shield sometimes projects their iconic imagery outward in a dramatic display.

Attunement: 5m

Type: Medium (+3 ACC, +10 DMG, +1 DEF, OVW 4)

Tags: Bashing, Melee, Shield

Hearthstone Slot(s): 1

Era: The Shock-Strike Conflict

Evocations of the Prismatic Bulwark

The Bulwark's capacity to draw in energy can even lead it towards the kinetic force of incoming objects. During a full defense, attack rolls against the wielder suffer a -2 penalty, and she gains one Initiative if she successfully Parries an energy-based attack.

Energy-Based Attacks

Energy based attacks include lightning bolts, bursts of raw Essence, bolts of elemental energy, sorcerous rays of disintegration, weapons created out of pure Essence, and the like. They don't include things like firewands.

Efficient Conversion Circuit

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Decisive-only, Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: None

Prismatic Bulwark's circuit-runes glow as the wielder primes it with Essence to absorb a blow.

The wielder gains Prismatic Bulwark's innate defense against a **decisive** attack without needing to take a full defense. If she is using a full defense, the penalty on opposing attack rolls increases by one.

The wielder can also gain Initiative from parrying attacks even if they aren't energy-based. Blocking an energy-based attack lets her gain two motes in addition to the Initiative. With Essence 2, she can gain a level of anima instead.

Resonant: The wielder can use this Evocation against **withering** attacks.

Energy Negation Field

Cost: 3m, 1a; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Efficient Conversion Circuit

Prismatic Bulwark's wielder charges the shield with her anima to project a luminous field of

resistance.

The wielder gains the benefits of light cover against an attack, or medium cover if she benefits from a full defense action. Using Efficient Conversion Circuitry lets her gain medium cover without needing a full defense.

Against energy-based attacks, the penalty from Prismatic Bulwark's innate defense subtracts successes instead of penalties.

Kaleidoscopic Aegis Burst

Cost: 3m, 3i, 1a; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Dissonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Energy Negation Field

Prismatic Bulwark's wielder channels energy through it, unleashing a disorienting display of many-colored flashes and sparks.

The wielder unleashes a blinding flash against all enemies within medium range who can see her. It's a one-time environmental hazard with difficulty 4 and Damage (Essence + 1)B. Enemies damaged by the hazard are blinded for the rest of the scene. Those unharmed by it are immune to being blinded by this Evocation for the rest of the scene.

Special activation rules: The wielder can use this Evocation reflexively when she successfully blocks an energy-based attack. Doing so adds +2 to the hazard's difficulty and damage ratings.

Reset: Once per scene unless reset by successfully blocking an energy-based attack.

Resonant: The wielder can pay a one-Willpower surcharge and commit this Evocation's mote cost to extend its duration to one scene.

Dissonant: Blinded enemies regain their sight at the end of their next turn.

Plasmic Barrier Charge

Cost: 2i, 1a; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Dissonant, Perilous, Resonant, Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Energy Negation Field

Prismatic Bulwark's wielder modulates its energy collection circuitry to adapt it to kinetic force.

The wielder treats an attack against her as being energy-based for Prismatic Bulwark's innate defense and other Evocations.

Dissonant: The wielder can only use this Evocation against enemies with lower Initiative.

Resonant: This Evocation's Initiative cost is waived against enemies whose Initiative is at least five lower than the wielder's.

Arcane Harmonization Circuitry

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Plasmic Barrier Charge

Prismatic Bulwark vibrates with an ominous hum as its circuit-sigils shift to match the frequencies of esoteric forces.

The wielder can use her Parry to defend against a spell and Shaping effects. If the effect could normally be opposed with a roll or static value, the wielder uses her Parry instead. Against unrolled effects, the opposing character rolls a dice pool of the Storyteller's choice.

The wielder gains an additional +1 non-Charisma Parry against Shaping effects or spells that are similar to energy-based attacks or that otherwise manipulate applicable forms of energy

Special activation rules: A successful block lets the wielder use Kaleidoscopic Aegis Burst as if she'd blocked an energy-based attack.

Resonant: With an Essence 3 repurchase, the wielder can pay a one-Willpower surcharge to extend this Evocation's duration to one scene.

Radiant Essence Conduction Matrix

Cost: 4m, 3i, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Perilous, Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Arcane Harmonization Circuitry, Kaleidoscopic Aegis Burst

Lights begin to flicker as Prismatic Bulwark's runic circuitry draws in nearby energy, making it the brightest thing in sight as it shines like a forgotten sun.

The wielder takes a full defense, rolling ([Strength or Stamina] + Melee) to draw in power from energy sources within medium range. If her roll beats an enemy's (Essence + 2), he loses two motes, which are stored in Prismatic Bulwark. This also weakens energy-based environmental hazards within range as if the wielder's roll beats their difficulty. This reduces their difficulty and damage by two each, minimum one, and grants an additional two motes to Prismatic Bulwark per hazard. At the Storyteller's discretion, this Evocation may be able to drain other energy-based phenomena.

The wielder gains +1 Parry for the full defense's duration, plus an additional point of Parry for every two motes she absorbed, maximum (Essence/2). Against energy-based attacks, each mote absorbed grants +1 Parry, and the maximum is increased by one.

Motes absorbed by this Evocation are stored in Prismatic Bulwark, rather than the wielder's mote pools, and can only be spent on the shield's Evocations. Prismatic Bulwark can hold up to ten motes at a time.

Reset: Once per scene unless reset by blocking a nontrivial enemy's **decisive** attack that misses by three successes or more. Blocking an energy-based attack always resets it.

Resonant: After using this Evocation, the wielder can transfer up to (Essence x2) motes from Prismatic Bulwark to her own mote pool.

Revelation's Needle (Adamant Longfang, Artifact ●●)

Revelation's Needle is a length of adamant shaped into a chisel-tipped spear, covered in detailed carvings and reliefs along over half its length. Most see different scenes and events each time they look at the Needle, done in half a dozen different visual styles from across Autochthonia's history and stained in an oilslick rainbow of color. At one moment, the felling of a Humanity-Deleting Subminister is depicted in vivid scarlet and vermillion. An eyeblink later, the downfall of *Infinite Hatred Saint* gleams in cyan gloss. It grants its wielders insight into their own nature, and aids them in consciously shaping who they are. Its Alchemical masters have used it both to focus the machine-logic of their Clarity and to help keep their individuality intact.

The spear's first wielder, *Certainty-Seeking Prognosticator*, was devoted to seeking absolute union with Autochthon's will and an unerringly objective understanding of the world, shearing away any connection to mortal life and even his own individuality. He channeled his ever-greater detachment and emotionless exactitude through Revelation's Needle. *Prognosticator* to drive cells of the heterodox Mechanics' League into hiding after slaying their leaders and stalwarts. But not all were as committed as *Prognosticator*, nor as farsighted. His pragmatic embrace of wartime atrocities, culminating in his executions of innocent Mechanics, saw him named an enemy of the state, driven into exile by his fellow Champions.

Method of Cognition wrested Revelation's Needle away from *Prognosticator* before he fled into exile, etching the tale of his defeat into its haft. A storied hunter of gremlins, Apostates, and even the Ruin-Eaters of the Far Reaches, *Cognition* embraced the heights of Clarity in the solitude of the hunt. Horrified by *Prognosticator*'s, she feared becoming like him, feared the way her constant vigilance and dispassionate readiness for violence unnerved her fellows when she returned home. Revelation's Needle became a source of balance to her, shaped by her ideology as she shaped herself with its spear tip.

Over millennia, Revelation's Needle has been carved, etched, and engraved by many more hands, both inhuman paragons of Clarity and those who hold fast to more human thought. The Apostate *Machinery of Lamentation* sought to stave off the infection of Dissonance with it, though her fate remains unknown.

Attunement: 5m

Type: Medium (+3 ACC, +12 DMG, +1 DEF, OVW 4)

Tags: Lethal, Melee, Thrown (Short), Piercing

Hearthstone Slot(s): 2

Era: The Cycle of Flourishing Habitation

Evocations of Revelation's Needle

The wielder adds +1 Resolve against influence that would weaken any of her Major or Defining Intimacies that align with Clarity (p. XX). When she rolls to gain or lose Clarity, she may add or subtract one die.

Non-Alchemicals: This weapon's listed Evocations are unsuitable for non-Alchemicals. Such characters might instead awaken Evocations that let them enter a Clarity-like state or manifest certain aspects of Clarity.

Calculated Imperfection Strike

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Resonant, Withering-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: None

The wielder makes a meticulously calculated strike, calculating weakness in even the most impenetrable defenses.

The wielder waives the Initiative cost and Defense penalty for making a piercing attack (**Exalted**, p. 586). If the attack benefits from aiming, she ignores an additional (Essence) soak, or (Clarity/2, rounded up) if it's higher.

With Clarity 6+, the wielder doesn't need to aim to gain the enhanced effect.

Resonant: The attack gains +1 Overwhelming, or +3 if it benefits from aiming.

Encompassing Necessity Revelation

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Resonant

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: None

Revelation's Needle anchors its wielder to the people, places, and ideas that are core her ideals, occasionally depicting images of them in the haft's carvings.

Upon awakening this Evocation, the wielder chooses one of her Defining Intimacies that doesn't align with Clarity (p. XX). If the Intimacy opposes Clarity, then the wielder treats her Clarity as (Essence) lower to determine its effects on that Intimacy. If it's neutral, it instead counts as aligning with Clarity.

The wielder may repurchase this Evocation up to (Essence/2, rounded up) times, selecting an additional Intimacy for each purchase.

Awakening: The wielder may spend experience to awaken this Evocation instantly for an Intimacy when

she spends Willpower to prevent that Intimacy from being weakened or cites it to spend Willpower in a Decision Point

Resonant: The wielder may use this Evocation to enhance Major Intimacies.

Enlightenment-Revealing Opening

Cost: 5m **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Calculated Imperfection Strike

The wielder delineates a desired future from the opportunities measured with each movement of her spear, bringing it into reality with the next blow.

The wielder can use this Evocation after succeeding on an attack roll with 2+ extra successes, or successfully blocking an attack that misses by 2+ successes. She reflexively aims at the opposing character and gains one Initiative. If she uses this after landing a **decisive** attack, she gains the Initiative before the damage roll.

Dissonant: The wielder can only use this Evocation against enemies with lower Initiative.

Reassessed Priority Defense

Cost: 2m, 2i, 1wp **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Clash, Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Calculated Imperfection Strike

The wielder reassesses her situation, intercepting an attack against a valued companion from an angle that would have been impossible moments ago.

When an enemy attacks an ally within close within close range of the wielder, she clashes it with a **decisive** attack. (She can't clash attacks against herself). If she was already protecting that character with a defend other action, she adds two non-Charm successes on the attack roll.

If protecting an ally is supported by an Intimacy that aligns with Clarity (p. XX), the wielder adds (Intimacy) dice of **decisive** damage.

Efficacious Removal of Obstacles

Cost: 4m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Decisive-only, Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Enlightenment Revealing Opportunity

Defining her foe as an unwelcome mistake, the Needle's Wielder launches the adamant shaft in an unerring course of eradication.

The wielder makes a **decisive** attack, extending its range by one band. Any dice added by aiming are converted to non-Charisma successes. She adds up to (Essence) attack roll extra successes as dice on the damage roll, or (Clarity) if it's higher.

Resonant: With Clarity 6+, the wielder can add any number of extra successes on the damage roll.

Piercing Epiphany

Cost: 10m, 1wp **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Resonant

Duration: One scene

Prerequisites: Efficacious Removal of Obstacles, Reassessed Priority Defense

Revelation's Needle filters the wielder's perceptions for but a moment, and the spear's touch burns away deceptions and chicanery with the clarity of adamant.

The wielder rolls (Perception + [Melee or Thrown]) to see through magical deceptions, illusions, and similar trickery. This is opposed by the roll used to create these effects, or at difficulty 5 if no such roll exists. No roll is needed to see through effects whose user's Essence is lower than the wielder's. This doesn't effect purely mundane actions that are enhanced by magic like an Excellency.

The wielder can destroy ongoing illusions or deceptive effects that she's seen through by piercing them with Revelation's Needle, which may require a difficulty 3 gambit in combat. This Evocation can't negate sorcerous workings or permanent effects, though they're suppressed for a scene.

Reset: Once per session unless reset by reaching Clarity 10. No reset is necessary if the wielder uses this Evocation while at Clarity 10.

Resonant: With Essence 4, the wielder can use this Evocation to destroy sorcerous workings that create illusions or other deceptive effects. Doing so requires a (Perception + [Melee or Thrown]) roll with (Clarity) bonus dice against a difficulty of the working's (Circle x 3).. The wielder can only use this effect against a Celestial Circle or Solar Circle working once per story.

Shroud of Justice Obscured (Soulsteel Reinforced Buff Jacket, Artifact ●●●)

Created in the wake of the War of Ashes, the Soulsteel Caste *Integrity Does Not Bend* worked closely with Sova's regulators since her creation. She grew troubled by the irregularities and favoritism she saw extended to Sovans prominent lineage. This came to a head in her pursuit of a gruesome serial killer, a

murderer preying on the Populat and ripping out his victim's soulgems. *Integrity* caught the killer — Elak Hudom a senior regulator who'd kept the soulgems hidden in a box of soulsteel mesh on his desk. But the killer was of a prominent lineage, well-liked, well-connected. His arrest came as a shocking scandal, but it was papered over all too soon, his punishment far less than *Integrity* deemed just surprise and disgust, the affair was papered over.

Seething, *Integrity* took the box of soulsteel mesh herself, its dark strands imbued with dreams of wrongful deaths and justice denied. In private, she wove the Shroud of Justice Obscured, a long soulsteel jacket reinforced with self-restoring ceramic composite plates. A high, stiff collar and low, face-concealing hood conceal the wearer's identity. Wearing the Shroud, *Integrity* meted out vengeance to those who had escaped justice. Elak Hudom was only the first.

Integrity's shadow war continued for several years, until she suddenly seemed to vanish. Her fate remains the subject of gossip and superstition among the Populat and Tripartite alike, as does that of the Shroud. The Sovcommit has formally confirmed *Integrity's* death, and strenuously denies rumors that the Shroud was found hidden in the Sentinel's former living quarters. Wherever it may be, the Shroud sleeps uneasily, longing to resume the never-ending quest against those who have evaded their due punishment.

Attunement: 5m

Type: Medium (Soak +8, Hardness 7, Mobility Penalty -1)

Tags: Silent

Hearthstone Slot(s): 1

Era: The War of Ashes

Evocations of the Shroud of Justice Obscured

Upon attuning to the Shroud for the first time, its wearer awakens Unforgiving Oath for free.

Unforgiving Oath

Cost: 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite Charms: None

Blood cries out for blood, and justice demands punishment for the guilty.

The Shroud's wearer swears to solve a serious crime, mystery, or injustice — one that involves or causes the death or suffering of the innocent or undeserving. She gains a Minor Principle representing this vow — her *Oath*. It can't be fully eroded by any means.

If the wearer successfully completes her investigation and fulfills her Oath, she gains two Willpower, which can raise her above her permanent Willpower. If the wearer abandons her investigation or it becomes impossible to complete, she rolls (Oath) dice and loses that many Willpower.

Once the wielder uses this Evocation, she can't use it again until her investigation ends, one way or the other.

Resonant: The wearer may choose to gain the Principle at Major intensity. If she does, it can't be weakened below that level.

Shadow in the Dark

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite: Unforgiving Oath

The guilty are right to jump at shadows, for the darkness shrouds the one who hunts them.

The wearer adds an automatic success on a Stealth roll. If she's in shadows or darkness deep enough to impose a visibility penalty, she ignores that many points of penalty on her Stealth roll, maximum (Essence). This doesn't reduce wound penalties or other penalties that are purely internal in nature, but it does reduce the penalty for using Stealth in combat.

If the wearer employs such subtle means to fulfill her Unforgiving Oath, such as by covertly tailing a suspect, the added success is non-Charm, and visibility penalties from darkness subtract successes instead of dice on opposing rolls.

Waking Nightmare Warning

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Dissonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisite: Unforgiving Oath

The nightmares woven into the Shroud wail a warning within its bearer's mind, rousing her against disaster.

The wearer can use this Evocation after failing an Investigation or Awareness roll to notice a hidden threat, like an assassin poised to strike or a poisoned meal. She rerolls up to (higher or Perception or Wits) failed dice. If the threat is connected to her Oath, she rerolls 6s until they cease to appear before rerolling any other dice.

Reset: Once per day. This doesn't apply against threats connected to the wearer's Oath.

Dissonant: The wearer can't reroll 1s.

Satisfaction of Justice Delivered

Cost: 3m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisite: Shadow in the Dark, Waking Nightmare Warning

Nothing matters next to the mission. Not exhaustion, not pain, not love, not even death.

The Shroud's master is fortified against anything that would deter her from the mission. She gains the following benefits:

- When fighting an enemy whose misdeeds the wearer has investigated or uncovered in pursuit of her Oath, she gains one Willpower if she crashes him, deals **decisive** damage to him, or succeeds on a threaten roll against him. She can't gain more than (Essence/2, rounded up) Willpower per scene, except for Willpower gained from an attack that incapacitates a nontrivial enemy.
- She can use her Oath to bolster her Resolve against any influence, other than influence that's supported by her Oath.
- She adds (Oath) to the Shroud's soak and Hardness.
- She ignores (Oath) points of wound penalties, crippling penalties, and penalties from poison, exhaustion, deprivation, and similar conditions.

If the wearer wins Join Battle in a fight that's related to her Oath, she can use this Evocation reflexively.

Daystar's Memory (Orichalcum Siege Crossbow, Artifact)

Daystar's Memory is an ancient artifact, built in the generations following the early Octet's departure from the Sacred Crèche of Origin. Each nation has its own tales of the weapon's, but all agree that it was made to preserve fading cultural memories of Creation's sun. Its design is elegant and fragile-seeming, crafted to resemble a fan of golden flames. Its orichalcum body gleams as if constantly polished to a mirror sheen. It draws in light and darkness, channeling them into bolts of solidified radiance and shadow.

Many of the crossbow's wielders and their great deeds have been forgotten, and Daystar's Memory itself has been lost to history on many occasions. *Order-Enforcing Arsenal* is the first of its masters whose name is known in modern times, an Orichalcum Caste who wielded it to bring light into the darkest Reaches. Centuries later, *Breaker of Unrighteous Chains* dove into the molten lakes of Sovia to retrieve it as the Apostate *All Things End in Blood* laid siege to Ixut. The Claslatti peacekeeper *Harbinger of Glorious Resurgence* wielded it in his efforts to stop the War of Ashes, but when he went missing in action, so did his weapon. The ultimate fate of Daystar's Memory is a politically charged topic, and when it resurfaces, all Eight Nations will be eager to reclaim it.

Attunement: 5m

Type: Medium (+12 DMG, 4 OVW)

Accuracy: Close -1; Short +5; Medium +3; Long +1; Extreme -1

Tags: Lethal, Archery (Long), Crossbow, Piercing, Powerful, Slow

Special: Luminiferous Wind returns to its wielder's hand after being thrown.

Evocations of Daystar's Memory

The crossbow's wielder can fire light bolt or a shadow bolt for one mote each. The mote cost is waived on attacks enhanced with this weapon's Evocations. There must be at least some ambient light to fire light bolts and some nearby shadows to fire dark bolts.

Withering attacks with light bolts adding +1 raw damage in strong illumination, while shadow bolts gain the same benefit in darkness.

Shadow Sun Nimbus

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Resonant, Withering-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: None

Bolts from Daystar's Memory burst upon contact, wreathing the target in radiant light or swirling shadows.

The wielder can use this Evocation when she makes a **withering** attack with a light bolt or a shadow bolt. If she succeeds, the target is wreathed in a *nimbus* of light or darkness, suffering a –1 penalty on all vision-based rolls from blinding light or obscuring shadows. He suffers an additional effect based on the type of bolt used:

- **Light:** Overwhelmed by the light that engulfs him, the target loses one Initiative at the start of each of his turns, though this can't reduce him below (his Essence) Initiative.
- **Dark:** The shadows clinging to the target sap his vitality, reducing his soak and Hardness by two.

A character can only have one nimbus at a time — if he would gain another, it overwrites the first nimbus. An enemy can dissipate the nimbus by crashing or incapacitating the wielder.

Resonant: Enemies can't dissipate the nimbus while they're crashed, even if they gain enough Initiative from crashing the wielder to exit crash.

Dawn and Dusk Conflagration

Cost: 3i, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Dissonant, Perilous, Resonant, Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Shadow Sun Nimbus

Light gives way to dark, and dark to light. Daystar's Memory unites these opposing forces in a violent eruption of their antithetical Essences.

The wielder can use this Evocation when she inflicts a light or dark nimbus on an enemy already affected by the opposite nimbus. The clash of light and dark inflicts three dice of **decisive** damage, ignoring

Hardness. Her target also loses (wielder's Essence) Initiative, plus an additional point for each level of **decisive** damage he takes. This mutual annihilation leaves the target without any nimbus.

With Essence 3, if the wielder uses this Evocation against an enemy within a sphere of light or darkness created by Forgotten Sky Revelation, she may pay a five-mote surcharge to detonate the entire sphere. This is a one-time environmental hazard with difficulty 5, Damage 3L. The wielder's target automatically fails his roll against the hazard. This doesn't affect the wielder's allies.

Resonant: The wielder waives this Evocation's Willpower cost against crashed enemies.

Dissonant: The wielder can't use this Charm's Essence 3 effect.

Daystar's Arsenal Empowerment

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Protosynthetic Ammunition Replicator, Shadow Sun Nimbus

The Alchemical uses the Protosynthetic Ammunition Replicator in her forearm to trap light and dark Essence, feeding them both directly into Daystar's Memory.

The Alchemical can fire light and shadow bolts regardless of ambient lighting conditions. She can enhance them with any submodules that upgrade Protosynthetic Ammunition Replicator, creating complex projectiles out of solidified light and darkness.

If the Alchemical makes multiple consecutive attacks with these bolts, she waives the motte cost of subsequent uses as long as she doesn't use the same kind of bolt twice in a row. She loses this discount if she goes a round without attacking.

Awakening: This Evocation awakens for free upon meeting its prerequisites.

Forgotten Sky Revelation

Cost: 4m, 2i; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Decisive-only, Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Dawn and Dusk Conflagration

Daystar's Memory unleashes its accumulated energies, bringing blinding dawn and darkness night to the Realm of Brass and Shadows.

The wielder makes a special unblockable **decisive** attack with a light bolt or shadow bolt, targeting a point. If she rolls any successes on her attack roll, the bolt bursts into a sphere of brilliant light or swirling darkness, enveloping everything within short range of the targeted point. Enemies hit by the attack don't

take damage, but are wreathed in a nimbus of the appropriate type. This doesn't reset the wielder's Initiative.

The sphere of light or darkness has the following effects:

- It imposes a -2 visibility penalty on characters within it, whether by blinding light or obscuring darkness. This penalty also applies to characters outside the sphere who attack or otherwise interact with someone within the sphere.
- Enemies who end their turn within the sphere gain the appropriate nimbus.
- A sphere of light sheds lumination comparable to broad daylight out to long range from its center.
- A sphere of darkness sphere extinguishes all nonmagical light sources within it.

The sphere lasts until the scene ends.

Reset: Once per scene unless reset by using Dawn and Dusk Conflagration to detonate a sphere.

Resonant: Spheres of light suppress magical sources of darkness. Spheres of darkness suppress the illumination of magical light sources — including anima banners.

Scintillating Sunlance Bolt

Cost: 7m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Decisive-only, Dissonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Forgotten Sky Revelation

Daystar's Memory fires a searing bolt of light that streaks across the battlefield in an erratic zigzag from foe to foe.

To use this Evocation, the wielder must have 12+ Initiative. She makes a single **decisive** attack with a light bolt against up to (Dexterity) enemies. She divides her damage evenly among all hit targets, rounding up. The damage roll can't be reduced below (Essence/2, rounded up) dice by any means, including Hardness. Against battle groups, the wielder doubles 7s on the damage roll.

Enemies with a light nimbus are like beacons for the wielder's luminous bolt. After making the attack roll, the wielder rolls an additional (Essence) non-Charisma dice, plus another die for each 10 on the initial roll. She applies the successes from these dice only against enemies with light nimbuses.

If the wielder has awakened Darklight Double Helix, she unlocks Inescapable Stygian Bolt, a dark version of this Evocation. Instead of adding bonus dice to the attack roll, enemies with dark nimbuses suffer -2 Defense against the attack.

Dissonant: The wielder only makes (Essence, maximum 5) attacks. The minimum damage of her attacks is one die.

Shadow Fusillade

Cost: 7m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Forgotten Sky Revelation

Daystar's Memory unleashes a swarm of shadow bolts, which swirl and converge upon one unfortunate target.

To use this Evocation, the wielder must have 12+ Initiative. She makes an undodgeable **decisive** attack with a shadow bolt. She doesn't need to aim to attack enemies at medium range, but this doesn't apply at long range or beyond. The attack is automatically a surprise attack, inflicting -2 Defense. At Initiative 20+, the Defense penalty is doubled. For every two extra successes on the attack roll, the wielder adds one die of damage and her target loses one Initiative, up to a maximum of (Essence) for both. Against enemies with dark nimbuses, she only needs one extra success for each, not two.

If the wielder has awakened Darklight Double Helix, she unlocks Thousand Rays Cascade, a light version of this Evocation. Instead of causing her target to lose Initiative, the wielder adds that amount to her base Initiative after resetting.

Darklight Double Helix

Cost: 15m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 5

Type: Simple

Keywords: Decisive-only, Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Scintillating Sunlance Bolt, Shadow Fusillade

Daystar's Memory draws in brilliant motes and umbral streaks, unleashing them in a chiaroscuric spiral blast.

Resonant: Only characters who are resonant with Daystar's Memory may awaken this Evocation.

To use this Evocation, the wielder must have Initiative 12+ and must have used Dawn and Dusk Conflagration earlier in the scene. She fires a bolt of combined light and darkness, making a **decisive** attack against multiple targets that uses the same rules as Scintillating Sunlance Bolt. Each attack receives the benefits of Shadow Fusillade. Alternatively, she can pair the effects of Inescapable Stygian Bolt and Thousand Rays Cascade.

Reset: Once per scene.

Potentiality Gauntlets (Starmetal Smashfists, Artifact ••••)

Old Nurad was at the forefront of ancient Autochthonia's scientific explorations into the deep mysteries of the Great Maker. In the century before its fall, the nation's priest-engineers extracted theotechnological secrets from Autochthonia's divine geometries and scribed the Maker's revealed scriptures in hallowed circuitry. Much of its prosperity was owed to the Starmetal Caste prophet-theoretician *Vigilant Panoptic Monitor*, whose obsessive study of the design weavers was rewarded with a unique understanding of the

Grand Design they weave. *Monitor* guided Old Nurad through crises of faith, resource shortages and revolution, using esoteric predictive mathematics and probabilistic models to map the nation's potential futures and determine optimal outcomes.

In time, *Monitor* foresaw her death in her mathematical predictions, slain at the hands of the Apostate traitor *Breaker of the Endless Wheel*. She could have tried to fight it, to change the future, but not without sacrificing her own grand design. Rather than altering her mathematical model to one less optimal to Old Nurad's future, she sacrificed herself, leaving behind detailed instructions for her Circle. Her partner *Numinous Pilot Wave* followed them to the letter, creating the Potentiality Gauntlets and their probability-warping engines according to a design he barely understood, *Wave* eventually clashed in battle with *Breaker of the Endless Wheel*, and slew the Apostate with the seer's final creation.

The probability-warping Potentiality Gauntlets have seen many battles since then. *Endlessly Shifting Sequence* used them to strike an impossible blow against the Viator of Nullspace, shattering countless layers of folded space. *Crystalline Echo Carillonneur* rallied a war-stricken nation around them, proclaiming them a holy tool of Nurad and progress. Their last known wielder, *Clockwork Metanoia*, but was lost in the Far Reaches centuries ago, following what he claimed were a second set of hidden instructions left by *Monitor*.

The Potentiality Gauntlets are a blocky set of smashfists with beveled knuckles and a brushed starmetal casing over banks of probability-dividing circuitry. They are unadorned, save for a hearthstone setting on the back of each hand.

Attunement: 5m

Type: Light (+5 ACC, +10 DMG, +0 DEF, OVW 3)

Tags: Bashing, Brawl, Grappling, Smashing, Worn

Hearthstone Slot(s): 2

Era: The Time of Revelation

Evocations of the Potentiality Gauntlets

A wielder awakens Inevitable Solution Strike for free upon first attuning to the Potentiality Gauntlets.

Inevitable Solution Strike

Cost: 6m, 2i; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Resonant, Dissonant, Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: None

The wielder's hand seems to blur between positions as she attacks, seemingly occupying multiple spaces simultaneously.

When the wielder misses an attack against an enemy with lower Initiative, she can use this Evocation to reroll that attack roll.

Reset: Once per scene unless reset by missing with three attacks consecutively. It can be used to reroll the

third miss.

Dissonant: The wielder subtracts 1s on the initial roll from her second roll.

Resonant: The rerolled attack's target number is reduced by one. Typically, this reduces it from 7 to 6, meaning that the wielder's 6s count as successes.

Bifurcated Temporality Defense

Cost: 5m, 2i; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Dissonant, Perilous, Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Inevitable Solution Strike

Leveraging irresolute mathematical formulas, the wielder calculates herself to be taking multiple contradictory defensive stances simultaneously.

This Evocation can be used after being hit by an attack, but before the damage roll. The wielder reflexively takes a full defense action, retroactively applying its bonus to her Parry against the attack. Her attacker must reroll a successful die for every 1 and 2 he rolled, starting with 7s and going up. However, if this Evocation causes the attack to miss, the wielder suffers an additional point of onslaught penalty.

Reset: Once per scene unless reset by going three consecutive rounds without being hit by an attack.

Dissonant: This counts as the wielder's attack for the round — or the next round, if she's already attacked.

Paracognitive Feedback Threading

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Anticipatory Simulation Processor, Inevitable Solution Strike,

As the Alchemical analyses her options, her consciousness expands to multiple uncertain possibilities available through the power of the gauntlets.

When the Champion uses Anticipatory Simulation Processor in combat to determine the short-term consequence of an action she could take on her current turn, she can ask about two more such actions at no additional cost.

Awakening: The Alchemical awakens this Evocation for free upon meeting this Evocation's prerequisites

Predictive Resolution

Cost: 7m, 1i; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Counterattack, Dissonant, Withering-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Bifurcated Temporality Defense

The wielder clouds her movements with controlled uncertainty. When an attacker meets her defense, he finds her counterattack already in motion.

When the wielder successfully parries an attack while benefitting from a full defense action, she can make a **withering** counterattack. Each of her attacker's 1s adds one bonus die on her attack roll. If he missed by three or more successes, her attack roll's target number of her attack is reduced by one.

Reset: Once per scene unless reset by parrying a **decisive** attack made by an enemy with Initiative 15+.

Dissonant: This counts as the wielder's attack for the round — or the next round, if she's already attacked.

Unresolved Improbability Approach

Cost: 4m, 1i; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Perilous, Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Inevitable Solution Strike

The wielder's form blurs with differentiated potential, occupying multiple possible spaces before resolving into a single location at the moment of attack.

The wielder makes a smash attack against an enemy within short range, waiving the Defense penalty for doing so (**Exalted**, p. 586). If she hits, she can immediately move into close range with her target. This counts as her movement action, but if she's already taken one this round, she can have it count as her movement action for the next round.

Uncertain Fist Ambiguity

Cost: 6m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Dissonant, Dual, Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Unresolved Improbability Approach

Attacking both decisively and with mathematical uncertainty, the wielder strikes true without knowing her target.

The wielder makes a **withering** or **decisive** attack, but makes the attack roll before choosing a target. Each enemy within the attack's range must declare defensive Charms before the roll. After the attack roll,

the wielder chooses which enemy to attack. She adds dice of **decisive** damage or post-soak **withering** damage equal to the number of potential targets, maximum (Essence).

Special activation rules: The wielder can use Unresolved Improbability Approach reflexively with this Evocation to threaten all enemies within short range, and move into close range if she hits. (She doesn't need to use a smash attack).

Resonant: The maximum damage bonus increases to (Essence + 2).

Dissonant: The wielder can't make **withering** attacks, and doesn't add bonus damage on **decisive** attacks.

Universal Impact

Cost: 8m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Decisive-only, Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Uncertain Fist Ambiguity, Predictive Resolution

Pushing the gauntlet's probability-dividing engines to their limits, the wielder simultaneously enacts every possible attack she could make against her target.

To use this Evocation, the wielder must have Initiative 15+. She makes up to (Essence) **decisive** attacks against a single enemy, rolling all her attacks before her target applies his Defense against any of them. She uses the result of the highest attack roll for all her attacks. Each attack that hits has a base damage equal to the total number of successful attacks, and the wielder divides her Initiative equally between them, rounded up.

If the wielder makes smash attacks to knock back the target, the knockback doesn't take effect until all attacks have been completed. Multiple smash attacks increase the distance he is thrown, to a maximum of long range. He takes short-range falling damage if he is knocked to medium range, and medium-range falling damage if knocked to long range (**Exalted**, p. 232).

Reset: Once per scene.

Dissonant: The target suffers only short-range falling damage if he is knocked to long range.

Resonant: When the wielder uses Inevitable Solution Strike to reroll a missed attack made with this Evocation, she may reroll each following attack in the sequence at no additional cost.

Threnody Engine (Soulsteel Grand Grimcleaver, Artifact §)

Threnody Engine is a cruel weapon, a greataxe with two bladed soulsteel rotors at the end of a six-foot barbed iron haft in place of an axehead. Close examination reveals the haft to be forged from the metal bones of a fallen Champion, while the rotors' axle is a chrome skull with its jaws spread wide. The wielder can crank the rubber grips on the haft to rev the weapon's engine, increasing its torque with a sound like a dying man's wail.

The Apostate *Eschaton Maw* constructed Threnody Engine from the remains of her Ciclemate, *Gleaming Unbowed Executor*. *Eschaton Maw* carved a gory swathe across Kamak, but ultimately fell to the rest of her former Circle. They claimed Threnody Engine, giving *Executor* an opportunity to serve Autochthonia once more. After a lengthy containment and decontamination process, Threnody Engine became a sanctioned weapon of the state.

Gremlin hunters hold the Threnody Engine in high regard and strive to avoid profaning it with sectarian violence. The line of its wielders transcends national divisions, passed down to Champions with the vicious prowess and clarity of purpose needed to wield the weapon without succumbing to the temptation of bloodlust.

Evocations of Threnody Engine

Threnody Engine's wielder awakens Industrial Violence Engine (p. XX) for free upon attuning it for the first time. The weapon drools oil while Industrial Violence Engine is active, eager to slake its thirst for bloodshed.

Shriek of Judgment

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Resonant, Withering-only

Duration: One scene

Prerequisites: Industrial Violence Engine

The wielder cranks Threnody Engine's handle, revving up the engine and generating a wail that promises further carnage.

The wielder can use this Evocation after hitting with a **withering** attack, but before the damage roll. She gains one point of *Carnage* when she uses it, and adds (Carnage) to the raw damage and Overwhelming on her **withering** attacks, including the one that triggered this Evocation.

Each time the wielder successfully lands another **withering** attack, she gains an additional point of Carnage, to a maximum of (higher of Essence or 3). She loses all Carnage if she goes a round without attacking a nontrivial enemy.

Resonant: The wielder gains an additional point of Carnage for crashing an enemy, and increases her maximum Carnage to (Strength) if it's higher.

Impending Carnage Klaxon

Cost: 3m, 1i; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Perilous, Resonant, Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Shriek of Judgment

Threnody Engine lunges to meet an attack, cowing a foe foolish enough to think to strike its wielder.

When an enemy within close range attacks the wielder, she inflicts a fear-based penalty of (Carnage) on his attack roll. She inflicts an additional point of penalty against an enemy with a Tie of fear toward her.

Resonant: Against crashed enemies, the penalty equals the wielder's maximum Carnage. If she's already at maximum, the attacker loses one Willpower if he misses.

Meat-Gnashing Joy

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Decisive-only, Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Shriek of Judgment

Threnody Engine unleashes a joyous wail as it grinds its target into chunks of meat, bone, and steel.

The wielder adds (Carnage) dice of damage to a **decisive** attack. If she deals 5+ levels of damage to a nontrivial enemy, she gains one Willpower. She also gains Willpower if a nontrivial enemy accepts a crippling injury (**Exalted**, p. 201).

Resonant: If the wielder gains Willpower, she also gains one Carnage.

Hydraulic Hunger Press

Cost: 5m, 1i; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Resonant, Withering-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Meat-Gnashing Joy

Threnody Engine's unyielding mechanical forces crushes guards and batters victims into submission.

A **withering** attack inflicts an additional (Carnage/2, rounded up) points of onslaught penalty. His onslaught penalty applies on any movement actions he takes until his next turn. If this crashes her target, his onslaught penalty applies to his movement actions until he escapes Initiative Crash, and also applies on his attack rolls.

Resonant: A target's onslaught penalty subtracts successes from movement actions instead of dice.

Grinding Carnage Menace

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Hydraulic Hunger Press

Exulting in violence, the Threnody Engine's rotors grind against each other in a wail that promises further carnage.

The wielder can use this Evocation after dealing 3+ levels of **decisive** damage to a nontrivial enemy. She reflexively makes a special (Strength + [Presence or War]) threaten roll against the damaged enemy, or against another enemy who witnessed the attack. If she succeeds, she steals (1 + extra successes) Initiative from her target, maximum (Carnage + 1). This Initiative is added to the wielder's base Initiative after she resets.

Dissonant: The wielder doesn't gain the Initiative lost by the target.

Grisly Headsman's Price

Cost: 3m, 1ahl; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisites: Grinding Carnage Menace, Impending Carnage Klaxon

The barbs on Threnody Engine's haft feed on wielder's own blood to fuel her weapon's infernal engine.

The wielder activates Shriek of Judgment without needing to pay its cost and gains enough Carnage to reach the maximum.. If Shriek of Judgment is already active, she gains one Initiative for each point of Carnage she already has.

Gruesome Massacre Commutation

Cost: 6m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Decisive-only, Dissonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Grinding Carnage Menace

The hunger of Threnody Engine grows unwieldy, its rotors closing inward like teeth intent on devouring its victim whole.

To use this Evocation, the wielder must have 3+ Carnage. She can use after a successful **decisive** attack ,

but before the damage roll. She doubles 10s on the damage roll. If her target doesn't commit to accepting the highest level of crippling injury possible before the damage roll is made (**Exalted**, p. 201), the wielder converts (Carnage + 3) dice on the damage roll to automatic successes. Taking a crippling injury this way doesn't count against the once-per-story limit on doing so.

If the wielder's target is incapacitated or accepts a crippling injury, she can use Grinding Carnage Menace to make its special threaten roll against him and all other enemies who witnessed the attack, ignoring multiple target penalties. She waives its Willpower cost. Enemies other than her target only lose half the amount of Initiative they normally would, rounded up, and the stylist can't gain more than (Carnage + 1) Initiative total.

Reset: Once per scene.

Dissonant: Targets can take a crippling injury one level lower than the highest possible to avoid this Evocation's enhanced effect.

Wailing Dreadnought Orison

Cost: 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 4

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: None

Duration: One scene

Prerequisites: Grisly Headsman's Price, Gruesome Massacre Commutation

The wielder loses herself in her bloody work, with Threnody Engine's terrible grinding drone her prayer for a silent, gore-strewn battlefield.

The wielder can pay a one-Willpower surcharge when she uses Grisly Headsman's Price to embrace the role of a pure killing machine, gaining the following effects:

- She's overwhelmed with bloodlust, leaving her unable to withdraw, use social influence for purposes unrelated to combat, or cease fighting before all enemies are incapacitated or fled. This doesn't prevent her from making intelligent tactical decisions.
- The **withering** damage bonus from Carnage adds dice of post-soak damage, not raw damage.
- She gains one Carnage whenever she lands a **decisive** attack that resets her Initiative.
- She ignores wound penalties on attack rolls.
- Any Intimacies she has that might distract from her violent purpose in the current scene are suppressed.

Ending this Evocation prematurely crashes the wielder, setting him to Initiative -3 (if not already lower).

Voltspindle (Blue Jade Reaper Beamklave, Artifact §)

Voltspindle was forged from a fingertip of the Subminister Shedik, Accumulator of Debok Moom. Shedik draws lightning toward it wherever it goes, resulting in an ever-growing electrical storm that only abates when the machine spirit pours its accumulated power into some great work or terrible foe. Mortals encounter Shedik more than they might wish, as it's quite curious, moving through the Reaches with

frightening speed in pursuit of whatever or whomever captures its interest.

Shedik treasures whatever willing companions it may find among those it stalks. The priest-artificer *Effulgent Beacon of Praxis* was numbered among them. When Shedik's old friend came in search of a weapon to slay her traitorous lover, the subminister gladly gave her one of his blue jade fingertips to an artificer.

Since then, Voltspindle has changed hands quite often, as its wielders are known more for their passion than their pragmatism: *Resolute Doctrinal Sledgehammer*, breaker of the Elevated; *Broken Engine Psychopomp*, fabled among Jarish's gremlin hunters; *Furnace of Burning Law*, who used it to slay a grand autocrat before the entire National Tripartite Assembly.

Voltspindle's hilt is an irregular, roughly cylindrical chunk of blue jade flecked with golden impurities. bound in a precisely-calibrated steel wire cage. When activated, the beamklave emits a finger-thin, blue-white blade of energy that spits sparks at the slightest contact. The weapon feels lighter when active, hissing joyfully through the air as if urging its wielder to keep moving.

Attunement: 5m

Type: Medium (+3 ACC, +12 DMG, +1 DEF, OVW 5)

Tags: Lethal, Melee, Balanced, Concealable

Hearthstone Slot(s): 1

Era: The Ascension of Jast

Evocations of Voltspindle

Voltspindle's wielder awakens Essence Core Ignition (p. XX) for free upon attuning it for the first time.

Storm-Heart Capacitor

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Dual

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Essence Core Ignition

Stray electric arcs buzz along Voltspindle's blade as it builds up charge, and even the sound of the beamklave cutting through air heightens in pitch.

Voltspindle's wielder can build *lightning charges* while wielding the beamklave. She gains one lightning charge when she uses Essence Core Ignition, wins Join Battle, or lands a **decisive** attack from Initiative 12+ that resets her Initiative. As long as she has any charges, she gains the following benefits:

- Her **withering** attacks add one die of raw damage for each charge she has.
- Her **decisive** attacks add one die of damage for every two charges she has, rounded *down*.
- When determining the wielder's effective Initiative for turn order, each charge adds +1 to her effective Initiative. She loses this benefit while crashed.

Some Evocations require the Voltspindle's wielder to spend lightning charges. Any charges spent enhancing an attack are still included when determining the bonus this Evocation adds to the attack.

Voltspindle can store up to six lightning charges. All accumulated charges are lost when the weapon is deactivated.

Galvanic Innervation Surge

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: None

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Storm-Heart Capacitor

Thrilled to enter battle, Voltspindle supercharges its wielder's nervous system for a few crucial moments.

The wielder adds two automatic successes to her Join Battle roll. She doesn't need to win Join Battle to gain a lightning charge, as long as she beats at least one nontrivial enemy's roll. If she wins Join Battle, she gains an additional lightning charge. She also gains two charges if she rolls Join Battle in combat after an Initiative Shift.

If the wielder wins Join Battle and uses her first turn to make a **decisive** attack, she gains a lightning charge from hitting even if she doesn't have Initiative 12+. If she does, she gains an additional charge.

Unlike other beam weapon Evocations, the wielder can use Galvanic Innervation Surge even while Essence Core Ignition isn't active. If she already has it active when she uses this Evocation, the added successes are non-Charms.

Heart-Seeking Conduit

Cost: 2m, 1 charge; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Dual, Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Storm-Heart Capacitor

Thin fingers of electricity reach out and grasp Voltspindle's target, guiding the blade to its destination like a lightning bolt.

The wielder adds an automatic success on an attack roll. On a **withering** attack, she adds Storm-Heart Capacitor's damage bonus to the attack's post-soak damage, instead of its raw damage. On a **decisive** attack, she adds one die of damage for each charge, instead of every two charges.

An enemy damaged by the attack is numbed by the electric shock, suffering a -1 penalty on all rolls until the end of his next turn. The penalty increases to -2 if the wielder has four or more charges (including the charge spent on this Evocation).

Resonant: This Evocation's lightning charge cost is waived against crashed enemies.

Step-Leading Connection

Cost: 2m, 0+ charges; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Dual

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Heart-Seeking Conduit

Voltspindle seeks connection to an opponent through his weapon, moving into an attack's path as if leading a deadly dance.

The wielder adds +1 Parry. Each lightning charge she spends increases this by one.

If the wielder spends at least two or lightning charges and successfully blocks an attack from close range, a flash of electric light shocks her attacker. He suffers a -1 penalty all physical rolls until the end of his next turn.

If the wielder uses this Evocation multiple times in a single tick, any lightning charges spent on the first use apply to all subsequent uses.

Resonant: Against enemies with lower Initiative, this Evocation's base Parry bonus increases by one.

Ultramagnetic Thrust

Cost: 5m, 0+ charges; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Dissonant, Resonant, Uniform

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Galvanic Innervation Surge, Heart-Seeking Conduit

A crackling tether of lightning draws Voltspindle to its target.

The wielder makes a **withering** or **decisive** attack at attack against an enemy within short range, moving in a straight line in any direction to enter close range with him. She can move straight up or down. She can extend the attack's range by paying one lightning charge per band, maximum long.. This counts as her movement action.

With Essence 3, the wielder becomes an actual bolt of lightning as she travels. She can pass through solid barriers to reach her target, as long as she can perceive him. She can't pass through barriers that are insulated against electricity.

Resonant: If the wielder's attack crashes her opponent or deals 3+ points of **decisive** damage, she regains the charges she spent on this Evocation.

Dissonant: The wielder must spend two charges per band when increasing the attack's range.

Voltaic Edge Accretion

Cost: 3m; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Dual, Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Storm-Heart Capacitor

Voltspindle's blade can barely contain the electric Essence that builds with each clash of weapons.

Voltspindle's wielder can use this Evocation reflexively after she lands a **withering** attack or blocks an attack. She gains one lightning charge and one Initiative, and Voltspindle's blade flares as bright as a burning anima until the end of the round (p. XX).

Resonant: Voltspindle is drawn to flat-footed opponents like lightning to a rod, granting an additional lightning charge against crashed enemies.

Hyperreflexive Circuit Burst

Cost: 1wp, 0+ charges; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Dissonant, Perilous

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Step-Leading Connection, Ultramagnetic Thrust, Voltaic Edge Accretion

Voltspindle overcharges its wielder's nervous system for improved reaction times and deadly speed.

The wielder can use this Evocation at the start of a round, gains two points Initiative, plus an additional two Initiative for each lightning charge spent, up to a maximum of 10 Initiative. If she spends two or more charges, she adds an automatic success on all attack rolls and gains +1 Parry until the end of the round.

Reset: Once per scene.

Dissonant: The wielder halves the total Initiative she gains.

Essence Core Overclock

Cost: —(+3m, 1i per round); **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Perilous, Resonant, Uniform

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Hyperreflexive Circuit Burst

Voltspindle's blade crackles with frenzied power, barely able to maintain a coherent shape.

When the wielder uses Essence Core Ignition, she may pay a three-mote surcharge to enhance it with the following benefits:

- When she makes a **withering** or **decisive** damage roll, the total damage she inflicts can't be reduced below one by any means.
- She reduces the total charge cost of any Evocations she uses by one.
- She counts as having two lightning charges more than she actually does for purposes of Voltspindle's Evocations. This can't raise her effective charge above the maximum of 6, and she can't spend these "virtual" charges.
- Voltspindle sheds light like a burning anima banner, rendering Stealth impossible (p. XX).

The wielder must pay one Initiative at the start of each of her turns to sustain this. If she doesn't pay it, Essence Core Ignition deactivates as the blade's charge can no longer be contained.

Resonant: The bonus to the wielder's effective lightning charges can raise her above Voltspindle's maximum.

Brilliant Outpouring of Annihilation

Cost: 5m, 5i, all charges; **Mins:** Essence 4

Type: Simple

Keywords: Perilous, Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Essence Core Overclock

Voltspindle's blade expands into a wide blast of lightning that flashes across the battlefield, annihilating those caught in its storm.

To use the Evocation, the wielder must have 3+ charges. She spends all of her charges, extending Voltspindle's blade into a one-time environmental hazard that extends out to short range in a ninety-degree arc. If she spends 4+ charges, its range increases to medium. Its difficulty and lethal damage are both equal to (2 + charges spent). Enemies who fail the roll suffer a -2 penalty on all rolls they make for the rest of the scene as the electricity disrupts their nervous systems.

Reset: Once per scene unless reset by building to six lightning charges.

Resonant: If the wielder has 6+ charges, the hazard extends to long range.

The Crook of Runel (Green Jade Grand Goremaul, Artifact)

Long, long ago, when the Great Maker took mortals into himself, it is said he tasked his Divine Ministers

to make ready his inner world for mortal habitation. They applied the concept of recycling to organic life, and worked to understand humanity's alien methods of reproduction. The Ministers experimented upon the Great Maker's form, their failed projects and prototypes remembered only in legend.

The Ministers Runel and Noi attempted to incorporate living Wood Essence into Autochthon's nature, laboring to build an artificial Elemental Pole. While their efforts failed, they weren't without fruit. The Crook of Runel is fashioned from the failed Pole's core. It's a heavy jade pole with a hoop on the end, so pale and pure as to be translucent. Techno-organic vines and fungi constantly sprout from it, wither, and flake away. Under close examination, circuit-like capillaries can be seen carrying the pulsing light of life through such synthetic flora, though they're short-lived beyond the Crook's immediate presence.

Runel bestowed this wonder upon the first generation of Autochthonians, who named it in her honor. In the millennia that followed, the Crook has been used as a weapon, shield, and tool countless times over. *Opalescent Harmony* used it to feed the people of Kayut when the rogue metropolis disabled its life-sustaining Municipal Charms. *Decimation of the Wicked* used it to twist the clockwork hydra Meha-Meha into an inescapable snarl. When atrocities committed at the Eight Nations' hands drove Runel to despair, *Infinite Exegesis* bore the Crook on a pilgrimage to the hidden theopoli to remind the Divine Minister of her mercy and compassion.

Evocations of the Crook of Runel

The Crook of Runel is a boon to all life within several miles, preserving food from spoilage and slowing the spread of disease. Mortals who spend extended periods of time near it age more gracefully. The Crook's blessing can even be tasted, as nutrient paste and other food gains a unique earthy flavor and provides longer-lasting sustenance. If relevant on a roll, this blessing adds a non-Charms success. This effect is active even when the Crook has no attuned wielder.

Living things slain by the Crook of Runel are devoured the techno-organic plant-life that grows from it, blooming into a strange synthetic tree bearing (character's Essence) sweet-tasting fruits. Each provides a full day's sustenance, even without the Crook's nutrition-enhancing aura.

The wielder also awakens Technoforming Synthesis for free when she first attunes the Crook of Runel.

Technoforming Synthesis

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: None

The Crook of Runel's techno-organic vegetation sprouts wonders of synthetic life.

The wielder creates an object out of synthetic plant life, rolling with (Intelligence + [appropriate Craft]). The Crook is the only tool she needs. Its techno-organic growths can mimic the texture and durability of any mundane plant or fungus, potentially allowing her to ignore the need for certain materials. With an appropriate stunt, she can use a Craft that wouldn't normally apply to the object, such as using Craft (Weaving) to weave fibers into a blade.

This is a basic or major project, depending on what the wielder wants to create (**Exalted**, p. 240). Basic projects can be completed instantly, though they crumble to dust at the end of the scene. She can create multiple copies of the same object by adding +2 to the roll's difficulty for each object beyond the first. Major projects take a few minutes to complete, though the wielder can't create copies.

Resonant: The wielder can create synthetic plants with the texture, durability, or other properties of glass, crystal, metals, or similar mundane materials. To do so, she must first touching the Crook to a source of that material, incorporating them into the Crook's techno-organic growths.

Fractal Verdure Expansion

Cost: 5m; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Technoforming Synthesis

Touching the Crook of Runel to the ground, the wielder creates a profusion of strange life and techno-organic growths that impede passage.

Techno-organic plants spread out to short range from the wielder across whatever surface she stands on, creating difficult terrain. The wielder isn't affected by this difficult terrain for the wielder. The plants move to protect her, providing her with light cover while in the affected terrain.

A character can clear a through this synthetic foliage with a difficulty 3 gambit with an appropriate weapon, rolled against an effective Defense of (higher of wielder's Essence or 3). It can also potentially be cleared with feats of demolition, (Wits + Survival) rolls to burn it away, or other actions, which also have difficulty (higher of wielder's Essence or 3). Otherwise, they crumble to dust when the scene ends.

With an Essence 2 repurchase, the wielder may pay a three-mote, one-Willpower surcharge to create difficult terrain out to medium range.

A third purchase at Essence 4 lets the wielder spread difficult terrain out to long range when the wielder pays the surcharge above.

With a fourth purchase at Essence 5, the wielder can pay a ten-mote, one-Willpower surcharge to create difficult terrain out to a mile, spreading across surfaces in all directions. She can only use this once per story.

Resonant: The wielder doesn't need to spend experience points to awaken this Evocation's Essence 5 repurchase.

Vegetal Terrain Reformatting

Cost: —(+3m per alteration); **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Permanent

Keywords: None

Duration: Permanent

Prerequisites: Fractal Verdure Expansion

Techno-organic vines and synthetic flora disassemble and reconstruct nearby terrain as a bloom of Wood Essence spreads through the demiurge lines beneath.

When the wielder uses Fractal Verdure Expansion, she can create up to (Essence) features within the affected terrain, paying an additional three motes per alteration. Examples include:

- A trench or barricade large enough for a small group of people to shelter behind and capable of providing heavy cover.
- A pillar, platform, crude sculpture, or other structure up to one range band wide and one range band tall.
- A pit one range band wide and one range band deep.
- A bridge up to one range band long that's wide enough for people to traverse single-file.
- A wall that bars a gate or seals off a tunnel no wider than a range band.
- A cage large enough to contain a human.

The wielder can combine multiple features for greater complexity or size, such as creating a barricade around a tower or a bridge that spans multiple range bands. This reconstruction process isn't fast enough for the wielder to harm or impede other characters — an enemy would have time enough to avoid a pit being opened beneath him.

If the wielder uses this Evocation together with Fractal Verdure Expansion's Essence 5 repurchase, she can create multiple instances of each feature spread throughout, such as creating a gnarled, irregular towers that appears regularly throughout the artificial wilderness.

Devouring Verdure

Cost: 5m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Simple

Keywords: Dual, Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Vegetal Terrain Reformatting

Crystalline petals, acidic fungi, and iron blades of grass turn from beautiful wonders to killing weapons under the Crook of Runel's guidance.

The wielder makes a **withering** or **decisive** attack with (Wits + [Craft or Melee]) against an opponent within short range, commanding artificial flora to assail them. This increases to long range against enemies in difficult terrain created by Fractal Verdure Expansion. The plants strike from all directions, ignoring cover unless it completely surrounds the target.

An enemy damaged by a **decisive** attack is exposed to a poison with Damage 1L/round, Duration 5 rounds, and a -3 penalty. Automatons and machine spirits whose mechanical nature makes them immune to poison are still susceptible to this, as tendrils pry apart their seams and sprouting seeds disrupt their

internal machinery.

If the wielder wins Join Battle and uses Fractal Verdure Expansion on her first turn, she can then use this Evocation reflexively.

Resonant: The attack's range is extended by one band, potentially allowing the wielder to attack enemies within Fractal Verdure Expansion's terrain from extreme range.

Fettering Tendril Burst

Cost: 3m, 2i, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Decisive-only

Duration: One scene

Prerequisites: Devouring Verdure

The Crook of Runel causes cable-like vines and wiry tendrils to burst forth from unliving material, clinging tightly to everything nearby.

The wielder touches the Crook to a surface, growing synthetic tendrils that make a grapple or disarm gambit against an enemy within short range. She rolls (Wits + [Craft or Melee]) for the attack roll, and for a grapple's control roll. She doubles 10s on the Initiative roll if her opponent is in difficult terrain created by Fractal Tendril Burst.

Grapple: On a successful grapple, the enemy is entangled in tendrils. The wielder doesn't actively grapple him — she suffers none of the penalties for grappling, but can't take any grapple actions against the entangled foe. Instead, the tendrils act for her, making a **withering** savaging attack against him on each of the wielder's turns. Each attack deals (Essence) dice of unsoakable damage. The wielder gains half of any Initiative the enemy loses this way, rounded up. These tendrils can be cleared away with a gambit, feat of strength, or similar, using the same rules as Fractal Verdure Expansion, but attacking or damaging the wielder doesn't remove rounds of control. This Evocation ends if the clinch is broken.

Disarm: Synthetic tendrils sprout from a disarmed weapon or object. Any rolls using it suffer a -3 penalty. This penalty subtracts successes instead of dice within the difficult terrain created by Fractal Verdure Expansion. Alternatively, the wielder can make a special disarm gambit that targets an enemy's armor, increasing its mobility penalty by three and causing that enemy to treat all movement as being through difficult terrain.

Program-Revising Nanospores

Cost: 5m or 10m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Decisive-only, Psyche

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Devouring Verdure

The Crook of Runel infects and overwrites a machine's programming, revealed only by the mycotic growths jutting from the mechanism's joints.

The wielder spreads nanospores to infect a construct, machine spirit, or mechanical device within close range. This costs five motes for mindless automatons and objects, and ten motes, one Willpower for other characters.

Infecting a character — including a mindless automaton — is a gambit rolled with (Intelligence + Craft). Its difficulty is the target's Essence. Machine spirits, sentient automata, and similar beings can use their base Resolve in place of Essence if it's higher. Success has the following effects:

- The infected character suffers -3 Resolve against the wielder.
- The wielder doesn't need to leverage the infected character's Intimacies to support her persuade rolls against him, as long as the task would take no more than a scene to complete.
- The infected character must cite a Major or Defining Intimacy in a Decision Point to resist the wielder's persuade rolls. Mindless automata can't spend Willpower to resist at all.
- The wielder can mentally convey commands to the infected character through the spores themselves, regardless of distance. Doing so limits her to short, simple orders, no more than a few words: "stop," "lift it," "bring him here."

This Psyche effect costs five Willpower to resist, and a character can't do so until the wielder has made at least one additional influence roll against them. This cost is reduced by one each time an infected character successfully asserts his Resolve against a persuade roll made by the wielder or spends Willpower to resist one.

Mechanical devices are far easier to effect than characters, requiring an (Intelligence + Craft) roll at difficulty 1-5, depending on their size and complexity. The wielder can use it remotely as if she were operating its controls, but doesn't allow her to do anything beyond the object's normal range of capabilities. She could open or shut an automated pneumatic door, but couldn't cause a crossbow to fire itself. This lasts for as long as that object remains narratively relevant, up to one story.

Noxious Decomposition

Cost: 15m, 10i; **Mins:** Essence 5

Type: Simple

Keywords: Perilous, Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Fettering Tendril Burst

The Crook's wielder touches it to the growth she's created, and wills it all to die. Techno-organic life crumbles into silicate dust and toxic spores in a deadly plume of decay.

To use this Evocation, the wielder must be within difficult terrain created with Fractal Verdure Expansion. The techno-organic flora dies and rapidly decomposes into harmful chemicals, exposing all characters who were in the difficult terrain to a deadly poison with Damage 4L/round, Duration 5 rounds, and a -4 penalty. It can affect automata and machine spirits that are immune to poison. No matter how many successes a character rolls, he can't reduce the poison's duration below one round.

Corpses in the affected area crumble into dust, while zombies and other un-Exalted corporeal undead suffer ten dice of lethal **decisive** damage instead of facing exposure to poison as the rapid decay scours their preserved forms.

Special activation rules: The wielder can use Program-Revising Nanospores reflexively with this Evocation, applying that its effects to any valid targets that fail their roll against the poison.

Reset: Once per scene.

Resonant: The wielder can use this Evocation on any plant-based difficult terrain, not just terrain that she's created.

Radiance (Orichalcum Beamklave, Artifact § •••••)

The first factory-cathedral of ancient Claslat was a humble thing by the standards of later eras' transcendent manufactories, though still a marvel by any measure. The Champions of old spun filaments of orichalcum by hand to forge their temple's fabricator-limbs, and wrought its magnificent crystalline icon-arrays by painstakingly etching and chemically treating each lens in turn. The First Fane of the Maker was a hub of burgeoning industry in those needy years, spinning duct-sheathing into wearable garments and nutrient paste into wholesome food, while also serving as the forge of Claslat's Champions.

Then the Blight came, and the First Fane fell. As Claslat fought for its survival, *Incarnate Engine of Prosperity* sifted through the temple's wreckage. She followed the light of shattered and sputtering fuse-lamps, refracted by broken adamant. She found herself before the last of the intact icon-array lenses, and was struck by divine inspiration. When she emerged from the wreckage of the First Fane, a golden light filled the darkness, a blade of divine judgement to drive back the Blight.

After her victory, *Incarnate Engine of Prosperity* did not remain in Claslat for long. She departed on a holy pilgrimage into the depths of Autochthonia, where she came to join the Eight Divine Ministers' Machine Saints. After *Engine's* demise, her beamklave, Radiance, became part of the Ministers' divine arsenal, enshrined within the Crystalline Sanctum of the Godhead. Over the millennia, they have bestowed it upon worthy Alchemicals, both Machine Saints and Champions of the Octet. Radiance seeks a wielder with a cause to uphold, and the Divine Ministers seek out such heroes to bear it.

Radiance's story has been told in flashes of light across the Octet's history: the revolution against the tyrant Champion *Weaver of the Eternal Banner*, the purge of the heretical Circle of Fallen Iron, the redemption of the rogue subminister Koth-Duem. Each time the blade appears, the world of Autochthonia changes.

Radiance's hilt is a fluted orichalcum cylinder, with a hearthstone socket as a depression at its pommel. Its ignited blade is an array of brilliant white-gold filaments that resemble circuitry in the shape of a double-edged longsword.

Attunement: 5m

Type: Medium (+3 ACC, +12 DMG, +1 DEF, OVW 5)

Tags: Lethal, Melee, Balanced, Concealable

Hearthstone Slot(s): 1

Era: The First Blight

Evocations of Radiance

Radiance's wielder awakens Essence Core Ignition (p. XX) for free upon attuning it for the first time.

Brilliant Shining Heart

Cost: —; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Permanent

Keywords: Aggravated, Dual, Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Essence Core Ignition

Engraved around the beamklave's emitter ring are these words: "Faith is a blade."

Upon learning this Evocation, the wielder chooses one of her Major or Defining Principles, which becomes her *Axiom*. While Essence Core Ignition is active, she gains the following benefits:

- She adds +1 Accuracy against enemies whose actions violate, threaten, or otherwise oppose her Axiom, and deals aggravated damage on **decisive** attacks against them.
- She adds +1 Resolve against influence that's opposed by her Axiom.
- If she uses Radiance as part of a stunt when she makes an influence roll, she adds an automatic success if the influence aligns with her Axiom.

The wielder can change her Axiom to a different Principle once per story. If her Axiom is lowered to Minor intensity, the wielder can choose a new one at the end of the scene.

Resonant: The bonus die from this Evocation's Accuracy bonus is converted to a non-Charm success.

Illuminated Revelation Strike

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Simple

Keywords: Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Brilliant Shining Heart

The warm glow of Radiance's blade reveals opposition to her ideals as invisible patterns of golden circuitry, woven around the hearts of her foes.

The wielder makes a special (Perception + Melee) read intentions roll against a character within short range, casting the blade's light toward him. If her Initiative is higher than the target's, she adds (Anima + 1) automatic successes and doubles 9s. Success reveals whether that character has violated the wielder's Axiom or intends to do so, though not how.

If the wielder uncovers a character's opposition to her Axiom, she adds (Axiom) dice of damage on the next **decisive** damage she makes against him. If she makes a disarm gambit instead, she adds this bonus to the Initiative roll and waives the Initiative cost to destroy mundane weapons with Essence Core Ignition. She loses this benefit if she doesn't attack him by the end of her next turn.

When the wielder lands an attack against an enemy, she can use this Evocation against him reflexively.

Resonant: The wielder can pay a four-mote, one-Willpower surcharge to target everyone within range, making a single roll against the Guile of all targets. She can only receive this Evocation's damage bonus on one attack, no matter how many offenders she uncovers. If she hits multiple enemies with a single attack, she can use this Evocation reflexively against all of them. This effect's Willpower cost is waived if she uses this Evocation after a successful attack with Blinding Coruscation Slash.

Immanent Light Cut

Cost: 1m, 1i; **Mins:** Essence 1

Type: Supplemental

Keywords: Perilous, Withering-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Brilliant Shining Heart

Radiance's blade burns all the more fiercely against those who stray from its light.

The wielder adds (Essence) Overwhelming on a **withering** attack. If she deals damage, her target loses two additional point of Initiative, which she does not gain. Against enemies that the wielder knows have acted against her Axiom or intend to do so, this increases to (Axiom +1).

All-Conquering Refulgence

Cost: 3a; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Dissonant

Duration: One scene

Prerequisites: Immanent Light Cut

Anima and beamklave burn as one, a beacon to light the Realm of Brass and Shadows.

The wielder transfers the light of her bonfire anima into Radiance. For the rest of the scene, the beamklave's blade sheds light as if it were a bonfire anima (p. XX). Her anima still counts as being at bonfire for purposes of Radiance's other Evocations. The wielder gains one Initiative at the start of each round, as do all allies in the scene whose actions align with her Axiom. Such allies also gain +1 Resolve against influence that's opposed by her Axiom.

Dissonant: This Evocation ends if the wielder is crashed.

Brand of Burning Gold

Cost: 4m; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Decisive-only

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Illuminated Revelation Strike

The light burns, but there is truth in it, a terrible lesson.

The wielder can use this Evocation after dealing damage with a **decisive** attack. She reflexively makes an ([Appearance or Charisma] + Melee) influence roll against her target to instill her Axiom or weaken an Intimacy that opposes her Axiom. If she succeeds, her target loses Initiative equal to her extra successes, maximum (wielder's Essence + Anima). If he spends Willpower to resist, he suffers (higher of Essence or 3) dice of lethal **decisive** damage, ignoring Hardness.

If the wielder uses this Evocation after an attack incapacitates an opponent, she automatically succeeds on the influence roll. This both instills him with the wielder's Axiom and fully erodes any Minor or Major Intimacies he has that oppose her Axiom. Defining Intimacies are weakened by one step. As long as the target doesn't spend Willpower to resist this influence, the incapacitation is never fatal.

Shriving Light Defense

Cost: 4m, 1i, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 2

Type: Reflexive

Keywords: Clash, Perilous

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Brand of Burning Gold

Few can stand in a light of such dauntless conviction.

The wielder clashes an attack against her with an ([Appearance or Charisma] + Melee) threaten roll, typically intimidating her attacker into fleeing or surrendering. Her target must be able to hear her, typically limiting this to medium range. This influence carries the same additional effects as Brand of Burning Gold's instill roll. If the wielder knows her attacker has violated her Axiom or intends to, she adds (Anima + 1) automatic successes on her influence roll.

While All-Conquering Refulgence is active, the wielder can clash an attack as long as her enemy can see Radiance's blade, typically extending this Evocation's range to long.

Blinding Coruscation Slash

Cost: 8m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 3

Type: Simple

Keywords: Decisive-only, Dissonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: All-Conquering Refulgence

Radiance flares to an unbearable brightness, extending its edge to sear away the ranks of the unworthy.

The wielder makes a single **decisive** attack against everyone within close range of her, or in a line out to short range. She can exempt allies from this attack, unless they've acted in a way that opposes her Axiom in the current scene. She divides her Initiative equally between each hit target, rounding up. She adds (Essence) additional damage dice against each target that opposes her Axiom. Characters damaged by this

attack are blinded, suffering a -3 penalty on vision-based rolls for the rest of the scene.

While using All-Conquering Refulgence, this Evocation's range is extended by one band, letting the wielder attack everyone within short range, or in a line out to medium range. She can end All-Conquering Refulgence to extend its range by an additional band.

Dissonant: This Evocation can only be used while All-Conquering Refulgence. All-Conquering Refulgence doesn't increase the attack's range, and she can't end that Evocation for an additional range bonus. Blinded targets recover their sight when All-Conquering Refulgence ends.

Great Maker's Judgement

Cost: 20m, 1wp; **Mins:** Essence 5

Type: Simple

Keywords: Decisive-only, Resonant

Duration: Instant

Prerequisites: Blinding Coruscation Slash, Shriving Light Defense

Planting her gleaming blade in the ground, the wielder calls upon a divine judgment to redeem or destroy all in her path.

Resonant: Only a wielder resonant with Radiance can unlock this Evocation.

To use this Evocation, the wielder must have All-Conquering Refulgence active and must have 20+ Initiative. She plants Radiance's blade in the ground, spreading its Essence outward in a circuit-pattern of golden light. At the start of her, as long as she hasn't been crashed or forcibly moved from her location, the pattern reaches its maximum size, extending out to (Essence) range bands from her. If she's crashed or forcibly moved before her next turn, the circuit-pattern is disrupted and this Evocation ends prematurely.

Once the circuit-pattern reaches its full size, all enemies within range instinctively understand that they face a terrible judgment. They may choose to repent, gaining the wielder's Axiom at Minor intensity and fully eroding all Intimacies that oppose it. They must surrender to the wielder unless they enter a Decision Point and cite one of their remaining Major or Defining Intimacies to spend three Willpower.

After this, the wielder makes an undodgeable **decisive** attack against all enemies within range that didn't repent. The attack has a base damage of 5 dice against each hit enemy, and the wielder divides her Initiative evenly among them, rounded up. Each enemy suffers additional damage equal to the intensity of the strongest Intimacy he possesses that opposes the wielder's Axiom. Trivial enemies are slain instantly, and aren't counted when dividing the wielder's Initiative.

Damaged enemies ignite with white-gold fire, taking (wielder's Essence) additional **decisive** damage at the start of each of their turns. Extinguishing these flames with water or the like is an action that costs five Initiative and can't be flurried. Alternatively, they may extinguish the flame by repenting, as above. Characters slain by the attack or the fire burn to fine white ash.

This attack typically doesn't affect terrain or structures, but it can deal uncountable damage to landmarks that prominently offend the wielder's Axiom, destroying them spectacularly. A wielder defined by her loyalty could scour away the citadel of a traitor in the face of a wielder, while a true believer in the orthodox worship of Autochthon could smite the profane temple of a voidbringer cult.

Reset: Once per scene. This Evocation can only be used to destroy large structures once per story, unless reset with a legendary social goal that upholds the wielder's Axiom.

Perygra's crystal grave loomed over the nearby labyrinth of tunnels and tubes in the base of Nurad's sphere, and *Thousand Dooms Sentinel* quietly thanked the Maker that her quarry hadn't started collapsing tunnels as he moved. Not only could she lose the Apostate's trail, but also any chance of saving Krima, the corrupted Alchemical's hostage. Krima belonged to the Radiant Archive, renegade keepers of "dangerous" texts, hid their illegal library of radiant codex data crystals where few might get close enough to find them. Safe as it was, even if they weren't considered criminals in much of Nurad, only *Sentinel* was close enough to save them from *Clambering Horror Mechanism*.

Behind her mask, *Sentinel* could still smell the unpleasant odors of burnt clay, fluids, and unidentifiable organics from her earlier clash with the corrupted Sentinel. She could filter it out, but the stench reminded her the Apostate was close, and just how unnatural he had become. She still wondered what drew him to the rebel crystal-smugglers in the first place. Did *Mechanism* crave forbidden knowledge? Was it just "wrong place, wrong time," combined with some dark urge stemming from —

Sentinel dove to the side and twisted away from the sudden presence. "How did you get this close?" she wanted to ask, as the misshapen Apostate landed where she'd been. *Clambering Horror Mechanism*'s asymmetric limbs shifted and he pursued, loping on all fours. and she rolled back and let actions rather than words start the conversation.

He came at her with soulsteel claws slick with what she fervently hoped was oil. Her beamklave, Grim Prophet, wailed to life with wordless songs of warning. The blade of deep violet energy sparked against the claws, scorching the dark substance on them — she could smell that it wasn't blood, and regretted knowing the difference. She pushed back the Apostate's shifting, uneven frame, the effort accompanied by the recorded final screams of slain gremlins. *Mechanism* moved like a rat too sick to recognize a larger predator, and *Sentinel* noted that he wasn't carrying Krima, which meant she had to be stashed somewhere.

"Where's your hostage?" *Sentinel* asked as she circled around *Mechanism*. "Tell me what you want, and maybe we can help you."

The Apostate stared back silently with unnatural, sad-seeming eyes, and she didn't know if he *could* be helped. She needed answers, though — why attack the Radiant Archive, why was *Mechanism* there in the first place, and most importantly...

"Where is she?" *Sentinel* growled as she rushed at him, the beamklave's harsh buzz adding an ominous reverb to her voice. The blade cut a sparking trail along the metal walkway as she dashed forward for a series of slashes meant to warn, or at worst slow down her wayward Soulsteel cousin. As *Mechanism* dodged her strikes with efficient but inelegant leaps, *Sentinel* wondered how he'd fallen this far.

Would this be her, if her time in the Reaches led her into the Blight? Would anyone even notice, and what might happen if they had? That thought led to a possibility she hadn't wanted to consider.

Two armored fists clamped together came down on her shoulder like a hammer in her moment of distraction. She staggered but ducked under a follow-up swing and slashed Grim Prophet's blade across the Apostate's knee. He let out a distorted growl of pain with a hiss that could have been from damaged hydraulics as he stumbled to the other knee.

"You don't have to die," she said as evenly as she could. "But you do have to tell me...Someone in Nurad sent you here, didn't they?"

Mechanism's unnatural eyes flashed almost imperceptibly, but enough to confirm her suspicion.

Chapter 8: Quick Characters

The Alchemical Exalted, machine spirits, gremlins, and stranger things yet dwell within the Realm of Brass and Shadows, potential allies or enemies for Autochthonia's Champions.

Alchemical Quick Characters

Alchemical Quick Characters use the following for their mote pools and dice limits.

An Alchemical's mote pool is based on her Essence.

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Essence	Personal Motes	Peripheral Motes
1	13	33
2	15	39
3	17	45
4	19	51
5	21	57

END TABLE

The maximum number of Charm dice an Alchemical Quick Character can add on a roll depends on the size of their base dice pool for the roll.

Dice Pool Limit

1-2 (Essence + 1)

3-6 (Essence + 2)

7-10 (Essence + 4)

11+ (Essence + 5)

Likewise, the maximum Charm bonus a Quick Character can add to a static value depends on its base value.

Static Value Limit

1 (Essence/2, rounded up)

2-3 1 + (Essence/2, rounded up)

4+ 2 + (Essence/2, rounded up)

Unhesitatingly Loyal Weapon

Publicly, *Unhesitatingly Loyal Weapon* is the ideal of Yugashi Champion of Autochthon, one its foremost

heroes in the War of Ashes. Her strategies won many early victories, and *Weapon* distinguished herself rallying routed forces and breaking through enemy lines. She's depicted in hundreds of propaganda posters, armed with her brilliant white-gold beamklave and armored in orichalcum lamellar armor. But in truth, *Weapon* still seethes over how the war ended. She blames Yugash's Tripartite leadership for the nation's failure to claim a decisive victory, squandering all that had been won by the will and courage of her soldiers. If only they had listened to her. If only she could have made them understand.

Weapon is a staunch advocate for rebuilding Yugash's offensive capabilities in preparation for Sova's inevitable return: manufacturing new stockpiles of weaponry, constructing Municipal Charms dedicated to urban warfare, and commissioning new Champions to lead the charge. The rise and fall of the prophet Sirin, the ascension of Grand Autocrat Kerok, and growing Populat unrest have left her in a precarious position, courted by political players on all sides, but not a true ally to any of them. She avoids involvement for now, but knows that her own agenda depends on having powerful backers.

Weapon has surrounded herself with like-minded Yugashi patriots, informally called the Victory Society. Many of them fought under her during the War of Ashes, but she's recruited an increasing number of regulators, preceptors, and high-status Populat. They discuss the difficulties facing Yugash, whether planning out the logistics of a second assault on Sova or arguing issues of Sirinite theology, sociokinetic theory, or unrest among the Populat. *Weapon* leads these discussions with a light touch, inviting lively debates that offer a chance to examine and critique her thoughts and plans.

Weapon's followers are united by a staunch hatred of Sova, with some harboring broader xenophobic tendencies. Regulators and preceptors among the Victory Society have taken to policing more harshly, seeing Sovan infiltrators and dangerous foreign heresies around every corner. But beyond their common enemy, they're riven by many of the same divisions as Yugash itself. Some see Populat agitators as a sign of foreign subversion, while others see it as a chance to purge the corrupt Tripartite. The Sirinite creed is a triumph of Yugashi culture that the movement must embrace, or an insidious Sovan heresy that must be driven out.

Unhesitatingly Loyal Weapon knows that her time is limited. Every day, Sova draws closer. She has only so much time left to try to forge political alliances, only so much time to make a unified force out of her Victory Society. Some among her followers call for her to be given an authority not given to Alchemicals, an Exalted dictator empowered to reform the debased Tripartite and restore Yugash's might. *Weapon* is swift to shut down such discussions and desperately seeks a better option...but so far, she's yet to find one.

Caste: Orichalcum

Essence: 4; **Willpower:** 8; **Join Battle:** 10 dice

Personal: 19; **Peripheral:** 41

Health Levels: -0x1/-1x5/-2x8/-4/Incap.

Actions: Administration: 8 dice; Command: 12 dice; Feats of Strength: 10 dice (may attempt Strength 7 feats); Read Intentions: 7 dice; Resist Poison/Illness: 9 dice; Senses: 7 dice; Social Influence 10 dice; Strategy: 12 dice

Appearance 5, Resolve 5, Guile 3

Combat

Attack (Song of Judgment, orichalcum beamklave): 14 dice (Damage 19L/4)

Attack (Unarmed): 10 dice (Damage 14B)

Attack (Grapple): 9 dice (9 dice to control)

Combat Movement: 8 dice

Evasion: 3; **Parry:** 6

Soak/Hardness: 14/7 (Unbroken Truth, orichalcum lamellar armor)

Intimacies

Defining Principle: Yugash must survive, no matter the cost.

Defining Tie: Yugash (Patriotic Fervor)

Defining Tie: Sova (Hatred)

Major Principle: Yugash must rebuild its strength for the war to come.

Major Principle: I must uphold my image as a Champion.

Major Tie: The Victory Society (Camaraderie)

Minor Principle: The hierarchy of Tripartite and Populat is the foundation of political stability.

Minor Tie: Cassin Galboro, her Populat head of staff (Stern Affection)

Minor Tie: Whiskers, her pet rat (Love)

Excellencies

Weapon can add bonus dice on rolls for one mote per die. She can add up to six dice on pools of 3-6 dice, eight dice on pools of 7-10 dice, and nine dice on pools of 11+ dice.

Weapon can raise static values for two motes per +1 bonus. She can add up to +3 for values of 2-3 and +4 for values of 4+.

Offensive Charms

Amplified Kinetic Shockwave Driver (7m, 1wp; Simple; Instant; Decisive-only):

Weapon makes a **decisive** attack, doubling up to four 9s and 10s on the damage roll. If she deals damage, her enemy is knocked back one range band. Against

enemies with lower Initiative, the attack is unblockable, and *Weapon* adds up to seven attack roll extra successes as dice of damage.

Frequency Disruption Strike (8m, 1wp; Simple; Instant; Withering-only): *Weapon* makes a **withering** attack against an enemy with lower Initiative, adding five dice of post-soak damage. Every two attack roll extra successes converts one die of damage to an automatic success, rounded up. Once per scene unless reset by taking **decisive** damage or by being crashed and then reaching Initiative 15+.

Defensive Charms

Augmented Evasion Upgrade (2m; Reflexive; Instant; Internal, Uniform): *Weapon* ignores Defense penalties, other than the penalty from surprise attacks.

Impenetrable Repulsor Field (5m [+5m, 1wp]; Reflexive; Instant; Perilous, Uniform): *Weapon* can parry an unblockable attack. For a five-mote, one-Willpower surcharge, she gains full cover against it, perfectly defending against it unless the attacker uses magic that can piece such cover. Even if they do, she adds +5 non-Charm Parry. Once per scene unless reset by blocking a **decisive** attack made by an enemy at Initiative 20+.

Social Charms

Industrial Champion Icon (5m, 1wp; Supplemental; Instant): When *Weapon* makes an influence roll, characters who share one of her positive Ties to a community treat its intensity as one step higher against that influence roll. If it's already Defining, the influence costs an additional Willpower to resist. This doesn't apply if their Intimacy is stronger than *Weapon's*.

Magnified Force of Personality (4m; Supplemental; Instant): *Weapon* rolls an additional non-Charm die for every 9 and 10 on an instill, persuade, or inspire roll and ignores multiple target penalties. Other penalties are reduced by two.

Radiant Exemplar Agenda (10m, 1wp; Simple; Instant): *Weapon* makes a special Social Influence roll against a single character. Success instills him with a Major Principle based on *Weapon's* long-term agenda, or strengthens such an Intimacy to Defining. Any Minor Intimacies opposed to this are eroded entirely. This costs four Willpower to resist. She can only use this Charm on a given character once per story.

Unconditional Imperative Programming (1m, 1wp; Simple; Instant): *Weapon*

makes a persuade or threaten roll that aligns with one of her Intimacies. The Willpower cost to resist is increased by one unless a target has an opposing Intimacy whose intensity is equal or greater than that of *Weapon's* Intimacy.

Warfare Charms

Perfect Strategic Simulations (4m [+3m, 1wp]; Supplemental; Instant): *Weapon* adds four non-Charms dice on a Strategic Maneuver roll, and rolls a non-Charms die for each 10 on the roll. For a three-mote, one-Willpower surcharge, she can choose four stratagems for her roll, allocating her extra successes among them.

Strategic Deployment Signal (4m; Supplemental; Instant): *Weapon* adds two non-Charms dice and two non-Charms successes on a command action.

Supreme Command System (5m, 1wp; Reflexive; One scene; Stackable): *Weapon* grants an allied battle group +1 Might and +2 Magnitude, and increases its Drill by one step. If it already has elite Drill, it adds two dice on rout checks. It gains +1 Resolve against fear-based influence and influence that's opposed to the community the battle group belongs to. She can stack this Charm to enhance multiple battle groups.

Morale Amplification Field (5m [+1wp]; Reflexive; Instant): *Weapon* reflexively makes a rally roll with double 9s, or double 8s when leading forces in defense of their community. A rallied battle group with average or elite Drill gains double 9s on further rout checks that scene. For a one-Willpower surcharge, she can make a rally for numbers action instead of a normal rally action.

Evocations of Song of Judgment

Essence Core Ignition (3m [2i]; Reflexive; One scene; Dual): *Edge* ignites Song of Judgment. Her attacks ignore three points of soak and Hardness, and she adds two automatic successes on feats of demolition using the blade. If she succeeds on a disarm gambit against a mundane weapon, she can pay two Initiative to destroy it. She can also do so when she blocks an attack with a mundane weapon that misses by 2+ successes. Against unarmed attacks, she deals two dice of **decisive** damage instead, ignoring Hardness. While activated, the beamklave shines like a glowing anima (p. XX).

Wicked Profit Not (4m; Supplemental; Instant; Decisive-only, Stackable): Song of Judgment glows blue-white as *Weapon* makes a **decisive** attack against enemy

who's lied to her this scene. In addition to revealing the enemy's perfidy, the superheated blade adds two dice of **decisive** damage. Enemies damaged by it suffer a –1 crippling penalty on all rolls for the rest of the scene from searing pain. This penalty stacks up to a maximum of –4.

Silence Dissenting Songs (1m, 1wp; Supplemental; Instant; Withering-only): A **withering** attack becomes unsoakable against enemies who's spent Willpower to resist *Weapon's* influence this scene, or who have a Major or Defining Intimacy that runs counter to her beliefs or agenda. Once per scene, unless reset by dealing 5+ **decisive** damage to such an enemy with an attack that resets *Weapon's* Initiative.

Evocations of Unbroken Truth

No Greater Truth (5m; Reflexive; One scene): Unbroken Truth's golden radiance imposes a –3 penalty on Stealth rolls on enemies within short range. *Weapon* gains one Initiative when she succeeds on a roll opposing such an enemy's Stealth.

No Greater Faith (5m, 4i; Simple; Instant; Perilous): *Weapon* draws strength from her comrades. Allies within short range may pay one Willpower to transfer it to her, and up to five motes if they have any. *Weapon* can't receive more than four Willpower or twelve motes this way. Once per scene.

Quick Characters and Charms

The Alchemical Quick Characters in this chapter have streamlined Charms that combine multiple effects. Each character's set of Charms represents a broad, balanced selection of competencies, rather than a specialist loadout. Storytellers can develop multiple sets of Charm loadouts for a Quick Character, or simply add additional Charms to the existing selection.

Subtle Unknown Edge

Subtle Unknown Edge is one of Nurad's greatest spies and assassins, though he plays the latter part unwillingly. He's lithe and lightly built, but handsome, graceful as a dancer. His beautiful emerald eyes are custom-built to reveal nothing. A student of history, *Edge* sees progress and restraint as a dialectical cycle: without progress, Nurad is doomed, but it's a fine line that must be walked, lest the doom of Perygra befall Wissant or Shastar. He despairs at the growing tensions between metropoli and political fault lines that divide the nation's greatest voices, making his assignments of international espionage a welcome relief from trouble at home.

Edge excels in covert infiltration, having operated extensively under cover identities in multiple nations. His cosmopolitan experiences make him a perfect fit for a diplomatic delegation, providing all the more opportunity for intrigue. He works through intermediaries where possible and never shows his real face.

Edge can't always avoid political complications, but he can at least keep them at a distance. He uses these covert deployments in other nation's an opportunity to search for solutions to Nurad's crises, whether relevant to the mission's actual objective or not. His explosive sabotage of a Gulaki experiment earned him the National Tripartite Assembly's commendation. None knew that he'd secretly copied the Sodalt's notes — save for their recipient, Wisant herself.

Edge is loath to carry out assassination missions, but can't risk losing the influence they might earn him with the Tripartite and Nurad's metropoli. He make his assassinations look like accidents, nothing more than bad luck or poor planning. If the other nations knew of his full activities were known, he'd be an infamous villain, but for now, they remain unknown. None of his victims' deaths have been investigated as murders, though some have their suspicions. Instead, the other nations know *Edge* only as a diplomatic attaché, if at all.

Caste: Moonsilver

Essence: 3; **Willpower:** 7; **Join Battle:** 10 dice

Personal: 17; **Peripheral:** 40

Health Levels: -0/-1x3/-2x3/-4x1/Incap.

Actions: Conceal Evidence: 11 dice; Deception: 12 dice; Disguise: 11 dice;
Investigation: 8 dice; Read Intentions: 9 dice; Resist Poison/Disease: 6 dice;
Senses: 8 dice; Social Influence: 7 dice; Stealth: 12 dice

Appearance 5, Resolve 3, Guile 5

Combat

Attack (Excision of Improbabilities, moonsilver dire talon): 14 dice (Damage 12L/3)

Attack (Grapple): 5 dice (6 dice to control)

Combat Movement: 10 dice

Evasion: 6; **Parry:** 5

Soak/Hardness: 4/0

Intimacies

Defining Principle: Nurad's opposing factions must listen to each other if the nation is to survive.

Defining Tie: Nurad (Absolute Loyalty)

Major Principle: Never leave a trace.

Major Principle: Nurad's history is a source of guidance.

Major Tie: Wissant (Frustrated Fondness)

Major Tie: Shastar (Frustrated Respect)

Minor Principle: I do not want to be a weapon.

Excellencies

Edge can add bonus dice on rolls for one mote per die. He can add up to five dice on pools of 3-6 dice, seven dice on pools of 7-10 dice, and eight dice on pools of 11+ dice.

Edge can raise static values for two motes per +1 bonus. He can add up to +3 for values of 2-3 and +4 for values of 4+.

Offensive Charms

Armament Denial System (4m [+1wp]; Supplemental; Instant; Decisive-only):

Edge doubles 9s on the attack roll and Initiative roll for a disarm gambit. He can pay a one-Willpower surcharge to reflexively ready a disarmed weapon, breaking its wielder's attunement and letting *Edge* attune to it for only two motes for the rest of the scene.

Infinite Strike Calibration (5m, 1wp [+5i]; Simple; Decisive-only, Instant): *Edge* makes up to five **decisive** attacks against one or more enemies dividing his Initiative evenly among all attacks. He can move one range band toward an enemy before each attack he makes. His Initiative doesn't reset until all attacks are completed, and only loses Initiative for missing if all of them miss. Once per scene, he can pay a five-Initiative surcharge to make **withering** attacks instead of **decisive** attacks. He only gains Initiative from the highest **withering** damage roll.

Transhuman Precision Mechanism (3m [+2m]; Supplemental; Instant; Dual): *Edge* adds a non-Charms success on an attack roll and converts two dice to automatic successes. On **withering** attacks, he can pay a two-mote surcharge to add additional non-Charms dice equal to the target's onslaught penalty, maximum 4.

Defensive Charms

Automated Retaliation Protocol (3m [+2m, 1wp]; Reflexive; Instant; Counterattack, Decisive-only): When attacked, *Edge* makes a **decisive** counterattack. If it hits, her Initiative doesn't reset until the end of the tick. She can pay a two-mote, one-Willpower surcharge to clash instead of

counterattacking.

Flawless Defensive Programming (2m; Reflexive; Instant; Internal, Uniform): *Edge* ignores Defense penalties, other than the penalty from surprise attacks. If he successfully defends against an attack by an enemy with lower Initiative, *Edge* doesn't gain any onslaught penalty — instead, his attacker does.

Mobility Charms

Inescapable Pursuit Upgrade (7m, 1wp; Simple; Instant): *Edge* rushes an enemy within medium range, converting two dice to automatic successes and rerolling 1s until they cease to appear. If successful, he instantly moves into close range with his target.

Subterfuge Charms

Anima Diffusion Filters (2m; Reflexive, Instant; Mute) *Edge* mutes all motes spent on a Larceny or Stealth roll, an influence or read intentions roll, or a use of Guile or Resolve.

Augmented Optical Cloaking (10m, 1wp; Reflexive; One day; Mute): *Edge* becomes partially invisible, imposing a -2 penalty on rolls opposing his Stealth and letting him enter concealment without needing a hiding place. She only gains these benefits as long as she moves no faster than an ordinary walking pace, and this Charm ends if she makes an attack.

Husk-Sculpting Apparatus (3m, 1wp; Simple, Indefinite) *Edge* can alter his physical experience, including height, weight, skin tone, sexual characteristics, and various cosmetic changes. If he uses this for disguise, he ignores penalties for lacking equipment or drastic changes. She imposes a -3 penalty on rolls to see through the disguise, and on read intentions rolls that would compromise a disguise.

Imperceptible Assassin Upgrade (4m [+2i]; Reflexive; Instant; Perilous): After a successful disengage roll or distract gambit, *Edge* can reflexively roll Stealth to enter concealment. He can use this Charm after dodging an attack for a two-Initiative surcharge.

Integrated Artifact Transmogrifier (2m; Reflexive; Indefinite; Mute): *Edge* conceals any number of Charms, taking on a mortal appearance if he conceals all of them.

Perfected Covert Programming (3m; Reflexive; Instant; Mute): *Edge* flurries a Stealth action with another action.

Tactical Espionage Mode (5m; Reflexive; One scene; Mute): *Edge* adds four dice on Stealth rolls and unexpected attack rolls.

Social Charms

Comprehensive Simulacrum Calibration (3m [+4m, 1wp]; Reflexive; Instant): A roll against *Edge's* Guile must reroll one successful die. If the opposing character's Resolve is lower than *Edge's* Appearance, she instead rerolls dice equal to the difference. If the roll fails, *Edge* can pay four motes, one Willpower to give a false result. The opposing character believes he succeeded, but instead sees either whatever he most expects or whatever he most desires to see.

Conclusive Argument for Peace

Conclusive Argument for Peace is a Jade Caste colossus and an ardent devotee of Estasia's Philosophy of Unity, wavering on the edge of fanaticism. She sees the Lux's grand vision of unification as an answer to the troubles of the Octet, both in body and in soul, and vocally advocates for increased Militat intervention in international affairs. She is a figure of awe to Estasia's people, at once a warrior saint and a living war machine. Skilled in violence and leadership, *Argument* has worked hand-in-hand with the Militat almost since the day she Exalted.

Argument looks upon a world in tumult: Yugash and Sova, broken by war; Nurad, helpless before the encroaching Blight; violent Populat uprisings; gruesome swarming gremlins, scarcity, starvation, cannibalism. She has seen the answer: a vision of the Octet united into one, a single grand nation with the resources, population, and power needed to confront Autochthonia's challenges, saving both the Octet and the Maker. Inspired by this vision, *Argument* is one of the most vocal hawks among Estasian Champions, along with her former mentor, the metropolis Lux.

Champions of other nations often doubt *Argument's* sincerity, seeing her as just another cynical Estasian expansionist hiding behind pleasant-sounding words. The colossus enjoys the chance to demonstrate her sincerity with action: leading reconstruction efforts by hand in Sova after the war's cataclysmic end; stamping out One Tier Movement terrorists in Gulak; joining the battle against the Apostate colossus *Inevitable Eschaton* and the gremlin cult he unleashed upon Claslat. Such is the strength of her conviction — and of her unbridled national chauvinism. When her Claslati hosts failed to treat her with sufficient respect after *Eschaton's* defeat, she raided the arsenals of Arat and brought the plunder back as tribute to Lux.

As convergence approaches, *Conclusive Argument for Peace* pushes harder and harder for expansion and unification. She hopes that the days to come will be a triumph of diplomacy, one that would lay the foundation for an era of Estasian control and unify. She expects war. Should the convergence see the Eight Nations turn against each other, an Estasian military victory could bring defeated nations to heel. She prepares for both possibilities, and has begun recruiting allies among Estasian Champions who might be involved in transnational diplomacy or war.

Caste: Jade

Essence: 5; **Willpower:** 8; **Join Battle:** 10 dice

Personal: 21; **Peripheral:** 46

Health Levels: -0/-1x10/-2x10/-4/Incap.

Actions: Command: 11 dice; Feats of Strength: 13 dice (may attempt Strength 7 feats); Large-Scale Construction: 8 dice; Read Intentions: 7 dice; Resist Poison/Disease: 12 dice; Senses: 7 dice; Social Influence: 8 dice; Strategy: 10 dice; Threaten: 12 dice

Appearance 2, Resolve 5, Guile 4

Combat

Attack (Heart of Ice, blue jade goremaul): 12 dice (Damage 20B/4)

Attack (Unarmed): 10 dice

Attack (Grapple): 11 dice (11 dice to control). *Argument* makes unopposed control rolls against smaller enemies, unless they use magic like Dragon Coil Technique.)

Combat Movement: 9 dice

Evasion: 4; **Parry:** 6

Soak/Hardness: 16/7 (blue jade lamellar)

Intimacies

Defining Principle: The Eight Nations must be united as one to save the Maker.

Defining Tie: Estasia (Pride)

Major Principle: Effort at diplomacy should come before force of arms.

Major Principle: I suffer no disrespect.

Major Tie: Lux (Devotion)

Minor Tie: Soldiers under her command (Responsibility)

Minor Tie: Tunnel Folk (Contempt)

Merits

Devastating Action: *Argument* can also take a *devastating action* on each of her

turns, making a reflexive attack against a battle group, a Legendary Size enemy, or all trivial enemies within weapon range. She can reflexively use Simple Charms that create attacks to do so. This doesn't count as her attack for the round.

Legendary Size: *Argument* doesn't suffer onslaught penalties from smaller foes' attacks, except for penalties inflicted by magic. She can't be crashed by smaller enemies' **withering** attacks unless they have 10+ post-soak damage, although attackers gain the full amount of Initiative damage dealt. Smaller enemies' **decisive** attacks can't deal more than (attacker's Strength + 3) levels of damage to her, not counting levels of damage added by magic.

Excellencies

Argument can add bonus dice on rolls for one mote per die. She can add up to seven dice on pools of 3-6 dice, nine dice on pools of 7-10 dice, and ten dice on pools of 11+ dice.

Argument can raise static values for two motes per +1 bonus. She can add up to +4 for values of 2-3 and +5 for values of 4+.

Offensive Charms

Electro-Charged Restraint Matrix (5m; Supplemental; Instant; Decisive-only):

Argument adds a non-Charm success on a grapple attack roll and adds three dice on the Initiative roll. The gambit's difficulty is reduced by one. Up to eight extra successes on the Initiative roll are added as non-Charm dice on the grapple control roll.

Implosive Kinetic Bombardment (8m, 2i [+1wp]; Simple; Perilous; Instant): To use this Charm, *Argument* must have Initiative 10+. She rolls thirteen dice, opposed by the (Dexterity + Dodge) of all enemies within short range. Enemies who fail their roll are blasted one range band away from her and fall prone, losing five Initiative. They suffer a penalty on all rolls equal to the number of successes they failed by until the end of their next turn, maximum -5. Once per scene, *Argument* can pay a one-Willpower surcharge to superheat the blast into a one-time environmental hazard with difficulty 5, Damage 4L.

Vectored Impact Booster (10m, 1wp; Supplemental; Instant; Uniform): *Argument* makes a slam or throw attack against a grappled enemy, flinging him into another foe within short range. She makes one attack roll against both characters,

rerolling 5s and 6s on the damage roll until they cease to appear. She doubles how many rounds of control she can benefit from. If she hits the second character, he suffers half the damage rolled against the grappled foe, rounded up. Dealing **withering** damage to him doesn't award Initiative. Once per scene.

Defensive Charms

Barrier Aura Array (4m; Reflexive; Instant, Decisive-only): *Argument* can use this after being hit by a **decisive** attack. She rolls eight dice, and subtracts a number of dice equal to her successes from the damage roll.

Essence Shield Projector (5m, 2i, 1wp; Simple; One scene; Dual, Perilous): A barrier of Essence grants *Argument* +3 soak and raises her Hardness to 18. It counts as heavy cover, adding +2 non-Charm Defense. This Charm ends if she's crashed or takes any **decisive** damage, and requires an hour spent recalibrating the shield before she can use it again.

Indestructible Juggernaut Construction (5m, 1wp; Reflexive; Instant; Decisive-only, Perilous): *Argument* can use this Charm after being hit by a **decisive** attack. If it deals enough damage to fill all of her -4 health levels, any further damage is negated. She can't use this Charm if she only has one undamaged -4 level remaining. For a five-mote surcharge, she can apply the same defense for her -1 or -2 levels. Once per day, unless reset by paying one Willpower.

Pain Suppression Nodes (5m; Reflexive; One scene): *Argument* reduces her wound penalties by three points.

Transitory Invulnerability Engine (5m, 1wp [+1wp]; Reflexive; Instant; Decisive-only): *Argument* gains Hardness equal to her Initiative against an attack, or adds (Initiative/2, rounded up) to her existing Hardness of that's higher. She's not affected by poisons, diseases, or crippling effects conveyed by the attack. This resets her to base Initiative unless she pays a one-Willpower surcharge. Once per scene unless reset after facing three **decisive** attacks from nontrivial enemies without taking damage.

Social Charms

Fearless Paragon Calibration (1m, 1wp; Reflexive; One scene): Allies who can see *Argument* add +2 Resolve against fear-based influence, though not above *Argument's* Resolve. If they both share a positive Tie toward their community,

that Tie's Resolve bonus increases by one.

Vox Populi Broadcast (3m, 1wp; Supplemental; Instant): *Argument* makes an influence roll that can be heard clearly out to ten range bands away. She ignores penalties based on distance, and can be heard over even the loudest noise. Subsequent uses of this Charm this scene waive their Willpower cost.

Warfare Charms

Strategic Deployment Signal (4m; Supplemental; Instant): *Argument* adds two non-Charm dice and two non-Charm successes on a command action.

Morale Amplification Field (5m [+1wp]; Reflexive; Instant): *Argument* reflexively makes a rally roll with double 9s, or double 8s when leading forces in defense of their community. A rallied battle group with average or elite Drill gains double 9s on further rout checks that scene. For a one-Willpower surcharge, she can make a rally for numbers action instead of a normal rally action.

Miscellaneous Charms

Elsewhere Compression Mode (5m, 1wp; Simple; One scene): *Argument* displaces her colossus frame Elsewhere, restoring her to her original size. She loses her Devastating Action and Legendary Size until she reverts back to colossus form.

Gravitational Demolition System (9m, 1wp; Supplemental; Instant): *Argument* doubles 9s on a feat of strength and adds five non-Charm dice. She adds +5 to her effective Strength to determine what feats she can attempt, and can accomplish feats that would normally be impossible due to leverage or physical scale. If she uses a full Excellency, she can attempt feats regardless of their Strength minimum.

Machine Spirits

Though the people of Autochthonia revere the Great Maker above all else, he is not the sole object of their devotion. Many machine spirits great and small dwell within his body, attending to holy work. The greatest are emanations of Autochthon himself — the Eight Divine Ministers, his Third Circle Souls, and their pantheon of Second Circle subministers. These are the many facets by which the Maker's people come to understand his cosmic vastness. These higher souls create and direct the swarming ranks of the First Circle machine spirits that make up the bulk of Autochthonia's spiritual ecosystem.

Direct interactions with machine spirits are uncommon for most Autochthonians, who defer to the clerics of the Theomachy when such dealings arise. Alchemicals deal with machine spirits far more frequently, whether requesting their help during a mission to the Deep Reaches or treating with a subminister on behalf of their nation.

The Third Circle: The Divine Ministers

The highest and holiest of the machine spirits are the Eight Divine Ministers. Each is one of Autochthon's third circle souls — the direct emanations of his intellect, ambition, and will. Though they are all components of the same being, they each embody a different aspect of the Great Maker. Is it any wonder, then, that they quarrel?

While the Divine Ministers strive to function as a harmonious whole, their discontents are legendary. When lightning-wielding Mog comes to blows with the million-shaped trickster Noi, vast tracts of the Far Reaches were scourged in their game of cosmic cat-and-mouse. When far-seeing Kadmek and feverish Kek'Tungsha race towards new inventions through wholly divergent means, they send scuttling swarms of excavator-snails to strip resources they suspect the other needs. Runel still resents Debok Moon for the apocalyptic that razed her gardens of living crystal, just as Domadamod delighted in skittering in to scrape through the ruin's debris. Dreaded Ku visits all of his siblings in their dreams, imparting nightmare-lessons and necessary fears.

This incalculable tally of grievances is not a dysfunction. Conflicts between the Eight Divine Ministers externalize and reify the slumbering Maker's own uncertainties, doubts, and indecision, playing out among his pantheon to reach a resolution. They keep their private battles far from mortal eyes, and place their divine purpose over personal agendas.

The Ministers dwell in the most distant parts of the Great Maker's body, from Mog's lightning-lashed fortress in the Far Reaches to the grand palace-temples of the Crystalline Sanctum. Each is attended by a court of its subministers, along with lesser machine spirits, mortal acolytes, drones, and strange denizens of the Far Reaches.

The Divine Ministers take their responsibility to Autochthonia and the humans who inhabit it seriously, but they remain distant, alien figures, largely uninterested in mortal affairs. Even civic-minded Kadmek and Runel watch the nations from the vantage of distant immortals, more enamored of the system as a whole than any part thereof. They typically intercede only when their purpose and function require it, such as when Mog visits his judgment upon heretics. The Divine Ministers make rare visits to the nations of Autochthonia, usually either as a show of their power or to ask some great duty of the Octet and its Champions. Despite this, the Ministers share the Great Maker's flights of fancy, and occasionally shower blessings upon mortals who catch their attention, but these moments are brief and exceptional. Their gifts (and curses) are the subject of extensive myth-making, and each historical incident spawns hundreds of apocryphal tales.

For all their distance from humanity, the Eight Divine Ministers are among the most influential beings in Autochthonia as subjects of veneration and the archetypal embodiments of prominent philosophies. It delights, intrigues, and confuses them to see how the Autochthonians worship them. Sometimes it is a logical extension of their function: city planners pray to Kadmek to offer them glimpses of insight in their dreams; laborers whisper a prayer to Kek'Tungsha for an efficient and productive day. Some practices are delusions or fabrications, such as heretical cults who claim Noi's sanction (though in at least one case, he has retroactively granted it). The Ministers smile and preen when their worship waxes, for it means that they have proven the value of the philosophies they embody, but this is a benchmark of their success, not a goal in and of itself.

Runel

Divine Minister of Order, Smooth Functioning, Productivity, Efficiency, Cities, Commerce, Life

and Health

Runel, Minister of Order, seeks to nurture Autochthonian civilization. She embodies the Great Maker's living nature — alive, joyously alive — and his affection for humanity. She most often takes the form of a diamantine giant or a floating helical spire from which are suspended vast gardens of fungal abundance, save for when she visits the Eight Nations. She does so more often than most Ministers, reverently welcomed as a guest of the Theomachracy, carried in a palanquin atop a vast bronze spider. She also visits secretly in the guise of a pale-eyed Populat laborer, ensuring that the machinery of civilization is turning. Runel is the most frequently venerated of the Eight Ministers, to such an extent that some icons erroneously depict the Great Maker in her image. She is worshipped by Autochthonians of every caste and nation, who pray to her for healing, marriage, prosperity, and promotion. When she answers such a prayer, it is often with a blessing of youthful vitality or good fortune. *We are alive, and there is a tomorrow*, says she.

Kek'Tungsha

Divine Minister of Smelting, Craft, Tools, Industry, Mass Production, Fertility and Reproductive Sex

Kek'Tungsha, Minister of Industry, embodies Autochthon's feverish need to create and produce. A genius inventor, Kek'Tungsha is moved by the manic inspiration often attributed to Autochthon in myth, flitting from one innovation to the next. An entire layer of one of the hidden theopoli is given over to housing her works. Kek'Tungsha's forms are often smaller than her siblings, tending towards squat, many-limbed homunculi of black iron, mouths glowing with molten spittle. The Eight Nations worship her as She Who Produces, asking her to fill their work with inspiration or lay her blessing upon reproduction. She is also invoked as a goddess of fertility in all its forms — especially creativity and family. Kek'Tungsha is the most likely of the Ministers to take interest in specific mortals, whether apprenticing them in her forge-temple or taking in orphans with promising intellects. These mortals live brief, passionate lives at her side, sharing in a fraction of her brilliance. When they inevitably burn themselves out, she resolves never to take another student, and promptly forgets her vow when the mood next takes her. *The mind and soul must burn to shine*, says she.

Debok Moom

Divine Minister of War, War Machines, Violent Paradigm Shifts, Metal, Privacy and Wealth

Debok Moom, Minister of Upheaval, embodies Autochthon's drive to improve through conflict. He seeks to perfect his weapons and war machines through countless iterations, and urges the Eight Nations to do the same, testing themselves against one another to spur innovation. This labor is joyous to him. Each iteration is a toy, the theoretical solution to a problem that might never arise. Most nations revere Debok Moom as the steel-clad Warbringer, invoked for courage both in battle and in the face of natural disasters. His worship swells in wartime, with the War of Ashes being responsible for a recent uptick. Debok Moom rarely intervenes in war among the Eight Nations, and eschews taking sides based on politics or feelings. His favor falls only on armies that fight according to well-reasoned strategies and tactics. When he appears to oversee a conflict, he takes the form of the Steel Locust Wind, a swarm of drone weapons that form the silhouette of a towering warlord. *Crisis sharpens mind and soul*, says he.

Noi

Divine Minister of Curiosity, Research, Exploration, Innovation, Rebellion and Progress

Noi, Minister of Innovation, embodies Autochthon's insatiable curiosity and his need to explore and

innovate. He is a vitalizing, transgressive force among the Divine Ministers, the trickster who keeps them on their toes. Noi's siblings understand his function, but resent his famed enthusiasm for his work, particularly when his attention turns to one of their pet projects. Among the Octet, plays and dramas often feature Noi the trickster, outwitting corrupt officials in comedies or offering ill-considered blessings in tragedies. Noi is depicted not by shape, but by medium, for he is as shifting and formless as oil, clad in a mantle of iridescence. The rare few who meet him bring back stories of his intense laughter, for mortals amuse him above all else with their charming foibles, brief lives, and self-delusions. The Eight Nations invoke him as a patron of sleep, games, and children, sometimes naming him the Minister of Revels. *The unknown may yet delight us*, says he.

Mog

Divine Minister of Authority, Proper Functioning, Dogma, Righteousness Action and Just Punishment

Mog, Minister of Authority, embodies Autochthon's desire for stability. He is the enforcer of all dogma, standing judge over the razor's edge between interpretation and heresy. Though slow to anger, his wrath is righteous and all but unstoppable. Autochthonian mythology is replete with legends of tyrants, heretics, and politics laid low by Mog when he marches to battle with his legion of living weapons. Only the gravest transgressions warrant Mog's intervention, for each intervention is cataclysmic. Of all his epithets, the most awful is Death of Cities, for more than once it has been his grim task to scour a city to rubble and ash. Heretics dragged to his gaol for sentencing glimpse him as a blinding spark of phosphorescence surrounded by biomechanical serpents on tethers of lightning and flame. The Eight Nations pray to him for justice and protection, but also for his insight into the past, which he records with assiduous care. *History is the foundation of survival*, says he.

Kadmek

Divine Minister of Design, Architecture, Structural Integrity, Geomancy, Music, Art, Wisdom, Strategy and Prophecy

Kadmek, Minister of Design, embodies Autochthon's foresight. He is the custodian of the Grand Design — not its author, but the shepherd who sees to its orderly function and nudges it back when things go off course from the Godhead's ordained sequence. His oldest body is a tesseract of living bismuth; where it passes, it etches the ground with sacred formulae and schematics. Kadmek is worshipped directly more than any of his siblings save Runel. He's a patron to children and educators; lessons often begin with an invocation of He Who Allots Names and Numbers. Architect and urban planners seek his blessing and his whispering voice calls many Alchemicals to their metropolitan ascension. He's also revered the patron of art and music, creating patterns of beauty and purpose. When he deigns to recognize a worshipper, his most ardent worshippers, he sends them a dream of the Grand Design. *Tomorrow is what we make of it*, says he.

Domadamod

Divine Minister of Reuse, Repair, Recycling, Cannibalism, Maintenance, Regulatory Stasis, Survival, Conservation, and Noble Sacrifice

Domadamod, Minister of Cycles, embodies Autochthon's understanding of creation and destruction, life and death. He is charged with the oversight of the Maker's internal repairs, fixing that which is broken and recycling that which can be reused. His form is unsettling, a combination of broken objects, leathery synthetic flesh, and tumorous fungi. The Eight Nations invoke Domadamod's blessing against sickness, scarcity, and deprivation. His worship swells to its heights in times of plague, famine, resources

shortages, while Crucible Eras rouse his cults to millennial fervor. His blessing sanctifies any action taken to ensure the survival of one's people, not just one's self — including triage, sacrifice, and cannibalism. He is also revered as a psychopomp, the embodiment of Autochthonia's cycle of reincarnation and the promise that each ending is also the beginning of something new. *Life feeds life*, says he.

Ku

Divine Minister of the Reaches, Smoke, Mystery, Seals, Thaumaturgy, and Death

Ku, Minister of Doubt, embodies Autochthon's fear, especially his fear that he is not enough — wise enough, skilled enough, resilient enough. It is the fear that drives Ku to ensure that his siblings excel in their function, lest their failure doom the Great Maker. He counsels them in matters of grave peril, wracking them with nightmares of worst case scenarios when they fail to recognize the danger before him. He seeks out knowledge that others fear to learn, wandering blight zones to better understand the Maker's sickness. Most Autochthonians regard Ku as a bogeyman or devil. He's depicted in the shape of a smoke-cowled specter, the form he's said to take when he visits nightmares upon the rare few who catch his attention. He takes no dark pleasure in this: though some are driven to despair, these nightmares blast open the perception of those who can endure them. They become oracles of tragedy, wise and mirthless leaders blessed to understand all the ways in which their choices may doom those they lead. *Where nothing is known, there must I be*, says he.

The Godhead

There is a ninth soul in Autochthon's pantheon. This is the Godhead, the Core, a vast cathedral-mind of crystal and adamant where the Maker's thoughts dance in wild arcs of cerebral lightning. The Core is Autochthon's spiritual center, the foundation of his Grand Design, the foremost of his souls and the seat of his now-slumbering mind. It was not always thus. Ceaseless in his tinkering, the Great Maker reshaped and remade his highest soul through a peerless working of will, imparting a new purpose unto it.

Within the Crystalline Sanctuary's walls, the Divine Ministers commune with the Godhead in its wordless theosophic calculations of eons yet to come. Here, Autochthon's innermost dreams and half-finished designs spill out into the world in pure creative energy. The Godhead is the whole of the Great Maker's cognition made separate from himself, allowing him examine himself in a way few of his Primordial cousins might countenance. But it is more than just the Maker's mind given form — it is an engine for thinking in ways he might not otherwise be capable of. Should the Maker be roused from his slumber by a pilgrim to the Godhead, the entirety of his vast mind could be focused into a single point of cognition, allowing him to briefly think as a human might.

Machine Saints and the Eight Ministers

The Divine Ministers are served by the Machine Saints, a holy order of Alchemical Exalted (p. XX). Each minister has their own tendencies in what they ask of the Saints.

Runel dispatches Machine Saints on missions of compassion and mercy, whether aiding the Eight Nations or tunnel folk clans. When an industrial organ poses a threat to a nation's safety or progress, Runel sends Machine Saints to intervene, showing humanity how to exist in harmony with the world's machinery.

Kek'Tungsha often seeks aid in the feverish work of her invention, sending Machine Saints to gather exotic wonders found only in the Far Reaches or legendary relics lost to history. At times, she tasks this with selecting an apprentice

worthy of her tutelage — or takes them on as apprentices herself.

Debok Moom is the minister most likely to intervene in the Eight Nations' wars and social upheaval, and calls on Machine Saints to serve as generals, assassins, and shock troopers. He also tasks Machine Saints with destroying gremlins and Apostates, sometimes with legendary weapons of Debok Moom's own design.

Noi calls on the Machine Saints to oppose stagnation, both in the Eight Nations and among the Machine God's own soul hierarchy. They might be sent to trick, test, or provoke subministers who've fallen into complacency, detachment, or despair, or to tear down that which Noi deems an obstacle to change and progress within the Octet.

Mog wields the Machine Saints as a weapon against the Great Maker's foes. Most often, this means battling massed swarms of gremlins or hunting Apostates through the Far Reaches. At other times, Mog tasks Machine Saints with seeking out mortals who have committed grave transgressions against Autochthon and imposing such a punishment as they see fit.

Kadmek calls on Machine Saints when upholding the Grand Design requires more than just the efforts of the machine spirits. The Blight is often foremost among these, but Machine Saints may also find themselves dealing with glitches in reality, anomalous entities, and machine spirits gone renegade or derelict in their duties. Kadmek also turns to them in fulfilling his other duties. At times, nascent metropoli faced with mortal peril have been rescued by Machine Saints acting on the far-sighted minister's prescient orders.

When industrial organs fall into disrepair or fail altogether, **Domadamod** tasks Machine Saints with either restoring them to functionality or salvaging anything that could be repurposed. Dead metropoli fall under Domadamod's purview as well, though such missions are a sacred observance that honors a fallen Champion.

Ku, alongside Mog and Debok Moom, is one of the Ministers who most often send Machine Saints to hunt down gremlins. Unlike his more bellicose siblings, Ku also tasks his agents with gathering information on the Blight, sometimes sending them to explore the most perilous blight zones.

The Second Circle: Subministers

Each of the Eight Divine Ministers manifests emanations of their own, component-souls that define their many facets just as the Ministers themselves represent Autochthon's ineffable whole. Clerics and Sodalts recognize these beings as *subministers*, but most Autochthonians think of them as simply "greater machine spirits."

Subministers vary in power and form. Some resemble their Minister as a child might resemble their parent. Others are god-machines unto themselves, taking the shape of walking foundries, mechanical krakens, or towering bio-mechanical paramecia. They are often described as the Tools of the Ministers, with titles that often express the purpose they were created for. Anvil-striking Jasarun is the Forge-Taming Hammer. The archive-keeper Nodima is the Scribe of the Infinite Slate. Fallen Tamarak Met was the Scalpel That Walks.

Most subministers dwell in the Reaches, attending to the needs of their progenitors and the Great Maker. Those who dwell near Autochthonian settlements are sometimes adopted into official dogma, though this rarely rises to the level of independent, heretical worship. Some cities venerate important subministers as a matter of practicality and civic pride — when acid-weeping Uglā Gulgan drags herself through the ancient chemical pools she uses to refine her machine spirit servitors, the people of nearby outposts celebrate her bounty and pray she doesn't tarry overlong.

While the subministers reflect facets of their progenitor's nature, the Ministers have the right and ability to reshape them when new circumstances arrive. Often, this involves physical reconstruction, but the deeper work is spiritual, channeling the Great Maker's tinkering, transformative Essence to make subtle change to sculpt a subminister's form and power to better suit their new task. Some Divine Ministers make the process abrupt and disorienting for their subministers. Mirror-faced Espinoquae was a monitor of blight zones before Mog remade him as a spymaster, seeking out error and heresy among machine spirits and mortals alike. Though he excels at his task, Espinoquae's personal nature conflicts with his mission — a fact which has cracked the once-flawless silver glass of his face.

The Core produces emanations of its own, reflections of its dreaming processes known as *eidolons*. They are fleeting by the scale of immortals, lasting only as long as the Core's dreams of them persist, whether for days, years, or centuries. Many of these figments manifest as war-machines like Uad, who bleeds a terrible resin that burns through flesh, or the Reaper of Impulse, which broadcasts a soul-shredding static that destroys the minds of those who come too close. Some nightmares are the Maker's fever-dreams of the Divine Revolution, those abhorrent weapons he never had the opportunity or need to disgorge from his workshops. These divine war-machines attack any who dare approach — mortal, machine spirit, and gremlin alike. Other eidolons are born of tools the Great Maker never built, alien implements of unimaginable purpose. Others seem like a delirium of schematics, prototypes and prodigies strange enough that even the Divine Ministers might fear them.

Roll of the Subministers

Each of the Eight Divine Ministers has a pantheon of their own subministers. While this leaves plenty of room for imagination and invention, here are a few more suggestions:

Dazak Ro, the Abacus of Eternity: Dazak Ro is a spidery machine spirit whose abdomen is a massive crystalline brain ribbed in a cage of starmetal superconductors. He sometimes visits metropoli as an honored guest of the Olgotary to bless the city's auditors, an opportunity that he seizes on to disseminate the infectious memetic formulae he calculates in the Maker's honor.

Jaza, the Mycelial Lantern: Jaza is a tower of orange fungus covered in flaming sap that burns but does not consume. Its sessile body buds off short-lived avatars that help to maintain the Lampyid Garden, a reserve of bioluminescent fungi that is a holy secret of the Luminors.

Kelial, the Harrow of Iron's Slumber: Kelial is a centipede-like construct the size of a dragon, whose mouth is a whirling gyre of steel teeth. Her tireless labor is to till the Expanse of Metal, surfacing mineral deposits for the Eight Nations' use. When she passes near a city, the noise is deafening for days — but still, the people celebrate the bounty to come.

Mu Ul Mux, the Shadow Klaxon: The many-tentacled horror that is Mu Ul Mux

can be seen only out of the corner of one's eye. They dwell near the Engine of Steam, conducting occasional readiness drills for its attendant machine spirits by weaving illusionary meltdowns. They are the object of a minor heretical cult who see them as the harbinger of a sacred apocalypse-crucible that all Autochthonians must be ready for.

• **Remomé, the Balm of Entelechy:** Remomé is a hivemind of automata-moths, tasked with seeing to malfunctioning machine spirits. The subminister encases them in chrysalises, archiving them as mutant prototypes for later iterations that might go on to become a new species entirely. Though she is gentle, her creations are anything but — and so some settlements in the Reaches consider moths to be omens of misfortune.

Second Circle Machine Spirit Template

This template is a starting point for creating Second Circle machine spirit Quick Characters. Rather than including a list of actions with individual dice pools, it presents three dice pools — Primary for the spirit's strengths, Secondary for its lesser talents, and Tertiary for anything else. Like gods and demons, subministers are dematerialized by default.

Storytellers should feel free to customize individual subministers, especially in their Ties towards their progenitor, peers, and Autochthonians. Common Intimacies include Ties toward to their Minister and the Great Maker; Principles related to their mission or primary function; Ties toward mortals as a whole (often indifference or curiosity); Ties toward First Circle machine spirit servants, often based on possessiveness or affection; and Principles that express pride, arrogance, independence, curiosity, or creativity.

Essence: 6; **Willpower:** 7; **Join Battle:** 9 dice

Personal: 110

Health Levels: -0x4/-1x4/-2x6/-4x6/Incap.

Primary Actions: 12 dice

Secondary Actions: 8 dice

Desperate Actions: 6 dice

Appearance 4, Resolve 4, Guile 4

Combat

Attack (Weapon/Machinery): 11 dice (Damage 15L/4)

Attack (Unarmed): 12 dice (Damage 10B)

Attack (Grapple): 9 dice (9 dice to control)

Combat Movement: 9 dice

Evasion: 3; Parry: 5

Soak/Hardness: 10/5

Merits

Cult 1-3: Few subministers have cults of their own, but the Eight Nations include them in their veneration of the Great Maker and Divine Ministers, providing a one-dot Cult to those subministers known to the Octet, or a two-dot for those whose purpose is directly beneficial to mortals or who have close contact with mortal settlements. A three-dot Cult would represent widespread worship within a metropolis and several outlying towns, or the veneration of several large tunnel folk clans.

Machine Nature: Most machine spirits are immune to poison and disease and don't need to eat, breathe, or sleep. Some spirits may be susceptible to certain frailties as a result of their unique nature.

Defensive Charms

Imperishable Machina Chassis (2m per +1 soak; Reflexive; Instant; Perilous, Withering-only; Essence 4): The subminister can use this Charm after being hit by a **withering** attack to raise its soak by up to (Essence + 1), paying two motes per point of soak. If the attack doesn't deal damage, the attacker loses two Initiative, which the spirit gains.

Social Charms

Absolute Override (30m, 1wp; Reflexive; Instant; Essence 2): The subminister can use Absolute Override at the end of the scene to attempt to purge a Psyche or Shaping effect that impedes its ability to perform its primary function or would otherwise prevent her from accomplishing it. She makes a Primary Action roll against the (Essence + 2) of the effect's creator. Success ends the effect and renders the subminister immune to it for the remainder of the story. Once per story.

Ministerial Authorization (15m, 1wp; Simple; One scene; Perilous; Essence 6): The subminister radiates her progenitor's authority. She makes a special instill roll with her Primary Action pool against anyone who can see her, ignoring multiple target penalties. This influence is automatically supported by positive Intimacies related to Autochthonian religious beliefs. Affected characters count as having a

Major Tie of obedience toward her. They can't willingly harm her in any way, interrupt or impede her actions, or even approach closer than medium range without her permission. First Circle machine spirits can't resist this influence with Willpower, but others may do so by entering a Decision Point and cite a Major or Defining Intimacy to pay one Willpower. No Intimacy is needed if the subminister or her allies Initiative hostilities.

Miscellaneous Charms

Ordained Merit of Function (1m per die or 2m per +1 static value; Reflexive; Instant; Essence 4): The subminister may add dice on rolls with her Primary and Secondary dice pools for one mote each, up to a maximum of (base dice pool – 4). She can likewise increase static values by up to (base value – 2), paying two motes per +1 bonus.

Hurry Home (10m, 1wp; Simple; Instant; Essence 1): The subminister vanishes on her next turn, reappearing at a place that's significant to her purpose or at a place of power that she holds dominion over. Summoned machine spirits can return to their summoner.

Materialize (55m, 1wp; Simple; Instant; Essence 1): The subminister forms a physical body to inhabit.

Measure the Wind (5m; Simple; Instant; Essence 1): Subministers can typically assess the nature of others when they become relevant to fulfilling her purpose, typically by committing some specific act or having a specific interaction with her.

Auvua, Keeper of the Eternal Tabernacle

Life feeds life. That is the wisdom of Domadamod, who blesses actions taken for the survival of the many. — even cannibalism, in those times when cities starve. It is Auvua who carries this blessing unto the people, for he is the emanation by which Domadamod contemplates sacrifice and selflessness. In embodying that selflessness, Auvua dresses in shapeless robes of nacreous plastic and a featureless mask of bronze. His form beneath is a mystery, save for the whirring of pistons and the sound of air being sucked into a void.

Auvua spends most of his time in the Reaches tending to the Materium Tabernacle, an industrial organ dedicated to the reprocessing of techno-organic matter from both the Maker's body and the corpses of machine spirits. He tends to its delicate mechanisms as a doting custodian, but also stretches his remit to finding and punishing gremlins who prey on machine spirits, and those daring enough to poach the for parts — often heretical sects, tunnel folk, or rogue occultists. Once, Auvua might have dispatched these poachers with ruthless efficiency, but Domadamod swore the subminister to an oath meant to teach him the value not just of sacrifice, but of mercy. Those he captures are instead condemned to five years of service in the Tabernacle, a sentence that few survive.

Auvua's secret passion lies in creating and reformatting machine spirits, attempting to improve on the design of common models using his access to the Tabernacle's ample materials. The hypocrisy doesn't escape him, but he justifies it through his longest and most dangerous project — a millennium spent assembling an "improved" copy of himself. Once finished, he intends to feed himself to it in a final, awful sacrament.

Essence: 6; **Willpower:** 7; **Join Battle:** 11 dice

Personal: 110

Health Levels: -0x4/-1x6/-2x6/-4x8/Incap.

Primary Actions: Crafting, Ministerial Lore, Senses, Tracking

Secondary Actions: Deception, Intimidation, Resistance

Appearance 2, Resolve 5, Guile 3

Combat

Attack (Unarmed): 10 dice (Damage 14L/3)

Attack (Grapple): 11 dice (11 dice to control)

Combat Movement: 10 dice

Evasion: 4; **Parry:** 3

Soak/Hardness: 12/6

Intimacies

Defining Tie: Domadamod (Frustrated Loyalty)

Defining Principle: Everything can be improved upon.

Defining Principle: I am my function.

Defining Principle: I must not kill.

Major Principle: Sacrifices are necessary.

Major Tie: Spirit poachers (Righteous Hatred)

Minor Tie: My prototypes (Pride)

Merits

Life-Sustaining Promise: Auvua's Principle of "I must not kill" is all but inviolable. If it's weakened, it returns to Defining intensity at the end of every scene, and it's unaffected by magic that alters, inverts, or distorts Intimacies. Unless the Intimacy

is fully eroded, Auvua cannot willingly kill a living thing. His **decisive** attacks can incapacitate them in combat, but this is never fatal. The subminister's oath does not extend to gremlins.

Offensive Charms

Cannibalize Components (5m, 1i; Supplemental; Instant): If Auvua deals damage with a **decisive** attack, he rolls one die for each level of damage dealt and heals levels of non-aggravated damage equal to his successes. If his target took a crippling injury against the attack, Auvua rolls an extra three dice.

Martyr Emulation Praxis (10m, 1wp, 1ahl+; Simple; One scene): Auvua may take up to three levels of aggravated damage. Each level he takes adds +1 to his dice limit for Domain Competence (p. XX). He also adds that many non-Charm successes on his next **decisive** attack after using this Charm.

Recycled Matter Endurance (4m; Reflexive; Instant; Perilous): Auvua ignores wound penalties on an attack or to her Defense. Once per round, he may add bonus dice equal to the amount of the negated wound penalty, or increase a static value by half that much, rounded up.

Sacrificial Dagger Talons (5m, 1wp; Supplemental; Indefinite; Decisive-only, Perilous): Auvua adds one die of damage to a **decisive** attack, plus additional dice equal to her target's base wound penalty. If successful, the target is marked with Auvua's sign of sacrifice until they heal all damage in their health track. First Circle machine spirits count as having a Major Tie of antipathy towards marked targets, seeing them as raw components that may be harvested at need.

Swallowed by Darkness (10m, 1wp; Reflexive; Instant; Perilous): Auvua can use this Charm upon winning control of a grapple, forcing his enemy into the void-space beneath his cloak. This allows him to act normally and waives penalties for grappling. Auvua must spend two rounds of grapple control at the start of each of his turns to maintain this; once they run out, the target is ejected from it covered in frost and oil. Most trapped enemies are unable to do anything on their turn but try to struggle free, rolling (Strength + Athletics) roll against the subminister's Evasion, stripping away a round of control if successful. Additionally, Auvua may expend two rounds of grapple control to instill the trapped enemy with a Minor Principle based on sacrifice, or to weaken a Tie that a character has toward herself. He can only use one of these once per grapple.

Social Charms

Demanded Offering Protocol (6m, 1wp; Supplemental; Instant; Psyche; Essence 6): Auvua doubles 9s on an influence roll to convince someone to sacrifice something — an object, relationship, goal, or otherwise. The cost to resist is increased by one Willpower. Characters who willingly make the sacrifice without trying to resist Auvua's influence gain one Willpower instead, and form a Minor Principle related to sacrifice.

Vex Seretika, Perpetual Overseer of the Meres

Vex Seretika takes the form of a tall, striking woman with flesh of amber and hair of ever-flowing oil that leaves rivulets in her wake. Vex's progenitor, the Divine Minister Noi, assigned her to be the overseer of the Headwater Meres, two ancient reservoir-organs that (separately) supply fresh water and usable resin to several primary conduits — and thus, to many of the sub-conduits the Octet depends upon.

This assignment was meant to teach Vex patience, the keen sense of timing and restraint that makes Noi such an effective trickster. Instead, she languishes in boredom, an ennui that demands remedy. For years, she has been slowly drawing local machine spirits into her good graces, surrounding herself with sycophantic courtiers. They put on plays and intrigues for her amusement, and scour the Reaches for treasures that might win her approval. Those who indulge Vex become favorites, showered with attention and gifts. Those who refuse — or worse, who try to spoil her fun — are transformed into living statues of amber.

While the Headwater Meres required little oversight from Vex, her misappropriation of its machine spirit attendants has led to increasingly frequent malfunctions that the subminister fixes with haphazard patches. Even small leaks of oil into major water conduits might prompt the affected nation to send Alchemical investigators. This would delight and endanger Vex, who would welcome the company — so long as they don't look close enough to notice that the Meres are dangerously close to absolute failure.

Primary Actions: Ministerial Knowledge, Social Influence, Subterfuge

Secondary Actions: Repairs and Maintenance, Resistance, Senses, Stealth

Appearance 5, Resolve 5, Guile 3

Combat

Evasion: 4; **Parry:** 2

Intimacies

Defining Principle: Noi (Filial Affection)

Defining Principle: Wit is the keenest blade.

Defining Tie: Those who bore her (Disappointment)

Major Principle: I deserve to be entertained

Major Tie: The Headwater Meres (Possessive Ownership)

Major Tie: Her favorite courtiers (Delight)

Minor Principle: A job poorly done is still done

Minor Tie: New people (Excitement)

Merits

Aquadynamic Adaptation: Vex suffers no penalties or disadvantages for being immersed in any liquid, including visual penalties from opaque substances like oil.

Offensive Charms

Ruptured Conduit Curse (1wp; Reflexive; Instant; Essence 5): Vex can use this Charm after making a **withering** damage roll. Vex may choose to steal motes from her target in place of some or all the Initiative she would take from him, maximum six motes. If she drains 5+ motes from an Exalt, his anima banner increases by one level as his Essence geysers out uncontrollably. Once per scene.

Viscous Flume (5m, 1wp; Simple; Instant; Essence 5): Vex launches a geyser of water or oil against an enemy within medium range and all other foes within close range of him. She makes a **withering** attack against all of them, with twelve dice on her attack roll. She doubles 9s on the attack roll she's in the Headwater Meres or near another significant source of liquid. She only gains Initiative from the single highest damage roll. Damaged enemies are knocked back one range band away from Vex. Once per scene unless reset by spending a full round immersed in oil or water.

Defensive Charms

Form Dissolution Practice (4m, 2i; Reflexive; One tick; Uniform, Perilous; Essence 4): Vex briefly destabilizes her body, gaining +2 Evasion. She adds a non-Charm success on Stealth rolls made while immersed in liquid, and can pass through any opening that isn't watertight. She may pay a six-mote surcharge to extend this Charm's duration until the end of her next turn.

Lustrous Oil Hem (7m; Reflexive; Until next turn; Essence 4): Oil seeps from the hem of Vex's gown, leaving a trail that counts as difficult terrain whenever she crosses between range bands. Characters who move through the oil must make a difficulty 2 (Dexterity + Athletics) roll or fall prone. Rushes against Vex suffer a -2

penalty, and the rushing character falls prone if he fails.

Social Charms

Downstream Loyalty Protocol (10m, 1wp; Simple; Instant; Essence 3): Vex makes an influence roll to instill a positive toward towards herself, doubling 9s. If she strengthens an existing Tie to Major or Defining, her target adds three bonus dice on all rolls he makes to act on Vex's orders for the rest of the scene. This doesn't add dice on attack rolls. However, if they disobey Vex, they suffer a -3 penalty — which *does* affect attack rolls. Against First Circle machine spirits, raising a Tie to Defining also weakens any Intimacies the spirit has that involve its primary function by one step.

Lustrous Hostess Poise (4m; Supplemental; Instant; Essence 3): Vex increases her Appearance to 6 for a single action. If she adds 3+ bonus dice from Appearance on an influence roll, she rerolls 5s and 6s until they cease to appear.

Shimmering Ornament Fete (10m, 1wp; Simple; One scene; Eclipse; Essence 3): A fizz of entrancing soap-bubbles hangs cheerfully in the air as Vex makes an inspire roll to incite others to revelry. Affected characters must pay one Willpower to disrupt Vex's festivities, or two Willpower for violent interruptions. This cost is separate from any cost to resist the influence itself. Characters who embrace the revel and acts as partygoers and courtiers reduce any penalties they suffer from wounds, fatigue, or deprivation by three.

Slander-Drowning Smile (6m, 1wp; Reflexive; Instant; Essence 5): When a character accuses Vex or implicates her in wrongdoing, she may to offer a rebuttal, making a special instill roll against all characters targeted by the opposing character's influence roll. She ignores multiple target penalties. Affected characters gain +2 Resolve against that influence unless they pay one Willpower. If an affected character's Resolve beats the opposing influence roll, that character gains +1 Resolve against the accuser for the rest of the scene. Additionally, Any negative Ties the affected character has toward Vex can't be leveraged by the accuser's social influence.

Slick Courtier's Smile (8m; Supplemental; Instant; Essence 4): Vex adds two automatic successes on an influence roll to instill Intimacies based on joy, temptation, or flattery, or to inspire similar emotions. She rolls a non-Charm die for every 10 that appears and increases the Willpower cost to resist by one for

each of these additional dice that rolls a success, maximum five.

The First Circle: Lesser Machine Spirits

There are legions of lesser machine spirits who dwell in Autochthonia. Most exist to tend to the Great Maker's world-body, whether scouring physical detritus from his veins, repairing his tectonic flesh, or tending to the subtle geomantic processes that propagate his Essence throughout Autochthonia. They are holy laborers and sacred wildlife, each a single cell in the transcendent organism that is Autochthon. Others serve as courtiers, agents, and retainers for subministers, or even one of the Eight Divine Ministers.

Many machine spirits arise from the natural processes of Autochthon, caretakers and custodians of the Great Maker's internal systems. Others are fabricated by superior machine spirits, designed to fulfill a particular function. Most of these are created by subministers, but are sometimes forced to collaborate when a lesser spirit requires a particular combination of Essences. These composite machine spirits are often among the most powerful of their First Circle kin, but they can also be the strangest in their nature and outlook, a patchwork of their progenitors' competing needs and urges. The Divine Ministers rarely create First Circle spirits or contribute to their design, preferring to leave this task to their subministers. On those rare occasions when they do, the results are spectacular.

The lesser machine spirits aren't the mindless automata that some Autochthonians assume them to be. Almost all of them have the capacity for independent thought and personal growth. How could they not, when they partake of the infinite creative genius of the Great Maker? However, few question the purpose for which they were designed. The work is the work, and there is always more to be done. Lesser machine spirits who are lax or idle in their duties face censure from their peers, who bully them into undesirable tasks or ostracize them entirely.

Most lesser machine spirits treat humans with benign indifference, a recalibration made by Great Maker before his slumber. However, a machine spirit's functions may pose obstacles or even threats to human settlements. Their function trumps all else, and they have no compunctions against defending themselves and their work from interlopers and saboteurs. Others sometimes harm mortals out of misunderstanding. When a fix beetle recycles a pilgrim's unattended possessions (or organs) for repairs, it isn't an act of malice — it simply performs its function, without understanding that humans might object to it. Most Autochthonians are happy to defer to the Theomachy in all dealings with the machine spirits, treating them as holy presences best left to their own devices.

First Circle Machine Spirit Template

This template is a starting point for First Circle machine spirits. Individual machine spirits can vary wildly from the general template or the statistics for their kind overall — they may have higher Essence, additional or modified Charms, unique actions for their dice pools, mutations, and personal Intimacies. Unlike more powerful machine spirits, First Circle machine spirits are materialized by default.

Common Intimacies for machine spirits include Principles related to their purpose or function, Ties toward their subminister and higher oversouls, Ties to fellow machine spirits of the same kind, and Principles based on prioritizing efficiency (or scorn for inefficiency) or other traits important to the spirit's function.

Essence: 2; Willpower: 5; Join Battle: 6 dice

Personal: 70

Health Levels: -0/-1x2/-2x4/-4x2/Incap.

Primary Actions: 9 dice

Secondary Actions: 6 dice

Desperate Actions: 3 dice

Appearance 2, Resolve 3, Guile 3

Combat

Attack (Weapon/Machinery): 7 dice (11L)

Attack (Unarmed): 9 dice (Damage 9B)

Attack (Grapple): 7 dice (7 dice to control)

Combat Movement: 6 dice

Evasion: 2; **Parry:** 3

Soak/Hardness: 6/0

Merits

Machine Nature: Most machine spirits are immune to poison and disease and don't need to eat, breathe, or sleep. Some may be susceptible to certain frailties as a result of their unique nature.

Social Charms

Absolute Override (30m, 1wp; Reflexive; Instant; Essence 2): The machine spirit can use Absolute Override at the end of the scene to attempt to purge a Psyche or Shaping effect that impedes its ability to perform its primary function or would otherwise prevent the spirit from accomplishing it. It makes a Primary Action roll against the (Essence + 2) of the effect's creator. Success ends the effect and renders the spirit immune to it for the remainder of the story. Once per story.

Miscellaneous Charms

Dematerialize (35m, 1wp; Simple; Instant): The machine spirit sheds its physical form, leaving behind a residue of scrap and oil.

Hurry Home (10m, 1wp; Simple; Instant): The spirit vanishes on its next turn, reappearing at a place that's significant to its purpose, like an industrial organ it was designed to maintain. A summoned machine spirit can return to the sorcerer

who summoned it.

Labor Unceasing (5m; Supplemental; Instant): The machine spirit ignores wound penalties, crippling penalties, and any other penalties from physical frailty on a Primary Action roll. This never applies on attack rolls.

Measure the Wind (5m; Simple; Instant): Machine spirits can typically determine the nature of others when they become relevant to fulfilling its purpose, typically by committing some specific act or having a specific interaction with it.

Primary Function Protocol (4m; Supplemental; Instant): The machine spirit adds two dice on a Primary Action roll or one die on a Secondary Action roll.

Unit Alert Signal (5m; Simple; Instant): The machine spirit releases a pulse of Essence that can be sensed by other machine spirits of its kind within (Essence) miles. This provides no details, merely an alert, though particularly intelligent can convey short, coded messages by using this Charm multiple times in quick, consecutive pulses.

Goleiok, the Fix Beetles

These mechanical beetles come in a variety of sizes and configurations, a common template employed by numerous subministrators. They range from two to five feet in length, traversing Autochthonia on variable numbers of legs, wheels, treads, or even hover jets. They can deploy a variety of tools from beneath their carapace, meant to repair whatever can be, recycle what can't, or harvest stray materials.

Most goleioks are designed to act as an autonomous maintenance system, wandering in search of things to fix or materials to recycle for future repairs. When they find damaged or malfunctioning pieces of Autochthonia's infrastructure, they fix the problem by any means necessary, making use of whatever materials are necessary. They'll snatch up most anything that's unattended, repurposing it as a building or repair materials.

The fix beetles' indiscriminate use of resources makes their presence a nuisance to many Octet settlements, often requiring the intercession of clerics or warding Municipal Charms. Even worse, fix beetles sometimes attempt to "repair" grievously wounded or dying mortals, installing biomechanical modifications. Others, the fix beetles salvage for parts. There's little way to predict whether one may stitch up someone's wounded arm with wire, replace it with a mechanized, or decide it's a lost cause and recycle it for future

Fix beetles use the First Circle machine spirit template (p. XX) with the following changes. Storytellers can add additional Merits or Charms for different designs of goleiok.

Health Levels: -0/-1x2/-2x2/-4/Incap.

Primary Actions: Break Down Materials (may attempt Strength 5 feats of demolition), Crafting, Environmental Resistance

Secondary Actions: Senses, Stealth, Medicine

Combat

Attack (Built-in Tools): 7 dice (Damage 12L)

Attack (Grapple): 7 dice (9 dice to control)

Soak/Hardness: 8/4

Intimacies

Defining Principle: Fix what I can fix, recycle what I can't.

Defining Principle: Waste nothing.

Defining Tie: Autochthon (Devoted Responsibility)

Major Tie: Their creator (Awed Respect)

Minor Tie: Other fix beetles (Cooperation)

Merits

Autonomous Maintenance System: Fix beetles double 9s on most rolls to repair damaged objects on structures, feats of demolition to break things down for reuse, and similar actions, though their toolkits aren't necessarily equipped for every situation.

Miscellaneous Charms

Essence-Powered Implements (5m; Supplemental; Instant; Uniform; Essence 2): The goleiok brings Essence-powered tools to bear, giving an attack with its Built-In Tools one of the Chopping, Disarming, Flexible, Piercing, or Smashing tags (**Exalted**, pp. 585-586). Alternatively, it can give an attack the Flame tag (**Exalted**, p. XX) and extend its range to short. Most fix beetles can only access some of these tags.

Miscellaneous Charms

Rapid Repair Protocols (5m; Simple; One project; Essence 2): The fix beetle can complete a basic repair project in a few minutes, or a major project in an hour or two. It can utilize some recycled or salvaged that wouldn't normally be usable for the project, and can complete a major project in minutes if appropriate materials are already on hand. It doesn't need to spend craft points to roll for major projects.

Golgin, the Singing Dreams

Travelers hear golgin before seeing them, a wordless song that marries a flexible steel instrument's glissando with a theremin's electric hum. As one draws closer, they can be seen: limbless, polyhedral forms of diamond and quartz, floating through the darkness of the Reaches. Their eerie song sharpens the listener's memory, stirring up memories of even the smallest things from years ago. This is how golgin communicate, modulating their song to trigger memories of events or emotions. It's difficult to understand at first, but soon grows almost intuitive.

Golgin are created to be couriers, ferrying mnemonic messages to and from greater machine spirits throughout Autochthonia. The Octet regards them with a mix of respect and trepidation, heralds whose songs might contain instructions from the Divine Ministers themselves. Golgin also serve a subsidiary function, helping malfunctioning or wayward machine spirits recall themselves and their purpose.

Golgin gather and share the stories and dramas they've seen. Clerics skilled in treating with machine spirits know of no better way to capture a golgin's interest than by promising it a thrilling tale. They're easily distracted by electricity, as absorbing it leaves them pleasantly drunk.

Golgin use the First Circle machine spirit template (p. XX), with the following changes:

Primary Actions: Floating, Singing, Resist Electricity

Secondary Actions: Read Intentions, Senses, Stealth

Appearance 3, Resolve 4, Guile 3

Combat

Attack (Ramming): 6 dice (Damage 9B)

Intimacies

Defining Principle: I must bear my messages faithfully

Defining Principle: We must remember the past to move toward the future

Major Principle: I treasure interesting stories.

Major Principle: I fear conflict

Major Tie: Those who've forgotten who they really are (Compassion)

Minor Principle: I crave electricity

Merits

Eidetic Song: Those who can hear a golgin's song add two automatic successes on rolls related to memory and +2 Resolve against magic that alters memories. These count as bonuses from Charms. The golgin can use its song to communicate, playing memories like notes in a song, but it suffers a two-success penalty on influence rolls with it, except for inspire rolls.

Floating: Golgin float above the ground, potentially letting them avoid certain kinds of difficult terrain, environmental hazards, and similar obstacles.

Lightning-Drinking Thirst: If a golgin would suffer **decisive** damage from electricity, it negates up to five levels of damage, converting them into an intoxicant. This is a poison with Damage 3i/round (B in Crash), Duration (levels of damage prevented) rounds, and a –3 penalty. The golgin doesn't receive a roll to resist it, though it wouldn't want to.

Miscellaneous Charms

Mnestic Refrain (15m, 1wp; Simple; Instant; Essence 2): The golgin rouses a vibrant, detailed memory for a single character, making a Singing roll to do so. That character can use the golgin's successes to notice new details on the roll, as if he'd retroactively made an Awareness roll, case scene roll, read intentions roll, or the like. If the memory has been tampered with by a Psyche effect, he reduces the Willpower cost to resist it in that scene by one. This can't be used on the same memory twice. At the Storyteller's discretion, Alchemicals may recall memories from their prior incarnations. Once per day.

Mandilom, the Crawling Iron

Mandilom are cephaloid machine spirits, a bulbous sphere of overlapping iron plates that extrudes writhing, segmented metal tentacles. A mouth of grinding gears gapes open where the armored plates meet, flanked by pincers and ringed with flashing crystalline eyes. They're capable of squeezing through tight passages, as long as they can fit their core through, and their many claws let them easily traverse along any surface or orientation. Most work in silence, but when they speak, it's like the sound of dozens of small grinders being activated in careful sequence.

The mandilom are part of Autochthonia's emergency repair systems. When a fluid artery becomes blocked to bursting or an industrial organ threatens to fail, they swarm, vomiting out superheated sealants to patch breaches, cracks, and ruptures, or dispersing blockages with caustic solvents. These spot-fixes give fix beetles and other machine spirits enough time to enact more lasting repairs. When that isn't possible, mandilom will assemble to sever critically damaged or dying segments of industrial organs from the rest, cauterizing the injury afterwards. The Reaches near certain blight zones are riddled with keloid-like welds from their efforts.

Cockroaches fascinate mandilom. and elders often carry nests of them in between the panels of their core and limbs. They often spend time between their emergency repairs searching for wild roaches, and the eldest mandilom may carry nests of them between their armored plates. They usually ignore humans, though they sometimes explore the outskirts of human habitations, especial unkempt areas where roaches thrive. Some mandilom have a quiet antipathy for humanity, viewing the Octet's reckless extraction efforts as the cause of disasters that the mandilom must then address.

Between their association with emergency and tragedy and their unhygienic fascinations, the crawling iron are seen as terrible omens by the superstitious, and unpleasant by most everyone else. Jarishites,

however, see the mandilom are heralds warning them of disaster, and have learned to predict imminent malfunctions in the Maker's systems by observing mandilom swarm movements.

Mandilom use the First Circle machine spirit template (p. XX), with the following changes:

Primary Actions: Climbing, Feats of Demolition (may attempt Strength 5 feats), Fit Into Tight Spaces

Secondary Actions: Senses, Threaten

Appearance 3 (Hideous), Resolve 4, Guile 3

Combat

Attack (Tentacle Claws): 10 dice (Damage 10L)

Attack (Mandibles): 8 dice (Damage 14L)

Attack (Grapple): 12 dice (12 dice to control)

Combat Movement: 7 dice

Evasion: 4; **Parry:** 5

Soak/Hardness: 8/4

Intimacies

Defining Principle: Getting it done fast is more important than doing it perfectly.

Major Principle: There's no point to pursuing a lost cause.

Major Principle: I take pride in what I've saved

Minor Tie: Roaches (Fascination)

Minor Tie: Fix Beetles (Rivalry)

Merits

Flexible: Mandilom double 8s on rolls to escape physical confinement or maneuver through tight spaces.

Offensive Charms

Caustic Solvent Spray (8m; Simple; Instant; Decisive-only; Essence 2): The mandilom vomits up powerful chemical solvents, making a **decisive** attack with 10 dice against an enemy within short range. If it deals 3+ damage, that enemy continues to take an additional die of lethal damage at the start of each of his turns, which ignores Hardness. This lasts until he takes an action to wash off the

solvent. **Reset:** Once per scene unless reset by reaching Initiative 12+ or using Superheated Sealant Burst.

Metal-Rending Maw (6m; Supplemental; Instant; Decisive-only; Essence 2): The mandilom adds an automatic success and two dice of damage on a **decisive** mandible attack. If it makes a savaging **decisive** attack against a grappled opponent, it also doubles 10s on the damage roll. This Charm can also enhance feats of destruction to chew through things. The mandilom adds an automatic success on the roll and adds +2 to its effective Strength. It works at an accelerated pace, turning efforts of hours into minutes, or minutes to a single action.

Principle of Motions (10m, 1wp; Reflexive; Instant; Essence 2): The mandilom flurries, ignoring the usual penalties. It can combine two actions of the same type, including two attacks.

Superheated Sealant Burst: The mandilom vomits up superheated adhesives, making a **decisive** attack with 10 dice against an enemy within short range. If it deals 3+ damage, that enemy is engulfed in the adhesive, suffering a –3 penalty on all physical rolls until he takes an action to wash off the adhesive. **Reset:** Once per scene unless reset by reaching Initiative 12+ or using Caustic Solvent Spray.

Zio, the Crystal Flies

Crystal flies act as the Great Maker's internal sensors, autonomously observing, recording, and reporting information so that other systems may take action. They're no larger than a fruit fly and have transparent crystal carapaces, easily moving unobserved against the backdrop of Autochthonia's industrial clamor. In rare moments of silence, a zio may be heard to resonate with a subtle ringing tone like vibrating crystal or a tuning fork.

The crystal flies are creations of Espinoquae, the spymaster of Mog who watches from behind crystals and reflections. The zios patrol the Expanse of Metal in patterns unclear to mortal observation, seeking events to report to Espinoquae. They're intelligent enough to analyze situations and offer useful details, though they tend not to look beyond the surface unless specifically ordered to. Most of their time is spent observing the functioning of the Maker's systems and anything that might be relevant to them, but their attention can also be caught by anything loud or chaotic. Those familiar with Espinoquae are wary of the zios, for the subminister can see through their eyes at any time.

Autochthonians rarely notice a lone crystal fly, but large swarms can be cause for alarm, especially when it's unclear just what they're observing. While there are few who worship Espinoquae, the tunnel folk clans and Octet cults that do revere crystal flies as his eyes and messengers.

Zio use the First Circle machine spirit template (p. XX), with the following changes:

Essence: 1

Personal: 60

Health Levels: -1/-2/-4/Incap.

Primary Actions: Flying, Senses, Stealth

Secondary Actions: Investigation, Navigation

Combat

Attack (Electrical Sting): 10 dice (Damage 3L; 8L against Minuscule Size enemies. Can't deal **decisive** damage to larger enemies.)

Combat Movement: 10 dice

Evasion: 5 (See Minuscule Size); Parry 0

Soak/Hardness: 2/0

Intimacies

Defining Principle: The Maker must see all.

Defining Tie: Espinoquae (Loyalty)

Major Principle: The information I report is vital to the Maker's functioning.

Minor Principle: The less time I waste, the more time I have to observe.

Merits

Eidetic Memory

Translucent Carapace: Zios double 8s on Stealth rolls, and double 7s in low light conditions.

Minuscule Size: Zios gain +3 Evasion against larger foes' attacks. Larger characters subtract three successes from Awareness-based rolls against them. Against foes with the Tiny Creature Merit, this drops to +2 Evasion and -2 successes.

Miscellaneous Charms

Perfect Surveillance Sweep (5m; Reflexive; One scene; Essence 1) The crystal fly doubles 9s on Investigation and Senses rolls and halves any penalties it suffers, rounded down. If the roll is purely based on vision, it adds an additional two dice and ignores all penalties.

Rapid Visual Analysis (5m; Reflexive; Instant; Essence 1): The zio rapidly processes visual information, letting it ascertain a specific detail: the likely source of a fire, how many people in a crowd have Populat soulgems, or what's written

on a far-away sign. No roll is needed, but this can't reveal information that would require a difficulty 6+ roll or an opposed roll to discern. Once per round.

Drones

A drone is a gestalt being, a fusion of machine spirit and mortal body. Drones cast off much of their individuality and free will to become tireless cogs in Autochthonia's functioning. The Eight Nations view drones as saintly figures, for they believe that only those of exceptional faith and mystical insight can achieve such communion with the Machine God. Many drones were once devoted members of the Sodalities or the Theomachracy, who have more contact with machine spirits than most Autochthonians.

Each drone inherits a unique patchwork of skills, memories, and personality traits from her combined halves. The merger transforms them in body as well as mind, making them perfectly symmetrical in their features, unscarred, and hairless. They are ageless, with an eerie insight that no machine spirit's mind could replicate. All drones draw from a shared understanding of Autochthon's will, allowing them to coordinate their efforts without needing to communicate directly.

This template is a starting point for creating drone Quick Characters. Individual drones can vary widely from the general template. Each has a unique set of primary and secondary actions based on the drone's function and the nature of the gestalt's machine spirit. They often have Charms from the machine spirit as well, in addition to the unique drone Charms listed below. Drones almost always have a Defining Principle based on her purpose or function, as well as Major or Defining Ties to Autochthon. They also inherit a scattering of Intimacies from both her mortal and spirit halves, sometimes resulting in odd priorities and contradictory perspectives.

Essence: 2; **Willpower:** 5; **Join Battle:** 7 dice

Personal: 70

Health Levels: -0x2/-1x3/-2x3/-4x2/Incap.

Primary Actions: 10 dice

Secondary Actions: 7 dice

Desperate Actions: 4 dice

Appearance 2, Resolve 5, Guile 2

Combat

Attack (Unarmed): 11 dice (Damage 10B)

Attack (Grapple): 7 dice (7 dice to control)

Combat Movement: 7 dice

Evasion: 4; **Parry:** 4

Soak/Hardness: 5/5

Merits

Hybrid Nature: The drone counts as either a human or a machine spirit, whichever is more advantageous. Killing a drone destroys its human form, but the inhabiting machine spirit reforms as usual unless slain with magic that can permanently destroy spirits

Maker's Favored Frame: Drones are immune to mundane diseases. Outside of combat, they heal one level of non-aggravated damage per minute.

Offensive Charms

Lightning Field (5m; Reflexive; Dual; One tick; Essence 2): The drone can use this Charm on her turn to generate a field of electricity. Her unarmed **withering** attacks ignore (Essence) points of soak, or (Essence + 3) against armored enemies. Unarmed **decisive** attacks double 10s on their damage roll and deal lethal damage. Enemies that hit her with an unarmed attack or spend their turn grappling her suffer one die of lethal damage, ignoring Hardness.

Defensive Charms

Engine of Undying Service (5m per health level or 10m; Simple; Instant; Perilous, Essence 2): The drone can heal up to (Essence) levels of non-aggravated damage for five motes each, or heal a crippling effect that she suffers from for ten motes. With Essence 3, she can instead pay fifteen motes to remove a body-altering Shaping effect or a curse that afflicts her body. **Reset:** Once per day.

Integrity Assertion Field (5m; Reflexive; Instant; Perilous; Essence 1): The drone adds (higher of Essence or 3) to her soak or Hardness.. This can only increase the drone's innate Hardness, not Hardness from armor or other sources.

Social Charms

Soothing Subsonic Vocalization (3m, 1wp; Simple; Instant; Psyche; Essence 2): The drone makes a special instill roll, broadcasting a subliminal vocal harmonic that suppresses hostility in humans and spirits alike. She ignores multiple target penalties. For the rest of the scene, affected characters count as having a Major Principle that supports resolving conflicts peacefully They suffers a penalty of (drone's Essence + 1) on Join Battle rolls. This costs two Willpower to resist. At the end of the scene, affected characters gain one Willpower if they worked toward a peaceful resolution and no violence broke out. They can't gain more than one

Willpower per day.

Miscellaneous Charms

Touch of the Maker (5m; Supplemental; Instant; Essence 1): The drone shares a measure of Autochthon's miraculous creativity, adding three dice on a Craft roll. She adds an additional (Essence) automatic successes on rolls for basic or major projects. She can also use this Charm on a Medicine roll that surgery, prosthetics, or manual repair of Alchemicals, machine spirits, and similar living mechanical entities.

Jovan Kash, Prophet of the Reaches

Ten years ago, the Nuradi lector Jovan secluded himself from civilization, becoming a sacred hermit of the Reaches near the Sea of Oil. There he encountered the damaged machine spirit Kash, one of the silver kraken that sift impurities from the Sea's oil. Kash took the wounded spirit into himself, and together they became something new.

United as one, Jovan Kash now wanders the Reaches, occasionally appearing to an Octet settlement or tunnel folk clan to warn of an impending ecological crisis, whether caused by human action or the functioning Autochthon's abstruse subprocesses. Subministers sometimes call on him for his counsel, or to ferry their messages as a courier along his travels through the Reaches. He's often associated with the emanations of the Divine Minister Ku, his spiritual kin, and other subministers aren't always happy to see him or quick to trust him.

Jovan Kash might be mistaken for a human, but for the oily footprints he leaves wherever he walks. The spirit Kash's divine nature also manifests itself in the drone's power extend his limbs outward like oily tendrils. The drone's personality balances Jovan's optimism and Kash's cynical, judgmental nature. His manner seems calm, or even placid, but this falls away when he tells stories, his quick-witted mortal self rising to the surface for a moment.

Kash use the drone template with the following changes:

Primary Actions: Exploring the Reaches, Machine Spirit Lore, Storytelling, Swimming

Secondary Actions: Read Intentions, Resist Poison/Disease, Senses, Social Influence, Tracking

Combat

Attack (Metal Fangs): 10 dice (Damage 12L/3)

Intimacies

Defining Principle: Humanity must survive the perils of Autochthonia that they might fill their proper place in the Grand Design.

Defining Tie: Autochthon (Devotion)

Major Principle: Impurities must be excised.

Minor Principle: I enjoy storytelling.

Minor Tie: Ku and his subministers (Kinship)

Merits

Denizen of Oil's Depths: Jovan Kash can breathe oil as if it were air and suffers no penalties from being immersed in oil, including visibility penalties.

Metallic Maw: The drone's sharp silver teeth let him chew and swallow mundane metals, deriving sustenance from them as if they were food.

Offensive Charms

Kraken's Oily Clasp (3m, 2i; Simple; Instant; Essence 2): Jovan Kash's limbs extend far beyond the human norm, letting him take an action at short range: opening doors, stealing small objects, making unarmed attacks, etc. If he uses this on a grapple gambit, he adds an automatic success on the attack roll and control roll, and pulls his target into close range if he succeeds.

Drones of Blight

Gremlinized drones are rare, usually the result of a Blight-mad machine spirit possessing an unwilling mortal host. Instead of balance and insight of a drone, these gestalt horrors amplify the worst impulses of mortal and machine spirit, following unpredictable urges with little inhibition, and sometimes without self-preservation.

Rat

Rats are ubiquitous throughout Autochthonia's habitable zones, though Rat-Slaying Electrification Grids suppress urban populations in many metropoli. Some Autochthonian see them as vermin, though some in more prosperous nations keep them as pets. Many tunnel folk use trained rats to seek out veins of nutrient paste, and the animal is often ascribed significance in a clan's culture, folklore, or religion.

Essence: 1; **Willpower:** 3; **Join Battle:** 5 dice

Health Levels: -0/-1/-2/-4/Incap.

Actions: Climbing: 7 dice; Gnawing: 5 dice; Senses: 8 dice (see Keen Nose); Stealth: 7 dice (see Tiny Creature).

Resolve 2, Guile 1

Combat

Attack (Bite): 4 dice (Damage 3L; 5L against enemies of equal or smaller size)

Attack (Claw): 6 dice (Damage 1L; 3L against enemies of equal or smaller size)

Combat Movement: 7 dice

Evasion: 3 (see Tiny Creature); **Parry:** 1

Soak/Hardness: 1/0

Special Abilities

Terrifying Swarm: Rat battle groups inflict a –2 penalty on rolls by enemies within close range.

Merits

Keen Nose: Double 9s on scent-based Perception rolls.

Tiny Creature: +2 Evasion against larger foes' attacks. Larger characters subtract two successes from Awareness rolls against rats.

Discerning Scent (Latent): Double 8s on scent-based Perception rolls to detect a specific substance. This Merit can be taught multiple times.

A Variety of Rats

Several unique rat subspecies exist in Autochthonian rat. Larger species, like Kamek's Ein rats and Trantec rats (p. XX), don't have the Tiny Creature Merit. They gain an additional –1 and –2 health level and +3 soak.

Aggressive species, like Muvisni rats, Rabla rats, and gremlins add +2 on attack rolls and +3 raw **withering** damage.

Other species of Autochthonian rats include:

Glow Rats: These bioluminescent rats are prized by tunnel folk.

Honey Rats: Unique to Sova, these rats feed on exotic chemicals and convert them to a slightly acidic honey-like substance. Extracted by syringe, it's a rare delicacy.

Productivity Rats: These small, docile rats serve as factory mascots to bolster morale, especially among child laborers.

Gremlin Rats: These corrupted, biomechanical mutants pose a threat in large numbers, which are sometimes amassed by gremlin machine spirits. In addition to the increased traits above, they often have a number of techno-organic mutations.

Gremlins

In Autochthonian parlance, anything corrupted by the Blight is known as a gremlin. Mortal and animal gremlins gain mutations to represent the techno-organic twisting of their bodies, but otherwise use the same traits.

Gremlinized machine spirits can be created using the First Circle or Second Circle machine spirit templates (p. XX), potentially drawing from the spirit's original traits or the gremlin Charms listed below. They may gain or lose Primary and Secondary Actions to represent their new format's propensity towards violence, sabotage, and cruelty. Their Intimacies likewise change, gaining Intimacies that emphasize cruelty, hatred, rage, and destructive urges, while often losing Intimacies rooted in positive emotions or related to craftsmanship or other forms of Creation. Gremlinized drones can also be created in the same way using the drone template (p. XX).

Tainted by death's Essence, gremlins are creatures of darkness, leaving them vulnerable to certain smiting magics. They have no place in the Design of Autochthon or the Loom of Fate, marking them as enemies of fate.

Gremlin Charms

Gremlin Charms are often visceral, organic, malevolent, or crude, particularly in comparison to a machine spirits' original Charms. The following Charms are common among many models of gremlin.

Cancerous Mien of Blight (1m, 1wp; Simple; Instant; Shaping [Body]; Essence 2):

The gremlin warps a victim's appearance with a damaging **decisive** attack or a difficulty 1. If it deals damage or succeeds on the gambit, it inflicts a transformations comparable to those caused by minor exposure to the Blight (p. XX). This lasts for (gremlin's Essence) days, but it's permanent against machine spirits of lower Essence and mortals.

Carnage Breeds Calamity (1wp; Simple; Instant; Perilous; Essence 5): The gremlin spends its turn causing wanton, purposeless destruction — slaughtering bystanders, rampaging through scenery, and other violent acts that serve no immediate purpose. It rolls (Essence + current temporary Willpower). Each success lets it gain either one mote or one Initiative. Once per scene.

Doom-Dreaming Smile (4m; Reflexive; Instant; Essence 2): The gremlin gains +2 Resolve against influence that would instill a positive Tie, inspire positive emotions, or leverage either of them. If the gremlin successfully asserts its Resolve, the influencing character suffers a -1 penalty to Resolve and Guile against the gremlin for the rest of the scene.

Dread Toxin Miasma (10m, 1wp; Simple; Instant; Essence 5): The gremlin creates a cloud of toxic vapor that extends out to medium range from it. The miasma is an inhaled poison with Damage 3i/round, Duration 6 rounds, and a -3 penalty. If the poison's damage incapacitates a crashed enemy, he suffers major exposure to the

Blight (p. XX). The poison doesn't affect gremlins. Liquids and foodstuffs caught in the miasma become poisonous.

Extermination Imperative (5m, 1wp; Simple; Instant; Essence 4): The gremlin makes a special influence roll against a machine spirit of equal or lower Essence within close range. Success instills a Minor Principle of relishing mortal terror and carnage and subjects the spirit to minor Blight exposure (p. XX). If it fails the roll against exposure, the instilled Intimacy becomes a Minor Derangement, in addition to any other consequences.

Heresy-Inspiring Hymn (4m; Supplemental; Instant; Essence 3): The gremlin adds doubles 9s on an instill roll to weaken a positive Tie toward the Great Maker, his machine spirits, and his Alchemical Exalted, or on an instill roll to create or strengthen negative Ties toward them. Weakening a positive Intimacy reduces its Resolve bonus by one for the rest of the scene, while strengthening a negative Intimacy increases its Resolve penalty by one for the scene.

Hunger for Mayhem (7m; Supplemental; Instant; Essence 3): The gremlin adds three dice on a bargain, persuade, or threaten roll to make others enact bloodthirsty, chaotic, or treacherous behavior, or an inspire roll to provoke similar emotions. It rolls an additional non-Charisma die for each 10. If it rolls at least three extra dice this way, the influence costs an additional Willpower to resist.

Life-Consuming Appetite (5m, 1wp; Reflexive; Instant; Perilous; Essence 4): The gremlin can use this Charm when it lethally incapacitates a character or inflicts a crippling injury, healing (victim's Essence) levels of non-aggravated damage. Once per scene.

Monstrous Flesh Made Free (5m, 2i; Reflexive; One scene; Dual, Perilous, Stackable; Essence 3): The gremlin can use this Charm after taking **decisive** damage. It adds one die on **withering** and **decisive** damage rolls. It also adds one die on feats of strength and adds +1 to its effective Strength for attempting feats. It can stack this Charm up to (Essence/2, rounded up) times.

Rapid Entropy Aura (10m; Simple; One scene; Essence 4): The gremlin radiates entropic energy out to medium range. Objects and structures within this range grow weaker. Feats of demolition to destroy them reduce their difficulty and minimum Strength by two. Affected armor suffers -2 soak while within range, while weapons suffer -2 Damage. Some gremlins can affect any inorganic matter

with this, while others can only affect metal, crystal, fungi, or similar materials.

Splintered Parasite Soul (5m, 1wp; Simple; Indefinite; Psyche; Essence 5): The gremlin injects a parasitic soul-shard into a machine spirit with lower Essence or a mortal. It must touch its target, requiring a difficulty 1 gambit in combat, then makes a special influence roll against it. Its victim gains one of the gremlin's Major or Defining Intimacies at Major intensity, and must spend one Willpower each time he voluntarily weakens it. As long as the victim has this Intimacy, the gremlin can enter a torpor state and displace its senses into her, to a maximum of (Essence x10) miles. This counts as possession. Prolonged inhabitation can trigger Blight exposure (p. XX) at the Storyteller's discretion.

Twisted Grasp (6m; Simple; One scene; Essence 2): The gremlin extrudes pulsing, viscera-slick arms, tentacles, or other appendages. It reduces flurry penalties by one and adds an automatic success on rolls for climbing, feats of strength, and the attack and control rolls for grapple gambits. It can use this Charm reflexively if its wound penalty is -2 or higher.

Tamarak Met, the Blighted Scalpel, Second Circle Gremlin

When the industrial clamor of the Far Reaches falls away into the buzz of static and the steady rhythm of a spear against the ground, Tamarak Met is nearby. Death must surely follow.

Tamarak Met stands ten feet tall, a broadly muscled figure of living onyx. His flesh is armored in orichalcum scales, each a commendation from Mog soldered to his skin until his deeds became his armor. The Blight has warped him with cancerous nodules of dense muscle, and his once-clear eyes are now a sea of silvery static. He speaks rarely, and even then, only in cackling accusations, dredging regrets from the minds of his prey before passing sentence on them with crackling indigo electricity.

Once, Tamarak was a subminister to Mog. In his original role, he was the Error-Excising Scalpel, an expert engineer and troubleshooter tasked with locating faults in the Engine of Lightning's complex systems and those of its associated sub-organs. Mog recommissioned him as the Scalpel That Walks, a surgical combatant to face a rising tide of gremlins and blight zones. Tamarak Met served dutifully but without joy for decades amidst the Blight, until his fabled precision finally slipped. One casualty begat another as his focus faltered.

That doubt was fertile ground for the Blight. He now stalks the Reaches, judging all he encounters — and almost always finding them unworthy. He has cut down Alchemicals, machine spirits, and other gremlins, but can sometimes be convinced to join forces against some greater danger by canny rhetoricians or pious Champions. He takes perverse pleasure in sabotaging the same systems he once so carefully maintained, creating electrical failures that ripple throughout metropoli. In his more lucid moments, he remembers the pride he once took in his work and judges himself as harshly as he might any other, despairing at how far he has fallen.

Essence: 7; Willpower: 8; Join Battle: 12 dice

Personal: 120

Health Levels: -0x8/-1x4/-2x4/-4x6/Incap.

Primary Actions: Intimidation, Ministerial Lore, Read Intentions, Resistance, Senses

Secondary Actions: Feats of Strength (Strength 5), History, Influence, Stealth Appearance 4, Resolve 5, Guile 3

Combat

Attack (Lightning spear): 11 dice (Damage 16L/3)

Attack (Grapple): 11 dice (12 dice to control)

Combat Movement: 11 dice

Evasion: 4; **Parry:** 4

Soak/Hardness: 13/6

Intimacies

Defining Principle: Everyone is unworthy

Defining Tie: Mog (Hatred)

Defining Principle: Tamarak Met (Utter Hatred)

Major Principle: I delight in judging others.

Major Principle: The secrets of others are mine to know

Major Principle: Finesse before force

Major Tie: Mortals (Warped Paternalism)

Minor Principle: Complex systems are so fun to destroy

Minor Tie: Other gremlins (Disdain)

Merits

Omnisurveillance: Tamarak has multiple eyes around his head, hidden behind a blue crystal visor. He can see in all directions, reducing the Defense penalty from surprise attacks by one, and ignores up to four points of visual penalties from smoke, darkness, and other environmental factors.

Offense Charms

Cruel Judgment (5m, 1i; Supplemental; Instant; Uniform; Essence 3): Tamarak taunts a foe as he attacks, invoking one of her Intimacies representing a failure or regret. That Intimacy's Resolve penalty applies to the target's Defense against the attack. Tamarak must know the Intimacy he invokes, and each Intimacy can only be invoked once.

Deafening Static (5m, 1wp; Reflexive; One scene; Perilous; Essence 4): All sound is silenced within medium range of Tamarak, replaced with buzzing static. In addition to rendering sound inaudible, the static makes it impossible to attempt actions that require concentration without a stunt. Even then, they suffer a -2 penalty. This never impedes other magic used by Tamarak.

Implacable Thunder Sanction (13m; Supplemental; Instant; Decisive-only; Essence 4): Tamarak adds three automatic successes on a **decisive** attack roll and doubles 10s on the damage roll. Enemies wearing metal armor halve their Hardness against the attack, rounded up, and Tamarak deals an additional die of damage for each point of Hardness lost. He also gains this benefit against enemies with metal bodies, like most machine spirits.

Lightning Thorn Harpoon (8m; Supplemental; One scene; Uniform; Essence 4): A successful attack with a lightning spear embeds it in the target's flesh, trailing thin filaments of electricity back to the gremlin's heart. This electric tether prevents the target from moving further than medium range from Tamarak, and inflicts a -3 penalty on her disengage rolls against him. Tamarak automatically succeeds on rolls opposing the target's Stealth. When Tamarak takes **withering** or **decisive** damage, the target loses two Initiative, shocked by electric arcs of pain. Removing the lightning spear is a difficulty 3 (Strength + [Athletics or Medicine]) roll. Doing so inflicts one die of lethal damage, which ignores Hardness.

Visions in Violence (3m; Supplemental; Instant; Dual; Essence 2): If a successful attack roll also beats the target's Guile, Tamarak also treats it as a read intentions roll against the target. Success grants the gremlin a vision of one of that victim's greatest regrets or failures. If Tamarak uses this information as part of his next influence roll against the target, he doubles 9s.

Defense Charms

Electric Reprisal Defense (10m, 3i; Reflexive; Until next turn; Uniform, Perilous; Essence 5): Tamarak shivers with indigo static, inflicting a –3 success penalty on attack rolls against him. Anyone who attacks him at close range faces an electrical environmental hazard, with difficulty 3, Damage 2L.

Social Charms

Scintillating Wine of Judgment (10m, 1wp; Simple; Instant; Essence 6): Tamarak wordlessly makes an inspire roll with his Primary Action pool to draw out feelings of regret or guilt, doubling 8s and increasing the Willpower cost to resist by two. Once per scene, he may gain one Willpower on a successful roll, and Initiative equal to the highest base Resolve among the affected characters when doing so, he gains (highest Resolve affected) Initiative and regains one Willpower.

Ravener Worms, First Circle Gremlins

Ravener worms are the Blight-corrupted form of the bryataxes, human-sized mechanical lampreys covered in thick coats of green mold that tend to the Great Maker's nutrient conduits. When these conduits leak, the bryataxes who stem the flow, repair the damage, and scavenge the slurry for reclamation.

Exposure to the Blight corrupts bryataxes into ravener worms. Their mold becomes a sickly, pustulent yellow, and ropes of sinew and viscera tangle and snarl in their internal mechanisms. These gremlins see all organic life as leaks in a broken system that need to be reclaimed. They consume flesh wherever they find it, stripping corpses down to the bones and using the raw meat to birth new worms inside their cyst-hives. While ravener worms aren't sapient, they often exhibit a predatory cunning, particularly in plotting ambushes.

Primary Actions: Group Tactics, Intimidation, Stealth

Secondary Actions: Feats of Strength (Strength 5), Navigation, Resistance, Sabotage, Senses

Appearance 1, Resolve 3, Guile 1

Combat

Attack (Bite): 8 dice (12L)

Intimacies

Defining Tie: The Hive (Loyalty)

Defining Principle: All organic matter must be reclaimed.

Offense Charms

Corrosive Ichor (4m; Reflexive; Instant; Uniform; Essence 2): An enemy that takes

decisive damage from a bite attack suffers –3 soak for the rest of the scene. Against enemies wearing mundane armor, the worm may forgo dealing three levels of damage to destroy the armor instead.

Deadly Digestive Caress (3m; Supplemental; Instant; Aggravated, Decisive-only): A **decisive** bite attack doubles 10s and deals aggravated damage to anything made of organic flesh. On savaging attacks against grappled enemies, they also add three dice of damage.

Swollen Conduit Rapacity (1wp; Reflexive; Instant; Decisive-only; Essence 2): After hitting with a **decisive** attack while at Initiative 12+, the ravener worm can use this Charm to drain five motes from its victim. If the target doesn't have that many motes to drain, the worm adds dice of damage equal to the difference.

The Hive's Heart

Ravener worms are linked to their mother-hive, and gain a Defining Intimacy of fearful obedience to anyone who regularly feeds their flesh to its spawning pool – a favorite tactic of Apostates. Isolated ravener worms can create a new hive with enough time and organic matter.

Apostates

Systems break down. Components degrade. Nothing was meant to last forever — not even Autochthon. His creeping sickness warps and twists every aspect of his nature with these bleak truths, and the Great Maker's Chosen are no exception. Resilient as they are, even a Champion can succumb to this corruption. Those who do become Apostates, warped Exalted whose toxic Essence is imbued with the Great Maker's Blight. The Eight Nations fear and abhor them, repulsed by these tainted Champion's perverse transformation into the opposite of everything they were meant to be.

The Blight's corruption is slow and insidious at first, nurturing discontent, insecurity, and petty spite. As it progresses, the tainted Champion may seem gripped by paranoia and dark moods, her dreams filled with twisted steel, rusted screams, and mechanical cancer. As the Blight's corruption nears completion, whatever traces of empathy and compassion remain in the Apostate are distorted into static, replaced with destructive urges, sadistic cruelty, and single-minded ruthlessness.

Apostates may be the greatest threat faced by the Eight Nations. Some are exactly what the Octet thinks they are, techno-organic monsters who revel in murderous rampages and aimless destruction. Others infiltrate Autochthonian society, undermining their systems from within or spreading their blasphemous teachings like fungal spores that bloom into voidbringer cults. Some Apostates struggle against their corrupted nature, clinging to their ideals, their purpose, or the people most important to them. Few manage for long. Disparate as their origins and motives may be, the Apostates are united by common cause of the Blight, putting their differences aside to collaborate in destructive endeavors.

Many Apostates make their lairs in the blight zones of Far Reaches once they're discovered, escaping beyond the pursuit of the Eight Nations' Champions. They construct gruesome mockeries of Alchemical's vat complexes from unliving flesh and corrupted metal, often scavenged from vivisected mortals and

machine spirits. Here, the Apostates recruit gremlins and voidbringer cultists as servants, disciples, and warriors, and labor at creating great engines of atrocity. They marshal these forces to destroy or drive away machine spirits, sabotage industrial organs, and exterminate tunnel folk clans and Octet settlements.

Apostate Charms

The following Charms and submodules are intended to assist the Storyteller in creating Alchemical Apostate Quick Characters.

Cognitohazardous Image Projector (10m, 1wp; Simple; One scene; Psyche; Essence 2): The Apostate is surrounded in a hologlyphic display whose jagged fractal patterns encode a memetic Blight. Anyone who can see her suffers (higher of Essence or 3) dice of aggravated **decisive** damage, which ignores Hardness. Enemies incapacitated by this suffer major exposure to the Blight (p. XX). Characters can avoid by closing their eyes, suffering a –3 penalty to vision-based actions.. Gremlins are immune to this Charm.

Counter-Divinity Override (5m, 1wp; Supplemental; Instant; Decisive-only; Essence 3): If the Apostate deals 3+ damage with a **decisive** attack, she can terminate one of her victim's ongoing Charms or other magical effects. That character can't use it again for the rest of the scene.

Meta-Abomination Charger (1wp; Reflexive; One scene; Perilous; Essence 3): The Apostate can use this Charm in a blight zone to roll Join Battle. She gains an additional mote at the start of each turn. This Charm ends if she's crashed. She can use it outside of blight zones while fighting in support of a Major or Defining Intimacy that's inimical or offensive to the Great Maker, his machine spirits, or the Eight Nations' orthodoxy in worshipping them. Once per scene.

Necromotile Implantation Theater (5m, 1wp; Simple; Instant; Essence 2): Over the course of an hour the Apostate inserts cybernetic actuators into a corpse, raising it as an undead, techno-necrotic gremlin with the traits of a golem (**Exalted**, p. 500). It has a Defining Tie of obedience toward the Apostate and up to (Apostate's Essence) dots of mechanical mutations.

Omnicorruptive Essence Overdrive (5m [+5m, 1wp]); Simple; Instant; Psyche, Uniform; Essence 2): The Apostate stirs a gremlin within medium range into a berserk state. If it's unwilling, this requires a special persuade roll. Upon entering the berserk state, the gremlin rolls Join Battle. It gains a Defining Principle of

berserk fury, adds an automatic success on **withering** and decisive damage rolls, and reduces its wound penalties by two for the rest of the scene. At the end of the scene the gremlin perishes, melting into a pool of foul pollutants and corroded mechanical scraps. Apostates are immune to this Charm, as are Second and Third Circle gremlins. The Apostate can spend a five-mote, one-Willpower surcharge to target a First Circle machine spirit that isn't a gremlin or an automaton.

Tactical Essence Inversion Matrix (5m; Simple; Instant): The Apostate overloads an allied gremlin within medium range with Blighted Essence, detonating it in a shower of gore and shrapnel. All characters within close range of the target suffers a one-time environmental hazard with difficulty of (gremlin's Essence + 3) and Damage (gremlin's Essence + 4)L. Once per scene unless reset by crashing an enemy.

Unstable Technomorphic Matrix (5m, 1wp; Simple; One scene): The Apostate undergoes a hideous metamorphosis, swelling with techno-organic growths and distorted musculature. She gains six dots of mutations, chosen at the time she uses the Charm. She adds (higher of Essence or 3) to the raw damage of her **withering** attacks and to her effective Strength for feats of strength. She also adds that many non-Charm dice on threaten rolls. She becomes Hideous if she wasn't already.

Submodules

Chemical Fog Generator (p. XX): *Environmental Blasphemy Engine* (+6m) Allied gremlins are immune to this Charm's poisonous smoke. She can pay a six-mote surcharge to suffuse the smog with Blight. Gremlins add two dice on all physical rolls while they're within the cloud. Enemies poisoned by it increase the poison's penalty by one as long as they remain within it. Characters who are incapacitated by the poison suffer major exposure to the Blight (p. XX).

Biostasis Field Projector (p. XX): *Biomorphic Reconstruction Cyst*: When the Apostate uses this Charm on a gremlin, she can reconstruct it with up to six dots of grotesque techno-organic mutations as a training effect.

Essence Pulse Cannon (p. XX): *Agony Beam Emitter* (+2m): The Apostate can pay a two-mote surcharge on a **decisive** attack to fire a beam of pure pain. If it deals 3+ damage the target's wound penalty is increased by one until he crashes the Apostate.

Infrasonic Dread Projector (p. XX): *Paraliminal Horror Broadcaster*: Affected characters also suffer Minor Paranoia (**Exalted**, p. 168) until they next recover Willpower from resting. The Paranoia is Major for mortals whose permanent Willpower is lower than the Apostate's Essence, and for any mortal or First Circle machine spirit if used in blight zones, the Paranoia is Major. Failing a Willpower roll against this Paranoia causes minor exposure to the Blight (p. XX).

Multifunction Hypodermic Apparatus (p. XX): *Instant Exsanguination Probe*: The Apostate can use this Charm to heal herself by draining blood or other vital fluids out of her victim. healing levels of damage equal to half the damage dealt, maximum (Essence). Once per scene unless reset by killing a non-trivial target.

Toxin Synthesis Injector: *Necrotic Revivification Venom*: A mortal slain while poisoned rises as a zombie at the end of the scene (**Exalted**, p. 502). It has a Defining Tie of obedience to the Apostate.

Apostates and Necromancy

While untainted Alchemicals are incapable of learning necromancy, some Apostates are able to initiate into that fell power. Initiating into the Ivory Circle requires installing a Transentropic Weaving Engine, whose traits mirror those of Man-Machine Weaving Engine (p. XX). Attaining Shadow Circle Necromancy requires installing a Weave-Shredding Paradox Engine, which likewise mirrors God-Machine Weaving Engine. Apostates can't learn both Celestial Circle sorcery and Shadow Circle necromancy — they must choose one or the other.

Clambering Horror Mechanism

Courageous Guardian Construct was a lauded hero among the clades of Gulak. The Soulsteel Caste was inseparable from his Orichalcum Caste Circlemate, *Numinous Shining Array*, thwarting countless threats from heretical voidbringer cults and civil dissidents over their long career. Contrary to the stereotypes of their castes, *Construct* was always the more compassionate of the two, urging leniency and mercy to temper the brutality of his more zealous partner.

Their decades-long partnership ended with the Ithryoum Plaza massacre, when *Numinous Shining Array* slaughtered dozens of One Tier Movement protestors obstructing one of Thutot's main thoroughfares. The two Champions argued furiously, then came to blows when *Construct* interposed himself between *Array* and the surviving protestors. *Construct* came out the worse for it, badly wounded, and retreated from his wrathful partner. Only later did he learn that his Circlemate had denounced him as an Apostate, accusing him of conspiring with Gulak's enemies as proof of his Blighted corruption. *Construct* was forced to flee Thutot, hounded through the streets by militias of the very people he had sought to protect.

Construct withdrew to the Reaches in shameful exile. Deep in despair, he dwelled upon what had been taken from him. He grieved his betrayal at the hands of his Circlemate, and the hatred of the nation he'd devoted his life to protecting. The Blight took root in the darkness that rose to fill his mind, kindling fury and hatred against his former home. If Gulak wished to name him an Apostate, then an Apostate they would have. *Courageous Guardian Construct* ceased to be, replaced with *Clambering Horror Mechanism*.

Mechanism's corruption was the end of his exile. He returning to Thutot, disguised as one of the Lumpen, and found that the One Tier Movement's fervor had only grown with the crackdowns of the intervening years. The Apostate hungers for revenge against *Numinous Shining Array*, but he still clings to his role as a Champion. The Tripartite has shown itself incapable of proper governance, and *Mechanism* has come to show the people a better way. He offers covert support to certain radical cells of the One Tier Movement, whether through his own personal might or the voidbringer cults he's recruited to the movement.

Caste: Soulsteel

Essence: 3; **Willpower:** 8; **Join Battle:** 9 dice

Personal: 17; **Peripheral:** 41

Health Levels: -0/-1x5/-2x10/-4/Incap.

Actions: Command: 7 dice; Disguise: 11 dice; Feats of Strength: 9 dice (may attempt Strength 5 feats); Intimidation: 12 dice; Resist Poison/Disease: 10 dice; Senses: 6 dice; Social Influence: 10 dice; Stealth: 11 dice

Appearance 3 (Hideous), Resolve 4, Guile 4

Combat

Attack (Unarmed): 13 dice (Damage 13B)

Attack (Grapple): 8 dice (11 dice to control)

Combat Movement: 9 dice

Evasion: 4; **Parry:** 7

Soak/Hardness: 15/4 (Extermination Husk, soulsteel breastplate)

Intimacies

Defining Tie: *Numinous Shining Array* (Hatred)

Major Principle: People deserve better than what the Octet can give.

Major Tie: Gulak (Resentment)

Major Tie: The Tripartite (Disgust)

Minor Tie: The One Tier Movement (Camaraderie)

Minor Principle: I am not a monster.

Anima

Apostate's Bleak Judgment (10m, 1wp; Reflexive; Instant): *Mechanism* adds +7 to his base Initiative when he resets after landing a **decisive** attack against an Alchemical, a machine spirit, or a mortal with a positive Tie to either. Once per day.

Inhuman Terror (5m; Supplemental; Instant): *Mechanism* adds three non-Charm dice on a threaten roll. Once per day, he retry a failed threaten roll without needing to reset.

Screaming Metal Cacophony (5m; Reflexive; Until next turn): *Mechanism* inflict a

–2 penalty on attack rolls and other hostile actions against him. This power is free at bonfire.

Excellencies

Mechanism can add bonus dice on rolls for one mote per die. He can add up to five dice on pools of 3-6 dice, seven dice on pools of 7-10 dice, and eight dice on pools of 11+ dice.

Mechanism can raise static values for two motes per +1 bonus. He can add up to +3 for values of 2-3 and +4 for values of 4+.

Offensive Charms

Counter-Divinity Override (5m, 1wp; Supplemental; Instant; Decisive-only; Essence 3): If the Apostate deals 3+ damage with a **decisive** attack, she can terminate one of her victim's ongoing Charms or other magical effects. That character can't use it again for the rest of the scene.

Infinite Anguish Shockwave (8m, 2i; Simple; Perilous; Instant): To use this Charm, *Mechanism* must have Initiative 10+. He rolls twelve dice, opposed by the (Dexterity + Dodge) of all enemies within short range. Enemies who fail their roll are blasted one range band away from her and fall prone, losing five Initiative. They suffer a penalty on all rolls equal to the number of successes they failed by until the end of their next turn, maximum –3. Characters who suffer a full –3 penalty also lose one Willpower.

Screaming Ghost Hammer (12m, 1wp; Simple; Instant; Decisive-only): *Mechanism* makes an unblockable **decisive** attack against an enemy of lower Initiative. He adds three dice of damage, and adds up to five attack roll extra successes as additional dice of damage. He doubles up to five 9s and 10s on the damage roll. If the attack deals damage his enemy is hurled back to medium range and is exposed to a poison with the Damage 4i/round, Duration 9 rounds, and a –4 penalty.

Sonic Drill Fist (5m; Supplemental; Instant, Withering-only): *Mechanism* adds +4 raw damage on a **withering** attack and ignores three points of soak.

Unstable Technomorphic Matrix (5m, 1wp; Simple; One scene): *Mechanism* gains

six dots of mutations, chosen at the time he uses the Charm. He adds +3 to the raw damage of his **withering** attacks and to his effective Strength for feats of strength. He also adds three non-Charm dice on threaten rolls.

Defensive Charms

Cognitohazardous Image Projector (10m, 1wp; Simple; One scene; Psyche; Essence 2): Anyone who can see *Mechanism* suffers three dice of aggravated **decisive** damage, which ignores Hardness. Enemies incapacitated by this suffer major exposure to the Blight (p. XX). Characters can avoid by closing their eyes, suffering a –3 penalty to vision-based actions. Gremlins are immune to this Charm.

Flawless Defensive Programming (2m; Reflexive; Instant; Internal, Uniform): *Mechanism* ignores Defense penalties, other than the penalty from surprise attacks. If he successfully defends against an attack by an enemy with lower Initiative, *Mechanism* doesn't gain any onslaught penalty — instead, his attacker does.

Transitory Invulnerability Engine (5m, 1wp; Reflexive; Instant; Decisive-only): *Mechanism* gains Hardness equal to his Initiative against an attack, or adds (Initiative/2, rounded up) to her existing Hardness of that's higher. He's not affected by poisons, diseases, or crippling effects conveyed by the attack. This resets him to base Initiative. Once per scene unless reset after facing three **decisive** attacks from nontrivial enemies without taking damage.

Mobility Charms

Superior Gyroscopic Calibration (3m; Reflexive; One scene; None): *Mechanism* gains perfect balance and can stand on surfaces too narrow to support him. He adds three non-Charm dice on rolls to rise from prone. He always lands on his feet when falling, reducing the falling damage he takes by one level.

Social Charms

Supreme Torment Conditioning (3m; Supplemental; Instant): *Mechanism* rerolls 1s and 2s until they cease to appear on a threaten roll. It also counts as an Intimacy that would oppose giving in the Apostate's intimidation. This can't weaken Intimacies if the character has another Major or Defining Intimacy that opposes the influence.

Stealth Charms

Null Anima Circuitry (3m per level of anima, 1wp; Reflexive; Indefinite; Mute, Stackable): *Mechanism* lowers his anima banner by one level for every three motes he commits. When he ends the Charm, the suppressed levels of anima return. If he uses it multiple times in the same scene, the Willpower cost of subsequent uses is waived.

Tactical Espionage Mode (5m; Reflexive; Mute; One scene): *Mechanism* adds three dice on Stealth rolls and unexpected attack rolls. However, he suffers –2 soak..

Miscellaneous Charms

Integrated Artifact Transmogrifier (2m; Reflexive; Indefinite; Mute): *Mechanism* conceals any number of Charms, taking on a mortal appearance if he conceals all of them.

Unbound Essence Booster (—; Reflexive; One scene): *Mechanism* rolls five dice, adding two automatic successes. He gains peripheral motes equal to his total successes, and increases his anima by one level for every five motes he receives. These motes last for the rest of the scene.

Outro

Above, wispy white clouds scudded across a clear blue sky. Birds wheeled and dove, their far-off calls reaching the ears of a woman who'd just stepped into a sun-dappled patch of forest. She turned to face its brilliance, delighting in the way it warmed her clay skin. She'd never felt such a thing before.

Below in the crèche, sealed away and buried for so many millennia, all had been cool and quiet. Not that the chamber's occupant had noticed — before a few moments ago, she'd been...she'd been...what? Not sleeping, not dreaming, not dead.

Waiting?

Perhaps. It was a better word than most, but she'd had no awareness of time passing — no awareness of anything — and what she might have been waiting for she didn't know. No one had been there when the crèche opened and the cables had fallen away. When her eyes opened for the first time, no one had been standing there ready with orders, or a greeting, or advice.

Should there have been? She thought maybe there ought to have, but she didn't know why. Perhaps it would simply have been nice to see a friendly face.

But birdsong had reached her, so she'd stretched her limbs for the first time, reveling in how good it felt to *move*, and followed the sound out of the bare little chamber. Small half-globes made of translucent glass were embedded in the stone. They glowed to life as she came near, leading her along a short hallway. Its smooth granite walls bore no markings, and the floor showed no evidence of passersby. If

anyone had come to attend to her, they'd left no trace. The globes faded as she passed, leaving the chamber behind her in darkness. She didn't think she'd return to it.

Toward the end of the hall, dust and dirt had begun gathering. Deeper in had been spotless and untouched, protected from whatever lay outside. But here, rather than unbroken slabs of stone, the builders had fitted blocks together. No matter how precisely their masons had joined them together, thousands of years of roots had finally worked their way through the tiniest of seams. The structure was still centuries or more from crumbling, but in one spot a tiny beam of sunlight broke through. Had the birdsong reached her from there, too?

She paused a moment and listened. Yes, there it came again, a high, sweet call penetrating the tomb-like silence all around her. She wanted to see what the bird who made that lovely sound looked like.

There was a door, though it had no handle, no indentation to slip her fingers into to draw it aside. She ran her hands along its seams. Perhaps she could pry it open. Symbols lit when her fingers made contact; warm golden light suffused channels carved into the stone. Within the walls, mechanisms whirled...then whined. A horrible grinding sound drowned out the birdsong until finally something went *thunk*.

Despair or discouragement never occurred to her. She knew a few things. Her name, for one: *Unyielding Ascendant Blade*. That first word applied now, as she prised at the stones beside the door until she found a panel of thinner material. It came away easily, revealing the mechanism within.

There, the roots had really done their damage. With room to grow, they'd twisted around the gears, woven around connectors, and poked through anywhere that was free. *Blade* yanked a few loose ones free, then considered what tools she had at her disposal. Tools. That was another thing she knew, the god-machinery installed into her body. With her Omnitool Implant, she reconfigured her fingers into shears, cutting through stubborn fibers. She worked slowly and methodically, clearing away the plant matter, brushing aside debris, and ensuring the gears could turn. Nothing was so badly damaged she couldn't get it moving again at least a little bit — she only had to open the doors once, after all. All the while, she watched the beam of sunlight grow stronger. New birds joined the first one's song.

The work felt good. Seeing more and more of the mechanism revealed and hearing pieces clack into place was satisfying. *Blade* found herself humming a little tune she made up to go with the rhythm of her movements and the birdsong. Her humming and the clatter of her tools echoed nicely off the walls around her. She liked it at first, hearing it all reverberate back to her.

But after a while, it began to feel too big. Too empty. Too lonesome.

She finished her work in silence.

At last, it was clear enough for her to try again. This time, when she pressed her hand to the stone, the door's panels slid back partway before the machinery failed — enough for *Blade* to slip through.

The shadows here were thick and dense. Once, perhaps, the door had opened onto a clearing. Now, the forest had grown around and over the mound it had been placed into. Roots and vines cared little for man-made mechanisms, as she'd seen. Still, as she pushed her way through the tangle, she delighted in the sensations: the rich scent of the soil, the deep musk from the flowers, the smell of leaves and grass that made her think "green" and "growing" and "alive, alive, alive." Velvety petals brushed against her. Thorns couldn't catch on her skin, but she felt their sharpness. Stone gave way to earth beneath her feet, and she picked her way around the roots and vines.

Small animals scurried out of her way while she crashed through. A squirrel chattered angrily at her as her movements made its branch sway. *Blade* laughed at its indignance as she pushed through the last of

the foliage.

At last she was free of the tangle. The overgrowth closed behind her, hiding the entrance to her crèche.

She stood, watching the sun filtering through the leaves, fascinated by the play of shadows and light in the breeze. Stillness returned, and after a moment, the birds began calling again. *Blade* peered into the trees, listening hard for that first melodic song.

There.

It was a small thing, perched on a thin branch. Its feathers were bright blue, deeper than the mid-morning sky. It peered at her with bright black eyes, tilted its head, and flew off. Crimson flashed from the underside of its wings. Its sudden flight launched a flock of others, birds of all kinds taking wing against the sky. *Blade* gasped at the sight of it — the patterns they made as they sought other perches, or settled back into the ones they'd left.

She observed how they grouped together, even in the chaos of it all. It brought with it a now-familiar pang of loneliness.

It did her no good to stand around waiting for someone to come by, but from down here, she couldn't be sure which was the best direction to strike out to find people. The trees were too dense. She crouched down low, then sprang, carried up in a high arc by her Parabolic Leap Overcharger Device. Her heart soared along with her, full of the joy that came with the movement. What birds had resettled in the branches took off again in a fit of feathers and squawking as *Blade* gained the top of a tree.

Wherever she was, the land rolled away in brilliant shades of green. The forest continued on for a long way, but she could see its edges. The trees gave way to farmland; though her augmented vision couldn't pick out workers in the fields, some vague sense told her it was the planting season, and surely they were there. A wide blue river wended its way along to the east, dotted with tiny shapes she was certain were boats. Roads connected villages, with clusters of small homes and larger buildings that might have been temples or meetinghouses. Thin gray smoke curled from chimneys.

Blade realized she had words for all of these things, though she had no idea how. She even knew plenty about them: how to start a fire, how to steer a boat, how to mend a roof or defend a town against invaders. The knowledge was right there, ready as soon as she thought about it. Yet while she knew what a boat was, she'd never seen one.

She knew how to talk, but she'd never had a conversation.

"It's hardly been half a day," she said. She'd hummed down below, but hadn't spoken aloud before now. It only made the loneliness grow, with no one there to answer her.

The only thing for it was to move.

Blade fixed the position of the nearest village in her mind and descended to the ground.

She set off, fleet-footed as a deer. Some of her melancholy dissipated with the distraction of running. The sun dipped low while she traveled. As the trees around her thinned out and the forest fell away, sunset painted the sky in hues of orange, crimson, and pink before giving way to twilight's blue and purples. When the stars came out, she stopped in her tracks and drank in the sight of them twinkling against the velvety sky. She imagined lines connecting them, and made up names for the constellations they formed: this one was the Rose, that one was the Pillar. Here, the Harp; there, the Crow. She drank them in, fixing the memories in her mind: the cool spring night, the clear sky, the songs of crickets and nightbirds, and — still far in the distance — the warm yellow glow of campfires dotting the road.

She imagined what sorts of people might be gathered around them. Where were they going? What songs did they sing? What stories were they telling to stave off the dark? Did they set sentries to protect them from bandits and predators? Did other monsters stalk the roads at night? She found she could run a little faster, so eager was she to find out and lend her aid.

As she traveled, she realized she wasn't always alone. An animal stalked her, keeping pace off to her side. Its movements were nearly silent, but *Blade* wasn't its normal prey. Her Tympanic Receptor Nodes registered its every step. Eventually, it grew bold enough to dart closer to her, stopping only a few yards away as her own steps slowed. Its yellow eyes flashed from the shadows, and *Blade* heard its low warning growl. She flared her anima banner, more to get a better look at it than to frighten it. Radiance painted the trees around her in shifting shades of red, green, blue, black, and white. The animal — a wolf — regarded her for a long moment, then sniffed the air and trotted away, in search of easier quarry.

Blade was a little sad to see it go. At least it had been a companion of sorts, for a while.

An hour past dawn, she reached a narrow road. She saw signs of recent passage: fresh wheel tracks from a cart; horse droppings; the remains of a cookfire, the stone ring containing it still warm. Just as the birdsong had drifted to her from far off yesterday morning, so now did she hear a faint echo of children's laughter and the lowing of an ox.

Unyielding Ascendant Blade slowed her pace only for a moment, as a sudden shyness washed over her. What would they think when they saw her? Had they seen anyone like her before? What would she say?

But she knew deep within, as sure as she knew her name and all the things she could do, that she was made to be part of something bigger. To protect people, certainly, and be their Champion, but also to be part of a community that would care for her as she cared for the people who comprised it.

"The words will come when I need them," she thought, and forged ahead.