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STIRKING GIANT

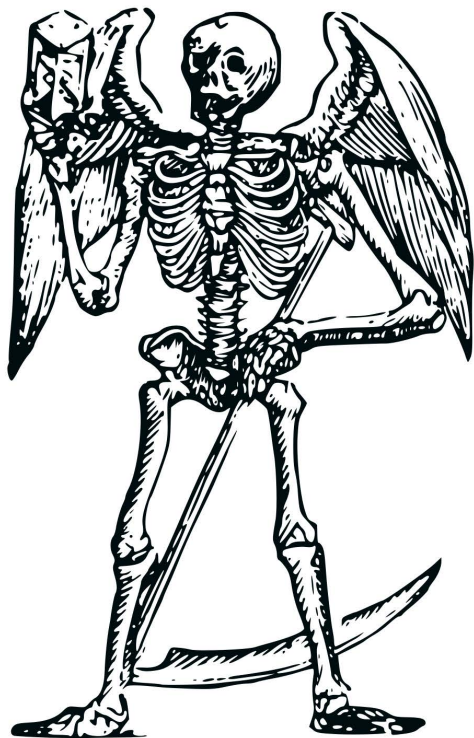


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STIRRING GIANT

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STIRRING GIANT

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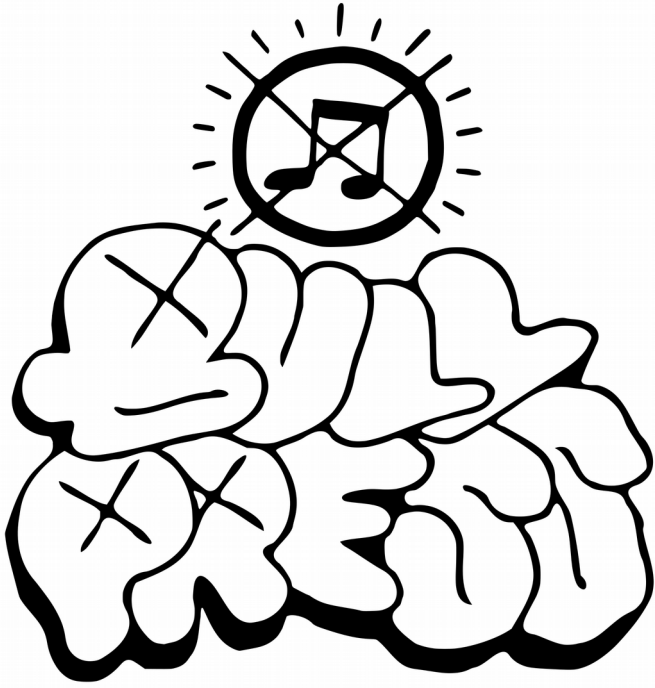


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EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW . . .

- ◆ Gameplay is conversational & cooperative
- ◆ 4 players is ideal, but 3 to 6 is fine too
- ◆ One player is the Key Narrator: they run the game for the other players
- ◆ Everybody else creates a main character & controls them in the game

HOW DO I DO THINGS?

You say it. For example, “I look into the alley, what do I see?” If it’s believable, you do it.

If it’s challenging (“I jump the huge gap”), the Key Narrator will tell you to **SPIN FOR IT** and you’ll flick the s6 spinner on the back of your book:

- | | |
|-------------|---------------|
| 6. Finessed | 3. Not really |
| 5. Success | 2. Failure |
| 4. Barely | 1. Faceplant |

If equipment, experience, distractions, general difficulty etc skew your chances . . .

EASY: the Key Narrator will have you spin s6 twice, taking the highest result.

DIFFICULT: spin s6 twice, take the *lowest*.

SPINNING

The back of the book is a spinner. Create an arm by looping one end of a paperclip or guitar string trimming. Fasten the loop over the spinner’s center-dot.

“s6” means a random number from 1 to 6. Flick the spinner arm; wherever it lands in the s6 ring is the result. “s10” is a random number from 1 to 10, “s4” means 1 to 4, etc.

MAIN CHARACTERS

The stars of the show. Everybody who isn’t the Key Narrator creates a main character, and the Key runs interesting scenarios for them. Any main character concept goes as long as it fits the setting, and starts humble (no superbeings or millionaires etc).

SPECIALS: powers and unique abilities for your main character.

SP: “Special Points”, what you buy and upgrade Specials with.

→ Character creation quick guide on page 52.

KEY NARRATOR

You run scenes for the main characters – interesting side characters for them to talk to, fights, problem-solving scenarios etc. The “arc” starting on the next page is a series of ready-to-run scenes leading to a narrative goal.

CLOSING CEREMONIES: at the end of each session, the Key awards SP for best performances etc (page 44 for all categories).

THE AMBITION

This is the common goal that keeps the main characters all pushing the plot in the same direction. The Ambition is set at the beginning of a game, and always has a large reward attached to it.

*All this is known as **DOMEFIECETV**, a conversational games system that can run any setting and any genre.*



STIRRING GIANT

A Conversational Game in Five Parts
Bull Press M M X X I I I

Summary: a near-future arc tracking down a depraved patrician in a lawless metropolis.

How to Run This: the Key Narrator just reads ahead a few pages and gets familiar with the approaching scenes (page 11 is plenty far to start). The other players (“actors”) don’t need to read anything: they just show up and the Key runs the game for them. Doesn’t hurt to keep a sheet of general notes to mark your place in the arc. Page 112 for example gameplay.

Length: sessions usually last 1 to 3 hours *but you can end it whenever you want*. Fill out sessions that went too fast with insertable bump scenes (page 42, go dogear quick).

Closing Ceremonies: run these at the end of each session, awarding SP for best performances etc. All categories on page 44.

Soundtrack: each scene has a single track you can throw on loop. If playing on the outside, or loading up a mp3 player for somebody inside, **all tracks are on bullpress.org**

***First Time Key Narrators:** fuck nerves. The friends are getting together to riff and bullshit with each other. They’re going to have a good time no matter what.

If your first session feels stiff, don’t sweat it, it’s not because you dropped the ball, *it’s because things are still developing* – the main characters don’t really have personalities yet, a crew dynamic is still brewing, and the setting doesn’t feel lived-in yet. The pilot session is still a good time, but where the hobby goes from good to great is two or three sessions in when the setting and characters start feeling familiar, start coming to life a little, and start relating to each other in interesting ways. There’s a reason it takes a couple episodes to get hooked on a TV show, you know?

Besides that, Keying is easy: just give the main characters engaging shit to do, see what gets people stoked, and find interesting ways to give your actors what they want.

Setting: Saint Disma R.E.S., 2140 AD

A neon-soaked megametropolis of nearly 20 million built on an artificial island in the South China Sea. The main characters are all from Municipal Zone 3, a working class neighborhood of migrants mostly from the decaying US empire.

Tech: what you'd expect for 2100s technology, except . . .

- 1.) **Firearms weak:** the development of velocity-triggered bose fields, called "parafields", have made firearm technology far less devastating (but still dangerous), ushering in a new renaissance of hand-to-hand weaponry.
- 2.) **Space unexplored:** just a few asteroid mining operations, observatories, research stations, and personal palaces of the ultra-rich.
- 3.) **No internet:** the era of quantum computing and a century of cyberwarfare have rendered most network protocols impossible. Vestigial cyberweapons that hijack device processors to recursively self-improve and then self-transmit have seeded their sleeper-hash throughout any device with more than a few KB of storage, like undetectable, hypermutating DNA that kills its host after transmission. Recent generations of digital devices have thus been inherently airgapped (built unable to interface with other devices in any way) and communication devices built without storage.
- 4.) **Phones minimal:** unable to receive texts or voicemail, or even store phone numbers (see above item). Basically just sophisticated walkie-talkies.

Plutocracy: Saint Disma (Région Économique Souveraine) was conceived by international financiers as a civic project to vacuum up regional trade revenues and juke just about every law transnational corporations find inconvenient. Standard government services are almost all privatized, elites maintain legal teams that make them effectively above the law, and the few organs of state only do the bidding of their lobbyists.

Language: mass immigration and a privatized education system has turned the island into a Tower of Babel. French and Mandarin Chinese are dominant, but English, Hindi, Russian, Japanese, and Indonesian are also common. The language / cultural proclivities of the ruling class is French.

The Cladogenic Population: about .01% of humans are now being born with psionic viability (able to manipulate reality with the mind), or other polyploid mutations, very probably as an unforeseen afterclap of the early days of genetic engineering.

Privatized Security: there are no police in St. Disma. Instead, well-heeled citizens and businesses keep security firms on retainer, hire private detective agencies, and occasionally contract international mercenary corps.

This tangled web of security institutions reduces response time and force, a major factor in the lawlessness and pervasive crime of the city. Zero civilian oversight ensures security contractors can be bribed or bought, and their ranks are full of pathological assholes whose dream job is having absolute power over any civilian they encounter.

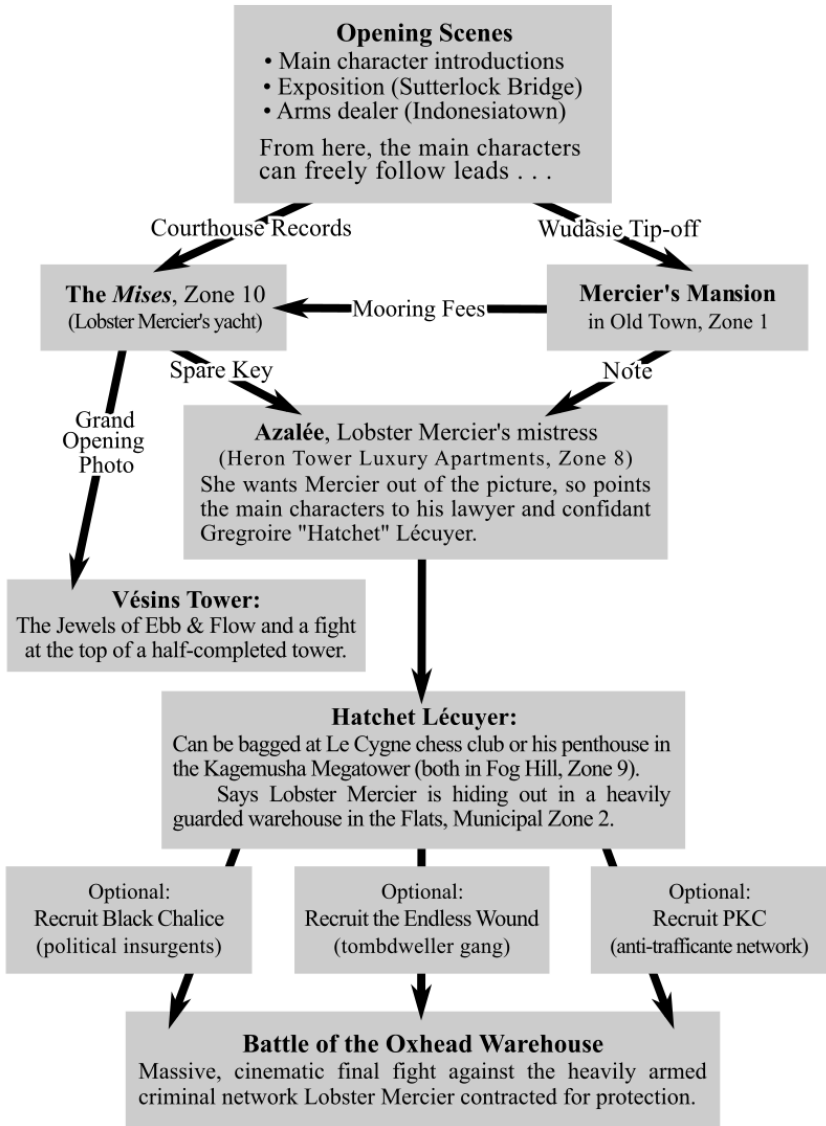
Big names include Paladin Group, Secom Global, Crown Holdings, and Tengpai Consolidated. Still usually called cops, hooks, heat, fuzz etc.

Gritty: life is hard in St. Disma. Workers toil long hours with no meaningful protections, sign their paychecks over to unworking rent-seekers, and regularly die from preventable disease. An expression of resignation you'll often hear is "c'est la monde" (*say-la-mohnd*, "that's the world"). A popular response from political radicals is "a better world is possible," often used as a subtle identifier among one another.

Premise

After a partial high-rise collapse in their neighborhood kills dozens, the main characters volunteer to hunt down the man responsible – Étienne “Lobster” Mercier, prominent socialite and notorious slumlord – and bring him before a citizens’ tribunal instead of the fucked St. Disma courts.

Storyline Flow: progresses downward, whether as a relatively straight line or zig-zagging to scenes of interest . . .



Arc Intro

Soundtrack: Bones - HDMI Instrumental

→ **Read italicized sections of text out loud, starting with:**

This joint's setting is the grimy megametropolis of St. Disma, 2140 AD. Spanning an artificial island in the South China sea, it was founded last century by French oligarchs to circumvent just about every law the ultra-wealthy and transnational corporations find distasteful.

St. Disma is a city of profound tensions: parapolitical insurgencies, criminal syndicates, and the privatized police forces of the city's robber barons are all actively at war with each other, shooting it out in the slums and boulevards. An emerging cladogenic minority born with composite mutations – an unforeseen consequence of ancestral genetic engineering – have become the perfect scapegoat for a sitting government hoping to distract from its legitimacy crisis.

The founding logic of the city has reached its natural conclusion: from the penthouse boardrooms of multinational corporations to the crews of small-timers battling for control of a dozen different dope trades, the criminal ecosystem is illuminated equally by gala chandeliers and the neon signage set in the permanent shade of a thousand skyscrapers.

Now – this is important – each of you create, then play a main character in this show: the type of character that would volunteer for a probably violent, definitely dangerous job defending the neighborhood they grew up in, the slums of Municipal Zone 3 . . .

Main Character Creation

Soundtrack: Craig Mack - Flava in Ya Ear Instrumental

Each actor creates a main character. Since you'll be Key Narrator this arc, *do not make a main character*.

QUICKLIST

(this list also on page 52: send everybody there if they have their own book)

1. Snatch a main character sheet from page 127
2. Concept: name, appearance, background etc
3. Pick Specials: page 55 - 69, start with 10 SP's worth (you can start here if you're still thinking on a concept)
4. Start with merk 10
5. Start with 0 defense (top number is just all lower numbers added together)
6. Start with a move score of 5
7. Main characters fluent in English (spoken by the mostly-American migrants of Zone 3). Spend a free bar in any additional language (St Disma multilingual)
8. Spend a bar in any major skill or language (two bars is fluent)
9. Put one point in any primary
10. Check page 53 for the bonus that primary gives you, write it down

→ The Key Narrator has veto power over corny shit, but don't be a tyrant.

Start humble: main characters start at level 1, which is just the average nobody with a few SP (so no experimental supersoldiers or millionaire recording artists etc).

The Glue: whatever the main characters' histories and relations, *bad blood is 100% off the table*: the main characters must trust and back each other for the show's duration. If anybody's ever about to fuck anybody else over, just say "Nah you don't do that," since it goes against the Glue.

Possessions: everybody starts with ¥500 (5 yuan = about 1 modern American dollar), a phone (voice calls only; no internet in this setting), and a place they stay at.

Time Limit: clearly set one before starting. Don't let one indecisive actor hold the first session up. An hour is plenty of time to create main characters.

Optional Development Questions

Help get a crew dynamic going and develop main characters by asking questions, especially if somebody is done early. Some ideas . . .

- How do they spend their free time?
- Why did they take the job? Money, politics, love of community, redemption?
- What do they respect most in a person?
- Are they more often called by a nickname? What's the story on how they got it?
- Do any of them know each other from around the neighborhood? Cousins, same job or hustle, shared hobby or creative scene, same church, underground contacts, drinking buddies, gym partners etc?
- What rumor precedes them? Is it true?
- Who do they run with?

Ask questions on anything interesting they bring up. Write down any material you might wanna use later on.

Intros

Soundtrack: Alchemist - Terry Instrumental

(Remember to read italics text blocks out loud)

Here's the show's premise: each of your main characters has accepted a job offered by your associate from the neighborhood, Saotome Katsumoto, better known as "Blackout" for causing one as a young boy. Whether for pay, justice, or love of community, you've signed on to hunt down the slumlord responsible for the collapse of Scilla Hills 10304, a high-rise tenement in the heart of Zone 3. While the papers and TV stations have downplayed the incident, a neighborhood that's long ago learned to look out for their own is organizing to bring those responsible to justice. Katsumoto mentioned he didn't have many details, but you know you're getting picked up at noon today to talk to the people who do.

Alright, we're gonna go around and have each of you describe where your main character lives and what their morning was like -- training, working on projects, taking care of a bizarre pet etc -- take a second to build up your character like that. Whose trying to go first?

Let each actor flesh out their intro scene. Ask questions about anything interesting they mention. Once their scene feels done, tell them they hear a horn honk twice, and jump to the next actor's scene.

Hangover Spotlight

Right before the most party-minded main character goes (ideally last), tell em:

You, actually, wake up feeling like you been struck by lightning; your eyelids are dry as bone, and your head is tormented by the searing halo of dehydration. The ringing in your ears gives way to a voice saying "you sleep in gorgeous, I'm just gonna make us some breakfast," and it aaaaall comes flooding back to you. You fucked up. Oh fuck you did you fuck up last night ... the apartment of an unfortunate acquaintance of yours, an absolute psychopath, swims into your vision. Describe psycho for us --

(Let them spit who they are / how they look / any quick details)

Foul. Now, sneak the fuck outta there.

Psycho's Apartment: the apartment is shaped like a P. The exit is the foot of the P, and the stem is the kitchen. Psycho is making breakfast and loudly singing Toto's "Could This Be Love".

The main character's belongings are scattered throughout the living room and bathroom. There's a fire escape out the bedroom window, but it stops 20 feet off the ground (if they **just jump** they take s8 offense and probably puke).

There are two little dogs, a fire alarm, and enough sheets to tie together into a rope.

There's no way to sneak through the kitchen without Psycho noticing. If the main character just talks to them, Psycho demands they stay and plan their future together.

If they try and **bolt through the kitchen**, it takes a minute to undo all the inside locks, so Psycho lights them up with egg after egg from an open carton on the counter while cursing them out (they might also take revenge later in the storyline).

Once they successfully escape, quickly montage their wretched train ride home, and **have them describe the rest of their short morning before getting picked up.**

Tagalog Side character: Saotome “Blackout” Katsumoto

Voice: slight Japanese accent

(Probably lightly roasts the hungover main character.)

Rides with the main characters for the duration of the arc unless killed. Has fully cybernetic legs (lost originals in the 2133 Acéphale bombings). Decently connected, well-respected, drives a dead clean 1966 Lincoln Continental convertible. Speaks fluent English and Japanese.

- **Optional character-building:** got his nickname from causing a blackout as a young boy by shitting off a building into the turbine of a power station and never lived it down (not forthcoming about the second half of that story). Came up rough in west central Zone 3. Runs an illegal bookies on Chrysanthemum st, and has a 5½ year old daughter named Shōko (after his grandmother) who’s with her mom this week.

- **How to play:** *keep him in the background.* He’s a safety net, not a main character for the Key. He should only ever offer guidance when the actors are completely stumped or about to fuck themselves. If the main characters are ever getting smashed out in a fight, have the enemies beat up on Katsumoto: *he should never be the last one standing.*

STATS

Offense s6 & s4 // Defense 3 // Merk 30 // Move 5

(Dual wields Ithaca IS9 longsword & matte black dagger; s6 kick if unarmed)

Specials: Gun It (extra move action once per fight)

O F F E N S E T A K E N

* * *

Voice Acting is Optional: if you aren’t good at voices or just think the concept is corny, don’t sweat it, you can just say “Katsumoto reminds you there’s still the spare keys lead to check out” and it gets the point across.

That said, voice acting side characters in the first person is powerfully immersive, makes them feel more present, and lets you just start talking in their voice without ever having to say who’s speaking. You don’t have to overdo it: a minor accent or change in tone is enough.

The Exposition: Sutterlock Bridge

Soundtrack: Q No Rap Name - Sutterlock Bridge

You glide along the teeming boulevards in a massive black brick of a classic Lincoln, top dropped to the summer breezes and speakers bumping oldies. Parking at a cafe, you head towards Sutterlock Bridge, bellowing gulls riding the seawinds above and container ships passing a hundred feet below.

You approach two figures looking out over the glistening waters of the bay, the colossal towers of downtown looming in the distance – Katsumoto claps hands with a big dude in a Saints jersey, and hugs a slender woman, clearly an old friend.

Katsumoto introduces each of the main characters to his two contacts.

Wudasie: dark skin, bird-boned, colorful headscarf. Voice: educated, no-nonsense.

Salvatore / “Big Man”: refrigerator sized white dude with a south Jersey accent.

Anybody with a security or street background can tell he has a pistol in his waistband.

Salvatore discreetly sets down a backpack on the sidewalk. Wudasie hands the main characters a picture of a fat, beady-eyed man with pinkish skin.

CONVERSATION POINTS

Wudasie does most of the talking, explaining all the details of the job . . .

- The picture is of Étienne Maurras Mercier [et-yen ma-raw *mer-see-ay*], born 3/19/97, better known as Lobster Merier for obvious reasons. This is the owner of Scilla Hills 10304, the tenement that collapsed early yesterday morning, so far killing 21.
- The main characters will recognize his name as one of the most hated slumlords in the city, with over-priced, neglected shithole tenements throughout Municipal Zone 3.
- Lobster Mercier is currently wanted for questioning, but even if he got charged by an honest prosecutor and faced an honest judge, the worst he would ever see is probation – same old story. It’s more likely he’ll just find a way to sneak off the island to resume his life of luxury elsewhere.
- Find Mercier before he skips town, bag him, and bring him around for a citizens’ tribunal. When they do there’s another ¥20,000 waiting for each of them.

Reasonable Questions

- **Any Leads?** The Lobster has a mansion in Old Town (Zone 1) that was busted up yesterday by a vengeful mob. Might be worth checking out.
- **Any Evidence?** Wudasie’s people have already talked to a few ex Scilla Hills tenants with copies of formal complaints submitted for integral spalling and signs of rebar corrosion, one dated as far back as the early 30s. Mercier’s properties being unsafe has been common knowledge for a while now, but evidence is indispensable to justice.

→ **In the backpack:** ¥5000 for each main character.

* Crew Ambition Established: Deliver the Lobster

Snatch up Lobster Mercier before he sneaks out of town and hand him over for a citizens’ trial. (Have your actors write “Deliver the Lobster” onto their character sheets under “Crew Ambition”)

Completion Value: +1 level and ¥20k each

Tooling Up

Soundtrack: Volume Ten - Pistolgrip Pump Instrumental

Katsumoto says they're headed to Indonesiatown to get set up with some weaponry.

Plotting: Katsumoto asks about leads on the drive there. His first thoughts are **A.)** Lobster Mercier's mansion or **B.)** checking if he has any records at the district courthouse.

Cove Street Music (Indonesiatown, Zone 4)

You park the Linc and cross the street towards a shop with "Cove Street Music" on the door. Katsumoto talks briefly with a tech behind the counter before she leads you through some backrooms filled with megalithic amplifier stacks, and buzzes you through a couple bomb-proof lookin doors. You step into a huge workshop bristling with every type of weapon imaginable. At the far end is a makeshift firing range with paper targets and rubber curtain backstops. A stocky asian man arises from a workbench full of partly-constructed stringed instruments. Dusting his hands off on a canvas shop apron he walks over to greet you . . .

Side character: Gao the Luthier

Voice: Cold Chillin

Chainsmoking arms dealer. If the crew talk among themselves at any point, he flips through a box of floppy disks, pulls one out labeled "Beretta P-24 Axehead" and slots it into a 3d printer, gently turning a dial as it lights up.

The Luthier greets Katsumoto like an old friend, and invites the main characters to try out anything that catches their eye on the range or some wooden practice dummies along the wall, then fires up a blunt while he chops it up with Katsumoto.

For each main character, the job's advance covers:

- 1.) A parafield (concealable device that protects against firearms and shrapnel)
- 2.) One two-handed weapon OR two one-handed weapons
- 3.) An X-Stat applicator (heals 10, single use, move action to apply)

The Luthier's Stock

- All **classical weaponry** on p. 106
- All **firearms** (except anti-tank rifles) on p. 107
- Both types of **instrument** on p. 108 (IshidaTec blasting orbs. Hover around user when not controlled by their gestures). Counts as two-hand weapon; fully covered by advance
- All **armor & shields** on p. 109 (can sub shield for weapon, but must buy own armor)

Exit: the Luthier packs all their purchases into locking instrument cases (spears telescope to a third their size, shields fold in half or quarters).

He tells the main characters to bang his line if they ever have any weaponry to sell, or need upgrades.

This Is Where We Cut the Main Characters Loose

The first few scenes were linear to make it easy on new Key Narrators, but now the main characters will be running free chasing leads. Blackout Katsumoto should fade into the background at this point.

Stay ready to make up unexpected side characters (page 119, go dogear quick) and scenes (page 116) on the spot.

When you end a session, it's useful to ask which lead your actors are headed to so you know what to prep for next session.

* * *

Lobster Mercier's Mansion (Old Town / Zone 1)

Soundtrack: Madvillain - Sickfit

You roll along the winding cobble avenues that thread through old-world neighborhoods of baroque mansions, past sculpture-ornamented parks with patrols of armed security, and into the heart of Old Town, where Lobster Mercier's four-story chateau looms all the more obvious for its damage: the courtyard garden is all tore up, some of the windows busted out, the front gates ripped off, and "GUILLOTINE" is spraypainted on the gargoyle-capped front wall. Pairs of Tengpai private security, called greencaps because of their emerald-green field hats, now patrol the area. What do you do?

Laying on em quickly reveals eight total guards on patrol, mostly outside the mansion.

Angles on Getting Inside

- A major distraction
- Gaffling / social engineering
- Just fight all eight greencaps
- Clocking the spot for more than 10 minutes proves a hole in their patrol pattern: once every few minutes, a door alongside the house goes unmonitored for a full 10 seconds

Fight: Greencaps

Soundtrack: Harm's Way - Human Carrying Capacity

Eight Tengpai guards with green armored vests, riot shields, and electroshock batons at their belts. You can force the fight scene by having a greencap come in to take a shit or whatever and stumble on the main characters.

Stats

x8: Offense s8 // Defense 4 // Merk 1 // Move 5

Tactics: immediately call for backup on their radios. Since they're spaced out, they'll arrive in waves of two. Safe to expect trucks full of veteran greencaps with heavy weaponry to show up after about ten minutes.

Psion: one guard is a psion. He spends his main action each turn sustaining a Special that causes -2 move to the main characters. If ruptured, he cannot use it again.

Merked: for these entry-level guards, merked just means a minor injury before they're KO'd, run off, or play dead.

Mansion Interior: *luminous liquid graphene pillars rise forty feet to the ceiling; split levels of hand-carved balconies interlock all the way up the open foyer. Every hallway and chamber you glance into is lined with priceless classical paintings, sculptures, and artifacts [too big to pocket, if anybody asks] -- just unimaginable wealth, each square foot costing more than what somebody from Zone 3 makes in a year. What do you do?*

Rooms: indoor movie theater, basement garage with a dozen luxury vehicles (mostly fingerprint ignitions), sub-basement tennis court, sauna, library, etc. Anything of value is too large to swipe, except for a collector's case of antique cufflinks (¥9000 if fenced) in the master bedroom on the fourth floor.

→ **Main characters merked:** if the main characters ever all get merked, they wake up on page 43.

C L U E S

- **Documents:** file cabinets and a few desk drawers are already thrown open and empty; the fine ashes of torched paper overflow from several fireplaces.
- **Mail:** very obvious pile on an ivory table in the dining room. Mostly junkmail and domestic bills, but also **A.)** mooring fees for a class B yacht called the *Mises* in the Hemlock Point Marina, and **B.)** an envelope with hand-written addresses containing a few itemized receipts and a note: “Étienne, the super says he needs these receipts signed for the new addition. Been missing you, Azalée” The return address is unit 1818, Heron Tower, Municipal Zone 8 (downtown).

* * *

Tail picked up: the main characters now followed by a cutty figure keeping point on the mansion from a gray Mazda. Undetectable unless actor specifically mentions they’re looking for tails.

If you ever have a low-action session, the tail calls in a car full of hitters to take out the main characters. It can jump off as a firefight on the highway, a sneak attack when they rest, or the goons can just run up on them as they follow leads (“Hey Mickey Mouse club, why don’t you mind your fuckin business?”) etc.

Bump Fight I (optional)

Soundtrack: Incendiary - The Power Process

Car full of goons sent by the tail picked up at Lobster Mercier’s mansion . . .

S T A T S

x2: Offense s4 (machetes) // Defense 0 // Merk 7 // Move 5

x2: Offense s8 (MP-5 SMGs, range 8) // Defense 0 // Merk 5 // Move 5

Tactics: one goon’s machete is coated in etorphine. Each landed strike causes a stacking -2 offense and defense to the target for the duration of the fight scene.

Merked: ideally dead, but if taken alive they’re clueless contractors. Checking a pager one of them is holding confirms they were hired anonymously and sent updates on main character locations. (Remember pagers only one-way). About ¥7000 in their pockets.

Balance: the fights in this arc were designed easy enough for 3 newjack actors to handle. If playing with more (or more experienced) actors, increase difficulty by increasing number of enemies or just amping up their merk.

District Courthouse: Searching for Records (Cherry Bay, Zone 4)

Soundtrack: Blackalicious - Swan Lake Instrumental

A dull concrete pillar of a tower looms at the far side of a bustling courtyard with a dried-up fountain. Underfunded enough to lack security guards who give a shit, a knot of bummy lookin skate kids take turns hitting the fountain's waxed ledge, their boombox pumping out that first Bone Sickness album, an all-time classic. You climb the wide entry stairway and pass into a lobby bustling with legal professionals and the occasional low-level offender headed to court. The unbrowed, comic-reading clerk behind the reception desk doesn't seem to notice you.

The unbrowed clerk dryly answers any questions without looking up . . .

- The only publicly available records on citizens are credit scores, formal criminal charges, and convictions. Detainment records have to be run through the comms department of a licensed security agency.
- Fees (administrative, processing, and copying) total ¥1204 per request.
- As he turns the page of his comic he says the waiting list is about a month since it's their busy season.

Clerk bribed: once ¥3000 reached, he's their best friend (but still needs to narrow down the many Étienne Merciers on the island with a DOB or middle name).

The clerk pulls out a clipboard and asks them to fill out a few request forms while he fetches their records. Katsumoto signs one with Hans Sumfela, 420 Dickslinger Street. Specifically ask what the main characters sign (useful for below bump scene).

Lobster Mercier's Legal Record: a dozen DUIs, a few sexual assault complaints, criminal neglect for a tenement fire – unsurprisingly all dismissed, settled out of court, or only sentenced to fines he probably considers pocket-change.

Case of interest: a dismissed mayhem charge for operating a boat while intoxicated. The brief explains Mercier maimed a tourist in a paddleboat while piloting his yacht outside the Hemlock Point Marina with a .21% BAC. Included are grisly medical photographs, a shot of the annihilated paddleboat, and a photo of a class B yacht with "the *Mises*" painted on the prow.

LEAD: if your actors don't catch it, use Katsumoto to prod them to search the Hemlock Point Marina for a yacht named the *Mises*.

* * *

Tail picked up: black Honda. Goes undetected unless actor specifically mentions they're looking for a tail. If you ever have a low-action session, the tail calls in a car full of muscle to take out the main characters. **Crucially**, have the goons try to intimidate them, but fail hilariously by using the joke names from the forms above.

Bump Fight II (optional)

Soundtrack: Xibalba - Cold

Three goons. Sent by tail who was sold info on main characters by corrupt clerk . . .

S T A T S

x2: Offense s8 (handaxes) // Defense 1 // Merk 10 // Move 5

x1: Offense s10 (psionic icebolt, range 6) // Defense 0 // Merk 10 // Move 5

Merked: ideally dead, but if taken alive they're clueless contractors. Checking a pager one of them is holding confirms they were hired anonymously, bag-of-money-left-in-locker style. (Remember pagers only one-way). About ¥5000 in their pockets.

The Mises, a Yacht in the Hemlock Point Marina (Zone 10)

Soundtrack: Jedi Mind Tricks - Three Immortals Instrumental

Seabirds wheel and dive along the bursting reef breaks, supermassive gantry cranes loom over the seaports that bite into the sapphire waters, and the low horns of a hulking container ship drone in the distance. Along the shore you spot the bristling masts of hundreds of sloops and yachts, swaying in the lazy waves along the docks of the Hemlock Point Marina. What do you do?

The marina has one guard on duty. He patrols once an hour if he feels like it.

The Mises: moored toward the back of the labyrinthine marina, name clearly painted on the prow and stern. Upper, lower, and foredeck. Loud music and raucous laughter can be heard within.

- **Goon:** Before the main characters can act, a big thumbhead lookin dude steps onto the upper deck and pisses out into the water. Standard spin to sneak up on him, easy spin if a bar or higher in stealth. If questioned he just says (French accent) shit like “I work for Deez” before grabbing somebody’s weapon or jumping into the water (**can’t be taken alive**).
- **Interior:** only unlocked entry is on the upper deck, leading to an inner balcony. Looking over the balcony: *three goons lounge in the TV room below you, their weapons within arm’s reach. The space is richly ornamented with historical memorabilia and Art Nouveau antiques. Empty champagne bottles are scattered along the bar, and a depleted eight ball sits on the coffee table, about half a gram railed up on the glass of an Ayn Rand portrait.*

Fight: Yacht Goons

Four soccer hooligan lookin knuckledraggers. Differentiate by description: tall, fat, face tattoos, Fred Perry polo.

S T A T S

x3: Offense s6 (military grade longswords) // Defense 1 // Merk 5

x1: Offense s6 (sawed off, range 4. s4 after 2 strides) // Defense 0 // Merk 5

Surprise Attack: jumping over the balcony causes s4 offense from falling, but will surprise the goons (so they act last, and have zero defense until they do)

Brute: if the fight is looking too easy, a huge inked up wigsplitter comes down the north hall. Offense s8+1 (axe) & s4 (uzi) // Defense 0 // Merk 20

Merked: dead. If paralyzed, they fall on their weapon and pierce a vital organ, immediately dying. If restrained, they’re domed by a wild spray of friendly fire, or die before anybody notices the dark arterial blood pouring from a wound to the back of their thigh. However you spin it, **none of these dudes are taken alive for questioning.**

Exits: from TV room there is a hallway (north), and an exit to the outer deck (south).

→ **Healing:** main characters fully heal after a night’s rest.
They are also free to buy HOTrods on page 111.

The Rest of the Yacht: a luxurious kitchen and dining room, spa, exit to the foredeck, two guest bedrooms, and a master bedroom. **Lobster Mercier is not on the *Mises*.**

The master bedroom: clearly belonged to Mercier, given there are photos of him with famous people on the wall. There is also a huge bed, felt-top card table, French historical memorabilia, and a walk-in closet with a safe in the back:

Clue A: Personal Safe

Half-hidden behind rows of old money duds in a massive walk-in closet. Securely bolted to the floor.

SOLUTIONS

- Remember Lobster's DOB (3/19/97)
- A rare-earth magnet to release internal lock
- Ten loud minutes with ramset, anglegrinder, or prybar
- Special with *unseal* effect
- Flour from the kitchen blown onto the keypad: more sticks to the first numbers of the code (skin's natural oils rubs off on the earlier numbers)

THE SAFE CONTAINS

- Dope black pistol with gold grip-plates engraved with a lion rampant. Has an inherent +1 offense bonus (s2 +1 +fast, range 6, ¥8000 if sold)
- The *Mises* title & landing permit: difficult to fence, easy to hire document forger to sign over to main characters ◦ ¥2400
- Several erotic novels: "Punted in the Balls by Merciless Soccer Starlets", "The Mafia Clamped a Car Battery to My Ballsack (Joke's on Them)" & "Stomped in the Balls to Death by a Sexy Lady Executioner"
- A **pair of keys** on a ring with a circular red tag. Front is a graphic reading "Heron Tower", on the back is scrawled "#1818"

Looking up "Heron Tower" in a phonebook (there's one on the *Mises*) lands them the address downtown. The Heron Tower thread starts on page 20.

Clue B: Photograph of Restaurant Grand Opening

In the master bedroom there are photos of Lobster Mercier with a few famous figures (opera star, prince of Thailand, big film producer etc), but most notably one of him cutting the ribbon at a restaurant grand opening, fine dining staff assembled beneath signage reading "干珠 滿珠 The Jewels of Ebb & Flow". Looking up this restaurant in a phonebook gives the address for the Sundaland Common, a well-known mall in Zone 11. Thread starts next page.

False Lead: The Jewels of Ebb & Flow (Zone 11)

Soundtrack: 猫 ∫ Corp - Palm Mall [whole album]

Clues leading here: 1.) photo on the *Mises*, 2.) Azalée mentions Lobster Mercier's the owner

This thread can be a quick dead end to add realism (if you only run this page), or an entire side-mission ending in a battle on top of a partly-constructed skyscraper, complete with worthwhile loot. **To be clear, this thread is optional.**

Sundaland Common

The Jewels of Ebb & Flow is located in the Sundaland Common (Zone 11), a luxury mall famous for extending out into the St. Disma Reef, its top domed in glass so you can watch all the tropical oceanlife.

Security: the main characters know a tourist spot like the Common doesn't allow (unconcealed) weapons, and are crawling with security to back that up (armed with arcguns, page 107, since firearms could damage the glass domeways).

Grand staircases descend into a teeming entry plaza. In its center looms a colossal tree, an extinct wisteria with long vines of canary-yellow flowers, once native to the sunken Sundaland continent and cloned from fossils at unimaginable expense. Through the entry are the famed palladium-glass domeways, every inch of their arched ceilings transparent, knots of gem-colored fish gliding lazily through the crystal waters and nearby reefscape. What do you do?

Goods & Supplies: the Common has almost anything the main characters would wanna buy. Most things cost what they would in our time; just remember 1 yuan is worth about 5 modern American dollars.

The Jewels of Ebb & Flow: *a live string quartet plays to extravagantly dressed diners under the low light of paper lanterns. A host approaches you, politely greeting "Irasshaimase. Table for [number of main characters]?"*

Any restaurant staff the main characters talk to either don't want any trouble or don't remember seeing Lobster Mercier.

LOU THE BUSBOY

On their way out of the Common, the main characters hear a whistle behind them. When they look over they see a teenager with a black apron over his shoulder.

Side Character: Lou

Voice: brash, Australian accent

Impoverished immigrant teenager, busboy at the Jewels of Ebb & Flow. White skin and tanned as shit, blown out stick-and-poke of a rose covering the back of his left hand, thorns stabbing out at its corners. Personality is jagged but likable (lightly roasts one of the main characters).

Lou says they were getting stonewalled: everybody in the restaurant knows Mercier ("He's like a part-owner or something") but nobody will say anything because they're not trying to lose their job. Lou says he hasn't seen Mercier for weeks, but if somebody gives him their number and a little compensation for his risk (¥1000), he'll do some digging and report back.

This is where the trap begins. It's a good time, lots of loot etc, but skip to "Heron Tower" on page 20 if you're trying to keep the arc short.

Lou calls later that day: apparently somebody is still ordering Lobster Mercier's exact same off-menu usual (a ¥600 oyster grinder with beluga caviar), and getting it delivered by a third-party courier. The delivery address is 1597 Airridichi, Zone 7: the Vésins ["veh-sehn"] Tower . . .

Vésins Tower (Zone 7)

Soundtrack: Benny the Butcher - Griselda Strong Instrumental

→ On the drive there, dark clouds slowly roll in, threatening rain

As the main characters get near the tower they see it's a **construction site** surrounded by 10' chainlink . . .

An unfinished tower looms over you, its skeletal form of criss-crossing beams raking the sky 500 feet above. As the sky continues to darken with brooding rainclouds, you notice windows in the topmost partly-finished story are illuminated. What do you do?

If they lay on the spot, a big guy sing-mumbling a soccer chant comes out the building and pulls half a dozen takeout bags from the dropbox at the chainlink roll gate. To be clear, he's on the other side of the fence so can't be snatched up unless the main characters already climbed over.

INTERIOR

A colossal, unlit marble lobby. The main characters will need a source of light.

- **Partial power:** most lightswitches don't work, except for those around the receptionist's desk and express elevator (below). Power can be supplied by entering the sub-basement beneath the parking garage where there's a large circuit breaker panel.
- **Ascend:** lobby elevators are unpowered and unfinished. Stairs stop at 42nd floor; the main characters can spin (easy spin if strong 1+) to climb a few levels of H-section steel columns from the top of the stairs to the open floor. Failure: fall back to stairs, s8 offense.
- **Express elevator:** down a wing past the reception desk. "Going up" button is backlit, showing it's receiving power. The luxurious express elevator's lights are on, and its console has only two buttons: "Lobby" and "Executive Suite".
- **Tracks:** if somebody's looking for it, dust from the gravel outside is obviously tracked toward the express elevator and more subtly into the sub-basement.

Pinhole cameras: the size of a pinky nail. One 20' directly above lobby entrance, another behind ventilation slits in express elevator. Four others hidden around.

Open Floor: *you step out onto an unfinished floor, open to the sighing winds, the peaking lights of the city sprawling in every direction. A massive latticework of columns and beams rise up around you another sixty feet, lacing into several stories of mostly-finished rooms on the eastern side. At its height are a few rooms whose windows glow faintly gold with interior lights. What do you do?*

→ The only way to get to the finished rooms is by climbing some scaffolding and crossing a 50 stretch of naked beams.

The call: if the main characters weren't assholes to Lou, he calls as they're crossing the beams. Lou, out of breath and speaking fast says something like . . .

"I called you as soon as I could, they made me set you up and I couldn't get away until now, do you understand? It's a fucking trap, stay the FUCK outta that tower – "

. . . and the first shots ring out. A main character's parafield flashes as they're hammered by a spray of SMG fire for s8.

Fight: Spider's Web

Soundtrack: Animals as Leaders - Thoroughly at Home

A battle along steel beams against ten attackers. It is now lightly raining.

E N E M I E S

(x7) **Goons:** Offense s4 (machetes) // Defense 4 // Merk 1 // Move 5

(x2) **Shooters:** Offense s8 (SMGs, range 8) // Defense 0 // Merk 5 // Move 5

(x1) **Brute:** Offense s8 (chainblade, range 2) // Defense 2 // Merk 15 // Move 6
(Yoked, chemical burns, heavy armored vest. Can't be pushed)

→ **For all these dudes, merked means dead:** if taken alive they'll dime out Lobster Mercier & skip half the arc.

- **Surprise:** enemy goes first, but mostly just move into attack range their first turn.
- **Pushing:** for this scene only, main characters (but not the enemy) can trade their move action to push or trip a target. On a 6 they push an enemy into another and they both fall. On a 1 the main character either drops their weapon, or loses their balance and precariously hangs from the beam.
- **Falling:** instantly merked from plummeting 40' to the nearest completed floor. Enemies are instantly killed.
- **Fail State:** if main characters all merked, they wake up on page 43.
- **End:** once there are only **two enemies left**, they each pull a case with ramhorn handles off their backs and jump off the side of the building: a pair of 6-foot SMP textile wings deploy from each case and the goons sail down into the cityscape.

L O O T

- Heavy vest from brute: +2 defense (¥9,000)
- ¥3,000 cash from goon pockets
- Two microgliders busted from falling (¥0), and an unharmed microglider (¥12,000)

→ Return soundtrack to Benny the Butcher - Griselda Strong Instrumental

Lit-up eastern rooms: empty except for takeout trash, spent coke baggies and bottles of booze, a pocket projector plugged into a Sega Genesis, and a receiver displaying the six pinhole cameras hidden throughout the tower.

If the main characters come back on Lou . . .

- A.) If they never did anything to earn his respect, he's nowhere to be found (safe to assume he sold them out)
- B.) If they treated Lou with respect: he says one of the prep cooks snitched him out – after he got snatched up, the cook was there to positively ID him for a roll of cash and an ounce of powder. Lou raises his right hand, two bandaged stumps where fingers should be, and says "These cunts were serious." Kastumoto tells him not to go back into the restaurant, gives him a wad of cash and says to call him if he needs work.

Heron Tower Luxury Apartments, Downtown (Zone 8)

Soundtrack: SpaceGhostPurrp - Petro Instrumental

Clues leading here: 1.) mail from Lobster Mercier's mansion, 2.) keys in the *Mises*' safe

You roll down the wide streets of downtown under a tempest of neon hologram signage, ants in the supermassive corridors of dizzying megatowers. You park and head through a busy plaza hung with long strings of paper lanterns marking the approaching Chinese new year. At its far end looms a white high-rise in the Post-Deco style, set with an emblem matching the keychain in your palm -- Heron Tower. What do you do?

GETTING IN

- Can just use spare keys from the *Mises*, but concierge doesn't recognize main characters
- Bribe concierge or security (¥2000)
- Sneak in behind car in parking garage
- Pose as courier or delivery driver, let everybody else in through a side entrance
- Glide down onto 18th floor balcony from neighboring tower using Special or microglider
- Disable lock of side door with rare-earth magnet or lockpicking set, etc

Unit 1818: top floor. Both balcony and front door unlocked. No response to knocking.

Apartment Interior: *a brass statue of the Nemean Lion looms in the middle of a dim foyer, a raised bed of blood-red poppies grown up around its pedestal. Incense smoke curls from an antique marble censer, drifting invitingly through rosewood columns and a trefoil archway where colorful birds sing from ornate cages. What do you do?*

The inside of the apartment is caked in wealth, comfort, and fine art. Areas of interest ...

- Dining room with a few half-finished meals on the table
- Dusty home gym
- Spa bathroom of gold-flecked marble
- High-ceilinged library (excellent collection)

Final room: *At the end of a long, windowless drawing room crackles an ornate fireplace, its golden glow washing over a lounging figure in a fine dress petting a large black dog. She looks over, not even a little concerned by the rough-looking strangers in her house, and wordlessly invites you to come sit by the fire with a gesturing hand. On the table beside her is a decanter of blood-red wine and a dozen bars of xanax. A masterful reproduction of Henryk Siemiradzki's "Phryne" hangs on the wall behind her, barely visible in the room's somber lighting. Do you sit?*

Side character: Azalée (“ahz-a-lei”)

Voice: glacial

A slender Laotian woman with cascading midnight hair. Strung out on opiates and xanax, but a self-educated wit can be glimpsed behind their blunting influence. She's the only side character that refers to the Lobster by his first name, Étienne. Speaks Lao, French, English, and some Mandarin.

→ Throws a couple xanax tabs in the air for her dog to catch throughout the conversation.

Tiberius, Azalée's Dog: a large black akita with eerily intelligent eyes that look the main characters over with the scrutiny you'd expect of a human.

Anybody with a background in security or biotech can tell from his obsidian-like teeth that he's a high-grade engineered attack dog: near-human intelligence, augmented strength, implanted plating over vital organs, Si3N4-encased teeth are all standard.

Stats: Offense s8+6 (bite) // Defense: 5 // Merk 30 // Move: 10

Conversation With Azalée

- **Unconcerned:** reminds the main characters it's a polite thing to introduce themselves
- **Whereabouts:** she has no idea where Étienne is. Calls to his phone aren't going through
- **If tested:** reminds them she would be reasonable to have her technologically perfected attack dog murder these armed strangers in her house
- **Azalée says they should be friends since they all want the same thing**
- **Why she wants Mercier gone:** he set up a large weekly annuity for her when they first became involved; if he goes away now, that money faucet stays on forever. She knows she was only ever a means to an end, shame on Étienne if he didn't think he was too. Thus ...

Azalée Offers up Lobster Mercier's Lawyer: the one associate she always saw with Étienne, and the one man who definitely knows where he is: Gregoire "Hatchet" Lécuyer (Gregwahr LeKOOyair). She gives the locations of his . . .

- Law firm (Tabouret & Lécuyer)
- Hangout (Le Cygne Chess Club)
- Penthouse (the entire 111th floor of Kagemusha Tower. She knows for certain since she attended a party there once with Étienne)

She also warns them that since he makes his money getting horrible people out of well-deserved sentences, Hatchet Lécuyer has **two elite bodyguards** with him at all times.

Backtracking: if you want the main characters to check out a previous scene (the *Mises*, the mansion, the False Lead thread etc) this is the spot to do it.

Give them time to kill: Azalée says she called Hatchet Lécuyer after the Scilla Hills collapse and he mentioned he was in China for a deposition – he won't be back until tomorrow evening. She can give leads as well, telling them about Mercier's yacht or restaurant.

Bagging Hatchet Lécuyer

Soundtrack: Mobb Deep - Give Up the Goods Instrumental

→ Starts lightly raining on the drive to Fog Hill

Gregoire “Hatchet” Lécuyer is the only one who knows where Lobster Mercier is hiding out. Pearl says Hatchet is only ever at . . .

- A. Le Cygne Chess Club, on the roof of the Magnolia Tower
- B. His law firm in the Jean Boyd Building
- C. His massive penthouse in the Kagemusha Megatower

. . . all of which are on Fog Hill in Zone 9: boojie, megatowers, heavy traffic.

Chapter Intro

Once the main characters make their way to Fog Hill read this out loud:

The downpour casts a subtle halo around the lights of Fog Hill. The ruby siren of a security chopper strobes above you as it glides between buildings, flashing over the jeering faces of gutterspout gargoyles, their jaws exhaling unending streams of water far above the teeming streets. Two Zone 9 hooks leer from a passing cruiser; one's face briefly illuminated as he drags on a cigarette. The soft whoosh of rolled-through puddles punctuates the conversation that's turned to coming up in Zone 3, trading stories about how you made ends meet and the shittiest job you ever had to work.

Go around and get a story from each actor. Katsumoto starts it by saying he was a trimmer at a fish processing plant and the owner, some dude who lived in Saudi Arabia, was pushing management to get revenues up. Quotas were high enough there was a piss jug under the line, and once when it was Katusmoto's turn to empty it he just sort of realized “I will do literally anything but this bullshit” and dumped the jug on the supervisor's convertible. Since then he's run an illegal bookies and made a decent living.

When that conversation fades:

The camera cuts to a closeup on Katsumoto, his brow furrowed in thought. As he monologues, we see various scenic shots of Fog Hill in the rain:

“I don't know man, I've struggled to put my finger on something for a while now. Anybody who works long enough starts to realize how much their work is worth – you know the showroom price of what you made on the factory floor; you see how much the shop made when you count down the register at night. You factor in the overhead, and still wonder where all this value you created is going. Most of us realize it when the factory owner rolls up in a different sports car every month – and once you realize it, you start to see it everywhere:

*Say my work creates, I don't know, 300 yuan in value each hour. The owner is going to take 200 of it so he doesn't have to work. He gives the shareholders and franchise owners a kickback, so they don't have to work either. Then when I take home what little they leave me, my landlord takes the rest of it so she *also* doesn't have to work. There's this whole chain of parasites; they do nothing of value, but somehow get all this money for free. Think about all the richest people in the world. You look up what they actually do and they just *own shit*. They just have their name on a deed, or a share, and that entitles them to insane amounts of free money every month. And where does that money come from? Us: the people who do the work.*

. . .

They've done, I gotta admit, an incredible job of keeping it low. If I was robbing working people I also wouldn't go rubbing it in their face. I would do everything I could to keep it quiet, to insulate myself, to only run with other people like me; other landlords, bosses, bankers, shareholders. But I would also live in fear. I would know I was outnumbered 100 to 1 by the people I legally steal from every month. I would know that the people I rob, someday they'll realize everything shitty in their life – high rent, long shifts, low pay, the misery of poverty – all these things are created by people like me wanting more and more, squeezing every last penny out of their existence. Dread of that day would keep me up at night, and I would do everything within my power – immoral, illegal, depraved, and worse – anything and everything to make sure that giant stayed asleep.

→ Close the scene with . . .

Oldies croon under the drumming of rain on the raised top. A shot of the Lincoln's side captures reflections of neon signage in every shape and color gliding by hypnotically. You stop at a light and dozens of people under umbrellas flood the crosswalks. All around you the brooding towers seem to rise forever, their soaring lights fading up into the rainy haze of Fog Hill.

Angles on Lécuyer

- A. Le Cygne Chess Club p. 24
- B. Kagemusha Tower Penthouse p. 26
- C. Tabouret & Lécuyer p. 27

Side character: Gregoire “Hatchet” Lécuyer (Gregwahr Le-koo-yair)

Voice: stern, educated, French accent

Nicknamed for his narrow, sharp-featured face. Thin, 50s, dressed in a fine old-world suit. Cold-blooded: will immediately give up Lobster Mercier once snatched. Speaks French and passable English. Rides in an unmistakable maroon 1949 Bentley Mark VI.

Since he makes millions getting trust fund kids out of vehicular manslaughter and rape convictions, he keeps two stacked bodyguards with him at all times.

Hatchet Lécuyer's Bodyguards

Ignatius & Calder
(red thin tie) (blue bowtie)

High-end private security: about 6'2", 230 lbs, stonefaced etc. Weapons are augmented knuckles that emit a low hum and make a small shockwave of concussive force on impact (two attacks per turn with these).

Disciplined spacial awareness and threat assessment. One stays with Lécuyer at all times while the other brings the car around or searches a questionable area before entry.

→ Stats / tactics listed over next few pages

Angle A: Le Cygne Chess Club (Lécuyer's hangout)

Soundtrack: Louise Trotter - Malagueña y Bésame Mucho

A boogie open-air chess hall for French-speaking businessmen. On the roof of the Magnolia Tower: 22 stories of Nouveau-Revivalist architecture with a cablecar station on the highest floor giving access to nearby towers. French-speaking main characters: Le Cygne means “the swan”.

Getting Up: the only entrance / exit to this rooftop club is an elevator.

Le Cygne: *the elevator doors open to reveal a rooftop covered in lush gardens of Gascon plant life. Boughs of fruit-bearing trees stretch out above knots of pensive chess players chewing on cigars and thoughtfully turning glasses of bourbon. Looming in the center is a white marble fountain of three daughters of Danaus eternally pouring out vessels of water, and a harpist strums softly on a tiny sidestage half-swallowed by flowering pear trees. As you approach, the host returns to his podium, politely greeting, “Bonsoir. Comment puis-je être utile?” [barely speaks English]*

Entrance fee for non-members is ¥400 each. Once inside, Hatchet Lécuyer and his two bodyguards are visible, finishing a game against a less-skilled younger man.

Optional Chess Match

If a main character challenges Lécuyer to a game of chess, they get +3 SP (but wait until closing ceremonies). Hatchet insists on making things interesting by betting personal items (he bets an antique letter-opener with ornate brasswork and a tiny ruby pommel. ¥5000).

Have the actor spin against Lécuyer three times to represent the beginning, middle, and end of the chess match. After each one, have them describe their style and tactics: fortress-like, trap-laden, ruthless, piercing, slow tide of aggression, patient counter-fighting, relentlessly sniping for the king, etc.

Spin is s4 + chess experience (amateur +1, enthusiast +2, expert +3), with Hatchet's bonus being +2. Remember to tell the story of the resulting spins. At the end, add all points together for the victor.

Bushcraft 1 or Higher: notice in the Le Cygne garden some deep purple atropa belladonna flowers with berries like drops of black ink. Also known as deadly nightshade, this plant is extremely poisonous and a powerful hallucinogen at sub-poisonous doses.

Moving on Hatchet Lécuyer

Soundtrack: Art Blakey & the Jazz Messengers - A Night in Tunisia

Lécuyer's table is a few strides away from a large skylight, which Calder blows out with a thrown chair, jumping down into the cablecar station, and catching Lécuyer when he follows. They then enter a departing (empty) cablecar right as its doors close. Ignatius attacks the main characters.

Optional: high-risk grapple. His first turn, Ignatius grabs a main character, and they both spin s10 + strong or fast (+3 for Ignatius). Whoever lands highest (respin ties) pivots and throws the other through the skylight's remaining glass to the station floor below for s8 offense.

Cablecar Fight

- Jumping to the cablecar station below has no action cost.
- New cablecars arrive every 20 seconds. There are about 20 strides between cars.
- Cables are in a cluster of 4, so safe to shimmy across them at a rate of move score minus 1. If the main characters approach this way, Calder takes shots at them from his cablecar, then climbs onto its roof to get the drop on the first main character to arrive. Cablecars are 2 x 6 strides.
- Jumping from tower roof to top of Hatchet Lécuyer's departing cablecar: easy spin, but if you fail, you fall to a different cablecar far below, automatically merked, primary weapon gone, and headed in the opposite direction.
- Lécuyer and Calder's cablecar arrives at a neighboring tower in a few turncycles (whenever it would be most cinematic). If able, they hop out into the station, and run down a grand staircase that lets out into the massive, empty lobby of a luxury shopping mall obviously being renovated: the shops are all closed up, and towering bloodstone pillars reach up to a ceiling full of half-installed chandeliers. The exits are all gated shut. If still unmerked, this dead end is where Calder makes his last stand.

→ Page 28 for what Hatchet Lécuyer knows

* * *

Hatchet Lécuyer's Bodyguards

Stats: Offense s6 & s6 (concussive knuckles) / Defense 0 / Merk 80 / Move 7
(If out of range, will create suppressive fire with a pistol: s2 +1)

Ignatius (red tie)
Attacks and obstructs

&

Calder (blue bowtie)
Retreats with Lécuyer

OFFENSE TAKEN:

Angle C: Tabouret & Lécuyer (Lécuyer's office)

Soundtrack: Conway - Rex Ryan Instrumental

Tabouret & Lécuyer is an opulent law firm on the 48th story of the Jean Boyd Building. Mostly legal and finance, this tower is dimmed to the gills. The main characters recognize security is so tight that this would be a nightmare staging ground.

Stealth in or social engineering: almost immediately foiled by well-disciplined security patrolling hallways, monitoring entrances, and checking IDs.

Seeking a consultation: receptionist (French accent) says consultations start at ¥10,000. Lécuyer's booked out seven months, but they could see a junior partner in as little as three weeks.

* * *

Hatchet Lécuyer's Bodyguards

Stats: Offense s6 & s6 (concussive knuckles) / Defense 0 / Merk 80 / Move 7
(If out of range, will create suppressive fire with a pistol: s2 +1)

Ignatius (red tie)
Pure aggression

&

Calder (blue bowtie)
Attacks and obstructs

OFFENSE TAKEN:

Hatchet Lécuyer Gives up Lobster Mercier

Lécuyer says Lobster Mercier is hiding out in a warehouse on the corner of Plénum & Talairport in the Flats, Zone 2. The warehouse is owned by an organization known as the Oxheads, who Mercier has hired for security until he can leave the island.

During his visits there, he saw 10 or 20 armed Oxheads at any given time. They appear to run a chop shop, smuggling, and pill operation around the clock. A “master bedroom” has been set up for Mercier in what used to be the office area. To prove he’s not lying, Hatchet shows them old pager messages which give the address. (Remember pagers only work one way).

The Oxheads: at least one of the main characters know about them, or maybe even had dealings with them. The Oxheads started as the Oxhead Firm, a loose association of coked up French soccer hooligans that graduated to kilos, car theft, and weapons smuggling. Local to Oxhead Point in Le Miroir, Zone 2. Their leader, Kneecapper Doriot (door-yo) is currently locked up in SDCC.

King shit: paraphrase the above paragraph on a note and slip it to the actor of the most street-oriented main character before the session starts.

Pockets: Hatchet Lécuyer’s holding ¥720 cash, a ¥20,000 timepiece and a ¥5,000 antique letter-opener with a tiny ruby pommel (if not already won from earlier chess match).

→ Level Up

The main characters all gain a level for their progress in the story

Plotting on the Oxhead HQ

Soundtrack: DJ Krush - 3rd Eye

Lobster Mercier is hidden inside a warehouse (the Flats, Zone 2) controlled by the Oxheads (a network of ex-hooligans that burgeoned into a heavily armed, serious criminal enterprise)

Additional Firepower: Hatchet Lécuyer reported between 10 and 20 goons at the warehouse any given hour. Additional muscle is needed:

RECRUITABLE GROUPS

Each recruitable group has a contact that leads to them. This contact is known by a main character, and listed at the start of each group's section.

The Endless Wound: a tombedweller gang in the undercity Page 30

Black Chalice: a cell of political insurgents Page 32

PKC: a militant anti-trafficante network Page 34

(All these groups are optional, but a good time to recruit)

Clocking the Warehouse

The Oxhead warehouse is surrounded on all sides by streets and sidewalks. Bottom 10 feet of the wall are masonry, top 10 are corrugated plastics. Massive takeout orders arrive about once every 6 hours. No noticeable shift patterns. Long strings of red lanterns hung along some neighboring streets for the approaching Chinese New Year.

Entrances: metal door with high-grade lock out front. Large loading bay door (can only be opened from inside). Only windows are skylights (plentiful).

Exit Plan

Katsumoto can optionally remind everybody the Chinese New Year parades will be jumping off in two days – the chaos of the crowds can be used to their advantage, especially with a quick outfit change or by hopping in a float.

If the main characters get laced with the undercity (next page), hopping down a storm drain or into a manhole would be about the easiest exit phase possible.

If the actors are lazy enough to just try “Uhh hop back in my car and hope for the best,” punish them in some way that won’t spoil the arc’s ending.

→ **The Battle for the Oxhead Warehouse is on page 36**

*The Endless Wound (Recruitable Tombdweller Gang)

Write this on a note, and before the session starts slip it to the actor whose main character would most likely know Belly:

“You know a dude from way back, a completely unhinged character called Belly for a massive surgical scar up his gut. Last you heard he was running with a tombdweller gang, a source of serious firepower and potential mercenaries in your plot to take the Oxhead warehouse. You’re pretty sure you still have Belly’s number somewhere.”

Linking Up With Belly

Soundtrack: Corrupted - La Victima es tu Mismo

Belly says to meet him at an oogle bar called the Rat’s Nest in a cuttier stretch of Zone 3. A dude in a studded up vest nods off out front, Disjawn blasts on massive speakers inside, and pitchers of Sewage Brew (16%) are on special for ¥20. Good time for a drinking contest.

Belly shows up an hour late, skeed out and rolling balls, his already-erratic personality turned up way too high. He wears an armored vest with a tac-light and mag pouches, is covered in stick-and-pokes, and has a busted nose mashed to one side. He says they’re running late, slams their pitcher, and jogs out.

As he hoofs it he puts his phone and 8-ball in a ziplock bag, and coming to a bridge hops over the rail, falling 30 feet into the canal below. He dives under and switches on his tac-light, swimming fully submerged down a drainway for an alarming full minute before emerging into an open air tunnel. Pulling out some loose bricks, he retrieves a trench knife and bullpup, yelling and spraying off a few rounds for no real reason.

The Tombs

Soundtrack: Xavier Wulf - Thunder Man Instrumental

Belly brings you down a long, zagging, crudely excavated tunnel of improvised framing and rock bolts. Brushing the loose earth from your clothes, you step into a colossal surge chamber, a concrete tank the size of a city block used to control flooding during monsoon season. Walking among the 50-foot-tall pillars streaked with long patinas of mineral residue, you enter a drainway channel, pass through another narrow excavation, and finally emerge into a large, dusty catacomb.

Electric lanterns are scattered through the ornate burial chamber, casting angular shadows across ornate stonework reliefs. A crew of tombdwellers covered in shitty stick-and-pokes, wearing patched-up black armored vests with a curling centipede painted on the back, all drink around the vault’s stone sarcophagus, yelling over a forest of liquor bottles and little trays of drugs strewn over its lid. A big dude with eerie, prosthetic nightvision eyes notices you, and mutters in the ear of a small albino woman who promptly yells at everybody to shut the fuck up.

The Undercity

Colloquially called “the Tombs”, the undercity is a massive network of illegal excavations connecting subway utility tunnels, catacombs, sewers, and the colossal drainage system that prevents flooding during monsoons (similar to the G-Cans in Tokyo). This labyrinth of downward sprawl was first occupied by junkies and oogles living rent free, but over the years these tombdwellers developed lucrative drug manufacturing and smuggling routes. Now heavily armed and more fucked up than ever, these tombdweller gangs kill each other non-stop over the invaluable real estate of the lawless undercity. The main characters will know the common sense in St. Disma is to never, for any fucking reason at all, enter the Tombs.

Conversation With the Endless Wound

Snow, a cruel and humorless albino woman, leads the Endless Wound. She does most of the talking . . .

- Asks operation details: who they'd be killing, where the warehouse is, what it's used for
- When chop shop mentioned, one of the Wound says they would have had to install industrial trench drains for their spray booth, so there should be easy access for a surprise attack from below
- Snow sweeps a dozen bottles aside and places a heavily notated map. It's concluded the area beneath the Oxhead warehouse is currently controlled by the Filth Coven
- **A Deal is Struck:** help the Endless Wound seize that stretch of Filth Coven territory, and the main characters get underground access to the warehouse, plus a cut of Coven loot
- Hiring the Wound to actually help storm the Oxhead warehouse costs ¥250,000

Fight: Storming the Pillbox

The Filth Coven have an outpost that holds the territory beneath the Oxhead warehouse, a crudely welded pillbox at the bottom of a waterfall junction. Snow's right-hand man (voice: basso) draws battle plans with chalk on the floor: the main characters are a B team that will run in after the spearhead and hold the southern tunnel.

Traversing catacombs, surge chambers, and half a mile of crude tunneling, they take inflatable, motorized boats down a huge drainway before arriving near Filth Coven territory. They come up on a decapitated body hung from the ceiling, its Corpsefuckers SC backpatch crossed out in red spraypaint. Belly explains the Coven mark their territory with enemies as he jumps up and high-fives the corpse, saying "Hang in there buddy." The Wound start tuning up with entire 750s of whiskey and half-grams of blow as the first shots ring out up ahead.

Fight Soundtrack: Vermin Womb - Decline LP [whole album]

Map: the main characters run through the large waterfall junction where the initial fighting's happening, one taking s10 offense from the pillbox's heavy machine gun. They reach the mouth of the south tunnel (3 x 12, knee-deep water) just in time to stop Filth Coven reinforcements from fucking their flank.

TUNNEL ENEMIES

(x3) **Fighters:** Offense s6 & s4 (sword & SMG, range 4) // Defense 0 // Merk 5

(x1) **Brute:** Offense s8+2 (concussive morningstar) // Defense 2 // Merk 20

(x1) **Psion:** Offense s6 (psionic acidbolt, range 12) // Defense 0 // Merk 20
(Spends first turn giving all allies +1 defense with Duration: Combat)

Gruesome: describe the chaos of the unlit tunnel, the strobing flash of automatic gunfire casting silhouettes of decapitations and brutal maulings. Out in the junction the Endless Wound get chewed up by a heavy machine gun nest on top of the pillbox before overrunning it and hacking apart everybody inside.

Fail State: lose the below loot except for ¥3000.

Loot: heavy armor vest (+2 defense), +2 concussive augmentation (can be equipped to any blunt force instrument to give it +2 offense), ¥6000.

Pillbox: rough-hewn stairs lead down to an excavated living space whose luxurious furniture clashes with walls of raw earth and shoddy framing. In the stash room, among crates of stolen goods are cages with exotic genetically engineered animals: **the main characters can take one and decide what it looks like** (sky's the limit).

*The Black Chalice (Recruitable Political Cell)

Write this on a note, and before the session starts slip it to the actor of the main character who is either the most politically radical, Eastern Orthodox, or has boxing / martial arts experience:

“You have an old friend and sparring partner from Napoleon Street Boxing Gym called No-Lobe, a wild Lithuanian with a long scar tracing above where the bottom half of his ear should be. When last you talked he was running with a cell of Christian Orthodox Anarchists called the Black Chalice, allegedly involved with a series of banker kidnappings and human trafficker executions. You know they could be a valuable ally in a situation requiring extra firepower.”

→ Reminder: having an actor present their exclusive info like this is a good changeup to the Key just telling everybody like usual.

Setting up the Meet: No-Lobe (Lithuanian accent) maybe pretends to be pissed at the main character, leading them on for a second before saying he’s fucking with them. He chats them up and says he can make the meet happen today.

. . .

Orthodox Cathedral of the Holy Seraphim (Slav City, Municipal Zone 4)

Soundtrack: Zdravko Mihaylov - We Sing for You, Lord

The cathedral is brilliant with the light of towering stained glass windows. A priest talks with two laborers near the baptistry, their quiet voices echoing massively in the silence between liturgies. Near the front of this tranquil microcosm, in a pew beneath an engraving of Saint Alice Domon, sit a knot of black-clad figures. The nearest stands to greet you . . .

Cultural Shifts: Christian Orthodoxy has become a bastion of radicalism. The teachings of Yeshua the Christ (using restrained violence and property destruction to drive profiteers from the Temple, Matthew 19:24, Acts 4:32, Luke 16:13, etc) that would have many from the global north denouncing him as a crazed extremist if they didn’t know who said it, are actually being practiced in the ranks of the broader religious populous, creating conditions for a new breed of highly motivated religio-political insurgent. Along with older movements like the Liberation Theologians, Catholic Workers, Plowshares, Confessing Church, Protodox, and New Taborites, they form an invisible network of safehouses and operative cells across the island of St. Disma.

While religio-political radicalism failed to regroup in the 20th century after assassinations of leaders like the Reverend King, Minister Malcolm X, and Bishop Óscar Romero, the 21st century saw not only a significant return to religious practice, but a resurgence in religiously motivated liberation movements across major faith traditions. The radicalized within these movements are noted for their uncommon effectiveness as they are A.) galvanized by sincere belief in a cosmic valence to their struggle, B.) fearless in the face of eternal reward for self-sacrifice, C.) believe they will be judged for any moral failings, and D.) reap all the benefits of strong leadership in the form of scripture and a higher power, without the drawbacks of assassinateable or corruptible human leadership.

Conversation With the Black Chalice

The most respected member of the Black Chalice seems to be **Brother Yusuf** (Syrian, black beard, discerning eyes, maybe thumbing through a knotted prayer rope). He does most of the talking . . .

- Ask about the operation. Their rules are no innocents, no chance of bystanders, and that all adversaries be given a chance to surrender and repent. (At the final fight this will work against them as the Oxheads ignore them and open fire.)
- It's obvious their priority isn't money, just waging war on the owning class, the government that props it up, and "other malevolent elements" like cartels and human traffickers.
- Ask the main character's names and about their backgrounds. Inquire into any potential connections to law enforcement, banks and finance, human exploitation, the state etc.
- Katsumoto asks about their name, why Black Chalice? One responds that black is the historical color of anarchist flags from the Zapatistas to the Makhnovshchina armies. The chalice symbolizes the most precious blood of the risen Mashiach.
- Once the conversation starts to feel done, one of the Black Chalice checks their watch and says "We're about 40 out. Any closing thoughts?" They tell the main characters they'll be in touch.

Pass / Fail: Black Chalice aren't hard-up for allies – if the main characters came off as class traitors or idolators, no phone call.

If the two crews seemed sympathetic, the main character who knows No-Lobe gets a call telling them they're down.

→ Return soundtrack to DJ Krush - 3rd Eye

HQ Package: when the main characters return to their HQ, they find a package with a black chalice sharpied on it. The doors of the HQ are all locked and there are no signs of forced entry.

The package contains a stucco replica of the Palais de l'Autorité Civique (capitol building of the St Disma government): 10" tall, heavy, but clearly hollow if inspected. When smashed open, illegal weapon enhancements (harmonic oscillators and concussion hammers) wrapped in cloth tumble out, along with a note that reads "good instincts. see you soon."

Harmonic oscillators and concussion hammers are small enhancements easily un/installed on hand-to-hand weapons. Putting a harmonic oscillator on a cutting weapon causes its blade to vibrate at 56kHz, increasing its slicing ability and giving it +1 offense. Putting a concussion hammer on a crushing weapon induces a split-microsecond gaseous cavitation beneath ambient saturation pressure, the immediate collapse of surrounding air generating a few hundred kilopascals of acoustic energy, giving that weapon +1 offense.

There's one harmonic oscillator or concussion hammer for each main character, matching to their preferred weapon type.

*Anquan xVx & the PKC (Recruitable Side Character & Gang)

Write this on a note, and before the session starts slip it to the actor whose main character would most likely know Anquan:

“You’re acquainted with Anquan xVx, a wigsplitter from Municipal Zone 5. He’s straight edge (sober, hates drugs), and a shotcaller for PKC (a gang that preys on drugrunners and drafts from the island’s straight edge subculture). Has a preternatural talent for violence. You’ve worked with him before, and think you could get him to bring some PKC heads around to take the warehouse. A real public type figure, Anquan’s almost always . . .

Morning: training at VIII Limbs fight gym (Zone 5)

Afternoon: reading at Grindcore House cafe, usually history (Zone 5)

Night: at a Hardcore show ”

Scene: VIII Limbs Fight Gym (Morning)

Soundtrack: Black Thought - Making a Murderer Instrumental

As you open the doors of the gym you’re greeted by the din of open mat: the echoing WATOOMS of kick shields and Thai bags getting lit up, the percussive thud of focus mitts and double-tether bags, and the chatter of students bullshitting between rounds of sparring. Your man Anquan sits at the far wall, towel over his shoulders, stretching out with a couple other trainees. What do you do?

Scene: Grindcore House Cafe (Afternoon)

Soundtrack: Fiend - Derailed EP

Heavily tattooed old heads sit in the sun out front an old-world, dilapidated building, shooting the breeze about new records and how much better the scene used to be. Inside, a strange mix of activist-looking types and carjacker-looking types mingle under visibly shaking stereo speakers. An unmistakable figure hulks on a worn couch, reading a volume entitled “Medieval Persia 1040 - 1797” and pensively turning a mug of coffee. What do you do?

Side character: Anquan xVx

Voice: Baritone

6’2” and yoked, tattooed up to the chin, typical fighter scars (small cuts around brows and cheeks, busted nose, cauliflower ear) today wearing an xREPRISALx longsleeve.

Good-humored, but a capacity for violence comes off him like smoke. PKC shotcaller, makes his living robbing dopeboys; neighborhood will actively protect him and PKC.

* * *

If asked why he hates drugs: even though he saw how they fucked up everything in the slums he grew up in, he still fell into using as a kid – he thought if he couldn’t have happiness, at least he could have pleasure. He watched as opiates hijacked his reward system, robbing him of the endorphin rush that comes from personal accomplishment or helping somebody out, watched his tolerance catch up every time he increased his dose so he was burning through cash just to not get dopesick. It only made his shitty life even worse, so now he takes his revenge by destroying their cancerous spread.

Finding a Hardcore Show (Night)

Searching the billboard of a punk / metal / hardcore record shop, skate shop, venue, or Grindcore House produces a photocopied flyer with amateurish art of two crust punks robbing a garbage truck at gunpoint. Fatalism and four other bands are playing tonight at the Merzbowl: ¥25, doors at 7, bands at 8.

Any main characters who came up skating or playing music know the Merzbowl is an illegal skate park and DIY space hidden inside a warehouse in the Industrial Quarter (Municipal Zone 5).

Scene: The Merzbowl

Soundtrack: Trapped Under Ice - Reality Unfolds [demo version]

→ Start track extremely quiet and turn up as they enter warehouse

A sliver-thin moon hangs in the light-polluted sky above the Industrial Quarter. Distant gunshots crack in the night. As you roll up on a non-descript warehouse you can feel as much as hear muffled soundwaves from within. What do you do?

Front doors locked. Behind the warehouse, showgoers loudly talk, sip on 40s, and pass around a blunt. A dude with face tattoos and a Slugfest shirt puts ¥25 from each main character into a little strongbox and stamps the back of their hands.

Inside: *You're hit with a tangible wall of sound that resonates through your limbs and lungs. A three-piece plays on the back of a squat quarter-pipe while young heads run across the makeshift stage and flip back into the roiling crowd. Big goons in blue GxAxMx CREW hoodies break up fights and keep point for bad falls. An Indian dude with a black beard and cybernetic eyes hops on the stage with a guest mic right before a breakdown and the kids lose their fucking minds. What do you do?*

Anquan is standing in the back by the Death Rites merch table. Some wobs in front of an IWW banner hand out pamphlets on industrial sabotage and insurgent labor organizing, their table crowded with literature.

* * *

Conversation With Anquan xVx

- Asks about details of operation, how far along their planning is etc.
- If the Oxhead drug operation is mentioned, Anquan is down, no charge, but only on the condition that all drugs on site flushed or torched.
- If drug angle not mentioned, his fee is ¥10,000.
- PKC is red hot since allegedly disappearing a local crew of meth cooks. While Anquan's interested, he won't be bringing any soldiers with him.
- Declines if any of the main characters seem like addicts or dealers.

GIFTS

If Anquan successfully recruited, he shows up with a HOTrod for each main character when they link for the operation (write down) . . .

HOTrod (hemostatic osteoblast & thrombin rod): the pinnacle of combat medical devices, this red 5-inch rod with a button on top delivers a compound of thrombin-mimicking nanites and synthetic osteoblasts. **Heals 20, costs a move action.**

The Battle of the Oxhead Warehouse

Soundtrack: Animals as Leaders - CAFO [*only once fight begins*]

Entry: skylights, loading bay door (only openable from inside), a large trench drainway in the center of the floor. Front door (south) is heavily reinforced.

→ Remember surprised combatants go last, and have 0 defense until their first turn.

Battleground & Setup

- **Strategic Cover:** heavy racking full of car doors and other parts.
- **Starting Position:** half the starting goons are within attack / charging range so the main characters can take advantage of their surprise attack.
- **Two Doors:** on north wall, lead to rest of warehouse. More goons come out of these.
- **Map Style:** mecharmor marker is 2 x 2. On numbered goon markers, it's helpful to write R (for ranged) or H (for hand-to-hand). Flip when merked. Map is 12 x 18 grid. Optional: add second level to map with a 2 x 12 mezzanine.
- **No Fight Map:** helpful to chunk enemies up into squads, referring to them by location (eastern squad, chop shop fireteam etc).

A L L I E S

***Anquan xVx** (only if recruited)

Stats: Offense s14+2 (large hammer with Judge sticker) // Defense 3 // Merk 40 // Move 7

Specials: **Worldbeater** (free s8+2 unarmed attack when 10, 20, and 30 merk reached)

Mizucorp Fibroblastic Applicator (fully restores one merked character to 0 offense taken. No action cost: nasal spray deploys nanites straight into bloodstream)

OFFENSE TAKEN :

***The Black Chalice** (only if recruited)

All Black Chalice have Move 5

Brother Yusuf: bearded man, bearded axe
Offense s14 +1 // Defense 3 // Merk 10

Offense Taken:

Medha Tai: Indian woman with sick icon-engraved sword
Offense s12 +2 // Defense 2 // Merk 20

Offense Taken:

Bulganin: stocky marksman, combat knife on vest
Offense s16 (range 40) // Defense 1 // Merk 10

Offense Taken:

No-Lobe: buckwild Lithuanian with a shotgun
Offense s10 (range 2) // Defense 1 // Merk 20

Offense Taken:

Chaplain Volkov: psionic capability, SMG
Offense s8 (range 8) // Defense 1 // Merk 10
Specials: Heal 5 (range 1, unlimited)
Revive to half merk (range 1, single use)

Offense Taken:

E N E M I E S

Tactics: spread attacks out evenly (don't instantly merk the weaker main characters).

* **Goons:** warehouse starts with 5 goons (+9 if Black Hand recruited, +3 if Anquan recruited). 2 additional goons arrive from back rooms every turncycle for three turns.

1. / / /
2. / / /
3. / / /
4. / / /
5. / / /

Stats: Offense s6 ranged (8 strides) or s6 hand-to-hand // Defense 1 // Merk 3 // Move 5

* **Brute:** on the first Oxhead turn a brute arrives from the back rooms. If immobilized or disarmed, he fires a sawed-off (s6, range 4 // s4 after 2 strides).

Stats: Offense s12+1 (+1 harmonic sword) // Defense 1 // Merk 10 // Move 7

O F F E N S E T A K E N :

→ If the main characters seem under-challenged, send out more brutes.

* **Mecharmor:** there's an older model of light mecharmor (basically an armored pod with mounted guns mechanized legs; used for difficult mountain or jungle terrain) in the chop shop. Biometric lock requires registered handprint to access. Boss of the fight, but takes time to activate:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| [] Turn 1: Goon sprints to mecharmor, locks himself in | [] Turn 2: Fires up engines |
| [] Turn 3: Calibrates weapons systems, stands | [] Turn 4: Takes first turn |

Stats: Offense s12 (50 cal HMG, range 30) // Defense 3 // Merk // Move 3
(Base merk is 50, +10 if Anquan xVx recruited, +60 if Black Hand recruited)

O F F E N S E T A K E N :

When allied side characters realize the mecharmor is actually in working condition they're noticeably rattled (imagine realizing you're about to fight a Sherman tank).

Fail State

If it looks like the main characters will get wiped out, let the last main character standing merk the mecharmor (even if it's not close to being merk). **As a fair trade, inflict loss:**

- The first main character merk has mild amnesia and loses their next level
- The second main character merk loses an arm (a prosthetic is ¥20,000+)

The Rest of the Warehouse & Loot

If Anquan xVx survives, he smashes the pill press and throws the captagon g-packs into a utility sink, leaving the water on. If Chaplain Volkov survives they administer last rites, including to Oxheads.

A.) Chop Shop: in a stationary vice, partly stripped for cleaning is an **H&K Deposer**, a high-grade automatic rifle that can immediately make another attack (can be different target) when it lands an 8. (s8 + fast, range 20. Worth ¥15,000.)

B.) Warehouse Floor: a masterwork **MDS sawed-off** with raptor grip and modified gas displacement system that attenuates recoil. Respins 1s (s6 +fast, range 4, s4 after 2 strides. Worth ¥8,000). Any +1 harmonic oscillators (worth ¥5,000 each) from merked brutes.

C.) Pill Lab: chemistry equipment, pill press, 14 g-packs of captagon (worth ¥10k wholesale). ¥12,000 in small bills are packed inside a suitcase.

D.) Lobster's Room: an ad hoc luxury suite. Door is locked but flimsy (0 strong to kick open). Lobster Mercier is hiding behind the bed, and immediately takes a shot at the breacher (s2), but is easily overpowered (merk 2). Unless somebody stops him, Katsumoto takes Mercier's parafield and pops him in the thigh so he can't run off.

EXIT PHASE

If the main characters' exit plan was "Uhh guess I'll just head back to my car and hope for the best?" punish them with a close call as the hooks pull over the car in front of them, or with the Oxheads catching their plates and taking revenge next season or something.

* * *

After the Operation

Soundtrack: Quasimoto - Boom Music Instrumental

Wudasic starts coordinating the tribunal (takes about 12 hours) as soon as she's contacted. It'll take place at the Hourglass Ballroom, an abandoned music venue in Sewerd Park, Zone 3. The main characters need to be there to testify and receive payment.

→ Montage through however the main characters choose to spend the next 12 hours.
(If they try and talk to Mercier he says he is above speaking with terrorists.)

The Childeric Bee: while leaving for the tribunal, somebody notices a glint under Lobster Mercier's collar, pulling out a gold curb chain with a garnet-inset golden bee pendant. Anybody with Worldliness 1+ recognizes it as a Childeric Bee replica, a symbol of French monarchic power. This can be used as a blank to set up future storylines (page 41) or just a final reward for a successful operation (worth ¥50,000).

Outro: The Trial of Lobster Mercier

Soundtrack: Pete Rock - Mind Frame Instrumental

Gauge Interest: if the actors just wanna see the Lobster's end, quickly summarize. If they wanna get involved with the trial's discourse, their opinion is valued by everybody present.

The Hourglass, an Abandoned Venue in Zone 3

Outside, the Yardbastards (a working class suedehead gang usually holding a picket line in the shipyards or fighting Sang et Terre in the stadium district) are working security and keeping a perimeter. The Bastards receive the main characters with triumphal stadium chants as they roll into the Hourglass' loading-yard and present the Lobster.

Inside, the neglected venue is lit with portable floodlights. Friends and families of the victims plus a dozen community members settle in. Wudasic spots the main characters and gestures them over. Salvatore is with her, shakes all their hands, and gives them a backpack filled with cash: ¥20,000 for each main character.

Étienne Mercier, hands bound, stands on the stage in front of pictures of all 27 victims of the Scilla Hills collapse. A Black Panther attorney named (Albertina) **Sostre** represents the prosecution. An activist lawyer and restorative justice advocate named (Shòuyí) **Mòzǐ** represents Mercier. The gathered people will serve as *en banc* judiciary.

Citizens' Tribunal

• **Opening arguments:** Mòzǐ argues nothing done to Mercier will bring back the victims, arguing in favor of strict pacifism and forgiveness.

Sostre responds that indeed one should always forgive, but the world must also be protected from sociopaths like Mercier: while he has the pomp of riches to lend him a sense of decency, in terms of human harm he is worse than several serial killers. He cannot be let free to continue his depravity.

• **Evidence:** presented documents and witness testimony show Étienne Mercier repeatedly ignored or downplayed reports of structural compromise in the Scilla Hills 10304 building, while still pulling about ten million yuan a year from that property alone.

• **Mercier Pops Off:** he says (French accent) something like *"This is a circus, an absurdity – a rabble of churchmice and hooligans lashing out in envy at someone who actually made something of themselves."*

• **Sentencing:** guilt now established, Mòzǐ proposes only seizing the entirety of Mercier's assets, and redistributing it to the workers and tenants he stole it from. Sostre says they should take everything *and* execute Mercier for crimes against humanity. Lobster Mercier, realizing this trial is more than symbolic, starts to sweat.

• **The Debate:** many still grieving the loss of loved ones demand execution or worse. Others argue it would be better optics and perhaps a better moral lesson to strip everything he owns but let him live. Counterarguments abound.

• **The Compromise:** somebody brings up that the ultimate nightmare of a soft-handed tub of guts like Mercier is work. Why not send him over to Malaysia (officially "The Malayan Worker's Confederation) where he can spend the rest of his life in a labor camp? People quickly warm to the idea.

• **Resolution:** a Malayan ambassador is reached on a scrambled line, and gets the green light from his colleagues: the MWC formally offers to rehabilitate the criminal Étienne Mercier in their most high-profile reeducation facility. The ambassador gives his word that Mercier will pay his debt to humanity in full, and his toil will be well-documented as an admonition to the global owning class and other economic criminals.

A dogcrate is fetched from a nearby pet supply store and Lobster Mercier stuffed in. Trusted seafaring contacts are already on their way to a nearby dock. A squad of armed Bastards throw Mercier in the back of a van and roll out of the Hourglass's loading-yard to raucous celebration.

*Crew Ambition Complete: “Deliver the Lobster”

Lobster Mercier found, snatched, and brought to justice

Reward: +1 level and ¥20,000 each

Naming of the Crew

A famous artist who attended the tribunal catches up with the main characters, showing sketches of them handing over Mercier. She’ll be turning these studies into a large oil painting, and wants to title it with whatever they call themselves.

Optional: for the best crew name, tell everybody to bring a few at the top of next session – whoever brings the favorite by vote wins 3 SP.

Close the scene with: the main characters are widely congratulated. Somebody gives them a nugget of asteroidal platinum that belonged to their son (crewman on a sort station) who was killed in the collapse, a mourning Muslim couple press onyx misbaha beads into one of their hands, a gravelly old head says they all drink for free at his bar for life etc. While tomorrow the for-profit media networks will wail about containing one’s anger to a voting booth, the people of St. Disma celebrate the unlikely triumph of justice in their community.

Coda

Soundtrack: Denzel Curry - Zone 3 [start real quiet]

As night falls, the news spreads and the celebrations gain momentum. Every block of Municipal Zone 3 slowly roils into a party, its residents in disbelief they’ve brought an untouchable member of the ruling elite to real and lasting justice. Doors are left open to neighbors, people empty into the streets, music exudes from every speaker and rival cliques save drama for another day. More and more people begin to recognize you, honking horns and popping off bottlerockets, offering drinks and joints, enraptured by the story of how a few no-name volunteers dogwalked a mid-level gang and snatched away one of the island’s most vile slumlords. As you slow roll down the jumping main drag of Zone 3, the closing shot slowly cranes up, rising above the grime, summer breezes, and sky-piercing towers of St. Disma.

→ Blast the track.

E N D

Keep it Rolling

If everybody likes the show and wants to keep meeting for sessions, here are a few ideas for season two's Crew Ambition (remember to rotate Key Narrators) . . .

- **Guts of the City:** some major players got waxed, and a reliable source says their massive stash is still hidden somewhere in a catacomb beneath Gascony Park.
- **Decapitate the Serpent:** a woman calling herself "Mirror" meets with the main characters. She says her people are posting bounties on vory v zakone leadership (page 47), and offers them intel on the vor captains: each controls a "pleasure house" in Slav City and has elite psionic security. They can work their way up the foodchain to the pekhan (boss), or take out a few and frame the others, leaving them to destroy themselves. Unclear if she's from a rival organization, the government, a rogue security firm, just out for revenge etc.
- **Gold:** the Lobster's Childeric Bee pendant is actually an original (worth about ¥25,000,000 but extremely difficult to fence), and word's gotten out who has it. French ultranationalists and old fashioned jackers alike come gunning for the main characters
- **Marching on the Bastions of the Morningstar:** the Black Chalice call in a well-deserved favor. A medical manufacturer called Sceptre Holdings has bought a sealed patent for a treatment that keeps Mesothelioma in remission, but are charging several thousand times its manufacturing cost, leaving patients to somehow get the funds or die. A coalition assault squad is plotting to enter their Zone 8 tower disguised as custodial staff, fight their way through heavy mercenary presence and cybernetic area denial systems, jack the patent off the highest floor, and bail using microgliders to fly down into the city.
- **Cleaning House:** the main characters investigate a series of bombings across St. Disma. A string of clues brings them to an ecofascist safehouse in the city, and then points them to a l'Ecephale (page 46) compound out in the Teardrops, a decent recreation of Lubart Castle. After bulldozing the heavily armed inhabitants and burning their fucked up nature temple where they sacrifice animals and shit, they find evidence of collaboration with the sitting government – weapons shipments, intel on rival political groups, and bomb-making materials.

Creating a New Show

If everybody wants to keep meeting for sessions, but run a different setting or genre, just bang out the below steps.

1. Agree on a show concept: something with a lot of narrative potential like uncovering supernatural secrets in the thriving cities of the Bronze Age, or exploring a small planet of destroyed civilizations now infested with strange lifeforms.
2. First Key Narrator steps up: since they'll be running the show, they now have creative control over the setting. Key, it's your job to come to that first session with an episode that introduces the main characters and sets the Crew Ambition in motion. If you're a first-timer, check out page 115 for a crash course.
3. Agree on a Crew Ambition: can be something immediate like repelling the raiders boarding the ship you're all passengers on ("Merk the Raiders"). Can be something open-ended like a crew of longtime associates starting a private detective agency and waiting for their first case to walk in the door ("Nail First Case"). Can be something longform like finding a lost map and then pillaging the tomb of the tyrant Kashif Sultan ("Into the Crypt").
4. Actors create a crew of main characters: a cast you'd wanna watch an actual show about – interesting group dynamics, believable for the setting, and all driven to move the show's plot forward.
5. Lock in a time for that first session: seriously, do this step now. If you kick that can down the road everybody's schedule is gonna fill up and your game probably won't happen.

Bump Scenes

Scenes that can be dropped into the middle of a session. Use them to change up gameplay or inject action.

SOCIAL

- **Psycho shows up:** ideally at the worst time possible. Just go buckwild with this one.
- **Revolver:** while traveling, laying on a building, or waiting for a meet the main characters start talking about their favorite spots around the city. Go around and get an answer from each main character – a dive bar, DIY space, athletic club, shooting range, pool hall, union hall, party headquarters, soup kitchen, record shop, secret spot in a bando or out in the Teardrops etc. Ask about anything interesting they bring up, and write down anything you might want to use later.
- **Point of Contention:** while traveling, clocking a building, or waiting for a meet the main characters get in a straight up shouting match but over something absurd. What is it? Emphasize it can't be serious, but completely inconsequential shit like whether it's OK to put noodles in chili, if water can be wet, grape vs orange soda etc. Egg them on with Katsumoto calling one a depraved pervert and another "literally Hitler".

FIGHTS

- **Bump Fight I:** squad of goons sent by tail picked up at the Lobster's mansion. Page 13.
- **Bump Fight II:** squad of goons sent by tail informed by sheisty clerk. Page 14.

• **Advanced Combat:** a contract killer with an invisibility mutation. Sets it off with a surprise attack (target's defense doesn't apply).

→ **Stats:** Offense s10+1 (spear) // Defense 2 // Merk 20 // Move 6

Tactics: stick and move. Will use spear to strike from a stride away, avoiding counterattacks and making his position difficult to determine.

Solutions: have something in the scene to drop on top of him – bags of cement or flour, cans of paint, large banners etc. A nearby puddle or pool would allow the main characters to see where he's standing. Also the Annihilate Psionics premade Special.

Merked: dead. Skin continues to show distortions of nearby scenery like a bizarre, glitching out chameleon.

Loot: dope Yoshida Armory spear. Inherent +1 offense (s10 +1 +strong, range 2, block 1). Telescopes to 24" for storage.

If pockets gone through (multi-tool, petty cash) an unsigned note says "double rate, Royal Barbell 732, confirm at second spot". There is also a small key in the assassin's pocket. Looking in a phonebook identifies a Royal Barbell powerlifting gym in Old Town; the key fits locker 732 which contains ¥10,000.

PUZZLE

- **The Microsafe:** contacts of Katsumoto link up. They're having trouble with a high-end model of microsafe that most likely contains some real incriminating shit, but will incinerate its contents if tampered with. It's tubular, just over a foot long, and has a combination lock of 3 rings around the lid, each numbered 1 to 100. It was *allegedly* scored in a bank job targeting the strongbox of Li Xiang Vu, one of the politicians leading the fearmongering campaigns against people with advanced bioactive mutations.

Solution: 50, 10, 5 (Vu's initials as roman numerals).

Loot: 2 SP and ¥2,000 for each main character. Contacts say they def owe them a favor.

If the Entire Crew Gets Merked

Soundtrack: GZA - Queen's Gambit Instrumental

The first pangs of consciousness are the pains of injuries: cracked ribs, cut lips, yawning gashes and aching bruises. One by one you stir back to the world of the living, wrists bound behind you, and the last dream-like haze of a heavy sedative lifting. What do you do?

The main characters wake up in the guts of a mid-sized ship; weapons, parafields, phones, and valuables gone. Their wrists are bound with cord (strong 4 to bust out).

→ The lengthy sopor they just woke from counts as a full night's sleep, healing them and restoring their once per day Specials.

Other Prisoners: there are three other people in the hold. One came aboard willingly (poor bastard volunteered himself into slavery to pay off his family's debts), so knows the ship is currently loading up in the Teardrops, a chain of small islands in international waters just off the St. Disma coast. They're headed for an underground slave market in Laos where they'll all be auctioned off.

Hold: there's a heavy watertight door (strong 15 to kick open), a large cargo hatch in the ceiling (strong 2 to lift but must have unbound wrists), and a bundle of wires in the ceiling's corner held in place by metal zip-ties with poorly trimmed jagged edges.

Possible Solutions

- Cut bonds on jagged metal zip-tie edge (get high enough by sitting on comrade's shoulders), or another believable sharp implement.
- Make a racket until one of the smugglers angrily tosses a tear gas grenade inside the hold, but quickly wedge something in the door.
- Tear out the wires. In about five minutes angry exclamations can be heard and the armed crew enter the hold to fix the wires.
- Strong main character just lifts cargo hatch for everybody else to crawl out.

Once the main characters leave the hold they were locked in, they encounter one of the smugglers who panics and runs off to get the rest of the crew.

Fight: Smugglers

Three drunk assholes that only speak French. All have a move score of 5.

S T A T S

Shortstack Offense s4 (24" pipe wrench) // Defense 0 // Merk 5

Big Guy Offense s4 (machete) // Defense 0 // Merk 5

Beard Offense s2+2 (Glock 31) // Defense 0 // Merk 2
(remember firearm offense doubled against target with no parafield)

Merked: gift your actors the satisfaction of killing slave traffickers. If taken alive and asked about who sold the main characters to them, the smugglers just describe whoever merked the main characters (never got real names or contact info) showing up at their boathouse since they have a reputation for selling humans in Laos.

Stash: rows of stolen flatscreens, dozens of crates of knock-off designer goods. The main characters' phones are in a duffel bag of boosted phones and tablets. Main characters' weapons are sewn up into a large commercial canopy tent with a few AK-47s and a Galil ACE 52 (rifle with inherent +1 to offense: s8 +1 +fast, range 20. Worth ¥10,000). Eight brand new jet skis are double-stacked up on the deck. In the cabin, a fourth smuggler is passed out on a bunk with a half-finished 750 of Monarch.

* On Last Week's Episode

Soundtrack: NAH - Be Cool Fucker

Start each new session by going over the events of last session, ending by setting the scene where you left off.

* Closing Ceremonies

Soundtrack: MF DOOM - Arrow Root

End each session by running through three categories . . .

- 1. Tha Golden Domez:** go around the circle and award each player 2 SP. As it's awarded the group gets to decide what it's for ("I present to you tha Golden Dome award for Worst Plan Humanly Possible" etc).
- 2. Key's Choice Award:** favorite performance of the session (2 more SP to that actor).
- 3. Completed Ambitions:** give SP for any Ambitions wrapped up.

ZONE CHECK

The island of St. Disma is sectioned into twelve municipal zones.

Zone 1: Old Town. Heavy with the Neo-Baroque architecture popular during the mid 21st century. Mostly rich lames, politicians, and celebrities.

Zone 2: Le Miroir (old world, middle income), **The Flats** (brickwork neighborhood along a scenic canal), **Woodshrine Beach** (dunes and goons. this cutty seaside neighborhood is seeing severe overcrowding and property values in freefall as more impoverished American emigrants move in).

Zone 3: where the main characters are from: mostly populated by poor English-speakers from the presently collapsing American empire. Home to the city's most violent slums, Zone 3 is often derided as "Disney Land" and its residents mocked as American pop culture figures (John Wayne etc).

Major neighborhoods: Sewerd Park, Barrio Tres Santos, Cannery District, The Yards, Wharton ("Wartorn") Heights, Rosewood, Ditchtown.

Zone 4: Cherry Bay (hills, rowhouses, light industry), **Slav City** (emigrants ranging from Szczecin to Vladivostok), **Indonesiatown** (mostly climate refugees from agriculturally obliterated Southeast Asia. Large Thai and Filipino populations as well).

Zone 5: The Industrial Quarter (ports and factories), **The Gash** (terraced slum in a steep valley).

Zone 6: Mostly **Little Bombay** (wealth disparity about as insane as the old country: tech billionaire skyscrapers near the tower districts give way to labyrinthine shanty towns rife with hunger, sweatshops, and Naxalites killing sweatshop owners).

Zone 7: Tower districts. **Business District** (mostly finance and global 500, basically the Lower Manhattan of St. Disma).

Zone 8: Tower districts. **Downtown** (commerce and office megatowers, many private museums, extravagant theaters, tourist spots).

Zone 9: Tower districts. **Fog Hill** (an extravagant playground of the international rich), **Jewelers' Row** (high-end retail), **Gascony Park**.

Zone 10: Gestas Heights (megamansions and private forests of international bankers), **Maplegate** (sweatshop owners that scream and shit their pants if you don't call them "job creators", their trophy wives), **Les Mâchoires** (leh *mash-wah* / "the jaws", a long cape of pristine private beaches and gorgeous terraced neighborhoods).

Zone 11: Seawinds (contains the world-famous Sundaland Common, a mall with palladium-glass domeways extending out into the waters of the nearby reef).

• **Stadium District** (Muay Thai, Lethwei, and boxing all huge; the Reapers are at the bottom of the Big3 basketball league, the Sharks are crushing their division in Kabaddi, the St. Disma Saints are actually doing half-decent in the National Rugby League).

Zone 12: The Teardrops (A chain of islands from the St. Disma coast well into international waters, auctioned off by the St. Disma government in the previous century. A very strange mix of casinos, drug and sex tourism, growing and smuggling operations, international criminals, local criminals, tax shelters and money launderers, corporate exclaves operating outside the law, and mysterious palace-compounds of billionaires with especially illegal vices. All fortified and crawling with private security).

→ The city's name derives from the reef the island was built over. "Saint Disma" is the antiquated French form of Saint Dismas, the good thief.

GROUPS & FACTIONS

Social tectonics and endless plot fuel for ongoing games.

Political: when a government fails to serve its constituency, it faces a crisis of legitimacy. Generations of poverty and frustration with a political body that only legislates on behalf of lobbyists has made St. Disma a hotbed of increasingly radical parapolitical institutions and multiple insurgencies. Here are the most powerful political entities in St. Disma . . .

- **Zaisheng Monarchists:** absolutist monarchists from the mainland who believe in Han Chinese ethnic supremacy, and the subjugation of all other ethnicities. They've coalesced around an obscure descendant of the Ming dynastic lineage named Zhu Zaiji, who they claim is a literal celestial entity, the biologically supreme of the biologically supreme. **Goals:** drive "ethnic encroachers" from St. Disma and the South China Sea, attack the sitting government, sterilize anybody with advanced mutations, establish Han Chinese aristocracy.
- **Ecofascisti:** really love nature, and really want race war. Started as street gangs like Second Siege, Butcherbirds, and l'Ecephale. Like most reactionary groups, the ecofascisti argue those born with composite mutations are an artificially divergent species, making them genetic competitors and thus a long-term existential threat to humans. **Goals:** attack corporations who degrade the natural environment, attack non-whites, attack egalitarian groups, attack psions and anybody else with composite mutations, attack cybernetic surgeons and genetic engineers.
- **Masculofuturists:** well-groomed, over-educated fascists who only allow gay male membership. They believe women are underdeveloped subhumans and should not be permitted citizenship or human rights. The Futurists have a big thing for the "classical canon" of art and literature, Russell Veh, Ernst Röhm, philosophy, and antique statues of jacked dudes. **Goals:** extermination of non-whites, subjugation of women and heterosexuals, armed struggle for its own sake.
- **Sang et Terre:** French ultranationalist movement that propounds a steep and very complicated ethnic hierarchy with (surprise) Frenchmen on top. Weirded out by the ecofascisti and masculofuturists, but will work with them to target the sitting government, non-whites, egalitarian groups, etc. **Goals:** kick out the non-whites, dominate the other white ethnicities, exterminate anybody with advanced mutations, make St. Disma a protectorate of France.
- **Naxalites:** a type of Maoism that emerged in India's ultra-impooverished red corridor. Huge presence in Little Bombay (Zone 6). Usual subfactions of Leninists, Trotskyists, Hoaxists, orthodox Marxists etc. **Goals:** total war against private corporations and any government which supports them, requisition of production factors from private control to worker control, foment revolutionary sentiment, implement new government managed by Naxalite vanguard party.
- **Eastern Orthodox Anarchists:** operate in small cells and "study groups" across the island. The most motivated are in Slav City, where several prominent priests and monastics preach Yeshua the Christ using violence on the money changers is a clear call for war against the world's owning class. Common graffiti: Luke 16:13, Matthew 20:25-28, Psalm 146, Acts 4:32, Matthew 19:24, Acts 5:29, "fuck the state, no king but Christ" etc. **Goals:** war against the mammon worshipers (the ultra-wealthy and private corporations), crush the idol of the state, serve the poor, sick, exploited, and hungry.
- **Sufi Mystic Zakatists (The Wäisi):** radical Muslim socialists who consider jihad a righteous struggle to liberate the poor and subjugated. Currently gaining serious momentum as their fighters return from coalition operations wiping out the last of the Wahhabists in Southwest China and the Arab Peninsula. Known for their small wars against the St. Disma drug cartels. **Goals:** uplift the poor and oppressed, attack private corporations and drug cartels, return their profits to the neighborhoods they preyed on, abolish illicit drugs.
- **The St. Disma Government, R.E.S.:** the current St. Disma government exists almost exclusively to serve private interest, their lobbyists, and the wealthy. While the last decade has been a non-stop legitimacy crisis, the state does have the ability to print infinite money, and also hire private detective agencies, security firms, and even international mercenaries to subdue the above insurgencies. A recent, closely-guarded tactic has been covertly funding and training various organized criminals and parapolitical groups (cheap to mobilize, don't have to answer for human rights violations) to attack the government's political competitors, or infiltrate them and become wreckers from within. **Goals:** subsume moderate political alternatives, discredit and disable parapolitical competitors, manufacture public approval of the state, keep the money flowing.

Criminal: activities range from humble operations like bookies, smuggling, and moving soft drugs to straight evil shit like human trafficking and hard drug distribution. Size ranges from international cartels to street-level small-timers . . .

- **Yakuza:** the smallest of the major criminal organizations but holding their own mostly by cleverly framing / pitting their enemies against each other and maintaining a ruthless monopoly on importing weapons. Specialize in gambling, smuggling, slave trafficking, and kidnapping.
- **Vory v Zakone:** “thieves in law”, Russian mob. The vory are mostly running amphetamines, party drugs, sex slaves, and extorting smaller operations. Known for their Zone 4 “pleasure houses”, palatial mansions of drugs, gambling, prostitution etc catering to wealthy elites. Have a weird thing for making captured enemies fight to the death as a gambling spectacle.
- **Triad:** ethnic Chinese organized by family and secret society. They move huge amounts of opiates from the poppy fields of Southeast Asia, manufacture countless tons of captagon, and control the most territory on the island, taking cuts from every small-time operation on their turf.
- **The Fuyant ("fui-yohn") Cartel:** leadership are French ex-military and ex-intelligence. Operating in an impenetrable covert network, even the sitting government and more traditional criminal institutions are hesitant to fuck with them. Currently have the wildly lucrative cocaine market on lock, and are rumored to have membership in high finance and world banks.
- **The Daaku Cartel:** recently unified Indian criminal syndicates. The worst of the human traffickers in St. Disma, and have a near monopoly on the Afghani poppy fields so are usually fighting the triad for share of the island’s opiate market.
- **Tombdwellers:** catacombs were created last century to accommodate the island’s skyrocketing population. Together with a massive anti-flood drainage system they form an underground network that has slowly been overrun by dozens of fucked up criminal gangs that freely move beneath the city since the government, security firms, and other criminals are afraid to enter.
- **Small Timers & Contractors:** hard drug manufacture, soft drug manufacture, street-level drug distribution, bookies, sport and fight fixing, loansharking, extortion, kidnapping, opposition research (stalking) and blackmail, assassinations, strongarm robbery, scamming, high-level specialist burglary, car theft, fencing, gambling dens, prostitution houses, human trafficking and slavery, weapons smuggling, benign commodity smuggling, money laundering.

→ Universal goals for all the above are **A.)** corner their current specialty markets, **B.)** expand into new markets, **C.)** dominate and extort smaller operations, **D.)** kill competitors, **E.)** politick, scheme, and backstab to make any of the above happen.

Philosophical: highly motivated mass movements that managed to cohere outside political or criminal organizing frameworks . . .

- **The Jinrui Kōken:** militarized technopessimists. Simply call themselves “pro-human”. They believe A. technology hasn’t made people happier, just increased the speed of their hedonic treadmill, and B. the consequences of new technology are unforeseeable. For example, the universally lowered IQ scores from leaded gasoline, the universal endocrine mutilations from endemic microplastics, the mass atomization and suicide crisis of the internet era, the structural unemployment and economic collapses of the automation era, etc. Subgroups vary, but a unifying conviction is to prevent new technologies from emerging by destroying research infrastructure and disabling research experts. More radical cells work to undo current technologies, regularly causing blackouts and attacking industrial production factors.
- **Nihilist Accelerationists:** believe that consciousness is a curse, and life is a vile contagion. Sounds like something a depressed teenager would think, but a few decades of neo-Schopenhauerist philosophers loaned a sense of academic seriousness to the Nihilist Renewal, the intellectual movement the Nihilist-Accelerationists emerged from. Moderate groups merely distribute free birth control and anti-natalist literature, where the radical majority coordinate high-casualty attacks on civilian targets. Their unifying goal is to worsen material conditions sparking war, conflict, and “existential realization”. Currently, the Nihilist-Accelerationist movement is an unorganized kaleidoscope of armed cells perpetrating a lot of sabotage, a few shootings, and the occasional suicide bombing, but if a highly capable, centralizing figure were to emerge they could become an actual existential threat.

[Key Narrator Notes]

[Key Narrator Notes]

Main Character Creation

Each actor creates and controls a main character in the game. As long as they fit the show's concept and start at level 1, anything goes.

*Quicklist . . .

1. Snatch a main character sheet from page 127
2. Concept: name, appearance, background etc
3. Pick Specials: page 55 - 69, start with 10 SP's worth (you can start here if you're still thinking on a concept)
4. Start with merk 10
5. Start with 0 defense (top number is just all lower numbers added together)
6. Start with a move score of 5
7. Main characters fluent in English (spoken by the mostly-American migrants of Zone 3). Spend a free bar in any additional language (St Disma multilingual)
8. Spend a bar in any major skill or language (two bars is fluent)
9. Put one point in any primary
10. Check opposite page for the bonus that primary gives you, write it down

→ Ready to play

Start undeveloped: you mostly figure out who your main character is as you play them, riffing with the other main characters and interacting with the setting. Leave mad room to grow.

Start humble: remember you're starting at level 1. You're basically the average person with a little SP so forget about any master swordsman shit.

Meet your Key at least halfway: they put together a game for you to enjoy so don't make a main character named Fred Shitbreath or whatever. The show is only as good as everybody's level of buy-in.

Build your cast cooperatively. Crew chemistry is what really makes a show jump. Try to think of yourselves not as a group of individuals, but as a crew, a cast of main characters you'd wanna watch an actual show about. You wanna be able to have a slamming pair-off scene with any two main characters.

"Two of us play in the same jazz combo" is good, but to really juice a cast, fuck around with dynamics and archetypes – Seinfeld with four Jerrys never would have worked, you know?

Background: defines your main character, sure, but also use it to seed your future storylines and tie yourself to the setting. Some prompt ideas . . .

- * Where and how you grew up
- * A group you belong to
- * A comrade or contact
- * Your art / creative expertise
- * Your trade / vocational expertise
- * A rival
- * Culture / subculture / ethnicity
- * A nickname / title and how you got it
- * Two rumors the other main characters have heard about you
(don't specify if true, false, or exaggerated till it comes up in-game)

Don't bother writing beyond the background box: no amount of backstory will make your main character feel like a living person (that only happens as you play them).

* * *

Levels

Levels represent a main character's power. After overcoming a significant challenge in the show, all main characters gain a level. Leveling up about once every 3 sessions is normal.

Start at level 1 with . . . merk 10, 1 Primary Point, 10 Special Points, 1 Knowledge Bar
Level 2 1 Primary Point, 10 Special Points
Level 3 1 Primary Point, 10 Special Points, 1 Knowledge Bar
Level 4 1 Primary Point, 10 Special Points
Level 5 +1 to all Primaries, 10 Special Points, 1 Knowledge Bar
Level 6 1 Primary Point, 10 Special Points
Level 7 1 Primary Point, 10 Special Points, 1 Knowledge Bar
Level 8 1 Primary Point, 10 Special Points
Level 9 1 Primary Point, 10 Special Points, 1 Knowledge Bar
Level 10 +1 to all Primaries, 10 Special Points
Level 11 1 Primary Point, 10 Special Points, 1 Knowledge Bar
Level 12 1 Primary Point, 10 Special Points
Level 13 1 Primary Point, 10 Special Points, 1 Knowledge Bar
Level 14 1 Primary Point, 10 Special Points
Level 15 +1 to all Primaries, 10 Special Points, 1 Knowledge Bar

And so on ...

Primaries

The core stats of a character. Each primary amps up secondary features, like so . . .

STRONG

- Every 1 point: +1 offense on all hand-to-hand attacks and throwing attacks
- Every 2 points: +1 defense (put under parry) ▫ Every 3 points: +1 move score

FAST

- Every 1 point: +1 offense on all ranged attacks and light weapon attacks
- Every 2 points: +1 defense (put under dodge) ▫ Every 3 points: +1 move score

HARD

- Every 1 point: +10 merk ▫ Every 2 points: +1 defense (put under grit)
- Every 3 points: heal 1 point of offense taken each turn

SMART

- Every 1 point: +5 Special points (SP) ▫ Every 2 points: +1 knowledge bar

Your main character starts at level 1 with a point in any primary (zero in the rest). Stat-wise this represents the average person. Narratively, primaries are open to interpretation: smart can mean wise or witty or booksmart, strength can be fast-twitch or slow-twitch etc.

Major Skills

A narrative touchpoint for what your main character can easily do. Examples listed below are still subject to your Key Narrator's judgment of the situation, so don't be like "I do this immediately and effortlessly and the book said I can so suck it."

Automotive

Examples: **1 bar** to hotwire an outdated model of car or cut brakelines, **2** to outride a pursuing police cruiser or restore a small engine, **3** to hotwire recent models of car, **4** to be able to deduce how to operate a tank, **5** to outride full-scale police pursuit with aerial support

Bushcraft

Examples: **1 bar** to build a fire with no tools or forage enough food for one person, **2** to forage for a group or extract and braid fiber, **3** to track a survivalist trying to evade you or safely weaponize venoms (s4 undefendable offense per turn with Duration: Combat, single use), **4** to knap and bind flint or obsidian weapons from scratch (-2 offense since made of stone, but can create any type of hand-to-hand weapon or bow), **5** to create a comfortable settlement with low-maintenance permaculture

Chemistry

Examples: **1 bar** to fully destroy fingerprints, **2** to trace origin of a street drug by extracting additives, **3** to discreetly synthesize batches of mid-grade recreational drugs (¥2,000 worth per week), **4** to extract poison (s6 undefendable offense per turn with Duration: Combat, single use) from [redacted household product], **5** to make a frag grenade (page 107) with an hour's labor and ¥100 worth of [redacted industrial products]

Electronics

Examples: **1 bar** to disable a security camera or cheap alarm, **2** to safely disarm a homemade explosive or defeat a mid-grade alarm system, **3** to project pirate radio in a 1-mile radius or to a specific nearby target, **4** to make a pulse-switching EMP device (temporarily disables nearby electronics) out of garbage with three days' labor, **5** to knock out a city's powergrid with access to a transmission line, or a specific neighborhood with access to a substation

Gunsmithing

Examples: **1 bar** to clear a jam or assemble your own ammo (50% discount), **2** to sabotage a firearm with spiked ammo so it explodes when next used (firearm destroyed, causes firearm's offense to user), **3** to safely make your own gunpowder (even in the wilderness), **4** to make advanced ammunition (automatically respin 1s), **5** to machine a firearm from metal stock (week of labor)

Medicine

Examples: **1 bar** for CPR or to stop arterial bleeding, **2** to identify a common poison / venom / toxin or reset and splint a compound fracture, **3** to be able to deduce a corpse's cause of death or seal a sucking chest wound, **4** to reattach a severed hand or identify a rare poison / venom / toxin, **5** to safely graft cybernetic prostheses

Metalworking

Examples: **1 bar** to make a dagger out of scrap or defeat a cheap lock, **2** to weld bulletproof armoring onto a vehicle, **3** to make any hand-to-hand weapon out of scrap, **4** to defeat the door of a bank vault, **5** to make a hand-to-hand weapon with a permanent +1 offense (week of labor)

Nanotech

Each bar is a 10% cash discount on nanite-based tech (represents being able to just create your own)

Stealth

Examples: **1 bar** to creep past a security guard scrolling through his phone, **2** to pickpocket the average person, **3** to creep up behind a sentinel and remove the magazine from their rifle, **4** to defeat art museum motion sensors, **5** to evade a team of mercenaries trained and equipped for pursuit

Worldliness

Examples: **1 bar** to know who pulls the strings in your local criminal underworld, **2** to know the date of most major historical events of the setting, **3** to have a friendly contact in every major city, **4** to know so many people in bands and labels that you can get on the list of any show on the planet, **5** to know the names and addresses of the people who actually killed JFK

Specials

Powers and unique abilities. Feel free to change any Special's appearance to fit your main character. Here's how they work . . .

***Special's Name** [total SP cost]

Aesthetic: How it looks

Summary: What it does

Effect: The base mechanic [SP cost]

Modifiers: Optional upgrades to range / area / duration etc [SP cost behind each]

Sources: psionics, mutations, genetic engineering, cybernetic augmentations, nanotech etc. We made it a wide and ambiguous spread so anybody could realize whatever main character concept they had in mind.

Premade Specials

Even if you know how to create your own Specials already, stick to these until the arc in this book is completed.

S T A T S Some Real Basic Premade Stat Specials

*CA130 Plating [10 SP]

Aesthetic: You've had high-grade carbide plating surgically implanted over your vital organs.

Summary: +2 defense (permanent).

Effect: *Defense Up 2* [2 SP]

Modifiers: Duration: Permanent [effect x5]

*Motorhead [3 SP]

Aesthetic: You grew up in Zone 3's poppin classic car culture.

Summary: You know the basics of automotive repair, maintenance, and can drive like a pro.

Effect: *Knowledge Bar* (automotive) [3 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Yoked [7 SP]

Aesthetic: You either lift or work for a living.

Summary: +1 strong (permanent).

Effect: *Primary Up* (strong) [7 SP]

Modifiers: X

*With the Quickness [7 SP]

Aesthetic: Surrogate alpha motor neurons have been injected into your spinal column.

Summary: +1 fast (permanent).

Effect: *Primary Up* (fast) [7 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Durable [7 SP]

Aesthetic: Bone density substantially increased from genetically engineered LRP5 co-receptor.

Summary: +1 hard (permanent).

Effect: *Primary Up* (hard) [7 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Cerebral [7 SP]

Aesthetic: You're a quick study.

Summary: +1 smart (permanent).

Effect: *Primary Up* (smart) [7 SP]

Modifiers: X

S E N S E
Premade Sensory-Based Specials

***Optical Prosthesis Type IV [3 SP]**

Aesthetic: You have prosthetic eyes, and not yuppy ones that resemble the real thing.

Summary: Permanent ability to see in the dark in addition to your normal vision.

Effect: *Night Vision* [3 SP]

Modifiers: X

***Sonic Recall [3 SP]**

Aesthetic: Your integ is always recording and archiving audio.

Summary: At will, perfectly recall anything previously heard.

Effect: *Phonographic Memory* [3 SP]

Modifiers: X

***Long-Range Monitoring [2 SP]**

Aesthetic: Remote cctv software for your integ and disposable monitoring devices.

Summary: You can place a tiny, magnetized camera / microphone (effectively infinite supply, but only one active at a time) onto any metal surface. It will use the metal surface as a transmission antenna, sending you audio and video feed you can view at will. Each purchase of this Special is another monitoring device that can be active simultaneously.

Effect: *CCTV* [3 SP]

Modifiers: Selectivity: Metal Surfaces Only
[-1/3 total cost]

***Augmented Vision [3 SP]**

Aesthetic: Your PDE11A gene has been edited to make your vision on par with the average pair of binoculars.

Summary: Vision permanently as good as an eagle's.

Effect: *Distance Vision* [3 SP]

Modifiers: X

***Biometric Ping [2 SP]**

Aesthetic: Integ hardware for an energy-expensive scan of the surrounding area for signs of life.

Summary: Get a good idea of all nearby lifeforms.

Effect: *Detect Lifeform* [2 SP]

Modifiers: X

***Microalarm [3 SP]**

Aesthetic: Adhesive-backed motion sensors (so tiny they're effectively undetectable) function as an alarm system.

Summary: You have an effectively infinite supply of disposable movement sensors. Each can raise an audible alarm or privately notify your integ, *but* only one can be active at a time. No limit on range.

Effect: *Alarm* [3 SP]

Modifiers: X

Integ(rated computer)s: one of the more sophisticated cybernetic prosthetics, an integ is an airgapped computer built into the subject's body that interfaces directly with their senses. Many Specials are just expensive software for a main character's existing integ (costs nothing to start with one).

S O C I A L

Premade Identity & Interaction Specials

*Bouncer [4 SP]

Aesthetic: You're a semi-legendary St. Disma bouncer with both the scars and contacts to show for it.

Summary: You know and are respected by just about every bouncer in the city.

Effect: *Minor Celebrity* [4 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Feel Deception [12 SP]

Aesthetic: You're psionically attuned to sense truthfulness.

Summary: You can immediately check any statement made within earshot for deception (no action cost, unlimited uses).

Effect: *Detect Lie* [4 SP]

Modifiers: Use: Unlimited [x3]

*Problems [-3 SP]

Aesthetic: For whatever reason, you're terrified of beautiful women.

Summary: You have an overpowering fear of conventionally good-looking women. Gain 3 extra SP for having to put up with your extremely strange phobia.

Effect: *Phobia* (beautiful women) [-3 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Nobelsoft Linguacore [5 SP]

Aesthetic: Energy-expensive integ software that amps up the language and speech centers of your brain.

Summary: You're able to fluently comprehend and speak any and all language for two minutes.

Effect: *Speak Any Language* [5 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Vocoder [3 SP]

Aesthetic: A small prosthesis in your larynx gives you exceptional vocal ability.

Summary: You can perfectly imitate any voice you hear a dozen words from. Unlimited uses.

Effect: *Imitate Voice* [3 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Fuck Integ [2 SP]

Aesthetic: Drop a polymorphic virus into a nearby integ.

Summary: Causes a target with an integ and a lower smart score to act completely insane for at least a few minutes.

Effect: *Insanity* [4 SP]

Modifiers: Range 6 [4 SP] // Selectivity: Integ [only 1/4 total cost since only about 1/4 of side characters have integrated computers]

How many times can I use each Special? The default number is *once per day*. For upgrades, check out page 71.

Some Specials are automatically permanent, like Bouncer. Others have had their use number upgraded, like Feel Deception, but most of these premade Specials are still at their default of once per day.

M O V E M E N T

Premade Specials That Move & Alter How You Move

*Shock Absorption [4 SP]

Aesthetic: You have prosthetic legs with hydraulic shock absorbers.

Summary: Can't be hurt by falling any distance (automatically permanent).

Effect: *Fallproof* [4 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Telekinetic Field [3 SP]

Aesthetic: You have minor telekinesis.

Summary: You can levitate and manipulate small objects within reach without touching them. Unlimited uses, can't cause offense.

Effect: *Microkinesis* [3 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Ragdoll [15 SP]

Aesthetic: You levitate the target and then violently throw them through space.

Summary: Target is thrown 2 strides in any direction. If they collide with another character, they both take s6 offense. No action cost (but must be used on your turn).

Effect: *Push* (extra stride, any direction, collision s6) [10 SP]

Modifiers: Speed: Immediate [+1/2 effect cost]

*The Spark [20 SP]

Aesthetic: You're psionically attuned to fire, controlling it with a thought.

Summary: You can move any fire within 3 strides, and it only costs a move action. On its own, this Special can't cause more than 3 + level offense (bonuses from effects like *Engine of Ruin*, *Heat*, *Death Dealer* etc still apply). Can't affect more than one square stride at a time without buying Area upgrade (page 71). Unlimited uses.

Effect: *Xkinesis* (fire) [13 SP]

Modifiers: Range 6 [3 SP] // Speed: Move-Equivalent [+1/4 effect cost]

*Jump Augmentation [9 SP]

Aesthetic: You have cybernetic leg prostheses that let you double the average NBA vertical.

Summary: You can jump up to the full distance of your move score for one turn. No action cost.

Effect: *Ill Jumper* [3 SP]

Modifiers: Use: Unlimited [x3]

*Mineral Phasing [10 SP]

Aesthetic: A rare psionic skillset lets you glide through earthen substances.

Summary: You can levitate through stone, dirt, gravel, concrete, brick etc for a turncycle.

Effect: *Pass Through X* (earth) [10 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Grapnel Prosthesis [10 SP]

Aesthetic: Your prosthetic hand folds away revealing a pneumatic grapnel cannon.

Summary: You can fire a grapnel up to 30 strides and have it secure to a surface or object (without damaging it). Grapnel line is fine carbon fiber braid able to reliably hold just over your bodyweight. Unlimited uses, effect upgradeable.

Effect: *Grapnel-Shot* (+25 strides) [10 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Metallic Reorientation [5 SP]

Aesthetic: Psionic resonance with metallic elements lets you surreally run around on metal surfaces.

Summary: You're able to run / walk / slide / stand on metal surfaces as if they were the ground. Metal surface must be substantial; can't use this Special to snatch people's metal weaponry or stand around on fine wire. Unlimited uses.

Effect: *Allsurface* [5 SP]

Modifiers: Duration: Permanent [effect x5] // Selectivity: Metal Surfaces Only [only 1/5 total cost since only about 1/5 surfaces metal]

A L T E R A T I O N

Premade Specials That Change up Form & Function

*Asomnia [5 SP]

Aesthetic: Your hDEC2 gene has been engineered to give you an always-peaking circadian rhythm.

Summary: No need for sleep (automatically permanent).

Effect: *Eliminate Biological Need* (Sleep) [5 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Giant [14 SP]

Aesthetic: A complex replicative mutation within the Xq26 chromosome lets you suddenly become fucking huge.

Summary: You grow twice your normal size. You gain 2 strong *and* you respend your fast score into either strong or hard. Lasts a fight scene.

Effect: *Enlarge Character* (+2 strong) [14 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Psionic Supercooling [10 SP]

Aesthetic: You've honed the psionic ability to compress velocity distribution in non-organic matter.

Summary: You can freeze objects – turn a small amount of liquid into ice, supercool cheap electronics into dysfunction, or make items so cold anybody holding them takes s6 offense per turncycle (starting at the beginning of your next turn). Weapons and implements can be thrown down freely, but armor takes a full turn to remove. Effect upgradeable.

Effect: *Freeze s6* [3 SP]

Modifiers: Duration: Combat [effect x3] //

Range 2 [1 SP]

*SVS Nanites [3 SP]

Aesthetic: Your cybernetic forearm generates and houses adaptive piezoelectric nanites that can conform to and maintain simple patterns.

Summary: Repair a simple object (door, wheel, machete) with nanites.

Effect: *Repair* [3 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Stretch Armstrong [15 SP]

Aesthetic: A complex mutation of several genetic markers manifests in abnormal musculoskeletal pliability.

Summary: Your body is unnaturally stretchy and contortable. You can reach three strides with any limb. Can't effectively use weapons while stretching (but this is upgradeable). This Special is always active / can use at will.

Effect: *Body Elasticity* (+2 range) [15 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Heavily Modified [10 SP]

Aesthetic: You're so extensively bionic that you don't need human sustenance, but you also face the hatred of the technologically wary.

Summary: You don't need to breathe, eat, drink, or sleep, and are immune to disease.

However, you gotta deal with people who think extensive cybernetic prosthesis erodes your humanity and makes you dangerous: some side characters will keep you at a distance, and ecofascist groups like Second Siege or l'Acéphale actively hunt and attack you.

Effect: *Non-Living* (hunted) [10 SP]

Modifiers: X

The back of the book is a spinner. “s6” means a spinner from 1 to 6, “s12” means a spinner from 1 to 12 etc. To use it, hold the looped end of a paper clip or guitar string trimming on the center dot with a pen. Flick the other end. Wherever it lands in the ring you're spinning for is the result.

G E N E R A T I O N

Premade Specials That Conjure & Create Shit

*The Frozen Tomb [7 SP]

Aesthetic: Vapor from the surrounding air crystallizes into a dope two-handed sword made of ice.

Summary: You can psionically materialize a sword of supernatural ice at will. Offense s12 + strong, block 2. No action cost to materialize, unlimited uses (but only one manifestation of the sword at a time).

Effect: *Supernatural Weapon:* Two-Handed Sword [7 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Liquid Graphene Shield [10 SP]

Aesthetic: An inky black disc of liquid graphene, strong enough to stop bullets, forms around a magnetic node on the back of your prosthetic wrist.

Summary: You can materialize a shield at Speed: Interrupt (can be in the middle of others' turns). Gives +3 defense (or +s6), but can't wield anything with that hand. Unlimited uses.

Effect: *Supernatural Weapon:* Shield (at Speed: Interrupt) [10 SP]

Modifiers: X

*PFG-3 Salamander [7 SP]

Aesthetic: Hand prostheses flare open revealing flamethrowers in your palms.

Summary: You have PFG-3 model flamethrowers in your hands. Offense s8 + smart, range 2 (burst instrument; single attack per turn, can't wield anything in your hands). No action cost to equip PFG-3s, unlimited uses.

Effect: *Supernatural Weapon:* Burst Instrument [7 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Psionic Lantern [3 SP]

Aesthetic: A shape of photokinetic light hovers in your wake.

Summary: You're able to direct a freely floating light anywhere within several feet of you. Can summon and extinguish at will.

Effect: *Call Light* (dim) [2 SP]

Modifiers: Range 2 [1 SP]

*Rare-Earth Magnet [1 SP]

Aesthetic: An intangible cloud of SA lanthanide nanites follows you around, ready to snap into a massively powerful disc-shaped magnet.

Summary: You can materialize a rare-earth magnet (powerful; extremely hard to get off a metal object). Can be used to sabotage weapons, seal doorways, defeat some locks etc. If left behind or destroyed, will reform as normal when Special next used. Default duration is a fight scene or about five minutes outside of combat.

Effect: *Call Item* (pocket-sized) [1 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Modular Cover Unit [6 SP]

Aesthetic: One of your prostheses is constantly replenishing an invisible cloud of nanites that can flash into a giant shield.

Summary: You can materialize a large bulletproof plate. Can either be a single square stride with merk 20, or cover two square strides each with merk 10. Immovable, but must be touching the ground (can be used for cover, climbing, a chokepoint barrier etc).

Effect: *Bulwark 2* [2 SP]

Modifiers: Speed: Immediate [+1/2 effect cost] // Use: Once per Fight [total cost x2]

Clade: if psions and mutants feel too played out, you can instead call them "clade", referring to "the cladogenic population". This phrasing became popular when media, reporting on the steady increase of composite mutations in newborns, began describing it as the biological concept of cladogenesis (classical Greek, "new branch"), which is when a population splits into a new species through selection, genetic drift, or – in this case – mutation.

Clade are the result of an ancestor receiving early genetic engineering, before its trans-generationally cascading effects were fully understood. Psionic viability is most likely an afterclap of the MARA sequence, one of the first and most popular gene edits meant to preclude cognitive decline and Alzheimer's disease.

I L L U S I O N

Premade Specials That Twist up Perception

→ Illusions last about 5 minutes each before starting to glitch out. Illusions that don't specifically target the user start with a range of 5 strides; any range modifier upgrades still cost the same but add up from there.

*Cloaking [10 SP]

Aesthetic: A latent mutation in your skin causes dipolar scattering cancellation.

Summary: You can turn invisible for about five minutes at a time. You can still be heard, smelled, etc and are slightly visible when moving (upgradeable).

Effect: *Invisibility* [10 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Full Modality Feedback [10 SP]

Aesthetic: Psionically juke the hippocampi of nearby observers into perceiving some sort of false sensory.

Summary: Create a very basic illusion that feels real to any observer: sound effects, an altered road sign, a calling voice, a bouncing grenade etc.

Effect: *Minor Illusion* [10 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Shroud of Quiet [3 SP]

Aesthetic: You psionically suppress the audible spectrum in a small area. You could seriously run a jet engine in there without the slightest sound.

Summary: Make one square stride perfectly silent for about five minutes.

Effect: *Silence* [3 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Acute Feedback [13 SP]

Aesthetic: You've developed world-class psionic specialty in sensory feedback.

Summary: Create a robust illusion that feels real to any observer – an all-blue 1968 Charger sonorously revving its slant-six under a hood hot to the touch, a thin-voiced guard that writes out and hands over a very real-feeling security pass, etc.

Effect: *Major Illusion* [13 SP]

Modifiers: X

D E A T H

Premade Death & Undead Specials

*Command the Dead [15 SP]

Aesthetic: You've spent years tracking down somebody to teach you the most fucked up and reviled form of psionics: the conduction of dead bodies.

Summary: A corpse arises to do your bidding. Corpse maintains stats, but loses Specials, intellect, and fine coordination (no ranged attacks). Lasts until destroyed, can't be raised again.

Effect: *Animate Corpse* [15 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Vile Axis [15 SP]

Aesthetic: From your pointed finger a beam of torrid energy rips through the fight, foul heat distortions slowly dissipating in its wake.

Summary: Affects all targets in its path: s8 offense to the living, s8 healing to animated corpses. No action cost, but must be used on your turn.

Effect: *Necrotic Energy Blast* s8 [5 SP]

Modifiers: Range 12 [4 SP] // Area: Ray [+1/2 effect cost] // Speed: Immediate [+1/2 effect cost]

M E T A

Premade Specials That Deal with Specials

Discount: both these meta premades only apply to psionic-based Specials. They cost 1/3 of their normal SP price, since only about 1/3 of Specials are psionic in this setting.

***Psionic Resonance [1 SP]**

Aesthetic: You're able to recognize psionic instantiation.

Summary: Immediately know whether something within eyesight has psionic properties, and get at least some idea of how it works.

Effect: *Identify Special* [3 SP]

Modifiers: X

***Annihilate Psionics [2 SP]**

Aesthetic: You've trained in undoing psionics.

Summary: Stop any occurring / ongoing psionic Special. The Key Narrator will judge difficulty, and give you an equal number of cards off a shuffled deck; as soon as you sort the cards in numeric order by suit, the targeted Special stops. Number of cards is determined by the power level of the psion whose Special you're undoing. No action cost *and* can be used during others' turns.

Effect: *Rupture* [3 SP]

Modifiers: Speed: Interrupt [x2]

U S A G E

Premade Specials That Alter Modifiers & SP Costs

***Eye of Desolation [1 SP]**

Aesthetic: You pour out your will into destructive force.

Summary: Sacrifice an unspent Special for the day: convert its SP value into points of offense added to the Special you use this turn. Unlimited uses. No action cost, and can be used on others' turns.

Effect: *Burn Special I* [1 SP]

Modifiers: X

***Eye of Restoration [1 SP]**

Aesthetic: You siphon your energies into healing the wounded.

Summary: Sacrifice an unspent Special for the day: convert its SP value into points of healing added to the Special you use this turn. Unlimited uses. No action cost, and can be used on others' turns.

Effect: *Burn Special II* [1 SP]

Modifiers: X

***Channeling [2 SP]**

Aesthetic: A supernatural wind seems to rise around you.

Summary: Sacrifice an unspent Special for the day; its SP value can buy additional uses of a once-per-day or once-per-fight Special that you've already used up. Unlimited uses. No action cost, and can be used on others' turns.

Effect: *Sub* [2 SP]

Modifiers: X

***Sublimated Suffering [2 SP]**

Aesthetic: Painful burn marks bloom on your skin as you push past your psionic limits.

Summary: You can buy additional uses of a spent Special by putting offense on yourself. You choose the amount: 1 offense for 1 SP's worth of Special. Unlimited uses. No action cost, and can be used on others' turns.

Effect: *Blood Sub* [2 SP]

Modifiers: X

O F F E N S E

Premade Specials to Fuck up Enemies

*Blood Psychosis [5 SP]

Aesthetic: You gain momentum in violence.

Summary: Every time you merk an enemy, gain +1 offense to all attacks and Specials for the rest of the fight.

Effect: *Death Dealer* [5 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Flashout [10 SP]

Aesthetic: You psionically detonate the surrounding air.

Summary: s8 offense to all surrounding enemies. No action cost, but must be used on your turn.

Effect: *Straight Offense* s8 [4 SP]

Modifiers: Area: Radius 1 [effect x2] // Speed: Immediate [+1/2 effect cost]

*Electroshock Spindle [15 SP]

Aesthetic: You fire a long, pointed metal bolt with an internal electroshock unit into the target's flesh, lighting them up with 1.480 μ C.

Summary: Target takes s6 offense and is completely immobile (no actions, no defense) until the end of their next turn.

Effect: *Superlock* [8 SP]

Modifiers: Range 12 [4 SP] // Offense s6 [3 SP]

*Entropic Flare [14 SP]

Aesthetic: Unstable psionic energy radiating off your hand bursts on contact with the target.

Summary: s4 adjacent offense. If you land a 4, double offense to target, and all enemies in a 4-stride radius also take s4 offense. If you land a 4 on any *secondary* enemies, they take double offense, and another s4 offense blast with radius 4 goes off, etc. This can continue for as long as you keep landing 4s. This Special can be used once per fight.

Effect: *Straight Offense* s4 [2 SP]

Modifiers: Chance: 1 in 4 chance of radius 4 s4 powerchain [5 SP] // Use: Once per Fight [total cost x2]

*Cast Down [4 SP]

Aesthetic: Psionic chokeslam.

Summary: Target thrown to the ground (it takes a move action to stand). This Special has no action cost and can be used on others' turns.

Effect: *Knockdown* [1 SP]

Modifiers: Range 3 [2 SP] // Speed: Interrupt [x2 effect cost]

*Acid Wave [10 SP]

Aesthetic: You materialize a wave of sulfuric acid onto a target.

Summary: Ranged s12 offense, 2s12 offense if target laid out.

Effect: *Mop Up* [2 SP]

Modifiers: Offense s12 [6 SP] // Range 3 [2 SP]

*Freezing Impalement [10 SP]

Aesthetic: You freeze moisture in the target's blood into long spurs of ice, piercing their flesh in every direction.

Summary: Ranged s4 offense, and s4 more offense at the start of your every turn for the rest of the fight. No action cost (but must be used on your turn).

Effect: *Straight Offense* s4 [2 SP]

Modifiers: Duration: Combat [effect x3] // Range 6 [3 SP] // Speed: Immediate [+1/2 effect cost]

*Immolated [14 SP]

Aesthetic: A chain of psionic fire lashes through your enemies.

Summary: Ranged s4 offense, jumps to two additional targets within 2 strides of each other dealing s4 to each; all targets take an additional s4 at the start of your next two turns. If only one target available they take the full 3s4, and 3s4 more for the next two turns.

Effect: *Stagger Offense* (3 turns) [-1/3 offense cost]

Modifiers: Offense 3s4 [6 SP] // Range 2 [1 SP] // Area: Chain w 3 Targets [offense x3] can jump 1 stride [1 SP]

Advanced Shit: some of these Specials have the effect "*Straight Offense*". This can instead be moved to modifiers (since straight offense can be an effect *or* a modifier) with the price remaining the same.

*Sonic Rupturing [13 SP]

Aesthetic: The air violently distorts as you blast soundwaves from your palm so powerful they can shred a central nervous system.

Summary: s12 offense to all targets in a line.

Effect: *Straight Offense* s12 [6 SP]

Modifier: Range 12 [4 SP] // Area: Ray [+1/2 effect cost]

*Ghostbolt [15 SP]

Aesthetic: You blast the target with superphysical energy that can selectively pass through matter.

Summary: Ranged s12 undefendable offense (surpasses target's defense score). Also passes through cover.

Effect: *No Cover* [2 SP]

Modifiers: Offense s12 [6 SP] // Range 12 [4 SP] // Undefendable [+1/2 offense cost]

*Adrenal Augmentation [9 SP]

Aesthetic: Your integ doses 5mg of artificial epinephrine directly into your carotid artery; reality begins to slow and your instinct for violence begins to sharpen.

Summary: +s6 offense to all attacks and Specials for rest of fight. Costs a move action.

Effect: *Offense Up* s6 [3 SP]

Modifier: Duration: Combat [x3]

*Needle Spray [10 SP]

Aesthetic: Hundreds of volatile, luminous needles of psionic energy burst from your hand.

Summary: Ranged s16 offense. Causes s4 undefendable offense to user. Only costs a move action.

Effect: *Recoil* s4 [-2 SP]

Modifiers: Offense s16 [8 SP] // Speed: Move-Equivalent [+1/4 offense cost] // Range 3 [2 SP]

*Decimation [5 SP]

Aesthetic: Your eyes blaze with psionic energy.

Summary: Any time you deal offense from a (non-attack) Special, add your smart score.

Effect: *Engine of Ruin* [5 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Cooked [4 SP]

Aesthetic: You obliterate an enemy's confidence, making them easy prey.

Summary: Actor must actually roast enemy. Anybody putting offense on the roasted target within the next turncycle adds +s6 offense. This Special only costs a move action.

Effect: *Defense Down* -s6 [3 SP] (Instead of lowering defense, all attackers just add offense)

Modifiers: Range 2 [1 SP]

*Mind Ripper [11 SP]

Aesthetic: You touch the back of the target's head: their body seizes up and eyes glow as their brain is hammered with psionic force.

Summary: Target takes s12 offense, 2s12 if you occupy the square directly behind them. No action cost, but must be used on your turn.

Effect: *Back Attack III* s12 [7 SP]

Modifiers: Speed: Immediate [+1/2 effect cost]

*Proximity Mine [6 SP]

Aesthetic: You produce a small proximity mine from one of your cybernetic prostheses and secure it to any surface.

Summary: s8 offense that can be set to detonate when movement detected, or triggered remotely. Mine can be discreetly secured to any surface (moving, organic etc).

Effect: *Mine* [2 SP]

Modifiers: Offense s8 [4 SP]

“Square” just means square stride. Think of the combat map divided up like a chessboard of square strides: this makes measuring out range, movement, and area Specials way easier.

A T T A C K S

Premade Specials That Modify or Evoke Attacks

Q: What's the difference between Attack Specials and Offensive Specials?

A: Attacking is what you do with a weapon: swinging a sword or shooting a gun.

- Attack Specials modify or trigger attacks.

- Offensive Specials (previous section) are any *other* way you damage an enemy, like psionic lightning or energy beams.

*Relentless Aggressor [3 SP]

Aesthetic: You pour it on, breaking down an enemy one attack at a time.

Summary: Each time you attack an enemy in a row (without attacking another enemy) you gain +1 to attacks against them. This includes Special attacks like any in this section.

Effect: *Hound* [3 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Trade Shots [6 SP]

Aesthetic: The pain barely registers before you're already hitting back.

Summary: Free attack on an enemy in range that lands an attack on you (can be used on others' turns with no action cost).

Effect: *Bust Back* [6 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Skewer [2 SP]

Aesthetic: Your reach weapon tags two enemies with a single attack.

Summary: Attack two targets in a line with a reach weapon (spears, chainblades etc).

Effect: *Reach Weapon Twofer* [1 SP]

Modifiers: Use: Once per Fight [x2]

*Pervasive Reaper [8 SP]

Aesthetic: You rapidly strike at every enemy besetting you.

Summary: Make an attack on all adjacent enemies. If dual-wielding, make an attack with each weapon (but remember they apply their defense to both attacks). Effect upgradeable.

Effect: *Spinning Attack* [8 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Your Bad [4 SP]

Aesthetic: An enemy lowers their defenses in turning away from you.

Summary: Free hand-to-hand attack on an adjacent enemy moving away from you (can be used on others' turns with no action cost).

Effect: *Chasing Attack* [4 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Enflaming Fire [4 SP]

Aesthetic: You fire a round through the soft tissue of one target and into another.

Summary: If you wound initial target with a firearm, make second attack on a target directly behind them for free. Effect upgradeable.

Effect: *Piercethrough* [2 SP]

Modifiers: Use: Once per Fight [x2]

*Fire Through Traffic [3 SP]

Aesthetic: You carefully place a shot without hitting any comrades.

Summary: Safely make a ranged attack through space occupied by comrades.

Effect: *Cautious Shot* [3 SP]

Modifiers: X

*No Weapon No Problem [3 SP]

Aesthetic: Growing up slapboxing and scrapping in Zone 3, you know your way around a fistfight just fine.

Summary: Whenever attacking unarmed, attack twice. Default unarmed offense is s2 + strong or fast (upgradeable with Specials from the attack effects section).

Effect: *Unarmed Fighting* [3 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Vicious Arc [10 SP]

Aesthetic: You turn with the momentum of your first strike, ripping an additional enemy.

Summary: Whenever you land a hand-to-hand attack on a target, you can make an additional attack on a different adjacent target (no attacking the same target twice). Effect upgradeable. Unlimited uses.

Effect: *Followthrough* [10 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Scissors Beats Paper [5 SP]

Aesthetic: This motherfucker really brought a gun to a sword fight.

Summary: Free second attack on a target wielding only a (bayonetless) firearm.

Effect: *Shooter Persecutor* [5 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Hummingbird Style [3 SP]

Aesthetic: Your blade moves faster and faster, blood tracing its wake.

Summary: Get a bonus s4 spin whenever you land a 4 with a light sword (machete, trench knife, smallsabre, etc). As many times as you land a 4, get another free spin BUT you don't get to add a primary score to any of the bonus spins.

Effect: *Critical Hit* (light sword 4): s4 offense [2 SP] powerchained [1 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Punctuated Cut [4 SP]

Aesthetic: You follow up a slash with a foul side kick.

Summary: Whenever you land a 6 attacking with a one-handed sword, target is pushed back. If they collide with another enemy, they both take s8 offense.

Effect: *Critical Hit* (one-hand sword 6): *Push* (collision s8) [4 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Severe Bleeding [6 SP]

Aesthetic: Slice open a major artery.

Summary: Whenever you land a 12 attacking with a two-handed sword, target takes s12 ongoing offense at the beginning of your every turn for the rest of the fight.

Effect: *Critical Hit* (two-hand sword 12): s12 offense with Duration: Combat [6 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Hit the Loop [4 SP]

Aesthetic: Swinging your flex weapon you rip an enemy with a little orbit, then go for the double big orbit.

Summary: Whenever you land an 8 attacking with a two-handed flex weapon (chainblade, meteor hammer, etc), 2s8 offense to all adjacent enemies (including initial target), BUT don't add a primary score to any of the bonus spins.

Effect: *Critical Hit* (two-hand flex weapon 8): 2s8 offense [4 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Arm's Length [6 SP]

Aesthetic: You use the length of your polearm defensively.

Summary: Whenever you land a 1 attacking with a polearm (spears etc), gain +5 defense for the rest of the fight (even if you land 3 1s in a row that's +15 defense).

Effect: *Critical Hit* (polearm 1): *Defense Up 5* with Duration: Combat [6 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Lucky Stun [4 SP]

Aesthetic: You whiff badly but dome em on the backswing.

Summary: Whenever you land a 1 attacking with a one-handed haftarm, target can't act and has zero defense until the end of their next turn.

Effect: *Critical Hit* (one-hand haftarm 1): *Superlock* [4 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Violent Euphoria [3 SP]

Aesthetic: Slow motion blood sprays and classical music.

Summary: Whenever you land a 14 attacking with a two-handed haftarm, you heal 21 offense.

Effect: *Critical Hit* (two-hand haftarm 14): *Straight Heal 21* [3 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Instrument Surge [4 SP]

Aesthetic: You push your instrument past its ostensible limitations

Summary: Whenever you land a 6 attacking with an instrument, deal an extra 2s6 offense

Effect: *Critical Hit* (instrument 6): 2s6 offense [4 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Aberrant Blast [10 SP]

Aesthetic: A blast of psionic force flashes outward from your burst instrument.

Summary: Whenever you land an 8 attacking with a burst instrument, deal s10 offense to all enemies within a 3-stride radius.

Effect: *Critical Hit* (burst instrument 8): s10 offense with Radius 3 [10 SP]

Modifiers: X

The only modifiers Attack Specials are allowed to have are Use and Duration.

- Use: Once per Fight is total SP x2
- Use: Unlimited is total SP x3
- Duration: Combat is total SP x3 (can use any number of times in one fight)
- Duration: Permanent is total SP x5 (unlimited uses *and* any number of uses per turn)

***BLAO [10 SP]**

Aesthetic: The reason you ride with a shotgun.
Summary: Whenever you land a 10 attacking with a shotgun, the target has a 50% chance of immediately dying.
Effect: *Critical Hit* (shotgun 10): *Death* 50% [10 SP]
Modifiers: X

***Targeted Blastback [6 SP]**

Aesthetic: Enemy's weapon flies violently backwards.
Summary: Whenever you land a 6 attacking with a sawed-off, target is disarmed and their weapon flies backward; if a hand-to-hand weapon, its offense is dealt to anyone in its path.
Effect: *Critical Hit* (sawed-off 6): *Disarm* (launch) [6 SP]
Modifiers: X

***Dynamic Calibration [6 SP]**

Aesthetic: A cybernetic array in your arms tunes up as you process data on live targets.
Summary: Whenever you land a 2 firing a handgun, gain an additional +1 offense that lasts the rest of the fight.
Effect: *Critical Hit* (handgun 2): *Offense Up* 1 with Duration: Combat [6 SP]
Modifiers: X

***Kinetic Transfer [4 SP]**

Aesthetic: Enemy badly dazed from the sheer force of a high-powered rifle.
Summary: Whenever you land an 8 with a rifle, everybody gets +8 offense against that target for one turncycle.
Effect: *Critical Hit* (rifle 8): *Defense Down* 8 [4 SP]
Modifiers: X

***GrRrRrRrRrAH [3 SP]**

Aesthetic: Empty a mag into an enemy.
Summary: Get a bonus s4 spin whenever you land a 4 with an SMG. As many times as you land a 4, get another free spin BUT you don't get to add your fast score to the bonus spins.
Effect: *Critical Hit* (SMG 4): s4 offense [2 SP] powerchained [1 SP]
Modifiers: X

***Up in Flame [15 SP]**

Aesthetic: Enemy catches fire.
Summary: Whenever you land a 4 attacking with a flamethrower, target takes s10 ongoing offense at the beginning of all your turns for the rest of the fight.
Effect: *Critical Hit* (flamethrower 4): s10 offense with Duration: Combat [15 SP]
Modifiers: X

Advanced Shit: most of these premade attack Specials are critical hits. You can make your own using the Critical Hit effect at the bottom of the attack effects section. The math is simple:
$$[SP \text{ cost of effect}] \times [\text{the chance of it happening}] \times 4 = \text{total SP cost}$$

D E F E N S E

Premade Protective Specials

*Thread the Needle [2 SP]

Aesthetic: You slickly dodge, causing your enemy's attack to pass to another enemy behind you.

Summary: Attack redirect. If an enemy attacks you when another enemy is on your exact opposite side, use this Special to immediately redirect the attack to the second enemy instead of you (no action cost).

Effect: *Slip 1* [2 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Paranoid [3 SP]

Aesthetic: You're the type to sleep with a combat knife.

Summary: Never surprised (your full defense applies during surprise attacks).

Effect: *Always Ready* [3 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Iron Mantis Style [1 SP]

Aesthetic: That kung fu shit.

Summary: Increase your defense up to 3 per level, but decrease your offense the same amount. Can't exceed max offense you can deal. Lasts exactly one turncycle (so if used at the end of your turn, defense bonus lasts until the end of your next turn) No action cost.

Effect: *Trade Offense for Defense* [1 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Congenital Analgesia [5 SP]

Aesthetic: A minor SCN9A mutation causes you to feel no pain.

Summary: Permanent +1 to defense.

Effect: *Defense Up 1* [1 SP]

Modifiers: Duration: Permanent [effect x5]

*Cycloid Scaling [10 SP]

Aesthetic: You have reddish scales from expensive genetic engineering.

Summary: Interlocking scales give you an extra 5 defense against sharp trauma (slashing and stabbing weaponry). While they're easy to cover up with a hoodie, revealing them might get you some bad reactions since genetic engineering of this degree is still experimental.

Effect: *Resistant to Offense Type* (sharp trauma) 5 [10 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Kinetic Availment [9 SP]

Aesthetic: The field of psionic force surrounding you is pierced with luminous trails of ballistic energy.

Summary: Whenever you take offense from a firearm, 2 points of it is actually healing instead of offense.

Effect: *Resistant to Offense Type* (bullets 2; healing) [9 SP]

Modifiers: X

Aesthetics: you're free to change the name and aesthetic of any of these Specials to fit your main character. For example, if you wanted a mutation that turned your skin to metal, just gank Cycloid Scaling (above) and change the name to Alloyed Skin or whatever.

H E A L I N G

Premade Specials to Reduce Offense Taken

*Psionic Healing [10 SP]

Aesthetic: Your eyes become faintly luminous as restorative energy courses through the target.

Summary: Heal a character within 3 strides for s12. Can be used once per fight.

Effect: *Straight Heal* s12 [3 SP]

Modifiers: range 3 [2] // Use: Once per Fight [total cost x2]

*Platelet Hyperactivation [9 SP]

Aesthetic: A red flush of activated thrombin slowly radiates from any point your hands touch living skin, wounds mending in its wake. (How did bearing this rare mutation affect your life until now?)

Summary: Heal an adjacent character (or yourself) for s8. No action cost. Unlimited uses (but not more than once per turn).

Effect: *Straight Heal* s8 [2 SP]

Modifiers: Speed: Immediate [+1/2 effect cost] // Use: Unlimited [total cost x3]

*Practiced Hand [3 SP]

Aesthetic: You've gotten pretty fucking good at keeping humans from dying.

Summary: Whenever you use a healing Special, add your smart score to the total amount healed. Unlimited uses.

Effect: *Engine of Mending* [3 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Wake [14 SP]

Aesthetic: Target hums with vitality.

Summary: Heal adjacent character (or yourself) for s16. If a 7 or 8 is landed, they also get +s16 offense on their next turn. This Special only costs a move action. Can be used once per fight.

Effect: *Straight Heal* s16 [4 SP]

Modifiers: Speed: Move-Equivalent [+1/4 effect cost] // Chance: 25% chance of +s16 offense [2 SP] // Use: Once per Fight [x2]

*DrezekCorp Proliferator XI [5 SP]

Aesthetic: A small, prosthetic pseudo-organ that keeps your circulatory system full of NIR nanoshells that rapidly repair tissue damage.

Summary: Reduce your offense taken by 1 at the start of your every turn.

Effect: *Regeneration* 1 [5 SP]

Modifiers: X

*Exogenous Negation [3 SP]

Aesthetic: An esoteric mutation allows you to return a person's biochemistry to stasis.

Summary: Selectively eliminate substance/s from the target's body – poison, venom, intoxicants, but also medicine or healing substances if desired.

Effect: *Neutralize Bioactive Substance* [3 SP]

Modifiers: X

Advanced Shit: some of these Specials have the effect "*Straight Heal*". This can instead be moved to modifiers (since straight healing can be an effect *or* a modifier) with the price remaining the same.

Building Your Own Specials

Pick out an effect (pages 72 to 103), and give it a name / aesthetic. That's it.

Upgrading Specials

Just add modifiers (opposite page) to give your Special longer range, more uses, bigger offense etc.

Modifiers

These upgrade Specials.

*USE

Once per Day default

Once per Fight total Special cost **x2**

Unlimited[†] total Special cost **x3**

[†](but not more than once per turn)

*RANGE

1 stride: default // 2 strides: +1 SP // 3 strides: +2 SP
6 strides: +3 SP // 12 strides: +4 SP // 20 strides: +5 SP

*SPEED

Main (costs your main action) default

Move (costs your move action) effect, healing and offense cost **x1.25**

Immediate (no action cost) “ **x1.5**

Interrupt (no action cost & usable on others' turns) “ **x2**

***OFFENSE:** 1 SP per +1 offense

Spinner: 1 SP per half the spinner's max. (Example: s8 of offense would cost 4 SP.)

***HEALING:** 1 SP per +2 healing

Spinner: 1 SP per quarter the spinner's max. (Example: s8 of healing would cost 2 SP.)

*AREA

Radius 1 stride effect, healing, and offense **x2**

Radius 2 strides “ **x3**

Radius 3 strides “ **x4**

All enemies or comrades in fight scene “ **x5**

Ray (all enemies in Special's path affected) effect, healing, and offense **x1.5**

Chain (effect jumps through multiple targets): effect, healing, and offense x maximum number of targets + 1 SP per stride between. If no additional targets, final target takes all

*DURATION

Turncycle default

Combat (or about 5 minutes outside of combat) effect, healing, offense, and area **x3**

Permanent “ **x5**

***SELECTIVITY:** Reduce Special price by condition. Only at night (half the time) would cost 50%. Only on the undead (about 10% of your enemies) would cost 10% etc.

*DEFENDABILITY

Undefendable (surpasses all defense) offense **x1.5**

+10% offense cost per each of the below defense factors ignored:

Armor // Shield // Block // Dodge // Parry // Grit // Specials

***CHANCE:** add something good, like an extra 20 offense when you land a 10 on an s10 spin, which would only cost 2 SP (10% chance means 10% cost: 10% of 20 SP is 2 SP). You can also use this modifier to reduce the Special's price by the chance of failure.

Effects

What a Special does. Newjacks, don't even look at this section. Go on, git.

Attack Effects

Can't have modifiers added except Use and Duration (end of section). What's the difference between attack effects and offensive effects? Attacking is what you do with a weapon (swinging a sword, firing a pistol). Attack effects modify or trigger an attack. Offensive effects (next section) are any other way you cause offense, like psionic lightning or energy beams.

Spinning Attack: make a hand-to-hand attack on all adjacent enemies in place of your normal attack this turn. Attack path can't pass through comrades (without attacking them). If dual-wielding: you can make an attack with each weapon on all adjacent enemies (but remember they get to apply their defense to both attacks). **8 SP.**

- Step: you can move one stride, attacking all enemies adjacent to your two-stride path. +10 SP
- Bound: you can move two strides, attacking all enemies adjacent to your three-stride path. +10 SP (and must have previous upgrade)

Followthrough: when you put offense on an enemy with a hand-to-hand attack, you can make an immediate bonus attack (same weapon) on a different enemy adjacent to you. Followthrough path can't pass through comrades (without attacking them). No attacking the same enemy more than once. Automatically Duration: Permanent. **10 SP.**

- Step: you can take a free one-stride step to followthrough on an enemy. +15 SP
- Reach: you can followthrough with reach weapons, *but* must maintain range (so if initial target 2 strides away, any subsequent targets must also be 2 strides away). Can instead followthrough to a second target directly behind an initial adjacent target, but then end there. Can't step (above upgrade) when using this upgrade. +10 SP

Shooter Persecutor: make a free second hand-to-hand attack on an enemy that only has a bayonetless firearm or launcher weapon (like bows, slings, crossbows) equipped. If the target pulls a hand-to-hand weapon this effect can't be used (both dropping and pulling a weapon has no action cost, and can be done at Speed: Interrupt). **5 SP.**

Lunge: increase hand-to-hand weapon range by 1 stride for one attack. You can lunge through occupied space, unless your Key says otherwise. Can be used in conjunction with any other attack Special, but only allows one target per use of *lunge*. **2 SP.**

Reach Weapon Twofer: when wielding a reach weapon, you can attack two targets in the range of a single thrust for one attack. **1 SP.**

Chasing Attack: free hand-to-hand attack on an enemy that's moving out of an adjacent square. Automatically Speed: Interrupt. **4 SP.**

Intercept: free hand-to-hand attack on an enemy that's moving through an adjacent square (must pass through, not move to). Automatically Speed: Interrupt. **4 SP.**

- Stop target if your offense is higher than their defense: +3 SP

Punish: when an enemy makes an attack on you and their offense is lower than your defense, make one free and immediate attack on them (if in range of currently equipped weapon). **4 SP.**

Bust Back: one free and immediate attack on an enemy that manages to hurt you with an attack (if in range of currently equipped weapon). **6 SP.**

Riposte: one free and immediate attack on an enemy that just attacked you, regardless of success (only if in range of currently equipped weapon). **8 SP.**

“Square” just means square stride. Think of the combat map as a chessboard of square strides. This makes measuring out range and movement way easier.

Unarmed Offense Up: increase unarmed offense for one turn (default unarmed offense is s2).

• s4 is 1 SP

• s6 is 2 SP

• s8 is 3 SP

Unarmed Defense Up: you have a defense bonus when unarmed. 4 SP per point of defense.

Unarmed Fighting: when attacking unarmed you can now make two attacks per turn. You can attack two different targets, or the same target twice (remember they get to apply their defense to both your strikes). When upgrading unarmed offense (*unarmed offense up*, *weapon specialist*, etc), it applies to both unarmed attacks. Your primary bonus (you can add strong or fast) also gets added to both attacks. Automatically Duration: Permanent. 3 SP

- Hybrid Style: if attacking with a one-handed weapon and your other hand is empty, you can also make an unarmed attack with that hand (Automatically Duration: Permanent): +3 SP

Shield Bash Offense: increase offense when attacking with a shield for one turn (default shield bash offense is s4). Remember that shield's defense unusable until turn after shield bash.

s6 is 1 SP

• s8 is 2 SP

• s10 is 3 SP

Shield Push: for one attack, shield bashing pushes the target back 1 stride. 2 SP.

- 2 strides: +2 SP
- Knockdown (takes a move action to stand): +2 SP
- Collision: if pushed enemy collides with another enemy, both take offense. 1 SP per point

Thrown Offense Up: increase thrown weapon offense for one turn (default is s4).

• s6 is 1 SP

• s8 is 2 SP

• s10 is 3 SP

• s12 is 4 SP

Thrown Range Up: increase thrown weapon range for one turn (default thrown weapon range is 3 strides). 1 SP per +1 range.

Barrage: sacrifice move action to make a second (non-firearm) ranged attack at half offense (round down). 5 SP.

Distance Shot: increase firearm or launcher range for one attack. 1 SP per +3 range.

Beat Cover: this ranged attack surpasses any cover the enemy has taken (this includes being behind other characters). To be clear, their defense score still applies. 6 SP.

Cautious Shot: your ranged attack (includes thrown) this turn can safely pass through space occupied by comrades. 3 SP.

Disarming Shot: instead of spinning offense for an attack, you can disarm a target in range of your currently held ranged weapon (launcher, firearm, or thrown). Key decides where unhanding weapon lands. 1 SP.

- Trade next main action for a Speed: Interrupt disarming shot (includes shooting down a thrown weapon already mid-air): +1 SP
- Trade next *move* action for a disarming shot: +2 SP
- Trade next *move* action for a Speed: Interrupt disarming shot (includes shooting down a mid-air throwing weapon): +3 SP

Piercethrough: if you successfully put offense on a target with a ranged attack, spin a free bonus attack on a target behind them (make sure to maintain line of fire). Must be a piercing projectile (arrow, javelin, bolt, bullet etc). 2 SP.

• Third target in a line: +2 SP

- Overshot: don't have to actually wound a target to make a bonus attack on another target behind them: +2 SP

Snipe: target must be unaware of you, and within range of your currently equipped firearm or launcher weapon. For every consecutive turn you spend observing them, you multiply the total offense of the next shot you take on them. If they take cover or become unobservable in some way, the multiplier resets. For example: if you spend one turn observing them, the shot you take on your second turn will have double offense; if you spend three turns observing them, the shot you take on your fourth turn will have quadruple offense. Limit of x5 offense. 5 SP.

Weapon Specialist: bonus to offense when attacking with a specific type of weapon: sword, haftarm, polearm, flex weapon, unarmed, launcher, shortarm (pistols / SMGs), rifle, shotgun, thrown, shield, burst instrument, instrument. If dual-wielding your chosen weapon type, you add the offense bonus from this effect to both attacks. Automatically Duration: Permanent. 4 SP per 1 offense.

Knockdown Attack: make an attack as normal; it also knocks down the target (it takes an entire move action to stand back up). **3 SP.**

Rock: make an attack as normal; it also causes the target to lose their next main action. **6 SP.**

Stop-Hit: sacrifice your main action next turn to immediately make an attack on someone (in range of your currently equipped weapon) that is about to attack: if your offense is higher than their defense, they do not attack. Automatically Speed: Interrupt. **3 SP.**

- Only sacrifice move action: +4 SP

Beat Back: instead of making a hand-to-hand attack, push the target back 1 stride. **1 SP.**

- Make hand-to-hand attack *and* push target back: +4 SP

Hound: each time you attack a particular enemy in a row without attacking another enemy, you gain +1 attack offense on them. Like this, attack 2: +1, attack 3: +2, attack 4: +3, etc. Special attacks like *barrage*, *stop-hit*, *punish*, *bust back*, *riposte*, etc all count towards this effect. Automatically Duration: Permanent. **3 SP.**

Overwhelm: each *turn* you attack a particular enemy in a row, you get a +1 bonus to attack offense on them. Like this, turn 2: +1, turn 3: +2, turn 4: +3 etc. You can target other enemies with attacks and Specials, just as long as you make at least one attack on the overwhelmed target per turn. Does not stack with *hound*. Can overwhelm multiple targets simultaneously. Automatically Duration: Permanent. **5 SP.**

Hem In: for one attack, get a bonus to offense for each (combat-capable) comrade adjacent to the target. **1 SP** per +1 offense.

Surprise Attack Bonus: bonus offense when attacking an enemy unaware of your presence. Offense doubled if attack is hand-to-hand: **1 SP** per +1 ranged offense / +2 hand-to-hand offense.

Load Up: skip main action this turn to double your offense when you attack next turn. **5 SP.**

Blitz: bonus to hand-to-hand attack's offense, but you must move in a straight line for your entire move score. **1 SP** per +1 offense.

Encore: after merking an enemy with an attack (includes counterattacks and other attack Specials), make an immediate free attack on an enemy in range. Unlimited uses. **7 SP.**

Back Attack I: bonus offense to one attack made to an enemy's back. If hand-to-hand: must be occupying the square directly behind the target. If ranged: must be occupying the 1-square-wide line directly behind the target. **1 SP** per 1 offense.

Back Attack II: for one turn, attack a second time for free when attacking an enemy's back. If hand-to-hand: must be occupying the square directly behind the target. If ranged: must be occupying the 1-square-wide line directly behind the target. If you also use *back attack I* the offense bonus only applies to one of the attacks. **7 SP.**

Shadow Attack: for one attack, attacking someone's shadow is the same as attacking their actual body. **2 SP.**

Critical Hit: you have the chance to deal extra offense with a specific type of weapon (automatically Duration: Permanent). Pick a number on your chosen weapon's spinner; whenever you land that number, you **dish out extra offense**. Here's the math:

$$[\text{bonus offense}] \times [\% \text{ chance of it happening}] \times 4 = \text{total SP cost}$$

So if your chosen weapon is a spear (polearm, s10) and you want it to do an extra 20 offense (20 SP) whenever you land a 3 (10% chance), you're just taking 10% of 20 (2 SP), and multiplying it by 4: total SP cost is 8. Easy shit. No increasing your critical range past one-quarter of the spinner's total numbers. **Instead of offense, you can spark an effect** when you land a critical:

$$[\text{SP cost of effect}] \times [\% \text{ chance of it happening}] \times 4 = \text{total SP cost}$$

Critical hits are one of the best hollers for your dollar: you're paying almost nothing in SP to give *every* attack spin the chance of a massive bonus.

Charging Bonus: +1 offense when charging. Automatically Duration: Permanent. **1 SP** per point of offense.

Charge Counter: +1 offense when spinning *against* charging enemies. Automatically Duration: Permanent. **1 SP** per point of offense.

Ranged Charge Counter: if you're wielding a ranged weapon and spin higher than the enemy charging you, they stop a number of strides short of you equal to the offense you beat them by. This includes thrown weapons. Automatically Duration: Permanent. **4 SP.**

Shoot Charger: when wielding a ranged weapon, pop a charging enemy (who's charging someone else) that passes through your range. Automatically Speed: Interrupt. **4 SP.**

Charge Knockdown: when you spin a higher offense than an enemy during a charge they're knocked down (it takes a move action to stand back up). Unlimited uses. **3 SP.**

Grappling Bonus: +1 to grapple spins. Automatically Duration: Permanent. **2 SP** per point.

Cerebral Grappling: add your smart score (instead of your strong or fast) to your grapple spins. Automatically Duration: Permanent. **3 SP.**

Grappling Throw: when you win a grapple (doesn't matter if you initiated it), you can throw that enemy a square in any direction (from the square you currently occupy). Target also knocked prone. If you did initiate the grapple and choose to throw, you can't also hold the target in place. Unlimited uses. **3 SP.**

- Two squares: +3 SP

- Collision: if thrown enemy collides with another enemy, both take offense. 2 SP per point

Grappling Offense: whenever grappling (win or lose, doesn't matter if you initiated it) you exert a clinch, choke, lock, or slam that puts offense on the enemy you're grappling with. Chosen grappling primary is added to total offense. Unlimited uses. **3 SP** per point of offense.

The only modifiers Attack Specials are allowed to have are Use and Duration:

Use: Once per Fight	total SP x2
Use: Unlimited (but not more than once per turn)	total SP x3
Duration: Combat (can use any number of times in one fight)	total SP x3
Duration: Permanent (unlimited uses <i>and</i> any number of uses per turn)	total SP x5

Offensive Effects

Straight Offense: 1 SP per 1 offense. Spinner option: 1 SP per half of spinner's maximum (so 3 SP for s6 offense, 4 SP for s8 offense etc). This effect can also be made into a modifier at any time.

Mop Up: if target is laid out when this effect is used on them, double your offense. 2 SP.

Offense if Still: enemy takes offense if they don't move at least one stride their next turn. Target will be aware of the effect. 1 SP per 2 offense.

Offense if Mobile: enemy takes offense if they move even a single stride before the end of their next turn. Target will be aware of the effect. 1 SP per 2 offense

Back Attack III: double offense when targeting an enemy from behind. For example, if you spend 5 SP giving this Special 5 offense, it deals 10 offense when attacking an enemy's back, but 5 offense from any other angle. If adjacent: must be occupying the square directly behind the target. If ranged: must be occupying the 1-square-wide line directly behind the target. Base effect cost is 1 SP (adding offense is usual price of 1 SP per 1 offense).

Deluge: this effect gives you a bonus for every attack or offensive Special used on your target since the end of your last turn. 1 SP per offense. (Example: if you spent 4 SP on this effect and 3 of your comrades attacked the target since your last turn, you would then deal 12 offense to the target.)

Stagger Offense: split offense of Special so that it happens equally over multiple turncycles. Occurs at the beginning of your turn. 2 turncycles: SP cost of offense is 25% less.

- 3 turncycles: 33.3% less

No Cover: this Special surpasses any cover the enemy has taken (includes being behind other characters). To be clear, their defense score still applies. 2 SP.

Power Up: the more action cost you pay, the more powerful this Special gets:

A.) Speed: Interrupt = 1/4 this Special's default offense, B.) spend only move action = 1/2 offense, C.) spend main action = normal offense, D.) spend both main action and move action = x2 offense, E.) spend this main action and your next main action = x3 offense, F.) spend your main action and move action this turn *and* your next turn = x4 offense (releases on second turn). Always round up offense. 2 SP per 1 default offense.

Chambered: user can divide up this Special's total offense however you want. Using a remaining portion of offense has no action cost, and can be done in the middle of others' turns. For example, after you pay the action cost of a *chambered* Special with 10 offense, you can nail a target with 5 offense right away (no action cost), then blast a different target for 2 offense (no action cost), then use that remaining 3 offense on another target (still no action cost), or wait until after your turn and interrupt an enemy with that remaining 3 offense. To reiterate: A.) you only pay the action cost of this Special once, B.) using any amount of remaining offense has Speed: Interrupt, and C.) you can use as little or as much of the Special's offense each time, until you've expended the entirety of the Special's total offense. A *chambered* Special lasts until the end of the fight scene, or about five minutes outside of combat. 1.5 SP per 1 offense.

- Fixed divisions: chambered offense divided into predetermined amounts (For example, 9 offense manifested as 3 blasts of 3 every time, or 8 offense divided into 4 jolts of s4 every time, etc): -25% offense cost

The back of the book is a spinner. "s6" means a spinner from 1 to 6, "s12" means a spinner from 1 to 12 etc. To use it, hold the looped end of a paper clip or guitar string trimming on the center dot with a pen. Flick the other end. Wherever it lands in the ring you're spinning for is the result.

Bloodlust: this offensive Special can be used at no action cost immediately after merking an enemy. **3 SP.**

Death Dealer: each time you merk an enemy, you get a stacking +1 bonus to all offense. This bonus lasts the rest of the fight scene. Automatically Duration: Permanent. **5 SP.**

Lifejack: you heal the same amount of offense you put on an enemy with this effect. **3 SP** per 2 offense.

- Siphon healing to self *or* any comrade in range: **+3 SP**

Recoil: also deals offense to user (surpasses defense). Subtract Special's offense cost by the offense caused to the user.

Mine: once you pay this Special's action cost, it's locked onto a location or object within range. You can detonate it at will, or assign it to trigger when there's movement within a certain proximity. You can detonate the mine from any distance. A placed mine lasts about a day. **2 SP.**

- Mine undetectable to enemies: **+2 SP**
- Mine doesn't expire: **+2 SP**

Trade Defense for Offense: lower your defense score, and increase your offense by the same number. Must be in actual combat: target shooting or kicking down a door won't be affected. Capped at 3 defense/offense per level. Offense bonus applies to all offense for exactly one turncycle (so both strikes if dual-wielding, counterattacks, all offensive Specials etc). Remember a negative defense score does that much extra offense to you. No action cost. **2 SP.**

Kinetic Charge: give an everyday item the offense of a classical weapon. Reach weapons must actually have reach (like a broom) and two-handed weapons must actually be functionally two-handed (like a guitar). Kinetic charge lasts for a fight scene (or about five minutes outside of combat). *Weapon specialist* doesn't apply to kinetically charged weapons, but effects like *thrown offense up* and *reach weapon twofers* do. No action cost to kinetically charge an object. **5 SP.**

Knockdown: knock down an enemy (it takes an entire move action to stand back up). **1 SP.**

Lock: target moves zero strides next turn. Target can still reface, move the rest of their body normally, and use their move action for something else (like a Special with Speed: Move-Equivalent). **1 SP.**

- Can't reface: **+3 SP**
- Superlock: target is completely immobile until the end of their next turn (no defense, no actions): **+7 SP**

Deny X Action: target loses their next *move* action: **1 SP.**

- Target loses their next *main* action: **2 SP**
- Target loses *all* action: unable to act until the end of their next turn (no main action, move action, or Specials with no action cost): **4 SP**

Porcupine: whenever an enemy moves into a square adjacent to you, they instantly take offense. Automatically Duration: Permanent. **2 SP** per 1 offense.

Reactive Offense: whenever an enemy puts offense on you, you instantly deal this effect's offense to them. Automatically Duration: Permanent. **2 SP** per 1 offense.

- An enemy within 2 strides (maximum upgradeable range): **+2 SP**

Defense Down: decrease defense in target for 1 turncycle. Default is Speed: Move-Equivalent, and all speed modifiers cost 25% less than their usual price. **1 SP** per 1 defense. (You can instead have this effect give an offense bonus of the same number to anyone attacking or using offensive Specials on the target, since the result is the same either way. Choice must be locked in before Special finalized.)

Offense Down: decrease offense in target for 1 turncycle. Default is Speed: Move-Equivalent, and all speed modifiers cost 25% less than their usual price. **1 SP** per 1 offense.

Move Score Down: decrease target's move score. Default is Speed: Move-Equivalent, and all speed modifiers cost 25% less than their usual price. Automatically Duration: Combat. **1 SP** per stride.

Disarm: currently held weapon/s (includes instruments) of target are dropped. **3 SP.**

- Weapon stripped (and immediately wieldable): +2 SP
- Launch: target's weapon goes flying 5 strides directly back. If a hand-to-hand weapon, its offense is caused to the first character in its path: +5 SP

Deshield: currently held shield of target is dropped. **2 SP.**

Disarm Punish: when an enemy makes a hand-to-hand attack on you and their offense is lower than your defense, disarm them of whatever they attack with (Key decides where weapon lands). Automatically Speed: Interrupt. **2 SP.**

- Can strip then immediately wield target's weapon: +1 SP
- Target's weapon goes flying 5 strides directly back. If a hand-to-hand weapon, its offense is caused to anyone in its trajectory: +3 SP

Sick Move: for one attack or offensive Special, gain an offense bonus of +2 per level, but you must specifically narrate how you gain it – clever use of the environment, weakness you clocked in target, just a cinematic surge of power etc. Automatically once per fight (can't have number of uses upgraded, or buy multiples of this effect). **5 SP.**

Burn Special I: sacrifice an unspent Special/s for the day. For every SP you sacrifice, add a point of offense to the offensive Special you use this turn. No action cost Unlimited uses. **1 SP.**

Swap Offense Type: pick an offense type (fire, cold, electricity, acid, psionic, explosive, blunt, sharp, void etc). You can now change the offense type of any other Special you have to this offense type. Each time you buy this effect it's for a different offense type. Unlimited number of swaps, no action cost. **2 SP** per offense type.

Engine of Ruin: whenever you use a Special that causes offense, add your smart score to the offense caused. Doesn't apply to Specials that use attack effects. For effects that cause recurring offense (*chambered*, *stagger offense*, offensive Specials with Duration: Combat, etc) add your smart score every time offense is dealt. Automatically Duration: Permanent. **5 SP.**

Defense still applies to Specials.

* * *

Special's offense - target's defense = offense put on target

Defensive Effects

Slip I: if user attacked by an enemy flanking them directly opposite another enemy, immediately using this Special will redirect the attack from the user to the enemy flanking opposite. **2 SP.**

Slip II: if user attacked hand-to-hand by an enemy adjacent to another enemy, immediately using this Special will redirect the attack to the enemy adjacent to the attacker. Automatically Speed: Interrupt. **2 SP.**

Projectile Shell: make one square invulnerable to all incoming projectiles, physical or supernatural. Can uncomfortably squeeze two average-sized characters in this shell (possible actions probably restricted). **3 SP.**

Perfect Shell: target is surrounded by a forcefield that prevents any force or matter from entering or exiting. Target can be a fixed area. If target is instead an object or character, the shell will move with the target. If used with Duration: Combat during a fight, the absolute shell instead lasts about five minutes (less if the user wants). Can uncomfortably squeeze two average-sized characters in this shell (possible actions probably restricted). **3 SP.**

Bulwark: conjure an unmoving force / shield about one square stride (big enough for cover, but too small to fully obstruct most doorways). The bulwark has 10 merk for every **1 SP** spent on it. Size can be increased at higher SP prices, and merk is spread evenly (example: if you put 4 SP into this effect, you could conjure A. a wall that's 1 square with 40 merk, B. a wall that's 4 squares with 10 merk each, or C. a wall that's 2 squares with 20 merk each). Bulwark must be placed on the ground (can't be knocked over). Speed: Interrupt cost is x5 instead of usual x2.

- Bulwark can be suspended in the air: +4 SP
- All offense from the attack or Special that merks the bulwark is completely absorbed (remaining offense does not pass to any target behind): +2 SP

Fallproof: you aren't hurt by falling anything less than 3 stories. Automatically Duration: Permanent. **1 SP.**

- Unhurt by a fall of any distance: +3 SP

Immovable: target can't be moved against their will for 1 turncycle. No action cost. **2 SP.**

Move Freely: target's movement / position not affected by Specials (unless they want it to be) for 1 turncycle. No action cost. **3 SP.** Any SP spent on *immovable* can be respent on this effect.

Juggernaut: target can't have their move action or their main action taken from them for 1 turncycle. No action cost. **1 SP.**

Knockdown Immunity: you are permanently unable to be knocked prone. **4 SP.**

Kip-Up: when knocked down, no action cost to return to standing on your turn. Automatically Duration: Permanent. **1 SP.**

Always Ready: during surprise attacks, use your full defense. **3 SP.**

Immune to Disarm: you can't be disarmed. Automatically permanent. **2 SP.**

Immune to Deshield: you can't be deshielded. Automatically permanent. **1 SP.**

Immune to Stat Alteration: you can't have your stats altered by anything except *your own* Specials, or leveling up. Automatically permanent. **4 SP.**

Immune to Mental Intrusion: social effects from the manipulation block (*insanity* to *plant memory*) don't work on you. Automatically Duration: Permanent. **4 SP.**

- Know when someone tries to use one of these effects on you, and who it was: +2 SP

Detect Mental Intrusion: user knows with certainty if a social effect from the manipulation block (*insanity* to *plant memory*) has been used on the target. **2 SP**

- Know identity of mental intruder: +2 SP

Rupture Shapechanging: target stays in their original form for one turncycle (also protects from shrinking and enlarging). If this effect used on a target whose form has been changed by someone lower level than the user, they immediately revert to their natural form. Default is Speed: Move-Equivalent, and all speed modifiers cost 25% less than their usual price. **2 SP.**

Rupture Stat Alteration: within the target area, all stat alterations that are less than Duration: Permanent are negated. **2 SP.**

Intercept Arrow: target breaks or snatches one arrow, bolt, or similar ammunition they're the target of, or that passes through their occupied square. Automatically Speed: Interrupt. **2 SP.**

- Current square *or* adjacent square: +2 SP

Divert Arrow: target redirects the trajectory of one arrow, bolt, or similar ammunition they're the target of, or that passes through their occupied square. The line of fire can be moved one stride to its left or right, and maintains its normal offense. Automatically Speed: Interrupt. **4 SP.**

- Current square *or* adjacent square: +2 SP

Intercept Bullet: target stops one bullet, photonic bolt or similar ammunition they're the target of, or that passes through their occupied square. Automatically Speed: Interrupt. **7 SP.**

- Current square *or* adjacent square: +2 SP

Divert Bullet: target redirects the trajectory of one bullet, photonic bolt, or similar ammunition they're the target of, or that passes through their occupied square – the trajectory can be redirected one stride to its left or right, and maintains its normal offense. Automatically Speed: Interrupt. **10 SP.**

- Current square *or* adjacent square: +2 SP

Divert Special: target redirects the trajectory of one Special they're the target of, or that passes through their occupied square, up to a certain offense amount – the line of fire can be moved one stride to its left or right. Automatically Speed: Interrupt. **1 SP** per 1 offense redirected.

- Current square *or* adjacent square: +2 SP

Reflect Special: target reflects offense from a Special they were the target of back to the character that targeted them, up to the offense cap of this effect; the remaining offense is taken as normal. Effect not reflected. Automatically Speed: Interrupt. Base cost: **3 SP**, +1 SP per offense reflected instead of taken.

- Mirror a Special targeting current square *or* adjacent square: +2 SP
- Mirror to another enemy in Special's listed range: +3 SP
- Store mirrored offense until a later turn, targeting any enemy within the Special's listed range (sputters out by end of fight): +4 SP
- Will mirror back any effect/s as well as the Special's offense: +5 SP

Absorb Offensive Special: when targeted by a Special that deals offense (including attack Specials), that offense instead heals you up to the limit of this effect (the remaining offense is taken as normal. Automatically Speed: Interrupt. **1 SP** per 1 offense healed.

- Current square *or* adjacent square: +3 SP

Bail Artist: give up next turn to completely dodge an attack. Must decide to use this Special *before* enemy offense is spun. Automatically Speed: Interrupt. **2 SP**

- Dodge attack *or* Special: +1 SP

Dive for Cover: trade your entire next move action to immediately (Speed: Interrupt) throw yourself prone. **2 SP**

- Also move one stride: +2 SP

Fuckwithme I: an enemy within sight takes a penalty that lasts until they attack you. No action cost. **1 SP** per -2 defense / **1 SP** per -2 offense.

Fuckwithme II: all enemies in the fight scene face a penalty until they attack you. No action cost. **1 SP** per -2 defense / **1 SP** per -2 offense.

Take One for Ya: user takes the offense that was directed towards a comrade. Automatically Speed: Interrupt. Adjacent comrades: **2 SP.**

- Any comrade in sight: +3 SP

Delay Wounds: use this effect immediately after the target takes offense to delay that offense one turncycle. Automatically Speed: Interrupt. **3 SP.**

- Two turns: +4 SP

Blood Buddies: two consenting targets split all offense taken equally between them. Automatically Duration: Combat. **2 SP.**

- Every additional blood buddy: +2 SP

Cryophilic: you handle the cold well. You A. aren't affected by the effect *freeze*, B. take half offense from any cold-based Specials (round down), C. aren't affected by cold weather, cold water, or anything less than about -80 degrees Fahrenheit, and D. can't take *thermophilic*. Automatically permanent. **5 SP.**

Thermophilic: you dig the heat. You A. aren't affected by the effect *heat*, B. take half offense from any heat-based Specials (round down), C. aren't affected by hot weather, scalding water, or anything less than about 200 degrees Fahrenheit, and D. can't take *cryophilic*. Automatically permanent. **5 SP.**

Immune to Offense Type: for one turncycle the target (and their gear) are immune to a predetermined offense type. Since every setting is different in offense type commonness, Key approval is required. Default is Speed: Move-Equivalent, and all speed modifiers cost 25% less than their usual price. Priced by commonness of offense type.

- Dominant (nearly all enemies in the setting use it): **5 SP**
- Common (about half of all enemies use it): **3 SP**
- Uncommon (a minority of all enemies use it): **2 SP**
- Rare (see it in maybe 1 out of 10 fights): **1 SP**

Resistant to Offense Type: you have a permanent resistance to a predetermined offense type. Since every setting is different in offense type commonness, Key approval is required. Every point spent on resistance to an offense type can be put towards purchasing immunity to it (above effect). Prices by commonness of offense type (examples are if our world was the setting).

- Dominant (like bullets): **3 SP** per 1 defense
- Common (like sharp trauma: knives / arrows / machetes etc): **2 SP** per 1 defense
- Rare (like electricity): **1 SP** per 1 defense
- Offense you resist with this effect is turned to healing, 1 to 1: x1.5 total SP

Defense Up: increase defense in target for 1 turncycle. Default is Speed: Move-Equivalent, and all speed modifiers cost 25% less than their usual price. **1 SP** per 1 defense.

Trade Offense for Defense: for every point you lower your offense, you increase your defense by a point. Must be in combat. Capped at 3 offense/defense per level or maximum offense you can deal in a single action (whichever lower). Lasts one turncycle exactly (so if used at the start of your turn, it lasts until the start of your next turn; if used at the end of your turn, lasts until the end of your next turn.) No action cost. **1 SP.**

Offense Up: increase offense in target for 1 turncycle. Default is Speed: Move-Equivalent, and all speed modifiers cost 25% less than their usual price. **1 SP** per 1 offense.

Move Score Up: increase target's move score. Default is Speed: Move-Equivalent, and all speed modifiers cost 25% less than their usual price. Automatically Duration: Combat. **1 SP** per stride.

- Permanently increase move score: **3 SP** per stride

Extra Move Action: give an extra move action (target can only use it on their turn). Must be used to move – no substituting Speed: Move-equivalent Specials. Automatically Speed: Interrupt. **5 SP.**

Healing Effects

Straight Heal: 1 SP per 2 points healed. Spinner option: 1 SP per quarter of spinner's maximum (so 2 SP for s8 of healing, 3 SP for s12 of healing etc). This effect can also be made into a modifier at any time.

Stagger Healing: split Special's healing so it happens equally over multiple turncycles (starts immediately). 2 turncycles: SP cost of healing is 25% less.

- 3 turncycles: 33.3% less

Transfer Wounds: user takes on any amount of the target's offense taken. 3 SP.

Lifejack: you heal the same amount of offense you put on an enemy with this effect. 3 SP per 2 offense.

- Siphon healing to self *or* any comrade in range: +3 SP

Regeneration: you automatically heal at the start of your every turn (no action cost). Automatically Duration: Permanent. 5 SP per 1 healing.

Fount: divide up this Special's total healing however you want. Using a remaining portion of healing has no action cost, and can be used in the middle of others' turns. For example, after you pay the action cost of a *fount* Special with 10 healing, you can heal a target for 5 right away (no action cost), then heal a different target for 2 (no action cost), then use that remaining 3 healing on another target (still no action cost), or even wait until after your turn and heal yourself right before an incoming attack, etc. To reiterate: A.) you only pay the action cost once, B.) using any remaining healing has Speed: Interrupt, and C.) you can use as little or as much of the Special's healing each time, until you've expended the entirety of the Special's total healing. A *fount* Special lasts until the end of the fight scene, or about five minutes outside of combat – if unused at the end of the duration, the remaining healing just goes towards the user. 1 SP per 1 point of healing.

- Healing divided into predetermined amounts (For example, 9 healing manifested as 3 blasts of 3 every time, or 8 healing divided into 4 jolts of s4 every time, etc): -25% healing cost

Cure Contagion: you fully lift any non-supernatural sickness from the target. 1 SP.

Neutralize Bioactive Substance: a poison, toxin, venom, hallucinogen, intoxicant, medicine, etc is rendered inert, even if already ingested (user can choose a specific substance if they want). Doesn't reverse the substance's past effects (like offense taken or healed etc). 3 SP.

Bring Back From Death: fully restore someone to their pre-death condition. The details of the effect – whether a ritual, conversation with Death, or venturing into an afterlife – are up to the Key. One-time use. 10 SP.

Burn Special II: sacrifice an unspent Special/s for the day. For every SP you sacrifice, add a point of healing to the healing Special you use this turn. No action cost. Unlimited uses. 1 SP.

Engine of Mending: whenever you use a Special with healing, add your smart score to how much it heals. For effects that cause recurring healing (*fount*, *stagger healing*, healing Specials with Duration: Combat, etc – but not *regeneration*) add your smart score every time healing occurs. Automatically Duration: Permanent. 3 SP.

Stat Effects

Primary Up: permanently increase a primary by 1 point. (If increasing smart, *don't* collect on the 5 bonus SP.) **7 SP.**

Merk Up: permanently increase merk. **1 SP** per +1 merk.

Knowledge Bar: permanently purchase a knowledge bar. **3 SP** each.

Offense Up: increase offense in target for 1 turncycle. Default is Speed: Move-Equivalent, and all speed modifiers cost 25% less than their usual price. **1 SP** per 1 offense.

- Permanent increase: **5 SP** per point of offense

Offense Down: decrease offense in target for 1 turncycle. Default is Speed: Move-Equivalent, and all speed modifiers cost 25% less than their usual price. **1 SP** per 1 offense.

Defense Up: increase defense in target for 1 turncycle. Default is Speed: Move-Equivalent, and all speed modifiers cost 25% less than their usual price. **1 SP** per 1 defense.

- Permanent increase: **5 SP** per point of defense

Defense Down: decrease defense in target for 1 turncycle. Default is Speed: Move-Equivalent, and all speed modifiers cost 25% less than their usual price. **1 SP** per 1 defense. (You can instead have this effect give an offense bonus of the same number to anyone attacking or using offensive Specials on the target, since the result is the same either way. Choice must be locked in before Special finalized.)

Trade Offense for Defense: for every point you lower your offense, you increase your defense by a point. Must be in combat. Capped at 3 offense/defense per level or maximum offense you can deal in a single action (whichever lower). Lasts one turncycle exactly (so if used at the start of your turn, it lasts until the start of your next turn; if used at the end of your turn, lasts until the end of your next turn.) No action cost. **1 SP.**

Trade Defense for Offense: lower your defense score, and increase your offense by the same number. Must be in actual combat: target shooting or kicking down a door won't be affected. Capped at 3 defense/offense per level. Offense bonus applies to all offense for exactly one turncycle (so both strikes if dual-wielding, counterattacks, all offensive Specials etc). Remember a negative defense score does that much extra offense to you. No action cost. **2 SP.**

Move Score Up: increase target's move score. Default is Speed: Move-Equivalent, and all speed modifiers cost 25% less than their usual price. Automatically Duration: Combat. **1 SP** per stride.

- Permanent increase: **3 SP** per stride

Move Score Down: decrease target's move score. Default is Speed: Move-Equivalent, and all speed modifiers cost 25% less than their usual price. Automatically Duration: Combat. **1 SP** per stride.

Rupture Stat Alteration: within the target area, all stat alterations that are less than Duration: Permanent are negated. **2 SP.**

Randomization: how much a stat is altered doesn't have to be a fixed number. To randomize, the SP cost is just half the spinner's highest number. Example: to increase your offense by s12 for a turncycle, the cost is 6 SP. To permanently increase your merk by s10, pay 5 SP, etc.

Movement Effects

Extra Move Action: give an extra move action (target can only use it on their turn). Must be used to move – no substituting Speed: Move-equivalent Specials. Automatically Speed: Interrupt. **5 SP.**

Move Score Up: increase target's move score. Default is Speed: Move-Equivalent, and all speed modifiers cost 25% less than their usual price. Automatically Duration: Combat. **1 SP** per stride.

- Permanently increase move score: **3 SP** per stride

Split Move: for one turn you can move, use a main action, then move again, not exceeding your total move score. No action cost. **2 SP.**

Push: target moves one stride directly away from user. **2 SP.**

- Target pushed an extra stride: +3 SP
- Push moves target in any direction (not just away from user): +2 SP
- Collision: if target is pushed into another character, they both take offense (Key decides where second enemy moves). 1 SP per point of offense
- Target also knocked prone (takes a move action to get back up) +2 SP

Switch: switch places with a comrade (remember default range is 1 stride). Automatically Speed: Interrupt. **4 SP.**

- Can target non-comrades: +4 SP
- Switch two characters: +4 SP

Convolve: you and a target move to the two centermost squares between youse (can fail in rare instances of extraheavy or secured targets). **2 SP.**

- Can choose which of the two centermost squares you land on: +2 SP

Slide: you move (slide / step / pivot / flip) one stride after a certain trigger, not more than once per turncycle. Automatically Speed: Interrupt.

- After attacking (avoids counterattacks): **3 SP**
- After enemy moves into an adjacent square: **4 SP**

Dive for Cover: trade your entire next move action to immediately (Speed: Interrupt) throw yourself prone. **2 SP.**

- Also move one stride: +2 SP

Lock: target moves zero strides next turn. Target can still reface, move the rest of their body normally, and use their move action for something else (like a Special with Speed: Move-Equivalent). **1 SP.**

- Can't reface: +3 SP
- Superlock: target is completely immobile until the end of their next turn (no defense, no actions): +7 SP

Deny X Action: target loses their next *move* action: **1 SP.**

- Target loses their next *main* action: **2 SP**
- Target loses *all* action: unable to act until the end of their next turn (no main action, move action, or Specials with no action cost): **4 SP**

Fallproof: you aren't hurt by falling anything less than 3 stories. Automatically Duration: Permanent. **1 SP.**

- Unhurt by a fall of any distance: +3 SP

Immovable: target can't be moved against their will for 1 turncycle. No action cost. **2 SP.**

Move Freely: target's movement / position not affected by Specials (unless they want it to be; can pick and choose) for 1 turncycle. No action cost. **3 SP.** Any SP spent on *immovable* can be respent on this effect.

Knockdown Immunity: you are permanently unable to be knocked prone. **4 SP.**

Knockdown: knock down an enemy (it takes an entire move action to stand back up). **1 SP.**

Kip-Up: when knocked down, no action cost to return to standing on your turn. Automatically Duration: Permanent. **1 SP.**

Ill Jumper: jump up to the full distance of your move score for one turn. **3 SP.**

- Jump the entirety of how far you move in a turn (so also covers double-moving): +3 SP

Ill Climber: climb on any surface until the start of your next turn, moving up to your total move score. Can use one hand for non-climbing shit. **3 SP.**

Ill Swimmer: swim as fast as your move score (default is half your move speed for swimming). **3 SP.**

Allsurface: walk and function on any surface like it's the ground until the start of your next turn. **5 SP.**

Grapnel-Shot: launch a rope / line / tether and have it securely attach to a surface or object (without harming it). From there you can swing, hang, yank shit towards you, and detach the grabbing end at will. Line's length is fixed once grapnel secured (upgradeable). Line can hold just over your weight. Automatically Use: Unlimited. Base range: 5 strides. **5 SP.**

- Can shoot and hold two lines simultaneously: +3 SP
- Every additional 5 strides of length: +1 SP (if you have two lines, applies to both)
- Freely detract or extend the line, reeling yourself up or down it (or reeling in / out a grabbed object) with perfect control: +5 SP
- Line can hold twice your weight: +2 SP
- Line can hold 1000 lbs (only +3 if previous sub-effect already bought): +5 SP

Glide: glide at will. If this effect is active you can't be hurt by falling. Automatically Duration: Permanent. **10 SP.**

Qing-Gong: also called wire-fu. You can jump like you have *ill jumper* (above) and glide around like you're in low gravity. Can no longer be hurt by falling. Automatically Duration: Permanent. **15 SP.** (Any SP spent on *glide* can be respent buying this effect).

Flight: starts limited: you gotta begin and end every turn on solid ground. Default flight speed is your move score. Automatically Duration: Permanent. **15 SP.** (Any SP spent on *glide* or *qing-gong* can be respent on this effect and its sub-effects).

- Unlimited flight / levitation: +10 SP
- Can fly carrying another average-sized character or equal weight: +5
- Faster flight: +3 SP per stride (permanent)

Projection: enter a trance-like state to move and sense through an intangible phantom of yourself. Projection can speak, and appears as if the user is actually there. Projection has merk 1. Projection lasts until destroyed or user ends. Nothing suffered by projection passes to user. Physical body incapacitated and unperceiving for projection's duration. **8 SP.**

- Projection invisible when unmoving: +5 SP
- Projection can manifest anywhere you've been before: +8 SP
- Projection can very slightly affect the physical world (exert 2 lbs of force): +4 SP
- Projection can use a single Special before immediately vanishing: +5 SP
- Projection can have any appearance or identity (deceives identification Specials, but can be defeated with *unscramble* in the social effects section): +3 SP

Sense Projection: within your normal range of sight / hearing you can detect any projection with certainty. **1 SP.**

Banish Projection: projection destroyed, consciousness returned to projector's body. **1 SP.**

- Create a projection-banishing zone up to about the size of a chamber (endures until used on another area): +2 SP

Pass Through X: you (and your gear) are able to move through a solid substance. You're fully intangible to that substance, so it will also pass through you. Remember default duration is one turncycle.

- Metal: **15 SP**
- Earth (stone / soil / concrete): **10 SP**
- Wood (living or dead): **5 SP**
- Glass: **5 SP**
- Textile (natural cloth or synthetic fabrics): **2 SP**
- Ice: **1 SP**

Teleport: you (and your gear) are instantly transported anywhere you can see. Default is Speed: Move-Equivalent, and all speed modifiers cost 25% less than their usual price. If you add offense to this effect, it can happen from the point you teleport to or the point you teleport from; same with added healing. **14 SP.**

- Anywhere you've been before (no sight required): +7 SP
- Transdimensional: +5 SP
- Teleport other: +7 SP
- Bring an adjacent character: +4 SP
- Teleport small group (your crew plus two; must be adjacent): +12 SP (only +8 SP if you already have the previous sub-effect)

Teleport Between X's: you (and your gear) are instantly transported from an X to another X within sight. Default is Speed: Move-Equivalent, and all speed modifiers cost 25% less than their usual price.

- Trees (living and planted in the earth): **7 SP**
- Flowers (living and planted in the earth): **6 SP**
- Radio antennae: **8 SP**
- Shadows (wide enough to fit your body): **10 SP**
- Bodies of water at least as wide as your shoulders: **6 SP**
- Bodies of water at least the size of a teacup: **11 SP** (5 SP if you have the previous sub-effect)
- Corpses (larger than a house cat): **6 SP**
- Fire (at least torch-sized): **6 SP**
- Between any currently lit forges, fireplaces, or firepits you've seen before: **11 SP** (only 5 SP if you already have the previous sub-effect)
- Mirrors at least as wide as your body: **6 SP**
- A sigil that takes a turn to inscribe (no defense that turncycle though): **10 SP**
- A complex seal that takes 10 minutes to inscribe: **5 SP**

No-Teleport Zone: create a zone up to about the size of a chamber in which teleportation is impossible (endures until used on another area): **2 SP.**

- Create a zone up to about the size of a chamber in which teleportation and portal formation are impossible (endures until used on another area): +2 SP

Portal: two portals manifest anywhere within sight. Portals last until user decides to close them or create a new pair. Default is Speed: Move-Equivalent, and all speed modifiers cost 25% less than their usual price. Fist-sized: **10 SP.**

- Person-sized: +8 SP
- Portal can lead anywhere you've been before: +10 SP
- Transdimensional: +5 SP

Microkinesis: you have a permanent (but minor) telekinetic field around you, active only within arm's reach. You can levitate small objects, move them around nimbly, but not with enough force to damage anything. **3 SP.**

Telekinesis: you permanently have the ability to move small objects (within sight) around without touching them: **12 SP** (only 9 SP if you already have *microkinesis*)

- Megakinesis: human-sized items and human-sized characters (of a lower level). Can't cause more than 3 + your level's worth of offense per turn: +10 SP

Xkinesis: you permanently have the ability to move a specific substance without touching it. Can't cause more than 3 + your level's worth of offense per turn.

- Wood: **12 SP** • Gold: **5 SP** • Any metal: **30 SP** • Fire: **13 SP** • Glass: **5 SP** • Paper: **4 SP**

Impediment: a square within range takes two strides to pass through. Automatically Duration: Combat. **1 SP.**

Bulwark: conjure an unmoving force / shield about one square stride (big enough for cover, but too small to fully obstruct most doorways). The bulwark has 10 merk for every **1 SP** spent on it. Size can be increased at higher SP prices, and merk is spread evenly (example: if you put 4 SP into this effect, you could conjure A. a wall that's 1 square with 40 merk, B. a wall that's 4 squares with 10 merk each, or C. a wall that's 2 squares with 20 merk each). Bulwark must be planted on the ground (can't be knocked over). Speed: Interrupt cost is x5 instead of usual x2.

- Bulwark can be suspended in the air: +4 SP
- All offense from the attack or Special that merks the bulwark is completely absorbed (remaining offense does not pass to any target behind): +2 SP

Increase Gravity: up to triple gravity in one square. Moving through a square with doubled gravity takes the equivalent of 2 strides moved; through tripled, the equivalent of 3 strides. **2 SP** per stride.

Decrease Gravity: as low as quarter gravity in one square. **2 SP** per stride.

Call Wind: a large area surrounding the user is subject to a wind that blows in a fixed direction. Any character moving with the wind gets a one stride bonus to movement, and any against takes a one stride penalty. Firing launcher weapons any direction but with the wind causes half offense. The wind will also speed along flying and sailing vessels, power wind turbines, blow away gas, fog, clouds, swarms, real light objects etc. Automatically Duration: Combat. **5 SP.**

Solidify Air: you create an unmovable solid shape that defies gravity and can bear about 1000 lbs for every level the user has. This shape can take any form (a plate, ring, bar etc), and can only be destroyed by passing its weight limit, the user ending it, merking the user, or using *rupture*. The shape of the solidified air is visible, and can have any (predetermined) aesthetic. Default duration is about five minutes (Duration: Combat). Priced by size limit. Max size about average human hand: **5 SP.**

- Max size about an average human body: +7 SP
- Max size about a chamber: +8 SP

Ambiguously outlined effects (“the size of a chamber”, “Key’s call” etc) keep the game moving and gloss over uninteresting details. Remember that stopping gameflow to get into glasses-adjusting mmm-well-did-you-calculate-the-radius type discussion is not fucking fun.

Social Effects

Walkie-Talkie: create a 2-way telepathic link with any one consenting character. Lasts until you create a new one, or one of you ends it. Target must be in sight at use, but once link established it has no range limit. Unlimited uses. Automatically Speed: Interrupt. **5 SP.**

- Target doesn't have to be in sight (but you must know them personally): +2 SP
- Additional characters: +1 each
- Transcends language barriers: +10 SP

Missive: you send a short, spoken message to anyone you know. Automatically Speed: Interrupt. **1 SP.**

- Private telepathic message only the intended recipient will perceive: +1 SP
- Visual element addable: +1 SP
- Anyone at all: +2 SP

Trace missive: know location of sender (at time of missive being sent). **1 SP.**

- Know identity of sender: +1 SP

Imitate Voice: replicate any voice you've heard at least a dozen words from; doesn't include vocabulary, personality, or other non-sonic characteristics. No limit to use. **3 SP.**

Instantly Learn Language: you are immediately and permanently fluent (two bars) in a language of your choice. One-time use. **6 SP.**

Speak any Language: for about 2 minutes you can fluently speak any language. **5 SP.**

Talk With Non-Human Animal: effect lasts as long as the conversation. **2 SP.**

Talk With Corpse: target not guaranteed to be cooperative though. **3 SP.**

Talk With Ghost: chop it up with someone who's passed on, no body required. If long dead, a valued possession of the deceased or presence in a place they'd most likely haunt may be required. **5 SP** (only 2 SP if upgrading *talk with corpse*).

Talk With Statue: 1 SP.

Talk With Gemstone: 2 SP.

Talk With Building: 5 SP.

Talk With Tree: 3 SP.

Talk With Body of Water: 3 SP.

Talk With Cloud: 5 SP.

Unbreakable Oath: the oath taker will know that they'll be physically unable to break the oath they are about to make. One-time use, at least some ritual required. **1 SP.**

Detect Lie: know when a specific statement made within earshot was deliberately misleading. Can detect something said a few seconds in the past. Automatically Speed: Interrupt. **4 SP.**

Detect Malevolence: ping the nearby area for anyone that means you harm. **3 SP.**

- Know exact location of character/s that mean you harm: +2 SP

Tracking: plant an intangible tracker. Exists until ruptured or user creates another tracker. Tracker can only be sensed with *true viewing*, *detect Special*, and the next effect. **3 SP.**

Detect Tracking: ping the nearby area for the above effect. **1 SP.**

Move Tracker: discreetly relocate a supernatural tracker. **1 SP.**

Good-Looking: you probably get hit on a lot (for better or worse), and tend to get your way a little more than the average person. **3 SP.**

Ugly: not even close to traditionally good-looking, but somebody's thing no doubt. Good luck out there. **-3 SP** (that's 3 extra SP to spend on any other Special, since you actually had to work hard and develop a personality – good on you).

Phobia: you have an irrational and overwhelming aversion to something. Requires Key approval. **-1 SP to -5 SP** depending on commonness: a -1 would be something like doctors, a -3 something like dogs, and a -5 something like bodies of water.

Minor Celebrity: you're a big deal in a small community: the neighborhood you came up in, or maybe a small scene not a lot of people follow (like a world-famous powerviolence musician, a legendary graf artist, a national handball champion, a local folk hero or righteous gangster etc). **4 SP.**

Insanity: make a side character with a lower smart score temporarily insane. Key decides nature and duration of insanity. Smarter characters will still experience minor symptoms. **4 SP.**

Notion: you give a side character with a lower smart score a vague desire or inclination. **5 SP.**

Sympatico: make the target more friendly towards you than they currently are. The less intelligent the target the more they'll be influenced (this includes non-humans). Key decides duration (usually longer the less intelligent they are). **5 SP.**

No Sympatico: make the target less friendly towards another side character. The less intelligent the target, the more they'll be influenced (this includes non-humans). Key decides duration (usually longer the less intelligent they are). **5 SP.**

Wimp'd: seriously dial down the courage and mental fortitude of the target. Less intelligent targets almost always run in fear, but ultimate level of effect and duration is Key's call. **5 SP.**

No Filter: make the target obviously blunt, just saying whatever comes to mind. Key decides duration (the lower their smart score the longer it lasts). **3 SP.**

Read Mind: momentarily observe surface thoughts of target: **3 SP.**

- Ascertain specific memory or knowledge (target will be aware of this sub-effect being used on them): +12 SP

Plant Memory: create or alter one memory in a target with a lower smart score. **10 SP.**

Immune to Mental Intrusion: the previous 14 effects (*insanity to plant memory*) don't work on you. Automatically Duration: Permanent. **4 SP.**

- Know when someone tries to use one of these effects on you, and who it was: +2 SP

Detect Mental Intrusion: user knows with certainty if an effect from the previous block (*insanity to plant memory*) has been used on the target. **2 SP.**

- Know identity of mental intruder: +2 SP

Read Character: know if a character within sight is higher or lower level than you, and get a vague idea of their stats. No action cost. **1 SP.**

Identify Object: gain detailed knowledge of an item within eyesight: Key Narrator must describe the make-up, function, and *some* recent history of the object. **5 SP.**

Identify Character: gain some knowledge of a character within eyesight: Key Narrator must tell you their name and a short description of what their life is like. **5 SP.**

Scramble Identity: give target a bullshit identity that will be fed to anyone trying to identify the target through supernatural means. Unlimited uses. **1 SP.**

Unscramble: you are permanently able to detect scrambling. Key must offer you some type of puzzle to decode that represent the scramble (includes *projection* and *inhabit corpse* sub-effects). When puzzle defeated, Key must reveal the information hidden on the other side of the scrambling. **2 SP.**

Sense Effects

Photographic Memory: perfectly recall any image or sight you've witnessed. Automatically
Duration: Permanent. **4 SP.**

Phonographic Memory: perfectly recall any sound. Automatically Duration: Permanent. **3 SP.**

Distance Vision: see about as far as a falcon (automatically permanent). **3 SP.**

Heat Vision: see heat signatures for one turncycle. **3 SP.**

X-Ray Vision: selectively see through matter for one turncycle. **3 SP.**

Night Vision: automatically Duration: Permanent. **3 SP.**

Echolocation: Like a bat. You have an understanding of the surrounding area as if you had
gone around feeling out and knocking on every inch of it. Always active **10 SP.**

Acute Hearing: your sense of hearing is (permanently) as keen as the average cat's. **4 SP.**

Scent: your sense of smell is (permanently) as powerful as the average dog's. **8 SP.**

Remote Viewing: move your visual vantage point anywhere your actual physical eyes can see.
Target can be an area or character. Once vantage point is set, it can rotate but is otherwise
locked onto target (to be clear, will follow mobile targets around). Can be sensed with *true
viewing*, *detect Special*, etc. No action cost, default duration is about five minutes (Duration:
Combat). **3 SP.**

- Anywhere you've been before: +5 SP

- Vantage not fixed; can move around at user's base move speed: +7

Remote Hearing: move your sonic vantage point anywhere you can currently see. Target can
be an area or character. Vantage locked on once used (to be clear, will follow mobile targets
around). Can be sensed with *true viewing*, *detect Special*, etc. No action cost, default duration
is about five minutes (Duration: Combat). **2 SP.**

- Anywhere you've been before: +3 SP

- Vantage not fixed; can move around at user's base move speed: +2

CCTV: create a fixed vantage point (both visual and sonic) you can check at any time, and will
remain until you create another one. Can be sensed with *true viewing*, *detect Special* etc. **3 SP.**

Unsurveillable: create a zone up to about the size of a chamber that nobody can remotely
observe through the previous 3 effects. Endures until used on another area. **3 SP.**

Blind: take away a character's sight for a turncycle. If used during a fight scene, they either
attack random squares, run off, or attack the source of any telling sound. **3 SP.**

Deafen: take away a character's hearing for a turncycle. **1 SP.**

True Viewing: for one turncycle you're immune to visual illusions, invisibility, blinding, and
can see supernaturally concealed phenomena. **5 SP.**

True Hearing: for one turncycle you're immune to sonic illusions and deafening. **2 SP.**

Anti-Illusion Zone: create a zone up to about the size of a chamber where illusions don't
work properly, ideally malfunctioning hilariously. Endures until used on another area. **10 SP.**

Detect Lifeforms: get an idea of all nearby biological life. **2 SP.**

Alarm: create an intangible tripwire that can range from the width of a single stride to the
perimeter of a chamber-sized area. Alarm signal can be visual or sonic, ranging from a loud-
ass cacophony to a soft chime private to the user's mind. If offense is added to this effect it
will be triggered when the alarm is tripped, and only applies to the square that was breached.
The alarm itself can be sensed with *true viewing*, *detect Special*, and the next effect. Lasts until
tripped, user negates, or user creates a new alarm. **3 SP.**

Detect Alarm: automatically Duration: Permanent. **1 SP.**

Juke Alarm: discreetly relocate, pass by, or otherwise alter a supernatural alarm. **2 SP.**

Illusion Effects

→ Illusions last about 5 minutes, and start with a range of 5 strides (can be upgraded from there). Size / area are limited by complexity and the Key's good judgment.

Minor Illusion: versatile but weak. Create soft music, a spring breeze, a pleasant fragrance, hot garbage reek, a fake wound, a single minor facial feature alteration, confetti bursting around a banner that reads "this is a trap", etc. Unlimited uses, but only one illusion at a time. **10 SP.**

Create Sound: any iteration of a sound the user has heard. Can accurately recreate a voice, even holding an entire conversation (must have heard voice of original speaker). **5 SP.**

Create Visage: any sight the user can imagine. Does not generate sound or other sensory. The larger and more animated the visage the more difficult it is to pull off. For example, if the user tries to maintain an elaborate disguise while concentrating on a task, or project a whole brigade of charging cavalry, there may be glitchy inconsistencies viewers can spot. **8 SP.**

Major Illusion: combines various complex sensory input. You can create an illusory chest of silver that is heavy and clinks and shimmers and is cool to the touch, conjure a well-spoken customs officer that smells faintly of temple incense and has a firm handshake, project a sturdy-looking rope bridge over the perilous gorge etc. As always, the more complex the illusion the more difficult it is to maintain. **13 SP** (any SP already spent on *create sound* or *create visage* can be respent buying this effect).

Gotchacopies: a full illusion of the target appears next to them, indecipherable from the target. In the instant this Special is used, the target may choose to switch places with their gotchacopy for free. The gotchacopy simultaneously imitates whatever their original is doing, only slightly differently (sometimes bizarrely), and stays in an adjacent square. A gotchacopy will go up in smoke when struck, and won't stop (or even slow) projectiles or spinning attacks. To be clear, gotchacopies are intangible, have 0 offense, and can't affect the world. **3 SP** per gotchacopy.

Counterillusion: alter someone else's illusion in a small way. To be clear, this effect works on any other illusion effect. Automatically Speed: Interrupt. The character that initially conjured the illusion maintains ultimate control and is free to disappear your counterillusion as soon as they notice. **1 SP.**

Countercounterillusion: instant and undefendable offense towards any character trying to counterillusion any of your illusions. **1 SP** per 3 offense.

- Know location of counterillusionist +2 SP

Anti-Illusion Zone: create a zone up to about the size of a chamber where illusions don't work properly, ideally malfunctioning hilariously. Endures until used on another area. **10 SP.**

Invisibility: other characters can still hear the target, smell them, see how they affect the environment, see shit thrown on top of them etc. Slightly visible when moving. Target's equipment also invisible, but not anything they hold or equip *after* becoming invisible. **10 SP.**

- Invisible even when moving (+3 to offense and defense): +15 SP

Melt Into Shadows: you get a bonus to stealth whenever you're in shadow. Automatically Duration: Permanent. **1 SP** per +1 to stealth.

Cloak of Verdancy: you get a bonus to stealth whenever you're in a tree, a bush, tall grass, seaweed, or other foliage. Automatically Duration: Permanent. **1 SP** per +1 to stealth.

Cloak of Mist: you get a bonus to stealth whenever you're in the mist, fog, or clouds. Automatically Duration: Permanent. **1 SP** per +3 to stealth.

Cloak of Tides: you get a bonus to stealth whenever submerged (3/4 or more) in water. Automatically Duration: Permanent. **1 SP** per +3 to stealth.

Chameleon Skin: at will, your skin changes color to blend into your surroundings. You can also freely change it to whatever color / pattern you feel. Automatically Duration: Permanent. +3 to stealth when active. **7 SP.**

Silence: all noise in target area is completely suppressed. Area can be fixed on a character or location (remember the default area for a Special is 1 square). **3 SP.**

Death Effects

Animate Corpse: turn a dead character into the undead and put them immediately under your control. Animated corpses use their pre-death stats, minus Specials. Higher intelligence, memories, speech, and the coordination required to make ranged attacks are lost. Offense taken restored to zero. Once destroyed as undead, they can't be reanimated. Corpse must be reasonably whole: if immolated, disintegrated, vaporized, absolutely butchered etc, they are unanimatable. **15 SP.**

Blood Animate: for every 1 offense you put on yourself, animate 4 merk's worth of corpses. No matter how many corpses are animated, it's done all in the same action. Corpse must be reasonably whole (see *animate corpse* above). **3 SP.**

- Don't need to max out corpse's merk to animate it (but they start with offense taken): +5 SP

Make Corpse Un-Animatable: automatically Use: Unlimited. Won't un-animate any corpses that are already animated. **2 SP.**

Steal Control of Undead: **1 SP** per 5 merk's worth of jacked undead.

Blood Mending: if you have wounded undead under your control, transfer any amount of offense they've taken to yourself. **2 SP.**

Necrotic Energy Blast: heals the undead, wounds the living. **5 SP** per 4 healing / offense.

- Spin-based option: **5 SP** per s8 healing / offense

Necrotic Energy Well: any enemy you kill immediately begins to radiate necrotic energy (heals the undead, wounds the living) in a one-stride radius. Offense / healing occurs as soon as a character enters that radius, and again at the beginning of their every turn for as long as they remain. Automatically Duration: Combat. **1 SP** per 2 offense.

Rattle Undead: any undead in the Special's area that are below the user's level are now permanently afraid of the user (will run from them). **1 SP.**

- Larger radius: +1 SP per stride

Anti-Undead Zone: create an area that undead cannot enter. Maximum area is about 100 x 100 strides, lasts one day. **3 SP.**

- Larger area: +1 SP per additional 100 x 100 strides

Anti-Living Zone: create an area up to the size of a chamber that the living cannot enter. Default duration is about five minutes (Duration: Combat). **3SP.**

Bring Back From Death: fully restore someone to their pre-death condition. The details of the effect – whether a ritual, conversation with Death, or venturing into an afterlife – are up to the Key. One-time use. **10 SP.**

Death: you have a chance of instantly killing the target, regardless of level or power (below Special is sole exception). **1 SP** per 2%.

Stash Lifeorce: user permanently transfers their merk to an object. As this object takes offense the user is wounded. *The user can't otherwise take offense.* The user will still age and even rot as normal, even if they can't die. One-time use. Usage time automatically at least an hour. **30 SP.**

- Every additional object: +10 SP. (Can be done any time after the initial transposition, but both the original and new object must be present)

Halt Aging: can be resumed at user's will. If undead, prevents decay. One-time use. Usage time automatically at least half an hour. **5 SP.**

Prevent Decay: preserve a corpse, severed body part, dead plant etc. **1 SP.**

Instant Decay: bring a corpse, severed body part, dead plant etc to its final stage of putrefaction in a matter of seconds. **1 SP.**

Reverse Decay: instantly restore a corpse, severed body part, dead plant etc to pre-putrefaction. Must have majority of target (even if only dust or bones) **3 SP.**

Kill Plants: end the life of all plants in a square. **1 SP.**

Revive Plants: restore the life of all plants in a square. **1 SP.**

Talk With Corpse: target not guaranteed to be cooperative though. **3 SP.**

Talk With Ghost: chop it up with someone who's passed on, no body required. If long dead, a valued possession of the deceased or presence in a place they'd most likely haunt may be required. **5 SP** (only 2 SP if upgrading *talk with corpse*).

Know Mortality Status: detect if anyone you know (or have learned a lot about) is alive or dead, over any distance. **2 SP.**

Fake Death: appear dead to anyone that doesn't have medical expertise, or a Special with an effect like *true viewing* or *true hearing*. User has limited perception and can't act, but can also stop the effect at will. **1 SP** per knowledge bar of medicine you can deceive.

Inhabit Corpse: temporarily transpose your consciousness to a corpse, which you can act and perceive through. Corpse retains full mobility and all pre-death stats, minus Specials, higher intelligence, and the fine motor skills required to make ranged attacks. Consciousness will return to user once corpse is destroyed or user abandons it. Corpse must be larger than a songbird. No limits on corpse's range. **6 SP.**

- Use one Special through the corpse: any backlash, identification, or tracing of the Special will apply only to the inhabited corpse: +5 SP

→ Undead (or any other entity) under a character's control act immediately after that character's turn.

Alteration Effects

Repair: restore a simple object (a pipe, a guitar, a wheel, a hull etc) to functionality. **3 SP.**

- Or a complex object (a car, a house, a computer etc): +4 SP

Heat: cause inanimate matter to become too hot to touch safely. Can target a single item or a square of ground. A heated object causes offense to anyone touching it at the beginning of user's next turn. If Duration modifier is bought, that offense is taken again every turn/cycle contact is maintained. Weapons and other implements can be dropped or thrown freely, but armor takes an entire turn to remove. **1 SP** per 1 heat offense.

- A target taking heat offense from this effect has that offense *repeated* for every heat and fire-based Special they're targeted with that turn/cycle (does not include this effect): +3 SP

Freeze: cause inanimate matter to become too cold to touch safely. Can target a single item or a square of ground. A freezing object causes offense to anyone touching it at the beginning of user's next turn. If Duration modifier is bought, that offense is taken again every turn/cycle contact is maintained. Weapons and other implements can be dropped or thrown freely, but armor takes an entire turn to remove. **1 SP** per 1 freezing offense.

- A target taking freezing offense from this effect has that offense *repeated* for every cold-based Special they're targeted with that turn/cycle (does not include this effect): +3 SP

Slick: you make a surface slippery and difficult to grip. If flat, that surface can be an entire square: if not (especially if moving) that surface is smaller. **2 SP.**

Stick: you make a surface highly adhesive and gluey. If flat, that surface can be an entire square: if not (especially if moving) that surface is smaller. **2 SP.**

Bind: attach two non-living surfaces that are currently touching. Bond unbreakable as long as Special lasts, but bonded objects maintain their durability as normal. **2 SP.**

- Includes living surfaces: +4 SP

Increase or Decrease Item Weight: by as much as 100%. **5 SP.**

Shrink Object: limit is 10% its original size. Whether weight or durability is maintained is subject to situational factors / the Key's call. No characters or animated objects. **5 SP.**

Enlarge Object: limit is 100% its original size. Whether weight or durability is maintained is subject to situational factors / the Key's call. No characters or animated objects. **5 SP.**

Lengthen / Shorten: you cause an object no thicker than 6" to extend its length up to 50 strides, or shorten its length to 1 millimeter (slightly thinner than a dime). Only length can be modified, no other dimensions. Maintains relative strength and flexibility of original object. Some extended objects can be used as a staff (offense: s4 + strong or fast / block 2 / range 2 / 2-handed), brace, battering ram, pole vault, straight up elevator etc. Each use of this effect purchased allows both one lengthen *and* one shorten per day. **14 SP.**

Decontaminate: obliterate anything harmful in food or water. **1 SP.**

Seal: you lock a door, window, box, bottle, folder etc. Seal lasts until user negates, seal forced, or Special used again. Strength of seal based on SP spent . . .

- Simple seal (can be forced with a small tool or strong 2 etc): 2 SP
- Heavy seal (can be forced with a large tool or strong 4 etc): 3 SP
- Advanced seal (can be forced with demolition tools or strong 6 etc): 4 SP
- Conditional seal: seal will only open for certain people, for certain passphrases, with certain items present etc. Can also display messages or simple images. +2 SP
- Snitchseal: telepathically see person that fucks with your seal. No range limit. +1 SP

Unseal: unlocks doors, cars, lockers etc instantly and silently. Will defeat any *seal* effect that has a lower SP value. Unlocking power is based on SP spent . . .

- Defeat simple locks (that would otherwise take 2 strong or a small tool to defeat): 3 SP
- Defeat heavy locks (that would otherwise take 4 strong or a large tool to defeat): 4 SP
- Defeats advanced locks (that would otherwise take 6 strong or demolition tools): 5 SP

Shrink Character: shrink yourself as small as 10% your original size, but also have a correlating % of your merk and strong. Lasts until you negate. **4 SP.**

- Allied character (they choose when effect is negated): +2 SP
- Non-allied (lower level) character. +2 SP
- Shrink self or allied character as small as a mote of dust: +2 SP

Enlarge Character: enlarge yourself up to three times your original size. Your fast score is reduced to 0 and respend between your strong score and hard score however you feel. Default is Duration: Combat, or about five minutes outside of combat. **8 SP.**

- Unlimited uses per day (can only target self): +12 SP
- Every extra point of strong or hard (fixed): +3 SP
- Can target other characters (they choose how to respend their fast score): +6 SP

Breathe Underwater: breathe underwater for about 1 hour. **2 SP.**

- Permanent: +2 SP

Eliminate Biological Need: automatically Duration: Permanent. Your body functions as normal without any of the following (can have more than one in the same Special) . . .

- Food: **2 SP**
- Water: **2 SP**
- Sleep: **5 SP**
- Air: **6 SP**

Non-Living: you're a cyborg, undead, automata etc. You don't need to breathe, eat, drink or sleep, and are immune to disease. **15 SP.**

→ Trade-offs: these give you back some SP. (Can later be bought back for same SP value.)

- Powered by the sun (24 hours with no sun = merked until returned to sunlight): -4 SP
- Merked when submerged in water: -4 SP
- Minor offense from direct sunlight (1 undefendable offense per minute): -3 SP
- Major offense from direct sunlight (1 undefendable offense per turncycle): -5 SP
- Hated (hunted?) by particular groups: -5 SP
- Take massive offense from a rare material: -5 SP
- Struggle to understand the living, their emotions, incentives, etc: -3 SP
- Still need to sleep, recharge, trance or otherwise be unconscious for 8 hours a night: -5 SP

Immune to Disease: automatically Duration: Permanent. **2 SP.**

Halt Aging: can be resumed at user's will. If undead, prevents decay. One-time use. Usage time automatically at least half an hour. **5 SP.**

Prehensile Extension: a tail, tendril, floating hand, trunk, tentacle, mid-wing fingers like a bat's, a ridiculous tongue like an anteater's, or whatever. Can hold and manipulate light objects, but can't attack or wield shields. Automatically Duration: Permanent. **5 SP** per prehensile extension.

- Every additional stride you can stretch your extensions: +3 SP

Body Elasticity: your body is supernaturally stretchy. Your limbs reach an extra stride, but you can't effectively attack with weapons while stretching them (upgrade listed below). This effect doesn't add any inherent defense, offense, or otherwise alter any stats. Weight never altered by this effect. **7 SP.**

- Every additional stride you can stretch your limbs: +4 SP
- Can squeeze your body through a space the size of your skull: +4 SP
- Can attack with weapons while stretching (limited to one stride of reach): +8 SP

Transpose Consciousness: permanently transfer your mind from your current body to another vessel: undead, an animated suit of armor or statue or other automaton, another animal or a supernatural creature, some kind of Frankenstein's monster you put together etc. New form maintains user's level, but respends all primary points and SP. As always, benefits have to be paid for (no free defense bonus for starting as a statue). One-time use. Usage time automatically at least a day. **15 SP.**

The remaining alteration effects are automatically Duration: Combat unless the user cuts them short. If the effect turns a character into another form A. their equipment gets morphed along with them, and B. they can't get bigger than twice their normal size, or smaller than a tenth their normal size.

Morph: shift between your normal form and a secondary form. Half your SP and all your primary points are respent in your secondary form, but once spent they're locked in place. User can permanently transfer SP from their normal form to their secondary form. Neither form can access the other's Specials. Form benefits still gotta be paid for: your second form can have wings, but you still have to buy flight to actually fly; you can have rhino skin but you still have to buy the extra defense. Secondary form starts with merk 10, move 5, and an s2 unarmed attack (like any other character). Secondary form can't equip weapons, instruments, shields or armor (upgrade listed below). Unlimited uses, but can only morph once per turncycle. **10 SP.**

- Secondary form can equip weapons, instruments, shields and armor: +15 SP
- Morph at Speed: Move-Equivalent: +5
- Morph at Speed: Immediate: +10 SP

Omnimorph: you can take any form, but your stats are limited. You get 1 level's worth of SP and primary points to spend when you shift into a new form. Can't access normal form's Specials from omnimorphed forms. Unlimited uses, but can only omnimorph once per turncycle. **30 SP.**

- Additional levels of SP and primary points: +15 SP each
- Omnimorph at Speed: Move-Equivalent: +5 SP
- Omnimorph at Speed: Immediate: +10 SP

Shapeshift: turn into any entity you can imagine. Can respent all of your SP and primary points every time you shift. Can't access normal form's Specials when shapeshifted. Can't use weapons, instruments, shields or armor. Main action to shapeshift. Use: Unlimited. **80 SP** (any SP spent on *omnimorph* can be respent buying this effect).

- Shapeshift at Speed: Move-Equivalent: +15 SP

Turn Into Liquid: about the same volume of liquid as your body. Can't access any of your Specials while in this form, and can still take offense as normal. Speed is the same as your normal form. **7 SP.**

Turn Into Smoke: or similar semi-gaseous state (mist, fog, cloud etc). Can't access any of your Specials while in this form, and can still take energy offense (immune to physical offense). Flying speed is your normal move score. **18 SP.**

- Faster movement: +2 SP per stride

Body Permutation: alter your body – change bone shape or muscle size, change your hair color or facial structure etc. A body permutation can also cause one bonus or penalty to a stat: alter offense (up to 2 points), alter defense (up to 2 points), alter move score (up to 3 strides), cause offense or healing (up to 2 points per turncycle). Can only cause one permutation per use of this effect, but remember the default duration of all effects in this section is Duration: Combat. **15 SP.**

- Double any of the above stat ranges: +15
- Can target other characters: +10

Rupture Shapechanging: target stays in their normal form. If this effect used on a target whose form has already been changed (by someone lower level than the user), the target immediately reverts to their natural form. To be clear, this effect also ruptures shrinking, enlarging, and body permutations. Default is Speed: Move-Equivalent, and all speed modifiers cost 25% less than their usual price. **5 SP.**

Entity Into Entity: turn a living being into a predetermined form (flamingo, hyena, animated football with arms and legs, etc). If hostile, target must be lower level. Merk and strength decreased to size % of original form. Stats can't be increased by this effect. User can end at will. **10 SP.**

- Alternative forms: +3 SP each

Entity Into Object: turn into a single predetermined type of mundane object. Fully maintain perception. Zero defense and can't take actions. Merk unchanged despite substance of form. User can end at will. **4 SP.**

- Very limited movement (half move score): +2 SP
- Can target other characters (must be lower level if hostile): +6 SP
- Alternative mundane forms: +2

Object Into Entity: must maintain relative size. Can be any entity from existing setting. Target can't be larger than user. Key entirely controls (effects like *sympatico* can still be used). Can't use weapons, instruments, shields or armor. Each time this effect used, spin s4: if you land a 4 the transformation is permanent. **6 SP.**

Object Into Object: transform a non-supernatural object. Transformed object keeps same materials, and volume can't be increased. Can be used to replicate a model object with a similar object, but the model object must be present for user to observe. Can't form anything complex like electronics or machinery. Target can't be larger than user. User can choose to make transformation permanent at no extra cost. **6 SP.**

Animate Object: target object sprouts arms and legs (if it doesn't already have them) and starts moving around. Key controls and determines personality (effects like *sympatico* can still be used). Target can't be larger than user. Move score 5, offense can't be higher than user's level. Can't use weapons, instruments, shields or armor. **3 SP.**

Command Cordage: animate a length of rope, whip, or cable. It can't levitate, but can slither around, wrap itself securely around objects, swing, loop, go stiff as a wooden pole, coil up etc. The animated cordage can also act independently, lashing an enemy (s4 + user's smart per turn), or grappling an enemy (straight s10). Acts on user's turn. Range limited to user's sight. Max cordage length 3 strides: **15 SP.**

- Or chain (s8 + smart offense, also add user's smart to grapple spin): +15 SP
- Max length 10 strides (can grapple two enemies at a time): +10 SP

Recruit Statue: animate a statue from the surrounding scenery to fuck up your enemies or just do chores. Can help with general labor or engage in combat as directed. Default merk is 10 x user's level, default offense is s8 + user's smart per turn, but stats will vary by statue. **3 SP.**

Recruit Tree: animate a tree from the surrounding scenery. Large deciduous trees can attack enemies (s6 + user's smart per turn). Vines and willows can grapple enemies (s10 + user's smart). Default merk is 100 x user's level. **7 SP.**

Grabby Plants: plant life within the fight scene grabs at your enemies. Weak plants like shrubs and ivy will only halve movement (costs two strides to move through their square). Strong plants like vines and surface roots will grapple adjacent enemies (s10 + user's smart). **7 SP.**

Solidify Air: you create an unmovable solid shape that defies gravity and can bear about 1000 lbs for every level the user has. This shape can take any form (a plate, ring, bar etc), and can only be destroyed by passing its weight limit, the user ending it, merking the user, or using *rupture*. The shape of the solidified air is visible, and can have any (predetermined) aesthetic. Default duration is about five minutes (Duration: Combat). Priced by size limit. Max size about average human hand: **5 SP**

- Max size about an average human body: +7 SP
- Max size about a chamber: +8 SP

Generation Effects

Companion: an entity permanently becomes your loyal companion. Starts with move 5 and merk 10. You choose their narrative origin and aesthetic, but practical benefits gotta be paid for (they can have armored skin, but you have to buy any defense bonuses; they can have wings, but you have to buy *flight* etc). You can permanently give them SP from your own pool (1 SP to 1 SP), but they can't take any of the effects on this page. Can't use weapons, instruments, shields or armor (upgrade listed below though). Merked usually just means KO'd, but they're not unkillable like a main character. If a companion dies or is otherwise no longer played, their SP total beyond the base price is returned to the main character. Base companion price: **5 SP**.

- Can use a language or otherwise communicate complex ideas: +12 SP
- Can make an unarmed attack each turn (starts at s2): +5 SP
- Can use weapons, instruments, shields and armor.: +15 SP

Call Entity: summon a fixed, predetermined entity that obeys your commands. Can freely communicate in any one of user's known languages. Starts with move 5, merk 10, and an s2 unarmed attack. Can't use weapons, instruments, shields or armor. User decides aesthetic, but practical benefits gotta be paid for (they can have armored skin, but you have to buy any defense bonuses; they can have wings, but you have to buy *flight* etc). You can permanently give them SP from your own pool (1 SP to 1 SP), but they can't take any of the effects on this page. If merked, called entity disappears in a cinematic flash (will return as normal when next summoned). Default is Duration: Combat (or about five minutes outside of combat). **10 SP**.

- Can summon aesthetically similar entity, but with respent stats each summon: +15 SP
- Can summon and unsummon entity at will: x2 total SP

Ride: conjure a fixed, predetermined entity to give you a lift. Can carry cargo equal to a large human. Starts with twice the user's move score, half the user's merk, and can't attack. User decides aesthetic, but practical benefits gotta be paid for (they can have armored skin, but you have to buy any defense bonuses; they can have wings, but you have to buy the flight sub-effect below etc). You can permanently give them SP from your own pool (1 SP to 1 SP), but they can't take any of the effects on this page. If merked, summoned entity disappears in a cinematic flash (will return as normal when next summoned). Hangs around until unconjured, merked, purged, or moved more than a few strides from user. **5 SP**.

- Base move score four times user's: +5 SP
- Can climb any surface: +10 SP
- Can swim as fast as move score (default is half): +5 SP
- Jump distance of 5 strides: +3 SP
- Glide: +5 SP
- Unlimited flight: +20 SP
- Ride massive enough to carry whole squad plus two: +5 SP
- Ride can bring several similar rides (enough for the whole crew): +10

Helper: conjure a fixed, predetermined entity to help with menial shit. User instructs, Key controls. User decides aesthetic, but can be no bigger than a small human (like a stone golem you raise from the earth), or two small forms (like a pair of spider monkeys in Mets jerseys that reek of ditch weed), or a mess of real small forms (like a crew of tiny ghosts represented by a chief foreghost). Starts with half the user's merk, move 5, and can't attack. Practical benefits gotta be paid for (they can have armored skin, but you have to buy any defense bonuses; they can have wings, but you have to buy *flight* etc). You can permanently give them SP from your own pool (1 SP to 1 SP), but they can't take any of the effects on this page. If merked, helper just pops like a soap bubble (will return as normal when next summoned). If the aesthetic is multiple helpers they each have half the user's merk, but all disappear as soon as one is merked. Helper hangs around until unconjured, merked, purged, bored, or moved out of user's sight. **5 SP**.

Quick reminder: **the default number of uses for a Special is once per day.**
For upgrades, check out the modifiers page (right before this section).

Supernatural Weapon: at will, materialize a weapon from thin air. Can be a classical weapon, instrument, shield, or launcher (like bows and shit, not firearms). Weapon can have any aesthetic, even being formed of destructive energy (like a blade that's a captured lightning bolt). Can have its own Specials (critical hits etc). To be clear, the same weapon is summoned with each use of this effect. User can unconjure at will. Speed: Immediate, unlimited uses. **7 SP**.

- Can simultaneously conjure a second weapon to dual-wield: +3 SP
- Conjure supernatural weapon at Speed: Interrupt: +3 SP
- Unlimited ammo. Ammo simply appears when firing, and can have any appearance. If used on a throwing weapon, it returns to user's hand after each throw: +5 SP

Supernatural Covering: at will, materialize an item of clothing from thin air. The covering can have any appearance (a horned mask that changes color, a cloak of molten gold), but is locked in once the effect is bought. The covering can look like armor, but any actual defense bonus (or other effects) have to be bought like normal. Pairs of shoes / gloves / etc count as a single item of clothing. **2 SP**.

Bulwark: conjure an unmovable force / shield about one square stride (big enough for cover, but too small to fully obstruct most doorways). The bulwark has 10 merk for every **1 SP** spent on it. Size can be increased at higher SP prices, and merk is spread evenly (example: if you put 4 SP into this effect, you could conjure A. a wall that's 1 square with 40 merk, B. a wall that's 4 squares with 10 merk each, or C. a wall that's 2 squares with 20 merk each). Bulwark must be planted on the ground (can't be knocked over). Speed: Interrupt cost is x5 instead of usual x2.

- Bulwark can be suspended in the air: +4 SP
- All offense from the attack or Special that merks the bulwark is completely absorbed (remaining offense does not pass to any target behind): +2 SP

Create Dimension: generate a new dimension of your own design. Its form, physics, weather, flora, etc are locked in once this one-time effect is used. Size always upgradeable. Means of getting to the dimension (gateway, item, just appearing there etc) up to you, but you'll always return to the exact spot you left from. Usage time at least an hour. Pricing by size . . .

- Trunk: **4 SP** • Chamber: **7 SP** • Estate: **12 SP** • Island: **20 SP**
- Continent: **30 SP** • Small planet: **60 SP** • Large planet: **90 SP**
- Star system: **240** • Galaxy: **1,200** • Nebula: **10,000** • Universe: **100,000**

Temporary Dimension: enter a microdimension of your own design. Dimension only exists while user inside. Other characters are free to tag along, but anybody left inside when the user leaves is thrown into another dimension (Key's choice). Means of getting to the dimension (gateway, item, just appearing there etc) up to you, but you'll always return to the exact spot you left from. Can't (via *this* effect) add anything able to leave the dimension, alter stats, or provide sustenance. Pricing by size . . .

- Size of a small room: **3 SP** • Large room: **4 SP** • House: **5 SP** • Estate: **6 SP**

Imbue Tattoo: create a tattoo that gives its bearer a Special. Costs as much as buying a Special normally (**1 SP** to **1 SP**) BUT Key Narrators are required to give discounts for sick concepts. This is a mandatory rule, but remember the Key has final say on what they think is dope and how much of a discount it earns. One-time use.

Imbue Artifact: instill an existing item with a Special. That Special costs 75% its normal SP value. Remember the item you imbue into can always be bartered, stolen, destroyed, or even used against you. One-time use.

Endow Sentience: give an object or place consciousness. User determines personality, speech, intellect, principles etc. Key controls. Can freely communicate, whether through speech or telepathy. Price can be negotiated with Key given certain properties. For example: a needy weapon that starts making trouble when it hasn't killed recently should get a big discount, and an implement that can sprout arms and legs and move around on its own should probably be double price. One-time use. **4 SP**.

Script: supernaturally inscribe text or symbols on any surface. Can't be longer than a short paragraph. Aesthetic is up to the user – mundane, colored, flashing, invisible etc. Effects like *true viewing* and *detect Special* are able to see past invisibility. Text lasts until ruptured, negated by user, or effect used again elsewhere. Unlimited uses. **3 SP.**

- Can be fixed in the air, including the air around a target (moves with target): +2 SP

Call Light: can summon, unsummon, and dim a supernatural light at will (unlimited uses). Aesthetic up to user (held item becomes luminous, handful of flame, brilliance in your eyes etc). Priced by brightness: Dim: **2 SP.**

- Thoroughly light up a chamber: +1 SP
- Thoroughly light up a village: +2 SP

Call Darkness: create an inky blackness about the size of a chamber that overpowers every non-Special source of light. **3 SP.**

Call Textile: permanently conjure a textile or fibrous object of your specification. Aesthetic up to user (spun from nearby raw materials, woven from aether, just barfed through a one-way portal etc). **4 SP.**

- Complex clothing or shelter: +2 SP

Call Wood: permanently conjure a wooden object. **3 SP.**

- About a dozen (identical) wooden implements: +1 SP

Call Stone: permanently conjure a stone object. **3 SP.**

- About a dozen (identical) stone implements: +1 SP

Call Metal: permanently conjure a metal object. Must be a single piece of metal: no complex items like machinery, firearms, armor etc. **8 SP.**

- About a dozen (identical) metal implements: +4 SP

Call Fire: about a handful, can't deal more than 1 offense. User has full control of the conjured flame within the square they occupy. Flame endures as long as user has a free hand. Aesthetic up to user. **3 SP.**

Call Electricity: just a respectable jolt or minor continuous stream. Can't deal more than 1 (direct) offense per use of this effect. **2 SP.**

Call Water: conjure a small amount of water in any form: **1 SP.**

- A very large amount of water (can't deal more than 5 total offense): +4 SP

Call Liquid: conjure a small amount of any non-water liquid (sulfuric acid, bleach, cooking oil, lemon juice, soda etc). Can't cause more offense than user's level: **3 SP.**

Call Wind: a large area surrounding the user is subject to a wind that blows in a fixed direction. Any character moving with the wind gets a one stride bonus to movement, and any against takes a one stride penalty. Firing launcher weapons any direction but with the wind causes half offense. The wind will also speed along flying and sailing vessels, power wind turbines, blow away gas, fog, clouds, swarms, real light objects etc. Automatically Duration: Combat. **5 SP.**

Call Weather: rain, wind, sun, snow, moderate storms etc. Not enough to cause destruction of any kind. Lasts at least a scene. **2 SP.**

Call Plant: a plant of any variety erupts from the earth. Can be food, medicine that heals s6, poison that deals s6, roots or vines that prevent a target's next move action, or any plant common to the setting. **6 SP.**

Call Food: a stacked meal for one person, a few snacks, or a single mind-blowing dish. Aesthetic up to user, and must be described vividly with each use. **1 SP.**

- Enough for all main characters, plus a few joiners: +2 SP
- A maxed-out feast with no limit on ingredients or presentation: +2 SP
- Ethereal servants to serve and clear dishes: +2 SP

Call Item: make a single existing item permanently summonable. Form is fixed: item can be altered or destroyed once called, but will return in its usual form when effect is next used. Can't summon multiples of the same item: using this effect within the duration of a previous use simply resummons the callable item. This effect can never cause more total offense than its SP price (so a 3 SP effect could cause 3 offense once, or 1 offense three times). Works on consumables (food, drugs, holy oils etc), but they lose their practical effect (nourishment, intoxication, stat alteration etc). Default is Duration: Combat. Buying Duration: Permanent allows you to summon and unsummon the item at will. Priced by size . . .

- Pocket-sized: **1 SP**
- Desk-sized: **8 SP**
- Cat-sized: **3 SP**
- Car-sized: **12 SP**
- Average human-sized: **5 SP**
- RV-sized: **20 SP**
- Unpurgeable (can't be unsummoned by the below effects): +3 SP

Purge: immediately vanish anything summoned by an effect in the above section (from *script* to *call item*) or a summoned entity (*call entity, helper, ride*). Must match SP cost of purged effect in burned Specials, which can be sacrificed at no action cost (similar to *flying mod* in usage effects). **2 SP.**

Purging Zone: create an area up to the size of a chamber where it's impossible to summon an object (from *script* to *call item*) or being (*call entity, helper, ride*). If a called object or entity from the above effects enters a purging zone, they immediately vanish. **5 SP.**

Summoned items (*supernatural weapon, supernatural covering, call item* etc) can have effects added to them (*endow sentience, offense up* etc) without paying any additional SP for *fusion* (bottom of the next section).

Meta Effects

Feel Manifestation: know when someone initiates a Special nearby (won't detect ongoing effects). This doesn't give any knowledge of the Special itself, just a certainty of where it was manifested. Automatically Duration: Permanent. **3 SP.**

Detect Special: pinpoint active / ongoing Specials anywhere in user's sight. **2 SP.**

Identify Special: user knows the function and some mechanical details of one Special within sight. **3 SP.**

Trace User: know identity (short description of their life at present) of a character who used a Special. Can be deceived by *scramble identity*, *inhabit corpse*, and *projection*. **3 SP.**

Rupture: undo an ongoing Special. The Key must offer some type of puzzle to decode, however difficult, to represent the complexity of the Special. Time spent on the puzzle translates to real time in-game. Only the actor of this effect's user can work on the puzzle. Key: ideal puzzles are balls of knotted up string and stacks of cards sorted by suit and number – both make it easy to gauge and deliver different levels of difficulty. **3 SP.**

Mimic Special: temporarily copy another character's Special that costs equal to or less than the amount of SP spent on this effect. Must witness use of Special. No action cost. User maintains mimicked Special until this effect is used again.

Fusion: create a Special with more than one effect. Some effect combinations leave space for interpretation, so make the function clear on creation. Key approval is required. If you put two effects into the same Special that would work the same if you just bought them separately, you *don't* need to buy this effect. +25% the base SP cost of all effects.

Usage Effects

Burn Special I: sacrifice an unspent Special/s for the day. For every SP you sacrifice, add a point of offense to the offensive Special you use this turn. No action cost Unlimited uses. **1 SP.**

Burn Special II: sacrifice an unspent Special/s for the day. For every SP you sacrifice, add a point of healing to the healing Special you use this turn. No action cost. Unlimited uses. **1 SP.**

Sub: sacrifice an unspent Special/s for the day and put their SP value towards additional uses of a Special you already used up. For example: sacrifice a 4 SP Special and a 3 SP Special (making them completely unusable until tomorrow), and you can cop a second use of an already-spent 7 SP once-per-day Special. Leftover SP can't be saved for later turns. No limit on uses, but must be used on your turn. No action cost. **2 SP.**

Blood Sub: put offense on yourself for an additional use of a Special you've already used up, 1 offense per 1 SP's worth of Special. You control exact amount of offense. No limit on uses, but must be used on your turn. No action cost. **2 SP.**

Flying Mod: sacrifice an unspent Special/s for the day and then use their SP value to enhance the modifiers of another Special. Leftover SP can't be saved for later turns. No limit on uses, but must be used on your turn. No action cost.. **3 SP.**

Fight Scenes

Where gameplay is normally freeflowing and conversational, fight scenes are turn-based.

*How They Work . . .

1. Every combatant gets a turn
2. Whoever swings first goes first
3. Turn order goes around the circle (Key decides which way)
4. Enemies and side characters go on the Key's turn
5. A turn consists of A.) a move action and B.) a main action
6. Move action: moves your main character. Can be done before *or after* your main action
7. Main action: attack with a weapon, use a Special, or take another move action
8. Once offense taken is higher than merk, you're out of the scene (can't act)
9. Fight ends when one side is merked or gives up

Attacking

Costs your main action. Every weapon has an offense spin (like s8 for a handaxe) . . .

$$\text{Weapon Spin} + \text{Primary Score}^* = \text{Attack's Offense}$$

*(fast for ranged and light weapons // strong for hand-to-hand and thrown)

Defense

Reduce all incoming offense by this number. Defense, like all stats, is just an abstraction; if some nerd is like "Well technically armor can't really protect you from fall damage," the rules allow you to kill them in real life.

Merked

Once offense taken gets higher than your merk, you're KO'd (can't act for the rest of the scene, even if healed). Start next scene a point below merked, but able to act. Main characters can't actually die until their actor wants them to (but don't act like an unkillable asshole because you can still get your arms chopped off and shit).

The Back of the Book is a Spinner: to use it, hold the looped end of a paperclip or guitar string trimming on the center-dot with a pen, and flick the other end. The result is wherever the arm lands in the s-ring (s6, s12, s20 etc) that you're spinning for. You can also install a spinner arm permanently by holding it in place with a brass fastener: just make sure the fastener head isn't too low and pinching the looped end of the arm.

Distance & Moving

Measured in strides. Default move distance is 5 strides. Half move score (round down) for swimming and climbing. Entire move action to stand from prone. Can reface at the end of your turn. Normal-sized characters occupy one square stride (think of the combat map gridded up like a chessboard). Can move through a comrade's square but not an enemy's.

Gameplay Option: Map Style

When a fight scene jumps off, lay out a chessboard and use pieces to mark each combatant. Each square is one stride x one stride.

- **Pros:** distance easier to measure, visual representation satisfying, fight scenes more tactically interesting
- **Cons:** needs board and pieces, transitioning into fight scenes not as smooth because of set-up time

Misc Attack Rules

Dual-Wielding: any character can use two one-handed weapons simultaneously, making an attack with both each turn. (If attacking same character twice, remember they get to apply their defense to both attacks).

Light Weapons: hand-to-hand weapons that let you add your fast score *instead of* strong. Shit like unarmed strikes, daggers, rapiers, staves, chainblades, meteor hammers etc.

Ranged Weapons: each ranged weapon has its own listed range. Targeting beyond costs -50% offense per stride. Reloading has no action cost (unless stated otherwise).

Thrown Attacks: thrown weapon offense is $s4 + \text{fast}$ *or* strong. Range is 3 strides. Both these can be upgraded with ranged attack Specials. Hand-to-hand weapons and shields can be used as thrown weapons (but base offense still $s4$).

Surprise Attacks: if target had no perception of a threat, they have zero defense until their first turn.

Attacking Unarmed: default unarmed offense is $s2 + \text{strong}$ or fast (once per turn). Many upgrades in Attack Effects.

Charging: an optional full-turn action that lets you move twice and then hand-to-hand attack. Target gets to make opposing attack; subtract higher offense from lower and the loser takes the difference. Charges must move in a relatively straight line and cover more than the charger's move score.

Attacking With a Shield: see "shields" in equipment (next section).

Grappling: main action. You and the target spin $s10 + \text{strong}$ or fast. If you have the higher result you can either A. disarm or take something else from target, or B. hold target in place (they get no move or main action) until the start of your next turn. If the character initiating loses they aren't then grappled, but it still costs their main action. Respin ties.

Tell the Story of the Numbers: even a quick "I slash him for 5" is fucking miles better than "uhh I do 5 offense to this dude." But ideally go in: "I spin past his last attack and slash the side of his head for 5." Keep it cinematic, you know?

Newjacks, use the level of success as a jumping off point, like "I jump forward and run my sword through him for 14." Instead of "I attack this dude and fuck I landed a 1" try something like "I give him a testing jab for 1."

Key Narrator Notes

Keep it moving. Don't let actors wait until their turn to decide what they're gonna do and then uhh and umm for two minutes. Keep heads in the game with a tight pace and the frenetic feel of a fight.

Remember fights are just as much a part of the story as any other scene, so always narrate that shit and bring it to life. Bug your actors to narrate their attacks, and prompt them with "Tell me what that looks like" when they do something interesting.

How many fights per session? Start with one and experiment from there. Every crew of actors is different: some will want just one real meaningful fight every few episodes, others will want three squabs a session.

Check out page 120 for tools and theory on creating gas fight scenes.

*Classical Weaponry

Everywhere at street level since the advent of parafields (page 109). “s8” means the weapon’s offense spinner deals 1 to 8, s4 is 1 to 4 etc (back cover of book for spinners).

Swords

Light sword s4 + strong or fast / block 1 / 1h, Light / ¥900
(*This would be like a dagger, machete, shortsword, barong, trench knife, smallsabre, etc*)

Single-hand sword s6 + strong / block 1 / ¥1,500
(*Broadsword, scimitar, khanda, saber, yatagan, jian, dao, katana, messer*)

Two-hand sword s12 + strong / block 2 / ¥2,500
(*Zweihander, changdao, flamberge, odachi, großes kriegsmesser, greatsword*)

Haftarms

Single-hand haftarm s8 + strong / block 0 / ¥1,000
(*Warhammer, handaxe, nzappa, doloire, mace, kama, sickle, raven’s beak*)

Two-hand haftarm s14 + strong / block 1 / ¥2,000
(*Greathammer, scythe, waraxe, morningstar, flail, kanabō*)

Polearms

Staff s4 + strong or fast / block 2 / 2h, Reach, Light / ¥400
(*Or anything staff-like you can get your hands on*)

Halfpole s4 + strong / block 0 / 1h, Reach / ¥1,100
(*Shortspear, javelin, trident*)

Polearm s10 + strong / block 1 / 2h, Reach / ¥1,600
(*Spear, halberd, naginata, yari, partisan, guandao, poleaxe*)

Flex Weaponry

Single-hand flex weapon s4 + strong or fast / block 0 / Reach, Light / ¥1,750
(*Chain-dagger, kyoketsu-shoge, jiujitebian, urumi, razorwhip*)

Two-hand flex weapon s8 + strong or fast / block 0 / Reach, Light / ¥2,500
(*Chainblade, kusarigama, daggerwhip, scourge, a motherfuckin meteor hammer*)

Misc

Baseball Bat s4 + strong 1h, s8 when held 2h / block 1 / ¥130

Chainsaw s16 + strong / block 1 / requires strong 1 and gas, loud as fuck / ¥3,300

Block: the bonus to defense you get from wielding this weapon.

Light Weapons: hand-to-hand weapons that let you add your strong *or* fast to the attack spin. (Default is to add your strong score to hand-to-hand attacks.)

Reach Weapons: hand-to-hand weapons with an extra stride of range (like a spear).

1h / 2h: a weapon is either one-handed (1h) or two-handed (2h).

Hand-to-Hand Weapon Augmentations

(Give basic bonuses to offense. Top out at +5. Only one augmentation at a time.)

- **Concussion hammers:** small, detachable collar increases blunt force trauma by releasing concussive energy on impact. ¥5,000 per +1 offense (double price for every additional +1)
- **Harmonic oscillator:** a modular oscillator that attaches to a blade vibrates it around 56 kHz, increasing slicing power. ¥5,000 per +1 offense (double price for every additional +1)
- **Electroshock units:** pulse-generating cartridge that attaches to metal weaponry. ¥8,000 per +1 offense (double price for every additional +1). Ultra-rare superior units act like arguns once per fight (+¥30,000)

*Firearms

Listed offense is for targets with a parafield equipped (extremely common). When firing on target without one, double total offense. No action cost to reload (tracking ammo isn't interesting).

Handgun s2 + fast / range 6 / 1h / ¥2,500
→ Supremely concealable.

Submachine Gun / Machine Pistol s4 + fast / range 4 / 1h / ¥6,000
→ When used two-handed, offense s8 and double range. Concealable.

Rifle s8 + fast / range 20 / 2h / ¥4,800
→ Can vary by range and concealability (carbines vs sniper rifles etc).

Anti-Tank / Anti-Material Rifle s16 + fast / range 40 / 2h / ¥15,000
→ Main action to move, move action to reload, cannot be fired standing (bipod attached).

Shotgun s10 + fast / range 8 / 2h / ¥3,000
→ Offense s6 after two strides.

Sawed-Off s6 + fast / range 4 / 2h / ¥3,000
→ Offense s4 after two strides. Concealable.

Under-Barrel Grenade Launcher . . s6 in 1-stride radius / range 10 / mounted / ¥5,000
→ Single shot, move action to use, main action to reload. Uses 40mm specialty grenades (¥200/ea) which must be tracked.

Bayonet s4 + strong / range 1 / mounted / ¥1,250
→ Can be detached and used as a combat knife (s4 + strong or fast / block 1).

Modifications

Sights: handgun range can be doubled with laser sights (¥850). Rifle and SMG range can be increased with optical sights (¥1,400 for range x10) but it takes a move action to line up a shot past default range.

Suppressors: standard issue suppressors (¥1,500) diminish sound from airplane engine levels to lawnmower engine levels. Spooky-quiet, two-stage suppressors (¥5,000) reduce noise to the clack of the gun's action (70dB, about as loud as a shower running). Suppressor price doubled for shotguns.

Thrown Weapons

Whether using throwing knives, chakrams, or just the hand-to-hand weapon you happen to be holding, thrown weapon offense is s4 + strong or fast. This can be upgraded with attack Specials. ¥700.

Grenades

Main action to throw. Effective range 5 strides + fast.

Frag Grenade s6, radius 2 / ¥500

Concussion Grenade s8, radius 1 / ¥250

Clinger Grenade . . . sticks to target, detonates on your next turn, s6, radius 1 / ¥1,000

Flashbang . 50% chance blinded (attacks random space) for 1 turncycle. Radius 3 / ¥900

Advanced Ranged Weaponry

Flamethrower s4 + fast to all targets in a line / range 3 / ¥18,000

Arcgun: fires a chain of electricity. Deals s6, s4, s2 offense (add fast score to each) to a series of three targets, can jump up to a stride between each target, can't attack same target twice. Only spin once (the spinner's arm will intersect all three rings). ¥16,550

*Instruments

These are cybernetic / mystic / psychic / supernatural weapons: anything that would magnify the offensive powers of the mind – floating orbs, third eyes, wave twisters, otherworldly devices and ill jewelry etc.

Instrument s6 + smart offense / range 5 / 2h / ¥8,000

Burst instrument s8 + smart offense / range 2 / 2h / ¥6,100

For this particular setting, you can keep it hard scifi with tech-based instruments (a prosthetic eye that blasts out a ray of plasma energy, a hovering spike that flies into enemies you point at, finger prostheses that exude long bolts of electricity from their tips).

If you're more into a comic book feel go with psionic-based instruments: an artificially grown ShingenTec crystal that amplifies psionic force, a transphysically resonant sword that can somehow slash 5 strides away, a sentient bolt of psionic energy that strikes where your thoughts dictate, etc.

*Armor

Only one armor type can be equipped at a time (non-stacking). No stat penalties for wearing armor.

Carbon Shell Vest	concealable, +1 defense / ¥1,200
Heavy Vest	+2 defense / ¥9,000
Advanced Armor Array (neck and shoulder protection)	+3 defense / ¥23,000
Liquid Armor (dilatant fluid)	+4 defense / ¥70,000

*Shields

Nothing can be wielded with the same arm wielding a shield. Two shields can be wielded at once if that's something you actually want to do. Shields in this setting fold in half or quarters for portability.

Buckler	concealable, +2 defense (or +s4 defense) / ¥600
Shield	+3 defense (or +s6 defense) / ¥800

OPTIONAL SHIELD ACTIONS

- **Sacrifice shield:** after someone spins offense against you, you can sacrifice your shield to ignore that offense.
- **Spun defense:** instead of a fixed defense, you can spin for a shield's defense against any given attack: spinner's max is twice the shield's defense (listed above).
- **Attacking with a shield** (aka shield bashing) deals s4 + strong offense, but you lose that shield's defense until the start of your next turn. Can still attack with offhand.

*Parafields

These emit a velocity-triggered bose pulse to slow incoming projectiles, greatly reducing the lethality of firearms and shrapnel. Only about the size of a deck of cards, you can just put one in your pocket and it will do its thing, pulsing a bullet-slowng bose field when it senses extreme velocities in its immediate vicinity. Dirt cheap and extremely common. If firing on the rare enemy without a parafield, double total firearm offense. **Standard unit** ¥3800

Cultural shift: parafields not only rendered hand-to-hand weapons more reliably destructive than firearms, but also boosted their social status. While most people have a fascination with archaic weapons to begin with, their effective use also requires way more skill and spine than squeezing a trigger, lending anybody carrying one an image of violent prowess. Put it this way: shooters are a dime a dozen, but the goon who rides with a sword probably has a chick in every other neighborhood.

Not unlike the da-dao and miao-dao sword units that saw surprising success in the wars of 1930s China, many fighters at both military and street level will opt for hand-to-hand weaponry for the sheer martial prestige, even when a firearm might be better-suited to the task at hand.

Goods & Services

A list of average prices for shit you might wanna buy in St. Disma. 5 yuan equals about 1 modern US dollar.

Housing & Headquarters

Full price before (monthly mortgaged / rental rate after). Prices will vary pretty wildly from the averages listed in this section depending on features and location.

Capsule condominium: ¥50,000 (¥450)

Boxing gym: ¥100,000 (¥850)

Large tomb in the undercity: ¥200,000 (¥1,600)

Small bunker: ¥250,000 (¥2,100)

Houseboat: ¥300,000 (¥2,500)

Dive bar: ¥500,000 (¥4,200)

Average condominium: ¥800,000 (¥6,700)

Rowhouse: ¥1.5 million (¥12,500)

Large bunker: ¥2 million (¥17,000)

Club: ¥5 million (¥42,000)

Penthouse: ¥8 million (¥67,000)

Private island in the Teardrops: ¥10 million (¥84,000)

Yacht: ¥18 million (¥150,000)

Mansion: ¥25 million (¥208,000)

Fortress-grade bunker: ¥50 million (¥420,000)

Transdimensional gate: ¥70 million (¥580,000)

Castle: ¥100 million (¥835,000)

Skyscraper: ¥500 million (¥4.2 million)

Self-sufficient colony (lunar, sustains 20): ¥1 billion (¥8.4 million)

Megatower: ¥1.5 billion (¥12.5 million)

Self-sufficient colony (venus or mars, sustains 20): ¥5 billion (¥42 million)

Self-sufficient colony (lunar, sustains 300): ¥10 billion (¥84 million)

Self-sufficient colony (venus or mars, sustains 300): ¥50 billion (¥417 million)

Laboratory or workshop (chemical, nanite, medical, automotive, gunsmithing etc): ¥75,000
This adds +s6 to any skill spin (take the highest) done on premises

Lodging

Average prices for nightly shelter.

Motel room: ¥180

Hotel room: ¥500

Luxury hotel room: ¥4,200

Chartered Flights

Includes cargo space.

Cessna prop plane: ¥4,000

Mid-sized jet: ¥20,000

Cargo Jet: ¥50,000

Neuronal Proliferation: genetic engineering that endows a non-human animal with near human-level intelligence (no effect on humans since FOXP2 gene already present). ¥7,000

Vehicles

Go in picking a model and giving it an aesthetic.

Cafe racer: ¥9,000	Ducati: ¥40,000	Beater car: ¥25,000
Classic car: ¥100,000	APC: ¥200,000	Tank: ¥500,000
Light mecharmor: ¥900,000	Heavy mecharmor: ¥5 million	

Healing

HOTrod: a red 5-inch rod with a button on top. Automated vein-finding syringe system delivers thrombin-mimicking nanites and synthetic osteoblasts – the Cadillac of combat casualty medicine. *Costs a move action to use.*

◦ Heals 10: ¥1,500	◦ Heals 20: ¥4,000	◦ Heals 30: ¥10,000
◦ Heals 50: ¥30,000	◦ Heals 80: ¥80,000	◦ Heals 100: ¥150,000

Sawbones (full healing, no questions asked): ¥900 per person

Daily Cost of Living

Impoverished: ¥200
Comfortable: ¥800
Owning class: ¥6,000
Ruling class: ¥30,000
World financial elite: ¥250,000

Hourly Wages

Menial labor: ¥20
Specialist or union: ¥150
Entry-level security: ¥60
Professional security (level 3): ¥300
Elite security (level 6): ¥800
World-class security (level 10): ¥2,000

* * *

Example Gameplay

Every game is gonna look different, and there's no one right way to run it. Let's just drop into the middle of a session – actor A, actor B, actor C, and their Key Narrator are deep in a show about warring secret societies in the 2230s, currently in a city on Mimas, a small moon just outside the rings of Saturn.

Key: The lights of the skyscrapers and suspension towers glide by hypnotically as you ride the layered expressway. You peel off your exit, and pass into the lock before the Mainzer Biodome – you've been through enough times to know security will search your car at the gate. What do you do?

B: Alright, you know the drill – guns in the duffel

C: I pull my pistol and drop it in the bag

A: I slide my AK into the bag. Where are we gonna stash these?

C: We don't got a lot to work with. The lock's just a road, right?

Key: Right. It's a curved roadway leading to the biodome

C: Hmm. What's it look like? Any greenery? Trash cans?

Key: There's a sidewalk along the median with a few bins, but all the grass is trimmed low. There are elm trees throughout the lockway, the type spliced with bioluminescent genes so their leaves glow at night – common street lighting practice in this district. The low artificial sky is drizzling, still on its day cycle –

A: So wait, with the rain . . . are there any drains along the roadway?

Key: For sure. They're spaced out along the median, and look like the type you can pull out by hand

A: That's gotta be the play – the trees are too obvious, and if it's trash day we could end up running around unarmed until we get back to the safehouse

B: Right

C: ... Would it be possible to, like, lift the grate, lower the bag, and then close the grate so it clamps down on the strap of the duffel bag?

B: Yooo

Key: That makes sense, yea

B: Alright, then once there aren't any cars coming I hoof out and try to clamp the duffel strap in one of the grates

Key: Works like a charm. It grips tight, and the tip of the strap is concealed under all the dead leaves around the drain

B: Sick . . .

C: Bet, we pull around to the gate

Key: You get to the gate and you're waved into a marked space like always. Blue sheets of light glide and spin over the car, and an armored guard spends a suspiciously long time . . . squinting at his console . . . before looking up and waving you through

B: You fucker

Key: A soft tone from your onboard signifies the toll was just deducted from your account

C: How much?

Key: Uhhh just ten credits

C: Alright lemme scratch ten off my sheet here

Key: So you pull into the colossal biodome and the first thing you see are the rings of Saturn above you, unimaginably huge, impossibly close, arcing through the infinite night sky of space. The dome's transparent panels refract the feeblest glare from the distant sun –

B: Fucking wild dude, I'll never get used to being offworld

Key: As you crest the entrance trail, you see the biodome below: four different ecosystems all built into the massive Mainzer Crater. What do you do?

C: Swiss Alps biome right? I head that way

Key: Alright, you ta –

A: Also I'm keeping an eye in the rearview, does anybody seem to be tailing us?

Key: Uhh no, there's nothing suspicious. Nobody's even behind you

A: Good, good

Key: You roll through a bamboo forest and cross a bridge into the Alps biome, quickly finding the spot. The camera slowly pans down through some oak boughs onto a real scenic clearing as you pull up. Jin's red SUV is already there, not far from a stream fed by a small waterfall. What do you do?

B: One of these days we're gonna be the first to fucking show up to something

A: I hop out and pop the trunk

Key: The red SUV's doors swing open, exhaling No-Sleep Jin, three massive goons, and faint classical music

C: Any I would recognize?

Key: You do actually. You're pretty sure you played it for a gala or maybe a wedding gig years back – it's [checks notes] a chamber opera called "Renard" by Igor Stravinsky

C: Hmmm, deep cut

Key: Quite so

A: I catch Jin's eye

Key: No-Sleep Jin says something in Korean to her crew and walks over to you. A breeze stirs the clearing, swaying the oak branches and ruffling the grass as she extends a hand in greeting. Are you bringing the case?

A: Does she have the cash?

Key: You see one of her guys hand a bag off to B

B: I'm counting that shit

A: Then I bring the case from the trunk and hand it over

Key: So one of her goons takes it, and you notice she waits until he's out of earshot before gesturing over to the waterfall, saying she has something to run by you

A: Alright

B: Do any of Jin's people follow them?

Key: Nah, one's inspecting the case. The other two are hovering near the SUV, pulling out packs of Lucky Strikes

C: How familiar do they look?

Key: Uhh, you seen them at the last few drops you did with Jin's people

C: Alright, I step over and light one of their cigarettes. "Sup cousin, you seen a skinny little guy like this around? Cybernetic eyes, buzzed head?" – and I show him that security footage we jacked

B: Think these mouthbreathers would know? They probably spend most of their time folding Jin's laundry

C: Can't hurt. What other leads do we have?

B: Fair point

Key: So you go up to the taller one and he watches the footage loop a few times, dragging on his cigarette, then says with a heavy accent "Actually ... I believe we have."

C: I told you son!

Key: Tall goon says something in Korean to the driver, beckoning him with a wave. As he walks over and clears the front of the car, you see he's carrying a naked machete –

B: What

Key: Tall goon says "Hands." You look down to see a trench knife has appeared in his offhand. What do you do?

C: Are you fucking serious?

Key: Do you say that?

C: Nah, I just – fuck . . . I guess I raise my fucking hands

A: Do I notice any of this?

Key: Nah mane, No-Sleep has you turned so you're facing the waterfall

A: Fuckin doin us greasy

B: I raise my hands a millimeter above my head, palms in, and then raise my middle fingers
Key: Short goon moves towards you B – he’s gripping a long-handled hatchet. With the other hand he pads around your pockets and pulls out your switchblade
B: When he’s rooting around I ask if his chick knows he’s into this type of thing
Key: Hahaha I’m sorry but he pops you with the butt of his hatchet for ... 2 offense, right on the forehead
B: What a rude man
C: So would anybody notice if I charge up my electroshock prosthetic?
A: Shit I forgot all about that thing
Key: Uhuh, I guess it would glow but it’s too bright out for anybody to notice
C: Alright I start amping up
B: How far away’s the car? The bat’s still in there right?
Key: Yea you remember it being in the trunk. The car is about four strides away – fair warning though, short goon’s definitely close enough to chop you
B: The trunk’s open though right?
Key: Uhh –
A: Yea from when I grabbed the case, I definitely would have left it open
Key: Alright fine, trunk’s open
B: Sick
C: Am I charged up?
Key: You’re charged up
B: Set it off C
C: An arc of electricity blasts out of my palm at tall goon
Key: Alright give me a number
C: [flicks spinner] 12 motherfucker let’s gooo!
Key: Dang ok, the bolt of electricity makes tall goon violently convulse and drop like a bag of rocks, definitely merked. B, you’re getting chopped by shortstack
B: Fuuck
Key: [flicks spinner] he swings the axe up into your ribs for 5. C, the driver brings his machete down on you for [flicks spinner] 2 offense
C: I dodge no problem, he only hits air
Key: Your turn B. A, you finally heard what’s going on so you’re on deck

...

How to Key

We run through the basics quick, plus a few moves for your toolbelt.

Writing an Arc

Lock in the Ambition first. The next step is thinking on the most interesting path to that Ambition – bring the main characters through fights, social scenarios, problem solving etc, all set in cinematic places and laced with intriguing side characters. If you're stumped, think on your favorite storylines from movies / TV and what made them favorites.

If you didn't run the arc in this book, scanning through it will give you a feel for the flow of an arc, and what's important for the Key to know. That said:

Only draw up one session at a time. You never know which way your actors are gonna go. Don't get attached to any particular outcome: you're just putting your crew in an interesting situation and playing to see how it shakes out.

Start small: plan on a humble two or three session joint for your first arc. Almost every newjack starts like a first-time prizefighter, putting on an incredible performance but completely emptying their gas tank the first round, noticeably slowing the second round, and by the third they're just surviving. Set a hard limit of three sessions for yourself.

Always introduce a scene with a brief description to immerse your actors in it. This is like an establishing shot in a TV show but better, since we can emphasize all sensory (the aroma of temple incense, the feel of seaside winds, etc). This brief intro doesn't have to be pre-written; a couple off top lines will do just fine. Always end with a prompt (like "What do you do?") to maintain smooth gameflow.

Key Narrators don't get a main character. If you're starting a new show, don't make one until the next Key tags in. If you're tagging in for somebody else, find a good reason for your main character to see to some other shit until the end of the arc. You have an entire reality to simulate: trying to also play as an actor is a shitty distraction, and (more importantly) ruins the effect of you being the Key Narrator.

Write for your actors: this is not a one-person show – you're creating interesting situations for your actors to make a story out of. Include narrative prompts for them to develop their main characters, and points of interactivity that will actually engage them in the scene. *Leave the most interesting blanks for your actors to fill in.*

This is only a real loose guideline, but the average session has . . .

- An interesting problem to be solved
- A fight scene
- An interesting side character / social scenario

Adjust to taste for your specific actors and what gameplay gets them stoked.

Number of players: 3 is ideal, but up to 6 is solid if it's a crew of quieter actors – any more than that is a fucking mess. The number of actors also determines how fast you go through the arc: not only are more actors trying to veer in different directions, but just the volume of riffs and planning will make scenes last way longer. Expect a crew of two actors to tear through this arc in four sessions, and a huge crew of six actors to take closer to a dozen sessions.

Consistent narrative progress: every session should end with the feeling "We just got closer to the Ambition." Resist the temptation of irrelevant side-missions. You want a clear series of narrative steps to the Ambition so your actors never ask "Why are we here again?"

Prepping a Session

Session prep is just immersing yourself in a fictional location long enough that you can make it feel real to your actors. You steep in the reality of the session's setting, thinking on how side characters would act, how events would play out etc, and it's actually really fucking transportive – arguably the best part of conversational games.

Don't over-prepare: coming up with all types of optional shit just because it *could* happen is a huge waste of time. It's way easier to instead make a straight line of just a few scenes that you can really tighten up. Since the main characters are chasing an Ambition, you already know where they're driven to go, making that straight line completely believable.

Don't under-prepare: if you start your session with “Wait what happened last session?” and then just improvise some bullshit, nobody's showing up next time.

Punching up scenes: if you already have your interesting fight / social scenario / problem to be solved, you can make it more immersive by . . .

- Nesting it in a more interesting location (“the bar” into “the rooftop bar at the top of the Banpei Tower”), or ornamenting that location (“Ray's house” into “Ray's house, walls lined with illuminated tanks of rare tropical fish”)
- Sharpen up the scene's intro. Contrast the immersion of these two . . .

“You enter the chapel. Your contact is there. What do you do?”

vs.

“You enter the cool air of the chapel, stained glass depictions of saints glowing with the morning sun. A lone figure at prayer crosses himself, and stands to an alarming height of 6'4”. He asks in a Salvadoran accent ‘were you followed?’”

Interactivity is crucial. The most fascinating scene in the world is meaningless if it doesn't prompt your actors to engage with it (social gameplay, problem solving etc)

The objective of being Key is to create the conditions for the raddest time possible.

Arc ideas: if none spring to mind, just think on the arc you would most wanna act in. If you're just in a creative dead end, try working on the soundtrack first – you'd be surprised how much that musical headspace can clear up creative logjams.

Stay on the gank: freely take everything you like from movies, TV, books, comics, history. Once you put them in your setting, they'll be an entirely new thing, unrecognizable from their source. You've been unconsciously racking up a colossal library of trope and story ideas your entire life by just watching movies and shit, and the more you pull from it, the more effortless accessing it becomes. Just don't ruin it by telling your actors what the source was: *let it be its own brand new and unique thing.*

Advanced shit: spotlighting is writing a scene for a specific main character's strength or skillset. It's hard to braid into a session on top of your normal prep, but when you do, it always makes the sessions for the actor you spotlight.

Get the ship sailing itself: the show's intro is where the actors buy in and the validating feedback loops of interest start. Think on an interesting way to introduce their main characters, and interesting ways to get back-and-forths rolling between them.

End strong: there's a reason you always end an album with like the third or fourth best song – that's the impression you're leaving listeners with. Deliver the arc's promised narrative payoffs, and give some falling action and satisfying resolutions.

Fuck nerves: the friends are getting together to riff and bullshit with each other – they're gonna have a good time no matter what you put on.

Running the Game

The alpha rule is having a good time, setting up the best time for your actors. All other rules bend to this one.

Prompts: these are your most important tool, basically just questions that move the story forward. Here's the best one:

- What do you do?

Use prompts to build the story and visualize scenes . . .

- You unlock your safehouse for everybody; what do they see as the door slides open?
- A wide shot pans across the house party – what are each of you doing when Kana arrives?

Use them to focus attention . . .

- So what are you gonna do about those cameras?
- The courier seems eager to bounce – do you say anything to him?

Some prompts aren't questions, just something that urges response . . .

- Everybody hears glass shatter upstairs.
- You see from cover that the mercenary leaves his radio and sidearm on the desk as he steps into the bathroom.

But yea, prompts are usually just a question, and always passive, so it never feels like you're prodding in a specific direction.

Interludes: never skip over traveling or laying low – these are arguably *the most* fertile ground for main character development. Ask what the main characters get up to – training, some type of hobby or passion project or personal crusade, spending time with side characters, blowing their cash from the last arc etc.

Interludes slam for both the long-term (“A month has passed since the last job; everybody give me a montage of what your main character's been up to”), and short (“As you wait for No-Lobe to show up, late as usual, you all get in an argument – not a serious one, but over something fucking ridiculous. What is it?”)

The pair-off: rocket fuel for character development. First, pair up main characters for a scene or interlude, then *guide them into finding and exploring that thing they have in common*. This creates a new, unique dynamic between them, like how the bassist and drummer of a band are just a bassist and a drummer until they start calling themselves “the rhythm section”, reifying their bond as a concept. This is maybe the best move in the prestige TV playbook: a well-cultivated bond between every main character is narrative electricity.

Emphasize sensory: when introducing a new scene, bring it to life by describing not just how it looks, but at least one other sense – the ambient sounds, aromas, how the air feels on the skin, the emotional atmosphere etc. Take that immersion shit seriously: your job as Key is simulating a more interesting reality for your actors, so really bringing them there.

Mention shit that has nothing to do with the main characters or their objective: routine happenings, locals going about their day, the foghorn sounding out in the harbor etc. If you only mention shit related to the main characters the world feels small and uninteresting, like the camera following them around has tunnel-vision. Setting the scene like this not only creates a more living world type feel, but gives your crew options for narrative threads they might wanna pull on. Chekhov's Gun is wrong and bad.

The Key is the editor: when a scene feels done, don't uh and um out of it, but prompt where they're headed next, or just cut to the next scene of interest. Keep it moving.

Show, don't tell: classic film trick. Instead of saying “The party's host is known to be an unhinged psychopath,” just show him throwing a guest off a balcony for disagreeing with him on Aristotle or whatever. *Never give 4 if you can give 2 + 2.*

Side Characters

Don't script: you can have an idea of what they'll say and do, but you still want improvising them to come naturally. You wanna give the impression of interacting with a real person, you know?

There are two ways to run side characters:

1.) Voice acting: voice acting side characters in the first person is more immersive and makes them feel more present. Having a unique voice for each gives them more personality, makes them easier to act, and you'll never have to say who's talking. Don't get goofy with it (seriously), just give them a minor accent or speech pattern change.

2.) Not voice acting: some people don't like voice acting because they're shy, bad at voices, or think it's corny or whatever. If you're not into it, don't sweat it, you can just say "Knock brings up the brass casings you found earlier" and it conveys the same information.

Don't over-think minor side characters: they only need a single distinguishing feature (next page) just to make them memorable / easy to reference.

Major side characters: always give them a personality, and a voice if you prefer voice acting. A unique physical feature makes them memorable. Make them feel a little more real by giving them a life outside the main characters (like a goal or passion). Making them *of* the setting goes a long way – from an existing culture or faction, affected by major setting events etc. Just remember no amount of information dumping will make them feel real, that only happens as they're interacted with.

You can also start with a favorite character from movies / books / TV and think on what makes them a favorite (stay on the gank). Subverting stereotypes is always good, like a scarred-up goon with a love for classical poetry, or an insanely hot woman who's also insanely gross, eating old sandwiches out the trash etc.

Last trick: reveal a wild rumor about an established side character. Is it true? Even more wild? Only an exaggeration? Just made up shit spread by their enemies? Decide the answer depending on the actors' reactions. Either way it's an easy injection of drama into the show.

Names: give nicknames to side characters. They're both A. easier to remember and B. more evocative, saying a lot about the side character in a single word.

You can use them in conjunction with a given name like "Balogun the Saint", which lets heads just call him the Saint until his given name sticks.

Two side characters with similar names is dogshit writing: if your show has a Samantha and a Sandra your actors want to kill you.

Almost everybody's favorite part of conversational games is social scenarios / interacting with side characters. Just sayin they're worth a little extra creative effort.

Side Character Generator

Bookmark this page to make a side character on the fly.

Head & Face

- Birthmark
- Facial scar
- Busted nose
- Glasses
- Pince-Niz (tiny, armless glasses that rest on your nose)
- Sunglasses
- Neon hair
- Beard
- Mustache
- Big sideburns
- Sharpened teeth
- Cigarette
- Kiseru pipe
- Glowing prosthetic eye
- HUD visor

Nationality

(sorted by most common)

- French
- Chinese
- Indian
- Indonesian
- Moroccan
- American
- Russian
- Ethiopian
- Japanese
- Chilean
- Pacific Islander
- Congolese
- Arabic

Naked Prostheses

(not meant to imitate the real thing)

- Fully prosthetic, mask-like face
- Prosthetic arm
- Prosthetic hand
- Prosthetic hand with a conductive plate
- Prosthetic fingers with retractable claws
- Prosthetic leg
- Prosthetic legs (shock-absorbent)
- Prosthetic legs (with launch pistons)
- Prosthetic feet (climbing augmentations)
- Prosthetic eye under gnarly scar
- Prosthetic jaw or mouth full of artificial teeth
- Prosthetic neck full of colored wires

Form

- Short
- Tall
- Fat
- Thin
- Jacked
- Stocky
- Young
- Old

Voice

- High voice
- Low voice
- Educated
- Loudmouth
- Soft-spoken
- Gruff
- Deadpan
- Talks out side of mouth
- Foreign accent
- Dogshit English

Genetic Engineering

(optional for setting)

- Gills
- Scaly or armored skin
- Polychromatic skin (blends with environment)
- Horns or antlers
- Claws
- Fangs
- Slit pupils
- Wings

Clothing

- 80s jacket with big collar and rolled up sleeves
- Powerviolence longsleeve
- Record label t-shirt
- Ratty death metal vest
- Jersey
- Acid wash denim jacket
- Workwear
- Hoodie
- Carbon shell vest
- Loaded up tac vest
- Rain poncho
- Business casual
- Business formal

Odds

- Septum piercing
- Dangly 80s earring
- Dermal piercing
- Hoops
- Black lipstick
- Icon necklace
- Big chain or gold rope
- Couple little chains
- Biker Rings
- Kabuki mask
- Boombox or speaker
- Prayer beads or prayer rope
- Barely concealed pistol
- Sword over back
- Combat knife
- Chainblade on belt

Tattoos

- Chestplate
- Tombstones (top half of arms)
- Sleeve
- Open shirt with a bellyrocker
- Leg sleeve
- Knuckles done up
- Hand piece
- Neck or throat piece
- Cursive script above eyebrow
- Teardrop/s
- Large cheek piece
- 3rd eye (small piece on lower forehead)
- Fully inked / bodysuit

***Advanced shit:** randomly point to a combination of two items above. The unique combination of features will instantly extrapolate a web of other features in your mind.

Fight Scenes

Narrate the numbers. Don't say "2 offense doesn't actually hurt him," do say "He sidesteps your swing." If somebody asks "How bad is this dude hurt?" don't say "He's up to like half his merk," do say "He's bleeding pretty bad and starting to breathe heavy." Your actors get a lot of satisfaction from all the dope shit they get to do in a fight – make sure to narrate all the energy blasts and necks getting snapped, and to use the phrase "tell me what that looks like" when actors do something interesting.

Punching up fight scenes: first is enemies. They should be A. mechanically interesting, with stats or abilities for the main characters to out-think or take advantage of (try surfing through attack effects), and B. aesthetically interesting, so it doesn't feel like you're just battling a block of stats.

Second is where you fight: a cinematic location – elevated tracks, in a ruined mausoleum etc – is crucial. For extra credit, add features like hazards, levels, cover, or moving components to increase strategic depth.

Every fight should feel like there was something gained by it: even just a little new information to advance the plot or some interesting items.

Guillotine Style: a method for smoother fights. The turn marker is an eye-catching object placed in front of whoever's turn it is. They pass it on when their turn is complete. *If the next actor doesn't immediately act, they are skipped.* This keeps heads in the game without fail: nobody needs to be caught up on what happened, nobody waits until their turn and then takes a minute to decide what to do – the fight just flows. The Key is exempt from needing to act immediately since they have a whole fight scene to run. Obviously this optional rule shouldn't be put on newjacks.

Advanced shit: at those higher levels, the balance of the crew can get all over the place, and the main character that dumps all their SP into a single stat or Special might start walking through fights with less and less of a challenge. This is where the chess match starts: finding a way to still challenge them *without* them feeling cheated.

Offensive main characters are easy to handle: if they dumped everything into targeting a single enemy, throw multiple enemies at them. Death 100%? No problem – make sure you always have an interesting lieutenant that can step up, or multiple bosses for every boss fight.

Defensive main characters are where you have to use your head a little more – there's almost always one motherfucker who spends every single SP on their defense stat, but you have a dozen ways around that. Our favorite way is to just turn up the heat on the entire crew, and when the high-defense main character is consistently the last one standing, everybody else will start balancing in that direction. Also, once their enemies notice, why wouldn't they just show up with a stinger missile that does s20+100 offense next fight? Or start using armor-piercing nanofilament weaponry, or send out a mutant with undefendable fire powers? Maybe a mercenary psion with social Specials or powerful illusions. Maybe a plot like carbombing their motorcycle, instantly merking them then ambushing the rest of their crew. Maybe a napalm blast or chemical weapon that coats them in acid, putting s20 offense on them every turn for the rest of the fight.

Merk: offense counts up because addition is easier than subtraction. This also allows you to write offense taken out in the open or on enemy markers without giving away if they're close to death. If you like the intuitive concept (counting down) more than the functional ease (counting up), you're free to flip it around. We went with the phrasing of "merk" because it's ambiguous: enemies can be dead, KO'd, retreating, or whatever.

Dealing With Actors

If playing on the outside, feel free to lay down the rule “If anybody pulls out their phone, every other player gets to send a text on it.” Most people don’t need this rule, but we’ve seen a few sessions go downhill on fucking rollerskates when actors started scrolling through instagram whenever the Key Narrator wasn’t specifically talking to them – they needed constant updates on where they were and what was happening, had to be handed crucial clues etc. Didn’t even seem worth playing. To be clear drawing and shit is fine since you can still take in what’s happening, but phone use will destroy your game.

Key, fucking around and riffing is arguably the best part of the game, so go along with it. You can have an interesting storyline, meaningful scenes, *and* constant fucking around.

There’s a point where it clicks for new people and they realize they really can do anything in the game. They usually ask for something way over-powered for a level 1 character (“Can I get a flying island with a sick pagoda?”), and that’s good: *your actors wanting shit is the engine of the game*. Always say yes, and have them write it down as a Character Ambition so you can run it for them next season.

If you’re inviting somebody you know likes to get fucked up, think on telling them it’s a sober table – remember if they suddenly become the most annoying motherfucker on the planet you’re stuck with them for the whole session.

The most you should ever have to regulate is the phrase “be cool”. If a new actor is still out of pocket, just “start a new game” without them in it to avoid drama.

There aren’t really actor types. You just have to watch for what engages people, what interests people, and keep your show dialed to keep everybody happy. Sometimes you’re blessed with an agreeable crew, sometimes you land a pack of divas who all want different shit and act foul if they don’t get it. That’s life baby. Ride out the season and start again with a new crew.

Advanced shit: proactive vs passive crews. Figuring out which one your crew of actors leans towards will make prepping for them easier. Examples: if the Crew Ambition is to knock over a mid-level drug supplier and your actors stare blankly before asking “Uhh so what should we do?” that’s a real passive crew. If another crew immediately starts plotting “Alright, first we find a fiend and tell him his next vial’s on us if he takes us to his dealer – we bag the dealer and work our way up the foodchain until we find somebody laced with the plug,” that crew is real proactive.

Proactive crews need less prep: you just give them a goal and they move the plot forwards. The other edge of that sword is they need way more improvisation: they move quickly and unpredictably, love exploring, and create their own immersion by asking a lot of questions about your setting (“What are the current power dynamics and alliances in the criminal underworld?” “What’s the architecture like in Old Town?”) which is flattering but can sometimes feel like stress-testing.

Passive crews mostly just want an interesting storyline spoonfed to them: you have to make both clues and narrative paths forward obvious, and break their Ambition down into real clear sub-goals. Instead of immersing themselves by exploring and asking questions, passive actors trust you to immerse them in the most interesting parts of your setting. This definitely doesn’t mean they’re having any less of a good time, so don’t take offense. Since passive crews are highly predictable, they’re a blessing for Key Narrators who love writing and hate improvising.

Soundtrack

All Bull Press soundtracks are on bullpress.org.

When creating your own soundtracks with whatever you've gotten off trulincs, or anything a friend has loaded on a mp3 player for you, remember . . .

- A. have the soundtrack lined up beforehand so you don't waste time searching for songs
- B. don't use anything with actual vocals (they're more distracting than you'd think)

Spinner Alternatives

Double-cup: write a ring of numbers on the outside of the *inner* cup. Cut a little window on the *outside* cup. Next to the outside cup's window, write the ring's highest number with an "s" before it. To spin, just look away and turn the cup a few times: your result appears in the window. Remember you can fit every range your main character uses on a single cup.

Cards: easy to get a hold of, slow to use. Create a stack for each range your actors use (s2, s4, s6 etc). Write the range on the back, then write the individual numbers of that range on the face. Keep the stacks facedown in the middle of the table.

Verbal: when you have no materials on hand, wanna keep it low, or are playing in seg.

- Figure out the range of your spin from 1 to whatever (example: s12 is 1 to 12).
- The player spinning and the Key each pick a number in that range, and say that number simultaneously (example: 5 and 3).
- Add those numbers together for the result of the spin (example: 8).
- Now, if those numbers go over the top when added together (example: $10 + 6$), it rolls over and counts back up from 1 (example: the result is 4).

So, if the range is 1 to 8 and player A says 3, and player B says 4, the result is 7. If the range is 1 to 6 and player A says 4, and player B says 5, the result is 3. If the range is 1 to 20 and both players say 20, the result is 20. See how when it tops out the remainder is the result? Slick right?

Spinning for It

When somebody tries to do something uncertain, the Key has them spin s6 for the result:

- | | |
|-------------|---------------|
| 6. Finessed | 3. Not really |
| 5. Success | 2. Failure |
| 4. Barely | 1. Faceplant |

Easy: spin s6 twice, take the *highest* result (75% chance of success)

Default: spin s6 (50% chance of success)

Difficult: spin s6 twice, take the *lowest* result (25% chance of success)

Versus: if it's two characters against each other, they both spin and the one with the higher result wins. If one has a significant edge over the other (relative stat is higher etc) they spin twice and take the highest. Ties can be inconclusive or spark another versus spin – Key's choice.

Pros & Cons

This mechanic adds the lauded gambler's buzz to any scene, can add suspense, and can spark the creativity that only comes from having to improvise.

That said this mechanic is real easy to over-use: the above returns rapidly diminish, you can paint yourself into narrative corners, make the storyline less interesting (your spinner isn't always a good writer), and skip material that would have been more fun to actually play through . . .

Don't skip interesting gameplay: crucial shit. If the main characters need to create a trap for a jungle yaksha, and you just have them spin to see how good the trap is, *you fucking blew it*. It would have been way more interesting to find out from various jungle inhabitants the yaksha is intensely attracted to gemstones, then design an ingenious trap using that knowledge and the jungle environment. Remember creating success through gameplay and interaction with the setting is basically the whole point of the hobby.

Spinning is just gambling with narrative capital: it's an easy way to give your actors a quick neurochemical buzz, but A.) there have to be interesting stakes, and B.) using it too often ruins the effect.

Alternate Rule: The Narrative Spin

This adds a prompt which can enrich the scene and keep the present subnarrative moving forward, but takes a little longer since the Key has to spend time thinking on an interesting consequence or bonus.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 6. Yes and (success, plus a bonus) | 3. No but (failure, but a good thing happens) |
| 5. Yes | 2. No |
| 4. Yes but (success, but at some cost) | 1. No and (failure, plus another bad thing) |

For example: a main character tries to hotwire the crooked PI's car. They land a 4 ("yes but"), so can fire up the car and drive off, but fucked something up so the stereo is *blasting* Spice Girls on loop. Another example: a main character jumps off the roof onto an enemy below. They land a 1 ("no and"), so the enemy sees them coming, gets a free attack on them, and they still take fall offense.

Balls Out: on a challenge that's real real dicey, worth making memorable, or just fucking insane, the Key can add a Balls Out spin to the s6 narrative spin. This produces truly buckwild scenes, but only if used rarely:

- | | | | |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| 4. Two bonuses | 3. One bonus | 2. One consequence | 1. Two consequences |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------|

Conversational Games & Narrata

Narrata is the creation of fiction through structured conversation. We at Bull Press consider it the most powerful form of escapism possible since it's not limited by the physical constraints of media: it goes exactly as far as your creative ability.

What really makes narrata immersive is having other people to run it with, and structure (rules) that get people interacting with the simulated setting and characters.

That's really all you need to know to start creating your own conversational games, but it helps to run a few existing ones to really figure out what gameplay you like and how to create more of it with specific rules.

Narrata is at least 60 years old, though it's arguable some centuries-old party games and umpired wargames fit the definition. Either way the artform is finally spreading its wings as we see a proliferation of new genres and gameplay concepts, new writers and luminaries, and games that can only be called works of fine art ranging from the size of a single page to dozens of volumes. Best of all, even though shit's popping right now, it can be said with certainty the John Coltranes and Dave Brubecks of the craft are yet to design their first game.

Game Design

Rule #1: the function of a game is its players having a good time.

Straight off the bat, here's some newjack shit to look out for and be brutally honest with yourself about:

- When you like the idea of a rule, but not the result of it
- When you're straight up reinventing the wheel just to be different
- When you're stubbornly holding onto a mechanic your friends / playtesters hate

Have clear design goals. Outline first or that shit's gonna balloon all over the place.

Start small: everything takes about a hundred more hours than you think, so start with a pamphlet-sized game (seriously). Bigger projects will always feel 90% done; be harsh in deciding when they're *done enough*, since there is a definite point of diminishing returns on your creative energy.

Playtest: there will always be shit that manifests different than you expected, so playtest more than even seems necessary. If possible, playtest across demographics (unless you're only designing a game for your friends). Most playtesters won't give you the brutal honesty you need: it's on you to keep an eye what actually engages them, what bores them, what rules they struggle to grasp etc.

Explicability: have an answer to questions like "what's it about?" and "how do you win?" You want your basic game concept to be a sentence, and the rules to be explainable in less than a minute. Anything more and motherfuckers' eyes start glazing over.

Watch for overdesign: a game isn't a live reading of the ten-page setting you wrote up, it's a concise ruleset that allows the actors to have a good time flexing *their* creativity. Leave the most interesting blanks for your actors to fill in.

Watch for underdesign: you need clear structure and goals. Too open-ended and players will feel directionless. Give specific prompts to induce a flow state.

Challenge: every game requires it. Too hard and heads check out from frustration. Too easy and heads check out from boredom. Ideally make it a curve so learning the ropes is *just* engaging enough for new people. Making difficulty scaleable adds massive replay value for more experienced players: do this by adding mechanical and strategic depth to reward their advanced knowledge of the game.

Risk: it's built into traditional games (where everybody plays against each other) since there can only be one winner and losing sucks. However, even if it's a cooperative game (where all the players compete against a situation or automated system instead of each other), there has to be a chance they could lose or face some major setback, otherwise there's no thrill. It's the same reason gambling's fun.

Frustration triage: losing and setbacks fucking suck, so having something to immediately distract from eating shit is A+ design. Example: for this game you could create a rule called "Hardened" – every time you're merked in a fight, you get a permanent +3 to your merk.

Incentives: never punish an action when you can instead reward not doing that action. Positive incentives are not only more reliable for shaping behavior, but also contribute to the overall sense of enjoyability of your game (nobody likes punishment).

Realism is a terrible goal. First of all, reality mostly sucks. Second, trying to reproduce it mechanically just creates a clunky labyrinth of conditional rules and other unfun shit. Instead, you wanna *hit the right notes of reality*, both in designing rulesets and settings.

Game mechanics are best when they're stripped down and abstracted representations of concepts that interest us (shit like fighting and powers). Settings are best when they're novel and outlandish, but still contour the relatable and interesting parts of our reality.

Realism is tax codes and spinning for how hungry you are or whatever; hitting the right notes of reality is unreal shit like dope spaceship fights and psychic powers BUT coherent setting logic and resonant side characters.

Randomizing outcomes: you can make the result of an uncertain thing up to chance with a randomization mechanic, sometimes called a resolution mechanic (similar to "Spinning for It", page 149). This does a couple good things: it 1.) creates a gambler's buzz, and 2.) gives the Key Narrator an improvisational prompt to interpret the result.

On the negative side, the neurochemical thrill of that gambler's buzz has swiftly diminishing returns: use it too often and it just becomes annoying. Even worse, a randomization mechanic skips over the gameplay that would normally create success.

Some games benefit from randomization mechanics (like Risk), but if you tried to force them into others (like chess) it would straight up ruin the game. Consider carefully if your game or mini-game would become more enjoyable by adding one.

When designing a randomization mechanic, consider range. Say you want to simulate troop reinforcements in your wargame, and each player spins at the top of their turn. s20 is way too swingy: if a player lands a 19 he can just dogwalk the player that landed a 4. You can always make the range smaller (like s8 or even s4), sure, but you could also make it more predictable: spinning 3s6 slightly reduces the range to 3-18, but more importantly it makes the results a bell curve since it's three different spins added together (so results at the extremes like 3, 4, 17, 18 are real real rare). You could also reduce randomness by making gameplay a factor: reinforcements are s6 + the number of fortresses you have, or you can spin an s6 for each warchest you turn in etc.

Don't get discouraged if your first game feels flat: *your early games are still worth playing*, you're just developing a more self-critical eye since you're now creating games. Sometimes rules and mechanics won't produce the result you thought they would and that's alright, that's how great rulesets are designed: small adjustments over time.

One of the more popular theories of learning is that we acquire and sharpen skills by first doing them wrong and then correcting: trial and error. It's annoying to hear for the hundredth time, but the best way to improve is by doing, failing, and learning from failures. Embracing that shit puts a person ahead of 95% of their competition.

Play more games: every innovation a person makes is a brick on top of a colossal pyramid of previous advancements in human knowledge made by other people. Explore that pyramid – designers put in thousands of hours creating a single game you can play in twenty minutes. Devour that knowledge to power your own innovations.

Presentation: sucks to say, but there's a reason presentation is 50% of your grade in culinary school. Consider it another good reason to start small; pamphlet-sized games don't need a \$10,000 layout and illustration budget to attract new players.

*Offense

* +
SPIN OFFENSE BONUS
 Range: Action Cost:
PRIMARY: SPECIAL: OTHER:
 Etc:

* +
SPIN OFFENSE BONUS
 Range: Action Cost:
PRIMARY: SPECIAL: OTHER:
 Etc:

* +
SPIN OFFENSE BONUS
 Range: Action Cost:
PRIMARY: SPECIAL: OTHER:
 Etc:

* +
SPIN OFFENSE BONUS
 Range: Action Cost:
PRIMARY: SPECIAL: OTHER:
 Etc:

* +
SPIN OFFENSE BONUS
 Range: Action Cost:
PRIMARY: SPECIAL: OTHER:
 Etc:

Temporary Bonuses / Penalties / Effects

* Move

*Base 5 *Fast *Strong *
 Movement Specials

MAIN CHARACTER

Name: LEVEL
 Summary:
 Appearance:

* Primaries

Strong Fast Smart Hard

* Crew Ambitions

* Value:
 Character Ambitions
 SP Value:
 SP Value:

* Background

* Show

* Defense

*Dodge *Grit *Parry
(FAST) (HARD) (STRONG)
 * *
ARMOR SHIELD
 * *
BLOCK SPECIAL
 * *
SPECIAL SPECIAL

*Merk

Offense Taken

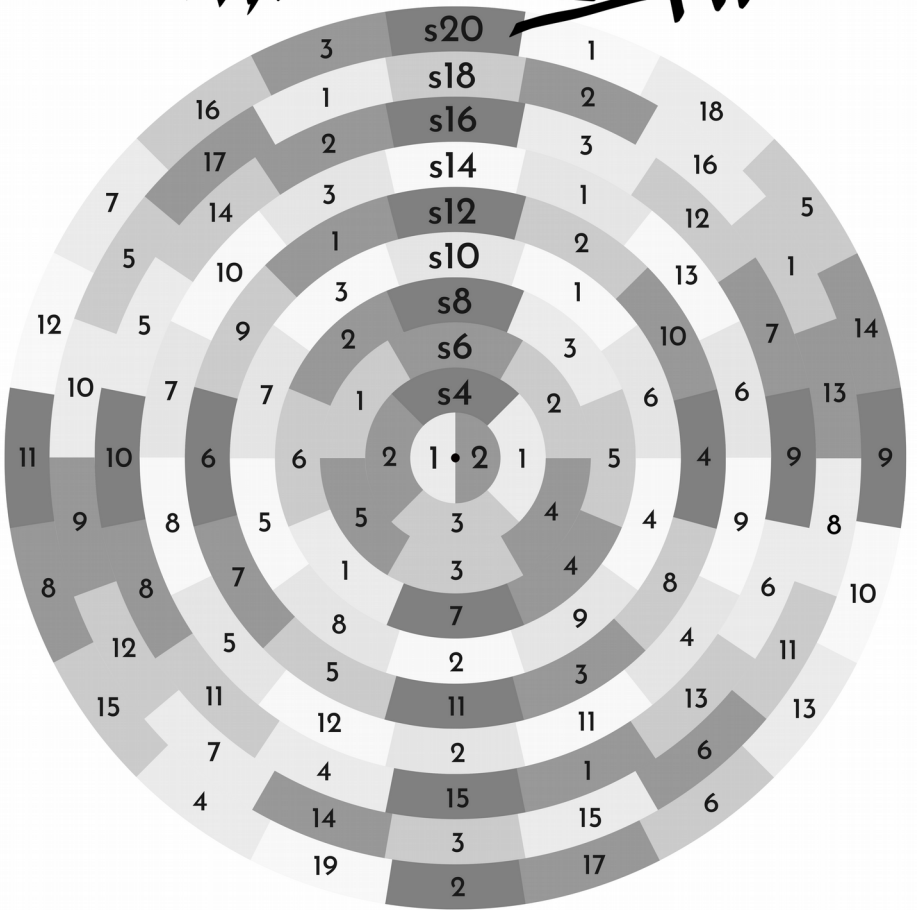
*Major Skills

Automotive									
Bushcraft									
Chemistry									
Electronics									
Gunsmithing									
Medicine									
Metalworking									
Nanotech									
Stealth									
Worldliness									

* Languages

*						*			
*						*			
*						*			
*						*			
*						*			

Handwritten graffiti text, possibly reading "HOMEROSTIV" or similar, rendered in a stylized, blocky font.



Closing Notes

Bull Press books are free to prisoners incarcerated in the US. While these book donations rely on funds we don't always have, if you write into your regional books to prisoners workspace, we know the good people volunteering there would be happy to send you similar conversational games and tabletop material.

To get a copy: have your people email your info to requests@bullpress.org. Even if your phone time is limited, this method should enable us to get a copy in your hands faster than mail-in requests.

People on the outside: if you'd like us to send a copy to an incarcerated friend, make sure to include their government name, ID number, and current facility in your email.

LIBRARY

(Every book contains main character sheets, spinners, and everything else needed to play.)

Corpse Thieves: a Kung Fu arc set in mythology-heavy Qing-era China. Unwind a bizarre series of graverobbing, scrap with supernatural wigsplitters, bust open esoteric conspiracies. Solid for newjacks (short and linear).

Illadelph: a game distilled from 90s hip hop, set in a parallel Philadelphia laced with powers, strange creatures, and superbeings. Solid for newjacks (short and linear), plus 75 optional missions across 13 cities for those trying to run longform games.

Stirring Giant: a grimy near-future arc tracking down a depraved patrician in a lawless megametropolis. Gene splicing, cybernetics, criminal underworld, political violence etc.

→ Digital copies of the entire Bull Press library are free at bullpress.org

Internal Font: Times New Roman

Style Guide: Ligma's Authoritative English

Language: the function of language is to convey meaning. Arbitrary rules grafted onto language (using "whom" for subject / "who" for object, or "less" for uncountable / "fewer" for countable, etc) *don't convey additional meaning and are thus linguistically valueless.*

This extends to groundless prohibitions on double comparatives (more faster, most oldest), verbiage (they is, she be), pleonasm (complete and total, where at) and so on. If meaning was successfully conveyed, the function of language was fulfilled – sweating about dangling participles and whatever is only a waste of time and effort.

Listen, language evolves. If you disagree, you can always talk in old-timey Shakespeare English.

System: this conversational game uses the DomepieceTV system. You have express permission from Bull Press to use it for your game or product as long as it's not for anything fucked up, and you shout us out.

Special Thanks to Q No Rap Name, a righteous individual and genius on the boards. qnorapname.bandcamp.com to hear a master at work

DUES

Respect and gratitude to the original Minneapolis scene: your hard work and innovation made our world far easier to live in.

All glory to The Most High