Chapter 1

I was driving in my aging white chevy pickup truck. It was a little before five am, the sun was two hours from showing itself and I was headed to morning practice with my adult rowers in the city. I was a rowing coach. It wasn’t a great paying career but I enjoyed coaching. The mornings I coached the masters rowers in the city and in the afternoon I coached at a private high school in the suburbs. I was past 40 and had given up on a successful career.

As I was turning left onto a side street short cut I suddenly found myself in utter blackness.

I should have been panicking but anxiety never came. A voice sounded in my head, “Congratulations on being selected for importation to play for the ultimate prize!” The voice was feminine and cheery. “A whole new universe has been created, seeded and aged for lesser beings to pursue divine essence!” The feminine voice belted with enthusiasm. “To liven things up the Creator has imported a few million outsiders from another universe where he got many of his ideas for creating this one. You are one of those lucky outsiders!” The voice paused, I surmised for dramatic effect. When the voice continued I was fully attentive. “Your new home has endless possibilities; Magic! Technology! Psionics! And many other paths to power and knowledge. The creator has hidden thousands of pieces of his divine essence throughout the universe. Collect enough and you can ascend and become a true divine being as well!” I was more than willing. I was getting old, life was boring and this sounded much more interesting. I thought briefly of my parents and sisters but surprising felt no longing of loss leaving them behind. My last serious relationship was three years ago.

“The first thing you need to do is select your race. If you choose a non-human race, just know you may spend time getting used to your new body and you may end up alone on a planet without other humans from your past world.” A myriad of animated figures appeared in the black expanse before me. It looked like a fantasy bestiary. I intuitively thought ‘humanoid’ and the thousands of figures sorted to hundreds. I focused on human sized and maybe a hundred figures remained. I started examining each one at a time for cosmetics and discarding one by one reducing the total number slowly. Wolfman…no. Catman…no. Orc…no….in the end I had a human figure and grayskinned human looking figure called the *Nul*side by side. After some internal deliberation I discarded the gray Nul and was left with human. The figure mirrored my body. I just thought how out of shape I looked. I was just under six feet and around 240 lbs. My dark brown hair was half gray. I had some hidden muscles but mostly looked overweight. I tried to mentally edit my appearance. I was able to reduce the body mass eliminating all the fat. I knew I was now 174 lbs and looked like a professional athlete. The loss of fat had also made my penis appear longer and appear larger. I decided to add some fat back to my frame, making me an even 200 lbs. My penis seemed a little smaller as my frame filled out. I added a little to it. I didn’t want a porn star dick, just something I could be proud of. I probably spent too much time playing with adjusting my penis and if someone was watching they were probably making jokes by now. I decided to change my eye color from dark brown to light brown, with some golden flecks. I changed my gray hair to all dark brown. I then added two inches to my height, making me just over 6’1”, leaning out the body as well. I thought this was my perfect self image. I was sure if a psychologist was here they would have a number of things to say about changing my appearance. I was unable to ‘un-age’ the body but the changes made me look like I was in my early 30s instead of forties but I knew my age had not changed. I was about to think I was finished but on a whim decided to remove all body hair from the neck down. This was because my last sexcapade on tinder had my partner complaining about my chest hair and not trimming the field. So I guess I was a bit self-conscious about having women complaining about it. When I thought I was complete the process continued.

“Congratulations you are a human male!” Calculating your base statistics…

A screen appeared in front of me in the blackness. It was light blue and I immediately knew I could edit the appearance of the screens. I left the screen cosmetics alone for now.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Primary Stats** | |  | **Secondary Stats** | |
| **Strength** | **11** |  | **Mental Resilience** | **3** |
| **Constitution** | **8** |  | **Soul Strength** | **2** |
| **Stamina** | **9** |  | **Cellular Cohesion** | **1** |
| **Agility** | **6** |  | **Personality** | **1** |
| **Speed** | **7** |  | **Fame** | **1** |
| **Intellect** | **11** |  |  |  |
| **Aether** | **0** |  |  |  |
| **Channeling** | **0** |  |  |  |
| **Charisma** | **7** |  |  |  |
| **Luck** | **2** |  |  |  |

I stared at the numbers. It was sort of like a character screen in a game but it was overly complicated. Fortunately the voice returned and supplied the answers I was waiting for. “Primary stats are your base attributes and effect your actions. They can be raised through skill advancement, focused training, rewards for quests or adjusted via items. All beings have these 10 primary stats. Transient humans average 7 to 10 in all stats at indoctoration. Strength is you physical prowess. Constitution is your health. Stamina is your ability to perform over long periods of time. Agility represents your minor motor dexterity. Speed is how fast you can move. Intellect is your smarts. Aether is your mana capacity. Channeling effects how fast you can gather mana. Charisma helps you interact socially. Luck affects chance. Secondary stats are special stats that are only displayed if their value is greater than 0. Raising and discovering new secondary stats is much more difficult. You currently have five secondary stats. Mental resilience will help resist psionic attacks and adapt quickly to new environments. Soul strength allows your body to be reconstituted. Every time this happens you lose one point of soul strength. Cellular cohesion lets your body to utilize certain modes of interstellar travel. Personality is your likability with others and affects how many SYSTEM companions you can have. Fame is your presence around other people. You have already have 1 Fame for being from another universe!”

Well shit…I thought. I am pretty below average and I have no capacity for magic. The voice returned, “Now you need to select a base class. You can choose from the following as a human: Warrior, Psionic, Mage, Scholar or Adventurer.” I waited for more elaboration. Nothing. I focused my mind on each class hoping for more info. Nothing. I was going to have to go in blind I guessed. Well I did play some MMORGs in high school so had some clue. I discarded warrior and scholar immediately. I hated studying things I wasn’t interested in and didn’t enjoy getting injured. Psionic seemed the best fit with my higher intellect and mental resilience. But Mage…magic called to me. Adventurer also sounded ok as it was probably well balanced and had good survivability. But mage… magic drew me. Before I could think more on psionic or adventurer I spoke aloud even though all I had to do was think my choice, “Mage!”

The voice returned mechanically, “Opening your body to the aether.” Pain racked my body and damn it burned. And I mean it burned like there was literally a fire burning me from the inside out. It was just an instant but it felt much longer. When I was able to focus again I noticed my stats had changed on the display. My Aether stat now showed 14 and my channeling stat was now an 8. I also had a new secondary stat called Aether Tolerance listed at 3. The voice told him what the new stat represented, “Aether tolerance is the factor of your mana pool you can safely utilize in a 24 hour period. If you exceed this amount you will experience mana burn and permanently lower you mana capacity.” Good to know, I filed that piece of information.

A new screen appeared next to the stat one:

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| --- |
| Mage Class |
| **Benefits** |
| *+20% Aether Channeling* |
| *+1 Aether even levels* |
| *+1 Channeling odd levels* |
| *Can Learn 1 spell per 5 Intellect* |
| *Gain 2 Spell Points per level* |
| *Gain 2 Stat points per level* |
| *Can learn 14 skills plus 1 per 5 levels* |
| *Gain 2 Skill points per level* |
| *Start with 2 Free Magic Skills (does not count toward total)* |
| *Spellcraft (Channeling)* |
| *Magic Sphere of Choice (Aether)* |
| *Starts with one free spell of choice from chosen magic sphere* |
| *(does not count toward total spells)* |
| *Can designate 1 primary skill* |
| *Can designate 2 secondary skills* |
| *+1 new cantrip spell at prime levels* |

My channeling jumped to 10 on the stat sheet as the mage benefits screen appeared. I thought it was just 8, a 2 point jump? Well if I was a level 1 mage that would account for one point. I was trying to figure out where the second point came from when a third box appeared in my vision.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Next Skill Slot at Level 5 | | Unused Skill Points: 2 | | |
|  | ***Skill*** | ***Level*** | ***Tier*** | **Percent Next Lvl** | **Stat** |
|  | *Spellcraft* | *1* | *1* | 0% | *Chan* |
|  | *Select* | *1* | *1* | 0% |  |
| 1 |  | *0* | *0* | 0% |  |
| 2 |  | *0* | *0* | 0% |  |
| 3 |  | *0* | *0* | 0% |  |
| 4 |  | *0* | *0* | 0% |  |
| 5 |  | *0* | *0* | 0% |  |
| 6 |  | *0* | *0* | 0% |  |
| 7 |  | *0* | *0* | 0% |  |
| 8 |  | *0* | *0* | 0% |  |
| 9 |  | *0* | *0* | 0% |  |
| 10 |  | *0* | *0* | 0% |  |
| 11 |  | *0* | *0* | 0% |  |
| 12 |  | *0* | *0* | 0% |  |
| 13 |  | *0* | *0* | 0% |  |
| 14 |  | *0* | *0* | 0% |  |

My skill list had my one skill from the mage class I mentally focused on the skill and thankfully got a small screen with information.

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| **Spellcraft** |  |
| Associated Stat: | Channeling |
| Leveling Effect: | Minor increase to casting speed |
| Level 7 Boon: | Not reached |
| The ability to formulate mana through the body and construct it into an effect using known spell formulas. | |

A prompt was asking me if I wished to level Spellcraft. I mentally selected yes and the skill went to 2, channeling went to 11 and I lost a skill point, leaving me with 1. So each skill when leveled increased its associated stat. I mentally chose the ‘select’ on my skill sheet and a list of 10 magic skills popped in a new window.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Fire | |  | Aeth |
| Water | |  | Aeth |
| Earth | |  | Aeth |
| Air |  |  | Aeth |
| Spirit | |  | Aeth |
| Nature | |  | Aeth |
| Chaos | |  | Aeth |
| Order | |  | Aeth |
| Enchant | |  | Chan |
| Teleport | |  | Int |
|  |  |  |  |

After reading through them I immediately tried to select teleport but the voice returned and it sounded smug when it spoke, “You currently do not meet all required prerequisites for the teleport magic skill.” I tried to get the system to elaborate but no matter what I focused on or vocalized I got no response. I tried ‘enchant’ and got the same voice which now sounded smug to me, “You currently do not meet all the prerequisites for the enchant magic skill.” So I had to choose from the remainder. *Should I choose a mostly damage oriented or defensive oriented?* After some long internal monolog I narrowed it to Fire, Spirit and Order. I was hoping Spirit or Order would have healing spells while the fire was the go to damage sphere. I settled on Spirit after more internal deliberation, being able to heal was a priority as I didn’t like the thought of getting injured but if I did get injured I wanted to be able to heal. The skill appeared on the skill list and my Aether increased by 1.

I used my last skill point and raised my Spirit Magic to 2, increasing Aether by another level.

*I guess my next step was to select a spell.* Another box appeared and had fifteen spells available and a whole bunch grayed out. With a thought I discarded the gray boxed spells. There were three healing spells on the list of fifteen remaining spells I could learn, heal self, heal other and mend bone.

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| **Heal Self** |  |
| Magic Sphere | Spirit (Tier 1) |
| Mana Cost | 50 |
| Range | Self |
| Effect | Heals 50 health over 10 seconds |
| Casting Time | 8 seconds |
| Duration | Permanent |
| Leveling Effect | Increase amount of health healed |
| Level 7 Boon: | Not reached |
| Heals minor tissue and organ damage over time. | |
|  |  |
| **Heal Other** |  |
| Magic Sphere | Spirit (Tier 1) |
| Mana Cost | 60 |
| Range | Touch |
| Effect | Heals 50 health over 10 seconds |
| Casting Time | 9 seconds |
| Duration | Permanent |
| Leveling Effect | Increase amount of health healed |
| Level 7 Boon: | Not reached |
| Heals minor tissue and organ damage over time. | |
|  |  |
| **Mend Bone** |  |
| Magic Sphere | Spirit (Tier 2) |
| Mana Cost | 100 |
| Range | Touch |
| Effect 1 | Heals broken or damaged bones |
| Effect 2 | Heals 25 health |
| Casting Time | 33 seconds |
| Duration | Permanent |
| Leveling Effect | Increase amount of health healed |
| Level 7 Boon: | Not reached |
| Heals and restores broken or damaged bones. | |

I began thinking…What a high cost of mana for the mend bone but it did heal some health as well. This system didn’t allow for mages to learn a large amount of spells…unless they had a high intellect stat. Maybe the mend bone spell was the best choice. Heal self was discarded, if I was getting a healing spell I should at least be able to heal others. The casting time ended up making my decision – I selected heal other over mend bone. The spell was added and immediately I used two spell points to raise it to level 3.

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| **Heal Other** | **3** |
| Magic Sphere | Spirit |
| Mana Cost | 60 |
| Range | Touch |
| Effect | Heals 53 health over 10 seconds |
| Casting Time | 9 seconds |
| Duration | Permanent |
| Leveling Effect | Increase amount of health healed |
| Level 7 Boon: | Not reached |
| Heals minor tissue and organ damage over time. | |
| \* Core spell cannot be unlearned | |

Well that was fairly disappointing. I wondered how much mana he actually had. A new screen came up in response.

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| **POOLS** | **Total** | **Regen/Min** |
| **Health** | 285 | 0.42 |
| **Stamina** | 245 | 0.60 |
| **Aether** | 305 | 0.51 |

*Well this info might have been useful a little earlier! I could cast my healing spell 5 times at full mana and it would take two hours regen enough mana to cast it again! What kind of shitty game system was this? I was immediately starting to worry. A mage seemed to be a terrible choice. Once my mana was used I would be a sitting duck. I tried to go back and change my decisions but the voice and the system failed to respond.*

The voice returned. “The last phase is for you to choose your perks. You can either take 12 points or play to the fates and roll two ten sided die and add two to that number.” The voice was quiet and I did some math. I liked math…The average would be 13 but there was also a risk of getting as low as a 4. But 12 was safe and how was I to know if this result would be manipulated by the voice? Do I trust fate? And also what perks would be available? I made peace with the fates and decided to roll.

“I will roll” I said after a long pause for the first time nervous. All screens disappeared and two dice appeared in front of me. I reached out half expecting them to be illusionary. They were not. They were cool to the touch and metallic. I tossed them into the dark and held my breath. They spun away from me with no surface to land on. Then they clanged and bounced on an invisible surface. They rolled away from me twenty feet before stopping. I couldn’t read them from where I was and my anxiety reached new heights.

The voice chimed in, “You rolled a 10 and a 4. You have 16 points to spend on perks. However you can gamble with the 10 rolling it again, if you get a 1 however you will get no points from the die. All other results will be added to your current 16 total” My heart raced and I wanted to jump up and down. I chose to roll again of course. The dice bounced as it rolled and the voice gave me the result again, “You rolled an 8, giving you 24 points for perks.” All screens disappeared and a new blue screen appeared and the list scrolled on for quite a ways. First I thought to sort out only mage specific perks. I then selected to sort by most costly first. The highest choice was 100 points and was labeled *Imbue Divine Essence*. No descriptor but it looked like this was a short cut to getting the essence this universe was created for. The next cheapest was 25 points, *Choose Mage Specialization*. Well that sounded awesome but inaccessible. I dismissed all the 25+ point cost perks. There was a really great sounding perk for 18 points, Greater Mana Vessel. It of course had no descriptor. I really wished there was a damn manual for this creation scheme. I thought ironically of the many games I played bypassing the tutorial…maybe this was my penance. It seemed the only time I could access a descriptor for was if it was on the character sheet. I decided I needed to add something to learn more about these perks. I sorted to the 1 point mage related perks and selected something that sounded interesting, Mage Adventurer Cantrip Suite. I purchased it.

Four new spells appeared on my spell list which had popped up on its own, light, sense danger, create water and know direction. I clicked on each spell.

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| **Light** | Cantrip |
| Magic Sphere | Fire (Tier 0) |
| Mana Cost | 5 |
| Range | Touch |
| Effect | Create a fixed point of white light 30 candles bright |
| Casting Time | 2 seconds |
| Duration | 30 minutes + 15 minutes per 1 additional mana spent during casting |
| Leveling Effect | Brightness increases |
| Level 7 Boon: | Not reached |
| Create a temporary light source fixed to an object. | |
|  |  |
| **Sense Danger** | Cantrip |
| Magic Sphere | Spirit (Tier 0) |
| Mana Cost | 20 |
| Range | Self, 10 meter aura |
| Effect | Senses creatures with intent to harm caster. |
| Casting Time | 40 seconds |
| Duration | 60 minutes + 60 minutes per 5 additional mana spent during casting. |
| Leveling Effect | Brightness increases |
| Level 7 Boon: | Not reached |
| Allows caster to sense hostile intent from sentient creatures. | |
|  |  |
| **Create Water** | Cantrip |
| Magic Sphere | Water (Tier 0) |
| Mana Cost | 10 |
| Range | Touch |
| Effect | Create 1 liter of water |
| Casting Time | 16 seconds |
| Duration | Permanent |
| Leveling Effect | Increase water volume created |
| Level 7 Boon: | Not reached |
| Create water from nothing. | |
|  |  |
| **Know Direction** | Cantrip |
| Magic Sphere | Order (Tier 0) |
| Mana Cost | 12 |
| Range | Self, max range 5 kilometers |
| Effect | Know direction of a familiar object known to caster. Caster must have been in contact with object within last 7 days. |
| Casting Time | 122 seconds |
| Duration | Instant |
| Leveling Effect | Increase range |
| Level 7 Boon: | Not reached |
| Helps caster find the direction of familiar objects | |

All useful spells if I was out camping. I focused on the word cantrip and was rewarded with some valuable knowledge in my mind. Cantrips were spells that could be learned even if a mage doesn’t know the associated magic sphere skill. The spell must have a base cost of 20 mana or less and will be effectively a tier 0 spell. The spell will not level and remain at level 0. A cantrip could be promoted to an open spell slot if the mage knows the associated magic sphere skill and then be leveled. I purchased another cantrip suite called Personal Comfort Suite for one more point because comfort is what I wanted in my new world. The four cantrips were Personal Warmth, Personal Cool, Clean Clothes, and Cleanse Body.

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| --- | --- |
| **Personal Warmth** | Cantrip |
| Magic Sphere | Fire, Air (Tier 0, Tier 0) |
| Mana Cost | 20 |
| Range | Self, air 2 inches from body |
| Effect | Warms air surrounding body by up to 20 degrees |
| Casting Time | 42 seconds |
| Duration | 60 minutes + 60 minutes per 10 additional mana spent during casting. |
| Leveling Effect | Increase temperature range |
| Level 7 Boon: | Not reached |
| Raises temperature of air surrounding caster | |

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| --- | --- |
| **Personal Cool** | Cantrip |
| Magic Sphere | Water, Air (Tier 0, Tier 0) |
| Mana Cost | 20 |
| Range | Self, air 2 inches from body |
| Effect | Cools air surrounding body by up to 20 degrees |
| Casting Time | 42 seconds |
| Duration | 60 minutes + 60 minutes per 10 additional mana spent during casting. |
| Leveling Effect | Increase temperature range |
| Level 7 Boon: | Not reached |
| Decreases temperature of air surrounding caster | |

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| **Cleanse Body** | Cantrip |
| Magic Sphere | Spirit, Teleport (Tier 0, Tier 0) |
| Mana Cost | 10 |
| Range | Self, air 2 inches from body |
| Effect | Removes all foreign matter from caster's skin and hair including sweat |
| Casting Time | 24 seconds |
| Duration | Instant |
| Leveling Effect | Increase range |
| Level 7 Boon: | Not reached |
| Cleans castors body | |

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| --- | --- |
| **Clean Clothes** | Cantrip |
| Magic Sphere | Order, Teleport (Tier 0, Tier 0) |
| Mana Cost | 12 |
| Range | Self, clothing worn by caster |
| Effect | Cleans all clothes and minimally restores clothes durability |
| Casting Time | 30 seconds |
| Duration | Instant |
| Leveling Effect | Increases restorative effects |
| Level 7 Boon: | Not reached |
| Cleans and minimally mends clothing worn | |

Well I thought being a mage was going to be cool, having temporarily changed my mind. Never having to bath or do laundry again! I briefly wondered if I could shit my pants and if the magic would take care of it? I needed to focus. I had 22 points remaining and wanted to increase my survivability. I expanded my search to the whole list again. Under general perks there was one that read +1 stat per level and cost just 5 perk points. It sounded great but what if leveling was slow and that perk wouldn’t help my immediate survivability. There were just too many options and I had too little knowledge of the mechanics to select wisely.

I was skimming the list for the 5th time when “psionic defense package” caught my eye. It cost 7 perk points. That would leave me with 14 and it sounded like a good idea to have some defense against psionics as I had a little phobia of being mind-controlled. I selected it.

**ADDED TRAIT: Superior Mental Resilience**, gain +1 Mental Resilience and +1 at level 4,8,12,16 and 20

ADDED: Mind Shield Skill, does not utilize a skill slot

ADDED: Sense Psionics Skill, does not utilize a skill slot

ADDED: Fortress Mind Psionic Ability

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| **Mind Shield** |  |
| Associated Stat: | Int |
| Leveling Effect: | Improves resistance |
| Level 7 Boon: | Not reached |
| Allows the skill user passive resistance from mind affecting spells and psionics | |

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| **Sense Psionics** |  |
| Associated Stat: | Chan |
| Leveling Effect: | Improves distance and sensitivity |
| Level 7 Boon: | Not reached |
| Skill user can detect psionics use, distance depends on skill level and power of psionics being used | |

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| **Fortress Mind** | 1 |  |
| Sphere | Mental (Tier 2) |  |
| Psion Cost | 2 |  |
| Range | Self |  |
| Effect | Reinforces mental defenses |  |
| Casting Time | Instant |  |
| Duration | Permanent until destroyed |  |
| Leveling Effect | improves defense |  |
| Level 7 Boon: | Not reached |  |
| Creates a mental barrier a psionic attack must overcome before affecting user, can be layered up to level of skill | |  |
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I didn’t really want to mess more with psionics figuring I had enough to learn in this new world with magic but at least I had a rudimentary defense against psionics. For 9 of my final 15 perks I decided on the “Stone Mage Optimization” figuring it would be good balanced offense and defense perk and matched with my mage class.

ADDED: Earth Magic Skill, does not count toward total skills

ADDED: Stone Magic Skill, bonus of 20% Aether cost reduction for all stone sphere spells, does not count toward total skills

Two Bonus Stone Sphere Spells, one is free primary spell, the other is a free secondary spell

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| **Earth Magic** | 1 |
| Associated Stat: | Aeth |
| Leveling Effect: | Improve Earth Magic spell effectiveness |
| Level 7 Boon: | Not reached |
| Allows access to tier 1 earth spells, can now learn Stone Magic Skill and Metal Magic Skill | |

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| --- | --- |
| **Stone Magic** | 1 |
| Associated Stat: | Con |
| Leveling Effect: | Improve Stone Magic spell effectiveness |
| Perk Effect | -20% Aether Cost for Stone Magic Spells |
| Level 7 Boon: | Not reached |
| Allows access to tier 1 stone spells | |

The list of spells came up. There were 4 spells I could choose from, summon stone, stone bullet, hail of stones and mold stone. I choose the first two spells with summon stone being the primary and stone bullet being the secondary. I was very disappointed when the descriptions popped up.

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| **Summon Stone** | 1 (Primary Spell) |
| Magic Sphere | Stone (Tier 1) |
| Mana Cost | 35 per cubic foot |
| Range | Touch |
| Effect | Creates Stone from Nothing |
| Casting Time | 78 seconds |
| Duration | Permanent |
| Leveling Effect | increases volume of stone created |
| Level 7 Boon: | Not reached |
| Creates a basic granite stone from aether in rough approximation of castors design | |

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| **Stone Bullet** | 1 (Secondary Spell) |
| Magic Sphere | Stone |
| Mana Cost | 10 |
| Range | 50 yards |
| Effect | Creates stone and fires it at the direction caster indicates |
| Casting Time | 2 seconds |
| Duration | Permanent |
| Leveling Effect | slightly increases velocity, range and stone size |
| Level 7 Boon: | Not reached |
| Note: requires marksman skill for accuracy | |

Summon stone was not a defensive spell as I had thought. It seemed to be a construction type spell. The stone bullet was ok but required a skill I did not have, marksman. At least with the description notes I was able to select primary spell and secondary spell and discover what effects that those statuses had.

A primary spell cost 10% less Aether to cast and leveled ten times faster. A secondary spell cost 5% less Aether and leveled three times faster. I searched through the remaining list of 6 point perks or less. I could get an item with everything from space suits to laser pistols to swords. But I knew intuitively without the skill to use the spell would be stupid. I could also get any number of skills. Well I decided one perk point to learn the marksman skill was smart, the perk was called “skilled marksman”.

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| **Marksman** | 7 – Skilled |
| Associated Stat: | Agil |
| Leveling Effect: | Improve accuracy with ranged projectiles |
| Perk Effect | Levels 10% faster |
| Level 7 Boon: |  |
| Level 23 Boon: | Not reached |
| General Aiming With Ranged Weapons | |

*Marksman Boon Selection:*

* *“Called Shot” - Once per 60 minutes increase chance to hit ranged target by 300%*
* *“Range Extension” - Increase Range of projectile by 10% (passive)*
* *“Shoot and Move” – after firing a ranged shot your movement is increased 50% for 6 seconds, cooldown 5 minutes*
* *“Heavy hitter” – damage is increased 50% on a ranged attack, cooldown, 10 minutes*

All great abilities to add to the marksman skill! I choose ‘called shot’ even though it most likely would only be usable once per battle. It hopefully would give me a guaranteed hit.

I was super happy with the skill and boon. I had also gained 5 agility points for the level 7 skill! I was down to just 5 points. I was planning to take 5 more skills but found a human specific perk called *slow aging* for one point. There was another human perk called *controlled aging* for 3 points. I surmised the higher point cost was a more advanced version. I decided to get the 3 point perk.

Controlled Aging, Restriction: Humans, being is tied to universal Aether and ages 1/10th as fast after completing puberty. Note: age reducing drugs, technology and other perks are 50% less effective.

I felt my body become youthful and felt like I was once again in my 20s. It must have been retroactive...best perk ever! Well my body felt like I was 20 and looked it. Best not to dwell on it. More importantly if I could survive I would have a few hundred years of life ahead of me. More importantly I wouldn’t need to rush into anything. I had two points left and returned to the list only showing one point perks. There were still hundreds to choose from. I dismissed all item perks. I wanted to get something permanent. I reduced again to one point mage affiliated perks. I decided I wanted to get a skill in another magic sphere. I narrowed my choice to Order magic on the hypothesis it might be a prerequisite for teleport or enchant magic. I had two choices ‘skilled order magic’ or ‘free order magic’. I was beginning to understand and was fairly certain the skilled order magic choice would give me level 7 in the skill but use up one on my skill slots. The free order magic probably was level 1 in the skill but didn’t use a slot. I choose the free version and I was correct.

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| **Order Magic** | 1 |
| Associated Stat: | Aeth |
| Leveling Effect: | Improve Order Magic spell effectiveness |
| Level 7 Boon: | Not reached |
| Allows access to tier 1 order spells, can now learn Social Magic Skill and Control Magic Skill | |

Now I was down to my last point. Should I get a spell? Skill? Raise a stat? Maybe the *slow aging*trait even though it would be half as effective. I could upgrade a skill to secondary status…which would allow it to level 3 times as quickly, a very good option. I started looking at traits only available to humans. I found one called Personality Improvement. I assumed it would increase my personality which would make dealing with other people easier. I selected it.

Human Personality Improvement - +1 the secondary stat Personality at levels 1, 7 and 23

“Congratulations on your new skills and abilities!” The voice was sounded joyous or maybe relieved I was finished. “Time for you to join some others from your old universe in your new one!”