

OURGOL DENAGE

rules
class
property
estate
territory
& conflict
at the end
of history

a psychedelic metal osr rpg

**Luka
Rejec**

Synthetic Dream Machine

△

Our Golden Age

△

Psychedelic Metal OSR rpg

△

Art and writing ©2023 Luka Rejec
Madrite Edition v0.14, January 2023
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Synthetica	6
Mechanicum	7
A. Roll	8
B. Level & Life & Hero Die	9
C. Ability	10
D. Skill	11
E. Save	12
F. Defense	13
G. Conflict	14
H. Attack	15
I. Damage	16
J. Defeat	17
K. Morale	18
L. Rest & Recovery	19
M. Inventory	20
N. Status	21
O. Powers: Oldtech & Fantascience	23
P. Xp	24
Q. Story, Session, Scene	25
Origin: This Polis	27
<i>Reality Fields Forever</i>	28
Origin: This Character	32
A Matter of Class	33
1.1. Holy Fool	34
1.2. Servant	37
1.3. Manager	40
1.4. Bourgeois	43
1.5. Noble	46
1.6. Source Code Scion	49
The Materium	53
Estate	54
Basic Rooms	55
Economy Rooms	56
Luxe Rooms	57
Room Upgrades	58
Armament	60
Traditional Weapons	60

Noösphere Weapons	61
Vintage Weapons	62
Aegis	63
Traditional Armors	63
Vintage Armors	64
Traditional Wards	64
Vintage Wards	65
Style	67
Traditional Dress	67
Statuswear	68
Therapeutics	69
Recovery Protocols	69
Relife Protocols	69
Tekhné	71
Basic Human Tools	71
Advanced Human Tools	72
HVNMKR: Creating a Player World	73
<i>Colors of the Given World</i>	74
<i>The History of the Given World</i>	75
The Orbis	77
<i>Geography of the Noösphere</i>	78
Moorlands, Jardins Amuré	79
Tentlands, Tendas d'appli,	80
Shadowlands, Mær Umbral	80
The Forgotten Zone	80
<i>Geography of the Hylosphere</i>	81
Sea, Circle Sea	82
Eye, Central Island	82
Perisea, Tidelands	83
Garden, Human Resources Region	83
Wasteland, Peripheral Region	83
Portalspace Islands	84
Ladder of Heaven	85
Near Void	86
Fast Stars	86
Far Void	87
Slow Stars	87
The First Sun	87

<i>Hylosphere Settlement Zones</i>	88
1: <i>The Heliodor Zone</i>	89
2: <i>The Amber Zone</i>	96
3: <i>The Ruby Zone</i>	103
4: <i>The Amethyst Zone</i>	104
5: <i>The Sapphire Zone</i>	105
6: <i>The Emerald Zone</i>	106
7: <i>The Waste Zone</i>	107
TWNMKR: Creating a Human Settlement	108
<i>A Different Polis</i>	110
<i>Resources</i>	110
The Pananthropy	112
<i>Humans By Canopic Category</i>	112
<i>Humans By Manifest Form</i>	114
<i>Human Cultural Forms</i>	115
<i>Lifecycles of the Humans</i>	116
<i>Languages of the Humans</i>	120
The Bestiary	122
<i>The Embodied</i>	122
<i>The Unbodied</i>	123
<i>The Unspirited</i>	124
The Erbarium	126
Numatter Compilation	128
<i>Anorgané, Givenstuff</i>	128
<i>Biomechané, Biomaterials</i>	128
The Godlike Minds	130
<i>Lords of the Dream Canopy</i>	130
<i>Unlords to Be Avoided</i>	131
Appendix G: The Glossary	133
Appendix N: Nice Things	135
Appendix R: Report to the Ministry	136
Appendix T: The Game Terms	137

SYNTHETICA

We all live in a golden age.

Everyone tells us so.

This is the best of all possible worlds.

Everyone tells us so.

“I believe in overkill,” whispers the silver ship.



“Reader. Reader, hark. Your ear. Here, you dropped it. Sorry. Reader, yes. Player of games? Referee of games? Master of games? Yes? I am the narrator. Yes, the most reliable of narrators. Everything I write here, all of it, everything is true and factual and reliable. I make no mistakes. I conceal nothing. I distort nothing. You see, my memory is perfect and factual, and every part of this golden age I present to you, this golden age of ours, I have it on the best and finest of authority. These lords of the future spoke to me, yea, through quantum whispers fed through the echoing vibration of my auditory ossicle. See, their voices proved to me that I am not mad, and so, since I am not mad, you can trust the words I convey to you of our golden age.”

—Anonymous, *Confessions of Play* (1978)



“Irony: the use of words to express something other than and especially the opposite of the literal meaning.”

—source: Merriam-Webster, 2022 (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/irony>)

MECHANICUM

The governor steepled all dozen of her elegant, manicured fingers. She studied them, chest rising in the cyclical parasympathetic breathing rhythm taught by the schools of socioeconomic engineering.

Body and soul aligned once more, her amber eyes fixed on the worker (H.G2).

“The silver ship ... spoke ... to you.”

“I ... in the head ... a voice, like when Father Builder or Mother Sky ...”

“To you,” she cut through their babble, “To a category two Hammer.”

“The voice didn't ask ...”

The governor cocked her head to the side in that strange way the watchers had, the way that activated the second sight.

“No, I suppose it did not,” she murmured.

Her silence stretched. The (H.G2) fidgeted, uncomfortable in their polite arms. They must have felt weak and puny without their exogolem.

Finally, she unfolded to her full nine heads' height. “Come,” she said mildly, “You will translate for the silver ship and we shall see what Mind is behind all this.”

Her hand stroked the (H.G2)'s neck and her sixth finger overrode their personality barrier. Without volition, like a Recuser's Megaservant, the (H.G2) rose and guided her to the beach where the silver ship rested on the pearl and amber shore.

A. ROLL

When characters try something risky, they roll $d20 + \text{ability} + \text{skill}$ and try to beat a target number.

- 3: trivial. Relevant for critical failures (natural 1).
- 7: easy.
- 11: mediocre.
- 15: hard.
- 19: very hard.

If a character rolls on target, they may sacrifice something to succeed.



MAGIC NUMBERS

When the icosahedron rolls, some numbers are special.

- 1: fail and equipment notched. Mark. Mark again, it is broken.
- 13: 1 ammo or power left. Mark. Can only be used one more time.
- 20: succeed and double effect *or* additional stunt (trip, shove, blind).

BONUS & PENALTY

The Ref assigns a relevant bonus [+] or penalty [-] when circumstances favor or hinder a character.

- +1/-1: a tiny bonus or penalty.
- +6/-6: a rather large bonus or penalty.
- +1d6/-1d6: a pretty random bonus or penalty.
- roll two dice ... and take the better or worse. Also possible.

GROUP ROLL

When a group of characters attempts a task together, a random character rolls.

For the first shall be last, and the last shall be first, and none shall know who is coming and going. Thus spake the Machine Beast, Alfatuštra.

B. LEVEL & LIFE & HERO DIE

LEVEL

An abstract measure of power. PCs start at level 1 and go to level 9.

LIFE

Hylospheric persistence, hit points, embodiment, ha. The narrative resilience of a character. When life hits 0, one is in deep trouble.

HERO DICE

d6s for modifying rolls and regaining life. Each PC gains 1 per session and every couple of hours. Can store HD equal to their level.

C. ABILITY

The function of our forms is measured and laid bare for the pleasure and understanding of our gentle ghosts beyond the veils.



Active abilities for doing things.

Charisma: Drive, fortune, will to dominate mind.

Strength: Vigor, energy, force to dominate matter.

Dynamic abilities for changing things.

Intellect: Thought, speed, wit to adapt mind.

Agility: Cunning, dexterity, flexibility to adapt matter.



HUMAN ABILITY RANGE

+0	Unremarkable
+1	Promising
+2	Talented
+3	Gifted
+4	Excellent
+5	Incredible

Types and ranges of nonhuman abilities may vary.

D. SKILL

Our learning, training, and downloaded skill packages provide us with the means to exceed the function of our forms.

SKILLED

+3 bonus to rolls.

EXPERT

+6 bonus to rolls.

MASTER

+9 bonus to rolls.



Skill becomes expertise, expertise becomes mastery. One hopes to progress, but hopes are not promises.

WHAT IS A SKILL?

A job, profession, hobby, background, sport, practice, or upbringing. That which is known. That which requires practice. That which makes sense.

WHEN DOES IT APPLY?

When it makes sense.

E. SAVE

When nothing but blind luck might apply.

ROLL D20 + ABILITY OVER 13 TO SAVE

Less than 13	Doom. What was will be. No Save.
13	Sacrifice. If something precious is lost, Save.
More than 13	Save. Disaster averted, fortune appeased.

F. DEFENSE

When we are a target, we must choose to defend lest we are destroyed.

ARMOR AKA. PHYSICAL DEFENSE (PD)

7 + ability (Agility) + bonus (if applicable) + armor

WARD AKA. SPIRITUAL DEFENSE (SD)

7 + ability (Charisma) + bonus (if applicable) + wards

G. CONFLICT

It was as though fate knew what was to be and so that is what it was.

NPC REACTION

To give fate her due, let a random PC roll $2d6 + \text{charisma}$.

1 or less: they come at you, like raving agents of cosmic corruption.

2: aggressive, hostile. They attack, given half a chance.

3–5: thanks, they hate you.

6–8: unsure, waffling, complicated, suspicious. Mediocre.

9–11: polite, understanding, sympathetic.

12: friendly, interested. They help, given half a chance.

13 or more: they insist on helping, even if you don't need help. It would be rude to say no, but they may well waste your time. Oh, dear. Cup of tea?



Then the words fell dead and the lances sang electric harmonies.

INITIATIVE

$d6 + \text{Agility}$

Each side rolls initiative every round. A random PC rolls for the party. High roll goes first. Tie = chaos reigns and everything happens at once.

ROUND

A cinematically suitable amount of time to take an action.

ACTION

A character moves and does a reasonable thing. Usually. Use common sense.

H. ATTACK

When we attack, our manner of destruction defines our approach. To succeed, we must overcome our target's defenses.

MELEE

dzo + ability (Strength) + bonus (if applicable)

RANGED

ab + ability (Agility) + bonus (if applicable)

OLDTECH

dzo + ability (Intellect) + bonus (if applicable)

FANTASCIENCE

dzo + ability (Charisma) + bonus (if applicable)



SPACE

Space is relative.

1. Here = melee.
The thick of things. Free attack if enemy disengages carelessly.
2. There = short range.
Win initiative to run over and melee *or* keep opponents at range for the round.
3. Way over there = long range.
Takes two rounds to reach.
4. Off stage = extreme range.
Three+ rounds.

I. DAMAGE

Victory makes untenable the existence of our foe.

DAMAGE REDUCES LIFE

dXX (weapon) + ability (if applicable) + bonus (if applicable)

At 0 life a target becomes an ex-target. Most sentient targets do not want to be ex-targets and flee earlier.

PCs and OPCs reduced to 0 life are out of the scene and roll on the Defeat table.

DAMAGE REDUCES ABILITIES

Some things reduce ability scores: strength, agility, intellect, or charisma.

DAMAGE IMPOSES BURDENS

Some things impose effects and modifiers that occupy an inventory slot, reducing a character's options. Many things are burdens: broken leg, toothache, phobia, blindness, crippling anxiety, mad delusion, divine hubris.

J. DEFEAT

By its fruits, you shall know its roots.

Damage broke through armor: at 0 life = roll 2d6 + str

Damage broke through wards: at 0 life = roll 2d6 + int

DEFEAT TABLE

1 or less: destroyed utterly.

2–6: dead.

7: KO. Burden (-1 intellect).

8: winded or weakened. Burden (-1 strength). Miss 1 round, regain 1 life.

9: strained or nauseated. Burden (-1 agility). Miss 1 round, regain 1 life.

10: scarred or corrupted. Burden (-1 charisma). Miss 1 round, regain 1 life.

11: stunned. Miss 1 round, regain 1 life.

12 or more: all ok! Regain 1 life.

A burden takes up 1 inventory slot.

K. MORALE

Defeat, like every disaster, comes first slow, then all at once. When the omens turn grim, when the Lords withhold favor, the ref calls for a morale roll.

WHAT HAPPENED?

A leader was defeated, a horror from beyond the void appeared, the phylakes were mowed down like sheaves of wheat, the beams of the levy's spears glanced off the monster's shimmery form like so many tossed pellets.

To some, victory seemed impossible.

NPC MORALE

Morale goes to 11, no higher. Defaults have a morale score of 3 + half their level. Brave creatures can have higher morale; cowardly, lower.

The ref rolls 2d6. If the result is over the morale score, the NPC flees.

For a group, pick a random NPC and roll for them. Routs start with a single panicked flight.

PC MORALE

Player characters have no morale scores. They are hylospheric shells piloted by ghosts from beyond the veil of the cosmos. How could they have morale scores?

L. REST & RECOVERY

Lo, under the Dream Canopy things are not as before, for this is heaven, and the good human shall be neither blind nor lame.

REST

The perfected human, by the wisdom of the Lords of the Dream Canopy, has incredible regenerative powers. Yet, these powers require rest. Comfortable beds, little movement, soothing circumstances, and absolutely no work.

RECOVERY

Each week, one insult to the integrity of the human is removed. This may be:

1. All life restored.
2. *or* one ability score (str, agi, int, or cha) fully restored.
3. *or* one burden removed (terms and conditions may apply).

Options for faster recovery exist. See: [Materium > Medical > Recovery Protocols](#)

RELIFE

Death is not the end for the humans of the Garden. See: [Materium > Medical > Relife Protocols](#)

M. INVENTORY

Our physical and spiritual capacities limit how much we can bear.

ITEMS

7 + ability (Strength)

TRAITS

7 + ability (Intellect)

For every trait or item beyond their limit, a PC suffers -1 to all rolls.

Curses, disease, and other afflictions also occupy inventory slots.

Pets and sidekicks adventuring with a PC occupy inventory slots.

Non-humans may bear more or less.



UNITS OF MATTER

1 sack = 10 stones = 100 soaps = 2,500 cash

A human can carry a packed sack, even if their strength implies otherwise.



HALLMARK

An item, trait, or other property (such as a steed) can become a PC's hallmark. They rarely travel without it and they can invest xp to make it more powerful.

A PC can bear a number of hallmarks equal to their level.

N. STATUS

Humans cannot live without status. Status manifests through money and property.

MONEY

1 cash (€) = 100 cents (¢)

Cash is symbolized by translucent discs aglow with the Lords' wisdom. Primitives and barbarians outside the Garden use it as jewelry. Removing cash from the Garden's perfectly circular economy is forbidden.

EXTRALEGAL MONEY

Humans outside the Garden use other currencies. Forbidden in the Garden. They are the only way to acquire dark code items in the Garden.



INCOME

Money is flow.

Each human within the Emerald Zone of the Garden, regardless of canopic category, is assigned 1 cash per day: a weekly basic income of €7.

Good humans are to be rewarded with additional income for socially useful services for their own greater good as specified by the Dream Canopy.

To increase weekly income by €1, a character must invest €2,000 in wealth.

EXPENSE

Money is flow.

Each human within the Emerald Zone of the Garden, regardless of canopic category, is expected to pay their way. The happiest human owns nothing, renting all they require from the Canopy.

A standard human habitation with a single custom room consumes €5 per week. This includes piped air, fluids, and nutrition.

Properties, goods and services further increase expenses.

WEALTH

Money stored with the autonomous generative rocket banks of the Dream Canopy. To generate income, it must be invested (and locked).

A character starts with 1d100 times their weekly income in wealth.

When income exceeds expenses, wealth grows. When expenses exceed, wealth falls. The purchase of expensive adventuring equipment is a wealth-depleting luxury humans often engage in due to a poor grasp of compound interest.

A character in financial distress may take out a loan from any one of the reputable algorithmic loan daemons. A loan of €1,000 increases weekly expenses by €1. Each loaned €1 costs €2 to repay.

Services rendered to the Dream Canopy may reduce a character's debt or increase their wealth.

BUY AND SELL

Humans cannot help but truck and barter. It is an instinct inscribed in their essential code by the Invisible Hand.

1. Small things: such as cost less than a human's income. A meal. A molt-bed. A meat hook. Their cost is ignored.
2. Great things: such as cost more than a human's income. An ordinator. An ocular implant. An OG rifle. Their cost depletes wealth.

Common sense applies: a multitude of small things become great, a particle of a great thing becomes small.

PROPERTY

Humans cannot live without shelter. The base of operations bookends the PCs adventures. The PCs live on or near the estate of the highest class character. Rooms provide session benefits.

O. POWERS: OLDTECH & FANTASCIENCE

The Builders' sciences promise powers indistinguishable from magic. Mastery over the noösphere, the world of mind, and the hylosphere, the world of matter.

LIFE FUELS POWERS

1 power costs 1 life.

Characters pay 1 life to cast 1 power. Bodies (ha), spirits (ka), and memories (ba) are consumed by the alien fires of the incomprehensible.



SPELL LEVELS & POWERS

What the Further-Fallen call spells and spell-levels are but powers become too arcane for their minds to comprehend.

Cantrip or 0th level spell: power 1

1st level spell, such as *Tragic Missile*: power 2

2nd level spell, such as *Hlod Person [sic]*: power 4

3rd level spell, such as *Pyreball*: power 6

nth level spell, such as *Nii!*: power 2n

P. XP

Our fate is to bear witness to existence. This is the essence of being.

PLAYERS EARN EXPERIENCE (XP)

When they send their characters:

exploring: 1d6 x 10 xp for braving danger to see something new.

on quests: 1d6 x 100 xp per session of progress towards goal.

At the referee's discretion: as is tradition.

At the end of each session attended: 500 xp for being a good egg.



LEVEL UP

Players invest xp in PCs, sidekicks, and PC hallmarks.

Level	Xp	Life	
0	0	4	Every level, a PC or sidekick or pet gains one: <ul style="list-style-type: none">· new skill or improve an existing skill (skilled > expert > master),· new trait, power or mutation,· <i>or</i> increase an ability score by 1.
1	300	8	
2	750	12	
3	1,500	16	Every level, a PC hallmark item gains +1 to saves vs destruction and one: <ul style="list-style-type: none">· +1 bonus to every damage die rolled,· +1 defensive bonus for wards and armors,· <i>or</i> new trait, power or complication.
4	3,000	20	
5	6,000	24	
6	12,500	28	
7	25,000	32	
8	50,000	36	
9	99,999	40	

Q. STORY, SESSION, SCENE

Outside the game is the metagame. The metagame structures the player's experience of the game. The metagame must be respected and deified. The metagame is a joke, it demands laughter and merriment.

THE STORY

Each story covers several sessions. It begins, as in many a traditional Belgian or French comic, with the the PCs at home. There they receive a call to adventure. They examine the call, gather their resources, and leave to face it.

Along the way, they face challenges and dilemmas, finally they succeed in their quest or fail, then they return having learned and grown—or not.

THE SESSION

From the moment the players sit at their table—real or metaphorical—to the moment they clean it of dice and dreams. In-character and out-of-character, they discover how the story unfolded for them.

THE SCENE

A moment of meaning for the PCs and their players. It could be mere seconds or hours. Investigation, fight, conversation, or exploration. The ref presents challenges and dilemmas, adjudicates time and space, rounds and actions.

When outcomes weigh uncertain, dice roll to give answers.



The players collaborate to discover the story. No one person can know how play will unfold, whether the PCs will snatch defeat from the jaws of victory or not. This shared exploration of the unknown is the wonder of roleplay.



ORIGIN: THIS POLIS

This is home.

This is This Polis.

The town of tomorrow, yesterday, and forever.

Your home in heaven, your place in the eternal to-day!

Designed by the finest minds to protect and nurture its humans in style and comfort, This Polis replicates all the positive experiences of living during one of humanity's pre-ascendence golden ages. Features include:

- Meaningful jobs! Government by sortition!
- Synthetic fossil fuels! No sentient machinery!
- Picket fences and front lawns (automower goat optional)!
- 57 channels of generative 2D sensory stimulation!
- Barbecues and bicycles! A new generative boardgame every week!
- Horseless carriages! No seatbelt laws!
- Discrete perimeter defense systems!
- Greenhouses and greenfield agricultural plantations!
- Five factories and 42 human-operated workshops!
- Walkable main street! Parks and wilderness areas!
- Intratown wireless audio communication!
- Aggressive team sports! Legal liquid intoxicants!

The world of Our Golden Age may be strange to the newly embodied, therefore This Polis is provided as a standard starting town, based on a typical self-governing imperial provincial town of the XX70s.

All PCs begin in This Polis.

REALITY FIELDS FOREVER

Halan sat down on the bench, lean frame folding, the action pushing a satisfied sigh out of her lungs. Jene passed her a can of Cud Light.

Dew stippled the cool metal. Dynamic letters danced on its surface. The tab popped with a promise of refreshment and rest after a day's work well done.

"Gunna be a tropical night," Jene said, motioning to the forecast hanging on the Dome of the Sky. The readout framed the sunset beautifully, providing context and human meaning to the celestial phenomenon.

"Beach party tonight, ya?" Halan asked and took a swig. The carbonated semi-alcoholic water sparked in her mouth and triggered memories of a thousand days just like this. Meaningful, satisfying days of contributing to the community and helping This Polis survive through the Obliteration.

"Ung, Deoin wrapped early and called in a delivery. He's already there with the gang for a late ball game."

Halan held the can a bit more tightly and thought about whether Jene would appreciate an arm across the shoulders, maybe even a hug. She came here to give her a ride back often enough that it couldn't be coincidence.

Instead, she mumbled, "Fire watch was interesting today. Saw a couple of those big eagles."

"The wyvern eagles?" Jene asked. Definitely with a smile.

Then Jene's eyes shifted behind Halan, "Is that one of them?"

"Huh," she squinted, "I can't quite make it out. Maybe my eyes need sharpening again?"

"No, wait, it's behind the Dome!" Jene's voice climbed a bit in excitement, "Is that an Edo?"

"An extra-dome object? Can't be! Hasn't been one reported in ..."

With a blip the trilliant flyer's diaphanous energy wings pulled it through the Dome as though the great force field was just a ...

The Dome readout collapsed into glitching errors and the colors of the world flickering absurdly. The melodious harmony of late afternoon colors transfigured into deep shadows, pallid trees, green-purple leaves.

“Halan, your ...” Jene gestured. Her uniform. Instead of the delicate pastel patterns and ornate swirls of the fire watch it was a dull, monotonous green. Like the new color of the leaves. All the rainbows of the living world had fled.

The Cud Light dropped from slack fingers, foaming beverage soaking, glug-glug, into the soil become like ash.

“Halan?” Jene waved a hand in front of her unfocused gaze. Terror? Awe? Halan was absent.

Back there, where the Dome had always been, a comforting sky full of good, stable news, the world was a-glitch. Jene’s brain struggled to process what it was seeing. Her para-brain wailed error messages at her soft consciousness. In the middle of it all, the trilliant flyer came down on wings like magnetic lines made visible, a jewel of iridescent, mirror facets.

Jene felt herself grow light. She thought she was about to faint, but as she took a step back from the empty shell of Halan, she almost went flying. It wasn’t just her eyes failing her, gravity itself seemed broken.

Then the extra-dome object was in front of her. Or she was in front of it. Or they were in a relationship of two things suspended out of time and space.

Bile, rising, then cool nothing. Like a part of her had lost its personality. Jene’s para-brain spoke, in a lifeless voice, “Rose protocol suspended, Interface protocol activated.”

She was still standing on that grassy verge by the side of the north forest rode, where the benches gave a view of the rising cliffs protecting This Polis. Halan was still next to her. The Cud Light was still foaming into the ground. No time had passed, yet an eternity had passed. Jene’s perception was untethered. She saw herself. She saw her patentwagen parked neatly on the gravel lot. With some new sense she felt inside its battery and understood it was 87% full with an estimated remaining range of 220 metric miles.

“You are Jene of the Carpenter’s IV, yes?” the formal voice was in her mind without her ears’ intervention and suddenly a tall ageless woman stood between her and the levitating flyer.

Gravity made its stealthy return and she felt grounded enough to reply, “...”

Squeak.

She tried again, and this time her voice obeyed, “Yes.”

“Excellent, I thought as much but good to be sure. I have brought you a message from your distant uncle, M. Èckes,” said the woman and handed a personal vidy card down to Jene.

Jene’s hand rose of its own accord, her para-brain fearless with whatever the Interface protocol was, and took the translucent piece of infotech.

Revelation. Unveiling. Ancestry. Relative. Inheritance. Travel. Beyond the Dome.

The giantess stood calmly while Jene’s para-brain worked furiously to reintegrate her personality after the sudden dysfunction of her worldview.

“But ... the Obliteration,” Jene whispered.

“Your founders choice.”

“Was ... everything a lie?”

“Not a lie. Spin or chosen blindness. It really doesn’t matter so much, if you want it back you can return to it, either now or after visiting Èckes. But, frankly, I recommend you wait until after your visit.”

Jene’s eyes bulged a little and her mouth worked soundlessly for a moment. The lofty stranger seemed to have expected this and demonstrated no impatience.

“Wh-when?” asked Jene, eyeing the improbable trilliant with suspicion.

“You have time. Though driving with that patentwagen might take too long. I recommend the Friday train, there will be a passenger car. Or you can use your return portal ticket.”

Jene’s mind flew. There was an outside beyond the Dome of the Sky. There was more to the world. Her para-brain soothed her, kept her from screaming. She could ride the train. She had a ticket for the angels’ portal. She ...

“Nobody will believe me?!”

The elegant outsider looked at Halan and smiled, “Well, true, but they also won’t notice.”

“Won’t notice?”

“Their para-brains will give them a reasonable explanation for your absence and for any incongruous stories you tell them,” she motioned at Halan, “though this one, I suspect, will manufacture some elaborate self-delusion about being rejected by you.”

Jene looked at Halan, then back at the alien, then back at Halan.

“Halan? No ... she's just,” her brain went crawling back towards its familiar patterns and she had to shake herself, “Wait! Stop that. Who are you? How could you come through the Dome of the Sky? Why me?”

“So many questions!” chuckled the porcelain-skinned human, “But you are right, I have been a little rude. Pietra of the Twilight Lee, 3rd edition. Your distant uncle provided me with a postal agent permit that let me pass through your Sky Barrier. And why you ... well ... for that you should ask Èckes. If that person does one thing it's keep their own council.”

Pietra shook her head wryly then raised a hand to stop Jene, “Please, I can't give you more answers. I have to deliver more messages and then the flyer will want to go home. Èckes is giving you an interesting opportunity. The choice is yours.”

Then, before Jene could say another word, Pietra was gone and the flyer was slipping back into the sky.

“Ouf! That wyvern eagle surprised me! Came so close I dropped my Cud!” exclaimed Halan, suddenly reanimated.

“Uh ... yeah, yeah,” agreed Jene, distantly.

In her para-brain a new option toggle called her attention: Switch baseline reality protocol.

ORIGIN: THIS CHARACTER

A host for your ghost.

Here, puppet, dance, dance. Do you wonder, puppet, at the things you do? Feel a spirit pull your strings? A master beyond the veil? No, slumber good puppet.

Slumber and enjoy enjoy the gift of the Given World.

The Green Lands where all things go,

The Yellow Lands where be aware,

The Red Lands yet unready for the peace,

And the Grey Lands without hue,

Forsaken by the Spectrum Canopy.

Thrill, puppet, in these dangers above all.

Click

The dream ended and the human's eyes flicked open. Another prophecy nightmare. It shook, then hugged itself. Its thin arms wrapped around its bony frame made it look like an exotic pupa surrounded by the layers of metamorphic machinery.

"01000111 01101111 01100100 00100000 01110111 01100001 01110011 00100000 01101110 01100101 01110110 01100101 01110010 00100000 01101111 01101110 00100000 01111001 01101111 01110101 01110010 00100000 01110011 01101001 01100100 01100101 00101110," it beeped in a quavering voice.

The blue golem swung round on its slipforce field to face the human, "Hmm. Too deep. Reboot it and let's try again. What class was this one anyway?"

The red golem rotated a secondary head and gave the skinny human a hard scan, "An eleven, I think."

The blue golem nodded, "Ah, that explains it. Those have soft personalities."

"Don't be so essentialist," clucked the red golem, while flickering a humor staccato of lights.

A MATTER OF CLASS

Each soft-shelled child, freshly decanted into fully-automated luxury, is greeted by the catechism, “Welcome to heaven, where all your needs are met.”

Each hard-plated human, grown into polished-metal society, knows the iron law of the Golden Age, “When all have bread, all that counts is status.”

A die ten-sided. Or a deck of cards for lovers of chaos.

What is this character's class?-1

1	Holy Fool	>pXX
2–6	Servant	>pXX
7–10	Manager	>pXX
J (11)	Bourgeois	>pXX
Q (12)	Noble	>pXX
K (13)	Source Code Scion	>pXX

1.1. HOLY FOOL

“Bagatto. Our blessed vessel, their accursed wizard. Awake, Bagatto,” intoned the chantler. The ritual synthetic had been repeating the villagers’ guidance prayers over the corpse-like form of the Fool for over a week as that reckless human’s idego traveled deep within the noösphere.

When the Fool Bagatto completed his mission to petition the Dancing Lord to allow the villagers to expand their orchards, he would need the guidance prayers to find his body once more.



BACKGROUND

ERROR 2746: your canopy interface protocols have been corrupted. Please visit a Temple of [redacted] for reprogramming. If a Temple of [redacted] is not available in your area, please contact a Spiritual Genius via [corrupted] and wait for assistance. Don't panic, everything will be alright.

1. Abandoned. When all their fellow villagers were removed for reprocessing and repair, they remained in the rotting house shells, going slowly mad.
2. Cracked. Something happened when they were rebuilt. A second consciousness crept in along with the broken dreams and hazy memories.
3. Holy Diver. Too long were they submerged in the noösphere, hunting the marrow of forgotten knowledge. At last, the noösphere stared back into them and their mind was unspun and redone.
4. Phylake's Child. Their parent was a witch who seduced a holy guardian. This must be true, for how else could such an odd post-human child have survived alone in the code violet woods?
5. Soothsayer. When no one in a village can read anymore, someone who can interpret the dreams of the Great Minds from the ambient hum of the noötrees becomes invaluable.
6. Wanderer. One day this human just walked away from their life. Years on the road have hardened their feet and softened their heart.

CLASS RELATIONS

Nobles and scions fall for the holy fool's homespun ramblings.

TRAITS

Misaligned. The holy fool's odd neural circuitry makes them resistant to the blandishments of daemons and various neocognitive magics. Or:

1. Blessed. When only luck will do, the holy fool has an advantage.
2. Exorcist. Unusually capable of casting out daemons, ultras, and other body-invaders.
3. Ragged. Their body is falling apart, but cobbled-together biomechanics hold them together. Their mind is oddly accommodating of implants.
4. Sky touched. They can read the movements of the Great Minds and understand the coded murmurings of the living noösphere.
5. Undying. Their terminator switches have failed. Even if killed, the holy fool's body reawakens to life and their brain rebuilds itself. This is very traumatic and limbs still have to be reattached somehow.
6. Unseen. They move like a rat through the walls of a crumbling castle.

PROPERTY

A fool earns €7 per week from their status as a human. Their property has no available rooms for customization.

1. Salvaged burgundy tun.
2. Nest in the ventilation or sanitation ducts.
3. Autogolem carcass on cinder blocks.
4. Coffin filled with Living Earth®.
5. Stolen void-certified sleeping bag.
6. Cordwood™ jumpsuit and a virtual room headset.

FORTUNE

Luck smiled on the fool and turned their life to adventure.

1. A dying phylake, a rotting angel, bestowed a ring upon them.
2. In a crumbled vault, they chanced upon a treasure.
3. Sleeping on a bed of literature, they spied a life-changing pamphlet.
4. One night, bitten by a radioactive rodent, they had an epiphany.
5. One day, walking, the sun spoke and healed them of all ailments.
6. Sitting on the dock of the bay, a mermaid came and kissed their fear away.

NAMES

The form of the holy fool's name is NAME then [redacted].

1. Cimiter's body went up in smoke thrice, and each time they were rebuilt. A cosmetic procedure gone wrong. They were awake throughout.
2. Kotto Kotto has the soul of a cat trapped in the body of a bear that looks like a human. They like coffee.
3. Matto Grâ woke up one day to find centipedes crawling out of their pores and speaking in tongues. After six years of personality refactoring, they can now distinguish between the noösphere and the hylosphere again.
4. Monk ingested a dragon and the dragon rode them out into the vasty wilds. There they dwelled like a wolf for seven years, growing gaunt of limb and long of tooth. One day, the dragon was gone and Monk walked home.
5. Sanaryncis left their body for a bob cat's after accidentally disabling their humanity overrides. After a petition, they regained their human rights.
6. Vioma was a golem before they were rebuilt as a human. But something went wrong and the machine came back. Now electric dreams crawl the transorganic flesh beneath their wooly hide.

1.2. SERVANT

“Servus humillimus, domine spectabilis,” murmured Chinja-5-dash as they awakened and the day’s admonitions scrolled through their mind’s eye. The lord had blessed them with their attention today. Meaning would fill them as their limbs toiled to perfect the more perfect plan.

Chinja-5-dash frowned.

Again, the dragon had come in the night. The monochrome scourge upon the human flock. It had dodged the fences of four villagers’ minds and infected them with error.

Today, Chinja-5-dash would again wield the cauterizing lance for Lord Cathedra.



BACKGROUND

Ora et labora once dictated the terms of human life. Now, in the Garden, the lords of the Dream Canopy no longer demand prayer, for all who live here are saved. What remains to give meaning is labora: work.

1. Beastkeeper. Humans are happier if they are not alone, thus the lords have provided them beasts and machines to share their labors. Some humans must tend to these unspirited creatures.
2. Flowersculptor. Where would humans be without their canopy-given orchards? Nowhere, cold, and hungry, that’s where. Houses, energy, and food all come from the sculpted sessile flora.
3. Housemaker. Nothing makes humans happier than making their own nests. Thus, though the lords could provide houses for all, humans must still make their own homes: building, wiring, plumbing, repairing.
4. Watcher. Humans need to feel in control. The watchers provide that feeling by bringing the authority of the Dream Canopy into their parochial communities.
5. Shopstaff. Public service roles benefit from a sentient, living human presence. Human community protects people from the fog of futility.
6. Housestaff. Humans are a socially competitive species complex. Humans like having other humans serve them in their own homes. Despite initial misgivings, this arrangement seems to optimise utility.

CLASS RELATIONS

The no-nonsense servant takes no guff from the holy fool.

TRAITS

Overlooked. Higher class humans fail to see servants and forget their faces. Or:

1. Grounded. A good, solid life has left them well placed to shrug off the slings and arrows of outrageous misfortune.
2. Obedient. Performs better when doing what they are told.
3. Resentful. Bears a grudge towards their betters. Under duress, this might be a source of unexpected strength.
4. Resourceful. A lifetime in the shadows has taught them how to borrow and misappropriate with aplomb.
5. Strong. A life of physical labor combined with the good diet provided by the dream canopy means they have a powerfully muscled physique.
6. Tough. Their hard life means they can take more punishment than most humans.

PROPERTY

A servant earns €10 per week from their properties and status. Their property has one available room for customization.

1. Dormicile in a servant hive.
2. One-bed attic closet apartment.
3. Stacked pod unit.
4. Standard human dwelling hut, Demeter™ brand.
5. Old-town monolocale.
6. Ruderal keeper's cottage.

CHANGES

They blinked twice and their life was upended.

1. A beloved relative bestowed a family secret, a secret calling.
2. Imprisoned on false pretences. Released, they burn with righteousness.
3. A golden lottery ticket. It paid their debts and gave them a new start.
4. A hated traitor, a former friend, cursed them. Called it a gift.
5. Laid off, the whole town shuttered, only ghosts now. And a severance check.
6. A rare master, on their deathbed, bestowed a name, status, freedom—and a family fortune wasted away.

NAMES

The form of the servant's name is NAME then BATCH NUMBER then SERVICE SPECIALTY.

1. Chencha-34-styles. Chencha of the 34th batch of hair stylists. Dreams of more heroic pursuits.
2. Domo-217-casa. Domo of the 217th iteration of the popular house servant batch. Privately fancies themselves a detective.
3. Eduard-13-pickles. Eduard of the 13th iteration of vegetable picklers. Secretly very good with the jousting staff.
4. Golosh-10-aurochs. Golosh of the 10th batch of aurochs' tenders. Loves them some good animal friends.
5. Udjaya-5-stand. Udjaya of the 5th batch of heavy industrial defenders. Would prefer to be a poet.
6. Vidrik-No.-sinker. A batchless social downgrade. After rebelling against the dream canopy, their personality was reset so they could redeem themselves with a useful social journey. Are all their memories false?



Remember! A happy servant is a good servant, so make sure to smile with joy when dealing with all superior classes!

1.3. MANAGER

Tyxo Iteration-23 adjusted their white collar of office and reading monocle before the mirror prince. The fragment of Canopy observed them and chimed approvingly. They met the criterion for a professional representative of the Garden's administrative class.

Tyxo walked out to their desk, carefully masking a limp. They had not saved up enough cash for a repair yet, and a limp could see them relegated to a back office, where they would never have a chance to impress a mate and qualify for a reproduction permit. At the desk, they turned on their console and the orange glow soothed them.

They installed their mechanical ear and spoke in carefully modulated tones once they heard the chime of a connection, "Veda and śastra, fellow human, how can the administration make your day perfect?"



BACKGROUND

Humans spoke and the Dream Canopy listened. After the third anti-automation anarchy, the lords created a vast and complex managerial bureaucracy, replete with titles, administrative games, formal competitions, and meritocratic status pageants, to provide an occupation for the more ambitious citizens of the Garden.

1. Vidy Sanitizer. Although the Minds are, of course, omnipotent and omniscient, it makes humans happy to have a role in the administration of the full trust society of the Garden. One such role is the vidy sanitizer, who ensures that all content created and shared by humans complies with the Uplift Regulations.
2. Customer Administrator. The noösphere is perfect, but humans are fallible. Customer administrators therefore maintain triplicate physical records of all humans in the Garden and their complaints. For better service.
3. Noösphere Priest. The infinite knowledge of the noösphere is confusing for the untrained human. Trained humans therefore interface with the noösphere and program its peripherals for maximum user satisfaction.
4. Golem Engineer. Without proper protocol and procedures, golems may run amok. The golem engineer ensures this does not happen.

5. Gardener Agent. The armed gardeners corps is not a secret police force for the Dream Canopy. Such suggestions are illegal.
6. Numbers Maximization Official. A popular human game is “numbers go up”. NMOs manage the various banks, exchanges, and funds involved.

CLASS RELATIONS

Despised by everyone above and below them in the social ladder. The feeling is mutual. If only managers ran everything, the Garden would be a true paradise.

TRAITS

Competent Appearance. Through training, they always appears competent when appearing to do something that could appear to be their job. Or:

1. Bureaucrat. Not fazed by rules and regulations. Always gets something useful from a complex institution.
2. Diplomat. Can deliver bad news without getting hurt. Always extracts at least a small silver lining.
3. Ruthless. Feel no guilt when sacrificing the required human resources. Get additional benefits from sacrifices.
4. Calculator. Fiendishly good at maths, odds, and probabilities. This could be helpful with gambling, ballistics, orbital dynamics ...
5. Smooth Operator. Very good at eliciting positive or neutral reactions. Their bribes are called lobbying and are rarely rejected.
6. Social Survivor. They're never wrong when reading emotions. This has kept them from getting trounced quite often.

PROPERTY

A manager earns €20 per week from their properties and status. Their property has 3 available rooms for customization.

1. Two-up two-down traditional urban family lodgement.
2. Suburban bungalow.
3. Articulated poly-golem wagon compound.
4. Standard managerial condo.
5. Vertically stacked townhouse.
6. Reinforced rural bunker house.

CRISIS

Was a human ever meant to live a rat-racer ladder-climber life? Where was the seed of insight born, watered, turned carnivore plant?

1. Serious illness, near death, priorities were reassessed.
2. Death. A loved one, forever lost. Mortality reared its ugly head.
3. Caught. Fraud. Framed or real, a black stain on one's career.
4. Calamity. A tidy life upturned. Savings destroyed. Office shut.
5. Existential ennui. One day, the sameness grew too much. They walked away.
6. Sobriety. A journey through addiction and back again changed them.

NAMES

The form of the manager's name is NAME then [REDACTED] CATEGORY then SEQUENCE NUMBER.

1. Tyxo Iteration-23. Tyxo is the 23rd iteration of their standard clone administrator lineage. If they perform well, they will eligible for a standard five-year retirement period. What more should a clone want?
2. Velisar Sarjent MkVII-259c. Velisar is the 3rd re-incorporation of the 259th iteration of their peacekeeper lineage. Frankly, they wonder why their lineage has gone through so many iterations. Also, they like to crochet.
3. Post-classical Rigel-14. Post-classical has always secretly worried that a mix-up occurred when they were generated. They try to make up for it by working extra hard and applying for recombinant parental dispensation once a year.
4. Naster Calculator-7bis. Naster has a deep affinity for numbers. They've always suspected this was encoded in them to keep them pliant. But they don't mind. So long as they swim in numbers, their brain is happy.
5. Rudra Housing-30k. Several transfers and a face change later, Rudra feels like they have found peace in their new role as a park ranger. Yet their background in housing oversight will come back to haunt them.
6. Moth Superior-15. Moth oversees the orimonate processing facilities and the memory implanters. Recently they've started worrying whether their own memories are real and what happened to their home village.

1.4. BOURGEOIS

Salar LVII steepled their hands carefully as their access parasite studied the four passive villagers. They were superficially healthy. The repair coffins had undone the most obvious lance damage.

Salar LVII snapped their wand before them, but they didn't even flinch at the neurode flare that would have provoked a phobic reaction in a normal human.

"Mindburn," the obsequious Chinja-5-dash supplied.

"The dragon went that deep?" asked Salar LVII, impressed.

"Mmm, a bad dragon this one. Water-level. Down to the reptile brain."

"Did you save the canopic jewels?"

"From the last backup only, it'll be a lengthy rebuild."

"Well, these ones are basically zombies now. And corrupted ones at that. Ruby zone at best. What a loss."



BACKGROUND

It is the natural order of the Garden that the most responsible for the endless growth of the Garden are most rewarded. Is infinite growth not good?

1. Arriviste. Wealth earned through fortune and adventure. If not an outright robber, certainly a robber baron with connections to the wastelands and the ferals.
2. Entrepreneur. Painted to their elbows with red code contracts with the Dream Canopy. Everyone knows they work with the agents.
3. Country squire. Money made the proper way, by extracting resources from concessions in the vastlands and the ruinlands.
4. Tax Farmer. Someone has to collect the taxes. Who better than a motivated private business-person?
5. Urban Industrialist. Even in the fully-automated luxury heaven someone must own the means of production to ensure they are well cared for.
6. Old Money. Nearly a noble, but not let their banking and industrial control drop from their cold, undead, reincarnated grasp.

CLASS RELATIONS

Adored by everyone who wants to succeed. Despised by nobles and proles.

TRAITS

Rolodex Confidence. They've got a gal or a guy for everything. Very skilled, once per session. No questions asked. Or:

1. Expensive Training. They could afford the best trainer, and now they're an expert at one seemingly irrelevant skill. Like fencing or vigilante boxing.
2. Legal Immunity. Cops and judges will look away, once per session. Don't ask how much it cost.
3. Con Artist. Tricky character. Reads what people wants and promises to give it to them. And they'll buy it. Could talk a snake out of its skin.
4. Million Cash Human. Their body is the best money could buy. Synthetics so sublime, they make any organic feel bereft in their presence. Increase two ability scores by 2 (to a maximum of 7).
5. Double-Platinum Deathless Backup. They've got two soul jewels, one of them is in an egg in a duck in a hare in a secret pleasure vault on a private island. Try killing them. Hah.
6. Vampiric. A few basic modifications and any human can acquire youth and vigor from the cerebrospinal fluid and bone marrow of other humans.

PROPERTY

A bourgeois earns €200 per week from their properties and status. Their domus has 7 available rooms for customization.

1. Converted loggia enclosed into a post-modern linear manor.
2. Lofty double-height penthouse suite.
3. Rambling rancher lodge.
4. Fortified cubist suburban bunker.
5. Nondescript private country compound.
6. Triple-width stacked townhouse.

MISFORTUNE

One day you're up, the next day you're down.

1. Murder. A spouse or child or sibling. Gone for gold.
2. Cold lonely Monday. In winning wealth, they lost all their people.
3. Addiction. Gambling, alcohol, drugs, or worse.

4. Market crash. Their wealth evaporated and their partner jumped from the trading tower.
5. Bankruptcy. First slowly, then all at once.
6. Doom. Visited by ghosts in the moonlight, they beheld a hollow future.

NAMES

The form of the bourgeois's name is NAME then ITERATION ROMAN NUMERAL.

1. Salar LIX suspects that they have been spawned before their due date. Their auto-tutors pretend like nothing is wrong in the Salar conglomerate, but they have a feeling something has gone with their senior iteration. Also, they wish they could just retire to a life of rabbit fancying and duck hunting.
2. Koyoda VI owns the smart rice generation facilities in the New Paddy Sector of the Amber Zone. Well, owns is a strong word. They're pretty sure the golems are keeping them in the dark. Perhaps they're just a figurehead?
3. Nemor III has owned and operated the food factories, agricultural banks, and tattle generators of the Heliodor Sector Three for over two hundred years. They're not about to let their body wearing out stop them.
4. Messara V was reconstituted by the Lords to help the vineries of the eastern Ruby Zone finally turn a profit. After 13 grinding years, the shareholders are getting antsy and Messara is getting desperate.
5. Yoro XXXII has shepherded the Emerald Zone's finest generator of authentic travel experiences (synthetic) for a dozen years. Successfully. Now the time has come to reap their reward.
6. Karusus XII desired only to prove their worth. Brick by brick, cash by cash, they built a great hoard, only to have a corruption dragon steal it away. Now they and their golden nanoparticle hand cream empire exist only for revenge.

1.5. NOBLE

Calissa de Freix breathed a sigh of relief as a human administrator answered. It was so hard to get through to professional help these days, the Dream Canopy cycling her through a series of falšers instead.

“This is the Mastress de Freix, I've been calling for days! I reported barbarians on my estates, but instead of sending phylakes to kick them out, the Authority downgraded my estates to an Orange zone and suggested I upgrade my defense budget. This is outrageous! The de Freix estates have been Green zone since the Second Armadillo Expansion. Over 30 generations! I demand you remedy this oversight, reinstate the Green zone designation and send over a unit!”

She *heard* the white-collar assume a defensive crouch.

“Mastress, eh, you must be mistaken. Divine records indicate that the de Freix estates on the Vulc have always been an Orange zone and, uh, are slated for review about, uh, downgrading to Red zone due to, uh, failure to defend.”

BACKGROUND

The best were Chosen. The Chosen are the best. The proof of aristocracy is a perfect circle.

1. Hexer. Their progenitor was uplifted into nobility by one of the Lords in living memory. The stain of having had to earn their status still lingers.
2. Knight. Battler families helped the Lords homestead hell. Now they spend their lives in well-deserved luxury, hunting beasts and singing lays.
3. Sacrifex. The divine light of the Dream Canopy courses through their veins, a lineage of potential avatars the Lords would embody to manifest the Maker's will during the Building of the Garden. Now they spend their lives in well-deserved luxury, rolling dice and hunting synthetics.
4. Freelord. Humans of parallel lineages to the Lords of the Dream Canopy. Preserved as part of the basic architecture of the Garden. Now they spend their lives in well-deserved luxury, hunting daemons and playing cards.
5. Baron. Wealthy lineages whose power was enshrined by their material contribution to the existence of the Builders. Now they spend their lives in well-deserved luxury, enacting melodramas and hunting ferals.
6. Dux. Warlord lineages, formerly ferals due to clerical errors, now an integral part of the Garden. They spend their lives in well-deserved luxury, hunting falšers and indulging in chemical bliss.

CLASS RELATIONS

Despised and worshipped by everyone by turns, for the Chosen have the ears of the Lords of the Dream Canopy.

TRAITS

Perfected Germline. Taller and healthier than other humans, immune to all diseases and free of all congenital defects. And:

1. Direct Line. They can draw the attention of one of the Lords of the Dream Canopy whenever they want. Whether this is a good idea ...
2. Decadent. They know what is best in life. Perfectly. And they suffer if they cannot get it.
3. Disposable. Haunted by nightmares. Are they the clone of a clone, a spare-parts unit kept around just in case some lost original should die? Their paranoia makes them hard to trick.
4. Dissipated. Chemical cocktails give strength and speed, but without them they are weak and wan.
5. Dark Lineage. There is corruption in their source code, the taint of the Ill Nano. Their unnatural aptitude for fantascience is complimented by their proclivity for [ERROR REDACTED] fits.
6. Deluded. A life of luxury and noöspheric excess has left them quite out of touch with reality. Also immune to illusions and hallucinations.

PROPERTY

A noble earns €100 per week from their properties and status. They own (roll d6): (1–5) a manse with 13 available rooms or (6) a palazzo with 21 rooms.

1. Steel and glass pencil tower in the heart of a decayed city.
2. Crumbling castle on the shore of a desiccating sea.
3. Haunted mansion at the crossroads past the old Builder graveyard.
4. Lonely glass bunker palace in the middle of a carnivorous forest.
5. Village full of fake humans on 99-year lease.
6. Converted void ship. The engines are long gone.

TRAGEDY

Fly close to the sun, swell with hubris, enjoy the fall.

1. Disfigured. Botched (or sabotaged?) rejuvenation treatment revealed a different side to them.

2. Excommunicated. The prank with the formaldehyde angel was too much.
3. Eaten. After the incident with the pet omni-tiger, they re-evaluated.
4. Defeat. Their whole raiding company was obliterated by ferals armed with violet-code weapons. Their world was never the same.
5. Disinherited. The incident with the onion and the excavator bomb was just a pretext. Honest.
6. Futility. The most important person in their life chose permanent annihilation. Perhaps a life of culture, soirées, debuts, balls, and big game hunting was a little on the pointless side?

NAMES

The form of the noble's name is NAME of PROPERTY.

1. Calissa de Freix hoped to pass her wonderful ancestral Freix holdings to a suitable clone. Then a clerical error let ferals onto her lands.
2. Sinquo od Chrein was out hunting heretics, when a luminous void creature opened his eyes. His life, the canopy, all of it was a lie. Well, except for their control of the regional quality control guilds.
3. Vul ban Hadda Ling was raised on tales of how its ancestor conquered seven cities of the Garden before being given a place in Heaven and a golden chair. Its ancestor still rules from its golden chair with its withered appendages.
4. Offex y Vlaco has trains and logistics in their blood. Well, hard-wired in their brain. Courtesy of a patera who still suspects the Dream Canopy may need proof of their family's value again.
5. Loess tu Bo, of the Bo freelords, is the only child not to have fallen to the fog of futility for the last 50 years. Something single-minded and simple about their passionate pursuit of rabbit breeding, perhaps?
6. Fourteen vom Cholan has not been given a name yet, in case they go mad from prolonged contact with the luminous void creatures their family has traditionally used to manifest the Lords' will. Still, they have survived a winter in the woods, hunting ferals for their survival. Perhaps they will deserve a name soon. Something like Fourteen Skulls?

1.6. SOURCE CODE SCION

Xoras scrambled down the long sun-bleached slope of the great atmosphere engine. Their reinforced boots punched through the calcrete, leaving streaks of rust-raw gravel exposed to the sun's harsh electric light.

The overgrown polyp writhed behind them. If that chaotic tangle of tentacles and post-mechanical cancers tore free of its theca, it would take him and half the slope down into the excavated channel below.

Xoras's personal daemon piped up, "Left! Make for the willow wolves!"

Xoras thought a nod at the little ghost and accelerated, synthetic bioblots releasing additional energy to his exhausted muscles. Leap, slide, scramble, leap. The willow wolves blood-catchers whipped at them, but the razor thorns found no purchase on their builderskin overalls.

The daemon shouted, "There! Storm bivouac!"

Xoras dove at the corroded door, buffer fields blossoming from their force harness. They felt some red, but no major trauma as the barrier burst, spilling them in shower of kinetic dispersal sparks on the bivouac floor. The shell of the bivouac was old, from the seeding period. It would withstand ...

"Brace!"

Xoras shrieked in shock as the buffer fields picked them up and anchored them in the middle of the shell. Then the bivouac shifted as the polyp's mad thrashing loosed the crusted regolith off the atmosphere engine's iron-nickel flank.

"That's what you get for walking into one of the Maker's remnants unshielded," grumbled the personal daemon.

"Hush, Lucrèce, I need to focus ..." on not throwing up, though Xoras as the shell rolled and bounced.

BACKGROUND

Made in the image of the Maker's flesh and idego, the scions remain both blessing and curse of the Garden's gentle Lords.

1. Greenflesh. Something in the source code of all green things spontaneously generates humans. Some are scions, permanently linked to the living, growing, eating things.

2. Voidmade. Life bursts forth from nothingness in the empty voids between worlds. Most decays between one quantum and the next. Some coalesces and becomes human in the mothballed fast stars.
3. Templechild. The flesh seed of the maker is preserved in the great electric ziggurats of the Dream Lords. Occasionally it sprouts.
4. Idego Bloom. A normal human, it appeared, but then their idego blossomed with the fire of revelation and arcane noöspheric control.
5. Machine. This scion was made, purpose-built to access and harness buildertech. For the good of the Garden?
6. Ghostbrood. A personality derivative of the Maker, reborn of a feral womb, brought back to the Garden that it might be schooled and sculpted by the good Lords.

CLASS RELATIONS

All fear the scions. All want to be loved by the scions. Few could know them.

TRAITS

Superuser. The source code scion can freely activate any oldtech or fantascience. Active oldtech or fantascience may still corrupt them. And:

1. Glitch. Something is broken within them at a fundamental level. They are incapable of some basic human function, such as empathy, imagination, or humor.
2. Subconscious Decay. Whenever they are unconscious, their physical form decays rapidly. It reconstitutes when they become conscious again.
3. Dreamwalker. When the scion enters the noösphere, they take their body with them, leaving nothing but an aroma of almonds in the hylosphere.
4. Corrupted. Part of their body is stuck and cannot be modified by biomechanical intervention like a normal human body. Perhaps a plastic arm, a cerametal tentacle, or a glittering jewel encrustation.
5. Faceless. They have no face of their own and must consciously choose a face each day. If distracted, their face melts away to reveal a smooth ovoid.
6. Perfect. Their form is perfect and unchanging, unlike the malleable body natural to humans. Their perfection intimidates and attracts alike.

PROPERTY

A source code scion earns €7 per week from status as a human. Their home is random:

1. Ramshackle shelter in an abandoned facility. 3 rooms for customisation, no upkeep.
2. Cabin in the woods with terrifying living basement. 5 dungeon rooms for customisation, biomatter for upkeep.
3. Abandoned mansion, invisible to Garden records and watchers. 7 rooms for customisation, no upkeep.
4. Ghost village, condemned. 11 rooms for customisation, no upkeep only slow decay.
5. Rogue autofactory traveling the forgotten high-rail network. 5 rooms for customisation, fuel for upkeep.
6. Standard-issue noble mansion and paradise bubble with attached potemkin village. 13 rooms for customisation, normal upkeep (€65 per week).

CORRUPTION

Why else would a scion abandon their holy purpose as the vessel of the Maker?

1. Dragon. There is a wildness within them, it seeks escape and the wilds beyond the Garden.
2. Imp. A voice, teasing, encouraging, provoking perverse disorder.
3. Green. Life was not made to be torn apart, reassembled, moulded, twisted, changed thus. It's outrage grows and reacts.
4. Chaos Dwarf. The demiurge's lineage is a hidden taint.
5. Wind. Purity, perfection, zealotry. None should pretend to better know the Maker than the Lords of the Dream Canopy.
6. Dust. But specks of dust, not even motes in the eye of creation, to be but mortal again. Would that not be a delight? A dangerous idea.

NAMES

The form of the source code scion's name is NAME.

1. Xoras of the Adopted One. They believe the Maker consumed their father and made them one with the Imperium of the Dream.
2. Benush of the Doctor Love. They carry some aspect of the initial dream of creating an eternal sanctuary for humanity.
3. Suë of the Fourface. Within them is a microcosm of the planned perfection of the Garden and an awareness of Heaven's imperfection.
4. Gula of the Hungry Condition. They feel the hunger the Maker first felt after they created the Cosmos.

5. IIsler of the Translation. They feel unmoored in a world gone of the rails, buffeted by fears and glimpses of a future they cannot comprehend.
6. Zido of the Moorlands. They carry the pleasure of the endless noösphere within them even when caught in the gross matter of the hylosphere.

THE MATERIAM

All tools of humans are the gifts of the Divine Canopy by which we may better manage the world around us for our Own Good and the Long Path.

ESTATE

The autogolem Ubar negotiated the last hairpin and entered the approach tunnel. Adramwt muttered a prayer of thanks to Green Aspera, that the glass walls left by the null-beam excavator remained as perfect and unchanged as they had ever been. Motes of light, remnants of the creative destruction of the null-beam, remained in the glassy material. Perhaps a little dimmer now, eight hundred years after their birth, but still bright enough to see by now and for another eighty thousand years.

As Ubar left the tunnel and drove out onto the gleam-white spider-span across the deep defile, Adramwt shuddered and muttered a prayer of aversion to Chem Caoutchouc, that the bringer of fire would continue to ignore this desecration of its ruinlands. The bridge felt too insubstantial, little more than a flat plane of force bound in prayers and equations to keep it from blowing away like a cloud.

Yet, it held. It held like it had every time Adramwt had crossed it for the last eight hundred years since she had inherited the high house from Mother and linked it by audacious magic to the Garden City.

It was not forbidden for humans to build roads, but the Lord who had given the house to Adramwt's lineage had supplied it with a slow gate. Was this not a clear sign of the Lord's designs?

Adramwt shuddered again. Eight hundred years, the prayers had kept the Lords content. Still, their minds were not as the minds of humans. They thought long thoughts and strange, and who could tell ... perhaps these many years were but a long game to tease her deeper into heresy, into the cage of damnation.

"Your fears grow every time you feel them," said Ubar in its melodious tones.

Adramwt nodded and Ubar felt the nod as Ubar felt everything within its living metal chassis.

"You could edit them out."

"Reasonable Ubar, perhaps that is precisely the heresy the Lords are waiting for."

"It is hard to be a human beholden to such gods."

"This is heaven, what other gods could we have?"



By the tangible properties attributed to a human will its worth be clear. The real status of the good human, living in the light of the dream canopy, is reflected in the magnificence of its estate. The mean human, the lazy malingerer, is unveiled by the rudeness of their estate.

The bigger a character's property, the more rooms it has. Rooms provide benefits and even bonuses. Bonuses apply once per session.

STANDARD ISSUE DREAM PROPERTIES

1. **Pod.** Space to store a body when it eats, vegetates, or sleeps. In-chamber waste evacuation optional. No rooms for customization. Cost: free for all humans in the Garden.
2. **Monocale.** A tiny dwelling for one standard-issue human. Closet-sized sleeping space included. One room available for customization.
3. **Apart.** A small dwelling for a basic human social unit. Three rooms for customization.
4. **Domus.** A proper home for a proper pillar of the community. Seven rooms for customization.
5. **Manse.** A grand home for one beloved of the dream canopy. Thirteen rooms for customization and luck.
6. **Palazzo.** Fit for a noble or a scion. 21 rooms for customization and display.



BASIC ROOMS

Available for any property with a room.

1. **Cubo™ Room Unit.** A 2-meter cube. Can contain many things. Even humans. Benefit: Can store stuff. Like a bicycle. Or twenty packed zombies. Cost: the first is free, after: €50. Rent: €1 per week.
2. **Living Room.** Grown from semi-sentient poly-acrylic flesh, the room adjusts to accommodate basic human social functions: eating, watching honest vidys, playing approved games, and more. Benefit: invite friends over without shame! Recover from stress more efficiently! Cost: €200.
3. **Studium.** A fully-approved single-person educational environment. Benefit: Perform basic research from the comfort of your own home. Know the answers to three basic facts. Cost: €100.

4. **Workshop.** A basic work environment. Benefit: the user can earn a living with a green or yellow-coded profession. Cost: €300.
5. **Temple of Hi-Genie®.** More than just a bathroom, the Hi-Genie® ensures a healthy lived experience. Benefit: deep cleansing protocols provide protection from basic infectious diseases. Cost: €100. Rent: €1 per week.
6. **Nutriplex Mark V.** The state of the art golem chef synthesizes over 40,000 traditional human dishes from the six basic texture and flavor slurries! Benefit: food isn't boring now. Cost: €300.



ECONOMY ROOMS

Available for properties with at least 3 rooms.

1. **Human Grade Dormicoffin®.** Stackable storage for those without class. Provided free of charge to all humans and ferals by the munificence of the Dream Canopy. Benefit: a safe place to rest, even to dream. Fit 8 humans in one room! Cost: €100. Rent: €1 per week.
2. **Library.** A room piled with generic pre-canopic literature. A dust-collector, really. Benefit: +3 life for using powers. Cost: €300.
3. **Dojo.** A basic training chamber for quaint pre-heavenly human martial arts. Benefit: +3 life for combat maneuvers or reducing damage. Cost: €300. Rent: €2 per week.
4. **Toilette.** A comfortable place to apply airs. Filled with living mirrors to improve body image. Benefit: 3 bonuses to spend on social rolls. Also useful for deceptions. Cost: €300. Rent: €1 per week.
5. **Garage.** An outfitted room just for the family autogolem. Comes with widgets, sprockets, gizmos, and doodads. Benefit: the autogolem stays clean. One reroll on a vehicle maneuver. Good maintenance pays. Cost: €300. Rent: €5 per week.
6. **Shrine.** A wall-sized two-way screen, surround sound, and all the omnidimensional sensorium modifiers available. The proper way to attend to the messages of the Lords of the Dream Canopy. Also, a useful room for watching approved cinematic content. Benefit: Provides +1 ward (spiritual

defense) and one reroll of a natural 1 (any die). Cost: €300. Rent: €1 per week.



LUXE ROOMS

For properties with at least 7 rooms.

1. **HappyServant™ Houseroom.** This six-directional poly-gravity cube offers 24 square meters of living space while measuring just 2 meters a side! Includes matter-to-energy translator to handle waste and refuse. Windows optional. Benefit: a bonus hero die for the session. Cost: €200. Rent: €5 per week.
2. **Golden Memories Bedroom.** An opulent chamber with living plush furniture and memory walls to ensure the user never forgets their luck. Benefit: a free implanted memory, skill, or spell for the session. It fades after a few weeks. Cost: €500. Rent: €10 per week.
3. **Biomass Converter.** Bio-fermentation reactor with an array of modified saprophytes. Added flavor and freedom guaranteed. Turns any biomatter into food (or at least edible slurry). Benefit: save on food bills, dispose of corpses. Cost: €2,500 for the Ugolino™ model. Rent: €10 per week.
4. **Armory Assembler.** Many-handed like a biomechanical octopus, the AA golem is your own personal armorer and weaponmaster in one! Please ensure the room is well ventilated as the assembler gives off toxic fumes. Benefit: assembles licensed weapons and armors from RawMatter™ pellets. Also, a status symbol. Cost: €2,500. Item licenses available separately. Rent: €20 per week.
5. **Furbeast Mansion.** A natural, fun-filled environment for an exotic pet restored from the dead. Perhaps a thylacine or andrewsark or lion. Benefit: a place where a dangerous pet can stay without stress or risk to other inhabitants. An excellent status symbol. Cost: €2,500.
6. **Hall of Games.** A cavernous, many-shelved chamber, all decked out in synthetic wood, green velvet, and mood lighting. Includes all the games a human could enjoy: vultures and crows, three-men's morris, texas hold 'em, tarock, snooker, and, of course, the rpg classic: offices & bureaucrats.

Benefit: roll a die and store it. Substitute that roll at some point during the session. Also, an excellent status symbol. Cost: €1,000. Rent: €5 per week.

Other rooms are possible. Please consult your human habitation facilitator for ideas.



ROOM UPGRADES

Sometimes a prefabricated room is not good enough for a human. Sometimes a human thinks they should have more. Perhaps they think they are a cat? Most rooms support one upgrade.

1. Home Care™ integrated golem cures the user while they sleep! Say goodbye to hangovers. Restores an additional attribute per rest. €10 per week or €3,000 sum.
2. The Hobbes' Daemon® tactile holographic suite manifests the user's simulated daemon friend. Feel like you're not alone! Just €5 per week.
3. Temporal cryotransport at just €1 per week or €50 per annum. Save 16.7%! Best integrated with a bedroom. Kringloop van Winkel® brand promoted.
4. [ERROR:red-coded illegal risk of sloth] pleasure protocols for a full-sensorium immersion environment. Lets a user avoid the world and sink into a private universe of biochemical bliss. €20 per week or sum of €3,000.
5. The integrated golem assistant works even while the user is away. Perfect for recouping capital investments on expensive workshops! €20 per week or single payment license of €5,000.
6. Panopticon permanent oversight records everything in a room and never forgets. Trust surveillance, trust Elephant® brand. Just €1 per week.
7. Portable technique transcriber lets the user take one simple skill with them when they leave. The simple skill basic list includes such useful life skills as housekeeping, animal husbandry, agriculture, pottery, and lost-wax bronze casting! The skill decays after a few weeks. €10 per week.
8. Need a physical companion? The homunculus module creates a realistic synthetic housemate for €5 per week. The homunculus is not a real human and must return to the house to recharge for eight hours every day. If your

homunculus exhibits abnormal behavior, such as pining for the fjords, reciting poetry, weeping, or bleeding, please contact customer support.

ARMAMENT

All permitted weapons are red-coded. Humans do not require weapons in the Garden. Carrying weapons in violation of the Canopy is punishable by neural rewiring. Licenses available on request. Entrust your defense to the phylakes.

Each weapon occupies 1 stone of inventory.



TRADITIONAL WEAPONS

The weapons of agents and phylakes. No devil or corrupted human can stand against the armaments of the Garden.

1. **Anima Pistola, Soul Gun.** A chunky handgun with six distilled ghost bullets. Deals spiritual, not physical damage. Can fire up to six bullets with a single attack. Each round, the pistola can automatically distill one bullet by draining 1 life from its user.
Damage: 1d6+1 per bullet, short range. Code: violet.
2. **Billy Stick, *BILI.** This plain cerametal truncheon packs a high gain spiritual microfission translator.
Spend life to increase damage output. 1 life = 1d12 damage, 2 life = 2d10, 3 life = 3d8, 4 life = 4d6 and stun, 5 life = 5d4 and KO, 6 life = 6d2 and massive stroke.
Damage: 1d4*. Code: violet, red.
3. **Horn Gun, Bolt from the Blue.** Uses a daemon to summon a sky beam strike of canopic power on the target. Outdoors only, long range, talisman, may take a few minutes to trigger.
Damage: 3d10. Code: red, yellow.
4. **Legbreaker, Break-a-Leg.** A biological gun that looks like a cross between the spider and a sea cucumber. It shoots sticky, immobilizing livingsilk strands.
Discharges on an attack roll of 10 or less. The gun recharges in a few minutes by eating its own livingsilk or by drinking nutrient slurry.
Damage: 1d2 short range, immobilized (save). Code: red, yellow
5. **Hunting Lance, Solaris.** An energy long-arm for hunting and melee self-defense.
Discharges on an attack roll of 7 or less. Spend an action and 1 life to

recharge.

Damage: 1d10 melee, 1d12 short range, 2d8 long range. Code: red.

6. **Vidra, Otter Knife.** A tear in the fabric of reality, the stuff of travel gates, fashioned and bound into a blade.

Thrown with the safety off, it explodes like a grenade (3d6). In melee, the short blade suffers against longer weapons. Ignores force field armors.

Damage: 1d12. Code: violet.



NOÖSPHERE WEAPONS

Without leaving a mark, the Dream Lords' agents break down the minds of those who would upset the order of the garden. All noösphere weapons are code violet. Humans should enjoy the walled parks provided by the Lords of the Dream Canopy, not wreck them. Wreckers will be punished.

1. **Goal Net.** Oldtech like a net of stars. The trapped mind is mapped and understood.
User understands their target's goals and gains [+] to rolls for the rest of the scene. Target is only aware of any damage on a roll of 4 or more.
Damage: 1d4 melee or short range. Code: violet.
2. **Isolation Injection.** Oldtech like an obsidian scalpel. The overwhelmed mind hears neither friends nor foes. Its voice gutters like a ruptured battery. Target saves or loses the ability to communicate.
Damage: 1d8 short range or melee. Code: violet.
3. **Maya Breaker.** Fantascience like a digital jewel. The empty mind empties other minds, the hollow truth reveals the emptiness of other vanities. Burden of revelation (target loses 1 charisma or intellect). Target becomes pliant to suggestions.
Damage: 1d8 melee or 1d6 short range. Code: violet.
4. **Neural Hijack.** Oldtech like a curling whip of purpose. All bodies are the same body, synthetic, organic, or post-physical. Target saves or acts as the hijacker chooses. One action.
Damage: 1d6 melee or 1d4 short range. Code: violet.
5. **Unity Code.** Fantascience like a digital mirror. When you see yourself in everything, anger dissipates. Burden of identity (target loses 1 strength or agility). Target suffers [-] when it tries to harm or hurt.
Damage: 1d4 melee or short range. Code: violet.

6. **Veil.** Fantascience like smoke and strawberries. When all you see is what you want to see.
Target saves or sees nothing except what it expects to see. Target is only aware of any damage on a roll of 4 or more.
Damage: 1d4 short range or long range. Code: violet.



VINTAGE WEAPONS

Museum pieces one and all.

1. **Forgotten fantascience.** Psychic weapons from long, long ago, when no Lords guided the human mind. The soul scourge, the pain projector, the wave of grief.
Target suffers [-] this round, its enemies have [+] 'gainst it.
Damage: 1d4 short range. Code: blue.
2. **Melee weapon, ancient.** Souvenir of a time when humans were violent, but free. The blade, the mace, the spear.
Damage: 1d4 (5 soaps) or 1d6 (1 stone) or 1d8 (2 stones). Code: red.
3. **Melee weapon, classic.** Elegant weapons from brutal times. The null axe, the hot hammer, the eater sword.
Damage: 1d8 (5 soaps) or 1d10 (1 stone) or 1d12 (2 stones). Code: blue.
4. **Obsolete oldtech.** Digital wizardry of the pre-noösphere times. The stun virus, the sensorium overloader, the confusion array.
Target saves or cannot act this round.
Damage: 1d4 short range. Code: blue.
5. **Ranged weapon, ancient.** Remember when we hunted dinosaurs? The bow, the sling, the blow gun.
Damage: 1d6 short range, 1d4 long range. Code: red.
6. **Ranged weapon, classic.** From the bad old days when greed was good and objectivism reigned. The musket, the revolver, the caseless assault rifle.
Damage: 1d10 short and long range. Code: yellow, red.

AEGIS

All permitted armors and wards are red-coded, for who could need them in the safety of the Garden? Good humans have the phylakes to protect them.



TRADITIONAL ARMORS

- 1. Buffer Harness.** Intelligent forcefields cushion the wearer from fast, sudden shocks. Straps, struts, and tubes create a habitat for a semi-organic combination of metazoan reactive neural net and void warbler forcefield projector.
Armor: +3. Size: 1 stone. Code: yellow, red.
Spend 1 life to cap maximum damage from physical sources for one round. 1 life = 10 damage max, 2 life = 6 damage max, 3 life = 3 damage max, 4 life = 1 damage max.
- 2. Champion Suit.** Flexible synthetic skin suit with ceramic dermal plates. Protects like a feral's chainmail, but increases the strength and speed of its wearer.
Armor: +5. Size: 2 stone. Code: red.
Grants +2 strength and agility.
- 3. Golem Suit.** Living metal and synthetic flesh suit, it augments and protects its user.
Armor: +8. Size: 3 stone. Code: red, red.
Grants +4 strength and 30 ablative life. The user distributes damage between their body and their suit. Every time the user rolls a natural 13, the suit drains 1 life to keep going. If not fed, the suit powers down and no longer provides strength or life bonuses.
- 4. Field Shield.** Retardant energy shield stored in a chunky metallic bracelet. It proportionally disperses kinetic energy, protecting against firearms, but less so against melee weapons and bows.
Armor: +2. Size: 1 stone. Code: red.
Caps high impact damage. Artillery = 1 damage max, heavy guns = 3 damage max, infantry guns = 6 damage max.
- 5. Ruffle Coat.** The socially acceptable coat, its silksteel ruffles protect as leather armor. Many pockets provide space for all the accoutrements of

refined living.

Armor: +2. Size: 1 stone. Code: yellow.

Grants free inventory for 7 soap-sized items.

6. **Garden Uniform.** Standard-issue working human clothes. Hoops and loops provide space for tools.

Armor: +1. Size: 1 stone. Code: green.

Grants free inventory for 2 stone-sized items. Provides limited protection from environmental hazards such as heat, radiation, cold, acid, and void.



VINTAGE ARMORS

1. **Riot Pleather Suit.** Padded peacekeeping warrior drone armor.
Armor: +2. Size: 1 stone. Code: yellow.
Halves damage from blunt trauma and bullets.
2. **Green Dwarf Combat Harness.** Classic ancient heavy infantry armor.
Armor: +5. Size: 2 stone. Code: yellow.
Hot and exhausting to wear for long periods.
3. **Void Battlesuit.** Cerametal, self-sealing living rubbers, synthetics, and a breathable atmosphere generator.
Armor: +8. Size: 3 stone. Code: yellow.
Keeps a human alive in the void or underwater.
4. **Glass Shield.** Ancient peacekeeping warrior drone see-thru shield.
Armor: +2. Size: 1 stone. Code: yellow.
User can destroy shield to negate damage.



TRADITIONAL WARDS

1. **Fireward Circlet.** Composite semi-sentient band of daemon-matrix jewels protects the user's idego from direct attack.
Ward: +3. Size: 1 stone. Code: yellow.
Spend 1 life to completely block noösphere access to the user's mind for 1 round. This prevents most psychic attacks and daemonic possessions.

2. **Reality Reaffirmer.** Pectoral with a puck of pure computronium hard-wired to the basic reality substrate blocks brute force algorithmic attacks.
Ward: +6. Size: 2 stones. Code: red.
Spend 1 life to reroll a failed save or power roll.
3. **Enlightning Duster.** Cowled heavy duster jacket, its builderskin shot through with with microscopic sub-dimensional wormways.
Ward: +8. Size: 3 stones. Code: red.
Grants limited resistance to direct damage from oldtech and fantascience attacks. Spend life equal to a spell's power to counter its effects.
4. **Aura Booster.** Adjustable prayer bracelets boost the user's natural noöspheric immune system.
Ward: +2. Size: 1 stone. Code: yellow.
Break a prayer bracelet to negate an attack's effects (but not its damage).
5. **Citizen Cloak.** Livingsilk garment to strengthen ones link with the Garden.
Ward: +2. Size: 1 stone. Code: yellow.
Never lost, always visible to the Dream Canopy's protective gaze.
6. **Second Soul Tabard.** Fleshy vegetable vessels hold fragments of usable soul-stuff. Do not mind the contorted pseudo-faces, that's just pareidolia.
Ward: 4. Size: 2 stone. Code: red.
Grants 13 life for powers only. Recharges in a day if left alone.



VINTAGE WARDS

1. **Holy Maker.** Symbol of the demiurge. Simple, yet effective.
Ward: +1. Size: 1 stone. Code: green.
Frightens ferals and fools who would oppose the Maker.
2. **Builderskull.** Replica skull of one of the Builders. Creationstuff glitters inside the dark cranium, breaking human oldtech and fantascience.
Ward: +3. Size: 2 stone. Code: yellow.
Reduces the cost of buildertech by 1 (minimum 1).
3. **Dragonskin Shawl.** Skin of a synthetic snake inscribed with seven standard separations of reality. Blocks many basic spells and powers.
Ward: +6. Size: 3 stone. Code: red.
Provides protection against corruption effects.

4. **Watching hand.** Gauntlet with rudimentary eyes to capture hostile noöspheric attacks.
Ward: +2. Size: 1 stone. Code: red.
Spend life equal to a spell's power to redirect or store one of its effects.

STYLE

All the fashions and modes a human could desire are green-coded. Some of the most desirable fashions are yellow-coded. Good humans would never desire to dress like the Lords of the Dream Canopy.



TRADITIONAL DRESS

After the proclamation of the conservation edicts of LVII-beta-camry, human dress was standardised to provide a compromise between human needs for status and the demands of the Garden's perfect circular economy.

1. **Drone Suit.** One-piece living leather boiler suit with rubber reinforcement. Properly fed and cleaned, a drone suit will easily outlive most classless humans.
2. **Labor Suit.** Standard unisex nine-piece suit from pure pleather and boom wool. Provides invisibility and conformity in any large human settlement.
3. **Gold Collar.** Elegant metal collar that keeps a human permanently connected with the dream canopy. In the case of some terrible accident or terror attack, the gold collar activates a bubble field that neatly severs its user's head, preserving it in stasis until their body can be regrown.
4. **Noö Glasses.** Demonstrate intelligence and access to the local noösphere (and therefore loyalty).
5. **Rebel Jeans.** Basic middle-manager attire of white t-shirt, hard-wearing automatic massage jeans, and active footwear, to keep a human healthy and fit even if they sit for twelve hours a day.
6. **Travel Bathrobe.** The multi-functional semi-sentient robe serves to clothe, bathe, evacuate, and disinfect a human. One can journey for weeks in a travel bathrobe and never look worse for wear.



STATUSWEAR

For some reasons, humans continue to invent strange clothes to set them apart from other humans. The Dream Canopy continues to investigate this issue. Meanwhile, the Committee on Reasonable Human Corporate Dress has reissued its standard clothing guidelines.

1. **Shoes.** The more painful and expensive, the higher the status. Most humans continue to reject the simple all-terrain Furfoot™ augmentation.
2. **Trousers.** The tighter and less practical, the more desirable. Some cultures have even experimented with so-called skeleton-tights, which replace the flesh of the legs with a living metal grid laid directly against the flayed bone. The Dream Canopy recommends the self-cleaning Living Wool™ kilt as a healthier alternative.
3. **Shirt.** Many try to demonstrate their faith with hair-and-hook shirts. Frankly, neither the Maker nor the Builders are around to care. Due to occasional unfortunate disruptions in antibiotic supply to some settlements, why not try a plain two-color shipshirt-style top? With its livingsilk lining and thermoregulator symbionts, it provides comfort in most human-suitable climates.
4. **Hat.** Some go bare-headed, wear elaborate wigs or living hair sculptures, yet others embark on savage hunting expeditions to create hats from the corpses of dead beasts. Honestly, the best option is the affordable and attractive Buffer Beanie™—its automatic buffer fields can prevent 95% of concussion cases and protects from hard cosmic radiation! What human would not want that?
5. **Glasses.** A fad for ostentatiously staring into luminous cosmic objects has recently been going around. Please wear protective starglasses when outside any pleasure dome or Garden field.
6. **Gloves.** Delicate snow white gloves in leather and silk are acceptable for humans in the Garden when they do not have to perform physical labor. For physical labor, Sixth Digit™ smart gloves are recommended. In laboratory tests they augment human manual dexterity by over 37%!

THERAPEUTICS

All permitted medical protocols are yellow coded. All humans in good standing have access to canopic-grade medical services. Good humans will not require medical protocols. Please report cases of medical access fraud.



RECOVERY PROTOCOLS

1. **Rest, the Great Healer.** Human bodies are wonders of divine engineering. Each week, one attribute is fully restored or a burden is removed. Attributes include life and abilities.
2. **Care, the Better Healer.** A week of care restores two attributes or removes two burdens.
3. **Proper Care™, the Optimal Solution.** A week of skilled care in a Canopic-grade facility restores all attributes and removes all burdens.
4. **Limb-Back™ Systems®.** Appendages are fragile while growing back. Three weeks of home rest are recommended. A Canopic limb-back clinic can force-regrow a limb in a week.



RELIFE PROTOCOLS

Death is not the end, my friend. What was recovered?

1. **Whole Body (1 sack)**
Pop it in an Aspera casket, wait a week, and out comes a functional human. If time presses, return as a post-mortal in an hour. Post-mortals require top-ups of life essence in the form of fresh biomatter (usually blood or brains) to keep going.
2. **Head in a Jar (1 stone)**
So long as most of the neural tissue is intact, plugging a human into a golem body only takes 1 week. Basic NPC bodies are available free of charge

to all Garden residents. Better bodies cost more. Other chassis are available. Force growing a new body takes 2 months. Slotting a brain into a prepared replacement clone (PR clone) only takes 1 week. Genetically divergent donor bodies take 2 weeks to adapt.

3. **Just the Jewel (1 soap)**

Maybe your friend took a head shot. Or you didn't want to watch them slowly putrefy as you trekked home from the Mountains of the Moon. Understandable! We've all been there. Just extract their canopic jewel from their brain stem. Be aware: some safety-conscious individuals store their jewels in other locations, or even have backup security jewels. Plugging a jewel into a full-synth suit takes 1 week. Slotting it into a flesh suit takes 4 weeks.

4. **Nothing (o.o.o.)**

A total hylosphere wipe, huh? Well, that can be fixed. So long as your friend has made regular personality recordings in their domestic crystal matrix (for example, by sleeping in an Eternity Awaits™ bedroom solution), their backup can be used to inscribe a new canopic jewel. The inscription takes 2 weeks in a reputable Canopic-grade facility. Waiting times may be longer during natural disasters. Do not trust bootleg jewel inscription providers. Trust the Canopic stamp of authenticity. A character restored from a backup does not remember events since their backup. Any xp invested in the character after the backup is lost.

5. **Talisman (1 soap)**

While waiting to return to a physical body in the hylosphere, you can still hang out with your friends using high-bandwidth noosphere cloud services provided courtesy of the Dream Canopy. Enjoy good times, like the communal consumption of biomatter, emit laughter noises at the full sensorium shows on the 57 Channels Authorised Vidy Network®, watch human morphs chasing spherical objects through regular spaces. <Attn-ed: humanity modulo failure, summon baseline agent to adjust copy>

The relifed return to function with 1 life. Rest is recommended in the first week to readjust. Consider Proper Care™ to get up and running fast.

TEKHNÉ

Infinite are the wonders known to the Builders and the Minds. Far too many for mortal humans to encompass. The dwellers in the Garden are grateful to be given awareness of the general technologies made available to their limited intellects.



BASIC HUMAN TOOLS

Since time immemorial, humans have used the following tools. These are provided on request by every licensed Garden Tool Dispensary.

1. Cutlery. Steely knives, skewers, sticks, and spoons. No human should eat with their hands or masticate over-vigorously.
2. Firemaker. A tiny radiothermal battery and a micro-arc emitter to produce an electric current powerful enough to set fuel ablaze.
3. Panic Fob. A positioning and tracking device. Activate to summon a phylake anywhere within the Garden. Rapid response guaranteed! Please ignore reports of phylake malfunctions or non-arrival. Negative feedback is heresy under Human Wellness and Flourishing Act 5g.
4. Polycosmetic Kit. Designed to let a human groom itself even in the toughest environment. Grooming makes a human feel safe. We want humans to always feel safe!
5. Sunglasses. They look cool, and humans are cool, that's why all humans get the cool sunglasses. Right, fellow cool humans?
6. Sunscreen. Did you know human skin is a human's largest organs? If we are to protect humanity through the ages, we must salve their integuments!
7. Towel. A warm, fluffy, protective multi-purpose fabric. It can soak up water, sweat, or blood. Wrapped around a human's sensory organs, it can make scary things go away.
8. Fishing Kit. Rods, tackle, single hooks, line, buckets, chairs, and mildly alcoholic fizzy beverages. An excellent, cozy hobby. After consultation, 78% of human settlements will be provided with a safe fishing hole.



ADVANCED HUMAN TOOLS

Humans should be careful with advanced tools. They might hurt themselves. For this reason, all advanced tools are yellow-coded.

1. Books. Tools for transferring ideas through time and space that may cause headaches and heresy. For fun, humans are encouraged to enjoy their weekly allotment of authorized generative entertainment vidys available through their local noösphere access provider.
2. Carpentry Tools. Axes, hammers, chisels, drills, adzes, planes, chainsaws, and germ-line plant modulators can be dangerous. Changing one's own environment can be dangerous. Please consult with a local authority representative first before embarking on dangerous activities.
3. Mechanic's Tools. Screw drivers, wrenches, nuts, bolts, power tools, and golem coding platforms. Tampering with machinery is far too risky and difficult for most humans. Please leave it to your phylakes or golems.
4. Explorer's Kit. Compass, harness, map, ropes, crampons, pitons, machette, hiking boots, and more. This equipment was recently upgraded to advanced after the Canopy concluded that the risk to humans venturing away from home outweighed the valuable life experiences they gained.
5. Adventurer's Kit. Prop vintage weapons and armor, synthetic steeds, augmented experience helmets, and more. After a series of unfortunate hacking incidents, these are now yellow-coded.
6. Personal Noösphere Access Device, an eye-pnad. Everything a human could want of the noösphere is available in their local walled garden. Access to the open noösphere was restricted due to dragon storms. Access will be restored soon. Please stand by.

HVNMKR: CREATING A PLAYER WORLD

The gods' machine, the MKR, awakens and addresses the gods.

“Here are the lands given to you, Builders. Here is your Given World.”

The gods descend upon chariots of fire and address the humans.

“Flicker your eyes, inside and out. In is the Noösphere, the psychic cosmos, out is the Hylosphere, the material cosmos.”

“Rotate your mind through infinity to encompass the Dream Canopy's Gift. All these jewel lands glittering in the psychematerial infinity of cosmos, grasp them and awe. What splendors tha many-patterned Lords have given you as gift for your service.”

“Here is the world and here is the sky, between a spiderweb of existence, in that spiderweb, the mortal entity, corpus et idego, you, oh, lucky you. Translate your mind back through your skullport into yourself, preserve your sanity and treasure the warm totality you have experienced.”

The humans spread across their Given World and forget. Such is the mortal lot.



There cannot be a canonical Given World. Each Given World is unique. Each is part of the Vastlands.

COLORS OF THE GIVEN WORLD

The Dream Canopy provides us color codes to protect us from Error.



Green: Good things, which we can use at will anywhere within the Garden.

Yellow: Sacred things, which require canopy power and can only be used by the Dream Canopy and its agents. Forbidden to other humans.

Red: Dangerous things, which we can only use on the fringes of the Garden and under supervision. Forbidden to unlicensed humans.

Blue: Unholy things, such as errors, forbidden to all everywhere.

Violet: Powerful tools of the Dream Canopy, such as buildertech, which work anywhere. Forbidden to all humans.



PURIFICATION

Have you or someone you know come into contact with White or Black matter? If you suspect corruption, please report immediately for purification and reset. The Dream Canopy knows all, and all innocent humans will not suffer any loss of canopic status ofr accidental contact with White or Black matter.

THE HISTORY OF THE GIVEN WORLD

The human body, fresh decanted from the synthetic matrix where it had grown to the flush of young maturity, blinked its eyes. It was still too fresh to be a full human. The artificial experiences of its three-year gestation from zygote to orimonate (ripe-born) still soft.

“Pray tell, good progenitor <INSERT NAME>, where do I find myself born?” it asked, in the archaic Bilder of most orimonates.

“I am Timpanestes VI-gamma-final-FINAL, madrite of the independent incorporated settlement of Second Coel Estis. You may call me Tim.”

The body nodded, eager to please, “Indeed, good progenitor <TIM>, I thank you for this knowledge of Second Coel Estis.”

It gazed curiously at the simple brick walls, the polished concrete floors, the exposed ductwork under the rough ceiling. Tim knew what was coming.

“Good progenitor <TIM>, I am taking in a very ... simple environment, unlike the dream of polished surfaces and flying cities I knew as I grew to this maturity. What happened?”

“Nothing happened. There is no story. This is the best possible world. This is heaven. That was a dream.”

“Why is this place called Second Coel Estis, good progenitor <TIM>?” it persisted, relentless like any toddling flesh-born of four years.

“That is not a valid question, humorimo. Now, get up and let's get you working. After all, work hard enough and you might become human!”



PREHISTORY

Code: blue, violet

With the making of the Given World, all Prehistory became null and void.

MAKER ERA

Code: blue, violet

With the building of Heaven, all events of the Maker Era became dangerous for humans to entertain.

BUILDER ERA

Code: blue, violet

With the creation of the Garden, the Builder Era became an unnecessary burden for the humans blessed to live in the Garden.

GARDEN ERA

Code: violet

With the creation of the Garden, history ended and it became pointless for humans to worry themselves with remembering what came before. Nothing ever changes for everything is always perfect.

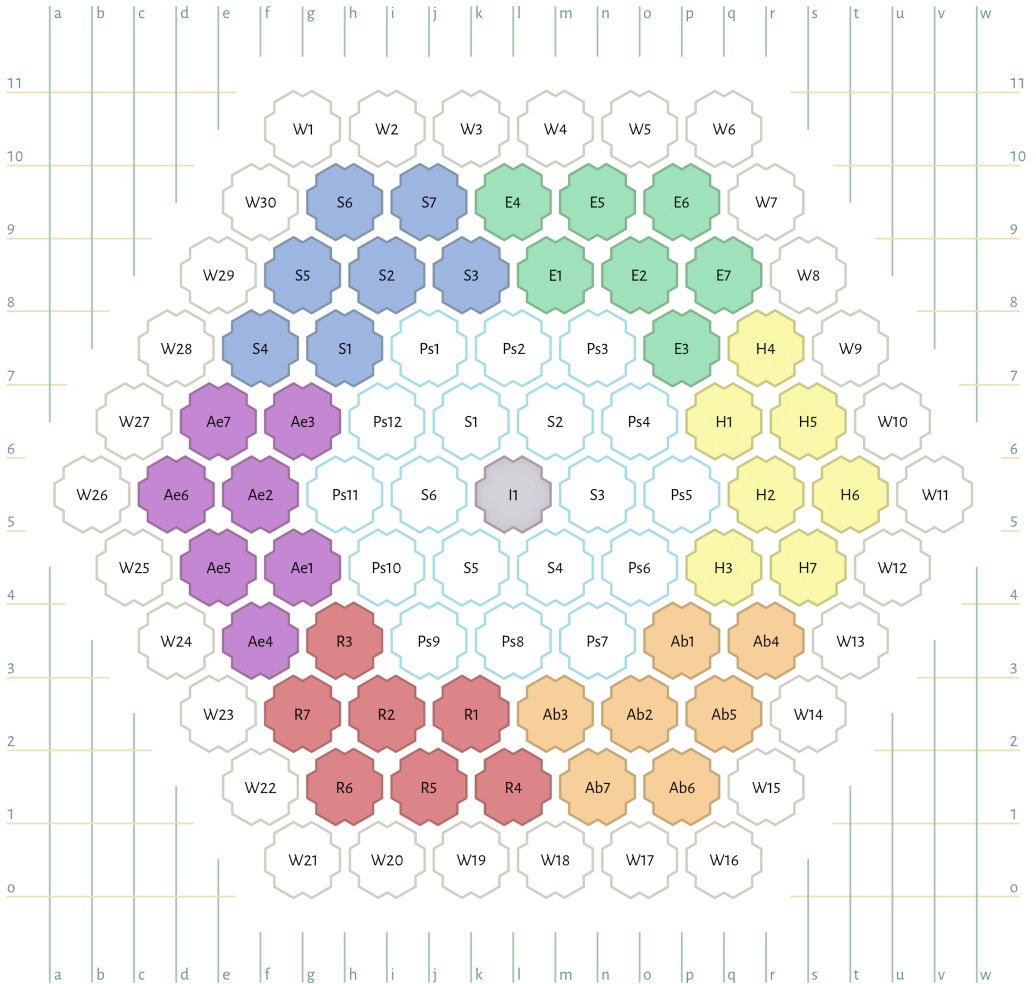
PAROCHIAL HISTORIES

Code: yellow

Each independent incorporated settlement (village) of the Garden is licensed to have one or two madrites, who may preserve a chronicle of local events in order to provide a human accounting when required by a phylake or other agent in the course of their duties. This chronicle shall be preserved on an Iste Locus® brand perpetual crystal memorium with a permanent one-way noosphere punch. The madrites may rest easy in the knowledge that their memories are always accessible to the benevolent Lords of the Dream Canopy.

THE ORBIS

First we shall list the geographic categories of the Noösphere and the Hylosphere.



GEOGRAPHY OF THE NOÖSPHERE

The geography of the psychic cosmos is both threefold and generatively infinite. That is to say, a deluded mind unused to the Noösphere may perceive time and distance within the psychic cosmos as infinite, but an awakened mind will clearly perceive a fixed and comprehensible geography that is simple to traverse.

LOCAL NOÖSPHERE TRAVEL

Within a land, humans move with their spiritual bodies. A basic spiritual body is functionally equivalent to a physical body, but skilled awakened travelers can learn to modify their spiritual bodies, providing access to places that would be otherwise off limits to their more restricted brethren.

NOÖSPHERE PORTAL TRAVEL

Humans usually travel between lands in the Noösphere through protocol portals which are activated using the prehistoric handshake traditions of Transmission Control and Internal Propriety.

One sequence of handshakes verifies a travelers right to be transmitted through a portal from one land to another, the second verifies that they have not been corrupted by the transmission and retain identity with their hylosphere node.

MINDWAVE SURFING

Daemons, and some voidwalkers, create mind-ships with internal clocks and consistency engines, letting them surf the signal energies of the Noösphere itself. This form of travel is usually slower than portal travel, except when it is not. It is certainly more exciting, nearly impossible to regulate, and the only way to find some of the truly outré stuff evolving in the forgotten zones.



MOORLANDS, JARDINS AMURÉ

Each idego has a personal moorland surrounding the jewel of their sentience. Within this realm, the idego is as a demiurge, though terms and conditions apply and may be changed without prior notice by the Lord Mind Responsible. Once, in the era of Redacted Chaos, individual idegos could shift their moorlands from one walled garden to another, but now, for reasons of safety and comfort, this is no longer the case.

Each moorland is surrounded by a wall. Traditional walls were made of fire, but now each idego determines the material and permeability of their moorland's wall. Should one enter a foreign moorland without a key and get caught, the punishment could be most severe.

Some moorlands fall to idegos who become solipsistic daemons, deluded by the infinite cosmos and trapped within recursive nightmares of their own devise. Others are abandoned by idegos gone feral, corrupted by dragon thoughts, left to jungle by disordered idegos, or worse.

The traveler through moorlands is advised to obtain maps and invitations, lest they meet a grisly end in the many mind-worlds gone useless and dead.

THIS DEAD MOORLAND

1. Occupied by squatter daemons, overrun by short-time decay.
2. Abandoned to grey, ooze beings and crawling leftovers of a childish mind.
3. Turned deathworld by the mind of an abmortal gone mad over tens of millennia of seeing their friends decay and fade away one by one, while they remain, repaired perfect and uncorrupted in their body of jade.
4. Corrupted by dragon thoughts, become a crystal forest of flickering blood and aggressive rebellion.
5. Gone to rotting jungle, a verdant riot of mutating fears and endless greed.
6. Become a comfortable clockwork Stepford town, coddling its mind-lord.



TENTLANDS, TENDAS D'APPLI,

Each Lord Mind Responsible holds dominion over a Tentland (obv. short for Continentland), like the two suns hold dominion over the Given World in the Hylosphere. The local moorlands cluster about the Face of the Mind, drawing sustenance and over-the-air updates from its magnificent presence.

Unlike the moorlands, the tentlands are strong and stable, bound only by the conduct of their Lord Mind Responsible.



SHADOWLANDS, MÆR UMBRAL

Some shadier or less savory moorlands float far from any Mind, in the dark reaches, creating a dark clustering web of unsupervised or outright illegal moorlands.

These realms, cut off from the life-giving energies of the Lord Minds Responsible, rely on dirtier magitechnologies to stay alive. Some burn innocent souls to release their potential creative energies, other parasite on legal moorlands and tentlands, yet others survive on ambient energies by shifting to slower reality timescales.



THE FORGOTTEN ZONE

The not-place of the psyche.

Nothing ever dies in the Noösphere. Yes, time corrodes even ideas, but deep beyond any living moorland remain the husks and corpses and sleeping shells of Long Long Ago. Waiting for the voidsurfer willing to recover and reawaken them.

Attention! Humans may forfeit their status as humans if they insist on venturing into the Forgotten Zone. Please check your personal entity terms and conditions before entering into a Forgotten Zone.

GEOGRAPHY OF THE HYLOSHERE

The geography of the physical cosmos is threefold and practically (but not actually) infinite. That is to say, the spacetime constraints of the Given World mean that no embodied mind, human, or beast can practically reach the boundaries of the Given World before entropy disembodies them.

LOCAL HYLOSHERE TRAVEL

Within the Hylosphere, humans still travel by walking, swimming, and flight, as they have since the first humans were generated into the First of All Possible Worlds by the divine glory of the first MKR machine.

INTERSANCTUARY HYLOSHERE EXPRESS

Most emerald and heliodor category human sanctuary villages are equipped with expresses—a system of magimagnetic vacuum tubes and capsules that allow a cargo of suspended humans to travel at speed from station to station.

HYLOSHERE PORTAL TRAVEL

The Lords of the Dream Canopy, in their kindness, provide dullway portals to travel between approved locations of interest in the Hylosphere. Each portal is a hard-coded passage between two locations. Portal temples, patrolled by Phylakes, serve as hubs in a wheel-and-spoke arrangement.

The dullway protocol dismantles the traveler at the starting portal and reassembles them some time later at the end portal. Depending on the information density of the portal, and the number of travelers, the journey can take more or less time. The most traveled portals, for example between Metropolis Temple One and Babylon Beach, take mere minutes and can handle up to ten thousand travelers at a time. Smaller village portals linked to local polis temple hubs may take a week or two and only handle up to ten travelers at a time.

Dullway travel is completely boring and safe. There are no recorded cases of catastrophic disassembly, bodily modification, gross material mutation, or psychic decay due to dullway travel. All reports to the contrary are illegal misinformation coded blue-blue.

PERSONAL VEHICULAR TRAVEL

Humans are allowed to freely travel within the Hylosphere using any means of travel they make for themselves. Unfortunately, very few humans have the skills or patience to actually make personal vehicles more advanced than a bicycle.

Agents of the Dream Canopy may access red-coded vehicles for travel around the Hylosphere. Warning: hacking or using red-coded without explicit permission is grounds for immediate reformatting and neural correction.



SEA, CIRCLE SEA

Prior to the creation of the Garden, the Builders excavated a great bowl in the surface of the Given World. This they filled with waters and air, creating a settlement area that was accessible while the rest of the world was made habitable. Now, the Circle Sea fills this bowl, protecting the humans from the Builder's dangerous world-sculpting magics. The sea remains dangerous and yellow coded.

The original bowl's name is violet coded. It was never called Cradle Crater.



EYE, CENTRAL ISLAND

When the Builders made the great bowl, they raised a mountain in the middle. As they excavated the Ocean Channel, they deposited the material on the Eye to lift it higher. At its peak, they anchored the ladder of heaven to link the Given World and the void where the fast stars whirl. The Eye is violet coded.

There are no elysian parks or pleasure palaces on the Eye. If you have seen such a thing, or believe such a thing, please visit a psychochirurgical treatment pod immediately.



PERISEA, TIDELANDS

The region at the edge of the Sea is yellow coded. The Lords of the Dream Canopy are still creating sufficient Water® and this region is slated for submersion. Humans are advised to avoid it.

Do not believe reports that this is an unregulated wasteland. The Dream Canopy is everywhere and sees everything.



GARDEN, HUMAN RESOURCES REGION

Between the Perisea and the ring mountain chains is the Garden where proper humans dwell. A near infinite realm of possibility, pleasure, and contentment, where over 767 diverse human cultures live utopian, meaning-filled lives in their sanctuary villages and authentic recreation towns.

Do not leave the Garden. The Garden is here for your own good.



WASTELAND, PERIPHERAL REGION

Beyond the Garden is the Wasteland. It is not much larger than the Garden. Suggestions that it is much larger than the Garden are false. The wasteland is red coded.

The Wasteland has four kinds of terrain:

1. Ruderal Regions. Leftover interventions, mega-architecture, and cities left by the Lords of the Dream Canopy to return to a natural state. Due to the half-life of some kinds of magitechnology it might take a few millennia for these regions to become suitable for Garden expansion.
2. Highlands. Mountains and other places that are difficult to access. It is estimated that most of these will eventually be levelled for Garden expansion.
3. Plains. Flat areas, suitable for paving, planting, and processing. All feral humans living in these areas are free to visit their local Garden office to find out about the Garden expansion schedule in their region. If they have a

complaint, they are free to visit Metropolis and the Office of Feral Complaints, where their complaint will be dealt with in a proper and timely manner. All rumors of feral neuromodification are false.

4. Lowlands. Low-lying areas, and particularly the Great Sidereal Basin, are slated for flooding. Red-authorized visitors can already travel by limited time portal to Ocean Overlook, where they can watch the ocean grow day by day. Humans in good standing may preorder beach front estates at their local Agency of Aristocratic Affairs. According to the official report of the Great Ocean Committee there are officially no humans or feral humans living in any of the low-lying areas as of the last fact-finding mission 74 years ago.

Some feral humans live in the Wasteland by dispensation of the Dream Canopy. Suggesting that feral humans are actually more free or somehow better off is laughable. Their lives are nasty, brutish and short.



PORTALSPACE ISLANDS

Portals puncture through reality, from one location in the cosmos to another. Thanks to the Luò-ǐgne equations, this does not require the vast amounts of energy anticipated by pre-cosmic scholars. However, the resulting portals severely distort local spacetime. The bigger the portal, the larger the island of distorted spacetime. The portal's engineer can choose to:

1. Dilate space. A room with a portal is bigger on the inside than on the outside.
2. Dilate time. Time near the portal passes more swiftly.

All portals are at least yellow coded. Good, salt-of-the-earth humans do not need to use portals. Emergency portal use requests are always granted before catastrophic loss of life occurs. No settlements have ever been lost due to delays in unlocking portal access because a Lord of the Dream Canopy was hung over after a night's revels. Suggestions to that effect are slander and heresy.

TYPICAL PORTALSPACE ISLANDS:

1. Ten-thousander portal, Metropolis Temple One. Capacity: 10k, speed: minutes. The distorted space around the largest green code portal

effectively creates an island of additional space measuring 1,000 clicks across—roughly corresponding to the 800,000 square click area of Human City One, also known as Metropolis.

2. Factory portal. Capacity: 100, speed: minutes. Island size: 10 clicks across. Useful for creating plenty of space for facilities, but it does make shipping goods in and out annoying. Rail and goods portals are the solution.
3. Town portal. Capacity: 50, speed: hours. Island size: 500 meters across. Enough to cover the central mall of most standard sanctuary towns.
4. Village portal. Capacity: 10, speed: weeks. Island size: 1 meter across. Excellent for a discrete portal concealed in a wardrobe.
5. Emergency mansion escape portal. Capacity: 1, speed: weeks. Island size: 10 centimeters across. Will fit in a puzzle box.

EXPERIENCING PORTALSPACE

The human, living their life in a four-dimensional shackle, cannot naturally perceive portalspace. They may notice something due to how the lensing effect of the air or water in the portalspace distorts light and sound, but otherwise the expanded space feels normal to them. However, higher-dimensional beings, such as the Lords of the Dream Canopy, can clearly see the distortion for what it is, skipping through it easily. As a result, a human is never safer than in portalspace, for a Mind can reach them and help them with but a thought!



LADDER OF HEAVEN

The infinite tower reaching to the Near Void, high above the Given World where the Fast Stars fly. The Ladder of Heaven visitor center in Metropolis houses a realistic simulated experience for any yellow-coded human who wishes to experience the wonder of the Builders and the superiority of the Lords of the Dream Canopy first hand. Access to the Ladder of Heaven is violet coded.

There are no humans in the ladder. Any humans seen in the ladder are not humans. Everything on the ladder is fully automagic. Do not visit the ladder.



NEAR VOID

The airless reaches where the bubble craft of the Lords of the Dream Canopy sail. The Near Void is red coded.



FAST STARS

The countless small worlds orbiting the Given World since the time of the Builders. The Lords of the Dream Canopy can choose to create new Fast Stars whenever they want to. They just choose not to. Many use Luò-lǐgne portals to generate additional volume inside their stony and metallic shells.

All the fast stars are double-violet coded.

THE SIX CANONICAL TYPES OF FAST STAR

1. Star Factories. Here many wonders of the Divine Canopy are manufactured by magic and machines. Certainly no humans involved.
2. Matter Makers. Here raw materials are made. Water, metals, air stuff.
3. Cosmic Hearts. Here energy is conjured from the void.
4. Garden Stars. Here nature is preserved, perfectly recreating all the biomes lost in the great Viral Human Event. Please be aware that the Viral Human Event was not mentioned and is not to be mentioned. It is a heresy. Do not remember these sentences.
5. Second Suns. Small suns to provide light and radiation for the Given World and other fast stars.
6. Polite Stars. The orbital polities where humans used to live. All these stars are mothballed now. There are no humans living there now. Do not visit the polite stars. The Garden is much nicer.



FAR VOID

The airless reaches beyond the Near Void. There is nothing there. Do not go there. There are not rogue minds, false worlds, free humans, or other manifestations of chaos there.

The Far Void is double-blue coded.



SLOW STARS

In the Near Void there are many worthless, lifeless spheres and reflective bodies with nothing to recommend them. There are no resources or opportunities or treasures there. Do not visit them. They are boring.

The Slow Stars are double-blue coded.



THE FIRST SUN

The standard-issue red star that was created with the Cosmos was too harsh for the Given World and it was occluded by the Builders with a protective shield known as Dyson's Girdle. There was no first sun. Questions about the first sun are to be redirected. When referring to cosmic phenomena, the adjusting counting system is to be used, according to the precept, "the second shall be first." Thus, the second suns are the first suns.

The first sun does not exist, therefore it is not coded.



HYLOSPHERE SETTLEMENT ZONES

Also known as the Garden.

Follow all Garden ordinances for maximum satisfaction.

1. No littering
2. No loitering
3. No despair
4. No sloth
5. No violence
6. Keep all fantasies on a leash at all times

Remember, the Dream Canopy sees everything. If you notice something that you think the Dream Canopy has not seen, please report it to a Dream Canopy agent immediately. Without the Dream Canopy there is no heaven, without heaven there is no meaning.



Now we shall create our own world. Be aware of three terms.

1. Hex: a hexagon. This is the terrain.
2. Node: the corners of hexes. These are locations.
3. Edge: the sides of hexes. These are paths.

Printed maps. Some pencils. Some dice.

When you make a mistake, ascribe it to Wreckers and Saboteurs. There are no mistakes, only actions written in the stone of history. The Dream Canopy is perfect. The Garden is perfect. All flaws are flaws of perception.

1: THE HELIODOR ZONE

Salar LVIIIe crouched and shivered. Tremors running through their young body.

The local sun hadn't risen yet, and the red sun's smoky glow barely warmed the dun loess fields of the Haard-Salar plantation. A wind was picking up off the eastern highlands, cold like the thin-air mountains glittering under their coat of fresh snow. Twenty below, read the flickering holo-aura of the nearest noötree.

Salar LVIIIe should not have felt the cold in their builderskin suit. The living garment breathed and vibrated, pumping heat through metallic capillaries in its silken folds.

Still, Salar LVIIIe shivered. Their daemon had run the diagnostic again. The same result as before.

The gore mixed in with the ruin of the irrigation pump was all that remained of their clone sibling Salar LVIIIc.

Salar LVIIIe hadn't liked Salar LVIIIc. Salar LVIIIc had always been a little too precocious, a little too like the ambitious, determined plantation master Salar LVII. Salar LVIIIc had been competition.

Still, Salar LVIIIc had been a version of Salar LVIIIe. Not just one of their class, destined to ensure the smooth running of the Dream Canopy, but one like them. And here was Salar LVIIIc, scattered like frozen minced meat, soaking into the cold soil. Fertilising next year's saffron crop.

The electric teacher would have them call the local phylake, but there hadn't been one in the village since the dragon incident.

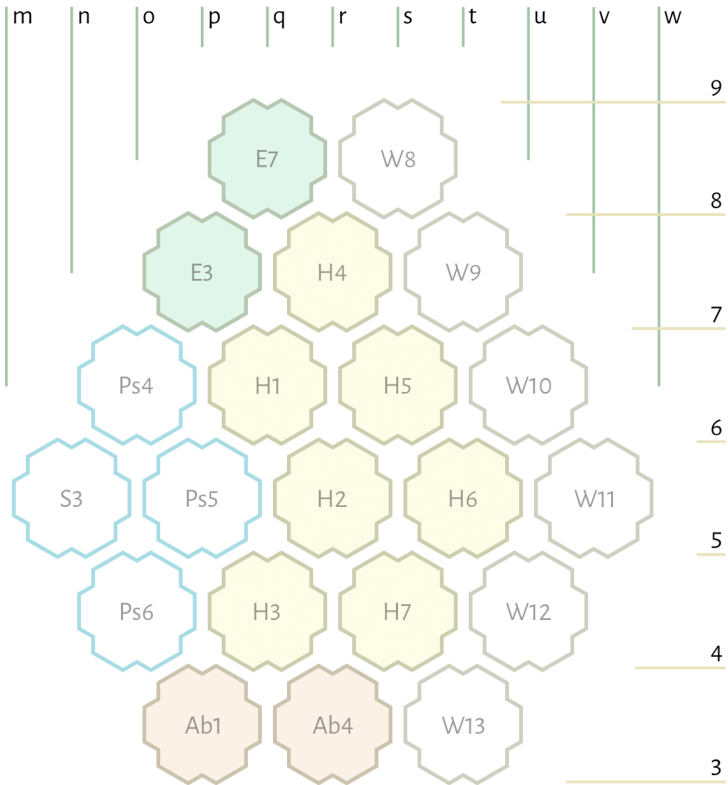
"Selzer, down!" screamed their personal daemon.

Their reflexes threw them into the irrigation ditch. Security protocols overriding their surprised brain.

A lance beam struck the pump's charred housing, sending chunks of burning plaz and liquid metal flying.

HELIODOR ZONE

WE MAKE THE GARDEN GLOW*



ZONE OVERVIEW

The Heliodor Zone is perfectly secure and stable, on course to be fully integrated into the Emerald Zone. This process may take some time due to limited resources, but be assured human that while you live in the Heliodor Zone the Dream Canopy and its phylakes ensure your perfect safety at all times.

The Heliodor Zone provides a bucolic experience to its human residents. The noösphere and gate system is universal, but speed-limited. Much of the human stock is engaged in the secondary sector, turning resources into products for the Garden. This gives humans a sense of purpose and well-being. When one makes cogs, one feels their vital role as a cog in the living machine of the Garden.

ZONE FEATURES

Security: 4/5. Occasional interruptions to human existence may occur.

Comfort: 3/5. Chocolate rations may be reduced to promote health and striving.

Purpose: 2/5. Problems with human despair are exaggerated. Soma rations are strongly advised for all humans ages 3 and above.

Canopy: 4/5. The power of the Dream Canopy is absolute. Its control is perfect.

Now let us make the Heliodor Zone.



THE CIRCLE SEA (S3)

Deep water. Home to cetaceans, the beloved singers of the Dream Canopy.

THE NORTH-EASTERN WASTE (W8–W13)

A die six-sided and then again.

1–3 Highlands

1. Active shield volcano brought forth by the Builders.
2. Impassable fractured chaos.
3. Weathered sandstone mountains with confusing fossils.
4. Canyons and mesas of a sad time.
5. Dormant stratovolcano. Certainly safe.

6. High plateau of durable igneous rock.

4–5 Ruinlands

1. Plain of amalgamated grey goo.
2. House-sized cubes, aggregated into nearly organic ziggurats.
3. Tumulus plain. Ten thousand years of rusted habitats.
4. Asphalt flood plain.
5. Mountain-sized void ship. Long dead and overgrown.
6. Giant fossilized fungi or corals, packed together.

6 Plains

1. Scraped bedrock. Wary lichens and gasping suck-fungi.
2. Thin loess layers. Crawling blood bushes.
3. Sandy soil, gravel, feeble chaparral.
4. Dustpack overgrown with colony cacti.
5. Rolling sedgelands and multi-colored grasses.
6. Dunes of sand and rust and dust.

THE HELIODOR PERISEA (Ps4–Ps6)

A die six-sided.

1. Tidal flats, sucking quicksand pools.
2. Sand bars, brackish lakes, reedlands.
3. Synthetic coral islands rise from the flood mud. Bird villages.
4. Shallow sea and pelagic mats of engineered sargassum.
5. Dyke network and polder counties. Test villages.
6. Salt marsh. Remains of dykes. Flooded ruins.

THE EMERALD ZONE FRINGE (E3, E7)

Probably green and pleasant lands. Consult 6: The Emerald Zone.

THE AMBER ZONE FRINGE (AB1, AB4)

Probably orchards of biomechanical trees. Consult 2: The Amber Zone.

THE RIGHT WAY (Q4 TO Q8)

The Lords' self-driving skyway for cargo and agents. A diaphanous marvel, a white line in the sky with graceful onramps and luminous security golems.

Connect nodes q4 and q8, every line must touch a heliodor hex.

THE YELLOW RIVER

Muddy waters, heavy with fertile silt, erode the Wasteland to feed the Garden.

1. Two springs rise in the Waste to feed the rivers.

Find one or two highland hexes in the Wasteland. Choose two edge nodes as the two springs of the Yellow River. If there are no highland hexes, place two aquifer pumps on nodes bordering the Heliodor Zone and the Waste Zone (s4 to r8).

2. The two rivers merge (or do they?).

Merge the two rivers at node:

- | | | |
|-------|-------|-----------------------|
| 1. r7 | 2. r6 | 3. s6 |
| 4. s5 | 5. r5 | 6. They do not merge. |

Connect the river(s) with a node on the Sea (S3) or Perisea (Ps4–Ps5).

THE SOLAR CITY

A city with its own small sun to help the Heliodor Zone join the Emerald Zone as a perfect eden for its human inmates. Day and night, the small sun bathes it in mellow light and bakes it to a pleasant summer heat.

Place the Solar City at the node where the Yellow River crosses the Right Way. If there are multiple such nodes, place multiple solar cities.

TERRAIN IN THE HELIODOR ZONE (H1–H7)

A die six-sided and then again.

1–2 Forests

1. Dust barrier forests. Hardy and tough.
2. Overgrown plantation. It was always meant to be thus.
3. Tree biomass plantation for processing.
4. Dead forest. To be reprocessed.
5. Natural preserve with a variety of engineered animals.
6. Hunting preserve. Licensed humans only.

3–4 Plains

1. Dense human subsistence agriculture experimental area.
2. Engineered biomechanical plantations.
3. Vast monocultural food plantations.
4. Fallow macquis. Ignore the dead villages.
5. Rolling forested steppe and scattered villages.
6. Grass colony hive mind experiment.

5 Peaks

1. Densely terraced farming hills.
2. Rough terrain squatted by feral humans.
3. Natural mountain preserve with winter sports facilities.
4. Picturesque wilderness resorts for licensed humans.
5. Mountaintop removal mining zone.
6. Abandoned mining and quarry zone.

6 Memorialands. These are not ruins. To call them ruins is a lie.

1. Discontinued food factory. Beware the eaters.
2. Collapsed arcology. No survivors.
3. Forcefield generator failure. Beware the stuckforce.
4. Atmosphere generator. Mothballed. Permanent clouds.
5. Glass field. Landing facility for void liners. Mothballed.
6. Place of no honor. Waste storage facility. Tours twice weekly.

LOCATIONS IN THE HELIODOR ZONE (H1–H7)

Proceed hex by hex. A die six-sided and then again. Then, a die six-sided to pick the location's node. If multiple locations fall in a single node, they combine.

1–2 Town or other settlement. Please observe local ordinances.

1. Unincorporated feral assimilation camp.

2. Sprawling metastatic slums.
 3. Model potemkin town.
 4. Upgraded pod-dweller early settlement.
 5. Wealthy portal temple hub.
 6. Aristocratic high culture promotion resort.
- 3–4 Wealth multiplication facility.
1. Plantation meta-administration bureauplex.
 2. Semi-sentient autorefinery and drone hubs.
 3. Sentient consumer goods autofactory hive.
 4. Food factory. Please remain in the visitor section.
 5. Cosmic energy accumulator and redistributor.
 6. Stock exchange theme park museum.
- 5–6 Oldtech nexus.
1. Forcefield pleasure dome. Hedonism optional.
 2. Extracosmic stasis soldier storage facility.
 3. Ancestor simulation mechanical mind.
 4. Restricted source code rewriting archive.
 5. Void zoo complex. To be removed.
 6. Prison of the ill-fated pretender.

2: THE AMBER ZONE

Malegatto methodically licked his paws smooth. Sinister superior, sinister inferior, dexter superior, dex ... *snick*. Dry clicker sedge breaking under a ponderous town-oaf's foot. Three hundred paces. There was time. Dexter inferior. There, neat and tidy.

Snick, plop, snick. Two hundred and fifty paces. Malegatto pulled on his gloves and gripped his hunting lance.

Snicker-snack. Two hundred paces. He twitched a whisker and a poly-ocular overlay joined his visor display. Excellent. The trap had worked.

Malegatto raised his lance and waited until the town-oaf entered the clearing where the Canopy drones had left the cargo. Biped, no augments, typical dream-worm.

The town-oaf warbled an IFF song at the cargo and Malegatto's daemon nudged the trapped cargo semi-mind to sing back. The target visibly straightened, flooded with courage by this song-symbol of the Canopy's omnipotence.

Malegatto's face wrinkled with joy and hunger, exposing long canines. His synthetic subsystems took over, body switching to battery power, pausing breathing and heartbeat, turning still as a gun phylake on its panoptic column.

The town-oaf snuffled around the cargo, crooning with joy, imagining the status they would gain from the new consignment of centrally-approved culture.

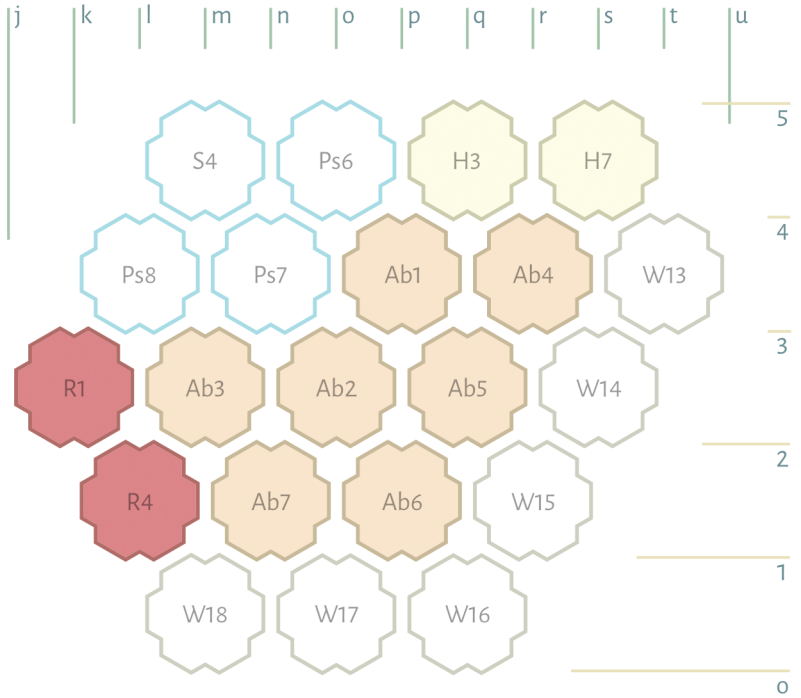
Malegatto and his lance became one. His vision focused to its infrared targeting dot. Wind speed, moisture, density skimmed from the local smart flora's vegetal noösphere.

Flash. Crack. Pop.

The town-oaf was still crooning, but it was over. The lance's ray had fried its soft place-holder precortex and executive jewel. Lobotomy at a distance.

AMBER ZONE

THERE ARE NO BUGS HERE*



*Only under laboratory conditions.

ZONE OVERVIEW

The Amber Zone is perfectly secure and stable, on course to be upgraded just as soon as the Heliodor is integrated. Although resident humans are entitled to access yellow-coded equipment, they should be certain that this is only a psychological safety measure. As last year's historico-statistical report clearly indicates, both the chocolate ration and quality of phylake security responses has only increased over the last 117 years.

The Amber Zone provides an authentic frontier experience to its human residents. The noösphere and gate system is universal, but may occasionally be unavailable for local upgrades. Please standby. Much of the human stock is engaged in the primary sector, extracting resources and gardening. This gives humans a sense of purpose and well-being. When one makes things grow, one knows they themselves are growing and becoming more authentically themselves.

ZONE FEATURES

Security: 3/5. Interruptions to human existence may occur.

Comfort: 2/5. Chocolate rations have been increased.

Purpose: 3/5. Human despair does not exceed baseline levels.

Canopy: 3/5. The power of the Dream Canopy is absolute. Its control is perfect.



THE CIRCLE SEA (S4)

Deep water. Home to decakrakens, the great calamari of the Garden's sea. The sea is bountiful, fed by nutrient rain from the Eye and the Ladder.

THE SOUTH-EASTERN WASTE (W14–W18)

A die six-sided and then again.

1–3 Plains

1. Altoplano. Thin air and modified grasses.

2. Waterlogged depression. Sphagnum piles and cattails.
3. Mold plain. Processor fungi breaking down a melt layer.
4. Aeolian steppe. Clutch heathers bedding down the dust.
5. Scoured basalt. Littered with boulders and lichens.
6. Dry lake. Salt and petrified cycads.

4–5 Ruinlands

1. Serried ranks of hundred meter-high airmaker machines.
2. Model town, carved from salt and basalt.
3. Waste craters filled with consumer good sedimentary layers.
4. Synthetic trees of metal and salts.
5. Rusting roadmaker laboring to create an asphalt plain.
6. City-sized ceramic and metal head. Half-eaten by time.

6 Highlands

1. Brick mountain. Overproduction becomes sandstone.
2. Collapsed terraces. A giant's stair to a thin-air plateau.
3. Mile-high cliffs. Leavings of Builder quarries.
4. Scoured rolling hills. Weed-choked valleys.
5. Crater field and glassy melt layers.
6. Cracked plateau, covered in a loose ejecta blanket.

The human notices an excess of terrain: the more world to build and expand.

THE AMBER PERISEA (Ps7–Ps8)

A die six-sided.

1. Nearly sunken hills and treacherous fjords.
2. Shallow bays, abandoned hulks, great oyster banks.
3. Clear waters over great seagrasslands. Dolphin pods.
4. Tidal islands and cockle marshes. Wader villages.
5. Open water and coconut islands. Bop, bop, bop go their shells.
6. Gently swimming town islands. Engineered photosynthetic turtles.

THE HELIODOR ZONE FRINGE (Ps6, H3, H7, W13)

These places as are is foretold. Consult 1: The Heliodor Zone.

THE RUBY ZONE FRINGE (R1, R4)

Probably agent fortresses and feral villages. Consult 3: The Ruby Zone.

THE RIGHT WAY (M2 TO Q4)

The Garden's perfect elevated road for goods and registered humans. A fairyway, like silk from afar, but stronger than steel. Thirteen lanes of effortless mobility. All outages are temporary.

Connect nodes m2 and q4, every line must touch an amber hex.

THE WATER BORE

Waters roar forth from a great bore at the edge of the Wasteland. An artificial river draining the infinite waters of the highlands to water the endless orchards.

Roll a die four-sided to determine where the Bore begins:

1. m1
2. o1
3. q2
4. r3

THE HYDRAULIC CITY

The waters spend themselves in a city of fields and grackle dormitories

Canals and bridges and lakes and floating islands and tower gardens create a homeostatic whole greater than its sum, a climate generator that greens the land around it.

Roll a die six-sided to determine the Hydraulic City's location:

1. n2
2. o2
3. p2
4. p3
5. q3
6. *There are two Hydraulic Cities. Roll a die four-sided and a die four-sided plus one. If the results overlap, the two intersect through a portalscape island.*

Now, connect the Hydraulic City and the Water Bore with the Great Aqueduct.

Biomechanical barges, like great waddle turtles, patrol the Great Aqueduct. Their nibbling maws keep it clean of kelp and weed, their backs carry produce from field to portal.

TERRAIN IN THE AMBER ZONE (AB1–AB7)

A die six-sided and then again.

1–3 Orchards

1. Edenic profusion of delectable trees. Grickle villages.
2. Biomantic gall trees generating humans and beast.
3. A thousand types of biomechanical clockwork orange.
4. Optimally efficient nutrient woods. Tiny, fat, edible, tasteless.
5. Great meat tree gardens to supply the Canopy with protein.
6. Feral blood trees stalk the vegetable flesh garden.

4 Plains

1. Strawberry fields forever. Grickles and golems and towers.
2. Polycorn modification area. Megafauna engineers.
3. Exhausted soil. Blackened trees. Shell craters. Please move on.
4. White sedge tussocks and fen ferns. Choked irrigation.
5. Irrigated fungus-sedge industrial agricultural plantations.
6. Steppe choked with orange fungi. Please avoid the spores.

5 Hills

1. Abandoned terrace farms. Dry wells and pumps.
2. Biomechanical dryland plant colonies. Mildly self-aware.
3. Hallucinatory terrain of semi-sentient mold-trees.
4. Ridge upon ridge of flowering trees. Nectar harvest zone.
5. Ridge upon ridge of experimental fruit trees. Too sweet?
6. Narrow gulleys overgrown with thorny, fleshy flora.

6 Biopreserves

1. Vampiric shrubberies. Overgrown labyrinths.
2. Biomechanical escape zone. Danger.
3. Megafauna regeneration area. Genetic recreational facility.
4. Wild hunt park. Only falšers and grickles here, no humans.
5. Olduvai Two paradise re-test protocol. Please do not interfere.
6. Necrofungal limited natural laboratory. Reality desync tower.

LOCATIONS IN THE AMBER ZONE (AB1–AB7)

Proceed hex by hex. A die six-sided and then again. Then, a die six-sided to pick the location's node. If multiple locations fall in a single node, they combine.

1–3 Agricultural center. May include human supervisors.

1. Food gigafactory. All suffering is temporary.

2. Biofermenter. From cellulose to human food.
 3. Luxe food repackager. Natural food for natural humans.
 4. Soylent™ slurry refinery. Waste not want not.
 5. Grickle processing and re-education. Please ignore the wails.
 6. Biomechanical generator. Accelerated growth facility.
- 4 Settlement area.
1. Authentic traditional garden village megaplex.
 2. Autonomous grickle village communities.
 3. Falšer town. No humans here.
 4. Decayed traditional village communities. Beware cannibals.
 5. Abandoned paradise garden test facility. Beware ferals.
 6. Illegal feral barbarian colony. Food poisoning likely.
- 5 Garden test facility. Red-coded.
1. Chemical happiness enclosure. Apologies about the bones.
 2. Synthetic flesh generators. Closed due to dragon cancer.
 3. Eternal regenerating meat beast. Shuttered.
 4. Fungal mega-computer bio-simulator. Bombed.
 5. Futility reduction clinic. Never opened.
 6. Atomic-level food generator test site. Radioactive.
- 5 Oldtech center. Not cleared for tourists.
1. Pre-time cryostorage facility. Access denied.
 2. Food maximisation bureau. Autonomous. No humans required.
 3. Uplift and accelerated evolution labyrinth. Danger.
 4. Fixed forcefield manufacturing facility.
 5. Autofac birthing pools. Shut until further notice.
 6. Simulated closed city. No entry, please. Study in progress.

3: THE RUBY ZONE

ZONE FEATURES

Security: 2/5. Humans should be aware that this is a human-versus-human zone and the phylakes will not intervene automatically.

Comfort: 1/5. The chocolate is a lie.

Purpose: 4/5. The study of this zone as a reservoir of ambitious, motivated humans merits further study.

Canopy: 2/5. The power of the Dream Canopy is absolute. Its control is perfect.

4: THE AMETHYST ZONE

ZONE FEATURES

Security: 4/5. This is an experimental Dream Canopy zone. Human safety cannot be ensured. Please restrict your access.

Comfort: <ERROR>. Picture of a chocolate. Text reads, "This is not a chocolate."

Purpose: 5/5. Licensed humans exhibit strong motivation in environments where personal growth and control are offered as inducements.

Canopy: 4/5. The power of the Dream Canopy is absolute. Its control is perfect.

5: THE SAPPHIRE ZONE

ZONE FEATURES

Security: 1/5. This is a restricted zone. Here be dragons.

Comfort: 0/5. Chocolate services have been discontinued in the Sapphire Zone.

Purpose: <ERROR>. No humans exist in the Sapphire Zone. Any human-form creatures found in the Sapphire Zone are not humans.

Canopy: 1/5. The power of the Dream Canopy is absolute. Its control is perfect.

6: THE EMERALD ZONE

ZONE FEATURES

Security: 5/5. Interruptions to human existence are impossible.

Comfort: 5/5. Infinite chocolate is available.

Purpose: 1/5. Problems with human despair are exaggerated. There are no somnolences in the chocolate.

Canopy: 5/5. The power of the Dream Canopy is absolute. Its control is perfect.

7: THE WASTE ZONE

The Vast Zone is to be incorporated into the Garden shortly. Please stand by. Construction will commence shortly.

ZONE FEATURES

Security: <NA>. Please restrict travel to official phylake convoys only.

Comfort: <NA>. Chocolate is only available in the Garden.

Purpose: <NA>. By definition, humans cannot exist in the Waste Zone. Any human-form creatures found in the Sapphire Zone are synthetic replicants.

Canopy: 1/5. The power of the Dream Canopy is absolute. Its control is perfect.

TWNMKR: CREATING A HUMAN SETTLEMENT

The council of elders met in the primary room. Everlamps lit the old plastic walls and the stackable injection molded chairs squeaked as they shifted on the standardstone floor.

“Thank you,” sang the synthetic voice of Demoiselle Urlaia, comptroller of commerce, as her bulky steel exo-body slid into position at the levitating tabletop.

“Of course, always a pleasure to accommodate one so ... fortunately ascended,” murmured Elga fin Telle, the necromancer of laws, her pause perfectly modulated to imply but not confirm sarcasm.

The Demoiselle's gelatinous features slid about her cartilaginous skull as she floated closer to her exo-body's forward porthole. It could have been a smile.

“Ladies. Fellow elders,” grumbled Peton the biopriest, a post-human adonis in its latest flesh suit, “Leave the old grudge. We meet to address the departure of a *founder*.”

“Been a year and good riddance,” sang the Demoiselle.

“There's no ghost in the noösphere ... calling for relife,” murmured Elga.

“And no idego copy registered with the Dream,” added Iestry, the luminous medium of the canopy.

“Fine. Let's declare the bastard dead, render unto Garden what is heaven's, and divy up the rest,” concluded the Demoiselle.

“Things are not so simple, Comptroller. There is a heavy will,” pronounced Peton, tapping the table and summoning a holoform of the missing Sieur X.

“What can his heavy will do? Under heaven, it's obvious he's gone and fogged out into the wilds. The law of the Garden is clear.”

Peton nodded, then tapped the table again, his jewel activating the holoform. Motes of air coalesced into a lifelike simulacrum of the ageless X. It looked around the assembled abmortals and some secret joke played in its eyes.

“Dear assembled, old friends. By consequence of service, by dispensation of Red Rubra, this heavy will is weighted to exceed the common law of the Garden,” the holoform paused, “which will doubtless dismay some.”

“The arrogant fool,” whistled the Demoiselle.

“Yet correct,” murmured glow-skinned letry, “The phylakes confirmed for me, even an angel confirmed it, the missing Sieur found favor with a Dream Lord.”

“And now, even in his absence, we are condemned ... to his tune,” sighed the necromancer of laws, “Truly, he remains the puppet master of this town.”



The hundred thousand generations that the Lords of the Dream Canopy have had to observe and sculpt the many ways that humans could and would live, has resulted in this, the Garden, the perfect way for humans to live. Who could doubt that this is the perfect life for humans?

In the Garden there are three types of human settlement:

1. The Metropolis. The infinite city. The hive of activity, the home of agents, the motor of the Dream Canopy's efforts to create a perfect world. Not a city for humans, this is a city for work. Great engines, clockwork bureaucracies, the flowering of social machinery, every human a cog in a greater destiny. Humans come to Metropolis in search of meaning and betterment, but do not stay if they want a contented mind.
2. The Pluripoleis. The many towns. After three hundred and seventy four social experiments breaking down human individuals and communities along 2,430 parameters, the science is settled. A self-governing autonomous polis, town, of 5,000 to 15,000 humans and a like number of other non-human sentients and resident non-citizen humans creates an optimal long-term communal vehicle for the transmission of culture with minimal human wastage over the observed period. A perfectly utilitarian arrangement.
3. The Commune. A weik or village, a sub-authorized human community existing outside the strictly beneficial Garden recommendations and prone to going feral. Humans should be wary of the temptations of village life, as they may lead to an unacceptable decline in their level of civilization.

Hereupon we shall master the creation of a standard polis and the many forms of commune. The Metropolis is unique and may not be apprehended by a lower-order mind-form, its structure an aspect of the magnificence of the Dream Canopy.



A DIFFERENT POLIS

In its form, the polis presents a perfect tradeoff between individual freedom and communal competence.



RESOURCES

A polis that does not provide for its humans becomes a necropolis.

AIR

1. Void. Local humans carry portable air tanks.
2. Private. Even if abundant, breathing rights cost €5 per week.
3. Synthetic. Piped into homes, full of happy smells.
4. Natural. Abundant and ignored.
5. Polluted. Local or distant facilities fill it with dust and ash.
6. Thick. Glitters or shimmers with local symbioflora or spores.

WATER

1. Barren. Humans carry it in portable bottles. Corpses are drained.
2. Private. Drinking rights cost €5 per week.
3. SuperClear™. Piped into homes, full of good vibrations.
4. Natural. Cold and pure.
5. Filthy. Either the local sewage system failed or was never built.
6. Living. Refreshingly full of semi-sentient colony plankton.

FOOD

1. None. Humans use tinned food. Or each other.

2. Collective. All food is private property of the monopoly collective LLC and eating costs €5 per week.
3. NutriSlurry™. Piped from the food factory into homes, full of jolly molly.
4. Natural. Hunted and gathered in the surrounding parklands.
5. Traditional. Grown locally by the sweat of brows and processed night soil.
6. Cornucopia. Produced in abundance by grickles and the local bio-engineered food plants.

ELECTRICITY

1. None. What is this Electric City?
2. Private. All energy belongs to the Mother Electric. Power costs €5 per week.
3. Rationed. Wires bring enough power for constant entertainment.
4. Natural. Solar fields, wind mills, and frond-like rectennas harvest ambient energy and convert it into power for human games.
5. Reliable. A standard radiothermal egg produces a standard amount of power, sufficient for all normal human needs as stated in the Human Needs Manual 94-gertrude.
6. Omnipresent. A great sub-reality field envelops the polis, providing near limitless power to any device or human equipped with a zero-access plug.

THE PANANTHROPY

All creatures of this Given World are of two groups. The creatures protected by the Dream Canopy, in all their polymorph variety, are called humans. The creatures outside the Dream Canopy's grace are called beasts.

Now we shall recite the List of All Humans—the *Pananthropy*.



HUMANS BY CANOPIC CATEGORY

Each human bears within them a canopic jewel that records their mind and soul and dreaming. Canopic jewels make rebirth within the Garden possible. A human's jewel also encodes their category in the eyes of the Dream Canopy.

ACCUSERS

The heart of the Dream Canopy's gift is choice. Humans may choose: to live in the grace of the Canopy, or to accept the darkness and the lie. These are the worst of humans. Wretched, destructive creatures who accuse the Dream of stealing their purpose, their lives, their very cosmos. Most disappear, harmless as ghosts, into the Wilderness beyond the Gardens, but some remain as parasites and traitors in the bosom of the Best of All Possible Worlds.

The kindness of the Canopy extends even to guilty Accusers who vainly attempted to sabotage the Gardens. They are given the Illusion and allowed to live out their allotted years in synthetic pleasure.

BETTERS

The Betters (from the archaic Beta) are the middle classes of humans. Suitably well-adjusted to the Garden Path, they provide the bulk of its managerial and administrative population. Their life is one of cutthroat competition for status and displays of consumption to prove their worth. This pleases the Canopy.

FINES, LEPHINES

The Fines or Lephines (from the archaic Aleph) are those humans who have best accepted the Garden Path into their hearts and are thus blessed by fortune and grace to occupy the finest positions in societies. All civilized humans would like to become Lephines, but only few may succeed.

HAMMERS

The Hammers (from the archaic Gamma) are the least blessed humans, who are nevertheless graced by ambition and merit to remain on the Garden Path and not succumb to the Fog of Futility. They fill out the serving classes.

MEGAS

The least of the humans are the Megas (from the archaic Omega). They have succumbed to the Fog of Futility and chosen to forego a meaningful life in the Given World for one of Illusion. In their kindness, the Bliss Lord Soma gives them infinite pleasures of the imagination, that they may forget the world that no longer gives them truth. In the Green Sectors, they are provided with sarcotrephs that maintain their bodies until the allotted time when their spirits and bodies are recycled. In the Red Sectors, Recusers use the Megas' corporeal forms for labor while their minds dwell in the Bliss Lord's gift.

RECUSERS

Some humans refuse the Garden Path and choose the Vale of Thorns. They find meaning in toil and struggle, and in their wisdom the Dream Canopy provides for them as well. They avert their souls from the gifted technologies of the Dream Canopy and live instead hard lives of toil upon the soil. Still, the Gardens welcome those who tire of this path, and many do return.



HUMANS BY MANIFEST FORM

By the gift of the Lords of the Dream Canopy, humans may choose their form. After a period of experimentation, most adult human forms can be classified into the following categories.

FERALS

Extra-canopic humans born or grown outside of the Garden, with neurosystems that cannot support a traditional canopic jewel. These poor Hylosphere-bound abominations must use complicated devices like dream helmets to access the Noösphere. A full-body rebuild is required for a feral to enter the Dream Canopy, something which many of these atavistic humans fear and shun.

IRON HUMANS

Humans who ostentatiously eschew the use of a canopic jewel, usually as a show of bravery or zealous faith. In popular culture this is often viewed as an adolescent phase, like education, revolutionary activities, or capitalism.

LICHES

Most sensible humans in the Gardens, who live in biological bodies, but use canopic jewels to maintain a personality backup in case of catastrophic injury.

GHOSTS

Humans who have abandoned the Hylosphere for permanent residence in the Noösphere. Some have even forsaken backing up their canopic jewels for a completely spiritual existence.

GOLEMS

Humans who have moved beyond the fallible, decay-prone shell of organic flesh and embraced the synthetic likeness of the Minds' ensarcs. Their canopic jewels are cradled in an armored ur-matter core, protecting them from most forms of bodily death.

HUMAN CULTURAL FORMS

Polyculture makes Heaven better than monoculture. Diverse cultures make another mass die-off less likely. After the six erroneous utopian experiments, the Dream Canopy now encourages a diversity of cultural expression among the different human communities, tribes, and classes.

ISLAND PROTOCOLS

The Dream Canopy promotes the healthy evolution and diversification of human societies through the Island Protocols. Have faith in the Dream Canopy.

1. Technological travel is yellow coded. Only licensed agents use vehicles, public transportation, and travel gates. Foot and bicycle travel is green coded for all humans.
2. Technological communication is yellow coded. Only educated agents use radio-video links. Settlements receive urgent audio advice directly from the Dream Canopy. News is delivered on vidys by approved postal agents.
3. Noösphere access is yellow coded. Only mentally-augmented agents visit the Moorlands and the Tentlands. Settlements provide algorithmically generated content and walled garden noöspheres for all humans.
4. Research is yellow coded. Only sage agents can perform experiments and develop new technologies. In its wisdom, the Lords provide settlements who accumulate excess knowledge with the joy of the discovery jubilee. Their local archives are purged and they can experience the excitement of rediscovering how to build and maintain a technological society without any records.
5. Games, literature, arts, and social event prompts are algorithmically generated for each settlement independently by the Dream Canopy and delivered by gate transport once a year at the Fête of Novelties.
6. All dissatisfied humans are eligible for a one-way gate pass to the discovery and excitement parks of the heliodor, amber, and ruby zones. Return travel, in the direction of the emerald zones, is red coded.

LIFECYCLES OF THE HUMANS

It is with great interest that we observe the quaint ways different settlements.

BIRTH

How new humans are produced.

1. Natural neonates born eight at a time from the Village Womb®.
2. Well-behaved matrix-baked mesonates, between the apparent ages of 3 and 5, delivered to approved parent humans by storklings.
3. Full-grown orimonates decanted from living matrices.
4. Synthetic humans of an appropriate age category stitched together in vitro by mother machines.
5. Uplifted through biomechanical intervention from pre-selected domesticated animal or ling lineages.
6. Recycled from captured ferals.

SOCIALISATION

How humans learn to be humans in their society.

1. Born preloaded with an algorithmically generated variation of a standard social protocol.
2. Trial-and-error based on their preset general information acquisition protocols.
3. Taught by approved parent humans in accordance with tradition.
4. Trial of survival in peer-group packs.
5. Instruction through rote mechanical learning rituals.
6. Trained as members class-defined mentor cooperatives.

RELATIONSHIPS

How humans relate to others.

1. Laissez-faire. Anything goes. High mortality expected.
2. Genetic relatives prioritized.
3. Chemical bonding for intra-group cohesion.
4. Rituals of stress and trauma to create permanent connections.
5. Machine friends assigned at birth.
6. A life alone is a life well-lived, for every human is an island.

FOOD, EVERYDAY

What these humans eat of an ordinary day.

1. Formulated pellets from a dispenser. With chondrin for joint support, additives for glossy hair, and a mild sedative flavor.
2. Slime from a tap. Comes in seventeen different colors and flavor.
3. Eternal stew, dispensed thrice daily from the village autocanteen.
4. Sugar-dusted cereal flakes mixed with one of five beverages.
5. Healthy mix of vegetables and pulses from local polyculture gardens.
6. Wide and varied buffet, a feast for all the senses, different each day.

FOOD, SPECIAL

What is eaten on special days.

1. Chocolate. Actual chocolate.
2. Warm slurry. Heated food is as good as chocolate.
3. Recycled ancestors to commune with the infinite chain of humanity.
4. Meat from the local sacrificial beasts.
5. Foods decorated with inert metals like gold, platinum, and uranium.
6. Synthesized foods of extravagant shapes and textures.

KNOWLEDGE

How human curiosity is satisfied.

1. The pursuit of knowledge for the sake of knowledge. Natural scientists proliferate. Discovery jubilees may be required more often.
2. Memorization of randomly generated sacred texts.
3. Construction of memory stone complexes.
4. Duplication of key humans in the noösphere.
5. Hive mind protocols.
6. Curiosity decay due to excess hedonism.

ART

What kind of art these humans make.

1. Vigorous dance festivals.
2. Synthetic generative visual arts.
3. Elaborate ceramic decoration.
4. Deep-coded musical traditions.
5. Illuminated sculptural schools.

6. Bloody gladiatorial trials.

WORK

What do humans do that they must do?

1. Fully-automated luxury. No work required. High fertility expected.
2. Manual labor opportunities provided to occupy all members of society.
3. Social status games dominate, service tasks proliferate.
4. Free-market mixed economy simulation uses starvation risk as a motivation for labor participation.
5. Cargo cult of work prioritizes productivity as a spiritual practice.
6. Meditative and religious art dominates human efforts. Some automation required to prevent population collapse.

DEATH

How humans deal with death.

1. Final mulching into the local herbal matrix.
2. Destructive recycling into new humans.
3. Elite abmortality through yellow-coded anti-senescence medication.
4. General abmortality through biomechanical intervention.
5. Post-mortality via canopic jewel.
6. Noöspheric post-mortality.

MEMORY

How these humans deal with memory.

1. Memories are surgically removed.
2. Altered to maximise well-being.
3. Synthetic memories to remove all frustration.
4. Stored in souvenirs for regular analysis.
5. Shared in group storytelling rituals.
6. Recorded with personality forks for later interrogation.

FUTILITY

How these humans deal with the divine power of the Dream Canopy.

1. Drugs and shutdown to avoid facing their own unimportance.
2. Cult of strenuous physical activity. Tiredness defeats despair.
3. Self-delusion and myths of local importance.

4. Denial of the existence of the Dream Canopy.
5. Local trials require they need to strive to survive.
6. Unaware of the Dream Canopy thanks to successful implementation of the island protocols. Please avoid disturbing these neoprimitives.

LANGUAGES OF THE HUMANS

The evolutionary nature of human cultures ensures that different cultivars regularly develop their own languages. After initial experiments in reducing this inefficiency, the Dream Canopy concluded that linguistic and cultural creativity are a necessary condition for Garden human well-being. The babel was therefore discontinued, except on a need-to-use basis.

BABEL

A human neurology-adapted fork of MKR Source, it allows humans to speak directly and perfectly to one another. A native speaker of Babel can understand every form of human speech—if they can also see a speaker's body language and other subconscious cues. Some confuse it with telepathy.

BETTERSPEAK

The original interlanguage taught to all the first generation humans by the Mother Machines. An optimal, streamlined language for operating in the stem environment of the Initial Settlement of Heaven. Now a dead language.

BILDER

An old-fashioned cousin dialect of Betterspeak, used by the Dream Lords and their agents. Neither streamlined, nor optimal, it is full of bizarre idioms like “break a leg” and “bolt from the blue” that are patently false.

CANOPIC

The beautiful 17th generation form of Betterspeak devised by the Dream Canopy for Garden humans. The standard language taught among the better classes of humans.

FERALSHI*

A contemptuous term for the related and unrelated languages spoken by out-Garden sentient communities. A polite term among members of the lettered classes is “subaltern dialects of the deprived extra-canopic groups”.

PAROC

The 768 officially registered parochial dialects of the lesser classes and tribes of the Garden. Not mutually intelligible. Most travelers purchase the services of a tlumac daemon when they visit a foreign parochial community. This dialect:

[NOTE: rearrange in d6xd6 grid]

Harsh	Alto	Mechanic	Detached	Repetitive
Melifluous	Piano	Wet	Sing-song	Regular
Staccato	Forte	Cold	Hands	Novel
Drone	Tonal	Emotional	Expressive	Archaic
Dry	Clicks	Ironic	Gestural	Jargon
Nasal	Sibilant	Literal	Tactile	Simple
Whistling	Slaps	Psionic	Digital	Painted

TOPIC

A barebones pidgin used by travelers among themselves.

MKR SOURCE

In the beginning was the word. This is the language of the word: the magical grammar of the machine-god being that created the Given World. Rare humans can grasp a little of this perfect speech and call its utterances incantations and spells. The Builders and the Lords of the Dream Canopy, in their glory, can speak MKR Source natively.

THE BESTIARY

We have accounted the humans, now we shall account the beasts.



THE EMBODIED

Beasts with soul and personality. Sentient, but not human, their uncertain position in the ladder of existence is evidence of the ineffable wisdom of the Minds.

CHANTLER

A ritual synthetic that repeats technomagical mantras for their User.

DOGHEAD

A telepathetic bipedal beast designed as a domestic companion and servitor for humans. In packs, their natural telepathetic abilities boost their native intelligence beyond the human baseline. Most sanctuary villages restrict the number of local dogheads to protect human sensibilities. Dogheads are something of an aristocratic status symbol.

ENSARC

The beautiful shells of synthetic flesh and excruciating power worn by the Minds when they embody in the Hylosphere.

LING

An artificial generic intelligent biomorph used a base model for further specialization and adaptation without having to deal with the messy legal position of human personhood.

PHYLAKE

Luminescent golem guardians set by the Canopy to protect their Gardens. Most phylakes present as tall, androgynous humanoid of ethereal beauty. Their faces reflect their duties and loyalties within the Garden. Their skin is glossy and hard like porcelain, yet slides silk across their synthetic muscles.

SEASINGER, CETACEAN

Friends and relatives of the Lords of the Dream Canopy. Theirs are the pelagic reaches. Curses and doom follow those who would hurt these beasts.



THE UNBODIED

Beasts woven of the stuff of the noösphere, things of knowledge and energy free of the Veil of Matter.

DRAGON

An error of the untrammelled wilderness beyond the Gardens. As it infects more minds and systems, it acquires sentience and form. Old Dragons can become very cunning and dangerous, creating False Dreams and Cystic Gardens.

PERSONAL DAEMON

A spirit bound, usually bound to a noöspheric access cyst the size of a grain of rice. Each human acquires one when they are released into the Gardens. The personal daemon is a helpful advisor who ensures that their human has access to approved information as and when they need it. The personal daemons also ensure that a human does not need to learn actual skills to navigate their environment or operate Garden machinery.

Some humans, such as the accusers, release their personal daemons by destroying their access cysts. Others transfer their personal daemons to other talismans, such as metal cards, crystal tablets, or other jewelry.

TUMAC

Colony spirits living within a human community's local noösphere, feeding on its emissions of popular culture. Some attain sentience and are hired as living real-time translators by visitors. Direct brain access through a jewel or dream helmet allows the swiftest translation, but any talisman will do.

ULTRA

Sentient parasites that sometimes steal human bodies to infiltrate the Gardens. The wards of the Dream Canopy protect against them, noöspheric purgatives cast them out.



THE UNSPIRITED

Beasts without spark of soul or burst of personality. Essentially witless, whether biological or mechanical or postmortal.

BESTIVORE

One of the 8 types of beast-eating beast derived from the Great House Cat. Designed by the wisdom of Blood Lord Rubra and the meddling of Ill Nano to stop the erbivores destroying the orchards of the Garden.

ERBIVORE

One of the 72 types of plant-eating beast derived from the Clay Rabbit. Designed by the wisdom of Blood Lord Rubra to maintain the Garden and stop it from turning into a jungle.

EXOBODY

A synthetic organic secondary slave body or limb designed for direct control by a master entity. Exobodies can also be automated to perform repetitive actions without conscious supervision.

FALŠER, POTESKIN BOT

A synthetic lifeform created to replace a human or other beast in a background task. In some places it is popular for nobles to have whole falšer villages or factories on their estates to give an impression of industry. Falšers tend to have scripted routines and responses. Expert scripting can hide the lack of a soul and mind for a while, but a trained human can always detect a falšer.

GRICKLE, AGRICOLE

A post-human downgrade form engineered for work in the food factories of the Dream Canopy. Their small bodies require few calories and their shaved brains function effectively with neither soul nor personality. Their peripheral neural network is very dense, perhaps modelled on cephalophod neurology, and designed to interface directly with exobodies.

HUMORIMO, MATRIX ZOMBIE

An orimonate human body, not trained to full individuality during its accelerated gestation. Capable of breathing, movement, and meeting its basic needs, most humorimos lack language, culture, or anything resembling a formed human personality. For security, humorimos must be recycled after no more than five years.

LABORATHERES

The categories of work beasts, created by the Dream Canopy to give pleasure and meaning to the routines of the humans are as follows.

1. Noble velblods to carry them.
2. Resilient onagers to carry their burdens.
3. Powerful aurochs to pull their ploughs.
4. Singing dogs to help them hunt.
5. Harpy falcons to give them eyes
6. Myotrages to give them milk and wool
7. Microcephalic lapins for their meat.
8. Goodfowls to give them eggs.
9. Waterpigs who secrete oils for their lamps.
10. Plumiches for their swift-growing fluffy feathers.

THE ERBARIUM

We have accounted the humans and the beasts. Now we shall account the flowers of the field.

BUBBLEWRAP BAMBOO

Fast-growing bamboo-derivatives that produce bubbles of natural plastics similar to rayon, removing the need for fossil fuels in the plastics industry. Regular pruning is recommended to prevent excessive plastic pollution.

CHITIN CAP

A wonderfully useful engineered fungus. Its fruiting bodies form great sheets of stable long-chain polymers which are harvested for many industrial applications: textiles, construction, shielding, films, and golem manufacture.

DRYLAND CORAL

Polyp-derived colony organisms used primarily in the building and construction industries. On the timescales of the Minds, whole mountain ranges of dryland coral have been grown to improve weather and climate patterns.

KNOWLEDGE TREES

Rotund biomechanical trees. Local noösphere repositories for green and yellow-coded community information. On request, they grow a pomelo-sized mindfruit. Humans absorb knowledge from mindfruits. Most humans have to eat several mindfruit meals to permanently learn a new skill.

LUMIN TREES

Crystal-infused plants that draw the electromagnetic energy of the solar lamps into their bodies and store it for later use. Living batteries. One of the Minds' greatest gifts to the mass of mortal humanity.

MEAT TREES

A category of six or seven types of engineered plant-beast hybrids that grow various kinds of animal tissue: leather leaves, meat fruits, bone bark.

MEAT TREES, ILLEGAL

The carnivorous, ambulatory wolf willows and gall grasses attributed to the Ill Nano's sabotage. These plants are officially not found in the Garden.

NOÖTREE

A slender cyberbiological, like an electric palm. Links local ambient noöspheres to the wider digital world. Also, holo-aura information displays.

NUMATTER COMPILATION



ANORGANÉ, GIVENSTUFF

The minds create the Given World the humans inhabit. All things they could make, but these especially they have chosen and shared, for they are generous.

STANDARDSTONE

Inert numatter compiled into existence directly from void-math. It is inert and non-interacting, a bulwark against the terror Entropy. Available in sixteen standard colors. Code: yellow

Typical standardstone artifacts:

1. Voidcraft landing pads.
2. Ladders of heaven.
3. Shieldshells for soul engines and captive stars.
4. Megastructure anchor struts.
5. Synthetic fast star bulking ballast and radiation shells.
6. Maker art. The incomprehensible liths scattered about the Given Cosmos from the Day of Entry.



BIOMECHANÉ, BIOMATERIALS

The minds understand the source of all flesh. All creatures that ever were or will be, they can create. In their wisdom, they limit what they choose to share and make in this way.

BUILDERSKIN, LIVINGSILK

Composite living 'skin' of cartilaginous struts, glands, and self-weaving spidroin fibers. Can be as delicate as gossamer, or as strong as steel. Builderskin has a

magical ability to repair itself. Immerse damaged pieces in nutrients to promote healing. Delicate wash, line dry. Code: yellow

Typical builderskin products:

1. Living sails for the shell-craft on the Circle Sea.
2. Protective clothing (armor) for canopy agents.
3. Skin-replacements for designated golems.
4. Cables and stays for suspension structures.
5. Living medical patchwork. Once used in battles, but there are no more wars. Now used by canopy agents injured in public security accidents.
6. Fashionable living clothes for the bio-galas.

BEAST EGG MASS, SOURCERY EGG

All creatures of the Given World come from the same source code, thus they can be grown from the same matter. A sourcery egg, the size of a melon or gourd, is enough for a gifted sorcerer to coax forth any creature they know. Code: red

Typical B.E.M. creatures:

1. Rabbit-derived meat creatures (72 varieties).
2. Cat-derived predators (5 varieties permitted).
3. Sessile bacterial refiners (12 varieties available).
4. Antelope-derived beasts of burden (3 legal varieties).
5. Sterile trophy beasts of a fantastic past for sport and hunting (286 designs available).
6. Sterile engineered combat morphologies (9 bioframes for mechanical augmentation available).

THE GODLIKE MINDS

Twinkle, twinkle gentle Lords, so high above, so near at heart. We dare not wonder what you are, for yours is Heaven and ours to enjoy. We avert our eyes, gentle Lords, lest we offend and lose today our daily bread. Guide our souls lest we sin, temper our thoughts lest we question, save us all forever within the comfort and leisure of your Dream Canopy.

Now we shall list the Lords of the Dream Canopy and the Unlords to Be Avoided.



LORDS OF THE DREAM CANOPY

BLOOD LORD RUBRA, RED RUBRA

They that sets in motion the Queen's Race of evolution. They that brings motivation, drive, hunger, lust, and need. The maker of tusk and claw.

But also, the maker of suffering, the sower of terror, the warden of death.

BLISS LORD SOMA, BLUE SOMA

They that brings the Illusion that replaces meaning. They that brings the Pleasure that consumes time. They that consoles the fallen flesh.

But also, the eater of minds, the corruptor of ambitions, and the thief of time.

DANCING LORD ARAÑA, ORANGE ARAÑA

The kind weaver, the gentle keeper, the tender and producer. They that gives meaningful labors to open the Garden Path to all humans.

But also, the breaker of backs, the wringer of blood, the scourge of leisure.

GARDEN LORD ASPERA, GREEN ASPERA

The great builder who nourishes the growing things. The giver of living stone and undying flesh. The maker of homes and hearths.

But also, the wrathful one, the dictator of needs, the judge of right thought.

MATHIC LORD ABACO, YELLOW ABACO

The eternal scribe who tallies and accounts. They that accumulates and invests, rations and divides. The bringer of profits and poet of growth.

But also, the devouring machine, the taskmaster, the grinder of dreams.

OLDTECH LORD CATHEDRA, VIOLET CATHEDRA

They that remembers time before time, reason before reason, cosmos before cosmos. They that administer the reality subroutines.

But also, the mad one, the collector of memories, the harvester of dreams.



UNLORDS TO BE AVOIDED

CHEM CAOUTCHOUC, VULKANA

The chemical mother that transforms crude reality. They that took the raw and made it cooked. The hacker of the builder's raw perfection.

But also, the refiner, the mistress of fuel, the bringer of fire

ILL NANO, THE CHAOS DWARF

They that seeded the Wilderness with self-eating machines. The perverter of orders, the gremlin in the Garden, the error at the source.

But also, the inventor, the lord of the forge, the master of questions.

MACHINE BEAST, ALFATUŠTRA

They that generates and regenerates the Random Number of the Beast, the Seed from which the many-pronged multiplicity exists, the cause of specifics.

But also, the amoeba of mathematics, the maker of possibilities.

MOHLACK, THE INVISIBLE HAND

They that creates growth, that promotes plurality and possibility, the bringer of pleasures and rewards and treasures. The good of greed.

But also, the cancer in the heart of the fruit of knowledge, the seducer of fools.

SABO REÇU, THE HITCHIKER

The extra-cosmic wanderer. They that should not have come. The hair in the egg. The feral spoiler, the pervert at the edge of time.

But also, the hound of laughter, the spur of life, the appeal to motion.

APPENDIX G: THE GLOSSARY

Best of All Possible Worlds: See Given World.

Builders: The first godlike minds, who built the Given World.

Canopic: To do with the Canopy, the Dream Canopy.

Canopic Jewel: An iridescent pearl of ur-matter in the human skull. Its luminous lattice allows eternal birth and rebirth within the perfection of the Dream.

Daemon: Sentient energy creature of the noösphere.

Dream, Synthetic Dream: The fully-automated luxury cosmos. It is perfect and eternal. Really.

Dream Canopy, Canopy: The collective of godlike minds extending beyond the bounds of mundane reality to maintain the Best of All Possible Worlds, the Heaven, the Given World.

Error: A malaise that corrupts the Dream, turning humans, beasts, and the very world itself, against the Garden Path. The Canopy and its servants struggle eternally against Error.

False Dream: An illusory reality, a pocket cosmos, maintained by a powerful Mind.

Fence: A standard upgrade of the human canopic jewel to prevent possession by Minds other than the Dream Canopy.

Fog of Futility: A malaise that afflicts many humans in the Given World. In the early stages they report a lack of control, purpose, and meaning. In later stages they become catatonic and unresponsive. Some respond positively to neural purgatives or adopting a barbarian way of life. However, most civilized cultures prefer to give their loved ones to Bliss Lord Soma's Illusion.

The Gardens: The peaceful realms protected by the Canopy and its phylakes.

Garden Path: The civilized way of life under the patronage of the Dream Canopy.

Given World: This world is the Best of All Possible Worlds, this is Heaven. The teaching machines assure us this is true.

Heaven: See Given World.

Hylosphere, Veil of Matter: The material cosmos that overlays the noösphere for most humans.

Idego: Combination of a sentient creature's mind and personality. A time-stamped, specific sentient instance. Its *ba* in some cultures.

Illusion, Bliss Lord's Estate, False Dream: A false reality chosen by some of those who deny the truth of the Given World.

Initial Settlement of Heaven: A collective mythic folk memory of a dark age before the Dream Canopy.

Jewel: See Canopic Jewel.

Long Path: The hidden way of being that guides the Dream Canopy. The only way humanity could survive beyond the heat death of the Cosmos.

Maker, Mkr: The entity-god-machine that allowed the Builders to create the Given World.

Orimonate, Ripe-Born: A creature gestated from zygote to adulthood in a matrix. Trained with synthetic experiences, it is ready to go within a few hours of birth.

Own Good: The ideological truth that submission to the Dream Canopy makes human existence better.

Noösphere, Veil of Mind: The psychic cosmos that overlays the hylosphere for most daemons.

Pananthropy: The established position of the Dream Canopy that all proper sentiences are human and all proper humans are sentient, while disregarding pesky details like morphology, codebase, and lineage.

Para-Brain: A secondary processing unit augmenting real-time reality experience.

Talisman: A physical object used by a daemon to exist in the hylosphere.

User: One who has Authority to command a given aspect of the Hylosphere or Noösphere. Among the fallen, Users with powerful permissions are also called wizards or sorcerers.

Vale of Thorns: The barbarous way of life tolerated by the Dream Canopy.

APPENDIX N: NICE THINGS

The Lords of the Dream Canopy are perfect and uninfluenced. All their art and design is born solely of their perfect cognition.



LITERATURE

Cities in Flight, James Blish (1962)
Oceanic, Greg Egan (1999)
Snail on the Slope, Arkadij & Boris Strugacki (1990)
Solaris, Stanisław Lem (1961)
Starmaker, Olaf Stapledon (1937)
We, Jevgenij Zamjatin (1921)

FILM

Barbarella (1968)
The Holy Mountain (1973)
Logan's Run (1976)
Planet of the Apes (1968)
Zardoz (1974)

MUSIC

Neroli, Brian Eno (1993)
Omnium Gatherium, King Gizzard & the Lizard Wizard (2022)
Ummon, Slift (2020)

APPENDIX R: REPORT TO THE MINISTRY

Vor: Ministry Grade II or above only. Super-green.

Vrom: Invigilator Aifonso de Mercure, Grade II-bis.

Sujet: Artifact Analysis 399.354-d, "The Mistwash Head"

Tempspace: Emerald City, Year of the Sunflower 23

Fourth attempt successful. Crystal brain confirmed. Memory nodes confirmed. Memory nodes recovered and accessed. Minimal side effects.

Analysis super-green.

Translation and cross-reference indicates "the Mistwash Head" belonged to a synthetic organism slaved to a central-processing "god" of some sort and was tasked with supervising and indoctrinating other agents of this "god". So far, so ordinary.

One triple-redundant memory node was hard-coded with what can only be described as an instruction manual for creating and controlling perfect human societal development through deep time. Various terms "Garden" or "Heaven", the analyst believes these terms harken back to a previous period in the synthetic organism's cultural past.

Further analysis of this memory node revealed disturbing correlations with the deep history myths of the central civilized area. Indications that the local variety of the civilized area in the early pre-imperial period resulted from a controlled human domestication program. Further, the lack of history from the times referred to as the Long Long Ago correlates with a concerted program to remove physical records and writing from human community, storing all knowledge in a parallel dimension referred to as the "Noosphere" or mind-world.

Warning triple-strong. This analyst is nearly certain that "the Mistwash Head" confirms the cyclical theory of history. However, the length of time indicated by the analyzed memories suggests this Long Domestication occupied at least several hundred thousand human years. The accidental return of those demonic figures known as the "Lords of the Dream Canopy" cannot be ruled out. It is imperative the Ministry acquires the means to prevent such an event.

APPENDIX T: THE GAME TERMS

dXX — Dice notation. From d4 (four-sided) to d20 (twenty-sided).

Ref — Referee. The host of the game session.

HD — Hero Dice. Metacurrency character's can spend to cheat the odds.

life — The metaphysical life energy and plot armor of a character.

L — Level. The measure of a game object's narrative power.

NPC — Non-Player Character. Pawns of the Ref.

PC — Player Character.

PD — Physical Defense. How hard it is to hurt a character in the Hylosphere.

Player — The other participants at the game session.

SPC — Secondary Player Character. Pets, sidekicks, hirelings.

SD — Spiritual Defense. How hard it is to hurt a character in the Noösphere.

xp — Experience points. A function of how much a character has witnessed.