SEACAT

Brĕve Rules & Things
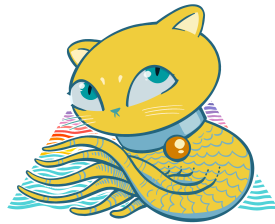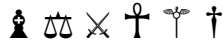
SEACAT

BRĔVE RULES & THINGS

for ULTRAVIOLET heroes

♟ ⚖ ⚔ ☥ ⚕ ✝

TO DO

RULES AND THINGS

estimating at 40% complete
> add 1-spread rules overview - missing
> add cleaned up basic mechanics 50%
done
> add cleaned up conflict and combat rules -
still missing
> add scene and encounter section - still
missing
> add cleaned up XP mechanics - still
missing
> add abilities, skills, spells - getting there!
> add equipment! - still missing
> add creatures! - gahhh, ongoing

So ... there's a lot left.

Why do I write so slowly? What the heck?
Aaaaaa.

THE
PART
WITH
THE
RULES

WHAT IS THIS BOOK?

This book is a toy-box for friends [role]playing games of heroes exploring strange worlds.

Mercenary merchants embarking into half-forgotten wastelands to trade or scavenge, machine humans awakening from aeons of sleep to seek lost masters, cultists determined to end this latest godless age, telepathic cats and body-stealing ghosts. Pompous nobles and revolutionary activists in a battle to define the future of their small civilization. Motes of dust in the eyes of Time and Space, the twin deities that make all people small.

The book of rules and things (*RAT*) is for every player. It includes core mechanics, lists of skills, spells, and abilities, and some optional modules for expanding the scope of roleplaytime.

ROLEPLAYTIME

Seacat is written for the social games of roleplay. It assumes the players are a group of friends (or people who might want to become friends) gathered together to spend time running unexpected heroes, imagining strange worlds, using different games to explore those worlds, to survive and thrive in them, to struggle against challenging threats, and be surprised by the the stories that grow out of the interplay of ideas and dice, successes and failures.

That is why it is arranged as a toy-box of rules and games that fit together loosely, giving space for improvisation, communication, and invention.

DESIGN GOALS

1. Quick setup, low prep, and short campaigns of 3–12 sessions.

2. Melodramatic, cinematic, and unexpected outcomes.

3. Imagination stimulator, players co-create the world on the fly.

4. Moderately crunchy system with levelling, items, abilities, modifiers, and other fiddly knobs and switches.

5. Compatible with *UVG* and similar minimalist modules and settings.

Breve Seacat is a miniseries subset of Seacat. It is covers the equivalent (with some jiggery-pokery) of levels 3–6 in *Old School Essentials* or *The Most Famous Fantasy Game*. It is suitable for adventures in the anti-canon worlds of the *Ultraviolet Grasslands* or *Witchburner* or *Longwinter* or *Red Sky | Dead City*. It also works with other fantascientific settings that handle odd abilities, strange items, and ridiculous technologies.

CORE CONCEPTS

1. Players co-create the game world through play. The player (referee or cat) running the game has different tasks from the players running heroes and sidekicks (runners). The referee moves play forward and wields a soft veto to maintain a measure of consistency.

2. Every attribute on a character sheet is a resource which may change, deplete or increase.

3. The referee uses natural language to describe the game world: its time and space, quantities and qualities. If the outcomes of a challenge are consequential and uncertain the referee assigns a target number between 3 (very easy) and 20 (very hard). Challenges may have binary or multiple possible outcomes.

4. Players roll polyhedral dice. They use a d20 to test themselves against challenges. Tests succeed when a player rolls over the target number. The number a die rolls is its natural or naked roll. Modifiers (stats, skills) sometimes apply. High rolls are almost always better.

5. Natural rolls of 1, 13, and 20 during tests have special effects. A natural roll of 1 is always a failure. A natural 20 is always a success and may multiply the consequences (e.g. in combat). A natural 13 means that after this test the hero has run out of a resource (such as ammo). Sometimes other natural rolls give other effects.

6. There are three unusual rolling situations: advantage [+] and disadvantage [-], consecutive rolls (20/20), and exploding dice (d6*).

   1. When a character is at an advantage [+] they roll an extra die and pick the better result. When they are are at a disadvantage [-] they roll an extra die and pick the worse result. Advantages and disadvantages cancel out one for one. Usually only a single advantage or disadvantage can apply, but some boons or banes let heroes stack multiple advantages or disadvantages.

   2. Some items and random tables use consecutive rolls for rare results. 18/18 means that when a player rolls a natural 18, they roll again and if the second result is also a natural 18, a special result occurs. This mechanic is a silly call out to the days of 18/00 Strength.

   3. Some items, spells, situations and monsters use exploding dice. d4* means that every time a player rolls a 4 they roll an extra d4* and add the result. They repeat this process as long as they keep rolling 4s.

7. Heroes face mechanical limits. The maximum level a hero can reach is 9. The maximum sum (stat + skill) they add to any d20 roll is +13. The highest target number a hero can ever possess or set is 19—this includes defense.

8. Monsters and obstacles set by the referee may break all the the hero rules and limits. Specific abilities and variants may supersede all these core rules.

GENERAL TERMS

ABILITY: inherent attribute of a character that lets them perform in unusual ways.

ADVANTAGE, BOON, [+]: situational bonus to a roll. The player rolls an additional die and takes natural result they prefer.

APTITUDE, APT: modifier used by skilled and expert characters.

ATTRIBUTE: all the different things describing a fictional character in play: aptitude, stats, skills, abilities, inventory, life, hurt, hero dice.

CHARACTER: imaginary person or thing run by a player at a session.

D20, D12, D8, D6, D4: the polyhedral dice with different numbers of faces.

DISADVANTAGE, BANE, [-]: situational penalty to a roll. Player rolls additional die, takes worse result.

EXTRA [NPC]: sketched out background character, usually run by referee.

HERO, PROTAGONIST [PC]: excessive.

HERO DICE (HD): d6s that can modify a hero's natural rolls, recover life, and fuel some other abilities.

HURT: serious injuries. Cumulative penalties that accrue as life, stats and other resources run out.

INVENTORY: how much a character can carry. Inventory is filled with gear, weapons, armor, tools, spells, burdens, fears, woes, and treasure.

LEVEL (L): a creature's relative power.

LIFE: once upon a time called hit points.

MAGIC, FANTASCIENCE: anything sufficiently advanced to be indistinguishable from magic.

NATURAL RESULT, NAKED ROLL: the number on a rolled die, before any modifiers. E.g. a natural 20.

PLAYER: a sentient creature partaking in a roleplaytime session.

REFEREE, CAT [GM]: the player running the game session and antagonists.

ROLL: rolling any polyhedral die.

ROUND: during a conflict, esp. combat, a sufficient amount of time for every character to take their turn.

RUNNER [not-GM]: player running protagonists (heroes and sidekicks).

SIDEKICK: secondary character or pet with simplified attributes.

SKILL: trained attribute of a character. A profession. First rank (skilled) applies aptitude to relevant tests, second rank (expert) doubles this.

SKIN: a hero type, a bundle of attribute and advancement tables.

SPELL: recipe for altering reality. A kind of gear.

STATS: S.E.A.C.A.T.: the six game stats modify most natural rolls.

SUM: total modifier (stat + skill) applied to a test.

TARGET: a number between 3 and 19 representing the difficulty of a test.

TEST: a d20 roll to overcome a target number. Often modified by a character's stat and skill.

TURN: part of round, time unit when a character takes their actions.

XP: points a player collects through play and invests in their heroes and

sidekicks. Xp represent characters' successes and experiences.

WHY IS THE REFEREE CALLED THE CAT?

This player role is called the ref, or more humorously, the cat, to emphasize that terms like "dungeon master" or "game master" are misleading. The game runner is no master—maybe a game host or referee. But even more than that, they're the member of the band that gets the evening organized, prepares a few hooks, and sets the beat for the game. They're like the bass player of the roleplaying group. Cool, sure, but coolest when they make everyone play and shine together.

SPECIAL REFEREE TITLES (D12)

If the players agree, they can assign the ref a special title and power each session. Each power gives a slightly silly meta-game effect to liven up the session and, sometimes, encourage friendlier roleplay.

1. **Catspaw**
   If there is a cat in the house, it's the referee's nominal boss. They can use its name as part of their title.

2. **Cat Lady or Lord**
   Gift other players 50 xp for lasagna or a tin of tuna.

3. **Game Golem**
   Once per session they can move a random location on the game map due to a reality glitch.

4. **Dog Duke**
   Can grant 1d4 re-rolls to players who bring food, snacks, and music to the game session.

5. **Caître D'**
   Can give a player 100 xp if they help clean up the kitchen and table after the game session.

6. **Dyeus Katter**
   Can have a hero's mildly annoying ancestor ghost appear to give advice or present the moral lesson of the session.

7. **Sky Cat**
   Like Ceiling Cat, they can invoke epic atmospheric effects in-game at any time, from rain to lightning. And nobody may groan at the cliché.

8. **Bass Player**
   Can give a player 1d6 x 10 xp every time they choose an apt background song. They can veto annoying songs, of course.

9. **Hazeraiser**
   Can open one travel portal for heroes per session. Demand sacrifices at will.

10. **Prismatic Lady**
    Randomly recolours in-game locations. It becomes (roll d6): (1) monochrome, (2) desaturated, (3) all cool hues, (4) warm hues, (5) bright, harmonious colours, (6) a brutal riot of neon and day-glo.

11. **Hero Herder**
    Draws a great big (abandoned?) railroad linking prepped quantum locations on the big map in the middle of the table (there is one, right?). The heroes don't have to take it, but … it's there.

12. **The Cat**
    Nine times during the campaign, they can bestow an extra life on a character of their choice.

PLAYING

"Alliteration makes everything at least 15% better"

—AdamB

TWO PLAYER ROLES

In a classic tabletop roleplaying game, which this mostly is, each session has two kinds of player. There is the player running the playtime (aka. the cat or referee) and there are the players running the protagonists (aka. the runners).

Neither of these terms is perfect, but they will do for now. A game table can choose other terms.

The referee player sets the stage for the playtime, prepares the sandbox, lays out the narrative hooks and themes, then runs the games and arbitrates the interactions of the heroes with the world through a mix of common sense, rules, and rulings.

The runner players take control of the protagonists of the playtime: heroes, sidekicks, and sometimes even extras. They play their various characters and use them to explore the world, overcome challenges, win against the odds or die, and in the process discover their stories through a mix of blind luck (dice) and fate (decisions).

One thing to reinforce: all the players in a roleplaying game are *playing*. The referee isn't an official outside of the game, like in football, or a master in control of the narrative. This is play time, not work. If someone forgets a rule or fails a quest, if players abandon a story arc or switch genres, it's no big deal. Dust the story off and keep playing.

Also, a group of players can switch around who is the cat and who are the runners from session to session. Or even during a game, maybe from scene to scene. The referee doesn't have to complete an immense, epic arc for it to be a proper roleplaying experience. A one-shot or five good scenes in a row may be enough.

Finally, it is possible to play a session with multiple referees or just a single player. It's just not as common.

TASKS AT THE TABLE (OR ONLINE)

Players perform multiple tasks during a roleplaytime session. Traditionally many systems bundle them together with the roles of referee (game master or what have you) and runner (player, protagonist). Often this means that the referee is tasked with much more work than the other players, which can lead to exhaustion, burnout, and failed roleplaying groups. It's also a big reason why many players avoid refereeing sessions. By unpacking the tasks and talking about them it might be easier to divide the labor fairly.

1. **Organizing a session**: finding a time and place for the group to meet. This can be any player, but it's good to make sure somebody is responsible for making the call.

2. **Hosting a session**: often roleplaying takes place at somebody's home. This can be any player, but it's important to realize that as the host, they are also have a special social role beyond just play. Thus, while the host has an obligation to make the group feel welcome, the other players also have a responsibility to be good guests and not abuse the host's hospitality. If playing outside of a home, say at a cafe, the player organizing the session takes on some of the social role of a host.

3. **Taking care of food and drinks**: roleplaying is a social event and this

often involves eating and drinking. Whether there will be food and drinks at the table is a group decision, but it's worth respecting the host player's preferences. Some groups make every player responsible for their own food, others do potlucks, yet others prepare communal meals like the traditional frozen pizza. The players should decide who will bring what, who (if anyone) will handle preparation during the sessions (e.g. who's handling the frozen pizzas and making sure they don't burn in the oven, who's making sure the glasses don't run dry), and it's absolutely a good idea to collect food money up front so nobody's left holding the tab.

4. **Cleaning up after a session**: especially if there is food involved, there will be cutlery and things to clean up. All the players should pitch in to help the host clean up after a session. Ideally, the players won't leave until the home is as clean as they found it.

5. **Generating characters**: often a new hero or sidekick will be introduced to the story. There should be one player who knows the rules for making new characters well enough that they can help others. It is helpful if this is not the referee, letting them focus on keeping the session rolling along.

6. **Introducing new players to the rules**: when a new player joins the group, it helps if there is another player who is not the referee who can guide them through the rules.

7. **Roleplaying the heroes**: this is the primary task of the runners. The referee should absolutely not roleplay their heroes or make their decisions for them.

8. **Roleplaying the antagonists**: this is a primary referee task, since obstacles to the heroes' desires is where stories are born.

9. **Roleplaying the extras (NPCs) and sidekicks**: any player can take over the extras or sidekicks in a scene. Usually, a runner will roleplay their hero's sidekicks, but they can assign them to other players too. Likewise, a referee can assign an extra along with a one or two-line description to a player not directly involved in a scene. The referee can call for tests to determine the extra's reactions, but beyond that sharing them out keeps all the players playing and makes outcomes unexpectable for everyone, including the referee themselves. Who knows, maybe the runner will suddenly turn the stat-less invented-on-the-spot shopkeeper into a beloved recurring character?

10. **Preparing hooks, plots, and modules for a session**: this is almost always the referee's task. Ideally it should be fun, not a chore. As a rule of thumb, the preparation should not take more time than running the session itself, and ideally take less. The more a referee listens to the other players during a session, and riffs off that, the more dynamic it should be.

11. **Making up lore, names, and backstories**: a large part of the fun of roleplaying is invention and imagination. Any player can and should do this. Traditionally, this task falls almost entirely on the referee (or on pre-written tomes), however it's a good to share it out among all the players. When the group encounters something new in the game the referee can take an exquisite-corpse improv approach. The referee roughly describes the new encounter, then point to the one runner and asks them to add some detail, then the next runner and asks them to add

some contrast, and so on, varying the questions a little bit. The runners may pass an improv totem from one to another, to make sure each of them gets their fair turn adding to the world's lore. Additionally, the referee can declare the runners to be experts in things related to their heroes, so the runner of a dwarven hero takes the driver's seat when it comes to describing dwarven lore.
If the referee takes this approach, they should wield a soft veto to maintain some consistency in the shared world and to keep it balanced, so that a single player's ideas don't steamroll over everybody else.

12. **Running the environment, sandbox, and adventure module**: this is another primary referee task. Keeping the imaginary world ticking over, setting the stage for the heroes.

13. **Running antagonists in combat**: this task usually falls to the referee, but they could outsource it to a runner who's heroes aren't present, or even a secondary referee player.

14. **Refereeing conflicts and combat between heroes and antagonists**: this is a primary referee task, but insofar as it deals with rules, an impartial runner well versed with the rules of the game, or whose heroes are not involved, could also handle this task.

15. **Keeping track of the heroes' resources**: this is a task for each runner individually when it comes to their own heroes, but one player might also handle the resources of the whole group, for example their caravans or possessions.

16. **Rules arbitration**: this task usually falls to the referee, but it is easy to outsource to any player so long as they are fair and impartial.

17. **Referencing existing books and lore**: another task that usually falls to the referee, but could be assigned to anyone.

18. **Keeping a campaign journal**: again, a task that often falls to the referee, but could go to any player. A group can even decide to skip it altogether, and the sessions will still be fun. Ideally, the player taking on this task likes to write.

19. **Drawing characters, scenes, and maps**: this is a task that really helps bring the game alive and every group should encourage as many players as possible to participate. In practice, many groups will usually have one or two players really get into the craft aspect of play. That's fine. Having a session art journal is a fun activity in itself.

20. **Staying on the same page**: this isn't really a task, but a useful for every player. A group meets to play *together* and it's important for all the players to read the room, make sure nobody is getting uncomfortable, and that everyone is enthusiastically on-board with a course of action. Splitting the party could be fun, but it might leave a lot of players pretty bored. Introducing a terrifying spidercat character might have been a good idea, if two of the players weren't arachnophobic.

ROLLS AND TESTS

A hero from another time awakens in their nanomagical sarcophagus. Researches marooned on a mountain struggle to win the trust of the local yeti-analogues. Savages being transported to a new battle-world run amok on a void ship. Godlike lings on their ring-habitat argue about which of the local flora and fauna would make the best uplift candidates. A sentient motorcycle possesses their rider like a puppet of flesh and bone. A crowd of bystanders looks on, perplexed.

Players run all of these characters. The runners handle the protagonists who take center stage: the heroes, their sidekicks, and attendant extras. The referee(s) handle the antagonists: the villains, minions, creatures, and bystanders.

Most of the time, running any and all of these characters involves only dialogue. The referee presents a situation. The runner says what their hero does. The referee narrates the outcome.

But sometimes the outcome is unclear and consequential. That is when the dice come out. They serve as oracles, as random number generators. Until the dice fall, anything could happen, once they fall, players use them to narrate outcomes.

WHO ROLLS WHEN

Every player will probably end up rolling at some point during a session. During fights, everybody will almost certainly be rolling. A good rule of thumb is that the ref shouldn't roll more often than the runners.

WHO CALLS FOR A ROLL OR A TEST

The cat. It's always the ref who calls for a roll. A runner can suggest a roll, and a ref can accept it. But they don't have to.

Exception: any player can decide to roll when it only affects their protagonist. *"Lovesick, Ponderosa Pearplanter contemplates whether she should just throw prudence to the winds and spend her last satrap dollars at the Evershadowed Tavern. She's making a hard aura test."*

WHO ROLLS FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

The ref should include the runners in determining the world around them. When a runner asks whether the rain is strong enough to soak the gunpowder, the ref asks another player to and find out using an 'I don't know' roll. When it's time to roll for random encounters, to figure out how well-stocked a market is, or to determine how dutiful a local enforcer is, this method takes some pressure off the ref and shares out the world-building duties.

The group can introduce a token to pass around the table, so a player can't roll twice in a row. Every group will figure out how much or how little they like to use this sort of distributed setting generation.

WHO TESTS FOR THE GROUP

When the whole group of heroes is trying to climb a wall, or a caravan checks for misfortune during a long journey, an interesting probabilistic problem occurs. Even if the likelihood of success is high for an individual test, the probability of all the tests being successful rapidly decreases.

Since every 1 rolled on a d20 is a critical failure, this means that every time a test is rolled there is at most a 95% chance of success and a 5% chance of failure.

After ten rolls there is a 40% chance of rolling at least one critical failure. The more tests are rolled, the more the chance of catastrophe predictably (though asymptotically) approaches 100%.

In play, this means that rolling multiple times for a single action (for example sneaking past a guard) reduces randomness and makes the rolling, essentially, pointless.

The solution is to **only test once per action, even if a whole group of characters is attempting an action**. Each time a runner tests for the whole group, they take an action token (or note in some other way that they have tested). A runner cannot test for the whole group until all the other runners have also tested. Once every runner has tested for the group, all the action tokens are returned to the table and the cycle begins again.

This means that every player will roll tests affecting the whole group at some point. If the only runner who can test when the party needs to sneak past a vigilant guard is the clumsy tourist in golem armor, this might present difficulties.

Clarification: what about combat? In combat each hero is usually taking their own action, so they all roll their attacks individually. However, mobs of poorly trained goblin-bots or hordes of space-fungus infested villagers can be treated as single (rather dangerous) opponents, getting a single roll.

THE 'I DON'T KNOW' ROLL

Sometimes a player simply doesn't know an answer. What is the in-game weather like? How would the hero react in a given situation? What is a sidekick's favorite color? Dice can be every player's best friend when they are faced with quickly inventing result or making a decision.

These can be improvised on the spot, but it's good to have a few probabilistic defaults to drop back on.

Binary Decisions (coins or any dice)
Heads or tails, evens or odds.
"Heads Elfsayer lets the pumpkin goblin run wild, tails she takes it to the witch."

Preferences and Hunches (d6)
(1–3) the common outcome, (4–5) the unusual outcome, (6) the rare outcome.
And flipped: (1) it's horrible, (2-3) it's annoying, (4–6) it's bearable.
"The weather's usually fine in the Levelling Heights. Let's see what it's like today."

Averages and Bell Curves (2d6)
(2) very bad and quite unlikely (1/36, 2.8%)
(3–4) bad and unlikely (5/36, 13.9%)
(5–6) bad and likely (9/36, 25%)
(7) bland and likely (6/36, 16.7%)
(8–9) good and likely (9/36, 25%)
(10-11) good and unlikely (5/36, 13.9%)
(12) very good and rare (1/36, 2.8%).

Flat Roll With Possibility of Catastrophic Cock-up and Option to Add Bonus (d20)
(1) catastrophic cock-up, critical fail (5%)
(2–11) common outcome (50%)
(12–16) uncommon (25%)
(17–19) rare (15%)
(20) very rare (5%)
(20/20) extremely rare and lucky (0.25%)

THE DEFINED ROLL

The war axe strikes the orcbot and deals d8 damage. The caravan leader rolls d12 for an encounter check. The glum-faced quarterling rolls a d20 for their misfortune check on their week-long trek through Sevenrivers Forest.

All these rolls are defined by the rules, the module, prior invention, or the referee's planned game notes.

APPROXIMATING DICE AND NUMBERS

Sometimes this is impossible. Either the players have forgotten a rule, or a new and unexpected situation has come up and the ref has to define a roll then and there. In these situations it helps to understand the numbers seacat plays with.

d1 (average = 1, option: d3-1)

Not a die. Just a flat number. Minimal life or stat damage. Useful for when inventory gets damaged. A suitable life total for disposable mooks in large combat scenes. To get a "d3" just roll a d6 and divide by 2.

d4 (average = 2.5)

The smallest, pointiest die. It's used for the damage of small or weak weapons and creatures. It can generate life totals for level 0 antagonists. Useful for moderately powerful attacks against heroes' stats.

d6 (average = 3.5)

The classic die. Average civilian weapons, improvised weapons. Unpleasant trips and falls. Good for generating life totals for thugs, goblins, or other annoyances.

d8 (average = 4.5)
or d10 (average = 5.5.)

Most common military weapons. Good for generating life totals for opponents up to level 4 or 5. Roll one die for each level.

d12 (average = 6.5)

The die for big weapons. Life totals for bigger monsters and traps.

d20 (average = 10.5)

The big die. Used for tests. Used for attacks by very large monsters or scary traps and weapons. This die can destroy any 3rd-level hero in a single roll. Scary.

5d8 (average = 22.5, very clustered results) *or* 1d8 x 5 (average = 22.5, nice and swingy)

For really scary monsters, big traps, explosives, massive damage, and the like, there are two options. Rolling a bunch of dice and adding them together, which gives results closely clustered around the average, or multiplying the result of a single die. Rolling multiple dice is good for reliable effects, while multiplying a single die is excellent for terrifyingly unpredictable outcomes.

1d6 x 10 (average = 35)

This can blow up any seacat hero. No matter their level.

THE D20 STAT TEST

This is the core mechanic of the game for determining when a hero succeeds or fails at whatever they are attempting.

For heroes it always means:

Roll d20 + stat + skill over target

This means rolling a d20 then adding a relevant stat and a relevant skill to beat the target set by the ref. What's a relevant stat or skill? Anything that makes sense in the context. Archaeology and thought might help with deciphering old runes in a tomb while tea-leaf reading and charisma might well apply when trying to impress with a tea ceremony.

For sidekicks and extras it usually means:

Roll d20 + sum over target

These are simplified characters with just one single number used to modify their rolls when relevant. When is the sum relevant? Whenever it makes sense from their description. A **goblin** (L1, attentive) might apply it when searching for tracks or listening for breathing in the shadows, while a **lion** (L3, lazy) might struggle to apply it when doing anything other than direct lion business (biting and scratching and pouncing).

ONES FAIL, TWENTIES SUCCEED

In every test, if the die rolls and turns up a natural 1 or 20, this is an automatic failure or success. The referee can never call for a roll if failure or success are impossible.

TEST STEP BY STEP

1. Runner describes what their hero tries to do.

2. Ref decides it's unclear whether success or failure would be automatic.

3. Ref assigns the test a target number between 3 and 19. They can describe the target with adjectives (easy, moderate, hard) to preserve the narrative fiction, or use numbers. Whichever is easier.

4. Runner rolls d20 and adds their hero's relevant stat and skill.

5. Based on the result, the ref narrates the success or failure.

6. Play proceeds.

OPTION: EDGE ROLLS

When a player's test precisely equals their target, they or the ref can suggest some sacrifice that will allow success at a cost. Ideas include:

1. In combat, take a hit or break their weapon as they push through an enemy's defences.

2. In a social conflict, pay a bribe or give a personal item as a gift to convince the other character to help them.

3. When casting a spell, set themselves on fire or create a weaker effect rather than suffering corruption.

4. When breaking and entering, destroy their tools or trigger the alarm as they disable the lock mechanism.

OPTION: DOUBLE OR NOTHING

Sometimes a player really wants their hero to succeed, even if they failed a test. They can buy a re-roll by paying a high price, pushing their luck beyond the bounds of good sense and reason. The ref may want to exercise a little discretion with this option, as used too often it can slow the game down, but it is fun for boss fights and high stakes casino scenes.

1. In combat, they take a point of strength or endurance damage and take a hit or break their weapon as they try once more to strike their foe.

2. In a social conflict, they suffer a point of charisma or aura damage as they are forced to pay a humiliating bribe in order to attempt to secure assistance for their cause.

3. When casting a spell, they suffer a point of thought or agility damage and give up a beloved souvenir to try and successfully cast a terrible, corrupting spell, despite their obvious ineptitude.

This isn't turning a failure into a success. The odds don't improve. The player is, frankly, gambling that their hero can pull off a stunt even as they get themselves deeper and deeper into trouble.
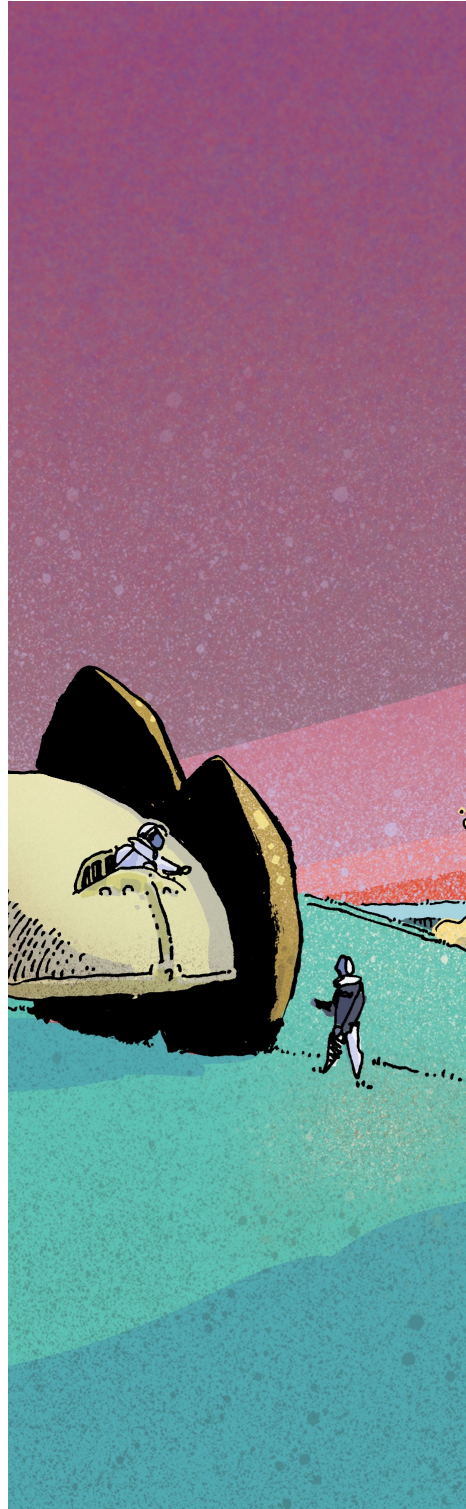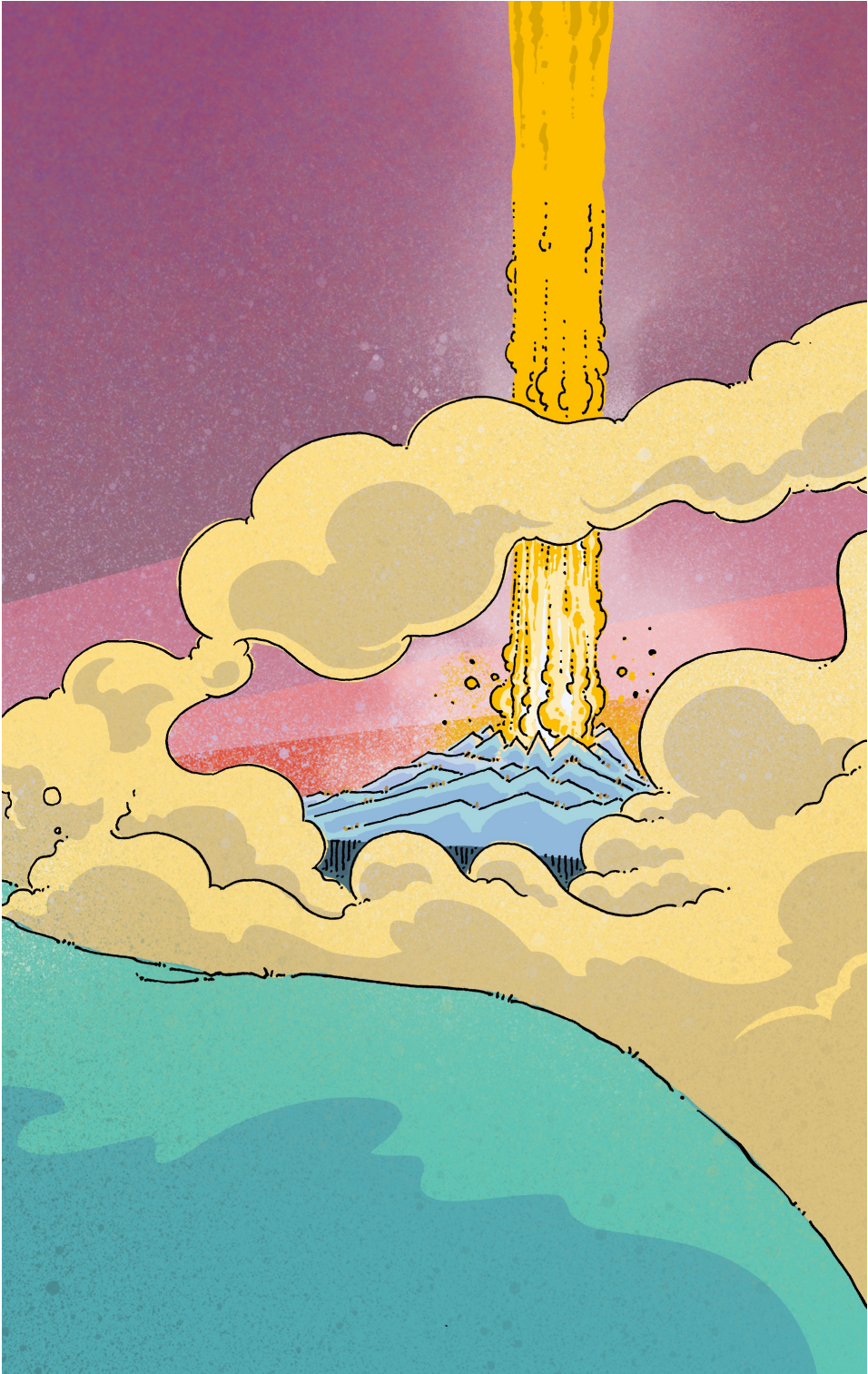
TARGETS

When something is obviously possible or impossible, or when there are neither consequences for failure nor success, it's not necessary to make tests. But when success is unclear and danger imminent, a target number is needed to make a test.

How hard is it to leap over a burning fence? While carrying a large bucket of gasoline? Without spilling any of it?

Distilling infinite narrative possibilities to a single number, determining the difficulty of a task, is one of the ref's vital tasks at the game table. The point isn't to give a precise, realistic target, but to supply the odds and let a runner decide whether or not to roll the dice and try for success.

Practically, the referee assigns a target number between 3 (very easy) and 19 (very hard), then describes the probability. Leaping over a burning fence might be routine, with a target of 7. Doing it while carrying a bucket of is moderately hard, (target 10). But doing it without spilling anything? Rather difficult (target 16).

STRICT LIMITS

The minimum skill a hero can ever possess is +2. The maximum total bonus (sum of skill, stat, and any other modifier) a hero can ever apply to a test is +13. Targets are limited to a range between 3 and 19 to avoid edge cases where a skilled hero can't fail (targets of 1 or 2) and situations where heroes are attempting tests (targets of 20 or more) they could never win.

FIXED TARGET NUMBERS

The basic approach is to memorize a fixed spread of target numbers and use those. A d20 has twenty identical faces and each result has a 5% probability. A probability difference of just 5% (the equivalent of +1) is too small to grasp viscerally, which is why the default target numbers are split into 20% (+4) steps. That most of the target numbers are primes is a happy coincidence.

RANDOMIZED TARGET NUMBERS

Often a referee won't know precisely what number to assign. Two similar tasks are never identical. Circumstances and actors change. Language is unclear. What one professional calls easy, another might call moderately challenging. Two free climbing routes might both be classified as relatively easy 4b (or 5.6 or what have you) ascents, but different climbers in different weather conditions might well rate them differently.

In such situations a little randomness goes a long way.

ADJECTIVES AND TARGET NUMBERS

Trivial Target = 3 (1d6)
Trivial tests are for situations that are routine, but have a risk of serious, catastrophic, or hilarious failure. For example, a hero rushing to the masquerade ball across a slippery bridge should be completely safe, but falling into the bog could be quite humorous.

Easy Target = 7 (1d8+3 or 2d6)
For situations that are a bit unusual, but should almost always present no difficulty for a professional. An untrained hero would face a real risk of failure here.

Moderate Target = 11 (1d10+6 or 3d6)
Situations that only professionals should attempt, and even they risk failure. Untrained heroes have a better than even chance of failure (the house always wins).

Difficult Target = 15 (1d12+9 or 4d6)
Even professionals face poor odds with a difficult test. Smart heroes will avoid these kinds of tests or seek to stack advantages in their favor before attempting them.

Extreme Target = 19 (1d12+12 or 5d6)
These are odds that only a desperate professional would even attempt.

[+] AND [-] AND HERO DICE

An advantage or boon [+] means the player rolls an extra die and takes the better result, a disadvantage or bane [-] means they roll an extra die and take the worse result.

Advantage [+] and disadvantage [-] are used with all kinds of rolls, not just tests. In general, the referee can always rule that in the fictional circumstances a hero's situation is better or worse than usual and instruct them to roll with advantage or disadvantage. Various modules, abilities, skills, spells, items, or situations may also instruct players to roll with advantage or disadvantage. An axe might deal damage with advantage. A spell might give players a boon when they roll encounter dice.

Advantages and disadvantages cancel each other out. Usually boons or banes do not stack. In combat a hero doesn't gain one [+] for higher ground and a second [+] because their opponent is careless. If circumstances are so very advantageous, the referee could just rule that an action succeeds.

Exception: heroes can spend hero dice to gain boons, granting additional [+] to their rolls. For example, a hero is trying to leap across a great crevasse. They spend three hero dice so they roll four dice on the test and choose the best result out of four.

HERO DICE (HEROICS)

One thing that sets heroes apart from sidekicks and extras is that they succeed at thousand-to-one odds nine times out of ten. They get this plot armor from hero dice.

Heroes acquire these d6s directly through play, from ancient magitech or space alien 'gods' pleased with their deeds. Players also accumulate hero dice by:

1. Attending a game session.
2. Playing for an hour or two (depending on how much die rolling happens).

A group can decide on other sources of these dice (e.g. for helping set up and clean up the play area, for arriving on time). Players assign these hero dice as they acquire them. If they have a stable of heroes, they choose how to distribute them.

Sidekicks, extras and hero dice
If they acquire hero dice during play, they can use them. Their runners might consider making them full heroes at that point.

Storing hero dice
Generally, heroes can store as many hero dice as they have levels. If using advancement tables, the maximum number of hero dice will vary.

USING HERO DICE

A hero die is a special d6. Players can get a small bowl to store these dice. This meta-game tool lets players adjust the odds in their heroes' favor. Specifically:

1. **Adjust other rolls**
   Immediately after rolling another die, a player can decide to roll a hero die and adjust the initial naked roll by up to that amount. So, if their d20 came up 17 on their attack roll, they can roll a hero d6 and hope to turn it into a natural 20— and thus a critical hit. They can also use

the hero dice this way to explode other dice or make consecutive rolls.

2. **Gain a boon**
   A player can spend one or more hero dice before rolling a die to gain a boon [+] on that roll. Multiple hero dice can be used together this way. This only applies to rolls for actions within a hero's control, not when generating random stats or corrupting mutations.

3. **Regain life**
   A player can also roll a hero die at any time to regain that many life points.

4. **Regain stat point**
   And a player can spend a hero die at any time to regain one stat point.

"WON'T BENNIES RUIN MY GAME?"

"I've heard a lot of game masters complain that hero dice will ruin 'their game.' That the heroes will become too powerful. That there won't be any challenge left. That these 'bennies' are unearned and just reward players for turning up.

First of all, they do reward players for turning up, but they are earned. As an adult in the year of our lord 20-clacking-20 I find it is a lot harder for a group to get together regularly than it was when I was a student, and quite possibly than it was back in the 1980s, before the erosion of stable 9–5 jobs. Players should get some recognition for making time and making it to the table.

Further, time is limited, and with less time, there are fewer dice rolled and fewer chances for those sweet, sweet critical hits. I like those and I haven't run games for a single player in 20 years who complained about the chance to roll one or two more critical hits per night.

Do hero dice make heroes too powerful? No, of course not. The deck is stacked, the house

always wins, the ref is playing with a whole world of challenges.

Hero dice give the players more options and control, encouraging them to go further and take more risks. But they are a limited resource that runs out, while the dangers they face do not.

Finally, I take umbrage with game masters talking about 'their game.' It's not their game. It does not belong to them alone. The roleplaytime is shared by all the players together. Hero dice purposefully reduce the power of the game master and their pre-scripted plot. They are part of the toolkit for turning a game master into a referee or, more humorously, the cat. Yes. They make it possible to end boss fights in a single round. Yes. They make it possible to stack a series of consecutive natural 20s, turning a x2 critical hit into a x16 critical hit. Yes. They make it possible to one-shot a dragon. Yes. That is the point. That is very, very precisely the point."

—the author (L2, ranting)

STATS

The UVG plays with six stats: strength, endurance, agility, charisma, aura, and thought. A stat of 0 is the minimum for heroes, 5 is the maximum for humans. They represent the natural aptitude of a character (while skills are learned aptitudes) and map to the ability modifier bonuses of the stats of classical fantasy roleplaying games.

Heroes have no negative stats by default because they make rolling tests more annoying without adding anything interesting.

Strength
The active physical stat. It does what it says on the tin. Lifting bars, bending gates. That kind of stuff.

Endurance
The passive physical stat. It's about how much pain and strain a character can take. Long-distance running and such.

Agility
The dynamic physical stat. It's about applying the hero's body with precision and speed to dodge oncoming death hamsters and throw void bombs with razor precision.

Charisma
The active mental stat. It's vitally important because it goes back to its classical Greek *khárisma*, representing divine fortune and favor. The gods and reason hate the uncharismatic, and charisma also serves as a luck stat. When a hero tries to batter down resistance to their arguments through force of personality, this is what they use.

If a player asks if their hero can find a war pig, greased lightning mobile, rod of doom, or simply the latest edition of *Burly Barbarians* at the town market, that calls for a charisma test.

Further, nine times out of ten, random effects or mindless creatures attacking a party of heroes will target the least charismatic one first. Clearly explain this rule to players before they generate heroes.

Aura
The passive mental stat. It indicates how much punishment the hero's soul, spirit, or psyche can take when faced by horror and stress. It correlates almost completely with endurance.

It is explicitly not wisdom. It does not show good judgement or shrewd insight. Those are character traits that the player decides for their hero, much like they decide on the colour of the hero's hair or shoes, without affecting mechanics in any way.

Thought
The dynamic mental stat, correlated with how quickly the hero can process and manipulate information. Its naming is also a silly reference to the Egyptian god Thoth.

GENERATING STATS

Individual hero bundles suggest ways to roll stats or by distributing 7 points among their stats (with a maximum of 3). Players may also roll their stats using a d20.

1–10	=0	close to human mean
11–14	=1	above average
15–17	=2	really quite good
18–19	=3	excellent
20	=4	exceptional
20/20	=5	the 18/00 of stats

STAT DAMAGE

Many dangers damage heroes' stats, from starvation to disease to monsters. The minimum possible is 0.

All stat damage is temporary unless otherwise specified or a hero dies, in which case, yeah, it's permanent. Stats are one of the key attributes, along with life, that heroes recover by resting.

Any stat damage a hero suffers when their stat is at 0 gives them a harm (fatigue) point, but does not further reduce their stat.

Option: Hardcore Mode
Players can decide as a group to let their heroes end up with negative stats through play. This can make the math of tests a little bit more slower (subtraction!).

In this case, any stat damage a hero suffers when their stat is at 0 or less gives them a harm (fatigue) point as well as reducing their stat.

STAT DAMAGE AND EXTRAS

Extras do not have stats per se. When they take stat damage, they reduce their sum by that amount. If stat damage reduces an extra's sum to 0 they are out of the fight. Extras do not track harm (fatigue) points to keep things simpler.

SKILLS

Skills represent **what a hero is good at**. They are a descriptive bundle of learning, practice, and experience. A hero can always try to do something, but if they are **skilled**, they are good enough to make a living with their know-how (they're a professional), while as an **expert** is good enough to teach that profession.

There is no mechanical difference between what other games call professions, proficiencies, tools, and saves. This is a little fuzzy on purpose! There is overlap in the daily tasks of an accountant and a plumber, and there is difference. The same holds for a soldier and a spy, a tinker and a tailor.

APTITUDE (FORMERLY BONUS)

All skills use the same aptitude modifier, which rises slowly with advancement. It represents the value of being a professional or an expert.

ANATOMY OF A SKILL

Street Magician (title)
#thief #trickster #performer (tags)
Strange sound of piping wafting. (fluff)
Bring joy to children. Perform magic tricks and sleight of hand. Use cold reading and cunning to dupe marks. (three sentences)

The **title** gives a first impression, a cliche to start roleplaying from.

The **tags** are useful for searching and categorization. A bit meta, I know.

The **fluff** sets a bit of mood and setting.

The **three sentences** give a practical outline for using the skill in play.

WHEN TO USE SKILLS

Players use their wits and imagination to figure out how their hero's skill might **reasonably apply** to a situation.

In most cases, dialogue between players will resolve the situation. When an outcome is uncertain and there are stakes to success or failure, the dice should come out.

HOW SKILLS WORK

A hero will find themselves in one of three possible situations:

1. No relevant skill.

2. Skilled, Pro (one rank in a skill).

3. Expert (two or more ranks in a skill).

If the **hero has no relevant skill**, they do not add their aptitude to the test and make the roll with disadvantage.

If the **hero is skilled** in a relevant skill, they add their aptitude to the d20 roll when they make a test.

If the **hero is an expert** in a relevant skill, they add double their aptitude to the d20 roll when they make a test.

OPTIONAL RULE: PERFECT MATCH

When a hero's skill perfectly matches the specific circumstances, the game runner may allow the player to roll with advantage. For example, a plumber trying unblock a trash compactor's outlet before it crushes the party, or a soldier trying to figure out if their weapon has been tampered with.

This is a very subjective rule, so communicate with one other and be willing to compromise.

WHAT COUNTS AS A SKILL?

When players make up new skills, consider:

1. Does it sound fun to roleplay?

2. Is it something a person could do for a living or as a hobby pursuit?

3. Can they describe it in three sentences?

4. Can they give it a memorable title?

If the answers are yes, it's probably a good skill to play with. Example:

'Sleight of Hand' isn't a very good skill. It describes a very specific task, with very narrow application. 'Street Magician' or 'Party Clown' would be a better, broader and memorable skill.

'Melee Combat' would be a bit dull and mechanical. 'Gladiator' or 'Infantry Soldier' makes for better stories.

LEARNING NEW SKILLS

When a hero gains xp and advances, they sometimes gain new skills automatically (and usually somewhat randomly!). This represents a culmination of their individual training and practice.

In most other circumstances, to **gain or improve skills** a hero must visit different locations and mentors and **collect successes**. At the end of a week of study at a location or with a mentor, they make a moderate Thought test (that's a roll over 11). Each location or mentor can only provide one success, but a hero can keep studying at the same location if at first they don't succeed. After achieving four successes the hero gains their new skill.

Simpler or more difficult skills are possible. Something like "the Dark Arts of Irshe Dalgba" might require six locations and tests. On the other hand, something like

learning to "drive an automatic [cargo wagon]" might require as little as two.

LIMITED SPACE FOR SKILLS

The hero sheet has limited space for skills (just 6 in Breve Seacat). This is on purpose, to discourage overflowing kitchen-sink heroes and encourage a little bit of specialization.

If a player runs out of space, they can:

1. Appropriate an ability or inventory slot for the new skill.

2. Replace an existing skill.

ADJUSTING SKILLS

You might discover that some skills just don't fit any longer, that they are profoundly overpowered or underused. In that case, discuss with the other players and rewrite the three sentences.

ABILITIES

Perks, traits, mutations, divine gifts. The fire resistance of a salamander. An ur-plant-derived ability to feed on sunlight. Cyber-telekinetic augmentation. Folk hero celebrity status. A parasitic symbiont that grants superhuman strength.

Abilities can get weird and are a bit of a catch-all category. Still, whatever they are and however they are acquired, they allow a hero to function outside the human norm and are beyond the skill an ordinary human could acquire through theory and practice. They are all treated the same way and go in the same section of the hero sheet.

ANATOMY OF AN ABILITY

Death Hunger (title)
#fighter #demon (tags)
Death awakens the blood demon within. (poetic description)
Rank 1: Track the enemies take out of the fight (or kill) in a battle scene. Each enemy the hero takes out gives them a cumulative +1 to attacks until the end of the scene. (rank and effect)
Rank 2: Also gain a cumulative +1 to damage for every enemy taken out. (rank and effect)

The **title** gives a colourful first impression of the ability.

The **tags** are, again, mostly for searching and categorization.

The **poetic description** gives a thematic idea of how the ability manifests during play. It also often goes into a bit of world-building and background, giving a hero more hooks for roleplay.

The **rank and effect** give the mechanical effect of the ability at each rank. Abilities can have different numbers of ranks.

HOW ABILITIES WORK

Abilities are almost always passive and beneficial. They change how a hero interacts with the rules, but don't require tests, sacrifices, ammunition or other equipment. Of course, there might be exceptions, and many abilities combine benefits and penalties.

The most common types are:

1. Simple augmentations to a hero, for example increased Stats or the ability to go without food.

2. Situational modifiers or actions, for example increased damage when cornered or advantage to tests when using cold iron items.

3. Social status that gives access to resources, sidekicks, and extras.

4. Miscellaneous bonuses, augmentations, and abilities that are available at certain times, intervals, or locations.

5. And things that just sounded cool, but might be a bit useless actually.

Some abilities have ranks. If a hero randomly generates the same ability multiple times, or chooses it again, they gain higher rank effects.

Social abilities increase a hero's resources and ability to influence the world around, but these are not super powers. They are subject to a referee's soft veto, which demands dialogue and trust between referees and runners. Approach them in good faith, and they are great fun.

INVENTING NEW ABILITIES

When players invent a new ability, they should consider:

1. Can they give it a one-line poetic description?

2. Can they describe its effect in one or two sentences?

3. Are they sure it's not completely overpowered or something that would bore players whose heroes don't have the same ability?

4. Can they give it a memorable title?

If the answers are yes, it's probably a good ability. Example:

'Detector of Evil' isn't a very good ability. It makes a hero the ultimate arbiter of morality. This removes choices from the other players. Something like 'Desire Detective' would be more interesting.

'Gill Implants' is a bit mediocre, but fine. A water-breathing hero expands the group's reach, but can lead to solo adventures. If the referee is comfortable assigning extras to the other players, this can become more interesting.

'Biomechanical Intestinal Upgrades' is kind of cool. Maybe it lets the hero digest any organic matter. This reduces their dependence on food supplies, but makes for mildly humorous situations ("Hansel eats what? *Again*?").

ACQUIRING NEW ABILITIES

When a hero gains xp and advances, they sometimes gain new abilities automatically. Think of this as the result of a longer process.

The usual other way heroes will gain abilities is through exposure to strange technologies, weird radiation, by purchasing horrifying augmentations, pushing dangerous red buttons, and exploring terrifying elder lingish ruins.

There is no other way to train or study for new abilities, so they also make good rewards for completing quests, or as ways

for heroes to burn a lot of resources (ahem, cash).

LIMITED SPACE FOR ABILITIES

The hero sheet has limited space for abilities (just 6 in Breve Seacat). This is on purpose, to discourage overcomplicated heroes and encourage a little bit of specialization.

If a player runs out of space, they can:

1. Appropriate a skill or inventory slot for the new ability.

2. Replace an existing ability.

ADJUSTING ABILITIES

You will almost certainly discover that some abilities just don't fit within the game. Maybe they are completely useless or profoundly overpowered. In that case, discuss with the other players and rewrite its description and effects.

MAGIC

Magic is everywhere in Breve Seacat. The world is enchanted. Awash in energies. Alive with *Ka*. Vibrating with *Lei*. Gushing with *Vir*. Threaded with radiations and information spheres and tiny wave-particle machines. Woven into the very structure of the universal simulation of reality.

Or, at the very least, the world of Breve Seacat is deep and old. Layers upon layers of misinformation and disinformation, reality alteration, and mad distortion coat the world like the filth of aeons. There are wheels and processes churning madly just beneath the skin of the ordinary and everyday. Where does the line between technology and magic and religion lie?

The line is a lie.

It is a truth: there are great powers waiting to be plucked free by a careless fool styling themselves wizard.

What are they? How do they work? Humans seek patterns. Invent explanations. Time passes. The theories are forgotten but the practices remain.

Those half forgotten powers promise so much. To overcome life and death, to ascend to the heavens like the prophets of old, to reawaken the glittering sky cities, to journey beyond the veil of night into the lands of Everlight and Neverfade.

So many promises.

So many fools.

So much pain, corruption, mutation, change, and death in their wakes.

HEROES AND SPELLS

WHAT ARE SPELLS?

Spells are practical recipes, rituals for ripping mundane reality open and changing it to serve the hero.

At best, they are naive and flawed. At worst, they are dangerous, garbled mistakes, misused and misunderstood.

CASTING SPELLS

Magic rips reality, imposing otherworldly wrongness on the mundane, so spells hurt. Heroes pay the spell price to begin casting a spell.

**Spell Price (in Life or Stat points)
= Magic Cost x Spell Power**

Different types of hero incur different magic costs.

	Magic Cost
Wizard, Witch, etc.	1
Thief, Explorer, etc.	2
Fighter, Warrior, etc.	3

Example: an explorer summoning a 3rd power *Thornstone Obelisk* pays 6 Life or any mix of Life and Stat points. A wizard, with their magic cost of 1, pays 3 Life.

The player whose hero casts a spell narrates the details of the procedure. Maybe the hero casts a spell by reading it out loud from a magic book, maybe it's a dance routine that summons a demon, maybe it's dribbly candles.

EVERYONE CAN CAST SPELLS

Any hero can try to cast spells, whether they have a relevant skill or not, so long as they pay the spell price.

If they lack skill, spell casting is harder:

1. The **spell price is doubled**.
2. All spell **die rolls are with disadvantage**, including corruption rolls.

SPELL POWER

Some spells are more powerful than others, or can be prepared in more effective (and expensive) ways. Higher power spells have a higher spell price and are more dangerous to cast. A hero can cast any spell of any power, but it is **dangerous to cast a spell of a higher power than the hero's level**.

DANGEROUS MAGIC

When a hero casts a **dangerous** spell (marked with a dangerous tag), or they cast a **spell whose power is higher than their level**, they must test their relevant magic skill to see if the magic corrupts them.

The spell price is the test target.

If the hero lacks a relevant magic skill, they test with disadvantage.

If the hero's level is higher than the spell power of the spell they're casting, they test with advantage.

Dangerous magic **corrupts** a hero, twisting their body, abrading their soul, and changing their personality.

SPELLS GO IN THE INVENTORY

Each spell a hero can cast goes in their inventory. This is the **spell burden** and is usually equal to 1 stone.

Most spells are not just recipes and bundles of words a hero carries in their head. They are a burden that weighs them down. This might be ritual equipment and manuals,

warding charms and protective clothes, ancient tools and body paints. Maybe even creepy skulls and newt juice. Maybe just the weight of malign knowledge and the pain of an ontogenic nanite injection.

The burden isn't used during casting. after casting. It can stored elsewhere, for example in a library, but a hero can't cast a spell that is not in their inventory.

Some rare tomes are valuable simply because they let a hero carry multiple spells in a single inventory slot.

STARTING SPELLS

Starting spells are listed in the Gear section of each Hero generator.

ACQUIRING NEW SPELLS

Heroes usually gain new spells by adventuring and studying strange artifacts, as treasure or payment for their work. Casting a new spell without studying it first is always dangerous.

Learning how to use a new spell somewhat safely requires a week's study. After that time, when the hero casts the spell for the first time, they make a moderate Thought test. If they fail, they misunderstood how the spell actually works and it is dangerous. The hero then tests to see if the spell corrupts them. If the spell was already dangerous, the hero makes the corruption test with disadvantage.

SPELL ATTRIBUTES

ANATOMY OF A SPELL

Anastasiya's Charged Hand (title)
#electric (tags)
The wizard rubs their hands together without rhythm and builds up an offensive electromagical charge. Their hands stay charged for several minutes or until they touch an object that conducts electricity. (casting description)
Power 1: Their next touch or unarmed attack deals 1d10 electric damage. (power and effect)
Power 2: Their touch also stuns the target for 1d4 rounds or knocks it back. (power and effect)

The spell **title** is like a song title. It's catchy and metaphoric, not a dry encyclopaedia entry.

The **tags** categorize the spell. Skills with matching tags can be used to cast a spell. If a hero's skills don't match a spell, they might still hack the spell and learn to cast it some other way.

The **casting description** sets up the spell: what the hero does, how they prepare, and how long it takes.

The **power and effect** describe the results based on how much power the hero feeds into the spell.

SPECIAL SPELL TAGS

#attack #dangerous #focus #imbue #item

#ATTACK

This spell is cast as an attack action. A hero uses their relevant magical skill to test against their foe's defense and affect them.

When a spell targets other attributes than defense, this is spelled out.

#ANCHOR

The spell creates a physical **anchor** which the hero stores in their inventory to keep the spell active and controlled. Destroying or losing the anchor ends the spell or worse.

#DANGEROUS

A spell that forces a test to avoid magical corruption every time it is cast (see Dangerous Magic).

Applying this tag to more spells is an easy way for the players to restrict certain spells in a setting.

#FOCUS

This spell require **focus** to stay active. A hero must spend an action every turn, or the spell ends.

A hero can always pay double the spell price to **imbue** the spell with their vital essence, keeping it active without focus. This is usually dangerous and requires a test against magical corruption.

#IMBUE

A spell that is kept active so long a hero **imbues** it with their vital essence (Life or Stat points). The imbued points are reserved and cannot be recovered until the spell ends.

#ITEM

When a hero creates a magic **item**, they use the spell to lock their life force (Life or Stat points) within a physical object. They can only recover the locked attributes when the magic item is disenchanted or destroyed.

Simple examples of magic items are magic sword, ring, and wicker fetishes.

CASTING PARAMETERS

Individual spells can deviate from these parameters.

CASTING TIME

Unless otherwise specified, a hero takes only a single action to cast a spell.

A hero cannot cast a spell with a longer casting time (a few minutes, an hour, etc.) in the heat of battle.

ENDING A SPELL

Unless otherwise specified, a hero does not need to take an action to end a spell, even if it is focused or imbued.

Disenchanting a magic item is always at leas a single action.

SPELL DURATIONS

Unless otherwise specified, a spell is nearly instantaneous in its effect.

Most other spells have durations described in minutes, hours, days, and other real-world units of time. The only exception are some combat spells with durations listed in rounds. Out of combat, a round lasts several seconds.

Some spells last until a specific condition is met (e.g. until the next sunrise, until the door is opened).

When a spell's duration runs out, the spell fades away with a mildly hallucinatory dissonance.

SPELL RANGES

Spell ranges are abstracted to the same zones as the rest of the game. The phrasing in the description may vary.

1. **Self, Zero, Nil**
   The spell only affects the hero themselves.

2. **Melee, Touch, Adjacent,**
   The spell only affects a space, object, or creature the hero touches or could touch with just a step or two (a very short range of about 2 metres or 5–7 feet).

3. **Close, Near**
   The spell has a middling range of about 10 metres or 30 feet. In an indoor environment, this is enough to cover most rooms or corridors.

4. **Far, Long**
   The spell has a range of about 40 metres or 120 feet. Enough to roughly cover a football pitch.

5. **Distant, Extreme, Other**
   The spell has a longer or somehow different range. A hero using this spell is outside the normal flow of battle.

CREATURES AFFECTED, AREAS OF EFFECT

Since areas of effect are abstracted, just like ranges, the relevant question is usually how many creatures does a spell affect?

1. **Single, One**
   The spell affects one creature.

2. **Small Area, Adjacent**
   The spell affects 1d6 creatures in a small area (about 2–4 metres across) or surrounding the hero.

3. **Middling, Medium**
   The spell affects 2d6* creatures in a mid-sized area about 10 metres across.

4. **Large, Big**
   The spell affects 4d6* creatures in an area about 40 metres across.

5. **Massive, Immense, X Targets**
   The spell has some other, more specific area or creatures.

A lot of parameters affect these numbers and the game runner will often have to adjudicate.

If creatures are tightly packed, the number affected might double.

If they are keeping their distance from one another, the number affected might be rolled with disadvantage.

If they are particularly small, a fireball might engulf more of them, while a storm of daggers would injure fewer. If they were particularly large, the effect might be reversed.

TARGETS

Unless otherwise specified, a spell affects all creatures and inanimate objects in its area of effect.

UNWILLING TARGETS

If a hero casts a spell on an unwilling target, they must always succeed at a suitable test for it take effect.

The exception is if the target is bound or restrained, for example a vampire bound in silver or a xenoform safely embedded in an artificial chest.

HACKING AND CREATING SPELLS

HACKING SPELLS

If a hero has a skill, which could potentially (with some explanation and hand-waving) also be used to cast a spell with a certain tag, they can **hack the spell**. This means they spend 2d4 weeks of game time tinkering with the spell, then roll a Thought test to successfully adapt the spell to their skillset. A relevant ability, like fool's luck, may apply.

[d20] Spell Hacking Test
1 — the hero failed. They will never succeed. They are gain a random mutation from the corruption table.
2–3 — the hero failed and cannot try again. Moderate test against corruption.
4–7 — the hero failed. Moderate test against corruption.
8–11 — the hero failed. Easy test against corruption.
12–15 — partial failure. Roll the next spell hacking test with advantage. Trivial test against corruption.
16+ — success! The hero has hacked the spell adapted it to work with their existing fantascientific skills! Add a new tag to the spell so it fits with the hero's skills!

When a hero successfully hacks a spell their player should narrate how it works and how they modified it. Each other player then suggests a quirk of the hacked spell. The hero's player chooses the best quirk (using popular acclaim as a guide) and writes down the new, modified spell. The player may name it after their hero.

CREATING NEW SPELLS

When inventing new spells, consider:

1. Is it an idea that creates fun solutions and novel situations?

2. Is it something that **isn't** a universal 'I win' button?

3. Can it be described in three sentences?

4. Does it have a memorable name?

If the answers are yes, then it might be a good spell. Worth trying, anyhow.

To come up with ideas players can use a book or movie or song title for the initial creative jolt, then mix it with another title (or just their imagination) to reinterpret what kind of spell the titles could give. Example:

Take an album title like 'Nonadaptation' and a song title like 'Enter Sandman'. The second title suggests elements silicon, sand. Not organic. Perhaps something like:

Nonadaptation (title)
#elemental #focus #nature (tags)
The wizard rocks back and forth for several seconds, then decoheres into a silicate sand cloud held together by strange forces. (casting description)
Power 3: The wizard can withstand severe heat and cold and survive without oxygen while in this silicon cloud form. They still get thirsty, tired, and hungry as normal. (power and effect)

This is an interesting spell because it lets the hero bypass the normal commonsense rules of being an organic creature. Instead, they function as a floating cloud of sand. On the other hand, there is a significant drawback: since the hero has to focus, they can only take one action per round. The spell is also quite expensive: it costs most heroes 6 Life. Enough to think twice about overusing it.

SETTING SPELL POWER

Spell power determines at what level a hero can cast it safely and how much vitality (Life and Stats) it costs to cast. Since hero levels cannot exceed 9 (or 6 in Breve) and the combined Life and Stat points of a true wizard will usually not exceed 42, this makes adjusting the accessibility of spells quite easy:

Power 0: This spell requires no sacrifice. It's equivalent to an ordinary action, like running or firing a pistol. A spell with a power of 0 can be used at will by any hero. Players should be a little bit cautious to keep it specialized (then again, they can always adjust it later!).

Power 1: A 3rd level wizard hero could use this spell about 20 times before running out of Life. It can be a little bit more powerful or useful than mundane equipment or actions.

Power 3: A 3rd level wizard could use this spell just 6–7 times before running out of Life. This is not an ability the wizard will use often, so it can be significantly more powerful than mundane actions and allow interesting local changes to the fundamental rules of reality.

Power 6: A 3rd level wizard could use this 3 times, and even a 9th level wizard might only pull it off 7 times. A spell this powerful could conceivably disable enemies automatically or make visible and semi-permanent changes to reality.

Power 10: A 3rd level wizard could cast this spell once, maybe twice. It would be dangerous to even a 9th level wizard. Such a spell might be the stuff of fairytales: decades of slumber, exploding mountains, stars falling from the sky, and drastic changes to reality.

Note: the Life and Stats are listed for wizard heroes. That's because their magic cost is 1

and so they can cast the most spells. Most heroes' magic cost is 2, doubling the price of their spells. So, even though they might have combined Life and Stat points of 54, they can only pay for 27 points of spells. A fighter hero's magic cost is 3, tripling the price of spells. Thus, their average of 70 Life and Stat points only pays for 23 points of spells.

ADJUSTING SPELLS

With descriptions that aim for natural language and poetry over technical precision, groups will invariably end up with spells that are mechanically too powerful or useful, reducing the creativity of roleplay and the utility of other characters. If that happens, the players should discuss and decide what to do. There are a lot of simple options short of simply banning the spell:

1. Make the spell dangerous.

2. Increase the spell power.

3. Adjust the efficacy of the spell: reduce its damage, range, or number of targets.

4. Add an additional cost or drawback to the spell.

The in-game narrative rationale for this kind of change is simple. Spells are a half-understood mish-mash of fantascience, which require rare components, half-understood rituals, and appropriate conditions to activate. Just like in the story of *Jekyll & Hyde*, the wizard has found that something has changed and the experimental spell is no longer as effective. Or, perhaps, its dangerous properties only became apparent after a period of careless use: just like radioactivity was prescribed as a cure-all in the early 20th century.

SPELL ALBUMS

Mad science wizards, arcane abbots, and dabbling dilettantes alike are fond of devising tabular diagrams of spells and inventing grand unified theories. Do these collections approximate a deeper truth, or is it all correlation masquerading as causation?

It hardly matters. It's best to think of spells as songs and the various collections, canons, and catalogs as albums compiled by celebrity wizards. Some pretend to tell a coherent story, others are ripoffs in disguise, yet others compilations of greatest hits.

A hero can learn spells from different albums, or stick to just one. The only thing an album really provides is a sense of thematic consistency for a wizard.

And, of course, the greatest heroes compile their own spell albums and become rockstar wizards in their turn.

SPELL BOXED SETS [D12]

If a hero is not using the palace of memories, they need some way to carry their spells. Here are a few ideas (d12):

1. **Demon-haunted computer**. It beeps and howls with repressed rage at its slow connection to the underworld.

2. **Synthskin cyber-fiche** that fits in a pocket and comes with a handy-dandy micro-lens reader. It's very portable, but fiddly to read. Not good for reading in the heat of battle.

3. **Memory fluid**. Needs to be refilled with cognitive juices regularly, or it might drain out. Requires a syringe or potion flask for every 'reading'. Reading it is a real rush.

4. **Baked clay tablets**, man. Better have a little wagon ready.

5. **Tattoos inked on their skin**. Going to need a couple of mirrors to read the high level spells. Or a very intimate apprentice.

6. **Bone scales** of the gimlet dragon. Epic and shiny, and some stupid barbarian might think it's just 500 cash worth of gem flakes. It's not. It's an archive of ancient lore!

7. **Parchment bound in a codex bound in silver chain locked with three arcane seals**. What kind of silly demon is bound inside?

8. **Brass and crystal clockwork** that hides the spells in combinations of gears and levers, reproducing them in the sweet tones of the spheres.

9. Just like the **regular book** one imagines. Oh, well.

10. **Shoddy paperback**, barely held together by its poorly glued spine, like the individual spells just want to break free.

11. **Biocomputer**. Also a preserved head in a jar. Once a famous poet politician professor, now a spell slave.

12. **Semi-precious stone slab** laced with memory crystals. They glint with a fae abandon.

EXTRAS: SIDEKICKS, PETS, & OTHER CREATURES

EXTRA SIMPLE CREATURES

Most other characters encountered in play are mechanically simpler than heroes. The referee usually runs most extras, but they can also assign some to other players to make a scene more lively.

These might be zebra (L2, pseudohorses) grazing on the side of Pynchon's Lens, the three-mile-high gravity-shifted force-plate sticking out of the Parmezzan Peninsula, or goblins (L1, virulent) brandishing *yunja* sticks. Or just about anything else.

In play, extras might be encountered just about anywhere. In the books they are encountered in two settings.

IN THE TEXT: MINIMAL ATTRIBUTES

In the text an **extra** (L1, pig) or a **creature** (L4, extra-imperial), only gets their title, level, and noun (or adjective).

The **title** (extra) describes who or what it is. The **noun** (pig) adds color to help roleplay them. The **level** (L1) is a clue to their relative power. For most extras this is all they'll ever need, because combat shouldn't be the default option.

When combat occurs, it helps the players to have a few more attributes. They can generate them randomly, using the creature generator, or check the creature's expanded attributes in the bestiary.

IN BESTIARIES: EXPANDED ATTRIBUTES

War Pig (L3, cunning)
#pig #mammal #biomodified (tags)
Def: 13, Life: 13, Sum: +6 (attributes)
Attack: gore (2d6*) and trample (1d4 to all adjacent) (attack)
Ability: when the war pig runs out of Life there is a 50% chance it is faking and actually still has 7 life. (ability)
At some point a biomancer general in the Bloodiron Legion Free Democracy came up with the brilliant idea of creating bioenhanced warpigs. Over the years most of them lost their venomous bites and hypnotic gazes, but their herds continue to terrorize remote free-steads in the Glazed Reach. (description)

The **tags** help with categorizing, searching, and figuring out what to do with an extra at a glance.

The **attributes** flesh out the creature for combat. Their Defense (Def) if they are attacked, Life if they take damage (or are used as a spell-casting battery), and Sum combines Stat and Aptitude into a single number that is added when they roll tests.

The **attack** lists how they commonly fight and how much damage they deal.

The **ability**, if any, describes the creature's quirks and special attributes in combat.

The **description** rounds out the creature or extra, giving a bit of background, some behaviors, common skills if any, and so on.

HOW EXTRAS WORK

Mechanically, extras are like super-simplified heroes.

When extras make tests there are two possible situations:

1. They **know what they're doing** and roll **d20 + sum**.

2. They **don't know what they're doing** and roll a naked **d20**.

Unless otherwise specified, they get two actions, just like heroes.

If, for some reason, an extra's Stat or Aptitude are required, and not just the sum, their aptitude modifiers are usually equal to their level divided by 4, plus 1, rounded up (Apt = (L/4) + 1). So:

- Level 1–4: +2 aptitude

- Level 5–8: +3 aptitude

- Level 9–12: +4 aptitude

- Level 13–16: +5 aptitude

- Level 17: +6 aptitude

TURNING EXTRAS INTO SIDEKICKS

Players may run across a particularly friendly farting marsh dragon (L1, highly explosive), lost puppy (L1, lucky), or sovereign quadrodont (L6, mammoth), and decide they want to adopt it.

This is easy enough and mechanically the players have two important tasks:

1. Assign the new sidekick a hero owner.

2. Give the new sidekick a name, nickname, or other term of affection.

This done, the **players can invest xp to raise their new sidekick's level**, increasing their attributes and abilities.

SIDEKICKS & PETS

Every player running a hero can also control secondary characters: sidekicks. These can be pets (say a cat), something more magical (say a butterfly-winged color-changing laser-emitting unicorn), human companions (perhaps John the Undertaker's Apprentice), or even vehicles (the Heromobile).

Each sidekick is 'owned' by one hero, and usually one player runs both their hero and their sidekicks, making decisions and rolling dice for all of them. But this doesn't mean that the different characters communicate telepathically or that animal pets magically have human levels of intelligence—unless such abilities are discovered or chosen during play.

ANATOMY OF A SIDEKICK

Flunky (L1, secretary) (title, level, and noun)
Def: 9, Life: 5, Sum: +3 (attributes)
A loyal but cowardly sidekick who does research and secretarial tasks, carries out the hero's orders and brews a mean (roll d6): (1) coffee, (2) tea, (3) beer, (4) sleeping tincture, (5) mind-numbing draught, (6) storm in a teacup. (description and quirk)

The **title** (Flunky) describes who the sidekick is and the **noun** (secretary) adds color to help roleplay them. The **level** (L1) is a clue to their relative power. For most extras (NPCs), this is all they'll ever need.

The **attributes** flesh out the sidekick in case they're caught in combat: their Defense (Def) if they are attacked, Life if they take damage (or are used as a spell-casting battery), and Sum to represent a combination of their aptitude and skill. Their attributes are also a baseline from which they can advance if a player spends xp on them.

The **description and quirk** round out the sidekick, describing how they behave, their skills, and traits.

HOW SIDEKICKS WORK

Mechanically sidekicks are basically extras.

1. The main benefit sidekicks bring to a group of heroes (besides comic relief) is access to additional actions, skills, and abilities that the heroes might not possess on their own.

2. When a sidekick tests to see if they succeed at an action their runner **rolls d20 and adds the sidekick's Sum**. Some heroes have abilities that also apply the hero's Aptitude to the test. In this way, the more inspiring a hero is, the better all their followers will perform.

3. Sidekicks might not all be good fighters, but if caught in combat each gets two actions on their turn, just like heroes.

4. Defense mashes together relevant stats, skills, and equipment. When heroes equip them with better gear, some eyeballing is required.

5. If a sidekick has an ability victims have to test against, like a venomous bite, the default target number is the same as their starting Defense.

6. Unless otherwise specified, sidekicks and pets are ordinary humans or animals, hurting, bleeding, and using tools and weapons like everyone else.

SHARING SIDEKICKS

Players can also lend sidekicks to one another. For example, in a group with three players, one player's wizard hero with a pet cat and a floating skull companion goes on a side quest. It could be a good idea for the player to pass the cat and skull to the other players, who then play them in scenes and

combat. This keeps all the players engaged in every scene.

Note: when one player controls another player's sidekick this is like playing with a borrowed instrument. Handle others' sidekicks with care and in good faith. Breaking another player's sidekick is akin to breaking their action figure. The referee should support every player's veto over their sidekicks' actions.

A sidekick can also become a group character, shared by all the players. Maybe they're a favorite donkey who somehow survived a half-dozen battles, or a trusty old main-line battle golem. In this case, regardless of which player is running the sidekick at a given moment, they use the highest aptitude of the heroes present.

SUICIDAL SIDEKICKS

The sidekick's player doesn't always have complete control of their sidekicks: they are not full protagonists. The referee can exercise a soft-veto to stop them doing something entirely out of character, utterly stupid or suicidal. For example, no sane human will agree to walk through a minefield to clear it for their friend or mentor. A brain-neutered slave might, however.

That said, over time, through play sidekicks naturally tend to become more like heroes, and players may even promote them to full heroes. That's fine. Players can have stables of heroes. If a sidekick becomes a hero, their player will eventually flesh them out with a full suite of Stats and other attributes.

PROMOTING SIDEKICKS

Almost all sidekicks are xp parasites. Though they can gain levels, they do not gain their own experience points. Instead, the player chooses how to apportion the xp their hero has earned among the hero and their sidekicks.

Sidekicks cannot be promoted beyond fifth level. If players want to turn them into full-fledged heroes at that point, that's fine.

Some sidekicks, like the Tourist's Friendly Mimic or the Skeleton's Fellow Skeleton cannot be promoted. This is either because they are already too high level (the mimic is level 13) or cannot learn (the brainless skeletons). They get a #nopromotion tag.

Generic Sidekick Promotions

Level	Invest	Effect
1	–	nil
2	500 xp	+1 Def, +1d8 Life, +1d4-3 Sum (minimum 0), +1d4-3 Abilities or Skills (minimum 0)
3	1000 xp	+1 Def, +1d8 Life, +1d3-2 Sum (min 0), +1d3-2 Abilities or Skills (min 0)
4	2000 xp	+1 Def, +1d8 Life, +1d2-1 Sum, +1d2-1 Abilities or Skills
5	3500 xp	+1 Def, +1d8 Life, +1 Sum, +1 Ability or Skill

THE
PART
WITH
THE
THINGS

Breve Seacat tosses players into a psychedelic metal RPG world of extravagant heroes and reckless science fantasies. With histories layered upon one another like mouldering stacks of books and pancakes and VHS tapes and gelatinous membranes, how does it all fit together? With worlds older and newer than expected, how to bring back actual stories? As heroes explore forgotten times, become vagabonds of alien dimensions, and befriend cultists of half-imagined sentiences, how does the center hold?

Simple. There is no center. It's wheels and turtles all the way down.

The implied worlds of the UVG and Witchburner and other modules I've written are purposefully incomplete and incompleteable. They are anti-canonic. Both the in-fiction knowledge of "how it all fits together" and player knowledge of "what it's really about," are flawed. Individual facts disagree. It is in play, through dice and player decisions, that truth-at-the-table is found.

There is no encyclopedia or gazetteer to memorize. There is a profusion of parts and toys to assemble into the world of the players' devise. Sure, there are some construction guides available, but like with branded plastic bricks, those guides do not describe one true way to play and build.

ALL THE SKILLS

This is an alphabetical list of skills. Pick random hero skills here or generate them with the hero book. Use subsets for more specific play styles.

HOW DO SKILLS WORK AGAIN?

A hero can have one or more ranks in a skill. Some skills provide special modifiers at higher ranks. All skills change the way a hero interacts with the game world mechanically and narratively.

1. An amateur or beginner with no relevant skill to speak of (no ranks in a skill).

2. Skilled, Pro (one rank in a skill).

3. Expert (two or more ranks in a skill).

If the **hero has no relevant skill**, they do not add their aptitude to the test *and* make the roll with disadvantage.

If the **hero is skilled** in a relevant skill, they add their aptitude to the d20 roll when they make a test.

If the **hero is an expert** in a relevant skill, they add double their aptitude to the d20 roll when they make a test.

#COMBAT SKILLS [D12]

Specialist skills useful in combat-heavy games or to ensure a hero is combat focused. #Combat skills provide additional mechanical benefits at higher ranks.

1. Archer (bows)

2. Chain Flailer (chains and chainsaws)

3. Energy Warrior (lasers)

4. Gunner (artillery)

5. Hammeraxe Hero (axes and hammers)

6. Knife Skiver (daggers)

7. Pole Disciple (polearms and staves)

8. Sword Ace (swords)

9. Riflehuman (long guns)

10. Rod Whirler (maces and clubs)

11. Unarmed Battle Artist (kung fu)

12. Wanderful Pistolier (handguns)

#MAGIC SKILLS

Many skills unlock access to individual spell albums and spells, but the strange jumbles of half-forgotten ritual and science decayed to lore that are the #magic skills are focused almost exclusively on parting the veil and unlocking secrets humans were not made to know. Besides unlocking a spell album, each #magic skill also automatically grants a new spell with each rank.

1. Acolyte of M. Electricity (electro-magic)

2. Automaton Developer (golem making)

3. Biomancer (bio-wizardry)

4. Daimonologist (oracles and summoning)

5. Necromancer Lawyer (necromancy)

6. Oldtech Scientist (technomancy)

FULL SKILLS LIST

1. **Acolyte of Mother Electricity**
   #priest #engineer #wizard #magic
   All creation hums the song Electric.
   Practice the old rites of electric equipment maintenance and repair. Use heavy energy weapons and ka batteries. Cast electric spells with blueprint scrolls.

2. **Apparatchik**
   #bureaucrat #trickster #aristocrat
   The highly trained bureaucrat reproduces the bureaucracy.
   Navigate arcane institutions and access

secret locations. Pass the buck and avoid blame. Use office supplies as improvised weapons.

3. **Archaeologist**
   #adventurer #explorer #thief
   Behold, the golden idol!
   Discover lost artifacts, climbing and jumping, dodging boulders. Detect traps and hidden doors. Crack a neural whip and handle small weapons.

4. **Archer**
   #skirmisher #combat
   Shoot an arrow, split a tree.
   Loose storms and sharpshoot with bows and crossbows. Make and break bows and arrows, keep them fighting trim.
   Rank 1: Also increase critical multiplier by one step.
   Rank 2: [+] to close attacks.
   Rank 3: Attack twice per action.

5. **Artist**
   #aesthete #social #thief
   The idea not manifested is worthless.
   Create new treasures out of aether, dreams, and labor. Paint and sculpt and draw and dance and sing. Wield a brush and chisel, sell broken trinkets as avant-garde art to hungry social climbers.

6. **Athlete**
   #adventurer #sports
   Run, rabbit, run.
   Run the extra mile, stretch reserves further, go faster. Climbing walls, jumping ditches, doing a triathlon. All of that.

7. **Automaton Developer**
   #thief #mechanic #magic
   Roboticist to the initiated.
   Heal and maintain the ancient autonomous machines. Follow the preserved manuals of ritual assembly to build copies of the platonic golems. Communicate with machines using the ancient art of coding. Use integrated energy weapons and void screwdrivers.

8. **Auxiliary Captain**
   #fighter #soldier
   They led the cannon fodder.
   Lead the forces of civilization to victories over monsters of the wild. Understand soldiers' bellies and boots, morale and logistics. Handle reconnaissance and field fortifications. Wield standard issue weapons and navigate the military bureaucracy.

9. **Biomancer**
   #bio #wizard #green #magic
   Skin-deep poems carved in flesh.
   Speak to the living spirit of flesh and bough. Hear injuries and diseases, modify biological processes, sculpt angels and monsters. Wield knives and saws, needles and probes.

10. **Bounty Hunter**
    #thief #detective
    It's just like hunting hogs.
    Track down humans and figure out what they're thinking. Use concealed weapons and non-lethal weapons. Navigate the grey areas between the law and the underworld.

11. **Burglar**
    #thief
    Door, window, wall. Same thing.
    Breaking into and out of places. Disarm locks and traps. Move very, very quietly. Appraise treasures.

12. **[Butcher] Banker**
    #thief #wealth
    Blood and money. Both must flow.
    Lending money and charging interests and extracting profits. Nobbing with fine folk and intimidating with wealth. Crunching numbers and analysing trends.

13. **Chain Flailer**
    #engineer #fighter #combat

Against the army of the dead.
Wield flails, chains, saws and chainsaws in the savior style from the Last Zombie Necrocide. Also put on a great show of being a lumberjill or lumberjack.
Rank 1: Also gain #reach.
Rank 2: Increase critical range one step.
Rank 3: Increase critical range one more step and decapitate undead on critical.

14. **Chemist**
#engineer #wizard
It's supposed to explode.
Understand chemical processes and equipment. Make explosives, cook drugs. Transmute worthless garbage (like urine) into valuable goods (like gunpowder).

15. **Daimonologist**
#daimon #magic #wizard
It wants to serve us. Trust me.
Find the multitudes inhabiting the realms beyond the aether veils and in this dark material reality bind them. Bend them, break them, force them to serve. Make them give up their secrets. Pretend to their trust and loyalty.

16. **Doctor Chirurgeon**
#bio #wizard #medic
Doctor what?
Fix damaged humans, diagnose injuries and diseases. Use medical equipment, scalpels and knives. Recognize poisons and potions, even curses and charms.

17. **Driver**
#adventurer #mechanic
Speed in the sign of yellow.
Handle land vehicles, manoeuvring at speed and over obstacles. Repair and keep them running. Pack them surprisingly well.

18. **Energy Warrior**
#fighter #electric #energy #combat
An elite order of laser monks?
Use and maintain ancient energy weapons in the field. Master wands, lasers, and death orbs. Peruse the holy manuals and recite the operation mantras.
Rank 1: Also use on minimum setting to use as tools for cutting or setting objects on fire, while dealing minimum damage.
Rank 2: Also adjust settings to gain [+] against force and energy defences.
Rank 3: Also full power modulation: choose damage dice results instead of rolling.

19. **Engineer Electrical**
#engineer #wizard
Not magic, technology! Abrakazzam!
Use an actual oldtech education to build, maintain, and fix complex electrical artifacts. Apply technology, construction and physics without relying on dusty rituals. Improvise weapons from electrical and electrician tools.

20. **Epic Knight**
#aristocrat #fighter #socialite
A beacon of chivalry.
Makes suitors swoon and social adversaries grind their teeth with masterful etiquette. Wields lance and sword and noble pin blaster from horse and hover-back. Rules over subhuman peons with the iron fist of justice and extracts taxes without fault or fail.

21. **Fisher**
#explorer #water
Gentle and atmospheric.
Understand rivers and lakes and shores. Know fish, boats and hooks, lines and poles, nets and yarns. Handle a harpoon and some basic navigation.

22. **Forager**
#explorer #wilderness
Food wriggles everywhere!
Find berries and nuts and mushrooms and grubs. Trap a rabbit, tickle a trout, start a fire. Keep dry and warm in the wilds.

23. **Gladiator**
#fighter #performer
Let blood soothe the decadent fools.
Thrive in arenas, put on shows. Impress crowds and intimidate opponents. Master showy weapons and gladiatorial mainstays. And dirty tricks, those too.

24. **Golem Pilot**
#fighter #mecha #oldtech
This might be an unbalanced fight.
Become one with their mobile golem armor. Understand them and their void-energy needs. Speak their language of flashing lights and keep them loyal.

25. **Gunner**
#fighter #soldier #combat
Take care of the general's big toys.
Use and maintain really big ranged weapons, like cannons, catapults, and null walkers. Pretty good at ballistics too.
Rank 1: Also reload faster.
Rank 2: Also [+] on long-range fire.
Rank 3: Also all damage dice explode.

26. **Hammeraxe Hero** *or* **Dwarven Disciplinarian**
#fighter #wilderness #combat
Has buttered scones for tea.
Chop down trees. Hammer down nails. Uphold the local 606 dictats of the dwarven worker-aristocracy. Slay with axes, hammers, axe-hammers, dagger-axes, mattocks, ice axes, and more. Play traditional percussion instruments.
Rank 1: Also increase critical multiplier one step.
Rank 2: Increase damage dice one step.
Rank 3: Increase critical multiplier one more step.

27. **Heavy Infantry**
#fighter #soldier
Break on through to the other side.
Master heavy weapons, armors, and shields. Fight in formation, resist charges, and endure long periods in armor. Storm enemy lines and fortifications, and more.

28. **Hunter**
#explorer #adventurer #wilderness
It doesn't know it, but it's already food.
Think like animals and hunt them. Track them, set traps, and hide in ambush. Skin them, prepare furs, and the rest. Use hunting weapons.

29. **Investigator**
#detective #thief #professional
Elementary, my dear sidekick.
Gather clues and piece together answers. Discreetly interrogate people. Use a couple of small, easily concealed weapons.

30. **Knife Skiver**
#street #fighter #combat
The shark has such teeth, dear.
Chop open coconuts and cut paths through jungle. Hide and throw and twirl knives. And kill with them, too.
Rank 1: Also knife damage dice explode.
Rank 2: Also ignore armor on attacks.
Rank 3: Also double damage with knives.

31. **Mechanic**
#adventurer #machine #engineer
Did you try plugging it in?
Understand machines and listen to their woes. Care for them, lubricate them, and fix them. Given time, even bring them back from the grave. Wield a mean blow torch and throw a sharp spanner.

32. **Modern Soldier**
#fighter #soldier
Once there were many like them.
Polish the rituals and skills and badges of the warriors from the before those wasted years when the Vustlands swallowed the Free Imperial Republics. Wield pistols and rifles, grenades and knives. Drive half-brainless machines. Endure mind-numbing ceaseless physical activity and drill.

33. **Navigator**
#explorer #professional
When the seven signs align.
Master maps and telescopes and cartography. Avoid getting lost and track down lost treasures and new discoveries.

34. **Necrologist**
#necromancy #skeleton #wizard
Make the dead whisper and speak. Dead trees, roadkill, hanged men, ghostly women, the ashes of the saints, all can be cajoled into conversation. Cast necromantic spells from the dead books.

35. **Negotiatior**
#explorer #thief #trickster
They think *they got the better deal.*
Read people and listen to them. Figure out what they want, and how to get it for them. Generate win-win outcomes along the jargon-strewn way to the key outcome. Do a bit of discrete espionage. Handle organizations and bureaucracies.

36. **Necromancer Lawyer**
#magic #social #wizard
Life and death are legal matters.
Talk to the dead and interpret their wishes. Mediate between the living and the dead. Consult the wisdom of long-dead ages. Sometimes bring things back from the long sleep of ages.

37. **Performer**
#trickster #artist
For my next trick.
Play to audiences and sway masses, whether with politics or music. Shift opinions and turn black into white. Fast talk and avoid blame.

38. **Pilot [in the Void]**
#explorer #navy
Listen, the ship knows where to go.
Pilot really big vehicles and machines. Understand them and their maintenance needs. Keep their synthetic personality constructs happy.

39. **Pole Disciple**
#fighter #wizard #combat
Poke with the pointy end, please.
Wield polearms in formation or alone. Unleash fire and brimstone with the staves of elder power. Fight with spear and shield like a hero of the old days.
Rank 1: Also increase defense by 2 when using a polearm.
Rank 2: Increase critical multiplier one step.
Rank 3: [+] to tricks, trips, pushes, and other maneuvers.

40. **Priest**
#wizard #thief #daimon
The will of the world is written in the wind and the seed.
Read the omens of wind and sky and water and grass. Divine the desires of the gods and their immutable laws. Adjust those laws to help others (and themselves).

41. **Rhetor**
#priest #charlatan #thief
A voice to soothe the savage beasts.
Teach and use the art of oratory. Divine the hidden structures of languages and use them to nuanced effect. Use glittering wit and honed logic to skewer opponents.

42. **Rider**
#fighter #explorer
Ride animals and riding machines. Wield light ranged weapons and lances. Take care of keeping steeds happy and working nicely.

43. **Riflehuman**
#fighter #combat
The longest arm.
Repair, maintain, and use long wands and guns, rifles and shotguns. Snipe from a distance and clear rooms with a prayer

and a sprayer. Full-auto hunting.
Rank 1: Also [+] to hit when sniping.
Rank 2: Reload as a free action.
Rank 3: Increase critical range by one step.

44. **Rod Whirler**
#fighter #wizard #combat
Spare the rod, spoil the fight.
Whirl rods, maces, clubs, and sticks in combat. Use the spell-rods of the battle wizards of old and crush bones with nuclearlithic uranium-head maces.
Rank 1: Also increase critical damage multiplier one step.
Rank 2: Also increase damage dice by one step.
Rank 3: Also ignore armor.

45. **[Oldtech] Scientist**
#magic #researcher #sage #wizard
It's how they did things Long Ago.
Understand the fantascience of Oldtech. Activate or deactivate nearly anything. Reverse-engineer how to use ancient technomagical artifacts. Jury rig a feeble emulation of the glories of the Long Ago.

46. **Professor [of Field X]**
#academic #wizard #sage
Practical applications coming soon.
Expound theories and histories. Navigate cloisters and libraries. Fight academic battles, and browbeat foolish opponents. Memorize one narrow field of lore.

47. **Singer of Lost Songs**
#poet #fighter #mystic
The Old-World will never die.
Memorize the heroic songs of the desperate land and perform them to please a crowd. Navigate the mythic wilderness of forgotten times by the landmarks of ancient days. Soothe wild beasts and rouse the blood rage in the breasts of humans.

48. **Skirmisher**
#fighter #thief

Go, go, guerrilla.
Irregular tactics and guerrilla combat. Sniping, ambushes, and shooting on the run. Light weapons and armors. Hiding and deception. And running away for long periods.

49. **Steppe Survivor**
#nomad #fighter #wilderness
Slept in the belly of a dead bear.
Survive and thrive in the endless steppe. Fish and hunt, track and hide, move quiet as the long-stripe cat. Shoot from horse and autowagon like a true child of the riding lands.

50. **Street Magician**
#thief #trickster #performer
Joy of the many, coin of the few.
Bring joy to children. Perform magic tricks and sleight of hand. Use cold reading and cunning to dupe marks.

51. **Sword Ace**
#fighter #soldier #combat
Double stake or split, the ace of spades.
Twirl and polish a sword, poke and chop and pommel bash. Parade march and dead man's hand card games.
Rank 1: Also increase critical range one step.
Rank 2: Increase damage dice one step.
Rank 3: Increase critical range one more step.

52. **Transcendence Ecologist**
#priest #wizard #bio #green
Listen, the grass is talking. It is hungry.
Study and adapt natural systems. Read leaves and listen to churning microbes. Use biological equipment and handle hunting weapons.

53. **Unarmed Battle Artist** *or* **Ur-War Programming**
#fighter #supersoldier #created #combat
They made champions to win the eternal war.

Understand battle and struggle at an almost instinctual, cellular level. Utilize body and environment as weapons (a vase might deal d4, a table d8, a decorative stone pillar d12). Endure stress, hardship, and fatigue as though designed for it.
Rank 1: Also unarmed attacks deal d6 damage.
Rank 2: Unarmed also deals d8.
Rank 3: Unarmed d12.

54. **Veteran [of the Psychic Wars]**
#fighter #trickster
They've seen a fire of unknown origin take their friends away.
Use psychic and oldtech weapons. Maintain archaic and golem armors. Close the mind to incomprehensible alien intruders. Stave off boredom. Survive and recognize strange nootropics developed by long lost corporate kingdoms.

55. **Wanderful Pistolier**
#duel #aristocrat #combat
Wands with pistol grips, gunslingers with archaemagic cloaks.
Wield fantascientific pistols and magitechnic wands like a gun baron of the now-defunct Powder Feudalism. Fast draw, trick shoot, duel and more.
Rank 1: Also reload as a free action.
Rank 2: [+] to close attacks.
Rank 3: Attack twice per action.

56. **Wilderness Explorer**
#adventurer #wilderness
Over seven rivers and seven hills.
Organize expeditions into the unknown and survive in the wild. Navigate by stars and landmarks, hack way through jungles and cross deserts. Negotiate with strange cultures and write popular travel literature. Wield rifles and machetes.

57. **Writer of Beautiful Letters**
#poet #thief # adventurer
Calligraphy and purple prose.
Make a living as a scribe using the three traditional scripts. Write stories, fictions, and forgeries. Inscribe ritual code scrolls with fluid ease. Wield a pen that wishes it were sharper than a sword.
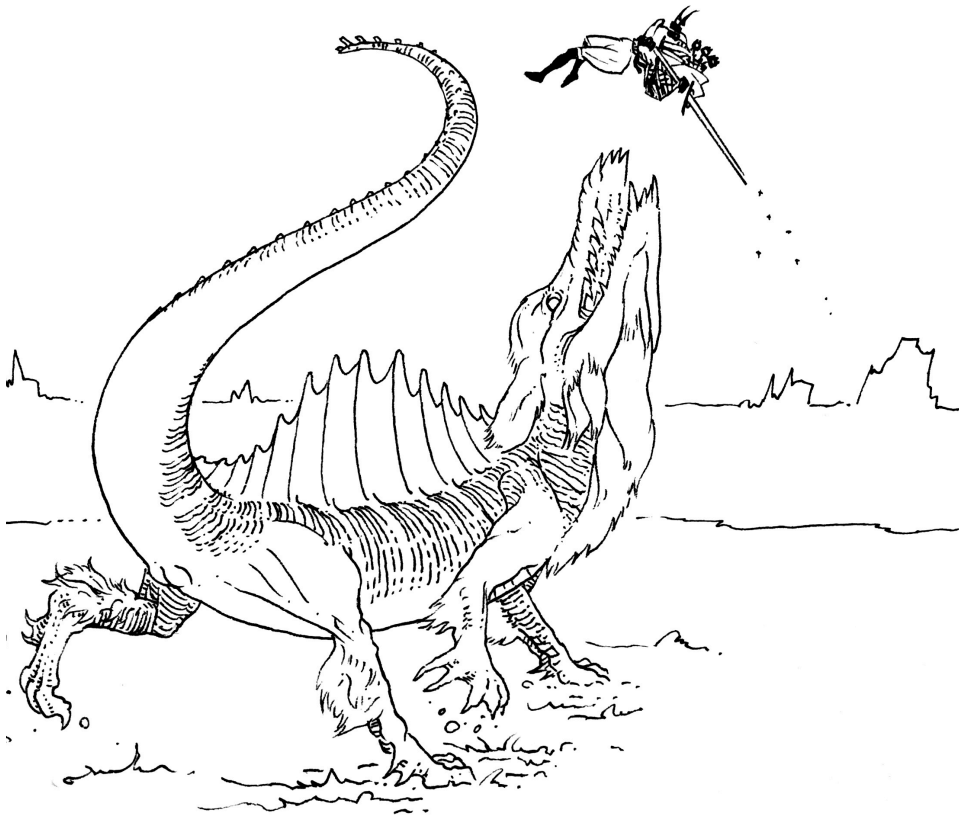
ABILITIES LISTS

Pick random hero abilities here or generate them with the hero book. The abilities are split into two lists: human abilities, which make characters who can pass for normal in most human worlds, and horror abilities, which create stranger heroes.

HUMAN ABILITIES

Baseline or modified humans might possess these abilities and still pass for normal.

1. **Action Boosted**
   #fighter #speed
   Rank 1: Once per turn the Hero can spend 1 life to gain one additional action. This boost is not an action.
   Rank 2: Or they can spend 3 life to gain two additional actions.

2. **Activate Everything**
   #thief #adventurer
   The red button will be pushed.
   Rank 1: Ignore all restrictions (level, stat, species, etc.) on all magic and ancient devices. Somehow activate all of them. Does the hero understand what they do? Unlikely.
   Rank 2: Once per day, when the hero touches a dead machine or artifact, it sparks to life and gives off one last gasp of utility. A dead autowagon rolls forward a last few meters. A visual calculator's last output glows dimly on its cathode sphere for a few minutes. An electronic lock reactivates and bolts a door.

3. **Artificial Organism**
   #machine #strange
   Rank 1: Hero is not actually alive. They do not need to eat, breathe, drink, or sleep. They gain energy from the sun, or from magical batteries.

4. **Biomancer**
   #bio #wizard #flesh
   Codes of creation singing in the flesh of the mortal and the damned.
   Rank 1: The hero is creepily well acquainted with biology, gaining advantage to all biological research tests. Additionally, when they touch flesh, it sings to them and tells them what it has experienced. After a few minutes of physical contact, they can ask or answer one question about the medical history and condition of a living creature.
   Rank 2: Advantage to all biology tests, including when casting biomancer spells. Can also answer questions about the medical history of dead organisms.

5. **Blood Is Armor**
   #fighter #rage
   Action hero style.
   Rank 1: When below half Life, the hero only takes half damage. They're tougher when covered in their own shiny blood!
   Rank 2: When below half Life, the hero can shrug off one attack every round (announced before the enemy's die roll).

6. **Break The Weak**
   #fighter #destroyer
   Cut them down like wheat.
   Rank 1: When the hero strikes an opponent of lower level than themselves, the opponent is out of the fight (and probably dead).
   Rank 2: When the hero knocks an opponent out of the fight they get a free attack.

7. **Chosen of the God Factory**
   #trickster #archaeologist #pinnacle
   The great giving machine.
   Rank 1: Charisma increases by 1 point. Additionally, once per day hero can ask God Factory for guidance and receive a true answer or advantage on their next test (often, the player may simply narrate something they "know", subject

to the referee's soft veto). Once per week, they can receive a mysterious package, no larger than a small coffin, containing a non-magical machine or item of their choice.

8. **Cold New Skin**
#ghoul #skeleton #undead #vampire
Smooth, cold, durable skin covers the hero's thews. Like polished semi-precious stone, their body is a sculpture of death. No heart beats within.
Rank 1: The marmoreal skin grants a natural +1 to defense, in addition to armor, Agility, and all other sources. Hero also increases their Charisma, Strength or Endurance by 1. This ability can hide many terrifying corruptions and mutations. If the hero is a ghoul or skeleton, they are no longer disadvantaged in social interactions and can now eat cooked food.

9. **Combat Monster**
#fighter #rage
Fight alone. Fight dirty.
Rank 1: When hero fights an opponent by themselves, they have advantage to attacks and tests to trip, trick, or otherwise hinder their enemy. But they never benefit from flanking.
Rank 2: When fighting alone, the hero's opponent never gain no advantage from flanking them.

10. **Critical Mastery**
#fighter #killer
Know where to hurt them.
Rank 1: Hero's critical hit damage multiplier is now equal to their aptitude or x3, whichever is higher.
Rank 2: The hero's critical hit damage multiplier is now equal to their Level or their aptitude or x4, whichever is higher (maximum x6).

11. **Death Hunger**
#fighter #demon
Death awakens the blood demon within.

Rank 1: Track enemies the hero takes out of the fight (or kill) in a battle scene. Each enemy taken out grants a cumulative +1 to attacks until the end of the scene.
Rank 2: Also gains cumulative +1 to damage for every enemy taken out.

12. **Dosemaster**
#medic #bio #wizard
Measured in all things.
Rank 1: Hero knows their doses. They don't roll dice when healing with potions and meds, or when applying a poison. Instead they treat the maximum result as the number of charges. So a potion that normally restores 1d8 Life, always restores 8 Life in the dosemaster's capable hands.

13. **Devastator**
#fighter #destroyer
Damage is everything.
Rank 1: Hero's attacks always deal extra damage equal to their aptitude or +3, whichever is higher.
Rank 2: Hero's extra damage is now equal to their Level or their aptitude or +4, whichever is higher.

14. **Doomed Steed**
#skeleton #social #undead
From the dust of doom springs forth an undying companion, a steed of bone, all polished ivory and sterling silver barding. If destroyed, the steed reforms from dust in 2d4 weeks.
Rank 1: Gain a **boney horse** (L3, devoted). It feels neither thirst nor hunger. It never tires and is proof against sharp missiles and blades.
Rank 2: The boney horse gains 2 levels. Its eye sockets burn with funereal flames. Its hooves leave smoking tracks.

15. **Earth Eater**
#machine #strange #augmented
Rank 1: Hero has a matter converter

installed in their body and derives sustenance from inorganic material.

16. **Echolocator**
#biomech #strange
Rank 1: Hero can use echolocation. Gain 1 Agility.

17. **Empty Shell**
#machine #strange #ka
Rank 1: Hero has no soul or *ka*. All fear or charm spells always fail against them. They have resistance against all other mind-affecting attacks. They can never be restored to life if they die.

18. **Electromagic Hacker**
#electric #focus #wizard
Talk long enough into the machine and it will talk back.
Rank 1: Hack adjacent oldtech creatures and equipment. In combat, hacking is one action, each command is another action.
Rank 2: Advantage to oldtech hacking when touching target.
Rank 3: Give hacked target one free command per turn.

19. **Eternal Champion**
#warrior #time #pinnacle
Carrying the torch of purpose beyond the gates of life and death, time and hate.
Rank 1: Hero bonds with an **eternal weapon** (L3, sidekick), sometimes as its master, sometimes as its slave. The hero develops expertise in one kind of weapon (applying double their aptitude to tests)—usually the same kind as their eternal weapon.
While holding the weapon, their Life increases by 1 point for each of their levels. They can also use their eternal weapon's Life for spell-casting. But their magic cost is increased by one. Additionally, This ability is not compatible with abilities that decrease a hero's magic cost.
Rank 2: When wielding the eternal

weapon, the hero's defense and critical hit damage multiplier in combat are always increased by their aptitude. So, a hero with an aptitude of +3 might increase their multiplier from x2 to x5.

20. **Expert Sidekicks**
#gang #thief #leader
They are the best.
Rank 1: A number of sidekicks equal to the hero's aptitude can be experts. This means they add the hero's aptitude when testing their skills.
Rank 2: The number of possible expert sidekicks increases to the hero's level or aptitude or 4, whichever is highest.

21. **Famed Explorer**
#social #adventurer
A name synonymous with the federal geographic society.
Rank 1: Advantage in some social situations. Impress people with credentials. Open social doors. Raise private contributions. But, the hero is easily recognized, making subterfuge difficult.
Rank 2: A member in good standing of an Official Association. Advantage raising official funding and equipment for expeditions.

22. **Feared Technomancer**
#social #wizard #thief #oldtech
Their careless experiments have seen them called 'mad' for good reason.
Rank 1: Gain a **creepy assistant** (L1, callous) sidekick. Cast technical spells with terrifying proficiency [+], but careless with corruption tests [-].
Rank 2: Hero has built a network of scavengers and informers, keeping them informed of new technical discoveries. They also gain an **ancient sentient machine** (L3, ominous) sidekick.

23. **Fire Friend**
#fire #burner
Accept the love of the Firebringer.

Rank 1: Hero makes all fire attacks with advantage.
Rank 2: All fire-related die-rolls with advantage, including damage.

24. **Firehands**
#fire #wizard
Be the flame.
Rank 1: Hero's bare hands can light up with fire. They can't throw it, but they can set things alight. Also, their unarmed attacks deal fire damage.
Rank 2: They increase their unarmed fire damage die two steps (e.g. 1d4 to 1d8).

25. **First Among Skeletons**
#necromancer #skeleton #wizard
The hero was never meant to be alone, the dread force whispers, they need fellows to help on their path.
Rank 1: Keep one **fellow skeleton** (L1, loyal) per level animate indefinitely. Hero needs a relatively intact skeleton or corpse and animating a fellow skeleton takes a few hours. They can additionally spend 1 Charisma and a few hours to animate one more skeleton for a night and a day.
Rank 2: Keep two fellow skeletons per level. Animating a skeleton takes just a quarter of an hour or so.
Rank 3: Keep four fellow skeletons per level. Animating a skeleton takes a few minutes.

26. **Fluid Anatomy**
#biomech #strange #liquid
They have organs they shouldn't have in places they shouldn't be.
Rank 1: Hero's insides rearrange and rebuild themselves to keep them going despite dreadful trauma. Spend 1 Stat point to turn a critical hit into a normal hit.
Rank 2: Spend 1 Stat point to regain Life equal to the hero's level.

27. **Friend of the Machine**
#golem #mech #thief

Soothe the savage robot.
Rank 1: Talking machines naturally like the hero. Gain advantage to social tests with machines.
Rank 2: All complicated machines always try to comply with the hero. Complicated locks try to unlock when whispered too, audio-visual orbs try to fix themselves when banged vigorously.

28. **Gastrointestinal Upgrade**
#biomech #eco #bio
Everything organic is fuel.
Rank 1: The hero's gut is a marvel of technomagic. They are immune to food poisoning, have advantage against all other ingested toxins, and can digest anything organic, from wood to bone to petroleum.
Rank 2: Nothing ingested can harm the hero's biomechamagical digestive tract.

29. **Incorruptible**
#golden #hero #luck
Their body is a temple of purity.
Their body's source code has been enhanced by chance or ancient germline intervention. The hero cannot suffer mutations through corruption. Instead they take a point of harm (fatigue). The ill hero requires a week's rest to recover.

30. **Influential Academic**
#social #academic
An esteemed, learned person in the community. And very much aware of that esteem.
Rank 1: If the hero's research 'helps' the community, they gain access to detailed information and basic supplies. Also gains a **protege** (L1, eager) sidekick to do research, make coffee, and runs errands.
Rank 2: Hero has built up a network of dedicated seekers after ancient truths. Gain two additional sidekicks: **money** (L2, noble backer) to fund research and **guns** (L2, ex-mercenary) to keep hero

safe from evil goons after their divine knowledge.

31. **Infraoptics**
#machine #strange
Redline machine microbes swirl in the hero's eyes.
Rank 1: Hero sees heat signatures and traces. Gains advantage on survival and investigation tests.

32. **Inspiring Commander**
#gang #fighter #leader
The intangible quality of a great leader makes their underlings fight harder.
Rank 1: A number sidekicks equal to the hero's aptitude fight with unmatched ferocity, adding the hero's aptitude to all their attacks and in-combat tests.
Rank 2: The number of possible inspired sidekicks increases to the hero's level or aptitude or 4, whichever is highest.

33. **Lightning Rider**
#electric #metal
Stormbrother he knows me.
Rank 1: The hero crackles with the Stormbrother's power and has advantage to all electric damage.
Rank 2: Hero also makes all electric attacks with advantage.

34. **Machine Breeder**
#mech #golem #trickster #pinnacle
Golems can only become people when they experience birth and death as all life should.
Rank 1: Hero's ability to develop and breed new golems grows. Crawling symbiote machines increase their Life by 1 point for each of their levels (current and future). The hero learns a new spell recipe for creating a random kind of golem. Additionally, the hero's magic cost when imbuing machines is reduced by 1. This ability is not compatible with abilities that increase a hero's magic cost.
Note: magic costs can never be reduced below 1.
Rank 2: Hero's golem upgrades expand and grow more powerful. Their Life increases by 1 more point for each of their levels (current and future).

35. **Master Blaster**
#explosive #burner
This Blaster! Only them leave!
Rank 1: The hero rolls all exploding damage dice (e.g. 1d6*) with advantage.
Rank 2: They have advantage to all explosive tests, including attacks and spells. They feel the energy trapped in matter yearning to be free like a phoenix.
Rank 3: Oops. They blew up. Time for a new hero.

36. **Memories of the Void Darkness**
#memory #wizard
This wizard's mind is riddled with wormholes to voids where old magics are wont to hide.
Rank 1: Hero learns a void spell. Additionally, hero gains memory points equal to their highest mental Stat. These are used to cast memorized spells as if they were Life points.
Rank 2: Hero's memory point total from this ability is doubled.

37. **Memory Palace**
#memory #wizard
A wizard's mind is like a scary old palace, full of dark holes where magical parasites hide.
Rank 1: The hero squirrels away extra spell burdens in their mind as magic memories. The memory palace has a number of magic rooms equal to their level.
Rank 2: Hero also gains memory points equal to their level. These are used to cast memorized spells as if they were Life points.
Rank 3: Hero's memory point total from this ability is doubled.
Note: Players can invent their hero's

memory palace. The more fanciful, the better.

38. **Meticulous Ritualist**
#ritual #wizard
Accurate ritual records must be kept if one is to have a meaningful summoning!
Rank 1: The hero gains advantage to all tests when casting a ritual spell (usually, spells that take more than a dozen minutes or so to cast).

39. **Neural Machine Symbiote**
#mech #golem #oldtech
Tiny silver animalcules flow through the hero's bloodstream, glittering golden wires thread their neural networks.
Rank 1: Hero can pilot golems and other thinking machines hands free. The symbiote accelerates their minds (gain 1 Thought).
Rank 2: The symbiotes accelerate all reflexes (gain 1 Agility) and let the hero talk with machines and other neurally enhanced humans at great distances.

40. **Omnimolecular Sensorium**
#bio #biomech #thief
Read stories in wind and stream.
Rank 1: The hero's sensorioum is expanded with new cutaneous and olfactory organs that let them read trace molecular remains. Their sense of smell is as acute as a blood hound's and they can 'taste' with their fingertips. Advantage when tracking, testing food for poison, sampling fuel for impurities, and other similar tests.
Rank 2: Hero can literally smell emotions. They have advantage to discerning interlocutors' intentions, picking up lies, and ferreting out tricks.

41. **Pheromone Panoply**
#bio #biomech #thief
Write poetry with biochemistry.
Rank 1: The hero has modified biological chemo-factories in their body. These provide communication molecules on demand. They have advantage to charming or intimidating others, and can scare away or 'blind' creatures like ants and termites that rely on chemical signals for communication.
Rank 2: The hero can use their pheromone panoply to communicate with and try to command insects and other creatures that depend on pheromones.

42. **Pistolero**
#fighter #thief #guns #specialist
Only good guys wield pistols.
Rank 1: The hero always adds their aptitude to pistol and wand damage.
Rank 2: As a single action, the hero can take two shots with a pistol or wand.

43. **Porcelain Skin**
#biomech #oldetch
They made people prettier once upon a time.
Rank 1: Hero's uncannily smooth skin is resistant to diseases and scarring. Gain 1 Charisma.
Rank 2: Hero's skin is resistant to acid, chemicals and fire. Gain 1 more Charisma.

44. **Position of Power**
#social #aristocrat
Important, and everyone had better know it.
Rank 1: If the hero can argue they are acting in the common good they gain access to basic information and extensive supplies. Also gain a **flunkey** (L1, specialist) sidekick for secretarial duties and personal assistance.
Rank 2: Hero has built up a shadowy power network beyond their official capacity. Gain two additional sidekicks: **muscle** (L2, scary) to enforce their will and **brains** (L2, spy) to keep them informed.

45. **Protector of Innocents**
#social #fighter

Despite the gore, a noble cause.
Rank 1: Hero gains advantage to attacks and tests when they are fighting to protect an unarmed innocent.
Rank 2: Word gets around. Downtrodden communities offer meager resources and hero gains a **naive apprentice** (L1, fanatical) who won't leave them alone. The apprentice is good at cooking, cleaning, laundering, carrying things, and learning.

46. **Racer of Renown**
#social #sport #vehicle
The grand velocity trophy proves life has meaning.
Rank 1: Fame grants the hero advantage (and notoriety) in many social interactions. Also, they gain advantage during vehicular chases.
Rank 2: Some of them were death races. Gain advantage when maneuvering to attack or defend with a vehicle.

47. **Radiant Sensorium**
#machine #strange
Rank 1: Hero can "see" in full darkness using a panoply of active, electromagnetic sense organs.

48. **Returned Hero**
#skeleton #pinnacle
They were already a hero once. Now they remember that they were a (roll d6): (1) wise ruler, (2) cruel warlord, (3) damned wanderer, (4) glorious saviour, (5) holy miscreant, or (6) notorious musician.
Rank 1: Once upon a time, in that forgotten age, people were better. Hero's Aura and Aptitude increase by 1. Every ruin has a chance of sparking a memory of older times in the hero.
Rank 2: Once upon a time, in that forgotten age, their skill was greater. Hero gains a rank in two of their skills. Additionally, they can spend 1 life to temporarily return a stone-sized object

from the past to full function. A corroded blade becomes sharp a gain, a wristwatch works again.

49. **Rubberskin**
#electric #resistance
*S*kin laced with symbiotic insulating caucho-fungoid.
Rank 1: The hero is resistant to electromagical and energy attacks (halving all damage).
Rank 2: The caucho-fungoid is interwoven with whole body. Immune to electromagical and energy attacks.
Rank 3: No longer fully human but an evolved caucho-fungoid chimera. Electromagic and energy attacks heal the hero. Note: they don't repair broken bones or open wounds. Those still need surgery.

50. **Secured Flesh**
#bio #flesh #adventurer
I am that I am.
Rank 1: The hero knows how their body works, keeping it strong and stable. They have advantage to all tests against mutations, dangerous spells, or anything else that might corrupt their body (e.g. disease).
Rank 2: The hero is resistant to toxins, venoms, poisons, and diseases. They only take half damage from such sources.

51. **Sparklefingers**
#electric #unarmed
Conducting the ambient electromagic of the world.
Rank 1: The hero's unarmed attacks can deal 1d4 electric damage instead of 1d3 physical damage. Conducting materials extend the attack range.
Rank 2: Electric touch increases to 1d6 damage. Spend a few hours to recharge dead batteries.
Rank 3: Increases to 1d8 damage. In a medical setting hero's touch can give [+] or [-] restarting stopped hearts, etc.

52. **Spell Detonator**
#magic #wizard #explosive
Things must boom.
Rank 1: All the hero's spell damage dice become explosive. E.g., a magic bullet (1d4) becomes 1d4*.
Rank 2: The hero's spell damage dice explode on their highest *and* second-highest rolls.

53. **Stargazer**
#fighter #poet
Gazed upon Mother Star and see through the Veil of Ignorance cast upon humanity by the Dark Sorcerer at the top of the false heaven. See through their whips and chains, and now they are as gossamer.
Rank 1: Hero rolls all tests against magic with advantage.
Rank 2: So many died to build the barbarian empire of the Dark Sorcerer with their flesh and bones. The moon-tide roars within the hero. They always deal double damage to magic-corrupted monsters and abominations. And to dark wizards, of course.

54. **Swift Recovery**
#fighter
Deep breaths, action hero, deep breaths.
Rank 1: Hero recovers twice as much Life when spending a hero die.
Rank 2: Thrice as much life.

55. **True Warrior**
#fighter #pinnacle
Beyond the gates of this reality there is only war. Prepare.
Rank 1: Hero's connection with the essential nature of struggle increases their Life by 2 points for each of their levels (current and future). But their magic cost is increased by one. Additionally, the hero learns to wield a new weapon. This ability is not compatible with abilities that decrease a hero's magic cost.

Rank 2: Hero's damage in combat is always increased by their aptitude.

56. **True Wizard**
#wizard #pinnacle
Welcome to the universe.
Rank 1: Hero's magic cost is reduced by one. But the connection with the void of wizardry reduces hero's Life by 2 points for each of their levels (current and future). Additionally, the hero learns a new spell. This ability is not compatible with abilities that increase a hero's magic cost.
Note: magic costs can never be reduced below 1.
Rank 2: Hero reduces all spell prices by one.

57. **Trust Me, I'm a Symbologist**
#trickster #academic
There are patterns everywhere, and they all hold meaning.
Rank 1: The hero knows what every symbol means, or says they do. Anyway, they always know when a symbol is broadly positive or negative.
Rank 2: Cast or nullify spells that use symbols (e.g. magic circles of protection or magical exploding symbol traps) with advantage.

58. **Unblinking**
#bio #strange
Rank 1: The hero never needs to blink. They gain advantage whenever undivided attention would be useful. They are harder to surprise. Also, they can creep people out.

59. **Undying Parasite Heart**
#bio #strange #horror
Have a little piece of their heart.
Rank 1: The hero's heart is a ba-symbiote that stores their memory-patterns and cannot die naturally. If the heart is placed in a suitable excavated body cavity, it will sprout tendrils and a crystalline neural web, taking over the

host in a matter of days. Every time the hero is 'reborn' this way they lose a mental Stat point, coming closer to their final end as a twitching madness of pulsing, tentacled flesh.

60. **Vacuum Hardened**
#machine #strange
When did *they* forget Old World?
Rank 1: Hero can survive a full day in hard vacuum due to significant nano-magical modification. Gain 1 Endurance.
Rank 2: Survive a full month in hard vacuum. Hero can derive sustenance from radiothermal batteries or other such devices.

61. **Vome Optics**
#machine #strange #horror
Now you see them looking into you.
Rank 1: Technomagical machines swirl in the hero's eyes, whirring and clicking, focusing and demanding. Hero's eyes provide low-light vision, sure, but their eyes are also ridiculously sharp and come with built-in filters. Yes. They can stare into the sun-line safely.

OUTCAST ABILITIES

Heroes with these abilities would have a hard time passing for normal humans.

62. **Bones Alone Remain**
#skeleton #necromancy
The hero is an undead skeleton. They require neither food nor water nor air nor sleep, for some dread force has restored them to this world, to this unliving body of bones. Somehow they can speak, despite having no soft tissues. However, they are a skeleton and that frightens people who see them unprepared, causing difficulties in most social interactions.

63. **Cannibal Ghoul**
#ghoul #horror #skeleton #undead
There is a hunger within the hero, a dread hunger, a hunger for life that will not let them rest. Their jaws ache, their teeth grow sharp, they long to feel the sweet burst of life within once again. Whether they repress this urge or not, the player draws a cannibal dice section on their hero sheet.
The hero can store one cannibal die (d6) per level. They can use their cannibal dice at any time to increase any other natural roll. The player can declare they're using the cannibal dice at any time, before or after the main roll, and they can use as many as they want at once. Each die is expended after one use. The hero gains cannibal dice from eating the (roll d6): (1) brain, (2) heart, (3) liver, (4) lungs, (5) intestines, or (6) unmentionables of a dead creature similar to themself.

64. **Duke of the Dead**
#fighter #skeleton #undead
The dread force created the hero to lead the hordes of doom in battle. Each of the hero's bones is mineralized, forged, hardened, and enhanced.
Rank 1: Resistant to all physical damage. However, hero now barely recovers without magic or other abilities, regaining only 1 life per long rest.
Rank 2: Hero gains [+] to all damage dealt with heavy metal melee attacks.

65. **From Dust I Always Return**
#lich #skeleton #undead #vampire
Hero's link to the mortal world is stronger than even it was in life, for the dread doom drives them and they see they are its avatar. Even if shattered to pieces, even if crushed to dust, when some of the hero's remains are sprinkled with (roll d6): (1) holy water, (2) blood, (3) wine, (4) tomato soup, (5) milk, or (6) nectar, their material form begins to reconstitute itself.
From broken, battered bones they are restored in a day.

From shattered pieces they are restored in a week.
From ground dust they are restored in a month.
From the last speck preserved in their reliquary in the heart of their bone castle they are restored in a year.
Note: This ability requires a minion or henchperson or friend willing to revive the undead hero, of course.

66. **Gelatinous Symbiont**
#weird #ooze
The hero looks quite disturbing, coated in an acidic gelatinous symbiont that calls itself 'buddy'. It might be sentient. It is certainly alien. It corrodes ordinary clothing. If the hero dies, the sad symbiont slithers away looking for a new friend. The symbiont itself cannot die.
Rank 1: A third of the hero by volume is the symbiotic organism. When the hero spends 1d6 life the symbiont heals itself and the hero with shocking speed, restoring 1d4 stat points or temporarily increasing one stat by two points (to a maximum of +5).
Rank 2: Two thirds of the hero are now replaced by the symbiont. It now provides acid resistance. The hero can take a gobbet of their acidic buddy (spending 1d6 life) and use it as a kind of acidic grenade, dealing 2d6* damage in small radius.

67. **Horrible Skeleton**
#horror #skeleton #undead
Truly, this hero was made to bring fear and pain to the world. Their bones twist and gnarl, growing sharp hooks and blades. It's almost like they have an aura of bone blades. They look like an actual, factual monster.
Rank 1: Close combat attackers against the hero take 1d6 damage from the hooks and blades. When the hero grapples or fights hand-to-hand their target takes 1d6 damage every time they attack, regardless of whether their attack roll succeeds or not. However, hero cannot wear armor since their blades and hooks grow to tear, shred, and cut it.
Rank 2: Damage increases to 1d10.

68. **My Bones I Engrave**
#priest #skeleton #wizard
They have dream-spoken to the keeper of thoughts, and the keeper has given them a magic chisel with which to engrave spells upon their bones.
Note: This ability requires that the hero's bones are exposed.
Rank 1: Gain up to five additional inventory slots for spells, on the arm bones, leg bones, and skull. Engraving a spell takes about a day. Replacing an engraved spell permanently reduces Endurance by 1 unless the hero finds a compatible bone and ritually replaces their current one with a 2d4 week off-screen solo dream quest.

69. **No Vital Tissues**
#skeleton #undead #golem
The hero has no soft tissues. Arrows and sharp projectiles deal minimum damage. Slashing blows deal half damage. But blunt impacts deal double damage.

70. **Radioactive Skeleton**
#oldtech #energy #skeleton
The hero's bones have absorbed so much radiation that they have a healthy blue glow, bright enough to read by if one squints (and the bones are exposed).
Rank 1: Hero is immune to radiation damage. Nearby living creatures lose 1 life every hour while they are glowing. A hazmat suit damps the glow enough that they don't poison everyone around them.
Rank 2: The glow is stronger, the doses more brutal. Nearby creatures lose 1 life every few minutes.
Rank 3: The glow is overwhelming, visible through flesh and cloth. Nearby

creatures lose 1 life every few seconds (or every round in close combat).

71. **Sinews of the Hungry Ghoul**
#ghoul #horror #skeleton #undead
A strange, abnormal flesh, sinewy and harsh, but flesh nonetheless, coats the hero's bones. They look like a ghoul. Hero can only eat raw food, cooked food makes their inhuman flesh convulse and retch and twist. This ability may overwrite the No Vital Tissues ability.
Rank 1: Advantage on all smell tests and rapidly restore lost life by gorging on the flesh of creatures with souls. The creature can be dead at the time. After eating the (roll d6): (1) spleen, (2) pancreas, (3) stomach, (4) kidneys, (5) hands, or (6) face of a suitable creature the hero regains 1d8 life over the next hour. Eating more creatures restores more life over more hours.
Rank 2: Regains 1d10 life or 1 stat point over the next several minutes.

72. **Teeth Like Knives**
#ghoul #horror #skeleton #undead
Words should cut as sharp.
Rank 1: Hero's teeth are monstrous. True weapons. They grow longer and deadlier the more powerful the hero becomes.
Level 1: 1d4 damage
Level 2: 1d6 damage
Level 3: 1d8 damage
Level 4: 1d10 damage
Level 5: 1d12 damage
Level 6–9: (roll d6): (1) teeth pierce wood like butter, (2) teeth regrow, can be broken off to use as actual knives, (3) teeth turn into tusks, (4) teeth inject poison, so long as venom vesicles are refilled, (5) teeth suck blood or memories, restoring 1 life per bite, (6) teeth can retract back, hiding from view.
Note: This is horrific and makes the hero look like a monster.
Rank 2: Jaws hinge wider, teeth reach deeper, giving [+] to bite attacks.
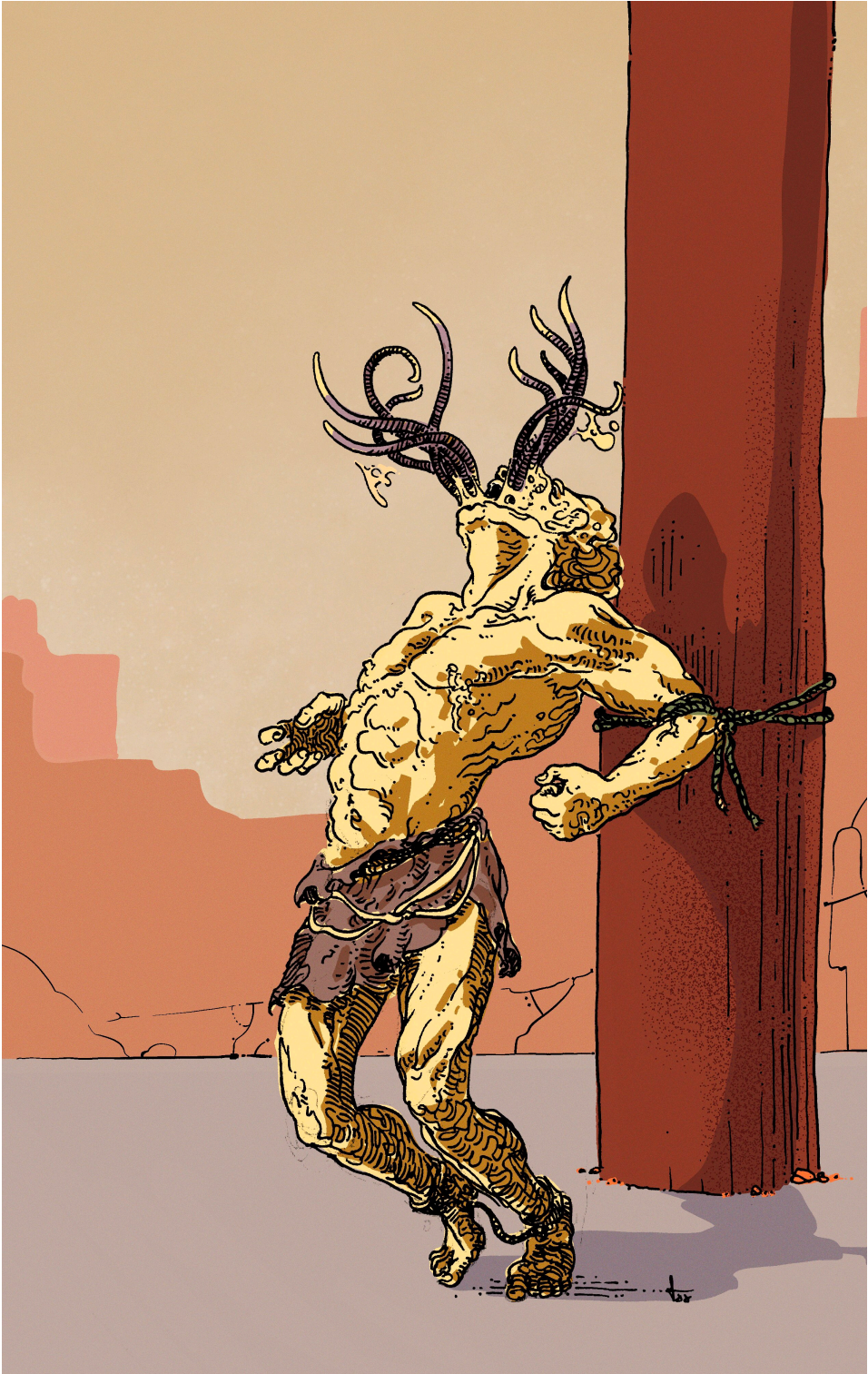
CORRUPTION

But soon the world
had its evil way
my heart was blinded
love went astray

I'm going through changes
I'm going through changes

—Black Sabbath, *Changes* (1972)

Exposure to dangerous magic, radiation ghosts, mutagenic blights, source corruption, biomancers, vomes, or other weird leftovers of the Long Long Ago can produce mutations or corruptions.

CORRUPTION OR MUTATION?

In game terms there is no difference between source corruption and mutation. They're just different words for the original body, soul, and personality of a game character being modified by strange forces beyond mortal ken. Corruption has a lovely pseudo-sacral note to it, while mutation feels more clinical.

The main reason the term mutation is sometimes preferred instead of corruption because it sounds weird to talk about 'cosmetic corruption' or 'beneficial corruption'.

That said, in the context of the game, the term 'mutation' is also inaccurate, because it suggests the changes characters undergo are entirely physical, when they can also affect their personalities and spirits.

Since there isn't a simple answer, it's best to accept the ambiguity and play with it.

RANDOM CORRUPTION

If a hero is exposed to corruption, their player first figures out how bad things are.

Every mutation through random exposure is likely to have deleterious effects. Positive mutations are hard to plan and requires folks with actual biomantic skills.

Flat d20 roll or a suitable 'Luck' skill.

1–3	It's visibly bad. They suffer a deleterious and a cosmetic mutation.
4–10	It's just plain bad. They suffer a deleterious mutation.
11–12	Ups and downs. They gain a deleterious and a beneficial mutation.
13	Chaos. They gain three mutations, one of each kind.
14–16	Visible but not bad. A cosmetic mutation.
17–19	A cosmetic and a beneficial mutation.
20	The biomagical lottery favors the hero! They gain a beneficial mutation.

A player doesn't have to accept mutations. Maybe they simply don't want strange, twisted heroes. Players should figure out other options together. For example, a hero could gain the **Incorruptible** ability, meaning that they get sick and require a week's bed rest and medical attention instead of suffering bodily corruption.

Some mutations have ranks. These can occur by chance (if a player rolls the same mutation twice or thrice) or choice (the player decides to deepen their hero's mutation when they gain corruption again).

GENERAL MUTATION EFFECTS

Not every mechanical effect is specified in the mutation lists. Every mutation takes up space on the hero sheet: usually ability or inventory slots. Many mutations also bring social and physical disadvantages.

VISIBLE MUTATIONS & SOCIAL STIGMA

The hero faces prejudice and stigma in most social situations. Initially, when a hero has one or two such mutations, they might test with disadvantage when trying to negotiate with a merchant, convince a princess-abbess to finance their expedition, or score a ticket to a ball. With more mutations, they will be shunned by polite society, become convenient scape goats for unexplained crimes, and often chased out of communities for the smallest infractions. Bandages, masks, and voluminous robes will be useful for hiding.

On the other hand, such heroes will often be at an advantage when trying to scare or intimidate baseline humans.

Finally, in certain outcast mage-blighted communities the social disadvantages may be nullified or even reversed.

DELETEROUS MUTATIONS & ILL HEALTH

Deleterous mutations always have negative consequences. Whenever a hero acquires a deleterious mutation, they reduce a relevant Stat by one.

Further, they will usually suffer specific disadvantages depending on the mutation. A hero without teeth will have trouble eating and talking. A hero with modified arms will have trouble with many motor tasks (including combat), while modified legs will disadvantage their movement.

COMMON SENSE SIDE EFFECTS

The list of mutations doesn't take into account all the possible side effects. Players should use common sense to when their heroes face unusual circumstances or edge cases. Apply advantages or disadvantages on a case by case basis.

For example, a hero covered in fur will handle cold temperatures better while another covered in scales would lose less water in dry environments, though without perspiration they might also suffer more from heat stress and should consider carrying a parasol in the open.

DELETERIOUS MUTATIONS

The dark corruptions of the void poison the source and can affect the *ha* and *ka* and *ba* of a character. Whenever a hero acquires a deleterious mutation they reduce a relevant Stat by one.

VILE CORRUPTIONS (D22)

1. **Curse of the Eater**
   Its hunger shall consume the cosmos.
   Rank 1: Teeth fall out. Chewing is difficult.
   Rank 2: Needle-sharp fangs, translucent like those of a deep-sea fish, grow profusely from the softened gums. Chewing is impossible.
   Rank 3: Fangs turn hard and black, mouth grows unnaturaly wide, jaw develops hinges. Hero gains bite attack (1d4).
   Rank 4: Entire head unfolds into biting, grinding maw. Bite attack (1d8).

2. **Skin of Radiance**
   The fires of the celestial truths were not made to reside within the skin of man.
   Rank 1: Skin becomes flaky, pale, and colorless. It is usually cold to the touch.
   Rank 2: Suppurating boils weep around the edges of hardened, chitinous growths. Hero gains natural leathery armor (+1 armor).
   Rank 3: Skin continually rots and sloughs off in translucent, malodorous sheets. Hero escape bonds and restrictions more easily.
   Rank 4: Skin is entirely replaced with a ghostly radiant aura that leaves faint burns and bruises on organic materials. The aura-skin gives off a greenish light, strong enough to read by if one squints.

3. **Listening to the Void**
   There are songs in the lines of creation.
   Rank 1: Ears wither away to nubs. Hearing is somewhat impaired.
   Rank 2: Strange organs spread and grow across the sides of the hero's head from the ruined nubs of their ears. Hearing is very impaired. Hero gains the ability to detect (roll d4): (1) magnetic fields, (2) electric currents, (3) radio waves, or (4) magitechnic emanations.
   Rank 3: Lacy, antennae-like horns erupt from the hero's head, letting them understand the strange radiations they could previously only detect.

4. **Claws of the Idle One**
   The predator does not work, it takes.
   Rank 1: Random hand withers and weakens. Using tools with that hand becomes difficult.
   Rank 2: Hand locks into a deformed claw. Using tools is impossible.
   Rank 3: Bones and gristle flow and reform into a trefoil ripping, cutting claw array. Hero gains unarmed attack (1d6).
   Rank 4: The claws bleed void stuff into this near world. The merest scratch from them can cause (roll d4): (1) paralysis, (2) acute formication, (3) hyperalgesia, or (4) muscle spasms.

5. **Digits of the Other Side**
   Reality will conform to revelation.
   Rank 1: Vestigial fingers or toes protrude from the flesh on the hero's (roll d4): (1) flanks, (2) arms, (3) legs, or (4) back.
   Rank 2: The digits elongate and become as strong as those on the hero's hands.
   Rank 3: The digits grow even longer, more powerful and with more joints. Like a cross between fingers and sinewy spider legs.
   Rank 4: The digits are so many and so powerful they can unfold like a fan, letting them easily trap or catch anything trying to get past them.

6. **Waterdrinker's Raiment**
From void sea come, to void sea return.
Rank 1: Vestigial gills and cutaneous gas bladders form on the neck and abdomen of the hero. They can hold their breath quite a bit longer than before.
Rank 2: An array of functional gills and gas-exchange organs effectively turns the hero into an amphibian.
Rank 3: Webbing increases the hero's swimming speed.
Rank 4: Eerily glowing biological chemical factories pockmark the hero's body, letting them breathe in the strangest of gaseous and liquid environments. A bucket's worth of pure water provides the hero with enough oxygen for an hour.

7. **Curse of the Sky Brought**
They sailed on wings among the galaxies.
Rank 1: Vestigial wings or flagellae bulge and flail on the hero's back. Wearing ordinary clothes is uncomfortable.
Rank 2: The primitive wings erupt in a tangle of membranes, struts, and tines. The hero can slow their fall or boost their jump. Ordinary clothes do not fit.
Rank 3: The wings look like nothing thisworldly, but they let the hero glide convincingly. The hero's entire body structure adapts to support the odd structures. Falls are no longer deadly.
Rank 4: The massive powered wings drain bone and gristle and flesh from the rest of the hero, leaving them stick thin but capable of flight.

8. **Lament of the Waking Bones**
There is no life eternal but death.
Rank 1: Hero becomes unnaturally thin. Flesh becomes sinewy. Hands become bony and raw. Skin becomes papery. Digestion becomes uneven and slow.
Rank 2: Only sinew and gristle remains beneath skin like parchment. Joints click and rattle. The skeletal hero can only digest blended soups.
Rank 3: The hero's internal organs atrophy away, leaving them a mumified, ambulatory undead abomination. They can only digest raw blood purée.
Rank 4: The hero's bones absorb their flesh, leaving a sparkling skeleton that looks like (roll d4): (1) jade, (2) bronze, (3) ebony, or (4) porcelain. They no longer eat, directly leeching the life force of nearby creatures to stay alive instead (1 Life per day).

9. **Warp of the Loom Within**
The body is a delicate plaything of bones.
Rank 1: The hero's joints become grotesquely hypermobile. Movement becomes slower and more deliberate.
Rank 2: Limbs become strangely flexible. Additional joints appear. Though more agile, the hero is weaker. Clothes fit awkwardly. They can rotate their head like an owl.
Rank 3: Shoulder girdle and hips can rotate freely, each vertebrae can dislocate, each rib can waggle.
Rank 4: Hero can rearrange their bone structure almost at will. Bones travel within their flesh, creating alien forms reminiscent of the *vatula-vyakula* of the Restless Madcap of Second Creation.

10. **Bonds of the Living Mountain**

Motion is waste.

Rank 1: The body grows heavy, beset by a chronic fatigue. Hairs become thorn-like, nails thicken and curl.

Rank 2: Follicles grow oversized and masses of keratinous fibers replace normal hair, covering the body in a spongy layer. Movement becomes clumsy, but blows are cushioned (+1 armor).

Rank 3: Prolific, heavy ropes of keratin grow from the body constantly (1 stone's worth per day). Appetite increases. Unless the the ropes are cut regularly, they quickly overwhelm the hero's ability to move.

Rank 4: The keratin growth diversifies, covering the unrecognizable hero in swift-growing (roll d4): (1) scales, (2) spines, (3) fur, or (4) luxurious feathers.

11. **Curse of the Astral Eye**

The world you see is a veil hiding the deeper beauty of the fields of *ka*.

Rank 1: Eyes turn (roll d4): (1) milky, (2) pitch black, (3) translucent, or (4) like amber orbs. Vision is impaired.

Rank 2: Eyes evaporate and collapse out of the eye sockets. Hero is blind.

Rank 3: A heavy, misty gas constantly leaks out of the hero's eye sockets. They can perceive auras with new crystalline organs growing where their eyes once rolled in fear and terror.

Rank 4: Faceted crystalline growths spread to the edges of the empty sockets, like queer jewelry. Hero can directly perceive the *ka* of living creatures.

12. **Patterns of the Ineffable Void**

ERROR: Reality compile failed. There is no abort, there is only retry.

Rank 1: Intelligence is reduced. Hero's twitching mind cannot avoid alien things lurking in the corners of reality.

Rank 2: Personality becomes alien. Hero no longer feels some human emotions, while acquiring other stranger ones.

Rank 3: Mind becomes temporally scattered. Hero gains mild precognition, avoiding immediate threats with unnatural speed and precision. At the same time, they can no longer focus on the here and now.

Rank 4: Hero's *ba* or personality is smeared out completely, replaced by something alien. Hero becomes immune to all mental attacks and acquires an ineffable goal, perhaps to (roll d4): (1) create odd patterns at energy interstices, (2) collect words and memories from key individuals, (3) paint alien murals on symbolic objects, (4) sing horrifying chants in the ruins of an elder time.

13. **Progressive Chimerism**

No beast shall need to dominate another beast in the chimereal time.

Rank 1: Feet become deformed and oddly turned. Walking is impaired.

Rank 2: Legs change form and angle, becoming bestial. Wearing shoes becomes impossible.

Rank 3: Legs and feet clearly resemble (roll d4): (1) the hoofed limbs of an ungulate, (2) the paws of a predator, (3) the talon-tipped feet of a bird, (4) nothing so much as the many-jointed limbs of an endoskeletal insect.

Rank 4: The hero pupates and in a grotesque transformation their abdomen, hips, and lower limbs are duplicated. With four legs, their movement is faster or more sure, but they are less maneuverable. Chairs and tight spaces become uncomfortable.

14. **Sign of the Third Hand**
New hands reach new truths.
Rank 1: A vestigial (roll d2): (1) tail or (2) arm grows on the body. It dangles, uselessly. If cut off, it grows back.
Rank 2: It grows stronger. Capable of picking up light objects. Clothes no longer fit.
Rank 3: The new appendage grows larger and stronger than the original limbs. The whole hero can lift themselves by their tail or third arm. Additional vestigial limb buds form.
Rank 4: Another appendage, just as powerful, bursts forth. Limb buds continue to form, studding the body.

15. **Mold of the Protean Eternity**
Fixity of form was a mistake.
Rank 1: Bones become brittle and prone to breaking. Hero becomes more vulnerable to physical damage.
Rank 2: Bones soften, while fluid organs strengthen to provide stability.
Rank 3: Bones dissolve entirely. Only sinew and cartilage support the now alien musculature. Staying bipedal and vaguely humanoid is an immense effort. The face tends to collapse and smear. An enclosing armor can help with mobility.
Rank 4: Hero becomes a protean thing of strange organelles and fluid body plan.

16. **High Crab's Mark**
The world is hard and full of hate. Harder yet must man become.
Rank 1: Back becomes hunched and bulky. Ribs stand out against skin.
Rank 2: Spine and back fuse into a bony cage. Mobility is reduced, but internal organs are better protected.
Rank 3: A shell-like carapace forms out of the hero's back (+2 armor).
Rank 4: Hero can retract within their armored shell for defense or to ride out hostile environmental conditions.

17. **Armor of a Hostile Heaven**
In the heavens there is only war.
Rank 1: Strange bones erupt from the skin. Wearing clothes is difficult.
Rank 2: Bones grow into jutting spikes, blades, and ridges. Wearing armor becomes next to impossible. Attackers may be injured (1d4 damage).
Rank 3: Elaborate spines, hooks, and plates cover the hero, defending them from attack (+2 armor) and increasing their threat (1d6 natural damage).
Rank 4: The bony structures develop into a terrifying suit of biological armor (+5).

18. **Curse of the Second Face**
Hypocrisy stripped reveals a new visage.
Rank 1: An additional eye and teeth develop on the (roll d4): (1) hand or arm, (2) leg or foot, (3) back or shoulder, or (4) chest or groin. They are non-functional. If removed, they grow back.
Rank 2: The eye becomes functional. Additional buds form. Cartilage and gums form around the teeth.
Rank 3: A second eye joins the first. A nose-bud forms. A functional mouth forms around the teeth. The hero can ingest sustenance and speak with the second mouth.
Rank 4: A complete face forms. Its distorted features can part to reveal a (roll d4): (1) venomous bite, (2) fearsome gaze, (3) blood-sucking fangs, (4) voice like an angelic choir.

19. **Tongue of the Iron Cuttlefish**
They drip venom when they speak.
Rank 1: Tongue is covered in sharp radulae. Speech becomes strange.
Rank 2: Radular membrane bifurcates. Tongue grows freakishly long.
Rank 3: Tongue base fuses to jaw for additional leverage, prehensile radular pseudopods become veritable tentacles.
Rank 4: Radular tentacles become modular, each splitting into five sub-tentacles, each with hooked, proboscid parts. The tongue tentacles are as strong as a pair of human hands. Hero can now drink nectar or blood with their tongue. Human speech is basically impossible.

20. **Second Thoughts of the New**
The seed of truth grows within.
Rank 1: Hard, cyst-like nodule develops on the (roll d4): (1) throat, (2) stomach, (3) lumbar spine, (4) upper back.
Rank 2: The nodule grows larger and bonier, a secondary brain begins to develop within. Reflexes are accelerated. Clothing has to be adjusted. Hero becomes more vulnerable to critical hits.
Rank 3: The secondary brain grows larger and faster. The hero's perception and analytical abilities increase. The disfigurement is more obvious.
Rank 4: The secondary brain achieves a semblance of independent thought and develops unusual mental abilities, such as (roll d4): (1) pyrokinesis, (2) telekinesis, (3) electrokinesis, or (4) tele-empathetic manipulation. Sometimes it takes over the hero's body.

21. **Curse of the Blue God**
From rot comes purification and health.
Rank 1: The filth of chaos oozes from the hero's porses. They become resilient to disease, but the smell is pestilential.
Rank 2: Fresh orifices open up on the skin and ooze a blood-like serum. Wounds do not fully heal and release a similar fluid.
Rank 3: Skin becomes a cratered, heaving, supurating mess covered in wriggling symbiotes that resemble grave worms. Nose, ears, eyelids, and other thin cutaneous areas may rot away.
Rank 4: A whiteish substance with the consistency of clotted yoghurt continually drips from the symbiotes. This milk of the Blue God has strong analgesic and numbing properties. The hero becomes entirely resistant to diseases and poisons.

22. **Mark of the Void Spawned**
Beyond radiance, the light of the void.
Rank 1: A barely perceptible darkness cloaks the hero, like diaphanous wreathes of pure nothingness. They become sensitive to bright lights.
Rank 2: The dark between stars now obviously wreathes the hero. They walk in shadow even on the brightest of days. Bright radiation or sanctified memory waters cause physical pain.
Rank 3: The void seeps into the hero, making them colourless and darkly-shaded. Smoke curls within their eyes and even in darkest night a faint ur-hue lets them find their way.
Rank 4: The hero is no longer quite there, appearing as somehow translucent and absent. They have a harder time interacting with the physical world and carrying heavy loads is right out, but at the same time the world also has a harder time affecting them.

COSMETIC MUTATIONS

Oftentimes the vibrations of the deep void make their victim appear strange and unearthly, even if they bestow no unusual powers and abilities. Many times a hero will be able to hide their inhuman looks, hiding void eyes with lenses or concealing their odd skull shape with a large hat. Successful camouflage takes up space on the hero's sheet, but it should eliminate prejudice and stigma in most social situations. Bath houses are likely to remain challenging, however. Remember common sense side effects in play.

Some cosmetic mutations do not have ranks, but random tables. For example, if corruption changes the color of a hero's skin a second time, the new result may leave them variegated or simply a new color, depending on their player's preference.

ODD NEW LOOKS [D20]

1. **Follicular Transformation [d6]**
   Astonishing changes to the hair.
   1. All their follicles vanish. They become completely hairless.
   2. Follicles go into overdrive, hair grows at twenty times normal speed.
   3. Facial hair grows long and incredibly impressive. Massive incredibly bushy eyebrows, full beard and moustache.
   4. Head hair turns into massive, full mane, like a lion's.
   5. All hair grows stronger. Fine fur covers entire body.
   6. True fur-ball. Entire body is covered in thick fur with a downy, insulating undercoat.

2. **Repigmentation [d6]**
   Hero's skin and hair colour change.
   1. Hair becomes semi-transparent, skin becomes translucent revealing veins and tendons beneath.
   2. Hair and skin become creepily monochrome. Perfectly white, pitch black, or 50% grey.
   3. Rock, earth, or plant hues.
   4. Skin becomes vivid yellow or red. Hair turns a complementary color.
   5. Skin becomes cool blue or green. Hair turns a contrasting color.
   6. Blazing colors. Neon or day-glo.

3. **Fantastic Ears [d6]**
   Ears like in a fantasy novel.
   1. Ears become perfectly rounded, like whorled snail shells.
   2. Flat membranes, like a lizard.
   3. Pointed ears.
   4. Mobile ears, like a fox or hyena.
   5. Floppy ears, like a bunny or basset hound.
   6. Elaborate frond-like or branching structures, like the antennae of a silkworm moth.

4. **Labial Translation [d6]**
   Fancy words for the mouth parts.
   1. Lips disappear entirely.
   2. Lips become scaly and hard.
   3. Lips grow large and fleshy
   4. Heavy cheek pouches develop.
   5. Sensitive tentacles, antennae, or whiskers adorn sides of mouth.
   6. Lips become a muscular extensible tube for sucking and sponging.

5. **Nasal Modification [d6]**
   That nose.
   1. Nose disappears entirely. Only mouth-breathing from now on.
   2. It recedes into muscular slits.
   3. Becomes tiny and sculpted.
   4. Grows large and bulbous.
   5. Becomes canine or feline
   6. Grows into a prehensile proboscis.

6. **Ocular Permutation [d6]**
   The eyes are the windows of the *ka*.
   1. Iris becomes a strange, vivid color.
   2. Iris and sclera both change color radically.
   3. Size and color of iris change. Pupil becomes cat- or goat-like.
   4. Eyeball changes size, color, and shape, becoming lizard- or cuttlefish-like. A nictating membrane forms.
   5. Entire structure of eyes changes, becoming insectile or arachnid
   6. Eyes become alien structure of metallic crystal and flickering light.

7. **Gravity Resistance Conversion [d4]**
   The body adjusts to alien gravities.
   1. Body becomes massive and boulder-shaped, suited to heavy gravities.
   2. Becomes squat and heavy.
   3. Becomes tall and slender.
   4. Very tall and stick-like.

8. **Oral Modulation [d6]**
   Mouths modified for strange meals.
   1. Mouth disappears, replaced by mastication-orifice on stomach.
   2. Becomes a puckered hole with a siphoning tongue.
   3. Narrows to a vertical slit concealing an insectile siphoning apparatus.
   4. Jaw and lips reduce to a cartoonishly gracile rosebud.
   5. Widens and number of teeth multiply, producing a cheshire grin.
   6. Grows into a vulpine muzzle.

9. **Cornute Evolution [d6]**
   Horn-like structures develop.
   1. Bony plates cover head like a helmet.
   2. Small conical horns.
   3. Curving caprid horns.
   4. Spiral horns, like on an impala.
   5. Delicately ramified antlers.
   6. Elaborate palmate antlers.

10. **Dermal Variegation**
    Skin patterns tell celestial tales.
    Rank 1: Delicate three-tone patterns cover every inch of the hero's skin. They look almost like yet unlike writing.
    Rank 2: The patterns gently shift and move without rhythm.
    Rank 3: The hero becomes able to minutely control the shifting of the patterns, making three-tone skin art.

11. **Vocal Tempering [d6]**
    The breath manifests the *ba*.
    1. Voice becomes harsh clattering rasp.
    2. It becomes metallic and syncopated.
    3. It becomes polyphonic.
    4. It carries elevated, inhuman notes.
    5. Voice becomes a cascade of colors.
    6. It becomes a flutter of sensations.

12. **Haemomorphism [d6]**
    Blood codes their post-humanity.
    1. It becomes pitch black.
    2. Nanomachinated grey.
    3. Haemocyanitic green.
    4. Vitriolic blue.
    5. Translucent like liquid infinity.
    6. Glowing and glittering golden ichor.

13. **Lucent Postmaterialism [d6]**
    Light is the destination of all flesh.
    1. Skin becomes smooth and waxy.
    2. Skin becomes translucent.
    3. Flesh becomes translucent.
    4. Organs become translucent.
    5. Bones become translucent.
    6. Neural network glitters with the light of the thousand thousand once-settled suns of the Higher Way.

14. **Anatomical Devolution [d6]**
    Gaze upon your ancestors.
    1. Facial features devolve 500,000 generations-worth.
    2. Features devolve 50,000 generations.
    3. Jaws enlarge to accommodate a diet of raw flesh and fibrous vegetables.
    4. Body becomes bulky and robust.
    5. It becomes gracile and adapted for climbing or brachiation.
    6. A furry, prehensile tail returns.

15. **Cranial Polymorphism [d6]**
    Phrenology is now useless.
    1. Skull develops flaring sagittal crest.
    2. Develops shelf-like brow ridges.
    3. It becomes perfectly spherical.
    4. It becomes boxy and angular.
    5. It becomes exquisitely elongated.
    6. Becomes delicately articulated.

16. **Refined Therianthropy**
    Embrace their inner animals.
    Rank 1: Features take a disconcertingly animal cast (roll d6): (1) vaguely piscine, (2) somewhat amphibian, (3) mildly reptilian, (4) curiously avian, (5) rather bovine, or (6) impishly feline.
    Rank 2: Features are clearly bestial, with whiskers, odd ears, and other horrifically uncanny valley alterations.
    Rank 3: The hero has an animal head.

17. **Orbital Differentiation [d6]**
    Eyes and eye-sockets alike change.
    1. Eyes and eye-sockets disappear completely, replaced by photo-receptive pits dotted across the face.
    2. Eyes leave sockets and become free-floating orbs.
    3. Eyes reduce to a single optical organ.
    4. Eyes enveloped in muscular sheaths capable of independent tracking, like a chameleon's.
    5. Eyes reduce in size and multiply across face.
    6. Eyes grow incredibly large and acute. The better to see things with.

18. **Digital Hypermanipulation [d4]**
    Fingers and toes specialize further.
    1. Digits become short and stubby, like small hammers or mallets.
    2. They grow broader and stronger, the tendons adapt to let them grip with no muscular effort.
    3. Longer and more flexible, for playing musical instruments a breeze.
    4. They split into delicate multi-tool-like assemblages of chitin and bone.

19. **Advanced Sexual Selection [d6]**
    Hypertrophy to signal mating fitness.
    1. Abdominal cysts simulate a six-pack.
    2. Benign pectoral tumors create the appearance of an attractive chest.
    3. Metabolic mutation makes adipogenesis impossible, ensuring that sought-after starved waif look.
    4. Gluteal hypertrophy.
    5. Novel adipose structures add contour to facial features.
    6. Muscular water retention increases to give the impression of fitness.

20. **Omnicommunication Conversion [d6]**
    Develop a signaling panoply.
    1. Skin becomes cuttlefish-like, changing colour with the flickering of thought and emotion.
    2. Ornate display plumage to attract attention and signal fitness.
    3. Bright red inflatable throat sac for conveying dominance and putting out deep bass croaks.
    4. Hypermobile ears to indicate nuances of emotion.
    5. Augmented musk glands share emotions through pheromones.
    6. Light-emitting organelles in the eyes. They really do flash now.

BENEFICIAL MUTATIONS

Roll d20 to find out what unusual benefits the hero gains.

1. Stronger. Strength increases. This may increase the stat beyond human maximums, as high as 7. Maximum modifier to a d20 roll remains +13.

2. Better. Endurance increases. May end up as high as 7.

3. Faster. Agility increases. May go as high as 7.

4. Smarter. Thought increases. May go as high as 6 or 7, but brain becomes progressively less human.

5. Psionic evolution. Mental ability develops or spell acquired as an innate ability usable once per day.

6. Tougher. Life increased. This can get ridiculous. Useful for a wizard.

7. Resilient. Immune system boosted, gain advantage against disease, poison, radiation, or some other environmental effect.

8. Psionic augmentation. Develop superhuman aptitude with one skill, making tests with advantage.

9. Supersoldier reflexes. Gain advantage on initiative. Always get one action during surprise round.

10. Expert mimicry. Always gain advantage to tests when copying somebody else (e.g., after seeing somebody climb the wall of the Red Tower, gain advantage on own test).

11. Cosmic channeling. When hero sees a spell cast, test Aura to see if they grab an echo of it in their ego-matrix (inventory). Echo can be cast once.

12. Mule. Carry twice as much as a normal human. Speed may eventually be reduced even as carrying capacity increases.

13. Metabolic enhancement. Derive sustenance from anything organic, and stomach is immune to organic poisons. Unfortunately, alcohol barely works anymore.

14. Optic augmentation. Eyes become sharper and more amazing than those of any normal human.

15. Sensory expansion. Develop eerie new senses: vibration sense, echolocation, electro-detection, a magnetic sense. Choose one.

16. Chosen regenerator. Every time hero is reduced to zero Life their body goes into hibernation as it reassembles itself at rate of 1 Life per day. Each reassembly reduces Endurance by 1.

17. Plastic bone structure. Can slowly adjust the shape and size of bones, squeezing through small spaces, growing taller or shorter, or mimicking other people's faces.

18. Predator. Heal swiftly by consuming biomatter close to own basic body pattern. Recover 1 Life for every stone of flesh consumed (adult humanoid is about 10 stone). For humans: chimps and lemurs are good, pigs less so. In healing-frenzy consume a stone of flesh per action.

19. Precognitive mutation. Occasionally see glimpses of the future. It hurts, but it works. Spend 1 Life to gain advantage on a test to avoid damage.

20. Secret weapon. Natural weapons hidden in body. Claws in fingers, blades in arms, or fangs in mouth. Hero now has natural weaponry.

SPELL ALBUMS AND SPELL LISTS

The spells are presented as pseudo-apocryphal spell albums or incantographies loosely arranged around different magic skills.

1. ANASTASIYA'S CANON OR ELECTROMAGIC

#electric #wizard

"The secrets of the all-magnificent, all-giving Electric *Ka* come down to us in an unbroken line of truth and symbiosis from the great Vivifex Anastasiya. They revealed that it is the contact of dissimilar primordial elements, in closes agreement with the principles of the static universe electric, that creates the radiation of motion and change and life." —Nusa the Skydread

Unless specified otherwise, all the spells in Anastasiya's Canon take mere moments, just a single action, to cast.

FREE CORE SPELL

Anastasiya's Charged Hand
#electric
The wizard rubs their hands together without rhythm and builds up an electromagical charge. Their hands stay charged for several minutes or until they touch an object that conducts electricity.
Power 1: The hero's next touch or unarmed attack deals 1d10 electric damage.
Power 2: Their touch also stuns the target for 1d4 rounds or knocks it back.
Power 3: Their touch also sets the target on fire, dealing 1d6 damage per round until put out (stop, drop, and roll).

OTHER ELECTROMAGICAL SPELLS

1. **Anastasiya's Arc Light**
    #electric #focus
    The wizard focuses. A small aura of shooting, crackling electric arcs surrounds them. Painfully bright blue light floods a middling area. Hair stands on end and the smell of ozone assails the nostrils.
    Power 1: All adjacent creatures suffer 1d3 damage per round.
    Power 2: 1d4 damage per round.
    Power 3: 1d6 damage/rd.
    Power 4: The aura expands and all creatures near the hero suffer 1d6 damage per round.
    Power 6: 1d8 damage per round.
    Power 7: 1d10 damage/rd.
    Power 8: 1d12 dmg/rd.
    Power 9: ... *and* every time any creature touches the hero it must pass a hard test or be knocked back and stunned for one round.

2. **Anastasiya's Electrifying Projection**
    #electric #travel
    The wizard collapses into an electromagnificent wave-particle singularity and travels like lightning to a nearby target (about 12m away) where they reappear in a sudden shower of sparks.
    Power 3: Each creature in the hero's path takes 2d6 electric damage. Every creature close to the target takes 4d6 damage. If the hero re-coalesces within a solid target, they and their target both take double damage (8d6).
    Power 5: Hero transmits themself to a far-off target (about 43m away).
    Power 7: Hero deals 3d6 damage in their path and 6d6 to creatures close to their target.

3. **Kovinov's Twitching Puppet** #electric #mind #focus #attack

The wizard raises their hands high and a crackling gush of electromagical bolts unerringly strikes a nearby target, dealing 1d6 electric damage.

Power 1: Every turn test against the target's Aura. If the hero succeeds, they gain poor control of its movements for that round and make it take an action (its action has disadvantage). The target takes 1 point of electric damage per round, whether controlled or not. The spell ends if the hero stops focusing, if the target touches the hero, or if it dies.

Power 3: Hero's control is satisfactory, target's actions do not have disadvantage. Target takes 2 points of electric damage per round.

Power 6: Hero's control is *Ka*-enhanced and all target's actions are advantaged. Target takes 3 points of electric damage per round.

4. **Kovinov's Ride the Lightning**
   #electric #sky #travel
   When an electrical storm is imminent, or in progress, the wizard raises their arms to the sky and a bolt of lightning strikes them.
   Power 6: All creatures adjacent to the hero take 4d6 damage and they ride the current into the cloud. The next round they return to ground up to a few kilometres away on a second bolt of lighting from the same cloud. The landing deals 4d6 damage to all creatures adjacent to the second point of impact. Both impact points should be visible from the cloud.
   Power 13: The lightning deals 9d6 damage at both strikes.

5. **Selbstein's E-Vivification *or* Galbani's Electric Parody of Life**
   #electric #creation #imbue #dangerous
   The wizard jams their Oh Mega rods into the yielding flesh of a corpse or bound creature and, over several agonizing minutes, forces an electric *Ka* elemental

into the flesh prison. This creates an **electric abomination** under the wizard's command. Giving an order to the electric abomination takes an action. The spell price is imbued in the flesh prison of the abomination until it is destroyed or the wizard unlocks it with a touch of both Oh Mega rods.

Using a living creature: bound to a non-conductive slab with solid straps, the target will experience a very painful and eventually deadly procedure. The target loses 1 Life per minute until it dies. This resets its Life total to the e-vivified abomination's normal maximum. The electro-possession is complete after 2d6 minutes and the victim is compelled to follow orders, even if they are still alive.

Note: Most inquisitors agree this use of the spell is a vile offense against life and the sapient universe.

Power 1: The hero e-vivifies a cat or dog-sized body, creating a Level 1 electric abomination.

Power 2: The hero e-vivifies a pig- or human-sized body, creating a Level 2 abomination.

Power 4: A cow- or horse-sized body, for a Level 3 abomination.

Power 8: A rhino- or hippo-sized body, for an L5 abomination.

6. **Wired Life *or* Danse of the Flesh Electric**
   #electric #creation #anchor
   What is a wizard in possession of a sack of electrical supplies and a fresh corpse to do? With this week-long ritual they can create a living, electric child of Mother Electricity. Just like in the blueprint scrolls!
   Power 2: The hero brings a dead body to life as a **wire ghoul** (L2). They also create a module of amber and wood and silver to control the ghoul (1 stone anchor).

Uncontrolled wire ghouls descend into a mad, dangerous rage.

Power 4: Hero can create a wire ghoul in just a few hours *or* using just a stone's worth of supplies.

Power 6: Hero crafts actual, proper personalities for the dead bodies they jolt to life, creating sentient **wirefolk** (L2). These can become sidekicks without control module anchors if educated over the first 2d6 weeks. In the early days they absorb learning at a prodigious rate, so a hero with a sack of educational supplies should be able to convince their new wired sidekick that they are a good, kindly friend, not a terrifying dark master.

2. ARS BIOMECHANICUM: THE BLOOD SONGS OF THE BIOMANCERS

WARNING: Many biomancer spells involve body horror, modifying creatures living and unborn, and other matters biological. These topics are unpleasant to many people and will not be suitable for every game table. Players should discuss how (and whether) to use them.

#biomancer #doctor #phytomancer

Biomancers whisper and listen for the creative essence of the world, sometimes called the world soul, that source that is within all life that lets certain creatures exceed the parameters of their physical existence. This source they call the 'blood of magic.'

Fools and foes call them blood wizards, but truly they are so much more. They are the sculptors and shapers, blood and bone and flesh their clay. In days of old the divine biomancers created the 65,536 forms of humanity, and even in these later, dwindled times, the biomancers know that if they just listen hard enough, study well enough, they may ascend that creative ladder once more.

Or, perhaps the foes are right, and they are mad scientists creating horrors and monstrosities for the benefit of no-one.

Or, possibly, these spells are just a bundle of half-understood fantascientific keys used to unlock oldtech and communicate with it. In fact, that seems more likely.

FREE CORE SPELL

Usha's Wild Mutation
#biomancer #horror
The caster provokes a sudden mutation in a creature. An unwilling creature tests

Endurance to resist the effect.
Power 3: The mutation takes 1d4 rounds to complete and deals 1d6* damage per round. A player rolls on the corruption tables to find a precise effect. The mutation occupies an ability slot.
Power 6: The caster chooses the mutation.

OTHER BIOMANCER SPELLS

1. **Nunka's Combat Adaptation**
   #biomancer #dangerous #warrior
   The caster grows claws, horns, venom glands, clubs, spines, or fangs on creatures.
   Note: this spell is dangerous for the affected organism, not the caster.
   Power 1: Over a day the caster coaxes natural weaponry suitable to the size of the creature out of its flesh. A rabbit grows dagger-like biting teeth that deal 1d4 damage, while an elephant grows a muscular tail with a thagomizer that deals 1d12 damage. If a creature already has natural weaponry, the caster increases the damage die by one step.
   Power 3: The natural weaponry bursts out of the creature in seconds, dealing 1d6* damage as its flesh ruptures.

2. **Nunka's Skin Reweaving**
   #biomancer #dangerous #warrior
   The caster transforms the skin of a creature, growing new structures and changing how it can function.
   Power 1: Over a day the caster turns a creature's skin into leather (Armor +2), covers it in warm fur, feathers, scales, or even rejuvenates it, making it look a decade younger.
   Power 2: The caster makes skin as tough as chain (Armor +5), but Agility is reduced by 1.
   Power 3: The caster creates vesicles in the skin that can hold gases or liquids, grows webbing between fingers and limbs, or even gliding structures, but

Agility is reduced by 2.
Power 4: The wizard turns skin into armored plates (Armor +8), possibly with thorns and hooks but Agility is reduced by 3.

3. **Rehoryan's Foretelling Flesh**
#biomancer #evolve #dangerous
The wizard drinks five drams of a creature's spinal fluid and grasps the possibilities inherent in its evolutionary future. They can then lay on hands and chant the viridian songs to force the creature to mutate and evolve.
Note: this spell is dangerous for the affected organism, not the caster. Unless otherwise specified, this spell can only be cast once per organism.
Power 2: After a day of laying hands and chanting the creature acquires a new ability or improves one stat by 2. Either use occupies one ability slot.
Power 4: The ritual takes an hour. The pain is exquisite.
Power 6: The ritual takes a few minutes. The screaming is very loud.
Power 7: The wizard casts the spell on an organism that has already changed by the spell, evolving it a second time. After a further day of chanting it acquires one resistance ability or improves one of its stats by 1 permanently, even above its normal maximum. Either use occupes one ability slot.

4. **Rehoryan's Mending Flesh**
#biomancer #focus
The biomancer touches an organism and its flesh and bone start repairing themselves.
Power 1: The creature regenerates 1 life point per round for 10 rounds. This only works on physical injuries. Broken bones set themselves, but remain fragile for at least a week.
Power 3: 2 life per round.
Power 6: 3 life per round.

5. **Rehoryan's Remembering Flesh**
#biomancer #dangerous #evolve
The biomancer tastes the flesh or blood of a creature and senses what its ancestors were, then brings them forth in the organism's own form.
body. Dangerous.
Note: this spell is dangerous for the affected organism, not the caster. This spell can only be cast once per organism. This spell can permanently reduce a hero's stats below zero. If a stat is reduced to -5 in this way, the hero dies.
Power 2: Flesh to flesh and blood to blood, the caster reactivates ancestral patterns in a creature. Over an hour of singing and precision neuro-puncture, the organism regresses to an earlier form. The caster chooses two stats, subtracting 1d2 from one and adding 1d2 to the other.
Power 4: Subtract and add 1d4.
Power 7: Subtract and add 1d6.

6. **Rehoryan's Singing Flesh**
#biomancer #doctor #investigator
The caster touches flesh and it sings to them, telling what it has experienced.
Power 1: The wizard holds onto a creature for several minutes and discerns its medical history and condition. Their player asks the referee three questions, and the referee answers to the best of their ability.
Power 2: It takes a mere seconds.

7. **Runo's Biological Acceleration and Retardation**
#biomancer #bio #imbue
The hero speeds up or slows down chosen biological processes in a sack's worth of living organism(s)—i.e. in one human. This could be something as simple as digestion or the leavening of bread, something as nasty as the progression of a disease, or something as useful as the gestation of a fetus or growth of a sapling. Affecting a larger

organism requires proportionally more castings of the spell.

Note: this spell is dangerous for the affected organism, not the caster.

Power 1: The caster makes biological processes unfold 10 times more or less swiftly for an hour.

Power 2: The process becomes 100 times faster or slower for an hour. This is #dangerous.

Power 3: 1,000 times faster or slower for an hour. This is very #dangerous.

8. **Runo's Dwarves and Giants**
#biomancer #bio #imbue #dangerous
The biomancer stretches their aura into an embryo, whether inside an egg or a uterus, and makes them larger or smaller. The biomancer imbues the embryo with its aural essence for the full duration of the pregnancy.

Note: this spell is dangerous for the affected organism, not the caster.

Power 1: The caster tweaks the embryo so that the fully grown creature will be at the extreme range of its natural size variation.

Power 3: The creature will be up to twice or half the size of the largest or smallest normal representative of its type. A gigantic fetus will often kill its mother during birth, while eggs usually survive.

Power 5: The creature will end up as much as four times larger or smaller.

9. **Runo's Egg Birth**
#biomancer #imbue #dangerous
The wizard sculpts an artificial egg from beast egg mass that can gestate an embryo to term.

Note: this spell is dangerous for the affected organism, not the caster.

Power 3: The caster imbues an artificial biological uterus for a creature for the full term of a normal pregnancy.

Power 5: The egg comes to term in a few weeks.

Power 7: The egg hatches in mere days.

10. **Runo's Marsupial Pouch**
#biomancer #dangerous
The caster creates a marsupial-style pouch on a creature, so that it can carry a fetus to term. This fetus does not have to be of the same species as the parent. Clone-jerkers use this ritual for creating brood parents.

Note: this spell is dangerous for the affected parent organism, not the embryo or the caster.

Power 2: Over a day they sculpt a marsupial pouch into a creature's flesh. Every pouch permanently reduces its Endurance by 1.

Power 4: The sculpting takes a few hours.

Power 6: It only takes several minutes.

11. **Usha's Cancer Bomb**
#biomancer #horror #focus #imbue
The caster spits on a creature and nano-daemons in their spit proceed to rip its source code wide open, letting chaos have its way.

Power 4: The target's flesh ripples and twitches for a round, then it tests Endurance. If it fails, flailing keratin ropes and strangling muscle tentacles erupt from its skin. Every round the tentacles damage the nearest available creature for 1d8 damage. Each round the target takes 2d6* points of damage. If the target dies, the spell ends and a **cancer bomb thing** (L4) crawls from its body. The thing is not under the caster's control.

When the target (host) creature dies, the thing also begins to die off unless the caster imbues it with their life force. Once a day the wizard can make a hard Charisma test to see if it becomes a self-sustaining alien organism. It is still not under the caster's control.

Seriously, why would anyone want this monster to live?

12. **Usha's Uplift**
    #biomancer #dangerous #divine
    The caster increases the intelligence of a non-sentient creature! Now anyone can play god! Very dangerous. Unless otherwise specified, can only be used once on an individual organism.
    Power 2: Over a few days the caster increases the Thought of a creature and its *keimplasma*, its germ plasm, by 1.
    Power 4: Increase the Thought stat by 1 again!
    Power 6: Again!
    Power 8: Again!
    Power 10: Again! "Behold, I am Prometheus, and I have given you the world!" cries the mad biomancer as the slime mould acquires sentience.

3. DAIMONOLOGIA: THE BRAZEN TABLETS OF NU ZEDAI

#daimonology #summoning #priest

The omen-eyes must be wiped clean of the dust of falsehood. The daimonologia is not a dark art of demon summoning. No. Only fools and zealots refer to creatures and essences of the other-bodied or disembodied worlds as demons. Strange. Terrifying. Inhuman. Yes. But not the demons of dark delirium.

Different wizards call these beings they use to aid them different things (roll d10 or choose): (1) daimons, (2) guides, (3) spirits, (4) ghosts, (5) *ka-ba* assemblies, (6) essential vapors, (7) fortunes, (8) messengers, (9) medicine, (10) vir.

Unfortunately, as every daimonologist knows, the best way for one daimonologist to steal another's business is to paint themselves as a representative of the 'good' spirits fighting against the malicious and misbegotten spawn of some thrice-forgotten heresy summoned by their rival.

DIALOGUE WITH DAIMONS [D20]

Commanding daimons and spirits is not about merely performing the spell rituals inscribed in the white-upon-purple *plazee* scrolls, engraved in the phosphor vidy crystals, and tomb-whispered upon the high gates. The spell is the flare that draws the attention of a daimon, whereupon the wizard enters into **#dialogue** with the ka-ba beings.

During this conversation, both creatures, wizard and daimon, partake of the numinous aura of the boundaries between the worlds. They may (roll d6 or choose): (1) glow with unnatural light, (2) be beset by chittering voices, (3) bring an arctic chill to their surroundings, (4) fade and become translucent, (5) exude strange odors, (6) give off a localized anti-gravity, repelling other objects and levitating slightly off the ground.

Sometimes a protective nimbus will protect the wizard while they converse with their daimon. Mortal creatures trying to interfere (or attack) the wizard or the daimon during such a conversation are at a disadvantage, and any attack that succeeds reflects half of the damage back on the attacker.

The daimon's level is usually determined by the power of the spell being cast. A power 6 spell cast will attract the attention of a level 6 daimon.

The wizard makes a relevant Charisma test to bend a daimon to their will through dialogue. If the daimon is lower level than the wizard, the wizard gains advantage. If the daimon is higher level, disadvantage.

A wizard in dialogue with a daimon cannot force them to duplicate or exceed the effects spelled out in the incantation. An exception can be made for dialogue test results of 20+.

d20	Dialogue Outcomes
1 or less	Daimon possesses the wizard for some minutes, riding them like a puppet.
2–3	Daimon convinces the wizard to help them.
4–7	Daimon convinces the wizard to let them on their way.
8–11	It is willing to continue the conversation.
12–14	Daimon agrees to fulfill request. Demands life price equal to daimon's level.
15–19	The wizard convinces the daimon to heed their will at no additional price.
20	The wizard possesses the daimon for some minutes, gaining full control of their physical immanence if they focus. They bend the demon to their will and their words are as laws of iron and fire.

Lunaya's Beseeching of Earth and Sky
#daimonologia #investigator #dialogue
The caster spends several minutes creating a makeshift shrine, aligning a few rocks and scratching celestial marks in the dirt. Then they use a small offering, perhaps libation of wine or a handful of trail crackers, to attract the attention of a local daimon.
Power 1: The wizard may ask three questions of the daimon and receive instruction on the local area. For example, the daimon might suggest where a spring could be found, if people have camped there, or if a large monster lives nearby. The daimon is not all knowing, but will try to answer truthfully if the wizard convinces them to help.
Power 2: The wizard begs assistance of the daimon. A convincing wizard gains three boons (usually advantage to a test). They can use these boons in the local area over the next day and night.
Power 3: The convincing wizard begs a gift off the daimon. Perhaps an unusually lucky rock, stick, or flower (1 stone). This gift carries three boons that they can use over the next week and a day.

OTHER SPELLS TO ATTRACT DAIMONS

1. **Lunaya's Pact Summons**
   #daimonologia #summoning
   A bodiless spirit out of time emerges to offer the wizard help for a price.
   Power 1: After the caster spends a sweaty hour begging with candles and a beheaded chicken, a daimon arrives to help. It also offers seven boons (advantages on tests) for the price of one life point permanently lost.
   Power 2: After minutes of hasty incantation, the daimon appears.
   Power 3: At the mere mention of its name, the daimon appears.

2. **Lunaya's Offering of Another**
   #daimonologia #summoning #imbue
   The wizard engages in an hour-long ritual exchange of fluids with another creature. This lets the wizard treat that other body like their own for the purposes of demonic pacts and offerings.
   Power 1: As long as the other remains imbued with the wizard's magical essence, the wizard can pay pact demons with their willing victim's life points and stats.
   Power 3: The victim can be unwilling. This is not a nice thing to do.

3. **Melistoma's Appeasement of the Afflicting Daimon**
   #daimonologia #dialogue #healing
   Many afflictions, such as diseases, poisons, and curses, are bound to their victim with a small daimon. Even many wizards are not aware of this fact. By appeasing (bribing) this small daimon a skilled daimonologist can dispel an affliction through dialogue, bypassing even some more powerful spells.
   Note: a daimonologist with ill intent could convince an afflicting daimon to afflict somebody else, instead of simply returning to its aetherial home.
   Power 1: the wizard chants for an hour or two and attracts the attention of a mild poison or disease daimon, something that causes discomfort or illness like nausea, vertigo, diarrhoea, the common cold or dandruff.
   Power 3: the wizard attracts a moderate poison or disease daimon, something that may be debilitating but not deadly, for example the flu or alcohol poisoning.
   Power 5: a deadly poison or disease daimon, or a curse daimon, listens to the wizard. This might be the plague, syphillis, or mercury poisoning
   Power 8: a terminal affliction daimon stops to talk with the wizard. Perhaps a radiation daimon or a metastatic tumor.

4. **Melistoma's Dispossession**
#daimonologia #dialogue #healing
The wizard cloaks themselves in the blue and green pigments that daimons fear and daubs their fingers with the fat of the catfish. They then approach a daimon's victim, waving four magic incense sticks, one for earth, one for sky, one for wind, one for green.
Power 2: The wizard draws the attention of a possessing daimon, engaging them in dialogue and trying to convince them to end the possession.
Power 4: The wizard adds a second of their mental stats (Aura or Thought) to their test to impose their will on the daimon and force them to leave their victim's body.
Power 6: The wizard also adds their third mental stat to their test.
Power 8: The wizard now also adds a physical stat to their test. Wrestling with daimons, baby.

5. **Nu Zedai's Embodied Assistant**
#daimonologia #possession
The wizard spends a few hours painting imbued diagrams on a creature with the six celestial tints. They then invite a daimon to take partial possession of the creature. While possessed, the target appears to be afflicted by magical corruption. It must make an Aura test when the possession ends or the magical corruption becomes permanent.
Power 1: Daimon gives advantage to tests using one of the target's stats or skills for a few hours.
Power 2: Advantage to tests using two stats or skills.
Power 3: Up to three stats or skills.
Power 5: Daimon grants a supernatural ability (any ability of choice).

6. **Nu Zedai's Helpful Imp**
#daimonologia #focus
The wizard spends a few hours creating a homely, inviting diagram, then sacrifices a small animal or potted plant to permanently incarnate a 'helpful' daimon in this world. The daimon is the size of a middling dog, with six-fingered human hands on each paw and a prehensile tail. It follows instructions faithfully as long as the wizard is focused. As soon as the wizard's attention wanders, the daimon is consumed with (roll d6 or choose): (1) sloth, (2) greed, (3) curiosity, (4) perversity, (5) sorrow, or (6) a higher calling.
Note: This spell does not actually allow a wizard to retain control of a daimon after they lose focus, the daimon also does not disappear. For example when they have to sleep.
Power 1: The helpful daimon (L0, incompetent) is suitable for basic, unskilled labor.
Power 2: A helpful daimon (L0, skilled) that can actually help with tasks.
Power 3: A helpful daimon (L1, precocious) with one supernatural ability, such as (roll 6 or choose): (1) levitation, (2) understanding many languages, (3) seeing in the dark, (4) breathing water, (5) speaking to animals, or (6) mimicking the voices of living creatures.
Power 5: a helpful daimon (L2, bulky) that can carry burdens like an ox or batter down gates like a bull.

7. **Nu Zedai's Invitation Rider**
#daimonologia #dangerous #dialogue #imbue
The wizard spends a few hours painting runes in the four black inks upon their own body, imbuing the swirling diagram with their own lifeforce. When the wizard decides to activate the diagram they choose how much spell power to unleash and a daimon rushes in to possess them.
Note: When the spell ends, the wizard

still has to convince the daimon to leave.

Power 1: For a few minutes the wizard's eyes flare, and they gain advantage to their skill tests (including attack rolls). The daimon then dissipates, taking the ink diagrams with them and leaving a foul, greasy taste in the wizard's mouth.

Power 2: for several minutes a halo surrounds the wizard's head and they gain advantage to skill tests and all effects (attack rolls and damage rolls).

Power 3: for about an hour cilia of light ripple across the wizard's body and they gain advantage to skill tests and all effects, as well as resistance to all physical damage.

Power 5: for about half a day the wizard is bathed a shifting aura of many colors, they gain all the previous effects, also increase one or more physical stats by a total of 3 points, and any weapon they hold is wreathed in incendiary energy (increasing damage dice one step) or, alternatively, they can shoot bolts of energy from their hands (1d12, incendiary).

8. **Sun King's Bound Laborer**
#daimonologia #dialogue #imbue
The wizard creates a binding seal from the three holy clays and inscribes it with the hidden names of a daimon and their enciphered commandments. When the wizard touches it to the daimon in question, the seal is imbued with the wizard's life essence and the wizard proceeds to entreat the demon to accede to their demands. If the entreaty is successful, the daimon is bound to serve the wizard for the specified period. If the entraty fails, the seal crumbles to dirt and dust. When the bond ends, the daimon departs and the seal crumbles to ash and salt.
Note: this spell does not summon a daimon itself, instead it is a tool for the daimonologist to entrap a daimon summoned by other means or discovered in some other way.

Power 3: The wizard spends a week creating the seal and the bond lasts for a day and a night.

Power 5: The wizard instead crafts the seal in a day *or* the bond instead lasts for a week and a day.

Power 7: The wizard instead crafts the seal in an hour *or* the bond instead lasts for a month and a day.

9. **Ur Viryé's Rescinding of the Invitation**
#banishing #daimonologia #dangerous
The wizard marks themselves with the three holy clays, dons the anointed key around their neck, holds the candle of night in one hand, and lifts up the Scripture of the Named and the Unnamed in the other hand. Thus armed, they can revoke any daimon's permission to dwell in the physical world of embodied souls and personalities.
Note: this spell directly banishes a daimon, bypassing dialogue tests.

Power 3: The wizard admonishes a 1st level daimon and cajoles them into departing.

Power 6: The wizard admonishes a 2nd level daimon.

Power 9: A 3rd level daimon.

Power 12: etc.

4. THE DISENCYPHERAE: PRACTICUM OF THE OCCULT INVESTIGATOR

#investigator #academic

It is known, as the Onka told, that many of the Ancient Truths are bundled, hidden, condensed, tinned, filed, and cyphered to prevent the Wrongfolk and the Administrators and the Truthkillers from getting at them.

That is why the scientific rituals of Occluded Investigation were preserved as a way to unlock the cyphered truths.

Or, possibly, these spells are just a bundle of half-understood fantascientific keys used to unlock oldtech and communicate with it. In fact, that seems more likely.

1. **Kocha's Door Open Itself**
   #investigator #mechane
   The wizard spreads their hands wide and summons a fragment of consciousness into an object that can open, such as a door, lid, hatch, or portal. Overjoyed, the dimly sentient object burbles at the edges of the wizard's mind, begging to please.
   Power 1: At the hero's gesture a nearby object opens. Shutters swing wide. At a second gesture, an open object closes. Locked objects open only if the key is already in the lock.
   Power 3: A far away object opens. Alternatively, a nearby locked or barred object swings open without a key. Or locks itself shut.
   Power 5: A far away locked object flies open or locks itself. Alternatively, a nearby sealed object, such as a steel door welded shut, flies open, showering all nearby with shrapnel (1d6* damage). Or a nearby object flows into its

surroundings, sealing itself permanently.
   Power 7: A far away sealed object opens in a shower of shrapnel, or an open one seals itself. Alternatively, the wizard summons an opening object from a platonic ur-reality, creating a door where before there was none. Or makes an opening disappear as though it never was.

2. **Skala's Blood Commandment**
   #investigator #blood #mechane
   The wizard drips their blood on a machine, artifact, treasure, or even a mundane object. Thereafter, when the wizard presses their forehead to the bloody stain, they compel the object to obey their wishes.
   Power 1: The object performs a simple mechanical action intrinsic to its nature. A wheel turns, a candle lights, a valve releases.
   Power 2: The hero doesn't have to touch their forehead to the object. So long as they are nearby, they can compel it with a simple gesture.
   Power 3: Hero's thought enhances the essential mechanical drive of the object. So long as they focus on the object, it performs with advantage.
   Power 4: Hero compels object with mere thought, no gesture required.
   Power 5: Hero overwhelms intrinsic mechane of the object. A door locks permanently, an entire candle spontaneously combusts in a small explosion, an engine block seizes up.

3. **Skala's Interrogation of Objects**
   #investigator #mechane #anchor
   In a mildly-terrifying day-long ritual, the wizard bonds their flesh and blood with an oldtech screen orb (this anchor is at least 1 stone in size, worth 100 cash). Thereafter, the wizard can spend a few hours to draw the symbols of interrogation around and upon an object with bone chalk. The wizard then bark

questions at the object. As its single word answers spell themselves out on the screen orb the symbols of interrogation fade away.
Power 1: the orb answers one question.
Power 2: three questions.
Power 3: six questions and the spell becomes dangerous.

4. **Voyt's Lexema Siphon**
#investigator #lex
The wizard runs their fingers across an alien text and the fundamental units of the lexicon swiftly flow into their mind (about one paragraph or 100 words per minute).
Power 1: This doesn't let the hero read a text, it gives them meaning units. For example "run", "dog", "terror" might derive either from "The dog ran from the Terror" or "Run! Terrible dog."
Power 2: The wizard intuits the general intent behind a text (warning, invitation, explanation, joke).

5. **Voyt's Mental Cartography**
#investigator #lex
The wizard sets up a ritual investigation apparatus that lets them monitor the basal psychoelectric and homeostatic responses of a subject to questions. Obviously, it requires a subject willing to sit down and answer questions.
Power 1: The interrogation takes several minutes. The hero asks a series of dummy questions and three key questions. They get the emotional response of the subject to the key questions (scared, confident, confused, aggressive, numb, not human).
Power 2: The investigation takes an hour or so. Hero picks up the neuro-cognitive attitude of the subject to three key questions (helpful, obstructive, uncertain, terrified).
Power 3: The investigation takes a few hours. Hero discerns the belief map of the subject for three key questions:

whether they think they are telling the truth or not.

6. **Voyt's Syntax Terror**
#investigator #lex #curse
The wizard analyzes the meta-grammar of a text, abstracted from its meaning, letting them discern if there are curses or mind-worms encoded in the gaps between meaning.
Power 1: The hero spends a minute per paragraph and uncovers traps laid in the text.
Power 2: Hero spends a few minutes to strip a paragraph of traps and nuance, making it safe to use.
Power 3: Hero spends an hour rewriting a paragraph-long text, encoding it with hidden emotion-curses and mind-worms. These provoke emotional reactions in the reader (fear, dread, awe, affection, laughter) if they fail an Aura test.
Power 5: Hero spends a few hours encoding a text with psychosomatic curses that provoke strong physical reactions (catatonia, bowel-loosening terror, flight, paralysis) if they fail an Aura test.

5. THE IRON BOOK OF CHAINS AND THUNDER

#forgemaster #heavy #metal #wizard

1. **Metal Whispers in the Dark**
#metal #wizard #forge
The wizard tells with a touch what weaknesses there are in a metal and where. Iron fairies sometimes teach this magic in their rust-strewn mounds.
Power 1: In seconds, the metal shares its simple secrets with the caster. They gain advantage to their next smithing test or attempt to break chains and metal bars.
Power 3: In minutes, the metal shares more of its essence. How it was forged,

where it came from, how it could be weakened or strengthened.

6. MANTRAS OF THE GLANCING KA AND SKIPPING MIND

#dream #ultra

Strange mantras found on a series of crumbling codices inside an artificial cave so old that the paint on its walls faded away as soon as someone looked upon it. Ever after the local artificial meat farmers called it the Pit of Fools.

1. **Asuki's Whispering Dream**
   #dream #posession #charm #focus
   The wizard holds a personal possession or body part of their target to their lips and whispers the six mantras of Asukuki the Mindskipper, the Glancing Ka, the Flickering Flame, as they descend into a trance, sending their *Ba* and *Ka* through the noösphere into the target's dreams. It takes the wizard a few minutes to fall into a trance, but the subsequent magical mental link lasts as long as the wizard sustains their trance (and the target remains asleep).
   Power 1: The hero manifests as an alien voice-object and communicates with the target.
   Power 2: They cloak themselves as somebody the target knows and communicate with the target.
   Power 3: They wrench control of the target's dreams, inducing sweet restorative dreams (target heals in their sleep) or nightmares (target cannot sleep or rest that night).
   Power 5: The hero slits a hole in the target's somnosphere, exposing them to the monsters of the void. Until the target receives help from a spirit doctor, they must make an Aura test every night or a **dream horror** (L2d4, violent, magenta) from beyond time and space possesses

them and rides their body. The morning after a dream horror ride they have no memory of what they did and get no rest.

2. **Nonadaptation**
   #elemental #focus #nature
   The wizard rocks back and forth for several seconds, then decoheres into a silicate sand cloud held together by strange forces.
   Power 3: The wizard can withstand severe heat and cold and survive without oxygen while in this silicon cloud form. They still get thirsty, tired, and hungry as normal.

7. MANUAL OF THE SEVEN-SIGMA GOLEM MYSTERIES

#technomancer #golemmafex #golem mechanic

"Existence not detected. Press F1 to continue.
Error #666: There is no message for this error.
Abort, Retry, Fail, Ignore ... #686
Special form of #676: many-line window overflow. Small character set overflow. This special form occurs when the reality's SENTIENCE capability is not sufficient to display the text properly.
#695: Page not visible. Press F1 to continue.
Error #664:Page is not visible. Press F1 to continue.
Error #663:Page is not visible. Press F1 to continue.
Error #662:Page is not visible. Press F1 to continue.
Error #660:Page is not visible. Press F"

—Earlier Ascension Prayer Scroll F1:17

There are two categories of technomancer, of golem practitioner. There are the practicals, the technician wizards, who maintain and manipulate the machinery of elder and modern days. Then there are the theorics, the seekers of the motive lemmas, who try to master once more the canonical forms and create new machine life.

The practicals tend to be better paid and have an easier time getting along with normal humans.

FREE PRACTICAL SPELL

Jam Release
#techno #practical #imbue
The caster manipulates the *ka*-grid a physical mechanism to increase or decrease its affordances, making it run more or less smoothly. The caster can imbue the mechanism with their life force to maintain the *ka*-grid manipulation.
Power 1: A small, soap-sized mechanism, like a lock, becomes easier [+] or harder [-] to open or otherwise use for about an hour.
Power 2: A stone-sized mechanism becomes easier or harder to use.
Power 3: A soap-sized mechanism becomes free-moving (essentially frictionless) or completely jammed for about an hour. This can release most locks.
Power 4: A sack-sized mechanism becomes easier or harder to use. Triple the power to jam or make frictionless.
Power 6: A stone-sized mechanism becomes free-moving or jams for about an hour.
Power 8: A wagon-sized mechanism becomes easier or harder to use. Triple the power to jam or make frictionless.

FREE THEORIC SPELLS

Draft Golem Blueprint Scroll
#golem #techno #theoric
The caster spends 1d6 days of work and one day of meditation to draft a blueprint scroll translating a living creature into an analogous golem that will follow instruction lemmas implanted in its command unit. Masterful golem theorics are capable of creating a blueprint scroll without destroying the template creature, but this is quite a difficult feat. A single scroll can later be used to produce multiple golems of that type and level.
Power 1: Caster drafts a blueprint for a golem based on a tiny creature. Perhaps a scorpion or a housefly, a perch or a jellyfish.
Power 2: A small creature. Toad or rat-sized.
Power 3: A cat or dog-sized creature.
Power 4: Chimpanzee or human-sized.
Power 5: Horse or aurochs-sized.
Power 6: Elephant or triceratops-sized.
Power 7: Big as a sea whale.
Power 8: Big as a void mosasaur.

Construct Imbued Golem
#golem #imbue #techno #theoric
The caster uses a blueprint scroll to assemble a golem, and their own life force to imbue it with motive *ka*. A workshop, tools, and materials are recommended. An improvised golem has halved (roll d6): (1) life, (2) mobility, (3) defense, (4) attack, (5) damage, or (6) just looks very poorly made. Assembling a golem takes 1 week per level of the golem (minimum of 1 day for 0-level novelty automatons).
Power 1: Assembling a tiny, insectile golem.
Power 2: Toad or rat-sized.
Power 3: Cat or dog-sized.
Power 4: Human-sized. And so forth.

OTHER SEVEN-SIGMA GOLEM SPELLS

Sample golem creature blueprints and golem equipment blueprints are hanging out in the Extras and Equipment sections.

1. **Ferugo's Energy Accumulator**
   #imbue #practical #techno
   The caster traces strange diagrams on the air for several minutes, imbuing a physical object with environmental *ka*, holding it in place with their will. This force can be released slowly, powering machinery or golems, or swiftly, creating explosions. The energy is drained from the caster's surroundings, which can cause crops to wither and cows to stop giving milk.
   Power 1: The caster imbues a chickpea-sized object with a tenth-unit of energy. It provides the equivalent of an hour's labor of a sub-baseline human. Suddenly released, it deals 2d6 damage to targets in a small radius.
   Power 2: Caster imbues an egg-sized object with a unit of energy. It provides the equivalent of a baseline human's day labor. Swiftly released, it deals 3d6 damage to targets in a medium radius.
   Power 3: Stone-sized object with ten units of energy. It deals 5d6 damage in a medium radius.
   Power 4: Sack-sized object with 100 units of energy. 8d6 damage in a medium radius. More closer to the object. Less farther out.
   Power 5: Wagon-sized object with 1,000 units of energy. If suddenly released, it is as destructive as a traditional ton of *taint* or *teent* (depending on oldtech sources). It deals 13d6 damage in a medium area.

2. **Ferugo's Explosive Modification**
   #practical #techno
   The caster modulates the sudden release of an energy accumulator, to create specific types of explosions. This spell requires an active energy accumulator (void batteries, radiothermal drums, or a barrel of jet-golem fuel will work fine). The effects are in addition to any damage an exploding accumulator (bomb, it's a bomb) would do.
   Power 1: The caster initiates a controlled reaction that fills a medium area with billowing, choking smoke.
   Power 2: The accumulator explodes with an almighty hot flash, blinding targets in a medium area and setting nearby objects aflame.
   Power 3: The explosion sends razor-sharp fragments flying, dealing 2d6 damage in a large area.

3. **Golem Equipment Blueprinting**
   #archaic #theoric #techno
   The caster spends 2d4 days to draft a blueprint scroll specifying a servo-assistant golem based on the canonical forms. A single scroll can later be used to produce multiple items.
   Power 1: A simple stone-sized piece of golem equipment. Perhaps a clock or power drill.
   Power 2: A smaller or larger piece of simple equipment, perhaps a wristwatch or a mechanical fruit pulper.
   Power 3: A complex stone-sized piece of

golem equipment, perhaps a prosthetic gauntlet or an automatic abacus.
Power 4: A bug- or vehicle-sized piece of simple equipment.
Power 5: A complex watch- or human-sized piece of equipment, perhaps golem armor or a recording roach.
Power 8: A barely visible tiny golem, or a barge-sized mammoth vehicle.

4. **Golem Equipment Construction**
#archaic #imbue #theoric #techno
The caster uses an equipment blueprint scroll to create a piece of powered gear, and their own life force to imbue it with motive *ka*. A workshop, tools, and materials are required. Assembling a golem takes 1 week per power cost of the blueprint. Materials, labor, rent, regulatory, and insurance expenses, as well as golem union fees, amount to 100 cash per power cost of golem equipment blueprint.
Power = golem equipment blueprint cost.

5. **Kantarupa's Golem Deconstruction**
#golem #theoric #techno
The caster reaches into a golem's lemma banks with their mind, trying to break them down. This break down may be explosive.
Power 1: The golem takes 1d12 damage.
Power 2: 1d20 damage.
Power 4: 2d20 damage and 2d6 damage to all nearby creatures.
Power 8: 3d20 damage to the target golem and 3d6 damage in a medium radius.

8. MEMORIUM OF THE CRYSTAL PALACE

1. **Hidden in My Palace of Memories**
   #void #wizard
   The caster spends a few seconds swirling their arms and hands and feet in ellipses, suddenly tracing glowing afterimages in the air, then steps through an afterimage into their own memory palace, hiding themselves from harm. The wizard does not age while in the memory palace.
   This spell requires that the caster has a memory palace and enough memorized spells.
   Power 1: The wizard disappears for about a minute and erases one memory point.
   Power 2: They disappear for about an hour and erase two points.
   Power 3: For about a day, erasing three points.
   Power 4: For about a week, erasing four points.
   Power 5: About a month, five points.
   Power 6: About a year, six points.
   Power 7: About a decade, seven points.
   Power 8: About a lifetime, eight points.
   Power 9: About seven lifetimes, nine points.
   Additionally the wizard can pull guests with them into their memory palace. Multiply the spell price and memory points erased by the number of people entering the memory palace (so if the wizard brings 5 guests, multiply all the costs by 6).

9. OGON'S TETRAHEDRAL PYROLATRIA

#fire #sun #sky #elemental #pyrolatry

Tetrahedrons inscribed with the fire-worshippers' strange designs. Magic to burn and creatively destroy and in the fires of this world replicate the celestial designs of the far-off creation.

1. **Human Candle** *or* **Lipid to Fire**
   #pyrolatry #imbue
   The caster mixes ash and crystal dust and pyrite flakes on a glass platter, then exposes them to the void radiation of the thrice-bent lines of power. After the hour-long ritual the powder mix glows with a disconcerting sapphire tinge. The mix magically catalyses lipids on contact, stimulating their sudden and violent complete oxidation. In layman's terms: it causes fat to erupt into flame.
   Power 2: About two stones' worth of lipids flare into gouts of flame, dealing 1d6 damage to adjacent targets. If the lipids are within a living creature, it takes 2d12 life damage and 1d6 stat damage as fire envelops it. It is also on fire. And choking.
   Power 4: About eight stones' worth, dealing 1d10 damage to adjacent targets. 4d12 life and 1d10 stat damage to a single living target.
   Power 8: About 16 stones' worth, dealing 2d6 damage to adjacent targets and 6d20 life and 2d6 stat damage to a single target that is now definitely dying.

10. PSEUDO-IRSHÉ'S BOOK OF NECROMANCY

#necromancer #skeleton #lawyer

A fine selection of tomes to grace the offices of any respectable necromancer lawyer or necrologist. Except for the forbidden volumes, of course.

FREE CORE SPELL

Dialogues With The Dead
#necromancy #core #imbue
The dead-talker uses the shell of a once living thing, a bone, a tooth, a dead tree, to send their voice probing into the void-sea of non-existence, to tease out the remnants of a consciousness still there to speak.
Power 0: Fragments, whispers only come through. The conversation is poor [-].
Power 1: The voice comes through, barely strong enough for a normal conversation.
Power 2: Drawn to the *vis viva* of the necrologist, the voice is eager to talk [+].

Once conversation is joined, it's time to roleplay. The following table can help.

d20	Conversation Outcomes
1 or less	**Corruption** afflicts the hero.
2–7	Decadent dead refuse to talk.
8–11	Superficial conversation with the dead.
12–15	Grab their attention and get at least one, if often evasive, answer.
16–19	The dead are compelled to answer.
20	Tricky words bind the dead to serve as guide and helper. Hero may **imbue** a reliquary (1 power, 1 stone) and carry the bound relic with them. The dead can answer questions, and not much else.

OTHER NECROMANCER SPELLS

1. **Akaula's Destruction of the Dead**
   #necromancy #purification #redsky
   The wizard releases their holy blood and with it anoints an undead abomination. This takes a couple of minutes and a lot of passionate imprecation. An assistant is helpful for holding the abomination down during this ritual.
   Power 1: The hero utterly destroys a 1st Level abomination.
   Power 2: Hero totally destroys a 2nd level abomination.
   Power 3: A 3rd level abomination.
   Power 4: etc.

2. **Akaula's Eating of the Blood of the Dead**
   #necromancy #assimilation #redsky #dangerous #imbue
   The wizard takes the powdered essence of an undead creature, mixes it with holy water and imbues it in an hour-long ritual involving robes, candles, and cryptic chanting. Drinking the (un)holy mixture is dangerous and painful, but bestows the powers of the undead.
   Warning: this spell is proscribed by all reasonable scholars and commissars.
   Power 1: Uses crushed skeleton bones. Hero loses 1d3 Endurance, then becomes resistant to slashing and piercing attacks (taking half damage) for about a day.
   Power 2: Uses dried and powdered zombie brain as key ingredient. Hero loses 1d3 Agility, then gains 10 temporary Life (or unlife) and takes half damage from bludgeoning attacks for about a day.
   Power 3: Uses diced and sliced ghoul. Hero loses 1d3 Aura, then gains a paralyzing touch and can regain 1d4 Life each hour by eating a quarter-pounder of living flesh. Cheese optional.
   Power 5: Uses the ash of a shadow. Hero

loses 1d3 Str, then takes half damage from all physical attacks for about a day.
Power 7: Uses shredded mummy flakes. Hero loses 1d4 Cha, then gains a rotting touch for about a day. With each touch (or strike), hero deals 1 point of Charisma damage.
Power 9: Uses preserved vampire blood. Hero loses 1d4 Thought, then gains a natural attack that deals 1d6 damage and restores Life 1 for 1.

3. **Akaula's Fear of the Dark One**
#necromancy #redsky #focus
The wizard takes a few minutes to anoint their forehead with holy blood (or their own blood), terrifying the dead.
Power 1: The hero's countenance terrifies several undead creatures (with a combined Level not higher than hero's Charisma + 1d6). They flee or cower if they cannot flee.
Power 2: Hero terrifies Charisma + 2d6 levels worth of undead.
Power 3: An undead creature of hero's level or lower prostrates itself in abject terror and follows their instructions. Giving each instruction is an action.
Power 4: Hero terrifies Charisma + 4d6 levels worth of undead.
Power 8: Hero terrifies Charisma + 8d6 levels of undead.
Power 16: Charisma + 16d6 levels.

4. **Esbeen's Animation of the Mummified Dead**
#necromancy #UVG #imbue
The wizard exhales their soul into a mummified corpse, imbuing it with a semblance of vital force.
Power 1: After a few hours the corpse awakens into a slow, shambling parody of life and follows the hero's instructions. The slow corpse (L1, zombie) takes only a single action each round.
Power 3: After a few minutes the hero shakes the corpse into lurching, jerky life

(L1, zombie).
Power 5: After mere seconds the hero exhorts the mummy to unlife. It grows supple and strong again. The mummy (L2) takes two actions per round.
Power 7: In a flash of soul fire hero transforms the corpse into a swift and ravenous ghoul (L4). It springs up, faster and stronger than in life. It acts immediately and takes three actions per round.

5. **Esbeen's Recalling of the Lost Soul**
#necromancy #energy #UVG
The wizard uses a corpse as bait to summon its soul, its *Ka*, back from the All-Fire. After an hour-long ritual a coiling serpent of ectoplasmic fire erupts from the corpse's orifices. The wizard can easily capture the soul to animate a golem or recharge a golem battery. This kind of soul abuse is possibly reprehensible.
Power 2: The hero summons back a Level 1 soul.
Power 4: Recalls a Level 2 soul.
Power 6: A Level 3 soul. Etc.

6. **Esbeen's Recalling of the Lost Soul and Reanimation of the Corpse**
#necromancy #UVG
The wizard uses a corpse as a focus to summon its soul back from the All-Fire. After an hour, the soul is bound back to its own corpse— essentially creating a corpse golem. The reanimated abomination is not imbued. Depending on time of death, very little of the original personality might remain. Unless somehow preserved, the corpse continues to decay. This kind of soul abuse is certainly reprehensible.
Power 3: The hero summons back a Level 1 soul.
Power 6: A Level 2 soul. Etc.

7. **Esbeen's Turning of the Mill Wheel of Essential Existence**

#necromancy #chronomancy #UVG #dangerous

With the half-mythic Turning spell the wizard replaces one individual creature that survived an event (accident, battle, or other incident) with another that did not; swapping who lived and who died.

Power 5: The hero spends a week painting a grand four-dimensional design of soul lines, world memories, possibility matrices, and erotic essentialisms. The design is large enough to cover a courtyard or patio. When the spell's target enters the central area of the design it is instantly dispersed into a probability cloud. The previously-dead creature then coalesces in a shower of sparks. The incident must have occurred no more than a month ago.

Power 10: No more than a year ago.
Power 15: A decade ago.

8. **Esbeen's Words With the Dead**
   #necromancy #UVG

   The wizard touches their forehead to that of a dead creature, summoning memory, dream, and desire back into this world. So long as the wizard maintains the touch they can hold a conversation, lending their own mouth and features to the dead and speaking in turn: first in their own voice, then the voice of the dead.

   Power 1: After an hour of chanting, the hero channels the spirit's personality-memory. Enough to answer one question.

   Power 2: After a few minutes the hero channels five questions.

   Power 3: Hero triggers an instant connection, allowing a conversation of an hour or more.

EQUIPMENT

To be inserted, yeah. Soon.

EXTRAS

Extras are simplified secondary characters, both antagonists and protagonists that provide the backdrop to the heroes' adventures.

Sidekicks and pets are secondary characters that a player or players control over time and improve by investing xp. Each sidekick has a main hero they look up to.

Generic Sidekick Promotions

Level	Invest	Effect
1	–	nil
2	500 xp	+1 Def, +1d8 Life, +1d4-3 Sum (minimum 0), +1d4-3 Abilities or Skills (minimum 0)
3	1000 xp	+1 Def, +1d8 Life, +1d3-2 Sum (min 0), +1d3-2 Abilities or Skills (min 0)
4	2000 xp	+1 Def, +1d8 Life, +1d2-1 Sum, +1d2-1 Abilities or Skills
5	3500 xp	+1 Def, +1d8 Life, +1 Sum, +1 Ability or Skill

DXX SIDEKICKS, PETS, & CREATURES OF THE ULTRAVIOLET HEROES

1. **Boney Horse** (L3, devoted)
Def: 13, Life: 16, Sum: +5
Attack: trample 1d10, Carry: 4
Abilities: *ever-growing silver barding*.
Silver barding grows upon the boney horse. It can be harvested sustainably, providing 1d10 cash per day. If the entire barding is removed it provides 100 cash, but takes a month to regrow.
Deathless. It feels neither thirst nor hunger. It never tires and is proof against sharp missiles and blades. If destroyed, it reforms from dust in 2d4 weeks.
A doomed steed to serve a chosen death knight. Or some fool hero.

2. **Brains** (L2, investigator)
Def: 10, Life: 10, Sum: +5
Razor sharp, this sidekick loves to stay in the background and has now found their perfect master. It hardly matters why they feel so little ambition, when they're so good at ferreting out secrets, planting false evidence, and finding hidden clues. Alas, they are (roll d6): (1) often depressed, (2) fond of over-eating, (3) utterly terrified of pain and violence, (4) completely without empathy, (5) a fool for games of chance, (6) saddled with a crippling drug habit.

3. **Electric Abominations** (L1–L5)
#electric #ka #undead #horror
Def: 9+L, Life: 5 × L, Sum: +3+L
Attack: amplified natural attacks (1d4* × L electric and physical damage)
Ability: anything that touches an electric abomination suffers L electric damage and tests (Target 6 + L) or is stunned for one round.
Imbued Oh Mega monsters created by

binding electric Ka spirits to mortal creatures (or their corpses). Left to their own devices, they can follow simple orders ("Kill everyone who enters!" or "Let no one pass" or "Attack anyone who touches the Seven-Sided Cube of Ineffability"). Giving more a more precise order ("Attack the orange goblin!") is an action.

Each is abominable in its own special way (d6):

1. **Bowel-Loosening Hum**
   Nearby creatures must test Endurance every round or their muscles involuntarily relax, disadvantaging all physical activity (Target 6 + L).

2. **Explosive Overcharge**
   When struck by a critical blow, the electric abomination explodes in a shower of sparks, setting nearby objects on fire and dealing Ld6 damage to all nearby creatures.

3. **Not Life As We Knew It**
   The abomination is immune to critical hits and other special combat maneuvers.

4. **Parasympathetic Shutdown**
   On a critical hit, the abomination's target suffers a heart attack.

5. **Stunning Touch**
   Its touch stuns for 1d4 rounds (Target 6 + L).

6. **Terror Radiation**
   Nearby creatures test Aura every round or they begin hallucinating their deepest subconscious fears, causing them to cower or flee in terror (Target 2 + L).

4. **Emotional Support Golem** (L1–L4, Viviform Synthetic)
   #synthetic #pet
   Def: 6 + 2 × L, Life: 1 + 5 × L, Sum: L

Attack: bite or kick (1d4* or 1d6*)
Ability: though they look just like their organic counterpart, they are far more enduring and can carry heavier physical and emotional burdens.

Many viviform synthetics are leftovers from the Jade Egg Wellness Corporation Cult's Age of Expansion. They are scattered around the metaverses, often still in their original packaging-cradles, still as statues, their Null-HeartTM batteries ready to propel them into motion, providing much needed emotional support and serving their new masters. Often even if their masters do not want service.

Each of these viviforms is oddly useless in its own way (d6):

7. **Support Skunk**
   The golem releases an overpowering, foul, muscle-relaxing odour that weakens every creature that smells it, disadvantaging physical activities.

8. **Reality Blanket Squirrel**
   The golem's skin unfurls from its synthetic frame to shield itself and its master from incoming missile attacks. All missile attacks against the two targets are made at a disadvantage and deal half damage. The golem can't really do much else while it's holding its own skin up as a shield.

9. **Opiate Teat Swine**
   The golem releases a blue-green milk from special psychotropic glands, which helps its master forget what they just saw.

10. **Environmental Cow**
    The golem comes equipped with a belly vesicle in which the master can shelter from extreme environments (cold, heat, vacuum).

11. **Heat Ray Dog**
    The golem has a hidden heat ray weapon. When unfolded, the golem gains an additional attack action each round (Short range, 2d6* damage).

12. **Alarum Goose**
    The golem's sonic attack stuns nearby targets and alerts its master (Target 6 + 2 × L).

5. **Eternal Weapon** (L3, angel or demon)
   Def: 19, Life: 20, Sum: +5
   An unearthly weapon with a mind of its own. By turns grim-brooding and wild-laughing, sometimes kind, other times withdrawn. Is it the hero's master or their slave? Does it promise hope or despair?
   While holding the weapon, the hero's Life increases by 1 point for each of their levels. They can also use the eternal weapon's Life for spell-casting. If the weapon's Life total is depleted it grows heavy and unwieldy, but it cannot be destroyed. If lost, it will somehow reappear within a week. Like a bad penny.
   This time round the glittery sky it's form is that of an (roll d6): (1) axe, (2) hammer, (3) spear, (4) polearm, (5) sword, or (6) gun. The voidly wickedness of the eternal weapon always deals damage with advantage.

6. **Ex Parrot** (no level, deceased).
   #joke
   Def: 19, Life: no, Sum: -10
   Attack: pining (1d6)
   It just lays there, pining for the fjords. There is no magitech that could bring it back.

7. **Fellow Skeleton** (L1, loyal)
   Def: 11, Life: 8, Sum: +3
   Attack: scrape 1d6 (or weapon)
   A splendidly loyal animated skeleton servant. Not very smart, but capable of

following precise instructions. Makes useful construction or field labor. Can be instructed to dance to repetitive electronic tunes.

8. **Flunky** (L1, secretary)
   Def: 9, Life: 5, Sum: +3
   A loyal but cowardly sidekick who does research and secretarial tasks, carries out the hero's orders and brews a mean (roll d6): (1) coffee, (2) tea, (3) beer, (4) sleeping tincture, (5) mind-numbing draught, (6) storm in a teacup.

9. **Gnawing Beetle Pet** (L0, undead)
   Def: 14, Life: 3, Sum: +1
   Attack: ineffectual scrabbling (1)
   Its carapace gleams with the lustre of a thousand splendid jewels. Its eyes burn with the fires of a hundred wasted lives. It gnaws bone and gristle and flesh and evacuates (roll d6): (1) virulently malodorous eggs,(2) minute hairballs, (3) incense pellets, (4) inkstone flakes engraved with minute memories, (5) tiny pearls, or (6) edible manna.

10. **Guns** (L2, recovering mercenary)
    Def: 16, Life: 13, Sum: +5
    A gold-toothed sidekick with an evil smile. They have a well-earned reputation as a fast-draw, and go about in a travel-stained cloak that conceals a half-living armor from a fallen Scorpion Kingdom. When not on duty they (roll d6): (1) collect matchboxes, (2) go hunting, (3) read racy adventure novels, (4) garden, (5) play darts with maniacal dedication, (6) visit junk sales.

11. **Metal Steed** (L2, shiny)
    #steed #disguised #pet
    Def: 15, Life: 12, Sum: +3
    Attack: short-range flame breath (1d6*)
    Capacity: 2 sacks
    It roars like thunder and gleams like a chrome elemental. On closer inspection it is a (roll d6): (1) living metal skeleton, (2) mirror-skinned horse, (3) golem

steed, (4) a null-battery powered motorcycle with sidecar, (5) an actual chrome elemental, (6) a life-drinking alien.

12. **Money** (L2, noble backer)
Def: 9, Life: 11, Sum: +4
A good-humored and slightly naive aristocrat. They were an illegitimate child who came into their fortune through the machinations of a sharp-witted aunt twice removed. Now they feel a vague urge to make the world a better place by funding ways to (roll d6): (1) bring high culture to the peasantry, (2) disprove superstitions and charlatans, (3) promote a national awakening, (4) make the citizenry see the truth of an unpopular occult practice, (5) alleviate poverty through eugenics, (6) explain the natural inequalities underpinning the aristocratic orders and thus stop the revolutionary urges that would lay waste the civilized world.

13. **Muscle** (L2, enforcer)
Def: 15, Life: 15, Sum: +4
A scarred sidekick with a murky past. They're scary with words, knives, guns, and other concealed weapons. They always wear a battered battle-vest under their clothes if at all possible. In a vulnerable moment they also reveal a familiarity with (roll d6): (1) dog breeding, (2) vehicle maintenance, (3) chess and strategy games, (4) miniature tree cultivation, (5) rambling and hiking, (6) watercolors and fine arts.

14. **Naive Apprentice** (L1, fanatical)
Def: 10, Life: 7, Sum: +4
The apprentice is good at cooking, cleaning, laundering, carrying things, and learning. They will give their life to save their (roll d6): (1) mysterious locket, (2) orphan sibling, (3) clan's honor, (4) heirloom dagger, (5) pet hamster, (6) tiny potted plant collection.

Special: the naive apprentice adds +1 to all sidekick promotion rolls.

15. **Protege** (L1, Research Fellow)
Def: 7, Life: 7, Sum: +4
An eager, short-sighted sidekick who does research, works on their thesis and brews coffee. In their leisure time they (roll d6): (1) do improv theatre, (2) re-enact historical events, (3) perform as a clown, (4) write racy accounts of hero's exploits, (5) experiment with psychedelic drugs, (6) dabble in the occult.

16. **Scruffy Dog** (L2, wise)
#dog #pet
Def: 14, Life: 9, Sum: +4
Attack: tenacious bite (1d6)
Ability: Any creature it bites is slowed until the dog lets go or it manages to land a blow on the dog.
The dog looks utterly non-descript, but within its eyes burns a fierce intelligence that has seen void ships on fire off the shores of Titan and heard the terrible song of the Zu Complex.

17. **Significant Other Golem** (L3, quirky)
#butler #golem
Capacity: 2 sacks
Def: 15, Life: 15, Sum: +5
Attack: machine hand chop (1d6)
A not-quite-sentient semi-humanoid golem built by (roll d6): (1) a parent, (2) a sibling, (3) another relative, (4) a good friend, (5) a mentor, (6) an enemy. It comes with over seven hundred pre-coded subroutine lemmas and follows voiced commands, so long as they are preceed with a ritual phrase, such as "Hey, <significant other>'s butler …"

18. **Skeleton Otter** (L1, hyperactive)
#otter #pet #undead
Def: 12, Life: 4, Sum: +4
Attack: nibbly nip (1d4)
Ability: When the otter runs out of Life it collapses in a heap of bones. Some

mysterious cosmic force always reassembles it within an hour or two. It's an undead otter skeleton. It still likes clams.

19. **Sleepy Cat** (L1)
#pet #cute #cat
Def: 17, Life: 9, Sum: 5
Attack: none
Ability: When the cat falls asleep in someone's lap it immediately restores 1 Life and makes them feel at ease.
The sleepy cat does not believe in violence. It does wish it had prehensile thumbs so it could use can openers.

20. **Sourcebeast** (L1)
#pet #sourcebeast
Def: 11, Life: 7, Sum: +3
Attack: bite (1d3)
Ability: A biomancer can tap its life points to cast spells.
An odd creature about the size of a terrier. To the untrained eye it looks like a (roll d6): (1) pot-bellied pig, (2) two-headed rat, (3) dome-faced dog, (4) spine-covered cat, (5) scaly mongoose, (6) bulbous gila monster. Each has an unusual ability:

1. **Metabolic Hyper-Regulation**
The beast can hibernate for months and months without food or water. It is also unusually resilient to hot and cold environments.

2. **Light-Emitting Third Eye**
The beast's third eye emits a bright light, like a torch.

3. **Pheromonic Emotion Modulator**
The beast emits pheromones that can provide [+] or [-] to tests against fear or other strong emotions.

4. **Enhanced Nutrient Glands**
The beast produces a nutrient-rich paste from small auxiliary glands. Normally, the quantities are small, but the beast can increase

production. For every 1 life point spent, it produces enough nutrition for a fully-grown baseline human.

5. **Photosynthetic Enhancement**
The beast is covered in symbiotic algal colonies that provide it with sustenance from the sun! Provided with bright light, it can go without food for a week or two.

6. **Shared Memory Growth**
The beast's brain is modified to store a one stone spell burden, serving as an expanded spell inventory for the biomancer. Comm-vine cables let a biomancer record, access, or replace the stored spell.

21. **Space Owl** (L4)
#bird #telepathic #pet
Def: 16, Life: 12, Sum: +6
Attack: mind-warping hoot (1d6 psychic damage to all adjacent creatures)
Special Attack: The space owl can swirl its eyes and steal part of a victim's mind (deal 1 Thought damage).
Ability: Telepathic communication.
It looks just like an ordinary little owl. But somehow it's incredibly fast. And sometimes it feels like it's saying things.

22. **Strange Mule** (L2)
#steed #grazing #sourcebeast
Def: 11, Life: 12, Sum: +3
Attack: kick (1d6)
Capacity: 2 sacks
Ability: a biomancer can tap the strange mule's life points to cast spells.
This mule's coat is oddly glossy. Queer ports are installed at meridian points.

23. **Thing, Cancer Bomb** (L4)
#horror #slow
Def: 6, Life: 30, Sum: +6
Attack: flailing tentacles (1d8 to all nearby creatures).
Ability: injured creatured must make a trivial Endurance test to avoid being

infected with the thing's spores.

A near-mindless mess of gore, ropes of keratin, legs of gristle, and bloody, hook-encrusted tentacles. Leave it to infect enough humans and it will become cunning and wise.

Infected Creatures: flailing ropes of gore burst out of their bodies, attacking the nearest target (Sum +6, 1d8 damage). The infected takes 2d6* damage per round as a new thing gestates inside them. The infected can attempt a very hard Endurance test every round to vomit out the growth that is eating them from within. The immature growth will twitch and die, exposed to the lungstuff too soon for its alien skin. If the infected dies before vomiting out the growth, a new cancer bomb thing emerges.

24. **Vorpal Rabbit** (L3)
    #fast #cute
    Def: 10, Life: 20, Sum: +9
    Attack: throat-ripping bite (3d6* terrible damage)
    Ability: The vorpal rabbit lands a critical hit on 17–20.
    It looks just like a wee little bunny. It's very docile unless severely provoked. Even if thrown into the midst of a battle it won't attack first.

25. **Wirefolk** (L2, blank slate)
    Def: 13, Life: 13, Sum: +5
    New, living person created from dead bodies by an electric wizard. Their bioelectric parts make them stronger than a normal person, but also grotesque and terrifying. When first created, they are innocent blank slates, recalling nothing of their previous life. With their super-charged brain they learn at prodigious speed.
    Creating a wire person usually takes a week and requires suitable organic parts harvested from fresh 'donors', a sack of electrical supplies, and a sack of educational supplies. An additional 2d6

weeks of education is common. They do not require control modules, but can kept as mind-controlled slaves if such modules are used.

An individual wirefolk will be very fond of (roll d6): (1) poetry, (2) wood-carving, (3) philosophy, (4) games of chance, (5) monastic solitude, (6) the natural sciences. In appearance, the flawed nature of their creator is always manifest and they are (roll d6): (1) lopsided, (2) red as burnt flesh, (3) apparently skinless, (4) bloated and suppurating, (5) hard like rubber or plastic, (6) threaded with wires and metal.

Wirefolk have been reported with a variety of abilities:

1. **Electrical Healing**
   They regain 1 Life point per minute when a powerful voltage is applied to them.

2. **Resilient Physique**
   They have advantage to tests against unusually hot or cold environments, which would harm most humans.

3. **Redundant Organs**
   Even after being reduced to 0 Life, they reanimate a couple of hours later (easy test) unless they have been mutilated or dismembered.

4. **Electric Immunity**
   They take no damage from electrical attacks.

5. **Electrographic Memory**
   They have almost flawless recall for electromagnetic information.

26. **Wire Ghoul** (L2, electric zombie)
    #electric #ka #undead
    Def: 8, Life: 13, Sum: +4
    Attack: fists (1d6* electric damage)
    Ability: their touch stuns for 1d4 rounds (Target 8)
    Dead bodies, reassembled and returned to life with wires and the power of

Mother Electricity. Their metal-threaded bodies crackle with a mockery of life, their movement provided by the *Ka* batteries embedded in their bellies. They are directed with control modules that weigh a stone each. The creator must always have the control module about their person, or the wire ghoul becomes undirected. The minds of undirected ghouls collapse into mad rage within days.

Creating a wire ghoul usually takes a week and a sack of electrical supplies. Some Wire Ghouls have been reported with other unusual abilities, like:

1. **Explosive Batteries**
   When struck a critical blow, the wire ghoul explodes dealing 3d6 damage to all nearby creatures. This usually kills the ghoul.

2. **Parasympathetic Shutdown**
   When the ghoul rolls a critical strike, the target's parasympathetic nervous system overloads. Breathing stops. The heart stops. Death often follows.

3. **Short Circuit Ghoul**
   Whenever the ghoul rolls a natural 6 with any die, whatever it touches (or the surface it is standing on) catches fire.

27. **War Pig** (L3, cunning)
    #pig #mammal #biomodified
    Def: 13, Life: 13, Sum: +6
    Attack: gore (2d6*) and trample (1d4 to all adjacent)
    Ability: When the war pig runs out of Life there is a 50% chance it is faking and actually still has 7 life.
    At some point a biomancer general in the Bloodiron Legion Free Democracy came up with the brilliant idea of creating bioenhanced warpigs. Over the years most of them lost their venomous bites and hypnotic gazes, but their herds continue to terrorize remote free-steads in the Glazed Reach.

DAIMONS FOR DAIMONOLOGISTS

d20	Level	Name	Ability	Quirk
1	1d20	Child of Flies	A disastrous incompetence	Fears garlic
2–3	1d6*	Petty Needs, Dirty Deeds	An annoying distraction, a painful stupidity	Loves yellow flowers
4–7	1d4*	A Tree, A Brook, A Stone	A small change in the world, a quickening or a slowing	Despairs in running water
8–12	1d6-1	A Basic Need, A Fundamental Desire	An unusual event becomes common, the common rare	Dances under falling leaves
13	1d12*	A Humorous Quip	A stroke of odd fortune	Dreams in song
14–15	1d6+1	A Platonic Essence, A Forgotten Thing	The rules of the world cease to apply for a while	Obsessively solves puzzles
15–19	2d6	A Fine Sentiment, An Essential Truth	A large change is introduced into the world	Entranced by beauty
20	3d6	A Great Emotion	Something out of nothing	Mocks mortals
20 /20	3d6*	A Higher Purpose, An Essential Avatar	The ratchet of history clatters across another peg	Cannot see the sun or moon
20 /20 /20	6d6*	Lightbringer, Lord of Truths, Devourer of Falsehoods, Creator of the Material World, Urgent Wisdom, The Forbidden	As far as mortals are concerned, this might as well be a deity. Powerful beyond compare, they uplift or raze kingdoms and cities and mountains.	Capricious. One moment kind, then cruel, one night a creator, another day a destroyer.

— sai fe gell ny byo nomen —

GOLEM BLUEPRINTS FOR TECHNOMANCERS

Nearly any other normal extra or sidekick could also be duplicated as a golem.

d20	Name	Level	Def	Life	Sum	Attack	Ability	Power Cost
1	Clockwork Spider	0	17	1	+5	bite (1)	Useful for reconnaissance or delivering poisons.	1
2–3	Ticking Rat	0	16	5	+4	bite (1d4)	Fast and sturdy as a mechanical cockroach.	2
4–7	Jeweled Bird	0	18	1	+5	claws (1)	Tiny, beautiful toy. A useful recording scout.	1
8–12	Golden Goblin	2	15	15	+6	cleaving blades (1d6+1)	Battle golem modeled on a vicious goblin.	3
13	Mechanical Horse	2	14	15	+4	kick or trample (1d8+1)	A near-tireless steed. Shiny and chrome.	5
14–15	Walking Giant	4	10	30	+5	punch (1d12+3)	Takes half damage from all sources. Can carry caster in its belly.	6
15–19	Wicker Autowagon	3	12	27	+6	run over (1d10+2)	Fast, self-propelled golem wagon of synthetic ivory, iron-reed, and rubber.	5
20	High Culture Vech	9	13	110	+3	trample (1d20+9)	Slow, enormous walker golem. Takes half damage. from all sources. Carries 5 passengers in internal pods. The most stylish travel systems money and magic make possible.	7

— taq ósep ó tuẏe, taq óset ó tela —

50 MORE PETS

Heroes can start with or find all sorts of other pets. The pets on the list can serve as a start for the players' imaginations. All pets start at level 1 by default.

d50	Animal	Def	Life	Gain	Sum	Carry	Attack	Ability	Likes
1	Sneaky Cat	14	5	+2	+3	0	Scratchy claws (1d4).	Jump on head, scratching and confusing target.	Pie
2	Fluffy Dog	12	5	+2	+3	0	Nippy teeth (1d4).	Nip at the heels, slowing down the target.	Shoes
3	Big Dog	12	9	+3	+2	1	Crunching jaws (1d8).	Bowl over target in a spray of drool and enthusiastic paws.	Trousers
4	Jumping Crab	15	5	+2	+1	0	Painful pinch (1d4).	Leap onto humorously inappropriate location and pinch embarrassingly.	Flowers
5	Loping Crocodile	13	11	+4	+3	1	Big bitey mouth (1d10+2).	Bite and twist to pull off a chunk of flesh, leaving a gushing wound.	Water
6	Boa Constrictor	12	11	+4	+2	0	Constricting coils (1d6+2).	Constrict a target and keep squeezing until it suffocates.	Wheels
7	Tusky Boar	12	11	+5	+2	1	Goring tusks (1d6+2).	Knocks over target like a bowling pin when it charges.	Cake
8	Cunning Sheep	11	7	+3	+3	1	Big horns (1d8+2).	Likes to sneak up and knock targets off cliffs and ledges (advantage on ledges).	Rations
9	Bunny of Chaos	11	3	+1	+4	0	Big bitey teeth (1d4).	Big vorpal bitey teeth that can take a head clean off.	Running away
10	Glamorous Goat	12	7	+3	+2	1	Pointy horns (1d6+1).	Rock-hopping hooves for climbing sheer cliffs and trees.	Sleeping
11	Grand Stag	13	9	+4	+2	2	Magnificent antlers (1d10).	Dramatic, awe-inspiring pose. Also, weapons get caught in antlers.	Scratching
12	Cute Spider	11	3	+1	+3	0	Venomous bite (1, dizziness).	Soft fur and gentle feet calm down scared creatures and children.	Trees
13	Veteran Horse	11	13	+3	+2	2	Trampling hooves (2d6+2).	Has mastered the parting kick. Good when retreating.	Leather

d50	Animal	Def	Life	Gain	Sum	Carry	Attack	Ability	Likes
14	Remembering Raven	12	3	+1	+3	0	Hurtful peck (1).	Can memorize a single spell. It's like a flying mini-wizard!	Snow
15	Ominous Owl	12	3	+1	+4	0	Mouse-hunting talons (1).	Silent avenger, it flies without provoking counterattacks.	Stepping on feet
16	Sand Octopus	12	3	+2	+2	0	Face-hugging tentacles (1d4).	Camouflage skin lets it hide in plain sight.	Curling up in front of the fire
17	Baby Dragon	13	1	+7	+4	0	Sharp teeth (1d4).	Breathes fire, dealing damage equal to its health. Also grows quickly and flies.	Boxes
18	Blithe Badger	12	9	+3	+1	0	Relentless bite (1d6).	Is completely immune to magic. Often also to commands.	Holes
19	Mischievous Monkey	12	5	+3	+3	1	Surprisingly big teeth (1d4).	An expert pick-pocket.	Mud
20	Devilish Donkey	11	8	+4	+2	2	Kicky feet (1d6+1).	Has a secret pact with a devil. Rerolls all 1s. Smells of brimstone.	Poop
21	Punctilious Parrot	13	3	+1	+3	0	Nut-cracking beak (1d2).	Expert in a surprising number of diplomatic and plantation protocols. Also, talks. A lot.	Seeds
22	Magic Magpie	14	2	+1	+3	0	Scratchy talons (1).	Has an extra-dimensional pouch where it can hide a few small, shiny objects.	Bad jokes
23	Unlucky Duck	12	3	+2	+2	0	Ear-piercing quack (1).	Everyone around the pet critically fails on 1s and 2s. The pet cannot critically fail.	Eating books
24	Terrifying Ostrich	12	8	+3	+2	1	Vicious kick (1d6+1).	Long-distance runner, has advantage on all travel checks.	Bones
25	Cute Kangaroo	12	9	+3	+2	1	Punch (1d6).	Advantage when jumping. Useful for crossing crevasses.	Digging
26	Rage Wombat	13	7	+4	+2	0	Murderous headbutt (1d6).	Resistant to all damage when angry, which is most of the time.	Making noise
27	Mongoose	14	4	+2	+3	0	Sharp teeth (1d4).	Snake-killer. Advantage to all rolls against snakes.	Running in circles
28	Friendly Otter	13	5	+2	+3	0	Smiling teeth (1d4).	Can use tools. Also, brings oysters and crayfish to its master.	Ambushing

d50	Animal	Def	Life	Gain	Sum	Carry	Attack	Ability	Likes
29	Venomous Viper	13	3	+1	+4	0	Cytotoxic venomous bite (1).	Venom breaks down blood cells, causes severe swelling, and possibly death.	Spitting
30	Battle Panda	11	13	+5	+2	1	Paw swipe (1d6+2).	Grabs target in a bear hug, carrying and crushing it.	Hissing
31	Leopard	13	8	+4	+4	0	Disabling bite (1d8+2).	Jumps from above, knocking a creature down and backstabbing it for double damage.	Licking
32	Cheeky Cheetah	13	7	+3	+3	0	Neck bite (1d8).	Incredibly fast, the pet has advantage to initiative and chases.	Slobbering
33	Sturdy Tortoise	15	5	+3	+2	1	Doleful glare (0).	Slow and steady, the pet can teleport once per day to slightly overtake its master.	Eggs
34	Lab Rat	12	3	+1	+3	0	Nibbly bite (1d3).	Can test potions and poisons with startling accuracy and good chances of survival.	Strangers
35	Dire Hamster	12	11	+4	+2	1	Vicious bite (1d8+2).	Can carry an extra sack's worth of gear in cheek pouches. Sure, it'll be drool-covered.	Standing very still
36	Love Leech	7	3	+3	+1	0	Leeching bite (1d4).	Its bite can cure some diseases or draw poison out of the blood.	Splashing water
37	Big Bear	12	17	+5	+3	2	Thunder paw (1d8+2).	Each pot of honey restores 1d8+1 health to the pet. Honey power!	Eating grass and weeds
38	Elegant Llama	11	7	+3	+2	2	Kicky feet (1d6).	It sheds incredible amounts of soft, warm wool. Also, can keep a person warm in winter.	Alcohol
39	Camel	12	12	+4	+2	3	Trampling feet (1d8+1).	Incredible spitting ability, it can put out a torch at thirty paces with a single spit.	Cream
40	Suspicious Coyote	13	6	+3	+3	0	Sharp bite (1d6).	It can smell a trick or a ruse.	Blood
41	Laughing Jackal	12	5	+2			Sneaky bite (1d4+1).	It's very good at provoking targets into doing something foolish. Also, it talks.	Crawling into small spaces

d50	Animal	Def	Life	Gain	Sum	Carry	Attack	Ability	Likes
42	Scavenger Raccoon	12	6	+3	+2	1	Beetle-crunching teeth (1d4+1).	Always finds something halfway useful and mostly worthless in any pile of trash.	Tearing clothes
43	Possum	13	4	+1	+3	0	Snuffling bite (1d3).	Insect destroyer, it can keep a small area clear of vermin.	Fishing
44	Amphibious Goldfish	11	3	+1	+2	0	Bubbles (1).	Grants one very small wish per day (rerolling one die).	Snoring loudly
45	Regal Cobra	12	5	+2	+3	0	Neurotoxic venomous bite (1d4).	For some magical reason, can survive indefinitely in a wicker basket.	Bringing dead 'gifts'
46	Psychedelic Frog	11	3	+1	+2	0	Slappy footsies (1).	The pet's skin secretes a powerful contact hallucinogen. Do not rub pet on peoples' faces.	Riding on its master
47	Crawling Shrubbery	8	5	+6	+1	1	Poking root (1d4).	When it stands still, it looks perfectly harmless.	Learning new tricks
48	Pet Rolling Rock	15	5	+3	+1	0	Self-flung rock (1d4).	It needs neither food nor drink nor air. It is almost a perfect organism. Perhaps it is not even an organism.	Staring. Hard.
49	Rebel Lion	12	13	+4	+3	1	Pouncing strike (1d8+2).	Impressive roar spreads fear and loathing.	Marking its territory
50	Precocious Pony	10	6	+3	+1	1	Gentle kick (1d4).	Neighs answers to simple math questions and can smell traps.	Fighting

— qobi sveri le sveri staleh —

AGAINST THE AUTHORITY OF THE DESIGNER

Hi there. My name is Luka and I'm a human being. I also wrote and illustrated the whole *Ultraviolet Grasslands*. And this book. And some others. I've also designed all the rules of Seacat. Well, when I say designed, I mean lifted those I liked from some games, house-ruled others, and hacked everything together until I enjoyed the result well enough. I tested it on core audiences of people who mattered to me, like long-time players, family, friends, acquaintances and some nice people who gave feedback, either on purpose or accidentally.

There is no magic to design. It's trial, error, and muddling. Is the result an idiosyncratic roleplaying game book? Yes, of course! Like every other such book since Gygax Arneson [sic].

Game rules are all made by ordinary people. Humans without unique insight into your game table. In the end, the only measure of the quality of this, or any, game book is whether or not you enjoy it, whether or not it is working for you and your friends.

Some of you will enjoy the rules as written, some of you will modify them to suit your tastes, some will cannibalize them for ideas All these approaches are fine. Indeed, inventing new rules and mechanics is a game all of its own.

So, I guess I'd say, this is my appeal to you: don't trust me as the final word on game design. Don't trust anyone! We're all just making it up as we go along.

—Luka, 2020

This column unintentionally left nearly blank.