



A SCHIZOTRONIC ROLE-PLAYING GAME

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Khaotic

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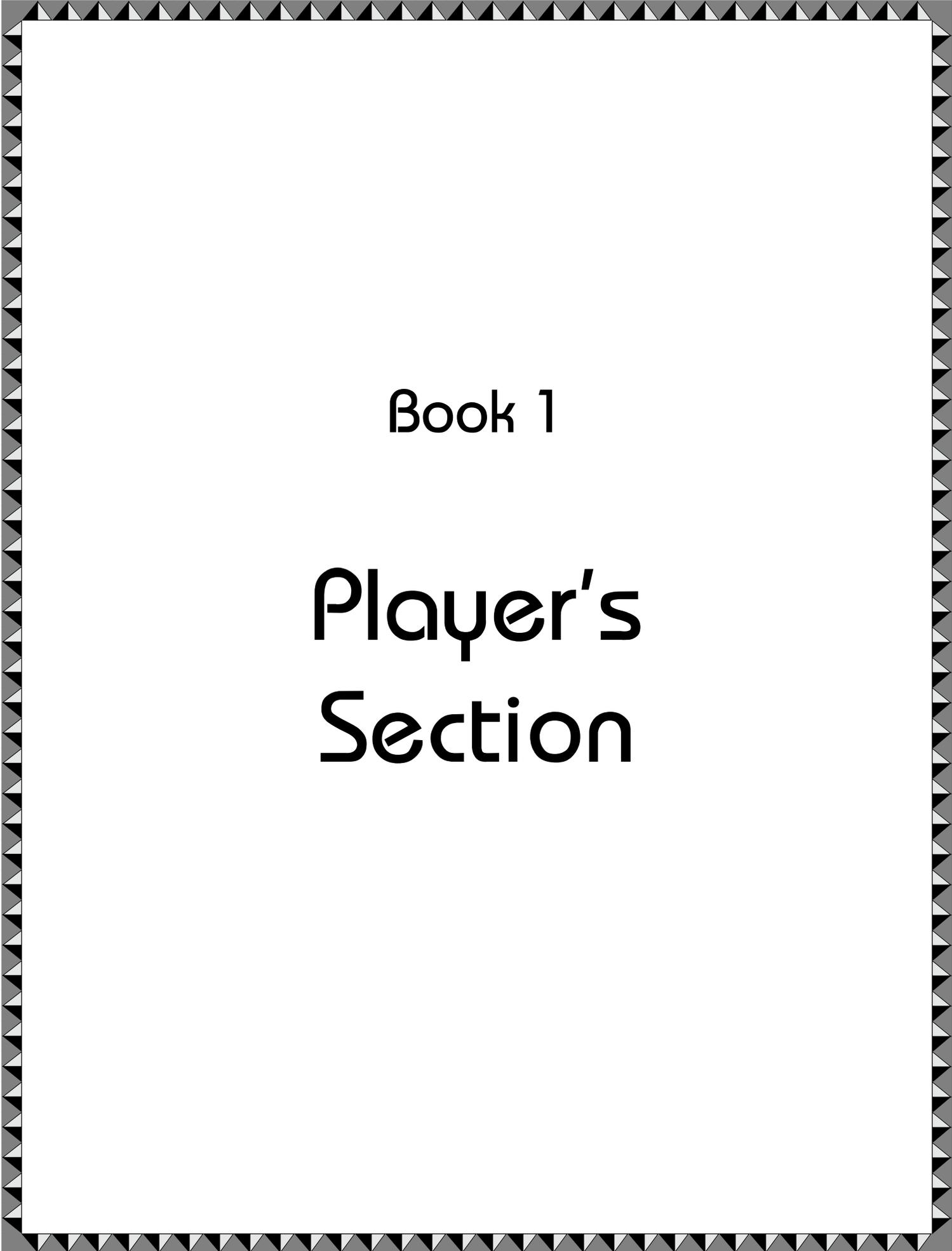
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Book 1

Player's
Section

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Strapped in the TransEgo Device, my arteries connected to a machine that would soon be doing my breathing for me, I had time to contemplate my folly. Now that I'd been briefed, I regretted accepting this assignment. But it was too late to back out. If I did, I'd be a security risk. Maybe even expendable.

What a laugh. I was already expendable. Why else would they send a grunt like me on a no-win mission like this?

Glancing across at the other volunteers, I saw my doubts reflected in the expression of the politician. He caught my eye and gave me a supportive smile, and looking at him I could almost believe we'd get back alive. I realized I hardly knew him, or any of the others. It didn't matter. We were about to get real close. In a short while, we'd all be sharing the same body . . .

Invasion 2030

The invasion of Earth began in the early 21st century. It came from a direction no one expected, and by beings no one imagined. The hulking creatures, armed with devastating weapons, struck at the fringes of humanity. Reports of suffering and destruction spread from villages to cities to the superpowers, and slowly, Earth prepared to defend itself against the invaders.

Khaotic tells of Earth's desperate struggle, and a war fought on two worlds. Read the graphic novel spaced throughout this book. Then prepare yourself to take the fight to the invader's home world!

[All rights to the illustrations in the graphic novel are held by the artist, David Stewart. The graphic novel has been omitted from this edition of the rulebook. —JW.]

Khaotic!

Khaotic is a science fiction role-playing game with lots of twists. Players can choose to fight off a monstrous invasion that threatens the Earth of 2030 or visit the "tech noir" world of Xenos.

Each setting offers its own challenges. Despite the dark imaginings of the late 20th century, the year 2030 isn't so bad. Society changes slowly, and while the selfish desires of greed and suspicion still drive many, most people lead lives of tolerant apathy.

Far worse than any terrestrial threats are the invading forces from Xenos. Hideous creatures armed with devastating weaponry appear out of thin air. They attack without mercy, massacring entire villages in remote corners of the world. Military leaders fear they are forming strongholds on Earth in preparation for the arrival of a larger

force. Governments are working hard to find a way to stop the monsters at their source.

THE TRANSEGO DEVICE

Their origin is the planet Xenos, a strange world which can only be reached via the TransEgo Device (TED), a machine constructed by Dr. Isabella Bayne in 1944. Once a respected US weapons specialist, Dr. Bayne began using children in her experiments on energy transmission. She apparently committed suicide when police closed in on her laboratory of horrors. The TransEgo Device was eventually turned over for study to the International Society of Enlightened Scientists (ISES).

TED can transmit only energy, not matter. Those who travel through the TransEgo Device leave behind their mortal shells in life support pods while their minds are propelled to Xenos. There, these committed agents find their minds plunged into the body of a Xenite. Their minds share one body, and while they can change hosts under special circumstances, they must always stay together. Only one personality at a time can control the host. The accompanying personalities find their psychic powers, long dormant on Earth, are magnified to an incredible degree on Xenos. Team members can swap control of their shared body as needed, giving the group a greater range of skills than could ever be mastered by an individual.

XENOS

They need all the help they can get, because Xenos is an oppressed world of corruption and decay, a land where the powers of the mind are unleashed and nightmares take place. Once a sylvan paradise, Isabella Bayne has warped its beauty and serenity. It is now a civilization of meat and steel, where biomechanical is no longer an obscure term, it's what you call the neighbor's kids. The boundary between human and machine has been crossed so often that medical doctors are uncertain what to classify as alive . . . and what is a machine.

In her capitol city of Kaleido, Isabella and her Brood of cybernetic Progeny and monestrous Spawn dominate the lowly human "worms." It is a dangerous world, and to survive, ISES jump-team

members will have to rely on a desperate combination of psychotronic weapons, psychic powers and human guile.

YOUR ROLE

In Khaotic, you'll play a volunteer in ISES (pronounced "I-sis"). You and members of your jump-team battle to stop Isabella's invasion from Xenos. You'll locate and destroy enemy bases on Earth, and travel to the oppressed world of Xenos to learn her technology and plans. Ultimately, your goal is to neutralize Dr. Isabella Bayne and rescue two worlds from her terrible reign.

Good luck. You're gonna need it.

Role-Playing Basics

Because Khaotic is a role-playing game, it's a bit different from other games you may have played. There are no tokens moved around a board; instead, the game takes place solely within the imaginations of you and your friends.

Each player controls a single character in the game and reacts to people and situations according to the personality of his part. Players do this by describing what their characters do and say, not by physically acting out their roles. One person serves as the referee. He is the interpreter of the rules, and in all disagreements, his decision is final.

THE REFEREE

Just as every story has a teller, every role-playing game has a referee. Using a mission as a guideline, the referee describes events and settings to the players. Vivid imagery, and sometimes simple maps or sketches, are used to explain what the characters see and experience.

The players tell the referee how their characters react to the described situation, and the referee tells them what happens, based on the skills of their characters, the luck of their die rolls, and the rules of the game. The players' actions directly affect how the story unfolds.

One of the referee's chief responsibilities is that of controlling the characters the players meet. The

referee assumes new roles as needed, sometimes playing three or four characters at a time, all the while maintaining their unique personalities. The characters that the referee plays are called non-player characters, or NPCs.

Referees are responsible for creating challenging missions for their friends. They must capture the players' interest and carry it through to the mission's end. Their job is not to kill the player characters. Instead, they should focus on running the game fairly and keeping the game enjoyable for all.

Because they have such an important role, referees should have complete knowledge of the rules. An experienced role-player will make the best referee for your first Khaotic mission. If you and your friends have never tried a role-playing game, it really won't matter who referees. Odds are it'll be the person who owns this book. But don't let yourself get caught always being the referee. It's equally fun to be a player in someone else's mission!

THE PLAYERS

The part taken on by a player is called a player character, or PC for short. Like the central characters of a book, the PCs are the most important characters in a mission. They are the movers and shakers. All the action in the game focuses on what they do and what happens to them.

For the duration of the game, try to immerse yourself in your role. This means you must refrain from using knowledge your character doesn't possess. You may know how to program a computer, but that doesn't mean your character knows.

Always try to act the way your character would behave. If your character is afraid of the dark, you'd be more likely to turn on a light than snoop around in the shadows.

Although you should be familiar with your character, you don't need to know all the rules to play. You can read the rules in the Player's Section or your referee can answer your questions as they arise.

Later, after you've gone through a few missions and are ready to assume the mantle of the referee, you can read the rest of the manual yourself. But beware: once you know the secrets of the referee,

you may very well lose the sense of mystery that will make your first games so memorable.

THE MISSION

A mission is a story, told by the referee, in which the players participate. A mission presents non-player characters, settings, and events in an easy-to-reference format. The referee prepares for a game of Khaotic by reading the mission in advance. During the game, he relates information to the players in response to their questions and the actions of their characters.

A mission doesn't have to be played from start to finish at one sitting. A session ends when the referee finds a good stopping place, the mission comes to its finale, or when half the players have fallen asleep and the sun is coming up. The next session picks up where the last one left off. To maintain interest, most missions are finished within two or three sessions.

Characters who survive a mission may be used later. Between missions, characters heal wounds, gain equipment and increase skills. Players can create detailed records explaining what their characters do between missions.

Object of the Game

The first goal of a player is survival. Yes, your character can die during a mission, and a dead character is gone. You cannot play the deceased PC ever again.

There are other goals beyond mere survival. Every mission has its own objective. To "win" you must accomplish the goal of the particular mission. By doing this, you will gain skill points, which may be used to increase your characters' abilities.

Khaotic is a team game. You and your friends must work together to solve the challenges presented by the referee. You'll either win together, or lose together. The fun comes from interacting with the other PCs and the imaginary world of Xenos.

The referee's goals are different from those of the players. It doesn't matter if non-player characters die--there are always more where they came from. A referee's objective is to stay one step

ahead of the players, keeping the game running smoothly while making the mission as enjoyable as possible. The referee is not the players' opponent.

OVERVIEW OF PLAY

The referee sits at one end of a table with a Khaotic manual and any maps or notes needed to run the mission. Extra paper can be used for sketching rooms, buildings, and other locations. The referee will need six-sided dice for those rare occasions when a die roll is unavoidable.

The players sit around the table. Each player needs a completed character sheet, a number of six-sided dice (the more the better), and a pencil. They should also have access to the rulebook.

If the players haven't already created characters, they do so now, following the rules in the Player's Section. Introduce your character to the group by giving a short description of his appearance, history and other noticeable attributes.

The referee starts the game by giving a little background on the mission you're about to pursue. She sets the scene by describing the setting, the NPCs that are present, what they are doing, and what is happening. The referee then turns to the players and asks, "What do you do?"

The players go around the table clockwise, explaining as clearly as possible what they want their characters to do. Your referee will help you determine your degree of success or failure, using the rules of the game. Your action is resolved immediately, before moving to the next player.

After all the players have had a chance to act, the referee explains what the NPCs are doing, if any are present. The next turn then begins and the sequence repeats itself. The referee decides how long each turn lasts and how much a character can accomplish in a turn.

Semi-Diceless Gaming

The major difference between Khaotic and most other role-playing games is the limited use of dice by the referee. A referee has complete control over the game world. The course of events is based on the skills of the NPCs and the requirements of the story line--not by die rolls.

Still, events rarely go as the referee planned. The players roll dice to influence the referee's story, adding a random element.

The use of dice by the players and not the referee is called semi-diceless role-playing. This innovative system frees the referee and the players to concentrate on what they enjoy most. The referee focuses on running the mission while the players concentrate on running their characters. Both receive the maximum amount of pleasure from the freedom Khaotic gives them.

Referees will need this freedom because they'll be doing a lot of thinking on their feet. Since the players can try most anything, they won't always go in the direction the referee has planned. A referee must learn to change the plot to accommodate the actions of the players.

Fortunately, the rules of Khaotic invite the player's creativity--and the referee's spontaneity. It's easy to introduce a new NPC, or create a new situation without planning. Almost any action the players can think of is easily resolved using a consistent system. Whether they succeed depends on their abilities, daring, and a fair amount of luck. Any action a player tries has a whole range of possible results, giving the referee greater flexibility in deciding what happens and making the game always unpredictable and exciting.

Requirements

To play Khaotic, you will need pencils, scratch paper, character sheets copied from the one provided in this book, and at least one six-sided die. The more dice you have, the better. You'll also need two to eight people--one to take on the role of the referee and the rest to play characters.

DICE

Die rolls help you figure out exactly what happens to your character out of a range of possibilities. They provide uncertainty and tension. You can purchase dice at most hobby or game stores, or you can swipe them from that old game of Monopoly sitting in the closet. It's easiest for the players to use their own dice, but they can also share.

In these rules, we use a standard gaming notation to show the kind of dice to roll. For instance, d6 means to roll a six-sided die. The “d” stands for die or dice, and the number after it shows how many sides the die has. In Khaotic, you will only roll six-sided dice (other role-playing games require polyhedral dice with 4, 8, 10, 12 and even 20 sides).

If a number appears before the “d” it indicates how many dice should be rolled and their results added together. For example, 2d6 means to roll two six-sided dice and total their results. If no number appears before the “d” you should roll only one die.

Sometimes, an addition appears after the die notation. This means to add the indicated number to the result of the roll. Thus, 2d6+1 means to roll two six-sided dice and add one to the total.

ROUNDING

Occasionally when playing Khaotic, you’ll need to divide a number in half. Unless otherwise specified in these rules, always round fractions up to the nearest whole number. So, five divided in half would equal three, not 2.5.

USING THIS MANUAL

This manual is divided into two sections, one for the players and one for the referee. The Player’s Section contains all the information you need to create and play a character. The Referee’s Section includes rules for running a mission, information on the game world, and a few ready to run missions to get you started.

Players should read only the first section; perusing the Referee’s Section will reveal secrets

they aren’t supposed to know, and possibly destroy all life as we know it.

Much of the manual is reference material. You don’t need to read everything before you begin playing. Players will read small parts of the Player’s Section during character creation and refer to the rest only as needed. The referee will want to skim the entire manual before running a mission. If the referee is a seasoned role-player, with a good grasp of common gaming techniques, he can easily teach the rules to the players during their first adventure.

AN INVITATION

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact the authors in care of Marquee Press. We look forward to reading your suggestions on what you would like to see in a supplement for Khaotic.

What’s Next?

Throughout the Player’s Section of this book, a graphic novel describes the background for Khaotic. Whether you’re a player or referee, you should read the graphic novel now, if you haven’t already.

[All rights to the illustrations in the graphic novel are held by the artist, David Stewart. The graphic novel has been omitted from this edition of the rulebook. —JW.]

When you’re done, turn to Chapter 2: Professions to begin the character creation process. It may look formidable at first, but it’s actually quite fun.

CHAPTER 2

PROFESSIONS

I heard a rumor a town in Montana vanished over night. On my media station, I saw refugees from South America raving about monsters. The military carted them off and I didn't hear a peep about it ever again. Commentators on the Net speculated we were at war, but no one knew who the bad guys were. I guess when I heard ISES was looking for recruits, I volunteered more than anything just to find out the truth about what was going on.

I never imagined it could be this bad.

Character Sheets

Before you can play Khaotic, you must first create a character using a character sheet copied from the blank found at the end of this manual (you may make as many copies as necessary for your personal use). It lists everything you need to know about your character in one handy place. As a player, a completed character sheet is almost all you'll need to participate in a mission.

Players create and control a single character each. Referees do not make characters at all (they run NPCs, but we won't get to that until we reach the Referee's Section).

Character Professions

The first thing to do when creating a character is to pick the kind of person you want to play from the professions presented later in this chapter. The professions in this book are people who fit into the cold steel world of Khaotic, people likely to volunteer for a trip through the TransEgo Device.

Your profession lets you know up front what your role is, and how best to play it. Of course, not all members of an occupation are identical, and you will have the opportunity to individualize your character.

The professions are balanced, so don't bother trying to find the best one . . . there isn't any. If you want to play a powerful fighter, choose a mercenary or soldier. If you want a technological expert, try a technician. There are dozens of types to select from. The choice is yours.

Your character may have only one profession. There are no "multi-classed" characters in Khaotic.

If you like, you may leave the selection of your occupation to luck by rolling on the Profession table. If you aren't comfortable with what you roll, feel free to roll again, or, for that matter, select the career of your choice. Like many charts used in character creation, the Profession table is intended to inspire you, not replace your creativity. You should never feel trapped into playing a character you don't like.

Two players can select the same profession if they want, though they may want to consult with each other first. You'll need a wide selection of skills to accomplish a mission, so it's to the group's advantage for the members to have different specialties. Coordinating in advance can prevent

everyone from choosing the same profession, and thus duplicating abilities.

Although a character's profession never changes, you're free to acquire whatever skills you like through training, practice and experience. A spy may become a heavy weapons expert merely by building up combat abilities. You'll have plenty of opportunity to customize your character both before play and between missions.

The thumbnail sketches presented in this chapter apply to the professions in general. Individuals can be totally different from the stereotypes portrayed here. Not all soldiers are bellicose, nor are all professors curmudgeons. You have the final decision on how to play your character.

All characters work for the International Society of Enlightened Scientists (ISES), and have a reason for going on missions to Xenos. Volunteers come from the military, government or civilian sector. Although all characters are supposed to be cooperative, individuals may feel more loyalty to their employers than to the mission itself.

Example: Keith decides to leave his character's occupation to chance. His first die roll is a 4 and his second roll is a 5. Looking up the result on the Profession table, he finds his character is a professor.

Keith looks up the professor profession later in this chapter. He decides he is a member in good standing of ISES, eager to learn about Xenos.

Profession

| d6 | d6 | Profession |
|----|-----|--------------------|
| 1 | 1 | Con Artist |
| | 2 | Demolitions Expert |
| | 3 | Engineer |
| | 4 | Government Agent |
| | 5 | Hunter |
| | 6 | Lab Rat |
| 2 | 1-2 | Medic |
| | 3-4 | Mercenary |
| | 5-6 | Military Officer |
| 3 | 1-2 | Military Support |
| | 3-4 | Pilot |
| | 5-6 | Police Officer |
| 4 | 1-2 | Politician |
| | 3-4 | Prisoner |
| | 5-6 | Professor |
| 5 | 1-2 | Psychologist |
| | 3-4 | Scientist |
| | 5-6 | Scout |
| 6 | 1-2 | Soldier |
| | 3-4 | Spy |
| | 5-6 | Technician |

Attributes

Characters have different strengths and weaknesses, just like real people. In game terms, your character's innate abilities are defined by attributes. Every character has the same eleven attributes, describing general physical and mental qualities.

The four physical attributes are: Agility, Dexterity, Stamina and Strength. The seven mental attributes are: Alertness, Charm, Cunning, Fate, Knowledge, Mechanical and Willpower.

No attribute is more important than any other; it just depends on the type of person you want to play. Characters with high Strength and Stamina will be more successful at fighting, while characters with high Charm and Cunning will do better at talking their way out of trouble.

Attributes are rated from 1 to 10. Five is considered normal for a typical person. If you have an attribute above 5, you are above average; below 5, you are below average. The Conversion table, printed on every character sheet and reproduced on the next page, shows an adjective describing the numerical ratings. At the gaming table, avoid using numbers to describe your character. Use the corresponding adjectives instead.

The listings later in this chapter give the attributes for each profession. On your character sheet, copy the scores for your profession. Put the number in the space to the left of the slash next to the appropriate attribute.

Example: Reading the professor section found later in this chapter, Keith learns his character has an Alertness of 6, Charm of 4, Cunning of 3, Fate of 6, Willpower of 7, Knowledge of 8, Mechanical of 5, Agility of 5, Dexterity of 5, Stamina of 5 and Strength of 4. He lists these numbers next to the appropriate attributes on his character sheet.

In describing his character, Keith doesn't say he has a Knowledge of 8 and a Strength of 4. He says he has Superior Knowledge and Poor Strength, as shown on the Conversion table.

ADJUSTING ATTRIBUTES

To individualize your character when it is first created, you may move points between attributes so long as no attribute is reduced by more than 1 point, nor any attribute raised above 8. For example, if you had an Alertness of 6 and you wanted to increase it to 8, you would have to subtract one point from two other attributes.

You may alter your attributes in this fashion only at the time your character is first created. Once you've decided upon your attributes, they cannot be changed so easily.

Example: Keith decides he wants his professor to be more charming than most. He reduces his character's Willpower, Mechanical and Dexterity by 1 each and increases his Charm by 3. On his character sheet, he changes his Charm to 7, his Willpower to 6, and his Mechanical and Dexterity to 4s.

HALVING YOUR ATTRIBUTES

On many occasions, you'll need to divide your attribute score in half to determine the number of dice you should roll. It simplifies things to calculate the half attributes now instead of doing it on the fly during the game. Next to each of your attributes, in the space to the right of the slash, write down half your attribute's score. Round any fractions up to the nearest whole number.

Example: Keith's professor has a Charm of 7. Keith notes that half of 7 is 3.5, which rounds up to 4. He writes "4" after the slash following Charm. He does the same for the rest of his attributes.

Skills

On your character sheet, each attribute has several skills listed under it. For instance, the Alertness attribute has Listen, Search and Track listed under it. They are all called Alertness skills.

Skills have more narrow applications than attributes. For instance, the general attribute of Alertness can be applied to many situations, but the skill of Listen can only be used when eavesdropping or listening at a keyhole.

Skills are listed on your character sheet with a blank space in front of them. Put a check mark in front of the eight skills listed for your profession. Using skills is described in Chapter 3: Skills.

Example: Keith's professor has the following skills for his profession: Leadership, Persuade, Question, Seduction, Sanity, Memory, Research, and Computers. Keith puts a check next to each on his character sheet.

TYPE

Each profession has a table for determining a specific character type. This helps you figure out your character's training, and gives you three additional skills. Put a check mark in front of these skills on your character sheet.

You may either select your type from the table for your profession, or roll a die and leave the selection to chance.

Example: Keith, being a gambling man, decides to roll his character's type. He gets a 4. This makes him a professor of mathematics and gives him the skills of Physics, Cybertech and Robotics. He puts check marks next to those skills on his character sheet.

DESCRIPTION OF ATTRIBUTES

Alertness is your character's vision and ability to notice things.

Charm is your character's charisma, manners, and style. It's the impression you make on others.

Cunning measures how inventive and devious your character is.

Fate measures your character's luck. It shows whether you were born under a lucky star, or an ill-fated comet.

Willpower encompasses your character's self-control, confidence and presence.

Knowledge shows how much your character has learned.

Mechanical is your character's mechanical aptitude. It's used to understand and operate machines and other devices.

Agility indicates your body's balance, grace and physical flexibility.

Dexterity rates your body's hand-eye coordination and your ability to work with your hands.

Stamina is your body's health, endurance and ability to withstand adverse conditions.

Strength measures your body's brawn.

USING ATTRIBUTES

Whenever your character tries to do something in the game, your referee will ask you to roll one of your character's attributes. For instance, if you're trying to convince a guard that you belong in a restricted area, your referee may ask you to make a Cunning roll.

Grab a number of six sided dice equal to your attribute rating and roll them. Add up all the 1s, 2s and 3s you roll, ignoring all 4s, 5s and 6s. The higher the total, the better your chance of doing what you want. Use the Conversion table to convert

your numerical roll to an adjective describing how well you did. A roll can range from Catastrophic (a low roll) to beyond Inhuman (a high roll). Tell your referee the result. You do not need to tell your referee how many dice you rolled or what the numerical result was. Simply say the roll was Poor, Passable, Inhuman or whatever.

Maxing the roll: If all the dice you roll come up threes, you have "maxed the roll." You get to roll all the dice again and add the total (counting just the 1s, 2s and 3s) to the first roll. You can keep rolling and adding to your total as long as you continue to roll all threes. Maxing the Roll will usually happen only when you roll 1 or 2 dice.

Example: Your referee asks you to make a Cunning roll. Since your character has a Cunning of 6 (Good), you roll 6 six-sided dice. They come up 1, 2, 4, 4, 5 and 6. Ignoring all the dice showing 4 or more, you add up the rest for a total of $1 + 2 = 3$. Glancing at the Conversion table, you see your result is Inferior. You tell your referee you made an Inferior roll.

Conversion Table

| Number | Adjective |
|--------|--------------|
| 0 | Catastrophic |
| 1 | Pathetic |
| 2 | Feeble |
| 3 | Inferior |
| 4 | Poor |
| 5 | Passable |
| 6 | Good |
| 7 | Great |
| 8 | Superior |
| 9 | Awesome |
| 10 | Incredible |
| 11 | Amazing |
| 12 | Inhuman |
| 13 | Unbelievable |

What's Next?

After determining your character's profession, turn to Chapter 3: Skills for more information on your character's abilities and how to use skills.

New Professions

You are never required to create a new profession. Many enjoyable missions can be played using only the professions provided in this rulebook. However, if you feel limited in your choices, you may design a new profession for your character. While this can be a challenging endeavor, it does allow you greater control over your character's abilities.

Title First, come up with a name for the kind of profession you are interested in. Maybe you would like to play someone who was a college student before volunteering.

Attributes Arrange the numbers 3, 4, 4, 5, 5, 5, 5, 6, 6, 7, 8 between the eleven attributes, using each number only once. You select where to put the numbers depending on how appropriate the attributes are for the profession you are creating. For instance, a college student might have high Knowledge and Mechanical, so you might set them at 8 and 7, respectively. They also need good endurance for late night cramming, so you might assign a Stamina score of 6. Continue in this fashion until all the attributes have been allocated a starting value.

Skills Next, choose 8 skills for your profession, listed in the order they appear on the character sheet. These are skills that would apply to the class of person in question. A student might have Artistry, Conceal (for hiding crib notes), Chemistry, Languages, Memory, Research, Forgery (for writing notes from one's parents), and Forage (gleaned through late night beer runs).

Type Come up with two to six branches of the profession and give each three skills that aren't possessed by the base profession. A college student may have Freshman, Sophomore, Junior and Senior as subsets, or areas of study such as mathematics, physics and history.

Referee Approval Any new character profession requires the referee's approval before it can be used in the game. Your referee may suggest modifications to the profession before allowing its use.

Con Artist

The con artist pretends to be something she is not in order to make money or escape an otherwise dull life. To become a team member, she has convinced ISES that she is a renowned scientist or high ranking official. In actuality, all her knowledge is self taught or based on life experiences.

The con artist is always sincere and charming. She is eager to please and a joy to work with. She has no formal training but will try to bluff her way through a situation before admitting that she has been lying all along. Despite her affectations, the con artist never forgets who she really is.

A con artist will eagerly place herself in the thick of things, even if ill-equipped to handle the situation, just for the excitement it provides.

Attributes

| Attribute | Value |
|------------|-------|
| Alertness | 4 |
| Charm | 7 |
| Cunning | 8 |
| Fate | 5 |
| Willpower | 5 |
| Knowledge | 6 |
| Mechanical | 5 |
| Agility | 5 |
| Dexterity | 6 |
| Stamina | 4 |
| Strength | 3 |

Skills

Bargain
 Persuade
 Sincerity
 Acting
 Disguise
 Lie
 Etiquette
 Quickness

Type

| d6 | Type | Skills |
|----|------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 | Scientist | Botany, Chemistry, Physics |
| 2 | Weapons Expert | Rifle, Shotgun, SMG |
| 3 | Doctor | Medical, Pharmacy, Psychiatry |
| 4 | Technician | Research, Electronics, Repair |
| 5 | Government Agent | Bureaucracy, History, Law |
| 6 | Military Officer | Leadership, Communications, Pistol |

Demolitions Expert

The demolitions expert knows how to create an explosion--or prevent one. He has extensive knowledge of explosives, including those occurring naturally as well as those caused by man-made devices.

The demolitions expert is generally a calm, calculating fellow. He knows one wrong move may be his last, and he tends to be deliberate and slow in his actions. Excitable people make him uncomfortable. Whether working for the military or private sector, the demolitions expert hopes that his work will not harm the innocent, and he strives to perform his tasks safely and responsibly.

Besides setting off explosions, the demolitions expert might be called in to dismantle a bomb. When racing against the clock, the expert may show an edge in his personality, but he will fight his temper to save the day.

Since many missions require the destruction of an invaders' base, ISES finds the skills of a demolitions expert invaluable.

Attributes

| Attribute | Value |
|------------|-------|
| Alertness | 5 |
| Charm | 3 |
| Cunning | 4 |
| Fate | 6 |
| Willpower | 6 |
| Knowledge | 5 |
| Mechanical | 8 |
| Agility | 4 |
| Dexterity | 7 |
| Stamina | 5 |
| Strength | 5 |

Skills

- Listen
- Search
- Demolitions
- Electronics
- Traps
- Dodge
- Quickness
- Rocket

Type

| d6 | Type | Skills |
|-----|--------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1-2 | Civil Engineer | Business, Geology, Physics |
| 3 | Arson Investigator | Streetwise, Interrogate, Law |
| 4 | Bomb Squad | Theology, Driving, Surveillance |
| 5-6 | Military | Conceal, Survival, Grenade Launcher |

Engineer

The engineer enjoys working with her hands, though much of her job also entails a high level of mental ability. She enjoys the mathematical precision and logical reasoning needed to create skyscrapers, spacecraft or computer software. The engineer is particularly pleased when she manages to solve a challenging problem.

Engineers are generally withdrawn, but not because they are shy. Instead, they are busy designing fantastic buildings and machines in their heads. They are the type of people to shout Eureka! at inopportune moments.

ISES recruits engineers from the civil and government sectors because of their ability to understand the alien machines of Xenos.

Attributes

| Attribute | Value |
|------------|-------|
| Alertness | 6 |
| Charm | 4 |
| Cunning | 5 |
| Fate | 5 |
| Willpower | 4 |
| Knowledge | 7 |
| Mechanical | 8 |
| Agility | 3 |
| Dexterity | 6 |
| Stamina | 5 |
| Strength | 5 |

Skills

- Bargain
- Business
- Geology
- Physics
- Research
- Computers
- Driving
- Repair

Type

| d6 | Type | Skills |
|----|--------------|---|
| 1 | Structural | Demolitions, Security, Acrobatics |
| 2 | Aerodynamics | Helicopter, Piloting, Jump |
| 3 | Computer | Communications, Electronics, Surveillance |
| 4 | Space | Cybertech, Robotics, Rocket |
| 5 | Weapons | Energy Rifle, Flamer, Gunnery |
| 6 | Sea Vessels | Boating, Hovercraft, Swim |

Government Agent

The government agent has a lot of personal integrity. He believes his country comes before his personal feelings and he's proud to work for a greater cause. Even if he feels he has been ordered to do something morally wrong, the agent will rarely think twice before carrying out his instructions.

Because of their rigorous physical training, agents are in good physical shape. They wear crisp blue suits, white shirts and dark glasses. A few of them have droll senses of humor, but most try to maintain a distance from others. After all, it's hard to plug a target if you've gotten friendly with him.

Many agents began their careers in the military or police force. They are great believers in discipline.

Volunteers from the government and military branches are commonplace in ISES activities. Because of their proven security clearance, government agents are entrusted with many secrets and may have knowledge not confided in other jump-team members.

Attributes

| Attribute | Value |
|------------|-------|
| Alertness | 5 |
| Charm | 5 |
| Cunning | 3 |
| Fate | 4 |
| Willpower | 5 |
| Knowledge | 6 |
| Mechanical | 8 |
| Agility | 4 |
| Dexterity | 7 |
| Stamina | 6 |
| Strength | 5 |

Skills

Leadership

Interrogate
Bureaucracy
Law
Security
Surveillance
Stealth
Pistol

Type

| d6 | Type | Skills |
|-----|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1-2 | FBI | Question, Shadowing, Unarmed |
| 3-4 | CIA | Disguise, Electronics, Unlock |
| 5 | DIA | Communications, Forgery, SMG |
| 6 | Ambassador Attache | Persuade, Cultures, Etiquette |

Hunter

Since many missions involve searches for Isabella Bayne and her minions, ISES often hires free-lance hunters to make the job easier. Only the best and bravest have been offered the opportunity to track the invaders, and it is understood that their participation will be richly rewarded.

A hunter is a relentless adversary, finding pleasure in his ability to track and bring down his quarry. He will team up with others to achieve a goal, but at heart is a self-sufficient loner. He knows about weaponry, and will use whatever is appropriate to bring down his intended target. When hunting a human, a handgun may suffice. If he knows he's on the lookout for something bigger, he will invariably reach for the appropriate sized firearm.

The hunter may be perceived as cold-hearted when engaged in the chase, but he has a warm side to him. He just doesn't want to let his feelings get between him and his target. For this reason, he tries to maintain complete emotional control when on a mission.

Attributes

| Attribute | Value |
|------------|-------|
| Alertness | 8 |
| Charm | 3 |
| Cunning | 6 |
| Fate | 4 |
| Willpower | 4 |
| Knowledge | 5 |
| Mechanical | 5 |
| Agility | 5 |
| Dexterity | 6 |
| Stamina | 7 |
| Strength | 5 |

Skills

- Track
- Shadowing
- Direction
- Driving
- Surveillance
- Pistol
- Rifle
- Unarmed

Type

| d6 | Type | Skills |
|-----|---------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | Tracker | Survival, Forage, Run |
| 2 | Big Game | Conceal, Languages, Survival |
| 3 | Sport | Zoology, Archery, Sniper |
| 4-5 | Bounty Hunter | Bargain, Streetwise, Law |
| 6 | Private Eye | Question, Conceal, Security |

Lab Rat

A lab rat is a person with innate psychic abilities. They are voluntary or involuntary subjects who have constantly undergone testing by the military or corporations interested in exploiting their powers.

In a heartless effort to enhance their abilities, lab rats have been subjected to drug and thought control experiments. Being strong-willed, most have withstood this abuse, but are notably suspicious because of it. Some have been irreparably harmed, and may need daily doses of drugs to keep sane.

A typical lab rat has a chip on his shoulder, having been tested and tormented most of his life. They are resentful of doctors and scientists, and fear that anyone who treats them well only wants to exploit their special powers.

Because lab rats have spent their formative years in secret laboratories, they do not gain any skills for their profession, and they do not have a type. Their reliance on their psychic powers has stunted their development of mental and physical abilities, so their attributes are lower than other professions. A lab rat gains the advantage of being able to use psychic powers on Earth, as long as they have a cost of zero to activate. On Xenos, a lab rat can use 0 cost psi-powers even when in control of the host body. See Chapter: 7: Psi-Powers for more information on powers.

For most lab rats, ISES is a fortunate alternative to the rigors of the lab. People with psychic powers make potent agents on Xenos. ISES treats its lab rats with a respect that most have never before experienced.

Attributes

| Attribute | Value |
|------------|-------|
| Alertness | 5 |
| Charm | 4 |
| Cunning | 5 |
| Fate | 7 |
| Willpower | 6 |
| Knowledge | 3 |
| Mechanical | 2 |
| Agility | 4 |
| Dexterity | 4 |
| Stamina | 5 |
| Strength | 3 |

Skills

None

Medic

The medic profession encompasses anyone with medical skills, from a neurosurgeon to a veterinarian. They are dedicated to healing the sick and saving lives. Most are unlikely to fight or harm others, though some may have combat training if they are members of a military organization.

Some medics have a cold, passionless bedside manner, but most are compassionate and caring. It is difficult for them to see living creatures suffer and they may try to put a fatally injured creature out of its misery even if it means endangering themselves. Medics have noble sentiments, but can be foolhardy in such situations.

ISES actively recruits trustworthy medics from the military and civilian sectors in an effort to reduce the number of casualties on missions. Veterinarians are sometimes sent to study the fauna found on Xenos.

Attributes

| Attribute | Value |
|------------|-------|
| Alertness | 5 |
| Charm | 5 |
| Cunning | 4 |
| Fate | 6 |
| Willpower | 6 |
| Knowledge | 8 |
| Mechanical | 3 |
| Agility | 5 |
| Dexterity | 7 |
| Stamina | 5 |
| Strength | 4 |

Skills

- Question
- Law
- Medical
- Pharmacy
- Poisons
- Psychiatry
- Research
- Quickness

Type

| d6 | Type | Skills |
|----|----------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 | Veterinarian | Tame, Zoology, Grappling |
| 2 | Military | Bureaucracy, Dodge, Pistol |
| 3 | Nurse | Persuade, Seduction, Grapple |
| 4 | Doctor | Leadership, Sincerity, Business |
| 5 | Surgeon | Search, Gambling, Law |
| 6 | Xeno-biologist | Botany, Xeno-biology, Zoology |

Mercenary

The insolent freelance hires out his skills--the attitude comes free of charge. He is often military-trained, and knows much about weapons. Underworld contacts give him access to the world's deadliest weapons. His impressive resume includes fights in government coups and wars against drug lords in South American villages. It makes no

difference to him, as long as he gets paid his fair share.

Trust and skill are two elements that a mercenary looks for in a person before he calls someone his friend. Once he feels a companion has proved herself, he'll be her buddy for life.

ISES hires mercenaries when they need skilled fighters, which is always. While ISES relies upon the merc's combat skills and honor, they are rarely trusted with more information than is absolutely necessary. Some mercenaries resent being left in the dark, but all are happy with their hefty paychecks.

Attributes

| Attribute | Value |
|------------|-------|
| Alertness | 4 |
| Charm | 5 |
| Cunning | 7 |
| Fate | 3 |
| Willpower | 5 |
| Knowledge | 4 |
| Mechanical | 6 |
| Agility | 5 |
| Dexterity | 8 |
| Stamina | 6 |
| Strength | 5 |

Skills

- Bargain
- Streetwise
- Business
- Grenade Launcher
- Knockout
- Pistol
- SMG
- Unarmed

Type

| d6 | Type | Skills |
|-----|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1-2 | Terrorist | Interrogate, Demolitions, Bully |
| 3-4 | Weapons Specialist | Flamer, Machine Gun, Rocket |
| 5 | Assassin | Conceal, Poisons, Sniper |
| 6 | Saboteur | Languages, Demolitions, Stealth |

Military Officer

Career officers are disciplined patriots who have offered their lives for their country, and now, their world.

In the enlightened year 2030, officers are just as often women as men. They come from one of the branches of the US Armed Forces: Navy, Marines, Army or Air Force. Occasionally, an officer from another country may be “loaned” to ISES for a mission.

The military officer is used to making cold, calculated decisions concerning the lives of her troops. She is capable of assessing risks quickly and efficiently. Although trained to engaged the enemy, she will retreat if the odds are impossible. The military officer is used to being obeyed, and may be frustrated if paired up with disobedient civilians.

Ranking officers in the armed services may volunteer for ISES duty either to escape the constricting regulations of the military, or with the expectation that it will help further their careers. All military officers are well trained in discipline, leadership, and tactics.

Attributes

| Attribute | Value |
|------------|-------|
| Alertness | 3 |
| Charm | 7 |
| Cunning | 6 |
| Fate | 6 |
| Willpower | 5 |
| Knowledge | 8 |
| Mechanical | 5 |
| Agility | 5 |
| Dexterity | 5 |
| Stamina | 4 |
| Strength | 4 |

Skills

Leadership
 Persuade
 Lie
 Bureaucracy
 Law
 Communications
 Forgery
 Pistol

Type

| d6 | Type | Skills |
|-----|------------|---------------------------------|
| 1-2 | Lieutenant | Bargain, Etiquette, Memory |
| 3-4 | Captain | Interrogate, History, Computers |
| 5-6 | Major | Cultures, Languages, Bully |

Military Support

Military support personnel are those people in the Armed Forces who make it possible to field armies of thousands of soldiers. Since they have minimum training in hand-to-hand combat and weapons, they do not participate in actual battle. They are primarily concerned with the daily bureaucracy of military life. Most support personnel are looked upon with some disdain by soldiers. They can't understand why the military would insist that support personnel be allowed to go on dangerous missions.

ISES regularly accepts volunteers from all branches of the military. It's natural that certain support personnel, eager for something more exciting than the cook's corps, would offer their services to ISES.

Attributes

| Attribute | Value |
|------------|-------|
| Alertness | 5 |
| Charm | 6 |
| Cunning | 3 |
| Fate | 5 |
| Willpower | 4 |
| Knowledge | 8 |
| Mechanical | 7 |
| Agility | 6 |
| Dexterity | 5 |
| Stamina | 4 |
| Strength | 5 |

Skills

Persuade
 Sincerity
 Sanity
 Bureaucracy
 Cultures
 Memory
 Computers
 Quickness

Type

| d6 | Type | Skills |
|----|------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 | Chaplain | Listen, Psychiatry, Theology |
| 2 | Protocol Officer | Leadership, Etiquette, Law |
| 3 | Clerk | Business, Research, Forgery |
| 4 | Journalist | Question, Artistry, Stealth |
| 5 | Translator | Listen, Question, Languages |
| 6 | Morale Officer | Entertain, Sincerity, Athletics |

Pilot

The pilot is an expert driver. Although she specializes in one type of craft--airplane, automobile, tank, or ship--in a pinch she can drive any vehicle. A strong streak of daring and an inordinate amount of faith in her abilities makes the pilot willing to take risks others would blanch at.

Pilots like to be on the move. More than any other type, pilots look forward to body-hopping while on Xenos, even if its unnecessary or risky. Their wanderlust may take the team into places best left unexplored.

Transportation is an important part of any mission, and when on Xenos, the vehicles are unfamiliar to say the least. ISES recruits pilots who have an instinctive affinity for conveyances.

Attributes

| Attribute | Value |
|------------|-------|
| Alertness | 7 |
| Charm | 5 |
| Cunning | 4 |
| Fate | 5 |
| Willpower | 5 |
| Knowledge | 6 |
| Mechanical | 8 |
| Agility | 3 |
| Dexterity | 6 |
| Stamina | 4 |
| Strength | 5 |

Skills

- Shadowing
- Direction
- Boating
- Communications
- Driving
- Helicopter
- Hovercraft
- Piloting

Type

| d6 | Type | Skills |
|-----|------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 | Motorcycle | Motorcycle, Acrobatics, Jump |
| 2 | Automobile | Shadowing, Law, Repair |
| 3 | Tank | Tank, Flamer, Gunnery |
| 4-5 | Airplane | Physics, Computers, Electronics |
| 6 | Ship | Jump, Swim, Rocket |

Police Officer

The police officer patrols city streets to insure the safety of its citizens. The first to be called in times of emergency, they are often vilified for their efforts. Most cops don't understand why people resent their presence, and some of them succumb to a "them or us" attitude. Others struggle to understand this division, and work to overcome it.

Police officers are people dedicated to the idea of justice and law. They are trained in riot control, hand-to-hand combat and small arms. A few become specialists, either detectives or SWAT team members.

ISES readily accepts volunteers from city police forces because of their proven dedication, reliability and crowd control training.

Attributes

| Attribute | Value |
|------------|-------|
| Alertness | 8 |
| Charm | 3 |
| Cunning | 5 |
| Fate | 4 |
| Willpower | 7 |
| Knowledge | 5 |
| Mechanical | 5 |
| Agility | 6 |
| Dexterity | 5 |
| Stamina | 4 |
| Strength | 6 |

Skills

- Search
- Question
- Shadowing
- Streetwise
- Law
- Surveillance
- Body Throw
- Pistol

Type

| d6 | Type | Skills |
|-----|----------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 | Highway Patrol | Direction, Driving, Motorcycle |
| 2-3 | Police Officer | Run, Bully, Grappling |
| 4 | Undercover | Acting, Disguise, Lie |
| 5 | SWAT Team | Security, SMG, Sniper |
| 6 | Detective | Listen, Lie, Interrogate |

Politician

The politician is very charismatic. She usually knows what to say in any given situation, and appears completely at ease in difficult social circumstances. Politicians enjoy being the center of attention almost as much as they enjoy pulling strings behind the scenes. Favorite watchwords include “power” and “control.” Politicians like to be the decision makers, even if they have no idea of the conditions.

The politician has employed her clout to assure herself a spot on an ISES jump-team. By volunteering for a dangerous ISES mission, she hopes to garner prestige. She may be acting in an avowed effort to find out what ISES is spending government funds on, or she may have a secret agenda of establishing diplomatic relationships with Xenos.

Attributes

| Attribute | Value |
|------------|-------|
| Alertness | 5 |
| Charm | 8 |
| Cunning | 7 |
| Fate | 6 |
| Willpower | 6 |
| Knowledge | 5 |
| Mechanical | 4 |
| Agility | 5 |
| Dexterity | 4 |
| Stamina | 5 |
| Strength | 3 |

Skills

- Leadership
- Persuade
- Sincerity
- Acting
- Lie
- Bureaucracy
- Cultures
- Law

Type

| d6 | Type | Skills |
|-----|----------------|-------------------------------|
| 1-2 | Diplomat | Bargain, Gambling, Theology |
| 3-4 | Ambassador | Etiquette, History, Languages |
| 5 | Senator | Question, Seduction, Business |
| 6 | Representative | Listen, Bargain, History |

Prisoner

In exchange for freedom, the prisoner has agreed to become a member of an ISES jump-team. Prisoners tend to be habitual criminals, making their careers out of thievery and cons. Many of them are highly sophisticated, using technological devices to pull off heists.

Prisoners dislike confined places, and will try to avoid capture at all cost. Once they’ve been incarcerated, they can think of nothing but escape. ISES allows them to be relatively free, and most cons approached by ISES eagerly agree to sign a contract stating they’ll work for the company for one, three or five years.

ISES uses prisoners for the most dangerous missions. If a prisoner is fortunate enough to survive his contractual term, ISES will honor their deal and release him.

Attributes

| Attribute | Value |
|------------|-------|
| Alertness | 4 |
| Charm | 5 |
| Cunning | 8 |
| Fate | 3 |
| Willpower | 7 |
| Knowledge | 4 |
| Mechanical | 5 |
| Agility | 5 |
| Dexterity | 6 |
| Stamina | 6 |
| Strength | 5 |

Skills

- Search
- Conceal
- Lie
- Stealth
- Filch
- Forgery
- Unlock
- Unarmed

Type

| d6 | Type | Skills |
|----|----------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 | Death Row | Bully, Knockout, Blade |
| 2 | Bank Robbery | Disguise, Run, Pistol |
| 3 | Computer Fraud | Communications, Computers, Security |
| 4 | Pickpocket | Dodge, Quickness, Run |
| 5 | Con Artist | Persuade, Acting, Disguise |
| 6 | Political | Cultures, History, SMG |

Professor

The professor has dedicated his life to one area of study. He is either a friendly fellow eager to exchange ideas and information, or a gruff curmudgeon who finds it hard to relate with people except over computerlink.

Professors generally view things in terms of their major area of interest. They are uncomfortable if their favorite theories are disproved, and they simply can't stand anyone who rivals them in their chosen field.

ISES was founded by scientists, many of them from Academe, and their ranks teem with highly educated people. Any professors would be honored to be join ISES, and the most physically fit routinely volunteer for jump-team duty.

Attributes

| Attribute | Value |
|------------|-------|
| Alertness | 6 |
| Charm | 4 |
| Cunning | 3 |
| Fate | 6 |
| Willpower | 7 |
| Knowledge | 8 |
| Mechanical | 5 |
| Agility | 5 |
| Dexterity | 5 |
| Stamina | 5 |
| Strength | 4 |

Skills

- Leadership
- Persuade
- Question
- Seduction
- Sanity
- Memory
- Research
- Computers

Type

| d6 | Type | Skills |
|----|-------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 | Biology | Botany, Xeno-biology, Zoology |
| 2 | History | Cultures, History, Theology |
| 3 | Law | Bargain, Interrogate, Law |
| 4 | Mathematics | Physics, Cybertech, Robotics |
| 5 | Languages | Cultures, Etiquette, Languages |
| 6 | Science | Chemistry, Geology, Physics |

Psychologist

The psychologist is fascinated by the inner workings of the mind. He wants to know what makes people tick, and studies phobias, behaviors and other traits in order to predict behavior and cure mental diseases.

The psychologist truly enjoys meeting other people, though his tendency to diagnose behavior based on childhood trauma can be irritating. For the most part, he is a friendly person with a calm, logical manner which raving madmen find particularly soothing.

The stresses of disembodied duty on Xenos requires a medic for the psyche, hence ISES's interest in recruiting psychologists. They also hope a study of the mental processes on Xenos will shed light on the enhanced psychic abilities prevalent there.

Attributes

| Attribute | Value |
|------------|-------|
| Alertness | 6 |
| Charm | 8 |
| Cunning | 6 |
| Fate | 5 |
| Willpower | 7 |
| Knowledge | 5 |
| Mechanical | 3 |
| Agility | 5 |
| Dexterity | 5 |
| Stamina | 4 |
| Strength | 4 |

Skills

- Listen
- Leadership
- Persuade
- Question
- Sanity

Cultures
Pharmacy
Psychiatry

Research
Computers
Electronics
Repair

Type

| d6 | Type | Skills |
|-----|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1-2 | Psychiatrist | Chemistry, Medical, Poisons |
| 3 | Psychologist | Sincerity, Interrogate, Research |
| 4 | Social Worker | Bureaucracy, Grappling, Unarmed |
| 5 | Child Psychologist | Sincerity, Tame, Survival |
| 6 | Pop Psychologist | Entertain, Acting, Business |

Scientist

A scientist is an expert in one or more disciplines. They are divided into two fields: those that formulate theories, and those that focus on experimental work--compiling data and projecting possible outcomes.

Scientists are intelligent people who can grasp complex ideas easily; however, their social skills tend to suffer from long nights in the lab. Their intense focus on their work may alienate them from others. Scientists are sometimes perceived as stuffy, irate, absent-minded or socially inept.

Often, the brightest scientists are not accepted for jump-team duty; their genius is needed on Earth. Some try to hide their credentials in an effort to become a jump-team member.

Attributes

| Attribute | Value |
|------------|-------|
| Alertness | 6 |
| Charm | 4 |
| Cunning | 5 |
| Fate | 5 |
| Willpower | 5 |
| Knowledge | 7 |
| Mechanical | 8 |
| Agility | 4 |
| Dexterity | 5 |
| Stamina | 6 |
| Strength | 3 |

Skills

Question
Sanity
Chemistry
Physics

Type

| 2d6 | Type | Skills |
|-------|---------------------|--|
| 2-3 | Cybernetics | Medical, Cybertech, Robotics |
| 4 | Biology | Botany, Xeno-biology, Zoology |
| 5 | Geology | Caves, Geology, Survival |
| 6 | Computer Sciences | Business, Communications, Security |
| 7 | Weapons Technology | Energy Cannon, Flamer, Gunnery |
| 8 | Electrical Sciences | Communications, Security, Surveillance |
| 9 | Behavioral Sciences | Bargain, Persuade, Interrogate |
| 10 | Anthropology | Cultures, History, Languages |
| 11-12 | Chemistry | Pharmacy, Poisons, Demolitions |

Scout

The scout is usually a soldier, though he may have been trained outside the armed forces. His duty is to observe an enemy stronghold and then report back accurate information to his commanding officer. Unlike spies, scouts rarely try to infiltrate; instead, they observe and map important sites, identify communication and security methods, and note the deployment and movement of troops and supplies.

A good scout will avoid direct hostile contact with the target. If combat develops, the enemy will know they have been observed and may change their security measures, negating the accuracy of any information that was gained.

ISES needs scouts for all types of missions, and normally recruits them from the military.

Attributes

| Attribute | Value |
|------------|-------|
| Alertness | 8 |
| Charm | 4 |
| Cunning | 6 |
| Fate | 5 |
| Willpower | 4 |
| Knowledge | 5 |
| Mechanical | 5 |
| Agility | 7 |
| Dexterity | 3 |
| Stamina | 6 |
| Strength | 5 |

Skills

Listen
 Search
 Track
 Conceal
 Survival
 Artistry
 Stealth
 Run

Type

| d6 | Type | Skills |
|-----|----------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 | Tracker | Zoology, Forage, Swim |
| 2 | Surveyor | Caves, Direction, Geology |
| 3-4 | Recon | Direction, Quickness, Pistol |
| 5 | Terrain Expert | Geology, Forage, Climb |
| 6 | Lookout | Listen, Shadowing, Surveillance |

Soldier

Soldiers are skilled in the art of hand-to-hand combat, weapons and battlefield strategy. Trained to obey orders without question, a soldier makes a good team player. Yet many are strong-willed and self-reliant people who feel their commanding officers are reckless fools. These soldiers find themselves leading by default, but rarely go up in rank, since their defiance has put a permanent black mark on their records. Soldiers dissatisfied with the military make excellent recruits for ISES.

In the year 2030, soldiers can be either men or women. Since the US Government sponsors the soldier, they are pulled from one of the branches of the Armed Forces: Navy, Marines, Army or Air Force. Occasionally, a soldier from another country may be “loaned” to ISES for a mission.

Attributes

| Attribute | Value |
|------------|-------|
| Alertness | 6 |
| Charm | 4 |
| Cunning | 5 |
| Fate | 3 |
| Willpower | 5 |
| Knowledge | 4 |
| Mechanical | 5 |
| Agility | 5 |
| Dexterity | 7 |
| Stamina | 8 |
| Strength | 6 |

Skills

Conceal
 Dodge
 Stealth
 Grenade Launcher
 Mortar
 Rifle
 SMG
 Unarmed

Type

| d6 | Type | Skills |
|-----|----------|--------------------------------|
| 1-2 | Private | Survival, Run, Shotgun |
| 3-4 | Corporal | Driving, Tank, Machine Gun |
| 5-6 | Sergeant | Communications, Bully, Gunnery |

Spy

Despite the image of the debonair international spy propagated by Hollywood, the spies of 2030 are nondescript. They are good at blending in with all types of society, and are keen observers. A spy's ability to circumvent security systems and collect information are invaluable to ISES.

ISES accepts volunteers from a variety of intelligence agencies. They are aware that some spies are sending information back to their respective agencies, and so avoid giving spies access to sensitive data.

A spy may be from the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Russian Intelligence Agency (MBRF), Service de Documentation Exterieur et de Contre-Espionage (SDECE, French), or Secret Intelligence Service (SIS, British).

Attributes

| Attribute | Value |
|------------|-------|
| Alertness | 8 |
| Charm | 5 |
| Cunning | 7 |
| Fate | 5 |
| Willpower | 6 |
| Knowledge | 5 |
| Mechanical | 5 |
| Agility | 4 |
| Dexterity | 6 |
| Stamina | 4 |
| Strength | 3 |

Skills

- Listen
- Search
- Question
- Lie
- Cultures
- Languages
- Security
- Unlock

Type

| d6 | Type | Skills |
|----|--------------|---|
| 1 | Embassy Duty | Bureaucracy, Etiquette, Forgery |
| 2 | Intelligence | Communications, Computers, Surveillance |
| 3 | Field Agent | Seduction, Driving, Pistol |
| 4 | Assassin | Poisons, Archery, Sniper |
| 5 | Mole | Acting, Disguise, Survival |
| 6 | Free-lance | Bargain, Persuade, Gambling |

Technician

Technicians are experts with all sorts of mechanical equipment. They are intelligent and highly skilled. Many technicians are self-taught or have a natural aptitude for their work. They bristle at the assumption that they aren't very bright just because they haven't had much education.

Techies tend to view scientists and military officers with suspicion. They don't like conforming to rigid rules or restrictions. Most of them dress in ragged jeans and faded T-shirts, and work their own hours. Their employers tend to indulge them because they are the best in the business.

Many technicians are members of ISES, and a few of the most idealistic volunteer for jump-team duty, either from a misguided sense of responsibility, or, more likely, a desire to see first hand the alien technology of Isabella Bayne.

Attributes

| Attribute | Value |
|------------|-------|
| Alertness | 5 |
| Charm | 5 |
| Cunning | 4 |
| Fate | 5 |
| Willpower | 4 |
| Knowledge | 5 |
| Mechanical | 8 |
| Agility | 6 |
| Dexterity | 7 |
| Stamina | 3 |
| Strength | 6 |

Skills

- Memory
- Computers
- Cybertech
- Driving
- Electronics
- Repair
- Robotics
- Quickness

Type

| d6 | Type | Skills |
|-----|------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 | Computers | Communications, Computers, Security |
| 2-3 | Security Systems | Security, Surveillance, Unlock |
| 4 | Engineering | Physics, Demolitions, Traps |
| 5 | Mechanic | Boating, Motorcycle, Piloting |
| 6 | Communications | Listen, Languages, Communications |

CHAPTER 3

SKILLS

We were trying to break into the Cyberlab. There was information in there ISES wanted. The politician was in charge of the host body, the rest of us were just crickets chirping in the back of his mind. My appraisal of Senator O'Neill was rising. He'd gotten us past the guards with a grin and some bureaucratic mumbo jumbo that bored me silly, but must have meant something to the guards since they let us through.

The politician stopped at the door. I asked him what was wrong, and he pointed at the security lock. "This is not my forte," he whispered to us, trying to look inconspicuous as he stood there talking to himself.

As a grunt, I voted for blasting the door down with our rocket launcher. The con overruled me. "Let me handle this," she said.

The politician relinquished control of the body to the convict and she sidled up to the lock, her fingers moving expertly over the keypad. "These damn fingers don't have much dexterity," she muttered, "but I think I'm getting it."

"Better hurry," My warning sounded in the mind we shared. "I hear someone coming!"

Skills

Unlike innate attributes, skills are acquired through training and experience. Skills adjust attributes, and are listed on your character sheet under the attributes they modify. For instance, the Alertness attribute has Listen, Search and Track listed under it. They are all called Alertness skills.

On your character sheet, each skill has a blank space in front of it and three boxes after it. You'll put a check mark in front of every skill your character possesses. With a hundred different skills

in the game, no character will be an expert in every one.

The boxes represent degrees of training. Later, you will check some of the boxes to indicate those skills your character has specialized in. The more boxes you have checked next to a skill, the greater your mastery of it. The Skill Point Cost table shows the different notations and what they mean.

SKILL POINTS

Characters begin with skill points, which may be used before the game starts to acquire new skills or increase those they already possess.

Total your mental attributes--Alertness, Charm, Cunning, Fate, Willpower, Mechanical, Knowledge--and divide the sum in half (round any fractions up). This is how many skill points you have to increase your mental skills, those skills that are listed under your mental attributes.

Now do the same for your physical attributes--Agility, Dexterity, Stamina, Strength--to find out how many skill points you have to increase your physical skills. Weapon skills count as physical skills.

Checking the space in front of a skill costs 1 point. Marking the first box next to a skill costs 2 points. Checking the second box costs 3 skill points, and checking the third box costs 4 points.

The above costs are cumulative. You must check the space in front of a skill before marking any of the boxes after it (unless the skill has already been checked because of your profession). The costs are summarized on the Skill Point Cost table.

Be sure to spend all your skill points. Any unused points are lost--they cannot be saved for later.

Example: Adding up his professor's mental attributes, Keith gets a total of 40. Dividing it in half, he finds he has 20 skill points to increase his mental skills. He puts a check in front of the following skills: Search, Bargain, Sincerity, Bureaucracy, Cultures, Languages, Medical, Xeno-biology and Driving. The cost equals 9 times 1 point per skill = 9 points.

He then checks the first box next to the following skills: Persuade, Question, Bureaucracy and Medical. Two of the skills, Persuade and Question, already had checks in front of them because of his profession. The cost equals 4 times 2 points per skill = 8 points. So far, he has spent 9 + 8 = 17 points, and has 3 remaining. He spends the remaining 3 points to check the second box next to Medical.

Now Keith totals his physical attributes and divides the result in half. He has 18 / 2 = 9 skill points to increase his physical skills.

He puts a check in front of the following skills: Dodge, Stealth, Unlock, Run and Pistol. The cost equals 5 times 1 point per skill = 5 points.

He then checks the first box next to Unlock and Pistol, for a cost of 2 times 2 points per skill = 4 points. He has spent a total of 5 + 4 = 9 points.

Skill Point Cost

| Advancement | Skill Level | Cost (cumulative) |
|-------------------------|-------------|-------------------|
| Skill is unchecked | Untrained | 0 points |
| Check in front of skill | Novice | 1 point |
| First box checked | Experienced | 2 points |
| Second box checked | Expert | 3 points |
| Third box checked | Master | 4 points |

What's Next?

After determining your character's skills, turn to Chapter 4: Other Characteristics for more information on your character's combat abilities, appearance, personality and background.

Using Skills

If your referee asks you to roll one of your character's skills, you must take the following steps:

- Find the skill on your character sheet. Skills are arranged in alphabetical order below the attributes that govern them.
- If there is not a check mark in front of the skill, then you are untrained in that area. Roll against the governing attribute divided in half, rounding any fractions up. This is where all those half-attributes you calculated earlier will come in handy.
- If there is a check, then you are trained in that area. Roll against the governing attribute. You gain +1 die for every box following the skill that is checked (if any are).

Example: Perkins is trying to convince a guard that he belongs in a restricted area because he's a high ranking official on a surprise inspection. His referee asks him to roll his Lie skill to see if the guard believes him.

Looking at his character sheet, Perkins finds the Lie skill listed under Cunning. It is checked and so are two boxes after it. He rolls a number of dice equal to his Cunning + 2.

His Cunning is 4, and with +2 for his lie skill, it brings the total to 6. He rolls six six-sided dice, getting 1, 3, 4, 6, 6, and 6. Ignoring the numbers over three, the total roll is $1 + 3 = 4$, a Poor result.

Example: The rebel guard fires a submachine gun at Perkins. Wisely, he declares he's diving out the nearest window. The referee asks Perkins to make a Dodge roll. He locates his Dodge skill under Agility. It is unchecked, so he rolls a number of dice equal to his Agility divided in half.

His Agility is 6, divided in half brings it to 3. He rolls three six-sided dice, getting 2, 3, and 4. His total is $2 + 3 = 5$, a Passable result. The referee says he made it out the window before the guard could hit him.

UNUSUAL SKILL USE

Sometimes, your referee may ask you to modify an attribute by a skill that normally adjusts a different attribute.

Example: Perkins jams his pistol firing at a swarm of insect-like creatures sent special delivery from Xenos, courtesy of Isabella Bayne. He tries to field strip his pistol to unjam it. The referee asks him to roll his Mechanical attribute adjusted for his Pistol skill.

Perkins has a Mechanical of 5 and his Pistol skill has a check in front of it and a check after it. He rolls 6 dice to unjam his gun, 5 for his Mechanical attribute and +1 for his Pistol skill. He gets 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 6, for a total of $2 + 3 = 5$, a Passable result. The referee tells him it will take a full turn to unjam his pistol . . . if he lives so long.

ABILITY SHORTHAND

In these rules, the term “abilities” refers to both skills and attributes. Throughout this manual, we use a shorthand method for noting ability rolls. It looks like this: (Strength - Passable). This means to roll the ability called for and subtract the value of the specified level. If the result is negative, treat it as zero. The values of the various levels are shown on the Conversion table found on every character sheet. So, (Strength - Passable) means to roll Strength and subtract 5 from the result.

Example: During a struggle, Perkins' kit bursts open and ammunition spills onto the floor. Afterward, he wants to recover his bullets. The referee decides that he will find (Search - Poor) x 3 bullets. Perkins rolls Superior on his Search. Since Superior equals 8 on the Conversion table, and Poor equals 4, Perkins recover $(8 - 4) \times 3 = 12$ bullets. If he had rolled Poor or less, he would not have found any bullets at all.

Example: Perkins is hit by a stun stick that knocks him out for (Great - Stamina) minutes. He rolls Passable on his Stamina. Since Great equals 7 and Passable equals 5, he is knocked out for $(7 - 5) = 2$ minutes. If he had rolled Great or better, he would not have been affected by the stun stick.

Ability Descriptions

This is an alphabetical listing of all the skills and attributes. The use of an ability takes a certain amount of time. Some abilities, such as combat skills, can be used in a single six-second turn. Others take longer. Research in a library can take hours to accomplish. The referee is the final arbitrator as to how long a skill takes to use.

The attribute in parentheses after the skill's name is the attribute it normally modifies.

[In the original 1994 rulebook, the player's section contained an abbreviated skill list. Full descriptions were reserved for the referee's section. For simplicity and playability, these two skill lists have been consolidated into this single, comprehensive catalog. —JW.]

ACROBATICS (AGILITY)

Acrobatics is used for tumbling, tightrope walking, swinging from a chandelier and performing other acts of derring-do. If you attempted to do a back flip out a window, you would use Acrobatics to determine the outcome.

ACTING (CUNNING)

This skill allows you to impersonate someone else's voice, gestures and mannerisms. If you try to pass yourself off as a guard, you needs a successful

Acting roll. A good disguise is usually necessary when impersonating a known person. To test whether an impersonation is effective, you must make an Acting roll versus the Alertness of anyone who interacts with you.

AGILITY (ATTRIBUTE)

Agility reflects your balance, physical grace and limberness. It's used when dancing, squeezing through a narrow space, or wiggling free from bondage. You can kick an object (Agility - Poor) x 3 feet.

AIM (DEXTERITY)

This is your hand-eye coordination and accuracy with thrown objects. It's used when throwing a grapnel or tossing an item to a friend. It can even be used to hurl a grenade. It is not used to throw other weapons (use the appropriate weapon skill instead).

AIRCRAFT (MECHANICAL)

This skill is used when repairing or piloting a fixed wing aircraft. An Aircraft roll is required at take off and landing. Otherwise, a roll is required only when you attempt a special maneuver or when flying under difficult circumstances. For instance, making a turn at high speeds would require you to make an Aircraft roll to avoid losing control of your plane. During a chase, an Aircraft roll might be used to determine whether you escape pursuit or are caught.

ALERTNESS (ATTRIBUTE)

Use Alertness to see or notice things. If you are specifically looking for something, the Search skill is used instead. The roll required for an Alertness roll is usually two or three levels higher than a corresponding Search roll would be. Distance, light, and weather conditions can affect the outcome of an Alertness roll.

Failing an Alertness roll may result in you being ambushed by a foe and losing your first attack

while you recover from your surprise. On the following turn, you may react normally.

The referee may ask you to make an Alertness roll if your character has the possibility of noticing something that is not obvious. If you are specifically looking for a hidden object or person, use the Search skill instead.

ARCHERY (WEAPONS)

Use this skill to fire a bow or crossbow. It may be used to hunt or compete in an archery contest. Instead of adding to an attribute, weapon skills add to the weapon's Accuracy. A character without the Archery skill must divide his Accuracy with a bow in half.

ARTISTRY (CUNNING)

Artistry is used in all creative endeavors, such as painting, sculpting or writing poetry. Both the skill's score and the players are used to determine the quality of creative work. If a character with a high Artistry draws a picture and rolls Unbelievable, the picture is a masterpiece. Conversely, an Inferior Artistry roll with a below average Artistry skill indicates that the character could only make childish scrawls. This skill is important when drawing maps or writing accurate descriptions.

ATHLETICS (STAMINA)

This skill shows how good you are at sports. It is used when skiing, skydiving, surfing, water-skiing or performing any similar activity.

BARGAIN (CHARM)

Bargain is used to negotiate with others, make bribes and develop compromises. A successful Bargain roll will make everyone feel like they've come out ahead. By bargaining, you can purchase an item for (Bargain - Unbelievable) x 10% of its list price, or sell an item for (Bargain) x 10% of its list price.

BLADE (WEAPONS)

This skill is used to make attacks with a sword or other edged slashing weapon. Knives and broken bottles are considered blades. Instead of adding to an attribute, weapon skills add to the weapon's Accuracy. A character without the Blade skill must divide his Accuracy with a knife in half.

BOATS (MECHANICAL)

This skill is used when piloting a speedboat or similar water craft (including a raft, rowboat, canoe or sailboat). A Boats roll is required to start the craft. Otherwise, a roll is required only when you are attempting a maneuver or are piloting under difficult circumstances. For instance, steering a boat in rough seas would require a Boats roll to avoid capsizing. During a chase, a Boats roll might be used to determine whether you escape pursuit or are caught. The Boats skill also reflects a character's seamanship, but it does not indicate camaraderie with crew members. You may need to use another skill to prevent a mutiny, or convince fellow sailors to obey you. The Boats skill can also be used to repair water craft.

BODY THROW (STRENGTH)

This skill is used to knock an opponent down, or hurl someone out a window. You may throw an opponent (Body Throw - RR) x 2 feet. If thrown more than 2 feet, the victim automatically falls down, but on a Feeble roll you fall down. The RR equals the target's Strength or Agility, whichever is higher. This may be used to maneuver a foe into a bad position (out of a room or down a flight of stairs) or to give you enough room to flee.

BOTANY (KNOWLEDGE)

This covers the knowledge of plants and herbs, their properties and where to find them. You must roll Botany versus the rarity of a plant to recognize it. Some plants may have medicinal or poisonous properties. The Botany skill is not used to obtain food; this is reserved for the Forage skill.

BULLY (STRENGTH)

You use your Bully skill when you try to intimidate others, but intimidation wears off fast. Bullying makes enemies, not friends, and a Catastrophic result means you have made an enemy and you may have a fight on his hands. Bullying includes threats of violence, and is most effective against the helpless (such as slaves or prisoners) or brutal, stupid folk who believe that bullying is a sign of authority. A Bully roll may be enhanced if you can back your threats with a show of strength or cruelty.

BUREAUCRACY (KNOWLEDGE)

This skill covers your understanding of procedures and your ability to interact with bureaucrats. It's used to fill out paperwork and to know which permits are needed to get something done in a corporate or government office.

BUSINESS (KNOWLEDGE)

This skill covers running a business, getting credit, assessing the value of an item and investing money wisely. A successful Business roll will allow you to read and interpret accounting records and receipt books. This is a good way of finding out how someone earned their money, and how they spent it.

CAVES (KNOWLEDGE)

This skill is used to detect earthquake faults, cave areas and landslide zones. It includes spelunking, the detection of underground passages and the ability to ascertain if cave formations are natural or man-made.

CHARM (ATTRIBUTE)

This is your character's charisma, manners and style. It's the impression you make on others, and your ability to make friends.

CHEMISTRY (KNOWLEDGE)

This skill reflects your understanding of chemical properties and interactions, including molecular and organic chemistry. However, it does not grant a knowledge of pharmaceuticals (use the Pharmacy skill instead).

CLIMB (STRENGTH)

This skill is needed for climbing walls, cliffs and other steep surfaces. Climbing stairs or ladders does not require a Climb roll unless there are extenuating circumstances, such as climbing a ladder covered in oil.

The referee sets the roll required depending on the distance being scaled and the condition of the surface. Climbing a twenty foot cliff with many hand-holds and crannies might take only a Passable roll, while ascending a 100 foot tower wall might take a Superior roll. The RR is reduced by 1 if the character is using a rope.

The greater your success, the faster you will climb the surface. Failure means you fall (RR - Climb) x 10 feet, up to the distance being scaled. The distance you fall determines the amount of damage you take, as shown on the Falling table. If the Climb roll equals the RR, you are stuck half way up the surface.

Example: Perkins tries to climb a 30' wall. The referee sets the RR at Passable. Perkins rolls Inferior, which means he climbed 20 feet before losing his grip and plummeting back to earth. He takes Good x 4 damage. His Defense roll is Poor, and so he takes 8 points of damage, a light wound.

Falling

| Distance | Damage |
|----------|----------------|
| 10'-19' | Passable x 3 |
| 20'-29' | Good x 4 |
| 30'-39' | Good x 5 |
| 40'-49' | Great x 5 |
| 50'-59' | Great x 6 |
| 60'-69' | Superior x 6 |
| 70'-79' | Superior x 7 |
| 80'-89' | Awesome x 7 |
| 90'-99' | Incredible x 7 |
| 100'+ | Amazing x 7 |

COMMUNICATIONS (MECHANICAL)

This is your ability to operate and repair communication equipment, including anything from a walkie-talkie to an advanced satellite system.

COMPUTERS (MECHANICAL)

This is your ability to operate and repair computers. It can be used to gain information from a computer database, or write a simple program. Altering an existing computer program is very difficult and time consuming.

CONCEAL (CUNNING)

Conceal is used to hide things. This could be as simple as tucking an object into a coat pocket, or as elaborate as smuggling a political dissident out of the country. Conceal is also used to camouflage a character. The camouflage remains effective as long as the character doesn't move. Moving while concealed requires a Stealth roll.

CULTURES (KNOWLEDGE)

This is your knowledge of the customs and politics of various communities. It's useful when dealing with people from divergent nationalities. On Xenos, it helps you to deduce the acceptable behavior in unfamiliar circumstances.

CUNNING (ATTRIBUTE)

This attribute rates how devious and sly your character is. It's used when cheating, fast-talking and committing other acts of deceit. It does not include out-and-out lying, which is a separate skill. Cunning is also used when trying to misdirect or manipulate someone with innuendo or psychological tricks. It's used to fake emotions such as respect and devotion. It also rates your character's creativity.

CYBERTECH (MECHANICAL)

This is your knowledge of cybernetics, the combining of machines and humans. While the actual installation of cybernetic parts requires surgery and hospitalization, the Cybertech skill can be used to repair a defective limb or diagnose a problem.

DEMOLITIONS (MECHANICAL)

The Demolitions skill is used to plant explosives for the maximum effect. It can also be used to deactivate a bomb.

DEXTERITY (ATTRIBUTE)

This skill rates your ability to work with your hands. Tying and untying knots, building a fire, catching a ball, weaving a basket and drawing a weapon are all examples of Dexterity.

DIRECTION (KNOWLEDGE)

You sense of direction will help you determine which way is north, or how to get from one town to another when the signpost is down. It includes the use of directional locating devices, including anything from a compass to a satellite locator. At night, a character studies the stars to determine where she is and the direction she wishes to travel. During the day, she uses the position of the sun, the wind and the growth of moss on trees to guide her. When at sea, the currents and water temperature may help her stay on course. Underground, the Caves skill is used.

DISGUISE (CUNNING)

This skill governs your ability to create disguises. It can be used to make a character look like a different person, or to help a character blend in with a crowd. Taking on the guise of a specific person is difficult to do and the imitator's build must match the person being imitated. To test whether a Disguise is effective, roll Disguise versus the Alertness of anyone who is closely examining

the character. The Disguise roll is made at the time the character is examined, not at the time the Disguise is applied. It is made using the skill of the character who applied the Disguise.

DODGE (AGILITY)

Dodge is used to escape combat, avoid a falling object, or evade an attacker. A character who dives out of the way of a stampeding horse would make a Dodge roll.

You can dodge to avoid being hit in combat. On the turn you dodge, you cannot be hit by any opponent with an Accuracy less than or equal to your Dodge roll. If the Dodge is Catastrophic, you stumble and must roll Passable on Agility or else fall down. On a turn that you dodge, you can do nothing else. If you have already attacked, you cannot dodge.

DRIVING (MECHANICAL)

This skill is used to drive a car, truck or similar land vehicle. Usually a roll is required only when you are attempting a maneuver under difficult circumstances. For instance, making a hairpin curve at high speeds would require a Driving roll to avoid rolling the car. During a chase, a Driving roll might be used to determine whether a character escapes pursuit or is caught.

ELECTRONICS (MECHANICAL)

This is your ability to operate and repair most electronic devices. It does not include electronics that are covered by other skills. For instance, it cannot be used to repair a computer or robot since they are covered by the Computers and Robotics skills, respectively.

ENERGY CANNON (WEAPONS)

This skill is used to make attacks with the largest plasma guns, ion beams and other energy weapons. On Earth, Advanced energy weapons are extremely rare and frequently experimental, but on Xenos, psychotronic energy weapons are common. Instead of adding to an attribute, weapon skills add

to the weapon's Accuracy. A character without the appropriate skill must divide his Accuracy in half.

ENERGY PISTOL (WEAPONS)

This skill is used to make attacks with pistol-sized energy weapons. Instead of adding to an attribute, weapon skills add to the weapon's Accuracy. A character without the appropriate skill must divide his Accuracy in half.

ENERGY RIFLE (WEAPONS)

This skill is used to make attacks with rifle-sized energy weapons. Instead of adding to an attribute, weapon skills add to the weapon's Accuracy. A character without the appropriate skill must divide his Accuracy in half.

ENTERTAIN (CHARM)

This covers your ability to sing, tell jokes, dance professionally, play an instrument, tell stories and otherwise entertain.

ETIQUETTE (KNOWLEDGE)

This skill enables you to know the appropriate behavior in social situations. This is an important skill in avoiding social blunders. It's useful in functioning well at anything from a party to a ceremony.

FATE (ATTRIBUTE)

Fate measures your overall fortunes. It's generally used when the referee wants to make an arbitrary decision. How many bullets does the soldier have left in his rifle? Roll Fate. Who will the monster attack next? Roll Fate. On whose watch did the raiders attack? Roll Fate.

FILCH (DEXTERITY)

This is used to pick a pocket, or steal something without getting caught. The referee sets the roll

required according to the Alertness of nearby people, the size of the item and the security of the area. The better your Filch roll, the more you can get away with. Failure means you get nothing or are caught in the act.

FLAMER (WEAPONS)

This skill is used to attack with flame throwers and incinerators. Instead of adding to an attribute, weapon skills add to the weapon's Accuracy. A character without the appropriate skill must divide his Accuracy in half.

FLEXIBLE (WEAPONS)

Characters roll against this skill to attack with flexible weapons, including whips, chains and flails. Flexible weapons may not parry or be parried (except by shields). Some flexible weapons can be used as makeshift ropes. Instead of adding to an attribute, weapon skills add to the weapon's Accuracy. A character without the appropriate skill must divide his Accuracy in half.

FORAGE (STAMINA)

This covers your ability to obtain food and water. In a country setting, it includes hunting and trapping small animals, fishing and collecting fruit, roots, mushrooms and edible grubs. In a city, Forage is used when rooting through garbage for discarded food, begging (for food, not money), or finding a charity soup kitchen. You can feed (Forage - Passable) characters per day with this skill. Extra food may be saved for later consumption.

FORGERY (DEXTERITY)

This skill is used to forge signatures, create false documents, counterfeit money and copy works of art. To create a successful forgery, you will need a Good Forgery roll as well as the genuine item to copy from. Increase the roll required to Superior if you are attempting to make a Forgery based on memory. Increase it to Inhuman if you have never seen the original. Alertness adjusted for Forgery is used when you are trying to detect a forgery.

GAMBLING (CUNNING)

Gambling is used to determine your luck when gambling. This skill is a knowledge of typical gambling styles and an instinctive understanding of the odds. If you try to cheat by dealing from the bottom of the deck or using other slight of hand, you must make a Gambling roll based on Dexterity instead of Cunning.

GEOLOGY (KNOWLEDGE)

The Geology skill allows you to locate mineral deposits, fault zones and hazardous terrain. You can use Geology to determine where a certain kind of stone came from. It's also helpful in identifying building materials.

GRAPPLE (STRENGTH)

Use Grapple to try and grab a foe, either to pin them or, on Xenos, to take over their body. The target is held (Grapple - RR) turns. The RR equals the target's Strength or Agility, whichever is higher. At the end of this time, another Grapple roll is needed to keep the target restrained. If the Grapple roll is 5 over the victim's Strength, they are pinned until released.

GRENADE LAUNCHER (DEXTERITY)

This is your accuracy with grenade launchers. Instead of adding to an attribute, weapon skills add to the weapon's Accuracy. A character without the appropriate skill must divide his Accuracy in half.

GUNNERY (WEAPONS)

This is your knowledge of large, vehicle mounted guns such as a tank's cannon or a ship's gun. It is also used to fire a howitzer. Instead of adding to an attribute, weapon skills add to the weapon's Accuracy. A character without the appropriate skill must divide his Accuracy in half.

HAFTED (WEAPONS)

This skill is used whenever you attack with a hafted weapon. Axes, maces and other weapons with long handles are examples of hafted weapons. So are most blunt makeshift weapons, such as clubs, chairs or brass spittoons. Instead of adding to an attribute, weapon skills add to the weapon's Accuracy. A character without the appropriate skill must divide his Accuracy in half.

HELICOPTERS (MECHANICAL)

This skill is used to repair or pilot a helicopter or similar rotor craft. A Helicopters roll is required to take off and land. Otherwise, a roll is made only when you are attempting a maneuver or are flying under difficult circumstances. During a chase, a Helicopters roll might be used to determine whether you escape pursuit or are caught.

HISTORY (KNOWLEDGE)

A knowledge of history can help you remember pertinent facts about a specific place, item or person. The amount of information gained depends upon the skill roll and the referee's inclinations.

HOVERCRAFT (MECHANICAL)

This skill is used when repairing or driving a hovercraft or similar vehicle. A Hovercraft roll is required to start the vehicle. Otherwise, a roll is needed only when you are attempting a maneuver under difficult circumstances. For instance, making a hairpin curve at high speeds would require a Hovercraft roll to avoid flipping the vehicle. During a chase, a Hovercraft roll might be used to determine whether you escape pursuit or is caught.

INTERROGATE (WILLPOWER)

Interrogation is used to extract information from an unwilling victim. It includes the threat of physical abuse, and the demonstrated conviction to employ torture. Whereas the Question skill makes

the victim eager to share information, the interrogate skill makes the victim afraid not to.

JUMP (AGILITY)

You can leap (Jump) x 2 feet. Reduce the distance in half if you do not have a running start. If you try to jump over a pit but barely make it, you might fall down on the far side. Barely failing will leave you hanging from the far edge. You must roll Passable on Strength to pull yourself out--or else fall in.

KNOCKOUT (STRENGTH)

This skill is used to incapacitate an opponent with a single blow to a vulnerable area. The victim is knocked out for (Knockout - RR) x 2 turns. The RR equals the target's Stamina plus half their Agility.

KNOWLEDGE (ATTRIBUTE)

Knowledge measures your level of education and the amount of general information you know. A high Knowledge rating makes you especially good at playing trivia games.

LANGUAGES (KNOWLEDGE)

This is your ability to speak, learn and understand foreign languages. It's used to interpret local slang and secret codes. Languages is used for both spoken and written communication. A Pathetic or Catastrophic roll may result in a completely misunderstood message.

LAW (KNOWLEDGE)

The Law skill enables you to know general legal principles, precedents and procedures. The amount of information gained depends upon the skill roll and the referee's inclinations.

LEADERSHIP (CHARM)

This skill is used to give commands. It can be used to take charge of a situation, either by barking orders or inspiring others to follow. For this skill to work, the subjects must have a reason to follow. Either you are their acknowledged leader or, in the case of an emergency, they lack any other source of leadership.

LIE (CUNNING)

Lie is used whenever you lies to an NPC or companion. A high Lie roll means you can tell tall tales and be believed. Lie is generally used to fast talk one's way out of (or into!) trouble. Lying always entails speech. Lying can be used to con people into believing something or into doing something that is not necessarily in their best interest.

LISTEN (ALERTNESS)

Used primarily when eavesdropping, Listen can also be used to distinguish garbled sounds. Use it to see if a character notices the approaching footsteps of a guard. But don't rely too much on this skill. Normal sounds can be easily heard by anyone who isn't too distracted.

MACHINE GUN (WEAPONS)

This skill is used to fire a machine gun (but not a submachine gun). Instead of adding to an attribute, weapon skills add to the weapon's Accuracy. A character without the appropriate skill must divide his Accuracy in half.

MECHANICAL (ATTRIBUTE)

This is your understanding of complex machines. Make a Mechanical roll to use a complicated mechanical device. An unsuccessful roll indicates that you cannot operate the device correctly. A Catastrophic roll may mean the item is damaged. You can also use this attribute to identify an unfamiliar device and to discover how it operates.

MEDICAL (KNOWLEDGE)

The medical skill is used to diagnose diseases and to tend the sick and injured. Unsuccessful Medical rolls can result in misdiagnosis. A Medical roll is needed to determine whether a foe is dead, unconscious or merely playing possum. It can also be used to deduce how a character died and how long ago.

Most importantly, the Medical skill is used to heal injured characters. The healer must have bandages or other first aid equipment. The patient rolls his body's Stamina adjusted for the Medical skill of the healer. He recovers (Stamina - Passable) levels of injury. Only wounds that have been received since the last time the character was treated may be healed. After being healed, players should put an "X" through the remaining wounds to show that they may not be healed by future Medical rolls, although they may still be restored through natural healing.

MEMORY (KNOWLEDGE)

Memory is used when a character is trying to remember something complex. The character's Memory roll indicates the amount of information recalled and its accuracy. Characters do not make Memory rolls to remember mundane things such as their names or how to tie their shoes. Use it when a character tries to recall something they have seen or heard only briefly, such as a map glimpsed in a general's hand or the plans of an enemy heard through a door.

MORTAR (DEXTERITY)

This skill is used to launch a mortar or other indirect fire artillery.

MOTORCYCLES (MECHANICAL)

This skill is used to repair or drive a motorcycle, bicycle or similar land vehicle. Usually a roll is required only when the character is attempting a maneuver under difficult circumstances. For instance, a character making a hairpin curve at high speeds would have to make a

Motorcycle roll to avoid rolling his bike. During a chase, it can determine whether the character escapes or is caught.

PARRY (DEXTERITY)

A character who has been hit by a non-missile attack can try to deflect the blow by making a Parry roll. The character must be holding a shield or other object capable of blocking the attack. For instance, a knife could not be used to block a two-handed sword, but it could block a small hatchet. If the Parry roll is greater than the Attack, the blow is parried. Otherwise, the parry has no effect. A character who parries cannot perform any other action on the same turn. Since a parry counts as the character's action, he cannot parry if he has already attacked.

PERSUADE (CHARM)

This skill is used to sway an individual or a group by playing on their emotions. It can be used to persuade an individual to accept an idea or certain course of action.

PHARMACY (KNOWLEDGE)

This skill covers the recognition of drugs and an understanding of their side effects and interactions. This skill is used to prescribe medication.

PHYSICS (KNOWLEDGE)

Grants an understanding of natural phenomena. The scientific knowledge is theoretical, not experimental or practical. An understanding of physics may help a character understand the theory under which an automobile works, but it won't help the physicist to operate or repair the car.

PISTOL (WEAPONS)

This skill is used to attack with a pistol, revolver or other handgun. Instead of adding to an attribute, weapon skills add to the weapon's

Accuracy. A character without the appropriate skill must divide his Accuracy in half.

POISONS (KNOWLEDGE)

This is the character's ability to prepare and apply poisons and their antidotes. Poison may be extracted from plants, animals, snakes, spiders and other poisonous creatures. Extracting poison from animals is usually a dangerous process. A failure indicates that the character has been bitten, stung or otherwise poisoned. Metallic poisons, such as arsenic are also covered by this skill.

POLE ARM (WEAPONS)

This skill is used to attack with a long thrusting or slashing weapon, such as a spear. The advantage of a pole arm is in its length, allowing it to be used through a barricade or from the second rank of fighters in battle. Instead of adding to an attribute, weapon skills add to the weapon's Accuracy. A character without the appropriate skill must divide his Accuracy in half.

PSYCHIATRY (KNOWLEDGE)

This skill represents a knowledge of psychoanalysis. By studying an NPC, a character may be able to distinguish criminal tendencies or psychotic behavior. Psychiatry can also be used to calm a disturb individual, or to gain useful information from a ranting lunatic.

QUESTION (CHARM)

Question is used to gain information from a reluctant source. Use it to wheedle state secrets out of a spy, or to find out why the tight-lipped villagers are afraid to go out on the moors at night. It determines how much useful information is obtained. Information may only be obtained from intelligent life forms. In addition, both the victim and the questioner must be able to understand one another. During a formal interrogation of a prisoner, the Interrogate skill is used instead.

A Poor Question roll might result in little or useless information, or the foe being questioned

may lie. The referee may wish to make Question rolls in secret to keep the players guessing. Don't overuse the Question skill--most foes will readily answer questions. Constantly requiring rolls will bog down an adventure.

QUICKNESS (AGILITY)

This skill represents a character's speed and reflexes. It is used to determine if a character can react before some event occurs. Use it to draw a weapon before an opponent, or to grab an item before it falls out a window. Quickness may also be used to decide which player can act first during a turn. The players involved both roll their Quickness. The high roller goes first.

REPAIR (MECHANICAL)

Repair can be used to fix any common mechanical device that is not covered by another skill. This includes replacing a car tire or fixing a broken lock, but repairing a damaged airplane would take the Aircraft skill. Repair can allow a character to jerry rig something until it can be fixed properly. Of course, she'll need the proper tools and materials. A repair job can take anywhere from a few minutes to a few days, depending on the character's skill roll. The referee must set the roll required depending on the complexity of the item being repaired, and how badly it has been damaged. Some broken objects are beyond repair.

Armor needs frequent repair. The roll required and typical time required depend upon the damage level being fixed, as shown on the Armor Repair table. For every point rolled over the RR, reduce the time required by 1/10th.

Armor Repair

| Damage | RR | Time |
|---------------|-----------|-------------|
| Light | Passable | 1 hour |
| Medium | Good | 2 hour |
| Heavy | Great | 4 hours |
| Critical | Superior | 8 hours |
| Deadly | Awesome | 16 hours |

RESEARCH (KNOWLEDGE)

Use the this skill to determine how much information a character gains when he is doing research at a library or hall of records. The time required depends on the roll and the amount of material being researched. If the character is searching for information in a single book, it could be done in a few hours, but researching an entire library could take days.

RIDE (STRENGTH)

This is the ability to ride any mount. Anyone can sit on a horse as it walks, but to stay on while galloping or in combat requires a roll against the character's Ride skill. If two or more people ride an animal, one should be designated the pilot. A character can ride (Ride) x 40 feet per turn, and travel (Ride) x 5 miles per day over open terrain.

RIFLE (WEAPONS)

This skill is used to fire a rifle, carbine or assault rifle. Instead of adding to an attribute, weapon skills add to the weapon's Accuracy. A character without the appropriate skill must divide his Accuracy in half.

ROBOTICS (MECHANICAL)

This is a character's ability to operate, repair and program robots. Use it to alter the programming of a robot, or to deactivate a rampaging Ôdroid. The robots in Khaotic are rarely humanoid. Most are like the industrial robots in use today: large machines with a limited routine.

ROCKET (WEAPONS)

This skill is used to fire a bazooka or other portable rocket launcher. Instead of adding to an attribute, weapon skills add to the weapon's Accuracy. A character without the appropriate skill must divide his Accuracy in half.

RUN (STAMINA)

This skill is used for sprinting as well as marching or hiking cross country. Assume a character can sprint (Run) x 20 feet per turn and hike (Run) x 3 miles per day along a road, or (Run) miles cross country. Always adjust your character's speed due to rough terrain, inclement weather or heavy burdens.

A successful Run roll will allow you to attack after charging into combat.

During a chase, both the pursuer and the pursued make a Run roll each. Whoever rolls higher achieves their goal, whether it's catching up with the other character or getting away. The greater the column difference, the more quickly it is accomplished.

If you are racing a time limit, the referee sets a roll required to beat the clock. If two characters are trying to get out of a building before the roof caves in, the referee can simply decide that the characters need a Good Run roll to get out without injury.

SANITY (WILLPOWER)

This skill measures your resistance to insanity. When you are confronted by extremely dangerous situations, the referee may require you to make a Sanity Check. The roll required depends on the degree of personal danger and the proximity of the threat.

If you make the Sanity roll, you grit your teeth and swallow your fear. But if you roll under the RR, you panic for x squared turns, where x is the number of columns by which you missed the roll.

A panicked character can do only one of the following (player's choice): Stand paralyzed with fear, flee in terror, faint, cry, whimper, scream or huddle in a corner. A character can be slapped or shaken out of his panic.

On a Catastrophic Sanity roll, you suppresses all memories of the event that frightened you. If reminded of the event, you refuse to believe it. In addition, if the referee feels the event was traumatizing enough, you may gain a phobia related to the event.

SEARCH (ALERTNESS)

Search is used when you are actively looking for something hidden, such as a secret door, a letter stashed in a desk, a trap or even tracks. Often, no roll is needed. If you search in just the right place, you should automatically find anything that is hidden there.

Search is also used to find, salvage or scrounge up equipment that might otherwise not be found. A referee may even allow you to Search a city for a weapons shop.

The referee may wish to make Search rolls for the players to keep the results hidden from them. On a successful Search, the character finds the hidden object, or if there is no object, the character is certain there is nothing to be found. On a failed Search roll, the character is certain there is nothing to be found whether there is or not. Optionally, the referee may have the character find a misleading clue she thinks is important, when it is actually a red herring.

SECURITY (MECHANICAL)

This is your ability to operate, repair and circumvent security systems. It can be used to deactivate an alarm, or set up a perimeter defense system to protect an encampment.

SEDUCTION (CHARM)

This skill is used to seduce a person into wanting physical intimacies. The victim's passions can then be used in further bargaining or for a few hours of enjoyment.

There are several levels of seduction that can be attempted. The "look" is used to gain a target's attention. The RR is Passable. Failure means you are ignored.

"Witty conversation" is used to engage the target in flirtatious banter. It has a roll required equal to the target's Cunning. Failure means the victim is offended or unimpressed. Success grants an immediate familiarity with the victim. In an effort to impress the seducer, the victim may be vulnerable to revealing secret information.

"The question" is used to move the seduction to a physical level. It has a roll required equal to the

target's Willpower. Leading a victim on without popping the question can cause resentment, frustration and outright hostility.

SHADOW (CUNNING)

This skill is used to follow someone without being seen. It doesn't matter whether it's done in a car, ship or on foot. When shadowing someone, a Shadow roll is required as long as the victim is in sight, otherwise the Track skill is used. You can follow a target for (Shadow - Alertness) x 10 minutes without being noticed before another roll is required. Failure means detection. Following within thrown range increases the roll required by +1.

SHOTGUN (WEAPONS)

This skill is used to fire a shotgun. Instead of adding to an attribute, weapon skills add to the weapon's Accuracy. A character without the appropriate skill must divide his Accuracy in half.

SINCERITY (CHARM)

Uses Sincerity to convince others that you are telling the truth. This is different from the Lie skill, because Sincerity can only be used if you are telling the truth (or what you believe to be the truth). It is a combination of credibility, innocence and honesty. Even if a Sincerity roll is successful, an NPC does not necessarily have to follow through with a suggested action. A Persuade or Bully roll may be called for as well.

SMG (WEAPONS)

This skill is used to fire a submachine gun. It is not used to fire heavy machine guns (they require the Machine Gun skill). Instead of adding to an attribute, weapon skills add to the weapon's Accuracy. A character without the appropriate skill must divide his Accuracy in half.

SNIPER (WEAPONS)

This skill is used to fire a sniper rifle. Sniping is different from other uses of a rifle. The effects of bullet drop, wind and target movement are all exaggerated in sniping, and must be accounted for by the sniper. The gun sights also require precision calibration for the targeted range. Instead of adding to an attribute, weapon skills add to the weapon's Accuracy. A character without the appropriate skill must divide his Accuracy in half.

STAMINA (ATTRIBUTE)

Stamina measures your endurance and ability to withstand adverse conditions. It is used when resisting disease or poison, recovering from wounds, or regaining consciousness. You must make a Stamina roll to survive starvation, blistering desert conditions or arctic cold. The longer you are exposed to the harsh conditions, the greater the roll required to survive.

STEALTH (AGILITY)

This is your ability to move on foot without being noticed. It is used when hiding or sneaking up on someone. Since characters cannot counterattack during the turn in which they are surprised, a successful Stealth roll can give you the advantage you need to subdue an opponent.

STREETWISE (CUNNING)

This skill covers your ability to locate a thief, fence, loan shark, or to learn of illegal activity in the area. Streetwise is also used when dealing with criminal types. A high Streetwise roll will gain acceptance; a low roll means you will be viewed with suspicion.

STRENGTH (ATTRIBUTE)

This is your physical power, used when trying to lift or carry heavy objects, break down locked doors, bend iron bars, dig a hole or perform any

other strenuous feat. The Lifting table gives some common RRs for hoisting heavy objects.

Lifting

| Weight | Roll Required |
|--------------|---------------|
| 30-50 lbs. | Inferior |
| 51-70 lbs. | Poor |
| 71-100 lbs. | Passable |
| 101-150 lbs. | Good |
| 151-200 lbs. | Great |
| 201-300 lbs. | Superior |
| 301+ lbs. | Awesome |

SURVEILLANCE (MECHANICAL)

This is your ability to operate, repair and circumvent surveillance devices. It can be used to operate a listening device, though planting the bug so it can't be found takes a Conceal roll.

SURVIVAL (KNOWLEDGE)

This is your knowledge of survival in hostile environments. It helps you know where to locate water, how to construct a shelter, build a fire or signal for help.

SWIM (STAMINA)

This is your ability to swim. It measures how quickly you move through the water, much as the Run skill measures land speed. It's also used to resist strong currents.

Normally characters can drown only on a Catastrophic roll. In swift moving rapids, rough seas or freezing water the possibility of drowning increases and is set by the referee. Each turn, a character who is drowning must roll Swim versus a roll required of Passable (in rough waters, the RR can be higher). If the roll is less than Passable, you must reduce your Swim by the difference. If the roll is over Passable, you reduce the roll required by the difference. If your Swim reaches zero or less you drown. If the roll required is reduced to zero, you recovers and can continue swimming.

If you have drowned but are pulled from the water within a few minutes, a Great Medical roll can revive you.

TAME (CHARM)

Tame is used to train animals and communicate with beasts on a very limited basis. This skill is more successful with domestic animals rather than wild creatures. Increase the RR by 2 when trying to tame a wild animal. Insects, fish and other low intelligence creatures are too stupid to train.

TANKS (MECHANICAL)

This skill is used to drive a tank, tractor or earth moving vehicle. A Tanks roll is required to start the vehicle and to control it. Firing a tank's guns takes a Gunnery roll.

THEOLOGY (KNOWLEDGE)

This is your knowledge of religions, myths and deities. You do not have to practice a religion to know about it.

TRACK (ALERTNESS)

Tracking is used to find, follow and interpret tracks and other signs of passage. It's used to follow someone or tell what happened in an area by the footprints left in the dirt.

The referee sets a roll required depending on the terrain and age of the tracks. You can follow the tracks for (Track - RR) hours before another tracking roll must be made. The referee may require you to make another Track roll if the person being followed climbed a tree or swam a river or took other evasive maneuvers.

In order for you to overtake your quarry, your Track roll must exceed the victim's Run by two or more. For example, to catch a foe with a Run of Good, you would need a Track roll of Superior.

TRAPS (MECHANICAL)

This skill is used to deactivate traps. Unless it is obvious, a trap must first be located with the Search skill. The referee sets the roll required to remove or circumvent the trap depending on its complexity.

The higher your success, the quicker you deactivate the trap (the time required can range from less than a minute to fifteen minutes). On a failed roll, you waste time unsuccessfully working on the trap, and on a very low roll, you accidentally set the trap off.

UNARMED (WEAPONS)

The success of martial arts are determined by the Unarmed skill. Instead of adding to an attribute, weapon skills add to the weapon's Accuracy. A character without the appropriate skill must divide his Accuracy in half. However, even without this skill, anyone can throw a punch. Your Accuracy with a punch equals your Dexterity, and your damage multiplier equals x1.

UNLOCK (DEXTERITY)

If something is locked, the Unlock skill is used to open it. This includes lock picking, safe cracking and even jimmying a window latch. The referee sets the roll required to open a lock depending on its complexity. The higher your success, the quicker you can open the lock (the time required can range from less than a minute to fifteen minutes). On a failed roll, you wastes time unsuccessfully working on the lock. Without the proper tools, the roll required for picking a lock should be at least Great.

WILLPOWER (ATTRIBUTE)

Willpower encompasses your self-awareness, self-control and confidence. It is used when resisting temptation, seduction, interrogation and mental torture. It frequently comes into play when resisting the persuasion of others and the mental manipulation of psychic forces.

XENO-BIOLOGY (KNOWLEDGE)

Xeno-biology is the study of alien life forms. By studying a specimen and making a Xeno-Biology roll, you can make an educated guess at the creature's abilities and weaknesses.

ZOOLOGY (KNOWLEDGE)

This is your knowledge of animals and their habits. It does not cover the ability to handle animals, which falls under the Tame skill. A

successful Zoology roll will allow you to deduce the habits, abilities and possible actions of any natural animal.

CHAPTER 4

OTHER CHARACTERISTICS

The Spawn were upon us before we had a chance to react. Rebecca, the convict in charge of our body, jumped when she should have ducked and we took a slug in the chest.

“Be careful!” I warned her. “This body’s gotta last us!”

“You take over,” she groaned. The pain from the wound was tasking her endurance.

“No time. Get us out of here, now! We can switch off once we put some distance between us and them.” To myself, I promised I’d personally show these Xenites the kind of damage a marine was capable of.

Wound Track

Your Stamina determines how many wounds you can take before being maimed or killed. There are five kinds of wounds: light (L), medium (M), heavy (H), critical (C) and deadly (D).

The Wound Track table shows the number of wounds a character can take based on his Stamina. For example, a character with a Stamina of 1 can take only one light wound before being incapacitated, while a character with a Stamina of 5 will not be incapacitated until taking a heavy wound

Find your Stamina rating on the Wound Track table and record on your character sheet (in the section labeled “Wound Track”) the types of wounds your character can take. Write the letters in the exact order they appear on the Wound Track table, one letter per space on the first row of your character’s track. The other rows are where you’ll record the tracks for your armor (see Chapter 6: Earth Gear). Letters in parentheses should be written down that way.

The wound track on your character sheet applies only to your character’s actual body. When

you take over a host body, you will use it’s wound track to record injuries. Your host’s wound track is written on a separate sheet of paper, called a body control sheet (there’s a blank sample at the end of this book).

Recalculate your wound track between missions to reflect changes to your Stamina. Do not recalculate your wound track during a mission.

Example: Keith’s character has a Stamina of 5. Looking at the Wound Track table, he sees he can take two light, two medium and one heavy wound before being incapacitated. On the first line of his wound track, Keith writes L L M M H.

RECORDING WOUNDS

Each time your character is injured, you must circle the corresponding letter on the wound track of your character sheet (when on Xenos, use the wound track of your host body). For instance, if you took heavy damage, you would circle the “H” on your wound track. If the appropriate wound level is already circled, you must circle the next highest unmarked wound level.

If the letter is in parentheses (), then do not circle it--you can take an unlimited number of wounds of that level. If you circle the right most wound level, your character is maimed. Tell your referee you've been maimed.

If the injury exceeds the right most wound level on your sheet, your character has been mortally wounded. Tell your referee. Your referee has information on what happens to maimed and mortally wounded characters.

For any wound you take, you can cross off a letter for your armor (if you're wearing any) instead of your body. The armor code must be equal to or greater than the damage you took. When a piece of armor is out of letters, it is ineffectual until repaired.

Example: Perkins has a wound track of L L M M H. During a fire fight, he takes two medium wounds. Later, he's knocked down a flight of stairs and takes another medium wound. Since both the Ms on his wound track are already circled, he takes a heavy wound instead. As he circles the H, he tells the referee he's been maimed.

Wound Track

| Stamina | Wounds |
|---------|---------------|
| 1 | L |
| 2 | LL |
| 3 | LLM |
| 4 | LLMM |
| 5 | LLMMH |
| 6 | LLMMHH |
| 7 | LLMMHHC |
| 8 | LLMMHHCC |
| 9 | LLMMHHCCD |
| 10 | LLMMHHCCDD |
| 11 | (L)MMHHCCDD |
| 12 | (L)(M)HHCCDD |
| 13 | (L)(M)(H)CCDD |

HEALING

Natural healing is a slow process. At the end of every day of complete rest, you may reduce your choice of one wound by one level. Erase the healed wound and circle the letter to the left of it on the wound track. If there is no letter to its left, then the wound is healed completely. If the letter to its left is already circled, the wound cannot be healed--pick a different one instead.

It is assumed that between missions, a character spends time recuperating from any injuries. All damage is erased from the character sheet. Attribute penalties due to mortal wounds are not recovered.

Example: Perkins has a wound track of L L M M H. He has one light wound and a medium wound. After one day of rest, he reduces the medium wound to light. The next day, he reduces the first light wound, healing it completely. The following day, he moves the remaining light wound one space to the left. On the fourth day of rest, he erases the final light wound from his character sheet. His is now completely recovered.

Carrying Capacity

The gear section of your character sheet is where you will list any equipment your character carries. Gear can be anything from a rocket launcher to a mechanical pencil.

Each item carried fills a slot in the Gear section of your character sheet. The total weight of the items your character can carry depends on your carrying capacity:

Carrying Capacity (in pounds) = Stamina x Strength

If you insist on carrying more weight than you can handle, you will be at -1 on all physical abilities. You can never carry more than twice your carrying capacity.

Example: Keith's professor has a Stamina of 5 and a Strength of 4. His Carrying Capacity is 5 x 4 = 20 pounds.

Appearance

You may either design your character's appearance yourself, or roll on the tables in this chapter. If you aren't comfortable with what you roll, feel free to roll again, or, for that matter, make up anything you like. You are not necessarily limited to the tables. As long as your appearance is accepted by the referee, you may be as outlandish as you like.

The same applies to your character's personality. You may either roll every aspect of your character, or simply create a personality yourself. If you already have a personality in mind, then don't follow the die rolls. They are meant merely as a stimulus for your imagination.

Here is an explanation of various characteristics. Record this data on your character sheet.

Sex Choose or roll the sex of your character. The rules make no distinction between males and females.

Age ISES requires jump-team volunteers to be between 18 and 33. Exceptions can be made by the referee.

Height The average male is about 5' 9". The average female is 5' 4".

Weight The average man weighs between 135 and 170 pounds. The average female weighs from 108 to 138 pounds. Actual weight is dependent upon the character's height.

Appearance Your character's overall appearance depends on your Charm, as shown on the Appearance table. Immediately recalculate your appearance whenever your Charm changes.

Eye Color, Hair Color If you roll a combination you deem unlikely, feel free to roll again.

Hair Style This is really a matter of personal choice, and may be changed between missions.

Values This is a quality or characteristic that your character admires or wishes to emulate.

Attitude Every character has an attitude to help define an emotional outlook. Attitudes serve as a guideline for role-playing. During play, your character will develop other traits as well.

Example: Keith now decides upon the appearance of his professor. He chooses to be male because it's easier for him to play a man. He rolls his age and gets a 3, which is an age of 18. Thinking how ridiculous an 18 year old professor would be, he

decides to make his character 30. For his height he rolls a 5, tall, and for weight he gets a 2, thin.

With a Charm of 7, Keith's professor is attractive. His eye color is a 6, light brown, and hair color is 4, black. His hair style roll is a 9, long and wavy.

On the Values table, Keith rolls a 7. His professor values Knowledge. Keith rolls a six-sided die twice to find out his character's attitude. The first roll is a 1 and the second roll is also a 1. Looking on the Attitude table, he finds his character is vengeful.

Background

The Background tables are used to generate miscellaneous facts about your character's past. They include people you've met, people who could be of help or hindrance in the future.

You'll roll a total of four background events. Roll 2d6 to find which background table to roll on, then roll again on the corresponding table. Write the results on your character sheet.

Spend a few minutes deciding how these events have influenced your character, how they are interrelated, and how they might still have an affect on your character's life. They need not to have occurred in the order that you rolled them. You may wish to write a brief biography for your character, adding even more details.

Example: Keith rolls for his professor's background. The first roll is 10, so he rolls again on Table 10. Getting a 12, he finds his spouse is angry at his career choice.

His next roll is a 4, a habit. He rolls on Table 4 and getting an 8 finds he is fascinated by weapons.

His third roll is a 3, a phobia. He rolls on Table 3 and gets an 11. His professor is afraid of drugs.

With a final roll of 9, Keith learns his professor had a lover! He rolls a 10 on Table 9 and learns his lover was killed on a mission for ISES.

These events come together nicely. His character joined ISES because of his fascination for high-tech weapons. While there, he met and had an affair with a co-worker. His wife disapproved of the time he was spending at the lab. His lover was sent on a mission to Xenos, but never came back. Now the professor is determined to revenge himself on those who killed her.

CHARACTER PERSONALITY

A character is more than just numbers on a piece of paper. In Khaotic, you are playing a complete (albeit frequently bodiless) person, someone with a personality all his own. No compilation of charts can create such a unique being.

It's up to you to flesh out the skeletal personality you have created. As you play, you will provide your character with an individualism of thought and action that makes him believable and fun to play. This is an essential part of role-playing, and it's very easy.

Only a rough idea of a character's personality is needed at first--about as much as you have already created. Your character will soon develop nuances on his own, based on his abilities and your whims. Once a character's personality has been established, it will tend to resurface whenever that character is played.

NAMING YOUR CHARACTER

Since your fellow players can't see your character, a name acts as a first impression. The name you choose should reflect your character's profession and personality.

Example: Keith names his professor Gilbert Mosley, Ph.D. of mathematics.

CHARACTER CONNECTIONS

As one of several personalities inside a single body, your character will be spending a lot of time interacting with the other PCs. It's important to know how the characters met, and how they feel about each other. Have they worked together before? Did they serve in a military unit together? Were they trained at the same institution? Do they work for the same agency? Did they meet on their first mission?

How does your character feel about the others? Is there someone he is especially fond of? Is there someone he dislikes? These relationships will develop during the game, but it's useful to have an idea at the start. Talk to your fellow players to see if you can interconnect your background stories.

Character Advancement

At the end of a mission, the referee awards skill points to the players on the basis of the difficulty of their mission and how successfully they accomplished it. The point value can be as little as zero (for a failed mission) to 16 points (for a hard mission that was completed beyond the call of duty). Each player receives the same number of points--the points are not divided between them. In addition, players who were especially entertaining during the mission gain 1 to 2 bonus points each.

Skill Points are expended to gain new gear and to increase abilities. You don't need to spend all your skill points at one time. Any unspent points are recorded on your character sheet. You can spend them later, between other missions.

Gaining Gear To be assigned a piece of equipment from ISES, a character must expend skill points. The cost of various pieces of gear are shown in Chapter 6: Earth Gear.

Increasing Skills Skill points are used to improve skills in the same way they are used during character creation (see Chapter 3: Skills). The only exception is that skill points gained between missions can be used to increase mind, body and weapon skills in any combination, at the player's discretion.

Increasing Psi-Powers To increase a power you already have by one point, you must spend as many skill points as the power's current rating. For example, to go from a rating of 4 to 5 would cost 4 skill points. Buying a new psi-power costs 5 skill points, and it begins at half the attribute listed as its starting value, rounded up. If you're wondering what psi-powers are, check out Chapter 5: Psi-Powers.

Increasing Attributes Characters begin the game at their physical and mental peak. Increasing an attribute is very difficult, and doesn't happen very often. By expending 10 skill points, you have a chance of increasing a single attribute. Roll the attribute you hope to increase. If your roll is Catastrophic (0), the attribute goes up by one point. If you get anything higher, the skill points are spent for no benefit.

USING SKILL POINTS ON A MISSION

You can also use skill points to increase your chances of making an ability roll. If you expend skill points immediately before making an ability roll, you gain one extra die for every skill point you expend, up to a maximum of +3 dice.

Re-Using A Character

Over the course of several adventures, a successful character's abilities will increase, making the PC more powerful. At the same time, the referee must develop greater challenges for the character to face.

A character who survives an adventure does not have to be used again. Unless the same character is necessary to connect interrelated missions, the referee should allow you the option of creating a new persona. Some players create stables of characters, and run a different one in every mission. While it can be fun to play different roles, it doesn't allow the characters much chance to improve, nor does it allow for their personalities to develop fully.

Although players are encouraged to reuse their characters, this is not always possible. The referee should prohibit characters who are too powerful for the mission, or those that are significantly more powerful than the others.

What's Next?

Your character is now ready to play!

If your first mission is going to be on Xenos, you best read Chapter 5: Psi-Powers so you'll know what you can do. On the other hand, if you're going on a mission on Earth, check out Chapter 6: Earth Gear for instructions on outfitting your character.

If you want more information on the world of 2030, read Chapter 7: Earth 2030. It will give you a feel for what life (and death) is like in the near future.

If you're going to referee the game, you should definitely read the rest of this manual before turning to the Referee's Section.

Sex

| d6 | Sex |
|-----|--------|
| 1-3 | Male |
| 4-6 | Female |

Age

3d6 + 15 years

Height

| d6 | Height |
|-----|------------|
| 1 | Very Short |
| 2 | Short |
| 3-4 | Average |
| 5 | Tall |
| 6 | Very Tall |

Weight

| d6 | Weight |
|-----|------------|
| 1 | Very Thin |
| 2 | Thin |
| 3-4 | Average |
| 5 | Heavy |
| 6 | Very Heavy |

Appearance

| Charm | Appearance |
|-------|--------------|
| 1 | Hideous |
| 2 | Ugly |
| 3 | Unattractive |
| 4 | Plain |
| 5 | Average |
| 6 | Appealing |
| 7 | Attractive |
| 8 | Striking |
| 9 | Stunning |
| 10 | Irresistible |

Eye Color

| 2d6 | Eye Color |
|-----|-------------|
| 2 | Violet |
| 3 | Green |
| 4-5 | Dark blue |
| 6 | Light brown |
| 7 | Dark brown |
| 8 | Hazel |
| 9 | Light blue |
| 10 | Light Gray |
| 11 | Dark Gray |
| 12 | Black |

Hair Color

| 2d6 | Hair Color |
|-----|------------------|
| 2 | White |
| 3 | Gray |
| 4 | Black |
| 5 | Sandy |
| 6 | Dark brown |
| 7 | Light brown |
| 8 | Blond |
| 9 | Auburn |
| 10 | Strawberry blond |
| 11 | Red |
| 12 | Golden |

Hair Style

| 2d6 | Hair Style |
|-----|------------------|
| 2 | Mohawk or shaved |
| 3 | Short & frizzy |
| 4 | Long & flowing |
| 5 | Crew Cut |
| 6 | Short & curly |
| 7 | Short & straight |
| 8 | Short & wavy |
| 9 | Long & wavy |
| 10 | Long & straight |
| 11 | Long & curly |
| 12 | Long & frizzy |

Values

| 2d6 | Values |
|-----|------------|
| 2 | Wealth |
| 3 | Vengeance |
| 4 | Status |
| 5 | Glory |
| 6 | Honor |
| 7 | Knowledge |
| 8 | Love |
| 9 | Friendship |
| 10 | Respect |
| 11 | Control |
| 12 | Power |

Attitude

| d6 | d6 | Trait |
|----|----|-------------|
| 1 | 1 | Vengeful |
| | 2 | Rebellious |
| | 3 | Arrogant |
| | 4 | Rash |
| | 5 | Stubborn |
| | 6 | Friendly |
| 2 | 1 | Fussy |
| | 2 | Serious |
| | 3 | Patriotic |
| | 4 | Sneaky |
| | 5 | Miserly |
| | 6 | Emotional |
| 3 | 1 | Detached |
| | 2 | Indecisive |
| | 3 | Trustworthy |
| | 4 | Helpful |
| | 5 | Cynical |
| | 6 | Idealistic |
| 4 | 1 | Calculating |
| | 2 | Cowardly |
| | 3 | Brave |
| | 4 | Innovative |
| | 5 | Jealous |
| | 6 | Rude |
| 5 | 1 | Lecherous |
| | 2 | Curious |
| | 3 | Slovenly |
| | 4 | Tardy |
| | 5 | Talkative |
| | 6 | Trusting |
| 6 | 1 | Diplomatic |
| | 2 | Honest |
| | 3 | Calm |
| | 4 | Skeptical |
| | 5 | Grim |
| | 6 | Restless |

Background 2

| 2d6 | Mental Illness |
|-----|--------------------|
| 2 | Depression |
| 3 | Periodic amnesia |
| 4 | Compulsive lying |
| 5 | Paranoia |
| 6 | Hysteria |
| 7 | Neurotic |
| 8 | Obsessive behavior |
| 9 | Megalomania |
| 10 | Delusions |
| 11 | Hallucinations |
| 12 | Manic depressive |

Background 3

| 2d6 | Phobia |
|-----|---------------------|
| 2 | A specific animal |
| 3 | Darkness |
| 4 | Insects and spiders |
| 5 | Water |
| 6 | Disease |
| 7 | Heights |
| 8 | Snakes |
| 9 | Tight spaces |
| 10 | Being alone |
| 11 | Drugs |
| 12 | Guns |

Background 4

| 2d6 | Habit |
|-----|-----------------------------|
| 2 | You clean compulsively. |
| 3 | You crack your knuckles. |
| 4 | You whistle when nervous. |
| 5 | You make puns. |
| 6 | You talk to yourself. |
| 7 | You have a favorite saying. |
| 8 | Fascinated by weapons. |
| 9 | You love to flirt. |
| 10 | You love to gamble. |
| 11 | You love to drink. |
| 12 | You pace. |

Background 5

| 2d6 | Dark Secret |
|-----|---|
| 2 | Never caught for crime you committed. |
| 3 | Never graduated from high school. |
| 4 | Demoted for incompetence. |
| 5 | Belong to an unpopular political party. |
| 6 | Was a petty criminal as a juvenile. |
| 7 | Suffer flashbacks of a bad experience. |
| 8 | Persecuted by a powerful group. |
| 9 | A near death experience changed you. |
| 10 | One of Isabella's early test subjects was your great uncle. |
| 11 | You don't believe Isabella Bayne is all that bad. |
| 12 | You've experienced spontaneous psychic events. |

Background 6

| 2d6 | Friend |
|-----|---------------------------------|
| 2 | Responsible for friend's death. |
| 3 | You owe a friend a favor. |
| 4 | Met friend during a crisis. |
| 5 | You saved friend's life. |
| 6 | Friend saved your life. |
| 7 | Friend is a former enemy. |
| 8 | You have a common enemy. |
| 9 | You have a common goal. |
| 10 | Friend helps you financially. |
| 11 | You must protect friend. |
| 12 | Friend is a former lover. |

Background 7

| 2d6 | Enemy |
|-----|--|
| 2 | You and enemy are professional rivals. |
| 3 | Enemy hurt or killed your loved one. |
| 4 | Enemy caused you to be imprisoned. |
| 5 | You stole enemy's lover. |
| 6 | Enemy stole your lover. |
| 7 | You caused enemy to be imprisoned. |
| 8 | You humiliated enemy. |
| 9 | Enemy humiliated you. |
| 10 | Enemy insane. |
| 11 | Enemy is your boss. |
| 12 | Enemy stole from you. |

Background 8

| 2d6 | Relative |
|-----|--|
| 2 | Sole support of aged, infirm parent. |
| 3 | Sibling works for ISES. |
| 4 | Sibling killed on mission for ISES. |
| 5 | Family wants you to quit ISES. |
| 6 | Parents are wealthy. |
| 7 | Intense sibling rivalry. |
| 8 | You are the black sheep of the family. |
| 9 | Scandal caused family to be snubbed. |
| 10 | Lost contact with family when you joined ISES. |
| 11 | Close loving relationship with parent. |
| 12 | Family rife with weirdos and criminals. |

Background 9

| 2d6 | Lover |
|-----|---------------------------------------|
| 2 | Lover is insane. |
| 3 | Lover married to another. |
| 4 | Grew apart, but still friends. |
| 5 | You date lover regularly. |
| 6 | Lover doesn't know you work for ISES. |
| 7 | Engaged to lover. |
| 8 | Rival stole lover's affections. |
| 9 | Love is unrequited. |
| 10 | Lover killed on mission for ISES. |
| 11 | Lover thinks ISES is too dangerous. |
| 12 | Lover works for ISES. |

Background 10

| 2d6 | Married |
|-----|--|
| 2 | Spouse committed suicide. |
| 3 | Spouse died in an accident. |
| 4 | Spouse vanished. |
| 5 | Spouse murdered. |
| 6 | Spouse imprisoned. |
| 7 | Spouse doesn't know you work for ISES. |
| 8 | Happily married. |
| 9 | Happily married. |
| 10 | Happily married. |
| 11 | Planning a divorce. |
| 12 | Spouse angry at your career choice. |

Background 11

| 2d6 | Divorced |
|-----|---------------------------------------|
| 2 | Split apart by professional goals. |
| 3 | You lost your job, then your spouse. |
| 4 | Split apart by money problems. |
| 5 | Spouse was two-timing. |
| 6 | Spouse's family drove you apart. |
| 7 | Spouse left you because of ISES. |
| 8 | You still love your ex-spouse. |
| 9 | You were having an affair. |
| 10 | You argued constantly. |
| 11 | You are separated, but still married. |
| 12 | Spouse drank too much. |

Background 12

| 2d6 | Child |
|-----|-------------------------------------|
| 2 | Your child is psychic. |
| 3 | You have a step-child. |
| 4 | Bad relationship with your child. |
| 5 | Your child is obnoxious. |
| 6 | Your child is very imaginative. |
| 7 | Good relationship with your child. |
| 8 | Your child is very bright. |
| 9 | Your child always gets in trouble. |
| 10 | Your child lives with other parent. |
| 11 | Your child is disabled. |
| 12 | Your child is adopted. |

CHAPTER 5

PSI-POWERS

As the con relinquished control, I took over. Four Spawn rounded the corner behind us, weapons bristling from their flesh.

I unloaded a rocket pod at the first, scattering its body parts to the four winds and blinding those behind it with the flash. Meanwhile, the senator used his telekinesis power. Our submachine gun floated in the air next to me, its muzzle spitting lead.

“I’ll take care of them,” the convict said. The eagerness in her voice meant trouble.

“Wait!” I barked. “We’ve got them covered . . .”

It was too late. An eruption of flame blossomed at the far end of the hall. Fire rolled along the ceiling, singeing the skin of our host. The monsters down the passage went up like torches, their screams horrible as they staggered blindly. Then the magazines of their guns exploded, sending shrapnel ricocheting in every direction.

The legs of our host grew weak, and I slumped against the wall. The rocket launcher on my shoulder pulled me down further, so I detached it and dropped it to the floor. It was useless, since our host no longer had the strength to carry it.

“Next time, hold off,” I growled at the convict. “We could have taken them without your help. Your bit of fun used up too much strength.”

“Sorry. But it was glorious, wasn’t it?”

The TransEgo Device

There is only one TransEgo Device on Earth, located now in the Dylan, Nebraska world headquarters of the International Society of Enlightened Scientists. The TransEgo Device (TED) was originally created in 1944 by Isabella Bayne, a

US military scientist. She used TED to transmit her psyche to Xenos. Employing her superior technology, she became the primary ruler of that parallel world.

Ninety years have passed since Isabella Bayne left Earth. Now, she is sending monstrous troops to invade Earth. Humanity’s only hope is to send agents through TED to confront her on her own ground.

The technology Bayne used to create TED is lost to ISES. The only man who understood it even

partially, Dr. Daryl Kasparian, is trapped on Xenos. ISES technicians understand how to operate TED, but lack the understanding to create others of its kind. That is why the single machine at Dylan is so important to Earth's safety, and why its location is top secret--even to some jump-team members.

Because the TransEgo Device can send only energy to Xenos, not matter, your jump-team will not be able to take any equipment. You will have to survive off your wits and what you find on Xenos.

ENTERING XENOS

When your mind is projected through the TransEgo Device, you will find your sentience transferred to the body of an inhabitant of Xenos. ISES can control neither the host nor its location. The TransEgo Device is still configured with the settings Isabella Bayne used to transport to Xenos. These settings have proven to send jump-teams to the vicinity of Kaleido, Bayne's capital city. The settings have not been changed because, without Dr. Kasparian's expertise, ISES technicians are concerned that adjusting TED may irrevocably sever Earth's only link to Xenos.

Your entire jump-team will be inside a single host. The team member with the highest willpower will initially control the host. One team member at a time can control the body. The person in control of the body is nicknamed "the Boss." The other jump-team members are called "crickets" because of their tendency to offer suggestions and advice to the Boss, much like crickets chirping.

Your jump-team cannot split up (except through the use of psychic talents), and your minds cannot exist outside a body.

When your jump-team invades a body, you will suppress the host's personality. It is "put to sleep." You will have no access to the memories or skills of the host, unless you allow him to regain consciousness, a dangerous and often futile exercise.

Determining the Boss Upon being sent through TED, each player rolls Willpower. The player who rolls highest has control of the body at the start of the mission. The Boss will have to fill out a body control sheet for the host (copied from the blank example at the end of this book).

THE BOSS

The Boss has full control of the body, and feels all the physical sensations and needs of the host just as though it were his own body. He may use any mental or physical ability, but his psi-powers are limited to those that were available to him on earth.

When attempting a physical action, the Boss uses the host's physical attributes, but modifies them with his own skills. The Boss makes all physical rolls for the body, including Defense and attack rolls.

Example: Wayne, the current Boss, has an Agility of 8 and is trained in Stealth (+1). His host body has an Agility of 4, and is untrained in Stealth (-3).

When inhabiting the host body, Wayne uses his host's Agility (4) but his own Stealth (+1). He would roll $4 + 1 = 5$ dice to make a Stealth roll.

CRICKETS

Crickets have no control of the body, and may not use physical skills. However, they may use mental skills based on their own attributes and have full access to their heightened psi-powers.

Although crickets share the senses of the body, physical sensation is muted. They may be aware of pain, hunger, fatigue and even pleasure, but they feel it with absolutely no intensity or emotion. They are fully aware of the host's body position, so they will know if they are smiling or making a rude gesture. There is no way for the Boss to hide his actions from the crickets.

COMMUNICATION

Crickets can communicate mentally between themselves and the Boss. Crickets may direct their thoughts at all, some or none of the other team members. The Boss can hear the mental voices of his companions, but he must talk aloud for the crickets to hear him.

Crickets can use words, emotions, and even images to communicate with each other:

Words The thought-voice of a cricket includes intonation. A cricket can whisper, shout, or express himself just as though he were actually speaking.

Emotions Non-verbal communication is possible through the expression of moods. Unless purposefully concealed, subconscious emotional cues are automatically transmitted to the other members of the jump-team.

Images A simple image may be transmitted to another member of the team. Such mental sketches are crude at best, and may be misunderstood. Use the Artistry skill to create an image.

SLEEP

A sleeper can do nothing, not even use psi-powers. To a sleeper, events that happen to the body are experienced as through they were a dream, and like a dream they will quickly fade once the sleeper awakens--unless he is reminded of them.

Like the host personality, a cricket may be put to sleep. Putting a cricket to sleep requires the agreement of all the crickets, including the victim. Sleep allows a cricket to regain Willpower at an accelerated rate. If a cricket sleeps for ten minutes or more, he will be fully refreshed when he is allowed to reawaken.

A cricket or Boss who is knocked unconscious for whatever reason is put to sleep.

Forcing Sleep Most people will not go to sleep voluntarily. If the crickets are not in complete agreement, those who want the victim put to sleep may do Willpower attacks on those who disagree, attempting to force the dissenters to submit.

Waking up Sleepers remain unconscious until awoken by the other crickets. Waking a sleeping personality, whether it is a jump-team member or the host, is automatic if all the crickets agree to it (the Boss has no say in the matter). A host who awakens is exactly like any other cricket, and may try to take control of the body. If the jump-team is in disagreement, those who want to wake the sleeper can try Willpower attacks to force the other crickets to agree.

CHANGING CONTROL

Changing control of the host is easy. When faced by an obstacle, you'll want to switch off to put the most skilled team member in charge to handle the situation.

The Boss simply surrenders control of the host. The cricket who wants to gain control then takes over. Surrendering control of a body requires an action, as does assuming control.

Battles for Control If more than one cricket wants to be Boss, they must do Willpower attacks on each other to determine who gets to be in control. In the meanwhile, the uncontrolled body goes catatonic.

A cricket who wants to control the body may do Willpower attacks on the current Boss. If the Boss submits, the challenger gains control.

CHANGING BODIES

A jump-team may leave a host to leap into a new body. The Boss decides when and whether to jump. The target body must be in physical contact with the team's current body. This is usually accomplished by grabbing hold of the target. The Boss makes Willpower attacks on the victim until the victim submits or is reduced to zero Willpower. On his turn, if he resists, the victim will probably try to break free from the Boss's grip.

If the target submits, he is put to sleep and the jump-team takes over. All members of the team must go with the Boss to the new body. The host of their former body awakens and assumes control of his body.

If the host was asleep the whole time he was under the jump-team's control, he will remember his time spent as a puppet as though it were a dream. Like a dream, his memories are at first vivid, but quickly fade. Within 15 minutes, the host will have only vague recollections of the experience. However, the host will have full memories of anything that happened while he was awake. This is one of the reasons awakening a host for questioning is so dangerous.

When transferring to a new host, the Boss must fill out a body control sheet for their new host.

Jump-teams cannot access their hosts' mental powers, including any innate psi-powers the host may possess. However, they can use the psychotronic devices the host carries.

CONTROLLING AN ANIMAL

It's possible for a jump-team to leap into the body of an animal. Taking over an animal is the same as for a human target. Luckily, animals have low Willpower. Unfortunately, there is a good chance you will lose your identity to its primitive brain.

Anytime the Boss takes control of an animal, he must make a Sanity roll. If the roll is Poor or less, he believes he really is the animal, and will not want to surrender control or jump to another body. The duration of the affliction depends upon the Sanity roll. If it's Inferior or Poor, it lasts until the jump-team moves to a new body. If it's Pathetic or Feeble, it lasts until the jump-team returns to Earth. And on a Catastrophic Knowledge roll, the victim's affliction is permanent. The players might as well create new characters.

Willpower Attacks

There are many times when you'll need to do a Willpower attack to resolve disagreements with a fellow jump-team member. Doing a Willpower attack counts as an action and requires a Willpower of at least 1. Crickets and the Boss can do Willpower attacks on one another. Sleeping crickets cannot perform Willpower attacks, and they are immune to such attacks.

- The attacker declares who he is attacking. Only one target may be attacked at a time.
- The victim can either resist or submit. Characters with a 0 Willpower must submit. Those who submit are considered in agreement with the attacker. Someone who has submitted cannot be attacked.
- If the defender resists, both he and the attacker roll Willpower. The low roller's Willpower is reduced by the difference in their rolls.
- Willpower lost in a battle of wills is regained at the rate of 1 point every 10 minutes.

- If the Boss's Willpower is ever reduced to 0, he loses control of his body and becomes a cricket. The body goes catatonic until someone steps in to take control.

Example: Perkins, a cricket with a Willpower of 8, makes a Willpower attack on David, the current Boss, who has a Willpower of 6. Perkins rolls 1, 2, 2, 4, 5, 6, 6 for a total of 5 while David gets a 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 for a total of 6. Perkins loses the battle of wills and must temporarily reduce his Willpower by $5 - 6 = -1$ point.

The next turn, Perkins does another Willpower attack, rolling only 7 dice this time. He gets 1, 3, 4, 4, 5, 6, 6 for a total of 4. David's roll is 4, 5, 6, 6, 6 a lowly 0. David loses this round and has his Willpower reduced by $0 - 4 = -4$ points. Since $6 - 4 = 2$, David will only be able to roll 2 dice during the next Willpower battle.

Smelling victory, the next turn Perkins attacks again. This time, David submits without a fight. David relinquishes control of the body and Perkins takes over.

Bugging Out

Returning from Xenos is easy. All awake crickets and the Boss must agree to return. If they do agree, they will return to Earth on their next turn. Any character who does not want to return must be suppressed through a battle of Wills.

If the jump-team members all have zero Willpower, they cannot return until someone recovers at least 1 Willpower. Special energy fields constructed by Isabella Bayne can also interfere with the connection to Earth, preventing a jump-team from returning from certain locations.

When you return to Earth, you awaken in your life support tube. Technicians will quickly revive you, and you will be debriefed. Your mission is at an official end. It takes time to reset the TransEgo Device for another transportation, and furthermore, traveling through the TransEgo Device is exhausting. ISES doctors advise one week of rest before a return trip to Xenos can be attempted.

Talents

When you travel through the TransEgo Device, your mind is stripped from its physical shell and plunged into the body of a native of Xenos. In the process, you shed your physical form in exchange for enhanced mental abilities. These paranormal abilities of the mind are called psi-powers and talents. All psychic manifestations are performed through the use of these abilities.

Through careful testing, ISES rates individuals based upon their psychic potential. Studies show that people fall into certain classifications, called talents. For instance, a person rated as a telepath would have telepathic powers when on Xenos.

While all characters have a talent, their latent powers are only tapped when on Xenos. Characters on Earth have no psychic abilities. You can decide your talent at the time your character is first created, or right before your first mission to Xenos.

You may choose any of the talents presented on the Talent table, or you can leave the selection to luck by rolling on the table. If you don't like what you roll, feel free to roll again or simply select the talent of your choice. Write the name of your talent on your character sheet. Characters have only one talent, and it can never change.

The talents are described in detail at the end of this chapter. Each talent grants a significant psychic ability that can be performed automatically, without a die roll. This ability does not require concentration. Only crickets on Xenos can use their talents. A character in control of a host body cannot use a talent.

Although more than one player can have the same talent, it's best to have a variety. Not only is it beneficial for your team to have an assortment of psychic powers at their disposal, it also helps give everyone a vital role in the game.

Example: Leaving his character's development to chance, Keith rolls on the Talent table. His roll is an 8, so his professor is an esper.

Talent

| 2d6 | Talent |
|-----|-------------|
| 2 | Illusionist |
| 3 | Energist |
| 4 | Illusionist |
| 5 | Incarnate |
| 6 | Telepath |
| 7 | Peeker |
| 8 | Esper |
| 9 | Id Master |
| 10 | Oobie |
| 11 | Energist |
| 12 | Oobie |

Psi-Powers

Psi-powers are narrowly defined uses of a talent. Whereas talents are flexible and cost nothing to use, powers drain psychic energy, have a limited application, require concentration and a die roll to activate. Their advantage is that they allow you to perform normally impossible feats. With the right psi-power, you could levitate your host body or glimpse the future.

Like talents, only crickets on Xenos can use powers. A character in control of the host body cannot use a power.

Each talent description at the end of this chapter lists several powers that your character can choose from. Since your talent dictates the powers available to you, you can only possess powers that are on the list for your talent.

When you first determine your talent, you receive four powers. Select them from those listed for your talent. The starting value of a power that you take equals one of your attributes, as specified for that power. The rest of your powers start at zero, and they are not available for you to use.

In the Psi-Powers section of your character sheet, list the powers you take, their starting values, and the cost to use them. Between missions, you may expend skill points to gain new powers or increase those you already have (see Chapter 4: Other Characteristics).

Example: As an esper, Keith's professor can choose four of the following psi-powers: Commune, Danger Sense, Dark Vision, Locate, Meditate, Premonition, Psychometry, Remote Viewing, Time Shift, View Aura.

Keith chooses Danger Sense, Psychometry, Remote Viewing and Time Shift as his starting powers. Psychometry equals his Knowledge, so it has a value of 8. Remote Viewing equals his Alertness of 6, and Danger Sense equals his Fate, which is also 6. His Time Shift power equals his Agility, so it has a value of 5.

Keith writes his powers, their starting values and costs to use on his character sheet in the Psi-Powers section.

USING PSI-POWERS

It takes just a few seconds to activate a psi-power; about the same length of time needed to make an attack. A character who attempts to use a power can perform no other action that turn.

Using psychic powers is a physically draining endeavor, and it cannot be done for long. The energy must come from somewhere . . . and when on Xenos, it comes from the body you are inhabiting.

A psychic draws upon the lifeforce of his host. As he is slowly drained, the host begins to stagger; the strength leaves his arms and his hands grow cold and numb. If drained too far, he collapses into unconsciousness. Recovery is slow, and can take weeks. Most often, a jump-team will depart a weakened host in pursuit of a fresh body.

Each psi-power has a cost associated with it. The more potent the power, the higher the cost. Many powers have a cost of 0, but it could be as high as 5.

When you use a power, you must tell the player in charge of the body what the cost is. The Boss subtracts the cost from one of the body's physical attributes--Agility, Dexterity, Stamina or Strength. The player in charge of the body gets to choose which attribute to reduce. The full cost must be reduced from a single attribute, it cannot be divided between attributes.

The cost deduction is made whether or not the power is successful. Reductions to physical attributes will affect the body's Defense, Accuracy, Carrying Capacity and ability to use heavy weapons. Consequently, the more powers the jump-team uses, the weaker the host becomes. Players may want to keep track of two values for their host's attributes: a starting value and a current value.

Hosts recover lost attribute points at the rate of one point per day of rest.

An attribute cannot be reduced below zero. If the cost to use a power is greater than all the host's current physical attributes, then the power cannot be used.

If a host's attribute is reduced to zero, he collapses and can no longer move. However, the jump-team can still use their psi-powers from inside the comatose host.

Example: Perkins wants to use his Locate power to find the key to his cell. He's seen the key before and knows what it looks like. Looking at the description of Locate in this chapter, Perkins finds the cost to locate the key is 2. The player in control of the host body decides to reduce its Agility by 2 points.

THE POWER ROLL

Unlike talents, powers are never automatic; they must be activated by a successful roll to have any effect. Rolling against a psi-power is just like any other ability roll. You roll one six-sided die for every point you have in the psi-power. Total all the dice that come up 1, 2 or 3 (ignoring the rest), and convert the sum to a result on the Conversion table printed on your character sheet. Tell your referee the result.

Example: Having learned the power cost to find the key to his cell, Perkins rolls against his Dowsing power. His Dowsing power is 6, so Perkins rolls 6 dice. He gets 1, 1, 2, 4, 4, 5. Ignoring the rolls of 4 or more, he gets a total of $1 + 1 + 2 = 4$. He tells the referee his roll is Poor. The referee tells him that while he can feel his psychic powers probing the area, he can't seem to locate the key.

RANGE

The range of a power is the distance between you and your target at the time the power is activated. Unless otherwise specified in its description, powers can be used on a single visible target within 30 yards (pistol range).

DURATION

Most psi-powers last as long as you continue to concentrate on them, but maintaining a power makes it harder to use other powers. When you try to activate a psi-power, you are at -1 die for each psi-power you are already maintaining.

Powers labeled instantaneous cannot be maintained. Once activated, their effects take their own course. They require no further concentration.

Putting a cricket to sleep stops any powers he is maintaining.

PSI-FAILURE

If an attempt to use a power fails, you can try again on a later turn, but the cost of the power is increased by 1 point. The inflated cost lasts until the end of the current scene, and is cumulative.

Channeling psychic energy is not without its dangers. If your roll to use a power is Catastrophic, you must immediately reduce the psi-power you attempted by 1 point. Powers reduced this way are regained after the mission, or after 1 week of not using any psi-powers.

Energist

You specialize in controlling energy. Energists rely on brute force over subtly. Their abilities let them change the surrounding environment, usually in a destructive fashion.

Energists are often restless people who are impatient with the niceties of everyday life. They like excitement in their lives, and will deliberately place themselves in dangerous situations just for the thrill of it all.

With this talent, you can automatically start small fires within 30 yards (pistol range). You can start one fire per turn, and once started, they burn themselves out just like normal flames. You can only cause inanimate matter to burn. Living flesh cannot be affected.

Burning someone's clothes does (Strength - Defense) x 3 damage. A victim can pat out one fire per turn.

Creating small, lighter-sized fires is easy and requires no effort. But producing a larger fire (for instance, a bonfire) requires a Strength roll to determine how quickly it grows. For instance, if you wanted to set a piece of paper on fire, you could do it in one turn at no cost. But if you wanted to set a house on fire, it might take a (Strength - Poor) x 5 minutes, at the referee's whim.

AVAILABLE POWERS

Choose any four of the following powers. When you first take a power, it's starting value will equal the attribute in parentheses.

Control Flames (Dexterity)

Cost = 0.

You can make flames burn hotter, bigger, brighter or even control their color. A Control Flames roll determines how much you can manipulate the flames. You need at least a Passable roll to have any effect.

Electrical Interference (Mechanical)

Cost = 0.

Instantaneous. You can turn electrical devices on or off, not by throwing the power switch, but by causing current to flow psychotronically through the machine. You need a Passable roll to make this power work, more for a complex or unfamiliar device.

EMP (Mechanical)

Cost = 1.

You can create a powerful electromagnetic field, which makes all electronics (and psychotronic devices) within (EMP - Passable) x 20 feet temporarily inoperable.

Fire Blast (Stamina)

Cost = 1.

Instantaneous. You can produce a ball of flames. The fire will not harm you or your body. All others within 30 feet (thrown range) take (Fire Blast - Defense) x 5 damage from the burst of fire.

Lightning (Strength)

Cost = 0.

Instantaneous. You can create a bolt of electricity that strikes a single target at up to rifle range, doing (Lightning - Defense) x 4 damage.

Magnetic Control (Knowledge)

Cost = 0.

You turn your host body into a magnet. Ferrous metals will stick to you. This power is a favorite at parties. The strength of your magnetism depends on your power roll, which must be at least Passable.

Shock Shield (Dexterity)

Cost = 0.

You can create an electrical force field around your host body. The field extends no more than two feet from your skin. Anyone foolish enough to pass through it takes (Shock Shield - victim's Stamina) x 2 damage. This damage can be passed through a metal conductor, so someone who hits you with a metal weapon would be shocked.

Static (Mechanical)

Cost = 0.

When this power is running, radio communication and compasses will not work within (Static - Poor) x 100 yards of you.

Temperature Control (Fate)

Cost = 0.

You can change the temperature of the local area, or of a specific inanimate object, by plus or minus (Temperature Control - Poor) x 20 degrees. The item will not burst into flames no matter what its temperature, but it may become too hot to handle.

ESPER

Espers are experts at sensing that which others cannot. They enjoy their status as fonts of knowledge, and are likely to become sullen if they do not feel appreciated. Though their powers don't let them interact much with their environment, their access to hidden knowledge makes them excellent team leaders.

Your ESP (extra sensory perception) talent allows you to use your Alertness skills even when you're not in control of your body. For instance, you

could search a room (using your Search skill) even if the host body was doing something else.

In addition, you can "see" out any direction from the head of your host body. Your field of vision is not increased, so you will still be surprised if you're looking in the wrong direction when you're attacked.

Your psychic awareness alerts you whenever a psychic power or psychotronic device is used within 30 yards (pistol range). By making an Alertness roll, you may even be able to figure out more information about the power, such as its direction, the distance, who used it and what the power was.

As an esper, you can see oobies when they are in ghost form and sense the presence of psychics who are remotely viewing your area. You are immune to psychic illusions, including the invisibility power.

AVAILABLE POWERS

Choose any four of the following powers. When you first take a power, it's starting value will equal the attribute in parentheses.

Commune (Knowledge)

Cost = 4.

You can ask the referee (Commune - Passable) yes/no questions. The referee must answer the questions truthfully, to the best of his knowledge. If he truly doesn't know the answer, he must say so (but this still counts as a question).

Danger Sense (Fate)

Cost = 0.

Whenever the target is about to enter a dangerous situation, you learn (Sense - Passable) pieces of information about the threat, such as its direction, proximity and source. While the target must be within range when this power is activated, it continues to work no matter where he goes. You can use this power on your host body.

Dark Vision (Alertness)

Cost = 0.

You can see even in complete darkness. This power requires a Passable roll to activate. This does not confer Dark Vision on the Boss; you will have to

tell him about the hazards in his way, and hope he doesn't stumble.

Locate (Fate)

Cost = 0 to 3. The cost of the power depends on your familiarity with the target, which can be a person, object or place. If you have a piece of the target, the cost is 0. If you have handled the target before, the cost is 1. If you have just seen and studied the target, the cost is 2. If you are using a second hand description to locate the target, the cost is 3 or higher, depending on the extent and accuracy of the description. You gain (Locate - Passable) pieces of information about the target's location, including its direction, its distance and a description of its surroundings.

Meditate (Knowledge)

Cost = 1.

This power is used to gain information you would otherwise have no access to. You gain (Meditate - Passable) pieces of information about the subject of your choice. The information can be as vague as the referee likes, and may be presented as images or words.

Premonition (Alertness)

Cost = 1.

You can sense the most probable future. You gain (Premonition - Passable) pieces of information about the future, including important or emotionally intense events. You can specify whose future you are looking into, and how far. However, long term projections are notoriously inaccurate. The referee gives the information based upon his best guess at the time the power is used.

Psychometry (Knowledge)

Cost = 1.

This power is used to gain information about an item, place or person. You learn (Psychometry - target's Fate) useful facts about the target (objects and places have a Fate of Passable).

Remote Viewing (Alertness)

Cost = 0, 1 or 4. You can sense what is going on in a remote location. The exterior of the target must be known to you. For instance, you could sense the interior of a building you've seen without ever

being inside, or detect the contents of an envelope you're holding. The cost depends upon your proximity to the target: 0 if you're touching it, 1 if it's clearly visible, or 4 if it's not visible. You learn (Remote Viewing - Passable) pieces of information about what is currently going on at the target location. For instance, you might see who is there, but what they are doing is unclear. Perceptions can be received as sights, sounds or smells.

Time Shift (Agility)

Cost = 2.

Instantaneous. You can gain a very accurate look into the near future. When you use this power, the referee continues to run the game normally for (Time Shift - Passable) x 2 minutes. At the end of the duration, the game returns to the time when the power was used. Any events that happened during the past few minutes are considered "the probable future" and are treated as though they never really happened. You can then act upon your knowledge of the future to make different choices.

View Aura (Alertness)

Cost = 0.

You can use perceive the colors of a target's aura. Your View Aura roll must exceed the target's Cunning. The colors of an aura should suggest the target's personality; dark colors for dark, gloomy personalities, reds for angry or enraged people, cool colors for calm individuals, and so on. The referee should feel free to describe the target's aura in whatever hues seem appropriate at the time. The better your roll, the more information you gain.

Id Master

An expert in mind over matter, you can embody your thoughts in material form. This talent allows you to create a psi-beast to do your bidding. A psi-beast is concentrated psychic energy, created from your id. They are visible and completely solid. A psi-beast is mentally linked to the psychic who created it, and has the skills and mental attributes of its creator. You can experience the world through its senses at any time and range, but on any given turn you must use either your senses or the beast's.

You'll decide your psi-beast's physical attributes at the time you create it. Each time you make a psi-beast, it can have different attributes. Add up your physical attributes from your character sheet (use the attributes of your real body, not the one you may be inhabiting on Xenos). The total equals the number of points you have to distribute between your psi-beast's physical attributes. Each attribute must be at least 1, and can be no more than 10.

When first created, the psi-beast appears within a few feet of your host body (brawling range). It is obviously an unnatural creature, horrifying and beastly in appearance. In general, psi-beasts range from the size of a small marmoset to a large gorilla. The higher its Strength and Stamina, the bigger it will be. Psi-beasts have manipulative hands and can use weapons. Since humans evolved from ape-like creatures, psi-beasts are distinctly simian. All psi-beasts are incapable of speech.

A psi-beast can travel any distance from its creator, and will obey any mental instructions it receives. Its own personality is primitive and beastly. You may play it accordingly if you like.

Since you have only one id, you can have only one psi-beast at a time.

Once your id has been unleashed, it's hard to recall. The beast must be within a few feet of you for you to call it back. You must make a Great Willpower roll to force the psi-beast back into your mind. If you fail, you cannot try again for (Great - Willpower) x 10 minutes. If you return to Earth without first rejoining with your id, your psi-beast will soon die--taking your id with it (see below).

You'll need to make up a wound track for your psi-beast, because it can take damage just like any other character. If your psi-beast dies, it will put a great stress upon you. You must immediately make a Passable Stamina roll (using the Stamina from your character sheet). If you fail, your id is destroyed with your beast. You become devoid of instinctual impulses, primitive urges and base emotions. It's as though the spice of life is gone from you. You'll grow progressively more depressed until oblivion seems preferable to your dreary existence.

AVAILABLE POWERS

Choose any four of the following powers. When you first take a power, it's starting value will equal the attribute in parentheses.

Cure (Knowledge)

Cost = 0.

Instantaneous. On a Good roll, you can neutralize any poison or disease that is within your host body. This power can also be used on your psi-beast, if it is within 30 feet (thrown range).

Heal (Knowledge)

Cost = 1.

Instantaneous. Your target immediately regains (Heal - Poor) x 2 levels of damage. A light wound equals 1 level of damage, a medium equals 2 levels, and so on. If the roll isn't good enough to heal a wound completely, it has no effect.

Know Desire (Knowledge)

Cost = 0.

Instantaneous. Lets you know the innermost desires of the target. You must roll your power over the victim's Cunning. The better your roll, the clearer the impressions you receive.

Post Hypnotic Suggestion (Charm)

Cost = 4.

Instantaneous. You can mentally plant a post hypnotic suggestion into the mind of your target. The suggestion is a series of specific actions. The series must contain no more than (Post Hypnotic Suggestion - victim's Willpower) separate instructions. The series must have a trigger, a specific event that, when it happens to the victim, will set off the suggestion.

Psi-Scan (Fate)

Cost = 0.

Instantaneous. You learn (Reveal Powers - target's Fate) x 2 powers of the target.

Psychic Blast (Strength)

Cost = 1.

Instantaneous. This is a momentary burst of psychic energy that affects everyone within 30

yards (pistol range). It does not affect you or the other jump-team members. A non-psi user takes (Psychic Blast - victim's Stamina) damage. A psychic takes double that amount of damage. If a psychic is wounded by a psychic blast, all the powers he is currently maintaining end.

Replace Desire (Charm)

Cost = 4.

Instantaneous. You can replace your target's deepest desire with one of your choosing. This can make long lasting and fundamental change to the victim. To succeed, you must roll over your victim's Willpower.

View Aura (Alertness)

Cost = 0.

You can perceive the colors of a target's aura. Your View Aura roll must exceed the target's Cunning. The colors of an aura should suggest the target's personality; dark colors for dark, gloomy personalities, reds for angry or enraged people, cool colors for calm individuals, and so on. The referee should feel free to describe the target's aura in whatever hues seem appropriate at the time. The better your roll, the more information you gain.

Illusionist

Subtle and cunning, illusionists are the most crafty of psi users. If they use their talents right, they can have high interaction with their surroundings.

By sculpting light rays, you can change the way something looks or make something appear out of nothing. Illusions cannot actually harm or touch anyone, and once people realize the images are harmless, they may choose to ignore them. Illusions are silent unless you use Create Sounds to enhance the effect.

This talent can create illusions within a 20' sphere. You may create multiple illusions, or one large illusion, but all the illusions you manifest must remain within the area of effect. If you can no longer see your illusion, or you move more than 100 yards from it (beyond rifle range), it vanishes.

You may cause the illusion to move at up to Unbelievable speed.

People can try to see through your illusions to perceive what is behind them. Disbelieving an illusion takes an action, and requires the witness to compare his Alertness versus your Cunning roll. If this disbeliever's Alertness is higher, he can see through the illusion.

AVAILABLE POWERS

Choose any four of the following powers. When you first take a power, its starting value will equal the attribute in parentheses.

Create Light (Cunning)

Cost = 1 per 10' diameter. You can create a sphere of illumination. Roll Create Light to determine how bright the light is. It can range from candlelight (on a Passable roll) to full sunlight (on an Awesome roll). You can make the sphere of light stationary or you can move it within line of sight. The sphere of light does not extend through walls or doors.

Create Sound (Cunning)

Cost = 0.

You can create noises. A power roll is made to determine how realistic the sound is. Simple sounds have a roll required of Good, while complex noises, such as voices, are much harder to fashion.

Destroy Light (Strength)

Cost = 1 per 10' diameter. You can create a sphere of darkness. Roll Destroy Light to determine how dark the area gets. It can range from a deepening of shadows to pitch black. You can make the sphere of darkness stationary or you can move it within line of sight. The sphere of darkness does not extend through walls or doors.

Destroy Sound (Mechanical)

Cost = 1 per 10' diameter. You can create a sphere of silence. Roll your power to determine how effective the silence is, you need at least a Passable roll. It can range from a dampening of noises produced in the area, or it can be a complete sphere of silence in which no sound can penetrate (on an Awesome or better roll). You can move the sphere within your line of sight. The sphere of silence does not extend through walls or doors.

Flash (Dexterity)

Cost = 1.

You can create a blinding flash of light. All those within thrown range are blinded for (Flash - victim's Alertness) x 5 minutes. If your roll is 5 points over the Alertness roll, then the blindness is permanent.

Invisibility (Fate)

Cost = 2.

You can turn a target invisible. Your Invisibility roll, which must be Passable or better, determines how good the invisibility is. It can range from a transparency that allows the target to blend in with the background (on a Passable roll), to complete invisibility (on an Awesome or better roll). Against non-area effect weapons, the target receives a bonus of (Invisibility - Poor) on Defense rolls, up to a maximum of +4. An Alertness roll greater than your Invisibility roll will see through the illusion. If an invisible creature makes its presence known through activity or noise, it can be hit by attacks directed in its general vicinity.

Photon Blast (Agility)

Cost = 0.

Instantaneous. You can create a beam of coherent light, with much of the effect as a small laser. It does (Photon Blast - Defense) x 4 damage to a single target within 30 yards (pistol range).

Sonic Blast (Stamina)

Cost = 1.

Instantaneous. You can produce a deafening blast of white noise. Those within 30 yards (pistol range) are deafened for (Sonic Blast - victim's Stamina) x 5 minutes. If the power roll is 5 points above the victim's Stamina, the deafness is permanent.

This talent allows you to possess another being. The target must be within sight and thrown range.

Roll your Willpower versus the target's Willpower. Reduce the Willpower of the person who rolls lower by the difference in their rolls. The target will know what you are doing, and where the psychic assault is coming from. You can repeat your attack on future turns until either you give up, or the target's Willpower is reduced to zero. Willpower points are regained at the rate of 1 point per 10 minutes.

When the target is reduced to zero Willpower, you can move into his body. The original personality is suppressed. If the victim is willing, no battle of wills is needed. You just jump right in.

Because you are now in control of a body, you lose all your psychic powers except those you had on earth (if any). This means you won't be able to jump to any other body until you return to your original host.

Returning to your jump-team is the same as taking over any other body. You must be within thrown range. If the Boss of the jump-team lets you in, there's no problem, you just jump right over. But if the Boss resists, you must do a battle of wills to get back.

Possessing another body is not without its dangers. If the body you are inhabiting dies, you will die with it.

When you are in another body, you lose your link with your team members and can no longer communicate psychically. If your jump-team changes to a new host while you are gone, you will have to find them and return to the new body, not the former host. This can make it very difficult for you to find the jump-team when it comes time to return. You have no psychic attraction to the jump-team nor any special way of identifying them.

If your jump-team returns to Earth without you, your connection to them, and to Earth, is severed. You are trapped in your new body forever. Likewise, if the jump-team is composed of incarnates and oobies, and they all leave the original host, they will not be able to return to that body and leave together.

Incarnate

Incarnates are independent and prefer to be on their own. Their talent allows for high physical and social interaction with their surroundings, but at great risk.

AVAILABLE POWERS

Choose any four of the following powers. When you first take a power, it's starting value will equal the attribute in parentheses.

Dream Control (Charm)

Cost = 0.

This power can be used on any sleeping mind. If you roll Dream Control over the victim's Willpower, you may alter the victim's dream to whatever you like. If the victim is killed in his dream, he will immediately wake up, unharmed.

Emote (Willpower)

Cost = 0.

You can send an emotion or feeling to the target. The target may be anywhere, but must be known to the psychic. The emotion is very faint and not intense in the least. The target will know that the emotion is being sent from someone else, and may mistakenly believe themselves to be empathic. The target will not know who sent the projection.

Enhanced Senses (Alertness)

Cost = 0.

This power increases your hearing and vision by (Enhances Senses - Poor) times. For example, on a Great roll, your hearing and vision would be increased by a factor three.

Increase Attribute (Strength)

Cost = 0.

You can temporarily increase one physical attribute of the body you inhabit. Specify which attribute you would like to increase. If you roll Poor or less, the attempt fails. On a Passable or Good roll, you get +1 to the attribute, Great to Superior grants +2, Awesome to Incredible grants +3, and Amazing or better gives +4.

Inflict Pain (Dexterity)

Cost = 0.

Instantaneous. The victim is at -2 on all attributes due to severe pain for (Inflict Pain - target's Stamina) x 2 turns.

Mind Control (Charm)

Cost = 2.

This power lets you control the target's mind. You must roll your Mind Control over the target's Willpower to take control--if you fail, the victim will know what you tried. If you make the roll, then you gain control of the target. The difference in your scores determines the level of control. It can range from requiring verbal commands, to a complete mental link over vast distances.

Reconsider (Willpower)

Cost = 1.

Instantaneous. To activate this power, you must roll your power over the target's Willpower. If you roll higher, the target doubts his current course of action and must do something else.

Resistance (Stamina)

Cost = 0.

At the time this power is activated, you must specify what you are resisting: disease, poison, air pressure, radiation, pain or suffocation. Resistance to suffocation negates the need to breathe, allowing your body to survive under water or in poison gas. Resistance to pain allows your host body to ignore the adverse effects of being maimed. Resistance to air pressure prevents your host body from exploding in the vacuum of space, or being crushed under the sea. Resistance to disease, poison or radiation prevents your body from being infected, poisoned, or irradiated, respectively. When confronted by the hazard you are resisting, roll your Resistance power. The referee sets the roll required based on the strength of the hazard, but in most cases it will be Passable. If the roll is made, you are unaffected by the hazard.

Suggestion (Charm)

Cost = 0.

This power makes the target more receptive to your verbal instructions. To activate this power, you must roll your Suggestion over the target's Willpower. If you roll higher, you gain influence over the target. At the very least, the target will view your suggestions in the most favorable light, though he will only follow reasonable directions.

Sustenance (Stamina)

Cost = 0.

This power lets you go indefinitely without eating, drinking, sleeping or excreting. When the time comes to do one of these things, simply make a Sustenance roll. If the results are Passable or better, you don't have to answer the call of nature, but act in all ways as though you had.

Oobie

Oobies are named after their talent for having Out Of Body Experiences (OOBE). They tend to think of themselves as outcasts or as the audience to the pageantry of life. Yet their ability to get in almost anywhere makes them excellent scouts.

With this talent, you can leave your host body and move about in a ghostly, invisible form. You simply step from your host, leaving your jump-team behind. While you are gone, you will not know what is happening to the jump-team since your psychic link to them is severed.

In your ghostly form, you can slip through small cracks and move through most material objects. However you cannot pass through solid walls and you cannot fly. Your movements are entirely silent, and in fact you cannot make any noise even if you want to (except through the use of a power). Physical objects pass right through you, and most material beings are oblivious to you. You never need to eat, drink or go to the bathroom.

Although immune to all physical attacks, you are still vulnerable to psi-powers and psychotronic devices. Because you are bodiless, you can only use powers that have a cost of zero.

You can stay away from your jump-team's body for up to 5 minutes for every point of Willpower you possess. Returning to your body for 1 minute resets the clock, so a character with 5 Willpower could travel out of body for 25 minutes, return for 1 minute, and then leave again for another 25 minutes.

If you don't rejoin with the jump-team within the deadline, you risk never being able to return. Every 10 minutes, you must make a Willpower roll. If you fail, the psychic link to your corporeality is broken. You can never return to your jump-team.

You become a lost soul, forever separated from the pleasures of the flesh.

The same fate will befall you if your jump-team returns to Earth before you return. Likewise, if the jump-team is composed of incarnates and oobies, and they all leave the host, none of them will be able to return to the original host body.

If your jump-team changes to a new host while you are gone, you will have to find them and return to the new body, not the former host. This can make it very difficult for you to find the jump-team when it comes time to return. You have no psychic attraction to the jump-team nor any special way of identifying them.

AVAILABLE POWERS

Choose any four of the following powers. When you first take a power, it's starting value will equal the attribute in parentheses.

Create Sound (Cunning)

Cost = 0.

You can create noises. A power roll is made to determine how realistic the sound is. Simple sounds have a roll required of Good, while complex noises, such as voices, are much harder to fashion.

Dark Vision (Alertness)

Cost = 0.

You can see even in complete darkness. This power requires a Passable roll to activate. This does not confer Dark Vision on the Boss; you will have to tell him about the hazards in his way, and hope he doesn't stumble.

Electrical Interference (Mechanical)

Cost = 0.

Instantaneous. You can turn electrical devices on or off, not by throwing the power switch, but by causing current to flow psychotronically through the machine. You need a Passable roll to make this power work, more for a complex or unfamiliar device.

Emote (Willpower)

Cost = 0.

You can send an emotion or feeling to the target. The target may be anywhere, but must be

known to the psychic. The emotion is very faint and not intense in the least. The target will know that the emotion is being sent from someone else, and may mistakenly believe themselves to be empathic. The target will not know who sent the projection.

Inflict Pain (Dexterity)

Cost = 0.

Instantaneous. The victim is at -2 on all attributes due to severe pain for (Inflict Pain - target's Stamina) x 2 turns.

Probability Travel (Agility)

Cost = 2.

Instantaneous. You can travel to an alternate universe where a certain recent event did not necessarily happen. If you make a Passable Probability Travel roll, you can force one roll that was made the previous turn to be done over. The roll must have been made by someone within your vicinity.

Shatter (Strength)

Cost = 0.

Instantaneous. Causes an object to shatter. You must roll your Shatter power over a roll required set by the referee. The roll required is based on the size and resilience of the object.

Teleport (Agility)

Cost = 5.

Instantaneous. Moves the jump-team and their host body to another place. The destination must be known to you, within line of sight, or obvious (such as the other side of a door). You cannot teleport between Xenos and Earth. When you teleport, spatial momentum remains. So if you were falling, and you teleported to the ground, your host would hit the ground as though he had fallen the full distance. The roll required to teleport depends upon your familiarity with the destination, and is set by the referee. If can clearly see your destination, the roll required is Passable. If the destination is very familiar, the roll is Good. If it's somewhat familiar, you need a Great roll, and if the destination is obvious but unfamiliar, you need a Superior roll.

Temporary Teleport (Agility)

Cost = 1.

Instantaneous. This is exactly like the Teleport power, except it lasts only (Temporary Teleport - RR) x 2 turns. At the end of this duration, your jump-team and host body return to wherever it is you came from.

Time Distortion (Mechanical)

Cost = 1.

Instantaneous. You can change the flow of time around yourself (and those in your host body with you), allowing you to speed up your actions relative to those around you. For (Time Distortion - Passable) turns, you and those in the same body receive 2 actions per turn.

Time Travel (Knowledge)

Cost = 1.

Instantaneous. Moves you (and his body and anyone in the body with you) into the future (Time Travel - Passable) minutes. To those in the normal time-stream, you seem to disappear for a few minutes before reappearing in the exact same position.

Peeker

Peekers, also called PK'ers, are named after their talent for psychokinesis. They are experts at moving objects at a distance, using only the power of the mind. While very simple, this versatile power makes them highly interactive with their surroundings.

As a peeker, you can use your physical skills even when you're not in control of a body. You can move objects in your vicinity without touching them. The maximum range is about 30 feet, and you must be able to see the target to move it. You can manipulate only one object at a time.

Using psychokinesis, you can pretty much do anything you could if you were physically there. Many actions, such as opening a book or carrying a weapon, will be automatically successful. But if a roll would be required for you to physically perform the action if you were in your own body, you must make the same roll for your psychokinesis to

accomplish it. So, if opening a safe would take a physical character an Unlock roll, it would also require you to make an Unlock roll if you were doing it with psychokinesis. Ability rolls are made using the attributes for your true body, not your host.

Lifting a person using psychokinesis is exhausting. The maximum distance a person can be raised is six feet, and it would require a high Strength roll to achieve!

Psychokinesis can be used in a myriad of ways. It can move a heavy obstacle out of your way. Or, it could manipulate a lock. The versatility of this talent allows you to use them in many ways.

AVAILABLE POWERS

Choose any four of the following powers. When you first take a power, it's starting value will equal the attribute in parentheses.

Body Control (Strength)

Cost = 1.

You can control another being's body. You gain control of (Body Control - target's Strength) limbs, including arms, legs and head. The victim retains control of the other limbs, and in any case, you cannot take over a person's voice. Use your Body Control when doing things with the controlled body. For instance, you would use your Body Control instead of the victim's Strength to lift a heavy object. The victim moves slowly and jerkily, and can fight to restrain his limbs. Using this power, you can make a victim strangle himself, drop a gun, or fall down.

Destroy Sound (Mechanical)

Cost = 1 per 10' diameter. You can create a sphere of silence. Roll your power to determine how effective the silence is, you need at least a Passable roll. It can range from a dampening of noises produced in the area, or it can be a complete sphere of silence in which no sound can penetrate (on an Awesome or better roll). You can move the sphere within your line of sight. The sphere of silence does not extend through walls or doors.

Force Shield (Dexterity)

Cost = 1 per 10' diameter. You can create a protective globe of invisible force. Any physical attack that tries to penetrate the shield must reduce it's Attack value by (Force Shield - Passable) points. A being who tries to break through the shield must roll his Strength over your Force Shield. You can make the force field stationary or set it to move with the target.

Hurl Object (Dexterity)

Cost = 0.

This power lets you hurl objects at a target. Small objects are hurled at bullet speeds, while heavier items are hurled more slowly, but do more damage because of their mass. A hurled object does (Hurl Object - Defense) x 5 damage.

Levitate (Strength)

Cost = 1.

You can fly at the rate of (Levitate - Poor) squared miles per hour. So, if you made a Great roll, you would fly at 9 mph, while an Unbelievable roll would propel you at 81 mph!

Shatter (Strength)

Cost = 0.

Instantaneous. Causes an object to shatter. You must roll your Shatter power over a roll required set by the referee. The roll required is based on the size and resilience of the object.

Sonic Blast (Stamina)

Cost = 1.

Instantaneous. You can produce a deafening blast of white noise. Those within 30 yards (pistol range) are deafened for (Sonic Blast - victim's Stamina) x 5 minutes. If the power roll is 5 points above the victim's Stamina, the deafness is permanent.

Telekinetic Kill (Dexterity)

Cost = 3.

You can kill a victim by constricting his blood vessels. Roll your power while the victim rolls Stamina. Reduce the ability of the low roller by the difference in the rolls. This can be repeated next round to reduce Stamina further. If Stamina is reduced to zero, the victim dies. If your Telekinetic

Kill is reduced to zero, you must break off the attack. Both Stamina and Telekinetic Kill are regained within minutes of the power's cessation.

Telepath

Telepaths are adept at mental communication. While their powers are limited because they are only effective when dealing with other intelligent beings, they allow for strong social interaction with other people.

Telepathy lets you to communicate with others even when you're not in control of a body. The target must be within the near vicinity, about 30 feet (thrown range), and within sight. Telepathic communication is treated exactly like speech, except no one but your target can hear you. Though the communication is purely mental, language can be a barrier if your target does not speak the same tongue as you. The target will know the general direction the thoughts are coming from, and may be able to identify you in a crowd.

This talent does not allow you to dredge up information or eavesdrop on thoughts. You only pick up those thoughts your target wants you to hear. The target may choose to ignore you, and if he has a Knowledge higher than yours, he can shut you out entirely.

When telepathically communicating, you may need to use other skills. For instance, if trying to convince someone to help you, you may need to make a Persuade roll. If telling a fib, a Lie roll would be needed. Basically, you'll need to make the same skill rolls that you would if you were verbally communicating.

AVAILABLE POWERS

Choose any four of the following powers. When you first take a power, it's starting value will equal the attribute in parentheses.

Cloud Mind (Charm)

Cost = 2.

This is the power to create illusions. For this power to work, you must roll your Cloud Mind power over your victim's Cunning. The better your roll, the more encompassing your illusions will be.

For instance, if you just barely beat your victim's roll, you could make him see small objects, but if you beat him by 5 or more points, you could control his entire apparent environment. The victim will see, hear and smell whatever you wish. Using this power, you can even make yourself invisible to the target. However, people cannot be harmed by illusions, and no one except the target will see the illusion. If the victim suspects false sensory input, he can choose to ignore your images.

Empathy (Charm)

Cost = 0.

You can read the target's emotions. This power reveals strong feelings such as fear, love, hatred, suspicion, hostility or anger, but it does not reveal who the feelings are directed at. You must roll Empathy over the victim's Cunning for this power to work, the better the roll, the clearer the impressions.

Life Detection (Alertness)

Cost = 0.

Instantaneous. You gain (Life Detection - Passable) pieces of information about any intelligent life within your immediate vicinity, including if there is any intelligent life, their approximate number, distance, direction and type.

Link Senses (Fate)

Cost = 0.

This power lets you share the senses of the target. You must roll Link Senses over the victim's Cunning to make this power work. The victim will not know they are under the influence of this power. You can switch between your senses or that of your victim, but you cannot receive both at the same time.

Mental Link (Knowledge)

Cost = 0 or 1. This power allows two-way communication with another. Language is no barrier, and neither is distance. Though the target doesn't need to be within sight, you do need to be familiar with him. If you are friends, the cost is 0. If you have spoken with the target and know him slightly, the cost is 1. You cannot use this power on a stranger. By using mind link on several targets, you can serve as a switching board for communication. This power only allows you to hear

what the target broadcasts, and the target may sever communication at any time. It cannot be used to dredge up information or eavesdrop on thoughts. The roll needed is Passable.

Mental Probe (Willpower)

Cost = 2.

This power allows you to extract information from the target. The target must truthfully answer (Mental Probe - target's Cunning) questions. The answers can be as brief or as misleading as the referee likes.

Mind Blank (Willpower)

Cost = 0.

This power gives you greater resistance to psychic attacks. When you have this power running and you are assailed by a psychic power, you get to roll your Mind Blank. If you roll Good or better, you have fended off the attack.

Mind Wipe (Agility)

Cost = 2.

This power removes memories from the target. You may obliterate (Mind Wipe - target's Knowledge) memories. Obliterating memories can be tricky. For instance, the memory "I had dinner with Isabella Bayne last week" could be removed, but the victim would still recall the discussion they had at dinner. He just wouldn't remember where or when he had the conversation.

Psi-Static (Strength)

Cost = 1.

Instantaneous. This power causes mental interference. For (Psi-Static - Passable) x 2 turns, no one within 30 yards (pistol range) who has a Knowledge less than your Psi-Static roll can activate or maintain a psychic power or talent. This will also inhibit you and your jump-team from using powers. It does not affect psychotronic devices.

Read Mind (Cunning)

Cost = 1.

Lets you read the surface thoughts of the target. The thoughts will be in the language of the target, and are frequently disjointed. You must roll Read Mind over the victim's Cunning, the higher the roll, the clearer the impressions you receive. If used on a dreamer, this power lets you see and hear the target's dream, just as though she were experiencing it. It works equally well on daydreams.

Sense Lie (Alertness)

Cost = 0.

Lets you know if the target is lying, but it won't reveal what the truth is. Whenever the target lies, the referee should make a secret Sense Lie roll for you. If the roll is over the target's Cunning, the lie is detected.

Sleep (Charm)

Cost = 1.

Instantaneous. Your target, which may be a cricket inside a host, is put unconscious for (Sleep - victim's Stamina) x 2 minutes. The victim can be roused sooner by being shaken. Awakenning a sleeping cricket is harder, and requires a Great Cunning roll.

CHAPTER 6

EARTH GEAR

Hendricks radioed the position of the Spawn. It was in the jungles to the south, making its way toward the tiny village of Kehsi Mansam. Our drop team was flying in to stop its progress.

A hail of rockets welcomed our eagle. A hit knocked out our left rotor, and as our transport started down, our team bailed in hoverpacks. I could see the Xenite below us. It was a big one, the size of a tank, and at first I thought it must be as dumb as a turtle. Then I saw the glint of intelligence in the narrow slits of its eyes, and I knew Isabella had given this one something special.

Guns bristled from its armored back, raining a stream of bullets up at us, swatting Anderson and Dixon from the air. The explosive tipped rounds from my AR-50 couldn't touch it. Gliding in on my hoverpack, I loosened my IMI Zeus. I'd been warned to fire it only from a braced position on the ground. But the way the Spawn was cutting us down, I'd never reach dirtside.

Holding the Zeus in both hands, I pulled the trigger. The recoil sent me spinning, the gun flying from my hand. From the thrashing down below, I knew I must have gotten its attention.

Equipment

Since nothing physical can go through the TED, you don't need to equip your character before a mission to Xenos. You simply check your body at the cryo-pod. Your equipment will be whatever your host is carrying, or whatever you can lay your hands on.

On those occasions when you are fighting on Earth, you will need to outfit your character. Good equipment will augment your natural skills. A

character with a machine gun will be a more effective fighter than someone with a stick.

You acquire gear on Earth by spending skill points. The skill point cost for gear is listed later in this chapter. Gear that is commonly available to all agents of ISES has a cost of zero.

During a mission, more gear may be purchased, stolen or taken from NPCs. Gaining gear during a mission requires the referee's approval. Write the equipment you acquire on your character sheet. If it's not on your sheet, your character doesn't have it. The only exception is clothing. All characters are assumed to have non-protective clothing appropriate for their professions.

All gear has a weight associated with it. You can carry up to your Carrying Capacity in weight (see Chapter 4: Other Characteristics).

At the end of a mission, if you decide to keep the equipment you acquired along the way, you must pay the skill point cost for it. Otherwise, it must be turned over to the ISES warehouse.

Once the points are spent for an item, it can be used on subsequent missions at no additional cost.

Armor

Armor is purchased by the piece, as shown on the Basic Armor table. The table lists the wounds that the armor can absorb. Copy the wound levels onto the wound track of your character sheet. For any damage you take, you can cross off a code for your armor instead of your body so long as the armor code is equal to or greater than the damage. When a piece of armor is out of codes, it is ineffectual until repaired. Armor helps protect against all types of damage, including fire, falls and missiles.

Helmets, boots and gloves can be worn with basic armor. They give you additional protection, but they are so bulky that they reduce an attribute, as shown on the Optional Pieces table. At most, you can wear one basic piece of armor, one helmet, one pair of boots, and one pair of gloves.

Example: Keith outfits his character, Gilbert Mosley, with a reinforced coat. The Basic Armor table shows it can absorb two medium wounds. He writes M M on the second row of his wound track. During the game, Gilbert takes a light wound. Keith may either circle the L on the first row of his wound track, or he may circle an M next to his armor. He chooses to take the damage against his armor. Later, he takes a heavy wound. Since this is more damage than his armor can absorb, he must circle the H for his body.

CHITINITE

Chitinite armor is made from a lightweight synthetic material based upon the molecular structure of natural chitin, but composed of unbreakable plastics and metallic fibers.

SHIELDS

Shields must be carried in one hand to do any good. Your Dexterity determines the type of wounds it protects against. The weight of the shield determines how many wounds the shield can absorb. If you lack the Strength Required to use a shield, reduce your Dexterity by 1 for every point you lack for purposes of determining the type of wound it protects against. Shields only protect against frontal attacks, and cannot help against falls or surprise attacks.

Example: Perkins, with a 6 Strength and 5 Dexterity, uses a heavy shield. It can absorb four medium wounds. If he had settled for a medium shield, it would absorb three heavy wounds.

Basic Armor

| Armor | Wounds | Cost | Wt |
|-----------------|---------|------|----|
| Light coat | L | 0 | 1 |
| Parka | L, L | 0 | 1 |
| Leather jacket | L, L, L | 0 | 2 |
| Reinforced coat | M, M | 0 | 2 |
| Kevlar vest | M, M, M | 0 | 3 |
| Riot vest | H, H | 1 | 3 |
| Flak jacket | H, H, H | 2 | 4 |
| Ceramic vest | C, C | 2 | 5 |
| Ceramic armor | C, C, C | 3 | 6 |
| Chitinite vest | D, D | 3 | 7 |
| Chitinite armor | D, D, D | 4 | 8 |

Optional Pieces

| Armor | Wounds | Attribute | Cost | Wt |
|------------------|---------|--------------|------|----|
| Leather gloves | L, L | -1 Dexterity | 0 | 0 |
| Combat gauntlets | M, M, M | -2 Dexterity | 0 | 2 |
| Heavy boots | L, L | -1 Agility | 0 | 1 |
| Combat boots | M, M, M | -2 Agility | 0 | 2 |
| Half helmet | M, M | -1 Alertness | 0 | 1 |
| Full helmet | H, H, H | -2 Alertness | 0 | 2 |

Shields

Dexterity Wound

| | |
|------|---|
| 1-2 | L |
| 3-4 | M |
| 5-6 | H |
| 7-8 | C |
| 9-10 | D |

Shield Weight

| Weight | Wound | Strength Req | Cost | Wt |
|--------|-------|--------------|------|----|
| Light | x2 | 2 | 0 | 1 |
| Medium | x3 | 5 | 0 | 3 |
| Heavy | x4 | 8 | 0 | 5 |

Weapons

There are up to eight statistics you need to know about a weapon.

Accuracy Your Attack value with a weapon equals the weapon's Accuracy or your Dexterity, whichever is lower.

Damage The damage multiplier of the weapon. If your Strength is less than the damage of the weapon, reduce your Attack by the difference.

Skill The skill used to fire the weapon. If you don't have the skill, you must divide your Attack value in half.

Conceal This shows how easily the weapon can be hidden.

Range The maximum effective range of the weapon.

Shots The number of rounds the weapon holds.

Cost The skill point cost to get the weapon.
Weight The weight of the weapon, in pounds.

CALCULATING ATTACK VALUES

- Your Attack value equals the Accuracy of the weapon or your Dexterity, whichever is lower.

- If your Strength is less than the weapon's damage multiplier, you must reduce your Attack value by the difference.
- If you lack the skill required to use the weapon, divide your Attack value in half (rounding any fractions up). If you are trained in the use of the weapon, that is, you have a check in front of its skill required on your character sheet, you will use your full Attack value, plus 1 for every box next to the skill that you have checked (if any).

To save time, you should do these calculations before combat and note your Attack with the weapons you are carrying on the gear section of your character sheet. You should also note the damage multiplier of the weapon after the Attack value. If you had an Attack of 7 and damage of x4, you would write it as 7 x 4.

An Attack roll is made like any other ability roll. You throw one six-sided die for every point of Attack. Add up all the 1s, 2s and 3s for your total, convert it to an adjective (Passable, Good, Great, etc.), and tell your referee the result.

See Creating Weapons, below, for an example of how to calculate an Attack value.

CREATING WEAPONS

The weapon lists are intentionally short. You may create additional weapons as needed, following these simple steps.

First, decide what weapon skill will be used to wield the weapon. Is it a pistol? A submachine gun? A blade?

Next, decide upon an Accuracy and damage for the weapon. The minimum for each is 2. Added together, Accuracy and damage must equal a set number, depending on the type of weapon you're designing. With pistols, for instance, they must equal 11. You could make a pistol with a 3 Accuracy and 8 damage, or one with an 9 Accuracy and 2 damage, or a more sensible pistol with 5 Accuracy and 6 damage.

The following listings will tell you what the Accuracy and damage of your weapon must equal. In addition, you'll find formulas for calculating other vital statistics.

Most weapons have a basic cost of zero. The weapon's skill point cost is raised by 2 points for every point you exceed the normal Accuracy + damage maximum.

If you don't want to create a weapon, you can always fight with your fists. Anyone can throw a punch for x1 damage with an Accuracy equal to his Dexterity. You don't even need the Unarmed skill.

Since x1 damage won't have much of an effect on anything except small insects, you might want to take a larger weapon after all.

Example: Keith wants to create a pistol to arm his professor. His character has a Dexterity of 4, a Strength of 4, and one check after the Pistol skill.

Keith sets the damage of his pistol at x5. Looking at the listings later in this chapter, Keith sees that pistols have an Accuracy + Damage total of 11, so the Accuracy of Keith's pistol must be $11 - 5 = 6$.

Since the professor's Dexterity is less than the gun's Accuracy, his Attack equals his Dexterity of 4.

His Strength is only 4, one less than the pistol's damage of x5. He suffers -1 from his Attack with the unwieldy weapon. His Attack value is now $4 - 1 = 3$.

With one box after the Pistol skill checked, Keith's professor is experienced with handguns. He receives +1 on his Attack because of his skill. His Attack value is adjusted again: $3 + 1 = 4$.

On the gear section of his character sheet, Keith writes his Attack followed by the weapon's damage multiplier: 4×5 .

The weight of the pistol equals its damage divided by three, rounded up, so the gun weighs 2 pounds fully loaded. Like all other pistols, it holds a clip of 10 rounds and can shoot up to pistol range. Because it has a damage rating of x5, the pistol is too big to fit in a pocket, but it can be concealed in a shoulder holster under a jacket.

Unarmed

This allows you to create a unique unarmed fighting style for your character, whether it's martial arts, boxing or street fighting.

Accuracy + Damage = 7

Maximum Damage: 4

Boxing

Accuracy 5, Damage x2

Kick Boxing

Accuracy 4, Damage x3

Martial Arts

Accuracy 3, Damage x4

Blade, Flexible, Hafted, Pole Arm

Accuracy + Damage = 12

Maximum Damage = 8

Weight = Damage/2

Range = Most can only be used at brawling range. Ask your referee if your weapon can be thrown.

Conceal depends upon the damage of the weapon. If it does x1 to x2 damage, it can be hidden in a pocket. If it has a damage of x3 to x4, it can be concealed under a jacket. If it does x5 to x6 damage, it can only be hidden under a coat. And if its damage is x7 or greater, it cannot be hidden at all.

Chain

Accuracy 8, Damage 4

Skill: Flexible

Club

Accuracy 10, Damage 2

Skill: Hafted

Combat Knife

Accuracy 8, Damage 4

Skill: Blade

Fire Axe

Accuracy 5, Damage 7,

kill: Hafted

Hatchet

Accuracy 8, Damage 4

Skill: Hafted

Javelin

Accuracy 9, Damage 3

Skill: Pole Arm

Pitchfork

Accuracy 7, Damage 5
Skill: Pole Arm

Pocket Knife

Accuracy 10, Damage 2
Skill: Blade

Sledge Hammer

Accuracy 7, Damage 5
Skill: Hafted

Spear

Accuracy 8, Damage 4
Skill: Pole Arm

Whip

Accuracy 9, Damage 3
Skill: Flexible

Bow

Even in an age of high-tech firearms, bows still have their place. A bow is virtually silent, making it an excellent choice for taking out a guard during a raid. A bow requires two hands to use. Crossbows require both hands to cock, but can be fired with one hand. All bows use the Archery skill.

Accuracy + Damage = 11

Maximum Damage = 7

Weight = Damage/3

Shots = 1 (may be reloaded and fired in the same turn)

Range = Rifle

Conceal = Non-concealable

Wrist Crossbow

Accuracy 8, Damage 3

Hunting Bow

Accuracy 7, Damage 4

Crossbow

Accuracy 5, Damage 6

Pistols

Despite improvements in energy weapons, guns are still the most common and effective weapons for small scale combat. The automatic pistol, with its faster rate of fire and high-capacity magazine, has virtually replaced revolvers.

Another reason for the automatic's dominance is the caseless ammunition used by all modern firearms. The round is completely consumed when fired, leaving no spent cartridge casing.

The standard round is a jacketed hollow point with armor piercing titanium core. ET (explosive tipped) rounds are also common.

Ammunition can be traded between guns with the same damage multiplier. For instance, a pistol with x5 damage could use the ammunition from a submachine gun that also had x5 damage. Ammunition, in reasonable quantities, has a skill point cost of 0.

Pistols have these statistics:

Accuracy + Damage = 11

Maximum Damage = 8

Weight = Damage/3

Shots = 15

Range = Pistol

Conceal depends upon the damage of the pistol. If it does x1 to x3 damage, it can be hidden in a pocket. If it has a damage of x4 to x6, it can be concealed under a jacket. If its damage is x7 or greater, it can only be hidden under a coat.

AMT Guardian Angel

Accuracy 7, Damage 4

This is a popular backup pistol for close range work. The design of the Guardian Angel allows it to fire old or poor quality ammunition without jamming. This is important in situations where supplies may be limited or unreliable, and the Angel is especially popularity with the US Special forces.

Astra Assassin

Accuracy 5, Damage 6

The world's finest close quarters small frame pistol comes equipped with a 10 round clip for its 9mm explosive tip punch.

Beretta 20MP

Accuracy 6, Damage 5

The latest development in Beretta pistol series, the 20MP became the standard side arm of US military forces in the 1990s and remained in the East Asian War. It operates on standard blowback double action . It also comes equipped with a built in laser targeter. When it was first adopted by the US military, it experienced instances of catastrophic slide failures that resulted in both injury and controversy. However, there have been no such reports from law enforcement agencies or civilians who use the gun. The precursor of this pistol, the Beretta 92F was popularized by the 20th century movie Lethal Weapon.

Browning Ultra High Power

Accuracy 4, Damage 7

A heavy pistol with considerable stopping power and a larger capacity than a revolver, the Ultra High Power makes an excellent weapon for those who want to take down their target with one shot. It has a select fire switch enabling it to fire single rounds or 3 round bursts. It serves as the standard sidearm of the British army.

Colt Enforcer

Accuracy 5, Damage 6

A sturdy, reliable pistol used by many police forces. Because of its short barrel, it pulls very quickly from a holster. Colt recently added a shrouded hammer to eliminate possible snags during a fast draw.

Colt Marine

Accuracy 6, Damage 5

A classic pistol with the same look as the Colt M1911A .45 caliber service automatic. The Colt was the standard side arm of the US military forces for many years until replaced by the more accurate but smaller caliber Beretta. This reliable pistol is still in common use by National Guard units and those who feel the take-down power of the Colt is more important than the handling of the Beretta.

Firestar Revolver

Accuracy 3, Damage 8

Favored primarily for its hefty, .50 Automatic Express round, the Firestar is the largest handgun

in common use. It has compensation to help absorb the massive recoil.

Glock M30

Accuracy 7, Damage 4, Shots 30

The high capacity clip of the Glock makes it popular with those who feel the need to shoot a lot of rounds in the shortest time possible. Lacking a safety catch, the Glock uses internal trigger safeties that are disengaged with the first pull of the trigger, allowing the gun to be drawn and fired quickly. The pull of the trigger is consistent between the first and subsequent shots, allowing excellent groupings of rounds. The pull is also adjustable, from a hair trigger to a hard, positive pull. The long, double-stacked clip of the Glock can only be concealed under a coat.

H&K F.E.D

Accuracy 7, Damage 4

A contender against the Beretta 20MP as the standard for the US Army, the FED lost the contract for reasons other than its performance. Its expense has made it less popular with law enforcement agencies, but it can still be found in the arsenals of many special forces. It comes with a built in laser dot sighting system. The FED operates using standard blowback double action.

Remington Pump Handgun

Accuracy 4, Damage 7

This is a five barreled handgun that has an action similar to that of a pump shotgun. To chamber the rounds, you rack the slide forward and back; this chambers a round into each barrel and readies the rotating firing pin. A pull of the trigger fires a single round and rotates the barrel. The tubes are reloaded using a break action, and hold 20 rounds.

Ruger Ultralight

Accuracy 9, Damage 2

Jimmy's first handgun, this lightweight revolver is popular for target shooting, but is sadly outclassed in school yard conflicts.

Smith & Wesson Model 29AE

Accuracy 3, Damage 8

A direct descendant of the Model 29, “the world’s most powerful handgun” popularized by Clint Eastwood in the Dirty Harry movies of the 20th century. The 29AE is a heavy handgun with considerable stopping power, but more manageable than the .50 AE. It is an old, classic design, popular with the highway patrol.

Vector FCP

Accuracy 6, Damage 5, Non-concealable

A full coverage pistol, this unique firearm covers the entire wrist of the user. It comes recoilless, chambered in 10mm with two 15 round clips in half moon shapes that clamp around the pistol in a circle. It is very stable and accurate especially with the built in laser dot sights.

Walther PPX

Accuracy 8, Damage 3

James Bond immortalized the Walther PPK, and for many years it was a favorite with European agencies. The improved PPX has a higher capacity and, unlike its predecessor, is not susceptible to jamming.

SMG

Submachine guns and assault rifles have a selector switch that allows the user to fire one bullet, a burst of three bullets or a spray of ten or more bullets. Machine guns fire burst or sprays only.

Burst At every pull of the trigger, a burst discharges 3 bullets at a single target. The damage multiplier is increased by 1. If you do not have 3 or more bullets in your clip, you cannot fire a burst.

Spray A spray fires 10, 20, 30, 40 or 50 bullets (your choice, up to the number of rounds you have in your magazine). If you have less than 10 bullets in your clip, you cannot fire a spray. Roll separately to hit each target in the field of fire, up to the number of bullets in the spray. You gain a bonus of +1 on your Attack value for every 10 bullets fired. Friendly characters in the field of fire will take (Weapon Attack Value - Defense) x Weapon damage.

Accuracy + Damage = 11

Maximum Damage = 7

Weight = Damage

Shots = 30

Range = Pistol

Concealing a SMG depends upon the damage of the gun. If it does x1 to x3 damage, it can be hidden under a jacket. If its damage is x4 or greater, it can only be hidden under a coat.

AKS

Accuracy 4, Damage 7

The latest Russian made submachine gun is a cut down version of the AK assault rifle. A screw-on flash hider reduces the flame and noise that issues from the short barrel. A bullpup design and removable forward grip contribute to its small size. Unlike most SMGs, the AKS fires rifle ammunition. The greater charge behind the round accounts for the high damage and kick of the weapon.

Calico Bonzai

Accuracy 7, Damage 4

For those who want the largest magazine possible, the Bonzai mounts a 150 round drum packed with 9mm rounds. It has little recoil and is very steady. It comes with a triple laser dot sight. Because of its large magazine, the Bonzai cannot be concealed.

Calico Backup

Accuracy 9, Damage 2

The smallest submachine gun available, the Backup can be hidden in a boot.

Colt Raider

Accuracy 5, Damage 6

A cut down version of the M16 military rifle. It comes with a flash hider to reduce the muzzle flash and racket that issues from the short barrel. Soldiers often remove their flash hidings, thereby making a small patrol sound like a much larger formation.

Enfield Windsor

Accuracy 6, Damage 5

This submachine gun has dual 30 round clips that wrap around the arm. It comes complete with a laser dot sight and recoilless action. The weapon is non-concealable.

H&K MP21c

Accuracy 7, Damage 4

The MP21c is the primary weapon of the FBI, Secret Service, US Navy SEALs, the UK's SAS and SBS, and Germany's GSG-9. It is the most common submachine gun used by the world's elite military forces. There are over 30 models of the MP21c designed by H&K to the specifications of various Special Forces. The MP21c's safety acts as a selector, allowing it to fire semi-auto, full auto, or three round bursts. The MP21c can be fitted with a folding, retractable or short stock.

Ingram

Accuracy 5, Damage 6

This effective "room sweeper" fires over 1,000 rounds per minute and can be easily hidden under a jacket. The threaded barrel fits a Sionics suppressor. To fire at more than thrown range, the folding stock must be extended. When it was first introduced, it was used by a number of Special Forces. Almost all dropped it in favor of more accurate weapons. The gun suffers tremendous recoil, and its nickname "phone booth gun" describes its limited range.

Micro-Uzi

Accuracy 7, Damage 4

A highly concealable version of the Uzi, only 10 inches long, but it packs less of a punch than its larger cousin.

Mitchel Recoilless X2F

Accuracy 8, Damage 3

This submachine gun is has virtually no kick. A good basic weapon.

Ruger P101

Accuracy 6, Damage 5

A fully automatic pistol with a recoilless action in double action only. It is capable of firing up to 1,500 round per minute, but is limited to its clip capacity. A potent urban weapon.

Sven Gustav

Accuracy 6, Damage 5

This sturdy Swedish "dream gun" has prove popular with a number of armies. With a rate of fire past 3,000 rpm, this new SMG is the best around, if

you can afford it. The bullpup design puts the see-through plastic magazine in the stock behind the trigger. A suppressor eliminates muzzle crack and flash, but does not reduce the sonic boom of a standard bullet.

Uzi

Accuracy 6, Damage 5

Similar to the Uzi of old, but sporting a built in laser dot sight. Designed by Israel in its war against the Arab states, the Uzi is used by covert operators everywhere, including the US Secret Service. It's reliable and easy to maintain. When the folding stock is extended, it is accurate. The safety is built into the grip, making accidental discharge by dropping the gun unlikely.

Rifle

All rifles are considered automatic assault rifles. They can fire bursts and sprays just like submachine guns (see above). Most rifles employ "bullpup" styling, which places the action in the stock, allowing for a good barrel length in an otherwise shorter weapon. Magazines load into the stock behind the trigger.

Accuracy + Damage = 12

Maximum Damage = 8

Weight = Damage + 2

Shots = 50

Range = Rifle

Conceal = Non-concealable

AK-91

Accuracy 5, Damage 7

An upgraded version of the AK-74, the AK-91 is now the standard assault rifle used by the Russian states. It is slightly lighter than the rifle it replaced. Both are found in the hands of irregular forces throughout the world, and some consider them the most widely distributed of all assault rifle. The muzzle brake vents gas sideways, making the rifle easily controlled even when on full automatic. Many enthusiasts consider the AKM-91 one of the world's most reliable rifles.

Calico Highpower AR

Accuracy 4, Damage 8

An odd gun, this AR fires 20mm ET rounds that have been especially shortened. It has a suppressed recoil system to soften an otherwise brutal kick. It has a capacity of 25 rounds and has impressive long range accuracy. The bullpup design makes it look tr s chic!

Colt AR-50

Accuracy 6, Damage 6

The long-time standard combat rifle of the US military. Improvements since its introduction in 1962 (when it was called the M16) have resulted in a highly reliable and accurate weapon. The AR-50, introduced in the East Asian War, added an optical sight to improve accuracy at longer ranges and a retractable bayonet (8 x 4 damage, use the Blade skill).

Enfield AR

Accuracy 7, Damage 5

This unique weapon has a large capacity magazine of 80 rounds. A break action loader, two half moon clips fit inside the opened cylinder. When fired, the clips dissolve and are destroyed.

Fabrique Nationale AR "Canon de Douler"

Accuracy 7, Damage 5

The standard for small independent European countries, this assault rifle fires tiny exploding fletchettes instead of bullets. The rotating barrel can fire 30 darts a second at an astounding 5000 feet per second. A brick of 300 darts is inserted into the bottom of the gun. Each pull of the trigger fires 30 darts. The rifle can fire a spray which grants +1 Attack value for every additional 30 darts fired, up to a maximum of 120 darts per turn.

H&K G11

Accuracy 8, Damage 4

One of the first rifles to combine caseless ammunition with a bullpup design, the G11 is considered the precursor to modern firearms. In its day, it was too expensive for most applications.

Vector Custom Combo

Accuracy 6, Damage 6

This recoilless rifle has a built-on 30mm grenade launcher under the barrel (see Grenade

Launchers, below). The deadly duo is capable of firing together or separately. A bullpup configuration reduces overall length without shortening the barrel. Its comfortable pistol grip fits the hands nicely.

Shotgun

The advantage of a shotgun is its greater accuracy, the disadvantage is its reduced range. Sawing off a shotgun's barrel to make a shorter weapon reduces the weight by 3 pounds and the range to thrown, but allows it to be concealed under a long coat.

Accuracy + Damage = 14

Maximum Damage = 9

Weight = Damage + 5

Shots = 10

Range = Pistol

Conceal = Non-concealable

Franchi SPAS 12B

Accuracy 8, Damage 6

The Special Purpose Automatic Shotgun is made in Italy. It was one of the first semi-automatic shotguns designed specifically for military and police applications. On the pistol grip model, the folding stock can be extended and hooked around the forearm for one-handed firing. An optional grenade launcher (see below) fits under the muzzle.

Ithaca Stakeout

Accuracy 7, Damage 7

A truly ambidextrous weapon, the Stakeout drops empty shells out the bottom instead of to the right. The pistol grip makes it easier to fire from the hip. The gun is compact enough to hide under a long coat.

Ithaca Roadblocker

Accuracy 5, Damage 9

This monster shotgun can punch through the side of a car and pulverize the passengers inside.

Mossberg Bullpup

Accuracy 9, Damage 5

Made from impact-resistant thermoplastic material, the Mossberg Bullpup is shorter than most

other shotguns because the action is located behind the trigger.

Neostead Automatic Shotgun

Accuracy 7, Damage 7

This extremely short automatic shotgun combines great accuracy with commendable reliability. It can fire a single shot, or it can spray up to 10 rounds, granting +1 to its Attack value for every 3 rounds fired. It loads using break action.

maintains consistent muzzle velocity and superior overall bullet velocity. It an effective sniper rifle.

Vaime Mk7

Accuracy 9, Damage 6

The matte black Mk7 is a silenced weapon, producing the same decibels as a suppressed .22 weapon. However, to achieve its quite operation, the Mk2 requires special subsonic ammunition. The slow bullet velocity reduces its effectiveness.

Sniper Rifles

All sniper rifles are semi-automatic. They are massive, heavy weapons that require a tripod to use.

Accuracy + Damage = 15

Maximum Damage = 9

Weight = Damage + 10

Shots = 10

Range = Extreme

Conceal = Non-concealable

Barrett M100

Accuracy 6, Damage 9

The bullpup design of the M100 reduces the overall length to just under four feet. The half inch bullets deliver massive injuries to living targets, and can even disable a light vehicle, aircraft or helicopter. The bullets are backed with such force that they often go right through body armor. When fired from dry ground, the rifle sends up a cloud of dust. The x10 scope gives excellent sighting.

Browning 1200 Sniper

Accuracy 7, Damage 8

A .high caliber rifle with a capacity of 10 rounds held in a removable clip. It can mount various night vision, infrared or thermal sights rather than its standard optical sights. The skeletal stock reduces its weight. The x6 scope gives a good field of vision and is quite rugged.

H&K PSG-13

Accuracy 8, Damage 7

By employing polygonal rifling instead of the conventional lands and grooves, the PSG-13

Machine Guns

All machine guns are belt fed. They are fully automatic, and cannot fire single shots--they must shoot a spray or burst.

Accuracy + Damage = 13

Maximum Damage = 9

Weight = Damage x 3 + 5

Shots = 100

Range = Extreme

Conceal = Non-concealable

Browning GPMG

Accuracy 4, Damage 9

A heavy machine gun, the .50 Browning must be mounted on a vehicle.

Ravenger GAU-10

Accuracy 6, Damage 7

This amazing weapon is very heavy but can lay down a suppressive blanket of cover. Without its casing, the weapon looks similar to the mini-guns of the 21st century. It is gyro stabilized allowing the gun to be fired even while moving.

Rockets

Rockets are especially effective against large, slow moving targets. They have two ways of killing. The person or vehicle being aimed at is the primary target and everyone within thrown range of the detonation (including the primary target) are secondary targets.

The primary target takes damage in the normal fashion. The secondary targets take damage equal

to (Incredible - Stamina) x 1/2 the weapon's damage multiplier.

If a rocket misses its target, it's up to the referee to decide how close the missile lands, and who is in the blast radius. On a Catastrophic attack, the person using the rocket will be caught in the blast.

It takes 1 complete turn to reload a rocket launcher. Some vehicles have multiple rocket launchers mounted on them.

Attack + Damage = 14

Weight = Damage x pods

Shots = 1 per pod

Range = Extreme

Conceal = Non-concealable

Example: Perkins fires his Zeus at two Xenites with Poor Defense and Great Stamina. His Attack with the gun is 5, and he rolls 2, 3, 4, 6, 6 for a total of 5. The first Xenite, the primary target, takes (5 - 4) x 9 damage, or 9 points. This equals a light wound.

Now Perkins rolls for blast damage. Blast damage equals (Incredible - Stamina) x 5 damage, so Perkins rolls 10 dice and gets 1, 2, 2, 3, 3, 4, 4, 5, 5, 6 for a total of 11. The Xenites take (11 - 7) x 5 damage each from the blast, for a total of 20 points, a heavy wound. The first Xenite now has a light wound and a heavy wound, the second just has a heavy wound.

IMI Hand Rocket

Accuracy 7, Damage 7

This unusual weapon is mounted on the wrist of the user. There are three pods encircling the forearm, loaded by breach break action. It takes 1 turn to load each chamber. A person can fire a single rocket or all three. Extra ammunition weighs 3 pounds per round.

IMI Zeus

Accuracy 5, Damage 9

This "Gun of the Gods" is the meanest gun on the block, firing 75mm tank-like high explosive shells. It must be reloaded after each shot. Although it has been equipped with a recoil reduction system, it is still an extremely difficult weapon to control. Extra ammunition weighs 5 pounds per round.

Stinger Missile Launcher

Accuracy 8, Damage 9

Skill Point Cost = 6

This man-portable air defense missile launcher has extremely advanced homing capabilities. An IFF system allows for positive identification of hostile craft, and the Stinger will not fire at a friendly aircraft. The 60-inch high explosive missile is fired at Mach 2, and has a range of 3 miles. Extra missiles weigh 8 pounds each.

Energy Weapons

All energy weapons are experimental. The ones listed here are the most reliable, and were developed by ISES during the East Asian War. The technology used in an energy weapon's power pack is the same as that found in electric cars.

Energy weapons have these statistics:

Accuracy + Damage = 12

Maximum Damage = 7

Weight = Damage

Shots = 20

Range = varies

Conceal depends upon the damage of the pistol.

If it has a damage of x1 or x 2, it can be concealed under a jacket. If its damage is x3 to x5, it can only be hidden under a coat. If its damage is x6 or x7, it cannot be hidden at all.

Hand Bolter PIP (product improved)

Accuracy 8, Damage 4

Skill: Energy Pistol

Range: Pistol

This pistol-sized weapon fires a short bolt of energy. The Hand Bolter was discredited as a standard when a preliminary unit exploded during use. The improved version, which contains additional safety circuits, has yet to gain favor with the troops.

Hawkeye Sniper Laser

Accuracy 7, Damage 5

Skill: Energy Rifle

Range: Extreme

This highly accurate laser delivers a burning bolt of coherent light at extreme ranges. The energy levels of the man-portable laser proved to pack too light a punch for most applications, but the accuracy of the weapon has endeared it with many people.

The Hawkeye is about the size of an assault rifle and has a bullpup design.

Flamers

All flamers use electronic ignitors so the fuel cannot accidentally detonate. Flamers do not inflict damage all at once, but over the course of several turns as the chemical compound burns into flesh. However, for simplicity, the damage is applied at the time the attack is made.

A flamer is capable of single, burst and spray fire just like an automatic weapon. This simulates holding down the trigger for longer periods of time.

Flamers have these statistics:

Accuracy + Damage = 12

Maximum Damage = 9

Weight = Damage/2

Shots = 15

Range = Pistol

Conceal = Non-concealable

IMI Hand Flamer

Accuracy 6, Damage 6

This small flamer is the size of large pistol. A tube connects to the fuel canister located in the hip holster.

Shivosky Zuckov "Zippo"

Accuracy 4, Damage 8

The zippo sprays a slender jet of flaming fuel. Its compressed fuel pack is small and can easily fit in the small of the back.

Mortar

A mortar is a tube down which the round is dropped. It fires when it strikes the firing pin in the bottom of the tube. The tube stands on a vertical mount. A mortar is fired using the Mortar skill, which is a Dexterity, not a weapon, skill. A mortar can fire any of the following shells:

High Explosive

These shells do (Mortar - Defense) x 10 damage to the primary target, and (Incredible - Stamina) x 5

damage to everyone within pistol range of the detonation.

Smoke

A smoke shell produces a cloud of white smoke for several minutes.

Flare

An illuminating shell produces brilliant light. It floats to the ground on a small parachute. If fired at a target, it does (Mortar - Defense) x 5 damage.

Stunners

Stunners are non-lethal weapons designed to drop a target without hurting him. They have a skill point cost of 0.

Stun Stick

Accuracy 7, brawling range, 1 lb. weight, Hafted skill.

This collapsible baton extends to three feet in length. A power pack sends an electric charge through the end of the stick. The stun stick does no permanent damage, instead it incapacitates the victim for (Attack - Stamina) turns.

Sony Self Defense Unit (SDU)

Accuracy 7, 10 shots, pistol range, 1 lb. weight, Pistol skill.

The SDU fires highly charged capacitance batteries, which discharge upon imbedding in the target. They incapacitate the victim for (Attack - Stamina) turns.

Panasonic Ionizer

Accuracy 7, 20 shots, thrown range, 5 lb. weight, Rifle skill.

A rifle sized weapon, the ionizer fires an energy beam to ionize the air between the gun and the target, then sends a high voltage charge along the ionized path. The jolt knocks the target out for (Attack - Stamina) x 3 turns. During this time, the victim suffers horrible convulsions, and may even experience cardiac arrest. The ionizer is powered by a standard ISES power pack located in the weapon's stock.

Grenades

All grenades have a weight of 1 and a cost of 0. All are 30mm and can be thrown or used in a grenade launcher.

Grenades may be hurled at up to thrown range by using the Aim skill. The Aim roll determines where the grenade lands. The referee sets the RR according to the difficulty of the shot. Throwing a grenade through a second story window could take a Great roll, while tossing one down a manhole might require an Inferior roll. How well the roll is made determines how many of the potential targets are in the blast radius. The effect of a grenade depends upon its type (see the listings later in this chapter).

Grenades have fuses which can be set to explode on contact or to detonate after a set amount of time (usually 4 seconds). The timed fuse is considered the safer of the two, since the you'll be caught in the blast only on a Catastrophic Aim roll. Timed grenades go off the turn after they are thrown, giving your targets a chance to react by dodging for cover or throwing the grenade back.

Since an impact fuse goes off as soon as it hits something, you'll be caught in the blast on a Catastrophic to Feeble Aim roll.

Gas grenades are especially dangerous. Winds can blow it all over the battlefield, so if your roll to throw the grenade is Poor or less, you'll be caught in the gas.

Example: Perkins hurls a fragmentation grenade at a group of three Progeny who have Good (6) Stamina. His Aim roll is Passable. The referee decides that one of the Progeny is out of the blast range. Perkins now rolls ten dice for the grenade's damage. He gets 1, 1, 1, 1, 2, 3, 3, 4, 6, 6 for a total of 12. The Progeny take (12 - 6) x 10 damage, for a total of 60 points each . . . a mortal wound. Two Progeny in the blast radius are blow apart.

Grenade Launcher

Grenade launchers are semi-automatic or pump action and fire 30mm grenades at up to rifle range with a magazine capacity of 10 rounds. A grenade launcher weighs 3 pounds. A character with a grenade launcher uses the Grenade Launcher skill to place the explosions instead of the Aim skill.

Fragmentation

Does (Incredible - Stamina) x 10 damage to all those within pistol range.

Mini-Grenade

Does (Incredible - Stamina) x 7 damage to all within thrown range.

Smoke

Produces blinding smoke which lasts for about 1 minute, longer indoors.

Concussion

The blast knocks down everyone within thrown range for (Superior - Agility) x 2 turns.

Thermite

Thermite grenades burn with a bright light. It can melt through steel in just a few minutes. It can be used as an illumination flare.

White Phosphorus

This grenade scatters burning white phosphorus. Everyone within thrown range takes (Unbelievable - Stamina) x 7 damage. Anything within the blast radius is likely to catch fire.

Tear Gas

All those within thrown range are incapacitated for (Great - Stamina) minutes.

Nerve Gas

Each turn, all those within pistol range have their physical attributes lowered by (Great - Stamina) points. The gas remains active until dispelled by the wind, usually a few minutes. The victim decides how to distribute the lost points among his attributes. If any attribute is lowered to zero, the victim dies. Points lost this way are regained at the rate of 1 per hour. Nerve gas may not be effective against the alien biology of Xenites.

Corrosive Gas

This acid based gas eats away at flesh and inorganic materials. It does (Great - Stamina) x 10 points of damage to living creatures within pistol range regardless of armor.

Biological Gas

The most frightening of weapons, the bio-grenade spews out a lethal virus. Everyone within pistol range will die within (Passable - Stamina) days. The effects of the grenade, nausea and dizziness, do not take effect for 5 hours. The virus used may not be effective against the alien biology of Xenites.

Grapple Grenade

For use with a grenade launcher only. It fires a collapsed grapple up to 100 yards. A nylon cord plays out behind the grapple. The Attack roll with the grenade launcher determines whether it hooks on its target.

Gum Grenade

This non-lethal weapon coats the blast radius with a gummy, sticky substance. Anyone within thrown range will be held by the gum for (Superior - Strength) x 3 turns.

Fletcherette

For use with a grenade launcher only. A fletcherette round sprays a cone of deadly needles at up to pistol range from the firer. The fletcherette round does (Attack - Defense) x 7 damage and can affect up to two targets at a time.

Explosives

Roll Demolitions to set up a satchel charge. You can use any of the triggers listed below. Setting the charges normally takes a Passable roll, +1 for each charge being set after the first. If the roll is failed by 3 or more, the explosive goes off. If your Demolitions roll is made, the charges are properly set.

Satchel charges do (Unbelievable - Stamina) x 3 damage each. The charges are cumulative, so four charges going off together would do (Unbelievable - Stamina) x 12 damage.

Satchel charges have a weight of 1 and a cost of 0.

Trip-Wire

The charge goes off when the trip-wire is pulled. The most common trigger.

Wire Detonated

A wire runs from the explosives to a detonator. When the detonator is pressed, the charge goes off.

Timer Detonated

Timers can be set for a few seconds to many hours.

Radio Detonated

The charge can be set off at up to half a mile via a radio signal. Charges have been known to be detonated accidentally because of ambient radio signals, such as the neighbor's garage door openers.

Other Detonators

A charge can be triggered by a number of other devices. A bomb on a plane can go off when the plane reaches a certain altitude. A car bomb can be rigged to go off when the car is started. Such non-standard detonators may increase the roll required to set the charge.

Special Bullets

These special rounds can be used in any gun that is not fully automatic.

Dum-dum

Shatters on impact, but less aerodynamic. +1 damage multiplier, -1 Attack value.

Gel

Usable in any shotgun, the rubbery gel pellets incapacitates the target for (Attack - Defense) turns, but do no permanent damage.

Glazer

A glazer round fires pellets suspended in liquid teflon. They have such poor penetration that they cannot harm armor. +2 damage multiplier, -1 Attack value, if the wound is blocked by armor, the armor is not damaged.

Teflon

Teflon coated bullets have greater penetration, but tend to slide right through a target without as much impact trauma. -1 damage multiplier, but the wounds cannot be taken off armor. Can be use in automatic weapons.

Other Gear

Silencer

Silencers are available for all pistols, assault rifles and submachine guns. A silencer reduces the noise of the gun to less than that of a .22 rifle. At more than 150 feet, it's difficult to recognize the sound as gunshots. The silencer also eliminates all muzzle flash, making it a reasonably safe choice for use around inflammable substances. However, the silencer slows the bullet to subsonic levels, reducing its damage rating by 1. Cost 0, Weight 1.

Tripod

Increases the maximum range of a rifle by 1 level when firing from a prone position. Cost 0, Weight 2.

Rifle Scope

Gives +1 Attack, but you must aim for 1 turn. Cost 0, Weight 0.

Laser Dot Sight

Gives +1 Attack, but must aim for 1 turn. Cost 0, Weight 0.

Tool Kit

Small tool kit containing wrenches, pliers, screwdrivers, etc. Cost 0, Weight 10.

Arc Welder

Good for spot welding doors closed, or cutting through a locked door. The power pack lasts for 15 minutes. Cost 0, Weight 2.

Electronic Tool Kit

Contains tools appropriate for working on electronic devices. Cost 0, Weight 5.

Wire Tapping Tools

This tool kit contains everything you need to tap a phone line, including the taps and a mini-recorder. It can produce a printout of all incoming and outgoing phone numbers. Using the equipment properly requires a Communications roll. Cost 1, Weight 6.

Lock Pick Tools

This handy tool kit contains a pick, shim, torsion wrench and stethoscope. Using the lock pick kit requires an Unlock roll. Cost 1, Weight 1.

Fiber Optic Tube

This slim tube can be inserted under doors or through small cracks to see into the room beyond. The camera end is the size of a pencil. It is attached to a small, hand-held viewer. Cost 1, Weight 1.

Med Pack

This medical kit contains emergency drugs and supplies for treating snakebite, disease, injury and nerve gas. Can be used 3 times. Using a med pack will take a Medical or Pharmacy roll (referee's option). Cost 0, Weight 5.

Stim Patch

This slap patch adheres to skin and dispenses a stimulant to counteract the effects of exhaustion or injury. A stim-patch will keep an incapacitated character going for another (Stamina - Poor) x 3 turns. Cost 0, Weight 1/5.

Gas Mask

Provides protection from gas grenades (except corrosive grenades). Cost 0, Weight 1.

Respirator

This lightweight mask offers protection from nerve gas and tear gas. Cost 0, Weight 1.

Excavation Tools

A pick or shovel. Cost 0, Weight 4.

Helmet Array

This compact unit is attached to a standard military helmet, or it may be worn as a head band. It contains radio communications equipment, a

flashlight beam and a video camera for transmitting images back to a base. The transmitter has a range of a half mile. Cost 1, Weight 1.

Motion Detector

By monitoring micro-changes in air pressure, this sensor picks up the general direction of movement around it. It has a range of 30 feet (thrown range). Using a Motion Detector requires a Surveillance roll. Cost 1, Weight 4.

Listening Devices

A listening device may be an audio bug or a video bug. Planting a listening device requires a Conceal roll. The effectiveness of a bug is determined by its size, and the larger a bug, the harder it is to hide. Cost 1, Weight 1/10.

Mini-receiver: 500 yard range, 12 hour duration.

Standard receiver: half mile range, 24 hour duration.

High powered receiver: 1 mile range, 48 hour duration.

Bug Detector

This device can locate a listening device within 30 feet. Using a Bug Detector requires a Security roll. Cost 1, Weight 1.

Positioning Device

By using information from satellites, this handy device pinpoints your current position anywhere on Earth. It takes an Electronics roll to operate. Cost 1, Weight 1.

Personal Digital Assistant

The PDA combines a fax, cellular phone, satellite positioning, computer functions in one unit. Military version includes a scrambler. Both transmitter and receiver must be set to the same code. It is possible to record a scrambled message and decode it later. Operating a PDA takes a Computers roll. Cost 0, Weight 1.

Transponder

This homing device helps people find you. It has a range of several miles, and its power pack continues sending a signal for several days.

Hopefully, the forces that locate you will be friendly! Cost 0, Weight 1.

Binoculars

Cost 0, Weight 1.

Low Light binoculars

Just like binoculars, but they can operate in low light situations as well. Everything is greenish, and colors cannot be distinguished. Cost 1, Weight 1.

IR goggles

Infrared goggles allow you to see by infrared light. Heat sources glow brightly, making it easy to spot enemies even in complete darkness. Cost 1, Weight 2.

Handcuffs

Cost 0, Weight 1/5.

Flashlight

Cost 0, Weight 1/5.

Hoverpack

Used like an old-fashioned parachute, a hoverpack gently drops the user to the earth. The jet pack allows for greater maneuverability than a parachute. Controlling the descent takes an Aircraft roll. It can also be used to make short jumps of up to 100 feet, but two such jumps will completely deplete the power pack. Cost 1, Weight 25.

Metal Detector

A hand held metal detector. It's useful for detecting weapons. Operating a metal detector requires a Security roll. Cost 1, Weight 4.

Vehicles

All vehicles have a number of statistics presented in the Vehicles table.

Skill The skill required to drive the vehicle.

Passengers The number of people the vehicle can carry. One person must serve as the driver.

Handling The amount the vehicle can change direction in one turn without the driver having to make a roll to maintain control.

Cruising Speed How fast the vehicle can go without the driver having to make a roll to control it.

Maximum Speed A vehicle cannot exceed its maximum speed. Aircraft have two values. The first is the minimum speed at which the plane will stall. The second is its maximum speed.

Range This is how far a vehicle can travel before it must be refueled.

Start-up How long it takes to start the vehicle.

Cost Vehicles are issued on a mission by mission basis. They cannot be purchased with skill points.

Vehicles

| Name | Skill | #Pas | Handling | Cruise | Max Speed | Range | Start-up |
|---------------------------|-------------|------|----------|---------|--------------|-------------|----------|
| Mid-Size Car | Driving | 5 | 30° | 60 mph | 140 mph | 300 miles | 1 turn |
| Wheeled Scout Jeep | Driving | 4 | 45° | 40 mph | 90 mph | 300 miles | 1 turn |
| Harley-Davidson Piranha | Motorcycles | 2 | 45° | 60 mph | 120 mph | 500 miles | 1 turn |
| Westland Phoenix | Helicopters | 2 | 60° | 150 mph | 250 mph | 500 miles | 5 turns |
| Eagle Troop Transport | Helicopters | 15 | 60° | 100 mph | 200 mph | 250 miles | 10 turns |
| Delphine Fast Attack Boat | Boats | 5 | 30° | 50 mph | 75 mph | 750 miles | 1 turn |
| Hover Platform | Hovercraft | 2 | 90° | 20 mph | 40 mph | 100 miles | 1 turn |
| GM M-5 Macarthur Hover | Hovercraft | 6 | 60° | 30 mph | 75 mph | 500 miles | 3 turns |
| Learjet | Aircraft | 12 | 30° | 300 mph | 100/550 mph | 2,600 miles | 10 turns |
| Cessna Twin Prop | Aircraft | 6 | 45° | 200 mph | 100/250 mph | 1,400 miles | 10 turns |
| VTOL Jump Jet | Aircraft | 6 | 60° | 500 mph | 1400/100 mph | 2,000 miles | 10 turns |

CHAPTER 7

EARTH 2030

“Why don’t we just let them have it?” the convict asked. “What’s so great about Earth that we have to risk our lives for it?”

We were crawling on our bellies toward a cave in the wilds of Montana. ISES Intelligence confirmed Spawn were setting up a base in the cave. I suspected VONU might be helping them.

At one time, I would have agreed with Rebecca. Between the Calcutta Plague and the East Asian War, there had been suffering enough to make anyone disgusted with the planet. Yet the past five years had been good, and despite the ethnic wars raging in Southern California, America was stronger now than it had been in the past forty years.

What we had wasn’t perfect, but it was worth fighting for. And it was a lot better than the misery Isabella Bayne had in store for us!

Earth 2030

While many interesting changes have occurred since the 1990s, much of society remains the same. Social structure, architecture and even entertainment are familiar enough that you shouldn’t have too much trouble maneuvering in the world of the future. Though Earth has gone through harsh times, the past decade has been one of relative prosperity and advancement.

Still, it’s important to have a general knowledge of history over the last fifty or so years. The following history briefly covers the events most important to ISES. As you read over the timeline, think about how these world events might have affected your character. Did he lose his family in the plague? Was he raised in a VONU enclave? You may

use any of these events to flesh out your character’s personality and motivation

Major events are fully explained later in this chapter. Although the focus is on American culture and politics, many of the events described have a world-wide impact.

History

CHINA

In the early 21st century, China saw the fall of the Communist government as the old guard leaders died one by one. Mass demonstrations took place, and members of the armed forces backed the demonstrators. Under the leadership of Zhiyuan On, a democracy based on the British Parliamentary

system was established in 2012 and China broke off ties with North Korea.

Zhiyuan On died of a coronary a few years later, and it was soon clear that a democratic China would not be able to survive without his capable direction. The new government grew weak from internal corruption. Massive vote fraud and intimidation were a reoccurring problem. A new wealthy class became the ruling force of China, while the peasants simply grew poorer and more oppressed.

In 2017, an army coup placed Xiang Chou as dictator of China. His dream of creating a Great East Asia capable of conquering the world was partially realized when he declared war on Japan (See East Asian War below). The East Asian War became an international conflict which lasted for three years. After China and her allies were defeated, Xiang Chou was lynched by his own countrymen.

Since 2023, the US and Europe have helped China rebuild and resettle the millions of people displaced during the war.

KOREA

With the loss of Chinese support in 2012 (see China), North Korea began to experience severe economic problems. In 2015 there was a peaceful return to democracy and the new government of North Korea voted to rejoin the South.

After initial enthusiasm from South Korean leaders, they soon realized that the reunification would cause extreme economic hardship as the wealthy South tried to absorb the economically poor North. Fewer international companies moved factories to Korea during this critical time, and unemployment rose to high levels. Eventually, a new leader, In-Su Kwan emerged. A great admirer of Chinese leader Xiang Chou, In-Su Kwan became dictator of United Korea in 2019. With financial backing from China, In-Su Kwan declared war on Japan for “historical and economic injustices” (see East Asian War below).

The war ended three years later, leaving Korea utterly ruined. In-Su Kwan escaped capture, and is believed to be living in Cambodia.

In 2030, Korea continues to rebuild with the support of US and European funding. The rebuilding of Korea has proven to be a wealth of new markets for many other nations.

MIDDLE EAST

Since 1998, electric cars and other alternative sources of transportation have taken a serious bite out of oil revenues. This failing economy, in part, has been the cause of several civil wars in Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Libya, Iraq, Iran and other Arab countries. As a general rule, Arab Nationalists want a more Pan-Islamic, anti-Western focus while the pro-democracy faction wants to be a part of the international community.

Recently, Kurdish rebellions have occurred in Turkey, Iran and Iraq in an attempt to form their own nation.

AFRICA

The Calcutta Plague (2004-2009) halved the population of Africa, and famine has been less of a problem ever since.

Many African nations were torn apart by civil war at the turn of the century. As Governments slid into anarchy, the people suffered from bloodshed and oppression. Led by the nations of South Africa and Botswana, the Great African Congress met in 2027. Deciding to once and for all abandon many of the old borders created by Europeans during colonial times, the Congress created a new political map in an effort to alleviate tribal disputes. Though this has not proved popular with all Africans, many are weary of war and eager to rebuild their countries.

EUROPE

The European Union steadily grew stronger as Russia and other Eastern Bloc countries joined throughout the early 21st century. Unfortunately, the economic benefits were mitigated by the constant ethnic wars that took place in Europe during this time. Though most of the ethnic wars ended by the mid 20s, tensions remain and flair ups are not uncommon.

LATIN AMERICA

Throughout the late 90s and early 21st century, many US companies moved their

manufacturing plants to Central America and South America due to cheaper wages.

All this manufacturing created a tremendous boom in South America and Mexico, but wages did not grow as industry leaders profited. Many labor unions sprang up aided and abetted by US Union leaders. Though strikes were uncompromising and bloody, the workers managed to achieve a somewhat higher standard of living.

US industrials who invested in Latin America now found their labor expenses higher than anticipated. As US companies made noises about pulling out, Latin American governments began searching for alternatives to shore up their threatened economies.

In 2006, a Colombian firm discovered a natural strain of hemp that did not contain cannabis. Suddenly, hemp became the cash crop of Latin America as farmers realized that hemp could be a cheap substitute for wood-pulp paper.

Suffering from a timber shortage, the US embraced the new paper goods, but Latin American industrialists realized that paper would soon give way to electronic media. They poured their income into research aimed at finding alternative uses for hemp. Hemp rope, clothing and lubricating oil were developed, but failed to provide profits as high as hemp paper. Then, in 2013 the first Sativa brick was formed.

Sativa bricks are made from a relatively safe chemical process used on pulped hemp. Bricks are formed in molds of almost any shape and hardened to a light-weight, yet durable construction material. The bricks are particularly well-suited to warm climates, since they naturally retain cool temperatures during the day and warmth at night.

In 2019, the United States, South America and Mexico began to formulate an economic unity based on the European Union model. The famous "Meeting of the Americas" formulated a plan to strengthen and unify North and South America. Tax breaks were given to businesses that agreed to stay in the American continents, and fewer Hispanics emigrated to America since there was no longer an economic need. These policies took their toll on East Asian countries who relied on American companies to supply jobs for their people. The loss of revenue from these sources was a main factor in the East Asian Conflict.

In 2022, the United Americas pact was signed. In 2029, a new currency, called the dolar, was

introduced into the Americas, based on the old American dollar.

UNITED STATES

A large majority of the poor and minorities were still left out of the economic and political mainstream by the mid-twenties. Though many of them fought in the East Asian War, few felt that they received adequate compensation for their efforts. Though employment was at a high, many of the jobs were low-paying with little chance for advancement. Race riots and terrorist attacks occurred as a resurgence of the American ethnic wars spread across the nation.

A dynamic young man of African-American and Hispanic parentage seized leadership of the disorganized minorities. Ciceron Milegros preached that the ends justified the means, and that only violence could teach the American Government the need for economic justice.

Ciceron Milegros was killed when he and a party of 15 dissidents tried to storm the House of Representatives and hold members of Congress hostage. An instant martyr, his death was the signal for full-scale rioting until his sister, Lisa Milegros stepped in and gave a stirring speech, calling for a period of mourning for her illustrious brother.

After defusing the violent crowds, Lisa drew up a plan to incorporate a new party, the Democracy for All movement. With strong backing from Unions and minority leaders, she succeeded in turning her brother's followers into political activists rather than terrorists. By 2027, the DFA made impressive gains in the US government. However, a small splinter group known as the Defenders of Justice uphold Ciceron's anarchistic teachings. They view Lisa as a traitor, and have declared her an enemy of the people.

Lisa Milegros is feared and hated by others as well. Various Aryan groups have engaged assassins to kill her, and VONU (see below) finds her message of world unity and cooperation to be suspicious and disturbing. It is expected that Lisa Milegros will run for President in the near future.

Money

In 2029 the United Americas currency standard was adopted by the United States, Canada and Latin America. The base unit is a dolar, approximating in size and value to an American dollar. Though still honored by banks and large businesses, the American dollar will soon be a monetary unit of the past when it will not longer be accepted on the exchange. The last day to turn in American dollars is set for January 1, 2031.

Few people actually use currency. Most transactions are made by debit card. Computer banking is very common, and people are used to checking their accounts via their own computers. This greater ease of money management has brought about its own challenges though, and computer theft is prevalent.

Fashion

FOR MEN

Business The typical business suit of 2030 is similar to past designs, consisting of a jacket and trousers. French cuffs with elaborate cuff links have become an important status symbol, so jacket sleeves are short, allowing the fashionable male to show off his jewelry. Jackets flair slightly at the waist and slacks are cut snugly around the hips. Though ties are still popular, a carefully knotted scarf or cravat is considered particularly stylish.

Formal For formal occasions, the classic tuxedo is still de rigeur.

Casual One-piece, sleeveless “grease monkey” suits in bright colors are very popular among the young. T-shirts contain liquid-crystal inserts which change the clever saying on the shirt depending on temperature. Jackets are short and tight, and long colorful scarves are common accessories. Slacks and jeans are tight-fitting around the hips.

Headgear With global warming and a greater risk for sun cancer, hats have come back in style. The classic fedora and the new “Berchel” (a wide-brimmed hat with a low crown) are both worn,

along with wide-brimmed baseball caps, straw hats and floppy caps.

Hairstyles Shoulder-length hair is considered stylish and acceptable even for businessmen. Beards and goatees have become popular, though many young men are opting for the clean-shaven look.

Hair-dyeing for men is the latest thing, especially “tipping,” a method in which the ends of the hairs are dyed a bright color, usually red, green or yellow.

FEMALE

Business Slacks have become completely acceptable for women in the business world, and many don suits that closely resemble their male counterparts, though the range of colors is greater. Magenta, burnt sienna and powder gray are common choices. Some women opt to wear a white blouse with french cuffs, a long skirt, and short boots. Cachet purses are small, embroidered bags attached to a belt of silk cords and are quite popular.

Formal For a formal night out a woman can choose from a variety of evening wear, the most popular being the tube gown, which flattens the silhouette into a boyish figure reminiscent of the 1920s, or the modified ballerina cut dress--tight-waisted with a flounced skirt that stops mid calf, with the back of the dress dipping nearly to the floor. Among young women, a short sequined “shirt dress” can be worn with patterned silk stockings, garters daringly peeping out from underneath the short dress.

Casual Women are wearing t-shirt dresses more often. These shapeless shirts are usually worn with a cachet purse to give emphasis to the waist, and thigh-high stockings with bright patterns. Slashed jeans are tight-fitting pants which have been sliced between the knee and cuff area, allowing colorful thigh-high stockings to show through. Bolero jackets are popular and may be trimmed with LEDs or symbo-lace (see Symbo-suits under Uni-sex below for more information).

Headgear Hats, berets and caps are the rage, due to the increase in skin cancer. These hats may have a short tease veil and be trimmed with ribbon, LED lights, or artificially preserved flowers.

Hairstyles Even older women are wearing their hair long and straight, often dyed in interesting patterns. This process is known as “tipping” and can give the hair a checkerboard, streaked or dotted look by dyeing chunks of hair in bright colors--red, yellow, green or orange. The effect lasts about a month, and then the process must be redone since the hair has grown too long to keep the pattern. Short-cropped hair is popular as well, especially with the ends frizzed for a halo affect.

UNI-SEX FASHION & ACCESSORIES

Symbo-Suits Symbo-suits are one piece jump suits made from hemp. They contain a bacteria strain which feeds on dirt, keeping the material fresh and clean. The bacteria is non-harmful to humans and this symbiotic relationship gives symbo-suits their name. All symbo-suits are an off-white, since a dye which does not harm the bacterial strain has not yet been found. Symbo is relatively expensive and is generally viewed as a status symbol. Lace and other trims made from symbo are common.

Talk Watch The most common accessory is the Talk Watch. Completely voice activated, the wearer can turn on the watch, announce a phone number, and be able to talk to the party at the other end. He can ask the time, and receive an answer, and even get local information such as weather and bus route schedules.

Chameleon Coat This coat is actually a thin plastic bag filled with a gelatinous substance which can be programmed to change colors. The wearer presses the appropriate buttons (found near the hem of the coat) and the coat will then pulsate in a variety of hues. The coat has a shelf life of about six months before the chemicals break down completely.

It is said that gang members program their coats to send out a colorful code to their enemies, effectively dissing them without saying a word. Deaths have occurred and some communities are considering a ban on the coats.

Cuff links Though jewelry is not as popular as it has been in the past, cuff links have come back in popularity. Elaborately jeweled, patterned or electronically capable of flashing or glowing, cuff

links are the status symbol of 2030. They are worn by both men and women.

S & M Leathers Blatantly worn by the young, these leathers are the decade’s symbols of defiance. Tight-fitting hoods made up of leather straps and bits of chain are worn by young women. Both sexes wear leather halters, dog collars and tight fetish pants of black leather or rubber. Facial tattoos are common, usually a sign of the person’s sexual preference--a pair of tied hands indicates bondage, while a hissing cat indicates a fur fetish. The symbols and their interpretations are endless.

While alarming to the establishment, the choice of S & M leathers as a dress statement has little to do with a person’s true sexual preference. Instead, the clothing is thought of as daring, chic and “cutting edge.”

Employment

The United States is currently enjoying a prosperous boom, chiefly due to the high demand for goods and services in war-torn East Asia. No battles took place on American soil during the intense fighting, allowing American factories to operate at peak efficiency. Afterwards, the US, Canada and South America where able to provide other nations with food, medicine and supplies necessary to rebuild.

Though the demand for labor is still high--both because of the war and the earlier plague--the rate of employment has dipped slightly over the last year. The majority of Americans are manufacturing workers, computer operators or maintenance mechanics. Many positions require a certain amount of physical ability but little skill. Workers expect to change jobs frequently and are often hired on a limited contract basis. Luckily, health care is no longer linked to employment, and basic care is available to everyone.

Though many professions have been eliminated by computers, new jobs have sprung up in their place. Some of the fastest growing professions of 2030 include:

ELECTRONIC ARCHIVIST (EAs)

An EA is responsible for transferring print, film and recorded media onto a computer network. Sometimes the system is small and encompasses only company records; others may be transferred for accessibility on Internet.

Though many EAs are involved in the drudgery of simple data entry, some EAs use a variety of sophisticated techniques to preserve literature and art of the past for future generations. They tend to be highly skilled, particularly in the areas of computer technology. Nearly every company or government agency makes use of EAs to compile, retrieve and preserve electronic data.

MEDIA MONITORS

In the early years of the Internet it was clear that some sort of policing would be necessary, since private systems were constantly being compromised by hackers. Government Agencies developed policing agencies, such as CERT (Computer Emergency Response Team), created by the US Defense Department. However, such International and national computer police forces were simply outnumbered due to the vastness of the Net. Corporations began hiring their own personal monitors to police their private systems and protect them from possible corruption.

Currently, media monitors patrol the Internet, tracking down information thieves and other computer criminals. Private media monitors are required to report all signs of tampering to their local US Computer Police Force, but some prefer to deal with malefactors privately.

SEA MINER

In 2027, an English company, Baker & Bonney, Ltd., received a patent on a process to mine the ocean of its minerals. Estimating that one cubic mile of ocean could contain as much as 25 tons of gold, the company placed its sieve processing unit just off the coast of Bermuda and began their mining process.

Instantly, nations began to claim ocean territory in an effort to seize the most of this vast new resource. The United Nations developed an

International seabed registry which was accepted by most nations of the world. In the meanwhile, Bonney & Baker not only perfected their mining methods, they had also sold several processing units to various countries, including the US, China and Japan.

Though environmentalists have warned that this vast strip-mining of the sea could have a devastating affect on human life, the process has been accepted as a safe and practical method for using a natural resource for the betterment of humankind.

Currently, sea miners are recruited for 3, 6 or 12 month assignments. They are required to live on small floating islands in the middle of the ocean while they extract minerals to be refined at plants on the mainland. Pay is very good, but the work is dangerous. Accidental drownings are common, and it is feared that the chemicals used in the process may have serious long-term side effects.

Fads

SCARRING

No longer a fad of the young, tasteful scarring of the face and hands has become nearly as popular as pierced ears and noses. The use of lasers has made the procedure virtually painless, and "Scar Bars" have become the fashionable hang-out. Here people can marvel at the latest patterns on flesh as men and women dance around them.

The procedure consists of small nicks or laser cuts made in a geometric pattern on the flesh until a raised scar is achieved. Popular designs are discreetly left at the hairline or sometimes around the eyes and cheek. Most commonly seen are glove scars, which cover the hands and are sometimes infused with red or blue dye to make the patterns more distinctive. Scars are also sported on shoulders, backs, necks and chests. As a general rule, women scar their hands, shoulders and ankles, while men favor the face, arms and lower back.

LITHIFICATION

Lithification is the process of fossilizing the remains of a deceased person. Unlike mummification, the body takes on a hard, smooth finish, similar to a statue. Bodies can be put on display, used to decorate a home or simply stacked away. Favored by the wealthy, lithification is fast becoming a fad among the middle-class, who opt for the process instead of a tomb for their loved ones. Deemed "Life Monuments" by the funeral industry, most modern cemeteries are dotted with lithified bodies. This is a popular process for pets as well, and lithified animals are available for purchase at many large department stores.

ASPIRATORS

A drug developed for the use of severe asthma sufferers has become a highly addictive street drug. Known commercially as BreatheLite and on the street as "puff," the drug in small doses helps alleviate the stress of asthma for several hours. However, large doses gives the user a sense of lightness, raised consciousness, heightened awareness and a general good feeling. The affect lasts for about two hours, after which a tingling sensation is felt and a heaviness overcomes the user. The drug is addictive when taken in large doses; deaths occur not so much from overdoses but from poor judgement decisions made while influenced by the drug.

The drug is made by an American pharmaceutical company based in Puerto Rico, the fifty-first state, but several forms of it are made illegally in Asia and shipped around the world. The drug is not effective in powdered or pill form, and must be swallowed. It is said that the original aspirator gives the best high. An illegal aspirator provides up to ten hits.

COLORFUL CONTACT LENSES

These large contact lenses were originally worn by movie actors in science fiction and horror movies. Formally painful, and sometimes harmful if worn for too long, these new lenses have none of the old drawbacks and have been successfully introduced into mainstream society as a fashion

statement. Covering just the iris or the entire eye, the wearer can choose between these popular colors: Dracula Red, Eerie Green Glow, Flashing Gold or Milky White.

TYPEWRITERS

Though most people read, write and communicate via computerlink, an increasing number are becoming wary of their lack of privacy. Recent rumors indicate that information received over the Internet might not be what was sent, and that all electronic information has the potential of being altered by outside agencies. Such stories have caused people to scurry to their grandmother's attics in search of these ancient dinosaurs. Typewriters are used by radicals afraid of Big Brother (or Big Business), but the lack of privacy issue is fast becoming a concern of the mainstream, even though the media scoffs at such fears.

Organizations

COMPUTER RELIGION

With a computer in nearly every home, and more than 85% of them with Internet links, it is no wonder that a number of online organizations and groups have proliferated. About 35% have telelink capabilities, which allows up to six people to talk to each other and establish a picture link. The screen is divided into six segments, and if all participants allow for picture contact, their image will be transmitted. By pressing a cursor on a picture, you can get a background profile on the person. This is considered more open and honest than the faceless nom de computer, but some people are already manipulating their screen image.

Still, the majority of people interact via a computer/modem hook-up, allowing for near anonymity online. The Reverend Sam Hawkins was one of the first computer personalities to make a name for himself. He did this by founding the first online church--the International Community of God's Love. Reverend Hawkins is a prolific writer, reaching out to thousands of people. His pithy sermons are preached daily on the Net, often

commenting on everyday concerns. Called by some as the Mark Twain of his times, Hawkins believes the worst in the government. Critical of “foreigners,” derisive of women and revisionist in history, Hawkins’ statements are in turns outrageous and meaningful. While his following is growing, he states that he cannot make a public appearance since the government would kill him on the spot.

Some say that the Reverend Hawkins is a personality created by college students, who simply pass down the chore of writing his sermons to the next class; others believe that Hawkins is exactly what he says he is. Donations are asked and given on a daily basis--credit cards only please, and at least \$50, to cover the transaction charge.

THE INTERNET

One of the most pervasive and available sources of information available to the average person. Though many attempts to control access and provide censorship to the Net have occurred over the years, no one has succeeded in doing so. However, information is increasingly suspect, since large corporations are beginning to hide behind small bulletin board services in an attempt to sell their products and services by appearing to be non-partisan consumers.

VONU

“Voluntary and Not Vulnerable.” This phrase was in vogue in underground circles in the 1970s. It is a style of living in which one drops out of society and lives completely off the land. Popular among survivalists and similar groups, VONU became a powerful movement in 2024 with the rise of a new dynamic leader, Derrick Johnson. Johnson comes from a military background, and he firmly believes that America is going to hell in a hand basket unless everyone goes back to their roots and lives life the way God intended.

VONU has become a hotbed for fringies and fanatics who fear retribution from the government for their belief in the right to bear arms, the right to ignore taxes and the right to live wherever they damn well please. VONU enclaves have clashed with several persons declaring them trespassers and

thieves, but so far, Johnson has kept out of jail. He has recently told his people to take any actions necessary to save America from its downward spiral. Some followers have taken this to mean that terrorist acts are acceptable, and military installations, malls and other symbols of modern day life have been blown up or vandalized. So far, no deaths have occurred.

EON ENTERPRISES

Founded in 2019 by F. Rod Barnes, EON Enterprises is currently the largest corporation in the world. It’s breathtaking rise to prominence began when Rod, then a media monitor for a large software manufacturer, played the stock market and parleyed a few thousand dollars into millions. He then created EON Enterprises, which began buying small networks, BBSs and other media outlets. During the East Asian War, EBS (EON Broadcasting System) secured the exclusive license to broadcast the war to the rest of the world.

By manufacturing inexpensive media stations and linking them to EBS, EON created the technology of Image News--a combination of film, commentary and computer technology which lets viewers seemingly interact with world events via their media stations at home.

EON Enterprises gained such public support in America that they were asked to electronically tally and record the results of presidential elections, using media stations as ballot boxes. Today, the company has subsidiaries in nearly every branch of entertainment or information services, including software, VIRTware, music, media stations, film, electronic publishing and more.

Though not directly competitive with ISES, EON Enterprises has had a few run-ins with the scientific group, specifically concerning patent rights. So far, these disagreements have all been resolved without resorting to legal action.

Entertainment

VIRCADES

Virtual Reality Arcades come equipped with rooms large and small for one, two, six, twelve or even 24 simultaneous players. Participants don loose-fitting cuffs and motion sensors which translate body motions into action patterns within the Virtual Reality playing field. Voice activation controls all other maneuvers. The player can choose their character's looks, background, strengths and weaknesses before play begins. During the game, the player appears to see and interact with other players in a projected world. A simulated persona is stored and kept for later use, and the player can access their favorite licensed character by using a password.

Combat simulations are quite popular, especially Hunt the Human (a simulated Bounty hunter game), Stake the Vampire and Ogre Wars. Recently, VirCades have been branching out into other themes, including sexual encounters (for adults only), and historical reconstructions (such as fighting in a Civil War battle or meeting Napoleon at a ball).

Some VirCades are quite expensive and very elaborate, though most are still clunky. The technology to completely simulate reality still hasn't come about, and VirCades offer only the illusion of infinite choices, while actually presenting a player only a few options at a time. The illusion of freedom of choice satisfies most people, especially young fans of the genera. So far, only the wealthiest families can afford home VirCades.

MOVIES/MEDIA STATIONS

With the expansion of satellites and the accessibility of movies in nearly every American home via the media station (formally a TV set), movie theatres have lost revenue. Now cinemas are trying a new tactic--Virtual Reality Movies. Patrons are asked to place VR helmets on their heads to watch the show, giving them a 3 dimensional view of the scene. Though unable to affect their

surroundings, the patrons do get an up-close-and-personal view of the actors and scenery.

Over the last year, the biggest box office draws have been Humphrey Bogart, Bette Davis and Marilyn Monroe, all appearing in brand-new, completely modern films. Their presence was made possible by highly developed computer compositing which allows computer programmers to use existing films to create animated figures which can be manipulated in a film. In 2029, Humphrey Bogart was nominated for an Academy Award as Best Actor and Best Special Effect, causing a fervor throughout the entertainment business.

Major movie studios are now claiming that their most successful actors are actually computer simulations, completely indistinguishable from real people.

Media stations are a combination of computer, viewing screen and sound system which optimizes the user's enjoyment of media shows and other forms of entertainment. The user can also use the computer to order items from a channel offering goods and services; vote for a favorite candidate in a beauty pageant or even change the ending of a show by selecting one of four choices: tear jerker, action-packed, romance or thought-provoking.

BOOKS/PRINT MEDIA

Though literacy is still decreasing, books and print media are being published at an enormous rate, though released on datachip rather than paper. A datachip book is played on a hand-portable reader. Interactive books are quite popular; the computer allows the reader to manipulate the plot line by pressing various controls. The story can be made more romantic or exciting as the reader dictates. The characters names can be changed to suit the reader, and the language of the text can be altered to one of 26 common languages.

Classic novels are being given the interactive treatment, and it's not surprising to meet people who have only read only the "happy ending" version of A Tale of Two Cities. Some purists complain that by putting the reader in control of the story, any meaning intended by the author is lost. However, the concept of reader-as-author is a growing force in literature.

MUSIC

A resurgence of traditional music and songs of various countries is noticeable in recent music. Computerized compositions are quite popular, and composers now may simply be computer programmers who mix the styles of their favorite musicians to create new sounds. Known as “samplers” these programmers are revered as much as rock stars of the past. Many samplers teach a cynical philosophy: since everything worth doing has already been done, why bother trying to create something new?

FOOD/DRINK

Nearly 40% of all Americans are active vegetarians. The trend for health-conscious living prevalent in the late 1990s resulted in less meat and fats in the diet.

Alcohol consumption is high, with beer still the favored beverage. Among the young, Evviva is the drink of choice. This tangy fruit cola has successfully challenged popular drinks for the past ten years.

Inventions

HOLOGRAM HELPERS

These small disks project an image nearly one foot tall. Originally created showing someone doing a simple household chore (fixing a plugged sink, changing the oil in a car) the Hologram Helper could be slowed down or speeded up, depending on the needs of the viewer. The Helpers became very popular and branched out into many fields--education, on-the-job training, hobbies and so on.

Originally capable of holding only one image loop, Hologram Helpers now contain up to ten programs of ten minutes each. A Hologram Helper about pet care for dogs could contain clips showing a person grooming their pet correctly, giving it medication and clipping its toenails.

Though originally fuzzy and indistinct, Hologram Helpers have improved their image loop quality immensely in the last five years.

Many people are opposed to the use of Hologram Helpers, citing them as a reason for low literacy. Now that many manufacturing corporations have licensed Hologram Helpers, they no longer bother to send out instruction manuals; instead, they simply send an image loop along with their product.

HOME SITTER

This video camera is outfitted with a fiber-optic network which allows you to watch what is happening at home from anywhere in the world. Used as a burglar prevention device.

HOME COMPUTERS

The boom in home computer use at the turn of the century put a computer in 91% of all American homes. Media Stations have supplanted the computer's dominance as an entertainment device. Now, most people who use their computer regularly interact with the world via the Internet.

In 2030, about 25% of all employees are able to work at home, contacting their employers via computer network or media station when necessary. Wages are often based on amount of work produced, which Union leaders denounce as “slave-driven piecework.” However, most people are grateful for the opportunity to be at home with their families, and willingly work long hours for a bigger paycheck.

MEDICINE

The Calcutta Plague was first diagnosed in Calcutta, India in 2004 and quickly spread throughout the world. Its airborne vector, long incubation and high mortality made it a global threat. At the bequest of the Chinese government, members of ISES worked tirelessly to find a cure for the Calcutta Plague. An antitoxin was developed and patented by ISES in 2009 and a joint effort by all world governments to inoculate the living against this horrendous disease was underway. Today, the disease is rarely diagnosed, though older members

of the community still remember when people dropped dead in the streets.

Skin grafts and plastic surgery have improved immensely, in part because doctors were allowed to study the terrible devastation visited upon soldiers during the East Asian War. Corpse skin is now effectively used to heal not only burns but to rebuilt portions of an injured body. Techniques for grafting digits and whole hands are about 78% effective with no rejection.

TRANSPORTATION

Approximately 50% of all cars in the United States are electrical. Following the design of the first successful electrical car, the Tiger T from Alternative Motors, electrical cars are swift, economical and cost effective. Fossil fuel vehicles are still used, but they are heavily taxed by the government in an effort to compel drivers to conform to more environmentally friendly means of transportation.

The oil industry, in a last ditch effort to discredit the electric cars, have released studies suggesting that the electro-magnetic fields surrounding the car power plants cause genetic decay. Two suits claiming cancer was caused by prolonged exposure have been settled out of court.

Timeline

January 18, 1892

Isabella Bayne born in Elsie, Indiana

1914-1919

World War I.

1924

Death of Lenin.

1929-1939

World-wide Depression.

1939

World War II begins.

1943

Dr. Isabella Bayne proposes the infamous “Philadelphia Experiment” to the Pentagon. The disastrous results lead her to be assigned to the K project.

September 27, 1944

Isabella Bayne declared dead; TransEgo Device confiscated.

May 1945

World War II ends.

1946

ENIAC (Electronic Numerical Integrator and Computer) begins calculations at the University of Pennsylvania.

1947

India achieves independence.

1948

Berlin Blockade, Communist coup in Prague.

1948-1949

Proclamation of State of Israel. Arab-Israeli war.

1950-1953

Korean War

1953

Death of Stalin

1961-1973

Vietnam War

1991

Fall of Soviet Union

1991-2011

Racism and nationalism foster civil wars which take place world-wide. Collectively, these become known as the ethnic wars.

1994

Ukraine agrees to disarm nuclear missiles. Nelson Mandela, is elected Democratic leader in the first multi-racial election in South Africa.

1996

The International Church of God's Love founded by Rev. Sam Hawkins. The first Internet Church to appeal to the mainstream, it is rumored that Sam Hawkins is actually a college student prank that has grown into an industry.

1997

A4 vaccination effective against 75% of all AIDS cases.

1997

A small breakaway faction led by General T. Prah temporarily takes over the Pakistani government and threatens to use the nuclear weapons at his disposal. Though quickly defeated in a daring raid, the realization that nuclear weapons are so readily available to a madman sends a shock wave throughout the world. Led by the US, Europe, China and Japan, a World Council meeting outside the UN is called to eliminate nuclear, chemical, and biochemical weapons. Though many world leaders immediately comply with the International Arms Limitation Agreement, others stall in an effort to get economic aid in return for dismantling their weapons. A few refuse to comply at all.

1998

Alternative Motors introduces the first model Tiger T, the prototype for their successful line of electric cars.

January 4, 2000

The International Society for Enlightened Scientists is officially incorporated as a non-profit corporation. The first laboratory is built in San Francisco, CA.

2004

The first diagnosis of the Calcutta Plague made in Calcutta, India. The plague quickly spreads to other nations.

2005

It's population ravaged by the Calcutta Plague, China donates a laboratory to ISES and promises complete ambassadorial status if the organization works exclusively on a plague cure. This offer leads the way to complete acceptance of ISES as an independent, non-partisan entity by all nations.

2006

BreatheLite, a medication for asthma sufferers is sold as a street drug. Highly addictive and dangerous when taken in large doses, "puff" quickly outstrips crack, cocaine and heroin in terms of usage.

2009

ISES scientists make breakthrough in plague studies. Vaccination patented and world nations cooperate to inoculate plague survivors. Nearly a third of the world's population has died. This terrible event has actually improved the lives of many, since the survivors now have less competition for food, work and medicine.

2014

Puerto Rico becomes the fifty-first state.

2019

The "Meeting of the Americas" takes place in Mexico City. Leaders of South and Central America meet with US leaders in order to create a unified economic base similar to the European Union.

2020

Korea declares war on Japan. United States and other allied countries defend Japan, while China backs Korea. East Asian War begins. The International Arms Limitation Agreement (1999) prevents the conflict from becoming an all-out nuclear holocaust.

2021

Though dedicated to world peace, the ISES Board of Directors agree that in certain circumstances firm and direct military defense is the only way to circumvent tyranny and oppression. ISES denounces Korean aggression and agrees to fund weapons research.

2023

East Asian war ends. The United States experiences an economic boom. Other countries, notably Japan and Korea, struggle to regain independence and power.

2024

VONU becomes a popular American movement. Founded by Derrick Johnson, former East Asian War demolitions expert and soldier.

2025

Ciceron Milegros, a dynamic young man of African American and Hispanic ancestry quickly establishes himself as a leader of oppressed, angry minorities. His call for the violent overthrow of the US government quickly gains acceptance by the poor. Major race riots and terrorist attacks occur throughout urban and suburban America.

2026

Ciceron Milegros is killed during a botched terrorist act against the House of Representatives. His sister, Lisa Milegros takes his place; she calls for an end to the bloodshed and creates the Democracy for All movement. She gains instant support from many poor and middle class workers. Racial violence is quelled under her magnetic leadership and major gains are made by elected officials throughout the US.

2029

Academy awards. Humphrey Bogart nominated in the Best Actor and Best Special Effect categories.

2029

The United Americas currency act goes into effect January 1, 2029. Joining with Mexico, Latin American and the US, the new base unit of currency is the dolar, essentially the same as the former American dollar.

2030

ISES launches the first space station into orbit.

2030

First Xenites invade Earth.

August 22, 2030

First jump-team, led by Dr. Daryl Kasparian, is assembled for a mission.

East Asian War

Spurred on by Chinese dictator Xiang Chou, Korean military leader In-Su Kwan declared war on Japan in 2020. The war soon became an international conflict, with China, Korea, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam and Thailand joining forces against the US, Japan, Taiwan and the European Union.

The East Asian War could have been more devastating if it hadn't been for the International Arms Limitation Agreement of 1997. Even so, new weapons and fighting techniques caused the death of millions, many of them civilians.

The war ended with the defeated of Korean armed forces at the Battle of Tokyo. Since 2023, Europe and the United States have given East Asia a large amount of economic aid to help various countries get back on their feet.

Slang

Blanket Blonde

(noun) A woman who appears cool and business-like, but is very promiscuous once she is "under the blankets." Occasionally used to suggest that a woman is incapable of handling a position of authority, since she is only good for sex. Derogatory. "My boss is a real blanket blonde."

Bove

(adjective) Stupid, idiotic, as in, "Don't be so bove." From bovine, cow-like.

Corpse

(noun) An ugly person, used in reference to both sexes. "John's such a corpse." Opposite of "skin", which indicates attractive flesh. See Skin.

Data Date

(noun) A first time meeting between two romantically inclined persons via computerlink. A data date is a modern version of the traditional blind date.

Nayvus

(noun) A dismissive term, often used to denote a person who is of no consequence. "My little brother is such a nayvus."

Monk

(noun, verb) A hacker who often breaks into systems just to explore rather than to steal or corrupt information. Like their namesakes, monks take a personal "Vow of Silence," and never divulge information they find on their Internet travels. True monks are rare. Also a verb, it indicates the use of stealth. "I'm gonna monk into the ISES system and see what's cookin.'"

Puff

(noun) Street name for BreatheLite, a misted medication developed for asthma sufferers. Puff is extremely addictive.

Rat Food

(noun) Fast food. Short for "rationed food." Slang commonly used by American soldiers during the East Asian War. The term was introduced into mainstream language shortly after the war ended. "All I can afford is rat food."

Real

(adjective) Term used to describe an event, person or item as being first-rate or superior, generally used with enthusiasm. "This VirCade game is real!" Currently used more than the ever popular term, "cool."

Salt

(noun) Advice. Usage: "Let me give you some salt: don't go into that alley alone." Possibly from the old saying, "With a grain of salt."

Scad

(verb) To beg or forage for food or money, usually in a sly, dishonest or underhanded manner Usage: "I'm gonna scad my old man for some cash."

Scadder

(noun) A person who scrounges or begs for money or goods. Often used as a derogatory appellation for one who works in a low wage or illegal job.

Skin

(noun) A good-looking or sexy person. Used in reference to both sexes. Usage: "Take a look at that skin!" Gained popularity when scarring and tattoo art became a popular decorative motif. Now used in reference to any attractive person. See Corpse.

Slide

(verb) Leave. Usage. "Let's slide. This place gives me the creeps."

Wearing a Monkey Suit

(phrase) This phrase is used derisively when speaking of a hacker who professes to be a monk when actually hacking for cash or destructive purposes. By extension, anyone who is being false is "wearing a monkey suit." See Monk.

So You Want to Know About ISES

WHAT IS ISES?

The International Society of Enlightened Scientists was formed via computerlink by eight young students in 1996. These students, located around the world, found they shared a common interest in scientific discovery and world peace (along with less noble interests in computers, science fiction and special effects movies). They deemed themselves the "International Society of Enlightened Scientists," and their future accomplishments would show that they were this, and more. These young people brought about what

was soon termed the “New Renaissance of Scientific Thought,” and each has been responsible for great breakthroughs in engineering, medical research and physics.

HOW DID ISES START?

In 2000, the uncle of Richard T’sung, one of the founding members of ISES, left a small fortune to his nephew with the understanding that he would use the money to further his scientific career. T’sung used his inheritance to incorporate ISES as a non-profit international society offering research grants to any person who presented a proposal to the board of directors deemed worthy of exploration.

It was T’sung’s intention to make ISES completely independent from any government. His goal was to achieve universal ambassadorial status, which would allow ISES to build laboratories in any country without fear of interference. T’sung and the other founding members of ISES lobbied hard for such status, but it wasn’t until 2005 that China became the first country to give ISES full ambassadorial rights.

IS ISES TRULY INDEPENDENT?

In 2009 ISES scientists created an antidote for the Calcutta plague. After receiving a patent for the life-giving medicine, ISES negotiated a cooperative vaccination program with international leaders in exchange for full ambassadorial rights. Most agreed, and the plague was eradicated.

As a non-political entity, ISES strives to maintain neutrality at all times, though the Board has agreed to focus efforts on weapons technology under certain circumstances, most recently during the East Asian conflict.

WHO STARTED ISES?

Richard T’sung founded ISES. A man of wide interests, he created or perfected many inventions, including Virtual Reality arcades, computerized sight goggles for the blind and more. He died in 2009.

Tanjiro Tadashi developed new theories in Phase Transition mathematics.

Kaliq Dubir was assassinated in 2023. At his request, his remains were interred in a vault at ISES headquarters.

Anna-lise Bjarne is a renowned psychologist.

Kijakazi Mbita was part of the team that discovered the A4 vaccination for AIDS, effectively curing 75% of all AIDS cases.

Micki Jeffries is a robotics specialist. Along with Griffen Shalcross, she designed the ISES headquarters located in Dylan, Nebraska.

Griffen Shalcross was the winner of the World Design Award in 1994, the youngest to do so. His company, Alternative Motors, specializes in non-fossil fuel energy sources.

Agustin Granillo. His studies on ways to enhance the natural growth of grains such as rice and wheat earned him a Nobel prize in 2014.

HOW CAN I JOIN ISES?

Not all members of ISES are scientists. Some are volunteers or trained support personnel. For special projects, members of military or political organizations may be invited to join ISES. If you’re interested in becoming a member of ISES, please contact your local Friends of ISES Chapter. ISES also accepts tax-deductible donations from non-members.

OUR MISSION

Through centuries of ignorance the guiding light of humanity has always been the person driven to solve a puzzle, right a wrong or simply know the truth for its own sake. Whatever their reasons for exploring the limits of human knowledge, they created a standard for scientific thought and reasoning that still exists today.

In the tradition of all scientists and explorers before us, we believe there can be no greater goals than these: to battle the forces of fear and ignorance; to embrace the unknown and make it known; to alleviate all suffering and further the standard of living for all humankind.

Rumors About ISES

Like every big corporation, ISES has spawned some far-fetched rumors. They're all unfounded as far as you're concerned, and as a proud member of ISES, part of your responsibility is to dispel the rumors the public has been led to believe. Here are just a few:

ISES is the Illuminati of the 21st century. It controls the world economy and manipulates world politics as it sees fit.

ISES was responsible for the Calcutta Plague. The Plague was created by ISES scientists in an effort to frighten world leaders into giving ISES ambassadorial rights. The plague spread farther and faster than ISES expected, but they still withheld the cure until they were given the status they demanded.

Kaliq Dabir, one of the founding members of ISES was not assassinated in 2023. The incident was staged and he is currently living on a private island in the Pacific.

ISES was founded by aliens from other planets who hope to study Earth technology before invading.

A time machine, built by Richard T'sung and Kaliq Dabir can be found in the famous Locked Vault time capsule at the San Francisco lab.

ISES Facilities

There are seven ISES laboratories: two in the USA (including ISES headquarters), one in England, one in France, two in China, one in Russia and one in India. Most are small laboratories supporting only a half-dozen researchers. Only the English facility and the US headquarters have a full-time staff of over 100 people.

Every year ISES awards a grant to outstanding researchers in the fields of Biology, Medical Research, Physics and Engineering. A salary is paid to the researcher, their experiments are funded by ISES, and all reasonable demands for equipment, chemicals, assistants and machinery are met. Such subsidized projects are scattered across the globe. Occasionally ISES sends teams to check on these otherwise independent laboratories.

ISES maintains small recruiting offices in several large cities. These are made available to students who are working on independent studies or who wish to devote their time to major projects. The purpose of these labs is primarily to interest young people into choosing a career in the sciences, though they can also be used to recruit volunteers for special projects, such as jump-team duty.

WORLD HEADQUARTERS, DYLAN, NEBRASKA USA

Specialty General studies.

Director Edmund Brackenberry. Friend of Richard T'sung, founding member of ISES.

Founded 2005. Built to be the ISES World headquarters when the San Francisco facility (see below) proved to be too small. A memorial garden and tomb of founding member Kaliq Dabir is located on the grounds.

SAN FRANCISCO USA

Specialty Computer Technology, emphasis on AI.

Director Agustin Granillo. Also a founding member of ISES and a member of the Board.

Founded 2001. The first ISES facility, it lost its status as World Headquarters when demand for space grew. This small lab maintains the famous "locked vault"; a time capsule prepared by the founding members of ISES, not to be opened until the year 3000. Rumor has it that experimental notes, important artifacts and fantastic inventions are hidden behind the door, including a time portal built by the young Richard T'sung and his friend Kaliq Dabir.

LONDON, ENGLAND

Specialty Chemistry

Director Sir Kevin Mandeville. Also a member of the Board.

Founded 2011. Called "the Tower" by members, the London facility was designed to resemble a modified English castle. It is the only facility to offer tours to the public.

ST. GERMAIN, FRANCE

Specialty Cybernetics

Director Dr. Lydia Rochard

Founded 2013. The St. Germain lab is making great progress in the area of cybernetics, but their work is protested by a fanatical group who believe they are intent on de-humanizing the world. Calling themselves “The Human Faction”, this organization has recruited a number of followers. Their protests have become increasingly hostile and violent, and all St. Germain personnel have been afforded special protection. Recently, the Human Faction has turned its attention on other corporations, but ISES remains the focus of their unreasonable fear.

BEIJING, CHINA

Specialty Genetics

Director Dr. Shilin Chen

Founded 2005. China was the first country outside the USA to recognize the need for an International scientific community. The Chinese government donated a small lab to ISES and provided equipment and funds for plague research.

XIANFANG, CHINA

Specialty Engineering & Physics

Director Paul Dokka

Founded in 2011. China offered to fund another ISES facility when plans for an Australian lab fell through. One of the few facilities to have a director who is not native to the country it is located in. Paul Dokka is an African American, formally a designer at Alternative Motors.

VLADIMIR, RUSSIA

Specialty Space Technology

Director Major Olena Ladovna

Founded 2020. The director is a member of the Russian military. ISES remains neutral in all matters of politics, and is committed to world peace. Although ISES rejects applicants who are currently involved directly in world politics or military groups, an exception was made when

Major Olena Ladovna was nominated director of the Russian ISES facility. Although Major Ladovna maintains her rank and can be recommissioned into the Russian Army at any time, she has agreed to remain politically neutral while working at ISES.

CALCUTTA, INDIA

Specialty Biology, emphasis on plague research

Director Dr. Yusuf Dabir

Founded 2026. Completed just four years ago, this small lab is dedicated to alleviating human suffering. The director, Yusuf Dabir is the son of founding ISES member Kaliq Dabir.

ISES Headquarters

The only TransEgo Device on Earth is secreted at the ISES world headquarters near Dylan, Nebraska. The ISES lab may become a base of operations for you and your jump-team.

Dylan, a small farming community, was the former hometown of Edmund Brackenberry, close friend of ISES founder Richard T’sung. When the ISES laboratory in San Francisco proved too small, Brackenberry convinced his grandfather to sell ISES a large plot of land on the outskirts of Dylan to build a new World Headquarters. The terms were generous and cheap, and in gratitude, Richard T’sung appointed Brackenberry lab manager of the facility, a post he holds to this day.

ISES maintains a small airport, experimental crop lands and a farm at this site. A number of people work at Dylan, including scientists, support personnel, computer technicians, farmers, security guards, pilots and secretaries. ISES headquarters is the meeting place for the Board of Directors every quarter, and there is a guest wing where visiting dignitaries may stay in protected comfort.

The Dylan laboratory was designed by Griffen Shalcross and Micki Jeffries, two founding members of ISES. The two used the flat surrounding plains and farmland to emphasize the quiet dignity of the facility. A clever use of space gives the compound a sense of immenseness that belies its actual size. A memorial garden at the back of the building draws the eye to the simple tomb of their friend and ISES

co-founder Kaliq Dabir. Built several years after the original garden was planned, the tomb is in no way jarring to the overall design and layout of the headquarters.

Your referee has more information on the ISES headquarters.

Dylan, Nebraska

This small town derives most of its wealth from the farmlands that surrounds it and ISES. Though the inhabitants sometimes whisper about the experiments that take place inside the compound, most of them are proud that their town is home to ISES World Headquarters. They have a friendly relationship with the visiting scientists, and protect them from prying tourists who want to get a glimpse of them.

Dylan has a population of roughly 5,500. Approximately half of the town is supported by farming or farm-related business. The main street is lined with small shops consisting of a grocery store, clothing store, barbershop, video store and fuel station. The town supports two taverns, three restaurants and three churches. A small park sits on the edge of the Tulley River. The town has a twelve room motel, though most visitors to the ISES facility are booked at the Rose Trellis House, a boarding house subsidized by ISES. The Rose Trellis House (M) consists of six guest rooms and is managed by the efficient husband and wife team of Sylvester and Theresa Waldren.

Dylan's main thoroughfare is Lindsay Road which bisects with Copperfield St. Lindsay Road meanders into the countryside and ends in a large compound known by the locals simply as "The Big Farm." This is ISES World headquarters, which consists of a farm, crop lands, a small airport and a large facility. The compound sits in a slight hollow, and a passerby could easily miss it.

The town itself has little to offer the casual visitor, though someone with time on their hands will soon be charmed by its small town simplicity. In the heart of Dylan is Caleb & Del's Country Store (A). Here, a shopper can find household goods, clothing and even fishing gear. Next door is Little Lola's Tavern (B), a beer and pizza joint complete with two ancient pool tables. Lola was a state

champion pool player in her day, and still plays a mean game.

The barber shop (C) is known as Curly's place, since he has been the owner and proprietor for nearly 35 years. Curly is bald as a cue ball, and the locals like to tease him: "Don't get near me Curly; I seen what you did to your own head!" Curly is a humorless man and never cracks a smile.

Across the street is the Cash n' Dash grocery store (D), flanked by the All-American Media store (E). These are the most modern facilities in Dylan, and are viewed with some suspicion by the old folks. The Media store plans on opening a VirCade booth in the near future, a move that is viewed as somewhat scandalous by many residents.

Bert's Fuel Station (F) accommodates electric, gas and diesel fuel. Retired farmers often sit on the benches in front of Bert's to catch up on the latest gossip. Bert is long dead, but his sons Gilbert and Kevin continue to run the station. Their business is quite lucrative, since they own the only station for 40 miles all around.

A small automated bank (G) stands next to the newly-built Golden Plate Cafe (V), a combination Chinese--Mexican restaurant. Surprisingly, the food is quite good. Across the street is a twelve room mini-motel run by Flora Bowman and her sister Shirley. The middle-aged twins keep the Sweet Dreams Motel (H) neat and clean, though visitors may be disappointed to discover that there are no media stations in the rooms--just a few religious tracts and prayer books.

The post office (I) is run by Bella Christianson, a gossipy middle-aged woman. The volunteer fire department (J) is maintained by young men and women who are paid \$30 for every fire they respond to. The siren can be heard for many miles over the plains surrounding Dylan, and farmers can be seen jumping into their trucks and making for the town when the call goes out. Next door is the Fightin' Fire Tavern (K), where everyone goes for a drink once the fiery peril is dealt with. Ollie Owens and his wife Pearl always give ISES employees one free beer per visit, making it a favorite hangout for off-duty jump-teams.

The Grange Hall (L) is just a few blocks away from the Fire Station. Once the elementary school, the Grange hall is now a solemn, musty-smelling building used for infrequent meetings of Freemasons, Elk and other fraternal organizations.

In the summer, a display of country craft works can be found here.

The Rose Trellis House (M) is a lovely two story home with a wide porch. Surrounded by a lush garden, this bed-and-breakfast is subsidized by ISES, which pays rent on each of the six bedrooms all year round. This guarantees that visiting scientists or jump-team members will have a place to stay if they decide not to stay at the facility.

Across the street from the Rose Trellis House is the Purvis Elementary school (N). When not in school, the children enjoy playing in Tulley Park (O) near the Tulley River. Though relatively shallow, drownings have occurred, so parents and other concerned persons volunteer to watch the children as they play near the water. One of these is Hilda Farthen, sister to ISES Director Edmund Brackenberry. Widowed ten years ago, Hilda has lived with her brother as his housekeeper in their family home (P). At one time the park and the surrounding area was the family farm, but slowly the town of Dylan absorbed it; however, the Brackenberry family still owns much of the outlying lands.

Hilda also volunteers part of her time to the Lindsey Middle School (Q) which is near her home. She encourages children to study, and often takes them on tours of ISES in an effort to stimulate their interest in science and mathematics. She is also popular at the Buckley High School (R), where she teaches a computer class to interested students.

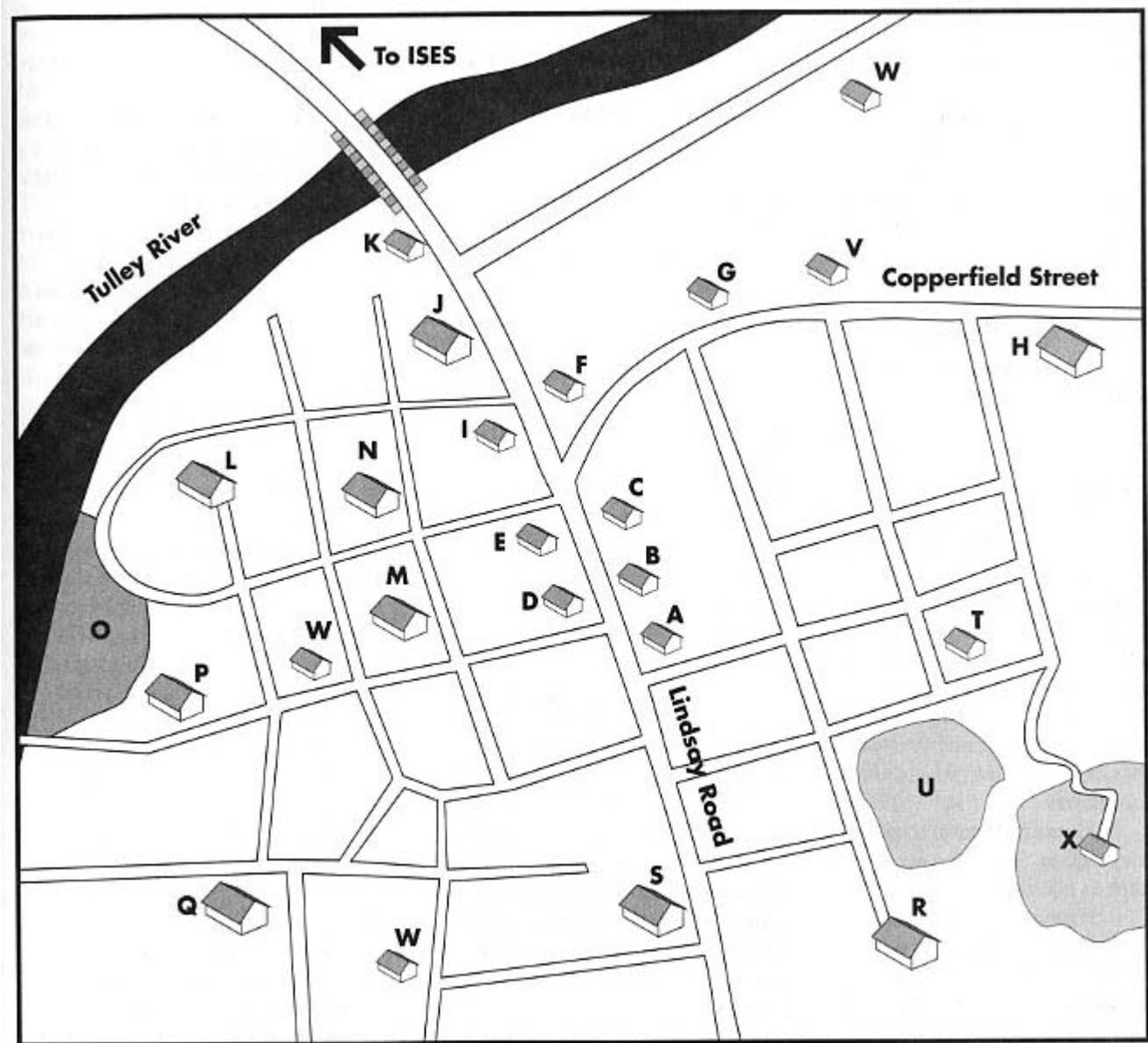
Dylan is not without its seedier places and townfolk. Chilly Billy's (S) is a dingy bar and grill which caters to truck drivers and hardened cattlemen. It's location near the High School is disturbing to town leaders, but so far, no one has created a scene. The Morley Cemetery (X) is surrounded by a sprawling trailer court (U) which houses farm hands and their families. A four person police station (T) is located on its northern edge, but the officers are often patrolling the lonesome byways of Dylan and miss the domestic violence that occasionally occurs in the court. Still, Chief of

Police J. Roland Davis manages to keep a lid on crime in Dylan, and many citizens don't bother to lock their doors at night.

Even with these few black marks against its character, Dylan is still a fine town to raise a family in. ISES scientists and jump-team members find that a quick trip into Dylan is just the thing to refresh their weary brain cells after a long day of research. They enjoy walking along the quick-moving Tulley River, watching the children play and find the pleasant camaraderie of the townfolk to be touching.

KEY TO DYLAN

- A Caleb & Del's Country Store
- B Little Lola's Tavern
- C Curly's Place barbershop
- D Cash n' Dash Grocery Store
- E All American
Media Store
- F Bert's Fuel Station
- G Automated Bank
- H Sweet Dreams Motel
- I Post Office
- J Volunteer Fire Department
- K Fightin' Fire Tavern
- L Grange Hall
- M Rose Trellis House
- N Purvis Elementary School
- O Tulley Park
- P Home of Edmund Brackenberry
- Q Lindsey Middle School
- R Buckley High School
- S Chilly Billy's
bar and grill
- T Police Station
- U Trailer Park
- V Golden Plate Restaurant
- W Churches
- X Morley Cemetery



Xenites

A Xenite is a general term for any inhabitant of Xenos. While many are human, the majority are alien in form--monsters, if you will. Isabella Bayne has genetically altered certain fauna of Xenos, creating artificial species called Spawn.

All natives of Kaleido speak English. It is not the native tongue, but was made the official language by Isabella Bayne. An older language, Azvorian, is sometimes spoken by the human population, though it is expressly forbidden. Spawn,

being created by Isabella Bayne, have no language other than English.

Although our information on Xenites is sketchy, ISES has compiled the following dossier on the most common creatures found in the city of Kaleido.

HUMANS

The humans of Xenos are indistinguishable from Terrans.

Azvorian

The humans of Xenos call themselves "Azvorians." They were once the only intelligent

species on Xenos. In Kaleido, humans live in ghettos, and are allowed passes to work at menial jobs. Other humans who fled Kaleido when Isabella seized control now live in hiding in the nearby mountains.

Humans form the lowest social class. Some are even kept as slaves.

Humans who actively resist Isabella's tyranny are known as rebels. Arming themselves from the corpses of their enemies, they steal into the city to commit acts of sabotage.

The rebels are led by a man called Timmy. To date, no jump-team has been able to contact Timmy. ISES would like to know more about him and his rebel force, since it is said that his psychic powers rival those of Isabella Bayne.

Another important human contact is Jabulani, a Seer of the Temple of Balance in Kaleido. Although it is forbidden to practice this faith, Jabulani defies Isabella's law in order to give hope to his people. The temple may serve as a refuge for rebels.

Progeny

Humans who have embraced Isabella's cybernetic enhancements are called the Children of Bayne by the pure-strain Azvorians. Considering the term "child" offensive, enhanced humans call themselves the Progeny.

The Progeny view themselves as a breed of supermen and despise those who refuse to accept enhancements. The Progeny can be found in positions of power throughout the city of Kaleido. They are the controllers who manage the Spawn--Isabella's more monestrous offspring.

Prime Minister Krog, a prominent Progeny, is Isabella's right hand man. Kantos the Huntmaster is an officer in Isabella's army of Spawn.

SPAWN

Spawn are artificial species created by Isabella Bayne from the natural fauna of Xenos. Spawn can reproduce with their own kind. Most have human intelligence. As part of Isabella's army, Spawn typically sport weapon implants. Though generally humanoid in shape, most Spawn are larger than humans.

Cybor

Hulking brutes, Cybors have huge skulls ridged with bony protrusions. The backbone of Isabella's army, the Cybors are none too bright, but they are easily trained, and highly loyal. Many of them are soldiers or guards. Cybors live in large family units. Families tend to be fanatically devoted to each other.

A male Cybor named Ebu-Da has proven to be a dangerous threat to all jump-teams. He is the brother of the first host taken over by a jump-team, and now seeks revenge on all Terrans. He can be identified by the extra-large psi helmet he wears.

Garou

Garou have low, flat heads, two bulging eyes and large fleshy protrusions on either side of their heads. These fan-like flaps not only help the garou hear but also serve as olfactory glands. Both senses are well developed. Garou have pale brown flesh, which can regenerate when soaked in human blood.

Garou are cruel creatures who hate humans and torment them for sport. They are known to have psychic powers. Chief of the Garou is Dredani, an ambitious warrior who takes pleasure in tracking down rebels. His home is decorated with the bones and skins of his victims. He has vowed to one day bring the skin of Timmy, the rebel leader, to Isabella.

Azvorians call Garou "Thukkani," after the vicious pack animal Isabella raised them from. Thukkani still hunt in mountains around the Kaleido.

Gator

Gators have long powerful legs, short arms, and enormous jaws. Gators are covered with sandy brown or green-gray scales. They dye certain scales of their skin, creating a pattern which indicates their status in gator society.

Gators live in enclosed communities, called nests, consisting of three or more families. Gators worship Isabella Bayne, treating her as a goddess, and they follow "the Cult of Isabella." Male Gators are mostly loyal soldiers in Isabella's army, while the females may be self-employed merchants.

The Azvorian name for a Gator is "Uthaw-Gwa." The reptilian beasts from which the Gators were raised are now all but extinct.

Harvester

A creature with squat legs, long arms and a barrel chest. Harvesters have prehensile snouts about a foot in length. Their hands have two stubby fingers and a large thumb. Harvesters are dusty gray or brown in color, with a slight mottling around the eyes. Their eyesight is poor, but their sense of smell is acute. Their tough hides can withstand intense heat and cold. Harvesters rarely carry firearms, probably because they lack the intelligence to use anything but primitive weapons.

In Kaleido, harvesters work in low status jobs, usually in physically demanding roles. Most live in outlying villages where they serve as farmers. They are vegetarians, eating only grains and vegetables. Some have been known to shelter humans.

Azvorians call harvesters “Garads,” after the farm animal from which they were created.

Squid

Squids have four tentacles instead of arms. These appendages are extremely facile. They have no necks; instead, their heads meld into their shoulders. A small cluster of eyes is located in the center of their foreheads, and they have small, tube-like mouths. Squids have naturally oily skin, giving them a smooth, slick appearance. The males have pale bluish skin; females tend to be gray. Squids find bright light and heat irritating.

Along well-traveled routes, Squids established convent-like communities known as Havens. They are shunned by other creatures. More than any other Spawn, they have disassociated themselves from Isabella and do not play an important part in her social structure. She, in turn, seems to let them live apart in their Havens. However, Squids have been observed entering and leaving the Cyberlab, where humans are experimented upon in the name of Isabella’s mad science.

Squids are highly psychic. They are said to increase their psychic powers with rigorous meditation at their Havens. The leader of the Squids is Erythyna, a female with imposing psychic powers. No jump-team has ever taken over a Squid.

The Azvorians call Squids “Lemakesh,” after the fresh water animal from which they were evolved.

Verm

A prominent ridge runs along a Verm’s spinal cord. The crest surmounts the head and ends in a

point over a barely discernible nose. Its eyes are large and have no pupils, and its purple tongue is long and forked. Their hairless, sallow skin is clad in bright clothing. They enjoy jewelry, especially heavy necklaces and bracelets.

Vermis have an uneasy relationship with the Gators, but the reason is unknown. Some Vermis have psi powers.

Vermis are extremely adept at mechanical problems, and are employed as technicians. Their facility with numbers, methodical minds and precise memories make them excellent accounts. Within their own communities, they have a strict caste system.

Verm were created from a household pest the Azvorians call a “Kusang.”

FAUNA OF XENOS

Gurapi

A huge, semi-intelligent quadruped with a spiked shell and tail. It has a narrow snout with many needle-like teeth. Its shell is bright crimson, while the rest of it is dark brown. They are surprisingly fast for their size. Gurapi are usually cybernetically enhanced, and may be treated more like a vehicle than an animal.

The turtle-like creatures, sans mechanical enhancements, have been used as steeds for centuries.

Onza

Used by Isabella’s troops as trackers, onzas are dog-sized arthropods with six legs, downy hair (much like a tarantula), and tubed fangs. Once they sense blood, they will track the source unerringly. Onzas can be found in the Cyberlab kennels. It is rumored that Isabella keeps onzas as pets.

Ranon

Ranoni resemble bald house cats, though they are slightly larger, have pronounced fangs and tentacled legs. These parasitic creatures are the equivalent of earthly rats. They are capable of squeezing into the smallest cracks and often make their homes in city sewers. Nocturnal, they come out to hunt small mammals.

Book 2

Referee's Section

CHAPTER 8

RUNNING THE GAME

Our current host had taken too many wounds and fueled too many psi-powers. We needed someone stronger if we were going to make it to the temple.

The Progeny I spotted didn't pay much attention to us as I lumbered up behind him. Why should he? Spawn were common in this part of Kaleido, if not at this late hour. Right now, there was only him and us.

"Get him!" the politician urged. I didn't need his instructions. I grabbed the Progeny from behind and held on, my will slamming against his with the force of a jack hammer.

His surprise didn't last nearly long enough. He hurled me over his shoulder, his cybernetic limbs overpowering the wasted flesh of our host. But his will was weak. One more touch would complete the transference. I grinned until a psychotronic pistol popped out of his forearm!

Running NPCs

Over the course of a mission, the players will meet many characters whom you control. These characters are called non-player characters (NPCs). While NPCs normally provide conflict and challenge, they are not always belligerent, and in fact many are quite friendly. An NPC can be anyone from an oppressed human to Isabella Bayne herself.

Using their skills, players can influence NPCs but they can't control them. That's your job. Without the influence of the players, an NPC will do whatever you believe is reasonable.

Many NPCs don't even have characteristics. These are the people a PC sees on the street or talks to in passing. They provide atmosphere and little else. NPCs who the players will interact with extensively need to be developed in greater detail.

NPC ABILITIES

The biggest difference between NPCs and characters is that NPCs have ratings for their attributes instead of numerical values. The ratings range from Pathetic to Unbelievable, and correspond to the results on the Conversion table found on every character sheet.

For example, instead of a Strength of 6, an NPC would have a Strength of Good. The NPC could perform any task that required a Good Strength roll. Once you set a roll needed to accomplish a task, it applies equally to NPCs and player characters alike.

Example: The referee wants a Spawn with Great Strength to lift a large boulder. He does not make a skill roll. If the referee wishes the Spawn to lift the boulder, the NPC can do it. This is done simply by setting the Strength needed to move the boulder at

Great. Should a character attempt to lift the boulder, she would need a Strength roll of Great or better to succeed.

If a character had tried to lift the boulder earlier, and had failed on a Great roll, then an NPC with Great Strength would not be able move it either. The boulder would simply be too big for him to lift.

INTERACTING WITH NPCs

NPCs can't always have their way. When an NPC is interacting with a player, there is usually a die roll involved. The die roll is made by the player; the referee never rolls against the NPC's skill. Do not think of it as the NPC's chance to accomplish a task, think of it as the player's chance to resist (or affect) the NPC. NPCs are constants. The players are the variables.

Example: While in a bookstore, Molly grabs a copy of "The Decaying Morals of Society" and makes a run for the door. Since she didn't even attempt stealth, the proprietor spots her and grabs the shotgun under his counter.

The NPC intends to get his gun and shoot Molly, while Molly intends to run out the door. The referee decides that if Molly's Run roll is greater than the proprietor's Agility, she will get away. Otherwise, the proprietor will get one shot off for every column by which she fails.

Before Molly makes her Run roll, the referee must assign the proprietor an Agility. The referee sets it at Passable. Molly must roll over Passable on her Run to escape.

Rolling the dice, Molly gets a Great result and scoots safely out the door.

SKILLS

NPCs do not have skills listed like player characters. During play, you must decide whether or not it would be reasonable for an NPC to be trained in a particular skill. If it makes sense for him to have the skill, use the governing attribute instead. So instead of using the Listen skill to overhear a conversation, an NPC would use Alertness instead.

If you feel an NPC should not have a particular skill, he should automatically fail any attempt to use

the skill. For instance, an NPC guard would reasonably have the Security skill, but he would not have the Entertain skill.

CREATING NPCs

Name An apt name will make an NPC easier to remember and more vivid in the player's imagination.

Attributes An NPC's attributes are rated from Catastrophic to Unbelievable, they are not assigned a numerical rating. Attributes which are not specifically rated can be assumed to be Passable. The higher an NPC's physical attributes, the higher his Willpower should be.

Defense Unlike PCs, who must apply Defense separately to each attack, NPCs have a set Defense rating which applies to all attacks, no matter how many are made upon the NPC in one turn.

Wound Track This is based on the NPC's Stamina, just like it is for player characters (see the Wound Track table). The wound track should include any extra wound levels for armor the NPC is wearing.

Weapons The weapons an NPC carries should be listed separately, along with its Attack value and damage multiplier. The weapon's Attack value takes into account the NPC's Strength and Dexterity.

Psi-Powers Only a few of the most dangerous NPCs will have psi-powers. Unlike attributes and skills, NPCs do not roll to use psi-powers. This reflects the uncertain nature of psychic abilities. An NPC's skill with a psi-power equals the attribute listed as its starting value. If the players take over an NPC, they do not gain his innate psychic abilities. However, they can use any psychotronic devices he is carrying. All psychic NPCs have a set number of psi-points per day that they may use to activate psychic powers. Once all their psi-points are used up, the cost of any additional powers must be subtracted from the NPC's attributes.

Appearance A brief description of the NPC is crucial for bringing it to life in the imaginations of your players.

Personality For the most part, an NPC's personality can be summed up in a few choice words. Try to make the NPC react to situations according to his personality. A cheerful NPC would not act morose without reason. A short quotation can give a strong impression of the foe's personality, as well as supplying a sample of how he thinks and talks.

Motivation An NPC's motivation will give you an idea of what the NPC wants and the purpose he serves in the game. An NPC's goal can be simple or complicated, depending on his role in the mission. Knowing an NPC's motivation will help you decide how he will react in different situations.

SAMPLE NPC

Hugo, Progeny Guard

Superior Alertness, Feeble Charm, Good Cunning, Passable Fate, Superior Willpower, Poor Knowledge, Poor Mechanical, Great Agility, Good Stamina, Superior Dexterity, Good Strength

Wounds: L L M M H H

Battle Vest: D D

Weapons: A light submachine gun replaces his right arm (Great x 4), and a plasma dart launcher is mounted on his back (Good x 7, 4 rounds). He also uses a knife (Great x 2).

Notes: Hugo is a Progeny guard at the Cyberlab. Brutish and unpleasant, he doesn't seem to notice his own body odor. His sole motivation is to stop unauthorized people from getting into the lab.

Body Control Sheet

Whenever players take over a host body on Xenos, you need to fill out a body control sheet. You may photocopy as many as you need for your personal use from the sample at the end of this book. A new sheet is filled out for each NPC the players invade, and you may want to fill out some typical NPCs before the game begins.

The body control sheet contains the body's physical attributes and other vital statistics. The body control sheet is passed to whoever is in control of the body.

| | | | |
|---------------------------|-------|---------------------------------|--------|
| Body Control Sheet | | Name/Race HUGO / PROGENY | |
| Agility | 7 / 4 | Carry (lbs) : | 36 LBS |
| Dexterity | 8 / 4 | SUBMACHINE GUN | 7/x2/5 |
| Stamina | 6 / 3 | PLASMA DART | 5/x7/6 |
| Strength | 6 / 3 | KNIFE | 6/x2/3 |
| Wound Track | | | |
| Body | L | M | M H H |
| Armor | D | D | ----- |

Attributes The NPC's attribute ratings are converted to numbers using the Conversion chart. For instance, if a player takes over an NPC who has a Great Strength, the player would write "7" next to Strength on the body control sheet. After the slash, write half the attribute score, rounded up.

Wound Track An NPC's Wound Track is based on Stamina, just like it is for player characters. Any wounds the NPC suffered before being invaded must be recorded on the Wound Track.

Weapons Note the body's weapons, Attack values and damage multipliers on the control sheet. A player who is in control of the body must modify the body's Attack values for his character's skills. If the PC lacks the skill required to use the weapon, the player must divide his Attack value in half. Otherwise, he uses the body's full Attack value, plus 1 for every box after the skill that he has checked (if any).

As the crickets use psi-powers, the host body's attributes will drop. The body's Attack values may need to be recalculated if its Strength or Dexterity drop below the values needed to use his weapons.

Wound Track

| Stamina | Wounds |
|--------------|---------------|
| Pathetic | L |
| Feeble | LL |
| Inferior | LLM |
| Poor | LLMM |
| Passable | LLMMH |
| Good | LLMMHH |
| Great | LLMMHHC |
| Superior | LLMMHHCC |
| Awesome | LLMMHHCCD |
| Incredible | LLMMHHCCDD |
| Amazing | (L)MMHHCCDD |
| Inhuman | (L)(M)HHCCDD |
| Unbelievable | (L)(M)(H)CCDD |

Ranges

Because the action of Khaotic occurs in the imagination of the participants and not on a playing board, it is unnecessary to measure distance in exact feet. The distance between characters, or the size of a room, is set by the referee using the seven range classifications shown on the Range table. Ranges describe the weapons that can be used at that distance effectively. You are always the final arbitrator in deciding ranges.

Range

| Range | Distance |
|----------|---------------|
| Brawling | 1-2 yards |
| Thrown | 3-10 yards |
| Pistol | 11-30 yards |
| Rifle | 31-100 yards |
| Sniper | 101-400 yards |
| Extreme | 401-800 yards |

Time

All role-playing games take into account the difference between “real” time and “game” time. Actions that take place within the game occur in game time, which is arbitrarily set by the referee. You tell the players what time of day it is, how long it takes to accomplish a task, and so on. It may take only a few minutes of real time to play out what happens in a day of game time. These rules always express time in game time.

There are five important groupings of game time:

Turn The shortest segment of game time. A turn represents just enough time for each character to do something interesting.

Scene A group of turns in one setting constitute a scene. A scene has a beginning (the characters arrive), a middle (an obstacle provides conflict) and an end (the challenge is overcome or the characters leave the location). A scene presents choices that will have a real affect on the PCs. If a scene does not contain choices, it is a transition.

Transition Transitions are little bits of business that link scenes. A transition can be as simple as a character stepping into the next room. Even a cross country trip may be transitional, as long as nothing of importance occurs.

Session A session is a series of scenes played out in one sitting. Your game sessions can last a few hours (real time) to all night marathons.

Mission A mission gives an overall purpose to the game you are playing. Each mission has its own objective. A mission may be resolved in one session, or it may take several.

URNS

A turn is one complete cycle around the gaming table. It represents just enough time for each character present to perform a single action.

During a fight, a turn might represent a few seconds--long enough for a character to swing a fist or fire a gun. But during an overland march, a turn could be as long as a day. It's up to you to pace the game so that time doesn't go by too fast (preventing the players from doing all they would like) or too slowly (resulting in tedious detail).

In a non-combat situation, when it's not important who acts first, you can go clockwise around the table, resolving each player's action as you come to him or her. Once all the players have had a chance to act, explain what the NPCs are doing, if any are present. Then begin the next turn by describing how the situation has changed or stayed the same.

In combat, Quickness may be used to decide the order in which characters act. The players each roll Quickness; NPCs use their Agility ratings.

Actions are resolved in order of Quickness, from the highest to the lowest. In cases where an NPC is tied with a player character, the player should be allowed to go first.

SPECIAL CASES

As long as characters perform actions that require about the same length of time, each player receives one action per turn. If the characters are doing things that require widely different times, a turn is based upon the action that requires the shortest time to complete.

Example: A Spawn attacks David and Perkins. David fights the enemy, while Perkins uses his laser torch to cut through a locked door. Since making an attack takes only a few seconds, and breaching a door takes at least a minute, David will have to fight for several turns before Perkins finishes his task. Each turn the referee should give Perkins the opportunity to stop working on the door in order to help David.

At times, only one character will act during a turn. If one character is questioning a foe while the others watch, the game will involve only the active player until another character does something that requires the referee's attention.

A player whose character is not present or is unconscious cannot participate (in effect, he misses his turn).

Actions

There are three types of actions a character can attempt: those that are automatically successful, those that are automatic failures, and those that require an ability roll to resolve. You must decide whether an action requires an ability roll.

AUTOMATIC SUCCESS

- The character is performing a routine action under normal conditions (walking, opening an unbarred door, etc.).

- Failure would have no substantial effect on the game.
- A die roll would cause more of a break in the game than it is worth.
- The character's success benefits the flow of the adventure.
- The character has succeeded at the task so well once before that she never again has to roll to do it. For instance, a character who rolls Awesome to pick a lock would never again have to roll to pick that particular lock. She has already proven her mastery of it.

AUTOMATIC FAILURE

- The action is impossible (such as an un-enhanced human jumping over a 100 foot wide chasm).
- The character has attempted the action before and failed.

Using Abilities

It's not always easy to tell if an action is an automatic success or failure. Some actions could go either way. To determine the outcome of an ambiguous action, an ability roll must be made. Ability rolls are explained in detail in the Player's Section. Here's a summary for your use:

- Tell the player what ability to roll against.
- If told to roll on an attribute, the player rolls a number of six-sided dice equal to the attribute rating. He adds up all the ones, twos and threes that he rolls, and uses the Conversion table to convert the numerical roll to an adjective describing how well he did.
- If told to roll on a skill, the player finds the skill on his character sheet. If there is a check mark in front of it, he rolls against the attribute listed above it. If there is not a check, he rolls against

half the attribute. He gains +1 die for every box after the skill that is checked.

- Sometimes, you may ask a player to modify an attribute by a skill that normally adjusts a different attribute. If a player is field stripping his gun, you might ask for a Mechanical roll adjusted for the Rifle skill. Normally, Rifle modifies the player's Attack value, but in this case it would adjust Mechanical.
- If all the dice on an ability roll come up threes, the player has "maxed the roll." He gets to roll all the dice again and adds the total (counting just the 1s, 2s and 3s) to the first roll. He can keep rolling and adding to his total as long as he continues to roll all threes.
- By expending Skill points immediately before making an ability roll, a player gains an extra die for every skill point expended, up to a maximum of +3 dice.
- When you see a notation like this, (Strength - Passable), have the player roll the ability called for and subtract the value of the specified level. So, (Strength - Passable) means to roll Strength and subtract 5 from the result. If the result is negative, treat it as zero.

Conversion Table

| Number | Adjective |
|--------|--------------|
| 0 | Catastrophic |
| 1 | Pathetic |
| 2 | Feeble |
| 3 | Inferior |
| 4 | Poor |
| 5 | Passable |
| 6 | Good |
| 7 | Great |
| 8 | Superior |
| 9 | Awesome |
| 10 | Incredible |
| 11 | Amazing |
| 12 | Inhuman |
| 13 | Unbelievable |

ASSIGNING THE ABILITY

You must decide which ability a player rolls against. Ask the player to roll against the ability that seems most appropriate. To help you, all the abilities are described later in this chapter.

Use an attribute only when there's no skill that covers what the player is attempting to do. For instance, what skill would a player roll against if he were trying to smash open a door? Since there is no door smashing skill, the player would use Strength instead.

Strive to be consistent and fair in your choices. Don't ask one player to make a Dexterity roll and another to make an Unlock roll when both are trying to break into the same vault.

Players never decide which ability to use. They may offer suggestions, but the final decision is left up to you.

DESCRIBING THE RESULTS

Part of the craft of being a referee is in adapting the quality of a character's roll to actions not specifically covered in the rules. Simply saying an action is "great" or "feeble" is not enough. You must describe what happens in terms of physical events.

Not all referees will make the same judgement call in the same situation. There is no "right" answer. However, you should strive to be consistent and fair. If a player makes a Poor roll, you would be unjustified in having complete disaster befall him. As a rule, disaster only happens on a Catastrophic roll, while an Awesome or better roll brings about unexpected benefits.

By interpreting the degree of success and failure, you control the tone of the game. Your creativity is at work here, so you should let your imagination flavor the game according to your views of what is exciting and fun.

In many situations, a player will suggest an interpretation of the results. If it's acceptable, let it stand! This takes the burden off you and gives the players a strong sense of participation. Their contribution can only enrich the story, making it more enjoyable for everyone.

INTERPRETING THE ROLL

How well a player rolls determines the degree of success or failure. The following guidelines will help you decide what happens.

Incredible to Unbelievable The character succeeds with outrageous excess. Not only did he accomplish everything he wanted, he looked good

doing it and gained an unexpected benefit in the process! He may be allowed a second action in the same turn.

Awesome The character makes the action look easy. He gains a small advantage.

Great to Superior The character succeeds completely. Nothing fancy, just solid success.

Good A small part left undone. This is more of a nuisance than anything else.

Passable With considerable difficulty, the character finishes most of what he attempted, but there is much left undone.

Poor The character is incapable of doing what he wanted.

Inferior The character fails in his attempt.

Feeble The character failed completely, and looked foolish in the process.

Pathetic Not only did the character fail, he caused some additional, embarrassing complication that must be resolved.

Catastrophic A spectacular blunder. The character's screw up causes significant problems, possibly even physical harm. A second roll must be made immediately to avoid the mishap.

THE ROLL REQUIRED

The roll required (RR) is the roll needed to succeed at a specific task. Most actions have an RR of Passable. Difficult tasks have greater RRs (such as Good or Superior), while easier tasks have lower RRs. Any roll over the roll required results in success. Any roll below the roll required will fail. A roll equal to the RR is inconclusive. It may indicate marginal success, such as a character who tries jumping over a pit only to find himself hanging from his fingers by the far side, or a character who tries climbing a cliff only to get stuck half way. Or, it can indicate a tie. As the referee, you may allow a second roll to decide the outcome.

When setting the roll required, consider how difficult the task is compared to a Passable task. For

instance, if juggling two balls requires a Passable Dexterity roll, juggling three balls might require a Good roll. Also consider any unique circumstances. Juggling three balls in a strong wind might require a Great roll, while a professional juggler might need only an Inferior roll.

You don't have to tell the players the roll required for a task, but it will help to keep you honest. At the very least, you should warn the players when they are undertaking something you consider especially difficult. In such cases, you should allow the players a chance to change their minds before attempting the action.

Example: Fleeing over the rooftops, David races to the edge of a building. It's 20 feet to the other side, over a fifty foot precipice. David backs up for a running start with the intention of jumping.

Before he leaps, the referee warns him that he will need an Incredible Jump to get across the chasm. David reconsiders his leap at the last moment and skids to a stop. Wisely, he chooses to find a narrower place to make the jump.

Example: David attempts to scale the wall of a warehouse to get to the skylight. The referee decides he needs a Passable Climb roll to make it to the top. David is in a body with a Strength of 5 but he is untrained in Climbing. He rolls 5 / 2 = 3 dice and gets a 2, 4 and 6 for a total 2. He finds he has failed with a Feeble result. David falls 30 feet to the pavement below.

Example: David challenges Harold, an NPC, to an arm wrestling competition. To win, David must roll his Strength over Harold's. Since Harold has a Great Strength, David must roll over Great to win. David has a Strength of 5. By rolling 1, 2, 2, 2, 5 he achieves a total of 6, a Great roll, tying Harold's Strength. The two strain, their quivering arms locked together. The referee calls for a second roll to decide the match. David rolls 2, 2, 3, 4, 4, 6 for a total of 7, a Superior roll. After a struggle, he barely defeats Harold.

ADJUSTING THE RR

Instead of adjusting the number of dice a player rolls, you should modify the roll required. Telling a player to roll an attribute at +1 die breaks the game's atmosphere by mentioning a number at

the gaming table. Instead, if it's convenient, mentally reduce the RR by one.

Be free with your adjustments. If you think a plan will work, make the RR easier. If you think it's hopeless, make the RR higher. The point is, the players should feel that by using their wits they can augment their chances of success, while thoughtlessness will increase their chances of failure.

SETTING THE RR

Here are some guidelines for setting the roll required:

Catastrophic to Feeble The action is so routine that it is automatically successful. There is no reason for the player to make a roll. Example: Walking up a flight of stairs.

Inferior The action is almost automatic, but there is small chance of failure. Example: Walking up stairs with one shoelace untied.

Poor The action is easy. Example: Walking up a flight of rickety stairs.

Passable The action is not easy, but not especially hard. This is the default for all actions. Example: Walking up a flight of icy stairs.

Good The action is difficult. Example: Walking up a flight of icy stairs without a banister.

Great The action is very difficult. Example: Walking up a narrow flight of icy stairs.

Superior The action is challenging. Example: Walking up stairs with a broken leg.

Awesome to Unbelievable The action is almost impossible. Example: Ascending a flight of burning stairs, covered in oil, with your legs tied together and no banister available.

The One Roll Rule

A player is allowed one roll to accomplish an action. If she fails the first time, the task is beyond her abilities. If she tries to repeat the action, she will automatically fail. She must wait until the next mission before receiving another chance to succeed.

For instance, picking a lock requires a successful Unlock roll. If the roll is failed, the character cannot open that lock no matter how hard she tries. However, she could still attempt to pick other locks.

Likewise, if a character succeeds at a task by a wide margin, she should never again have to roll to do it. So if a player rolls Awesome to pick a lock, she would never again need to roll to pick that particular lock. She has already proven her mastery of it.

An exception to the One Roll Rule are attacks. A character may attempt to strike a foe repeatedly. Each attack is considered a separate action.

Many situations allow a character to accomplish the same task using different skills. If a character can't pick a lock, she could try using her Strength to break it. Players should be encouraged to attempt a variety of tactics.

Special Rolls

HIDDEN ROLLS

Sometimes, a situation requires you to make a roll against a character's skill without the player knowing the true result. This happens when you don't want a player to know that his character has failed. Hidden rolls are the exception. In most cases, the players should be allowed to make their own rolls.

COOPERATIVE ROLLS

When two or more characters cooperate to accomplish the same task, they all roll their ability rolls. The highest roll is treated as the result for the group. Increase the roll by +1 for every other player

who rolls over Passable, and reduced it by -1 for every player who rolls under Poor. The maximum number of characters who can combine their efforts must be set by the referee, following the rules of common sense. For example, two characters can batter down a locked door, but only one character at a time can pick a lock.

Example: Keith and David are trying to hack a computer. The referee sets the roll required at Great. Keith gets a Great Computers roll, but David gets a Feeble roll. David's ineptitude reduces Keith's Great roll by one level, dragging it down to Good. Keith is just about to get into the computer system when David pushes the wrong button and kills the power on their terminal.

COMPETITIVE ROLLS

When a character pits himself against another character, each player makes the appropriate skill roll. The character with the higher result achieves his goal. If a tie occurs, the result is inconclusive and the contestants may have to roll again to determine the outcome.

Both characters do not always roll against the same skill. A character seducing someone would roll his Seduction, while the character being seduced would roll her Willpower to resist.

A player should not be forced to obey another character because of a skill roll. Simply tell the affected player what his character thinks or feels. The player still has final control over his character. If he doesn't consider his "feelings," you may wish to penalize him for playing out of character by giving him no bonus skill points at the end of the mission.

Example: David, feeling frisky, has his eye on Lisa, another player character. He tries his Seduction skill on her to see if he can start any sparks. He gets a Superior roll on his Seduction, while Lisa gets only a Feeble Willpower roll to resist him. The referee tells Lisa that her character is interested in David, but it's up to the player to decide what her character does.

EXTENDED CONTESTS

There are occasions when, for dramatic reason, one roll may decide a competition too quickly. In

these cases, an extended contest can help to build tension.

Here's how it works. The competitors roll their abilities, and the person who rolls lower reduces his ability by the difference in the rolls. If they tie, then there's no effect. The competitors can roll again on the following turn until one of them gives up, or one has his ability reduced to zero.

Attributes that are reduced in this fashion are normally regained fully at the end of the competition.

Example: David, riding a motorcycle, is being pursued by a truckload of Xenites. The referee asks David to roll his Motorcycles skill to see if he's caught. David has a skill of 6, but his roll is only a 4 (Poor). The Xenites have a Driving of Passable (5), and they slowly close the gap.

David can now rolls only 5 dice. He rolls and gets a 5 (Passable), barely maintaining his lead over the truck of bristling monsters.

David gets lucky on his next roll and rolls 10 (Incredible). 10 (David's roll) - 5 (the Xenite's Driving skill) = 5, which is enough to reduce the Xenites skill to zero. David does a daring maneuver, jumping his motorcycle over a stone wall. Over his shoulder, he glimpses the ball of fire bursting from the truck as it slams into the wall.

Defense

During an adventure, the PCs will be exposed to frequent danger. The players will need to make Defense rolls to avoid harm.

A character's base Defense equals 3. Each turn (not each attack), he may add a number of dice equal to his Dodge skill to his Defense rolls--but only if there is room for him to evade. The maximum number of dice he can roll versus a single attack equals his Agility. A Defense roll is made like any other ability roll. The player throws one six-sided die for every point of Defense, totaling just the 1s, 2s and 3s.

When on Xenos, the Boss uses the Agility of the host, and makes all Defense rolls for the body.

Because referees have enough to think about without deciding how to allocate Dodge dice, an NPC's Defense simply equals her Agility.

Example: Perkins tries to run down a hallway protected by two robot lasers. The referee asks him to make two Defense rolls. He has an Agility of 6, but since he does not have a check in front of his Dodge skill, he has only 3 dice he can add to his Defense rolls.

Like all characters, Perkins has a base Defense of 3. To his first roll, he adds 2 dice from his Dodge, bringing the total number of dice to 5. He gets a 2, 3, 3, 5, 6. Discarding everything over 3, he gets a total of 8, a Superior roll. The first laser misses him completely.

The same turn, Perkins must make a Defense roll to avoid the second laser. He's already used 2 dice from his Dodge, so this time he can only add the 1 remaining die to his base Defense, giving him a total of 4 dice. He rolls 1, 2, 3, 3 for a total of 9, an Awesome roll! The referee describes how he adroitly weaves between the lances of energy to safely reach the far end of the corridor.

TAKING DAMAGE

Hazards that could possibly injure a character have an Attack value and damage multiplier. The higher the Attack, the more likely the character is to be injured. The higher the damage, the more deadly the hazard is to someone who does not avoid it.

Determining how badly a character is hurt by a hazard or an attack is easy. A character takes (attacker's Attack - defender's Defense) x damage points of injury. If the Defense roll is greater than or equal to the Attack, then the target avoids injury or shrugs it off without harm.

Damage is immediately converted to one of five wound levels, as shown on the Wounds table. An abbreviated form of the Wounds table is printed on every character sheet.

The defender circles the corresponding wound level on his character sheet. If the letter is in parentheses (), then he does not mark it off--he can take an unlimited number of wounds of that level. If the right most letter is circled, the character is maimed. If the damage exceeds the right most wound level, he is mortally wounded.

Example: A Progeny shoots at David, doing Great x 3 damage. The referee asks David to make a Defense roll. David has an Agility of 5, but lacks the Dodge skill, so he only gets 3 Dodge dice. He adds 2 of

the dice to his base Defense of 3, giving him a total of 5 dice versus this attack. Since his Agility is also 5, this is the maximum number of dice he can roll for Defense. He rolls and gets a 2, a Feeble result.

The referee figures Great (7) - Feeble (2) = 5, multiplied by the Progeny's damage of 3 is 15. Glancing at the Wounds table, the referee sees that 15 points of damage equals a medium wound. He tells David that he took a medium wound.

Wounds

| Damage | Wound | Example |
|--------|----------|---|
| 1-9 | Light | A mere scratch or bruise. |
| 10-17 | Medium | A flesh wound. |
| 18-24 | Heavy | A severe injury. |
| 25-30 | Critical | A splintered bone. |
| 31-39 | Deadly | A severed limb. |
| 40+ | Mortal | Decapitation or a two inch hole in chest. |

GETTING MAIMED

A maimed character cannot function very well until he recovers. Roll the injured body part on the Hit Location table. The character suffers the penalty listed under the "Maimed" column of the table. For simplicity, do not roll for NPCs, simply treat all maimed NPCs as incapacitated or unconscious.

An incapacitated character cannot perform any action requiring the use of an ability roll. He may still make Defense rolls, but cannot add his Agility to the roll. The effects of maiming last until the wound is healed.

If the PCs are on Xenos and their body is knocked unconscious, the Boss is put to sleep. The other crickets are unaffected and may take over the body. However, they will be unable to revive it to consciousness simply by becoming the new Boss.

Hit Location

| 2d6 | Location | Maimed | Mortally Wounded |
|-----|----------|---------------|------------------|
| 2 | Eyes | Blinded | -1 Alertness |
| 3 | Jaw | Cannot talk | -1 Cunning |
| 4 | Head | Unconscious | -1 Knowledge |
| 5 | Gut | Incapacitated | -1 Willpower |
| 6 | Chest | Incapacitated | -1 Strength |
| 7 | Torso | Incapacitated | -1 Stamina |
| 8 | Leg | Leg useless | -1 Agility |
| 9 | Arm | Arm useless | -1 Dexterity |
| 10 | Face | Unconscious | -1 Charm |
| 11 | Hand | Hand useless | -1 Mechanical |
| 12 | Ear | Deafened | -1 Alertness |

MORTAL WOUNDS

A mortally wounded character collapses and is unable to move. The body immediately loses a point from an attribute as determined by the Hit Location table. The attribute loss is permanent, and cannot be regained through healing. Mortal wounds can reduce attributes to a minimum of one.

For PCs on Xenos, it is their host body that will lose an attribute point, not them. However, the Boss in charge of the body may suffer excruciating pain. Her Willpower drops to zero due to the pain, and she is automatically put to sleep. The other crickets are unaffected.

A mortally wounded character will die in 3 turns unless a Good Medical roll is made by another character to save his life. Players cannot take over a mortally wounded being.

DEATH

A character who dies on Earth is gone. There is much sorrow at seeing an ISES agent die. Let the player create a new persona and reenter the game as soon as you can work him in.

On Xenos, death loses its sting, but is not without its dangers. The host becomes inert flesh, and it can no longer be controlled. The host personality dies with its body, as do any sleeping PCs inside the host's mind. Since the PC who was in charge of the host at the time it was mortally wounded is automatically put to sleep, the other characters have 3 turns to reawaken him or else he will perish with the host.

The characters inside the corpse can still use their talents and any psi-powers that have a 0 cost. They can try to jump into the body of anyone who touches their corpse by making Willpower attacks. Only one character at a time can make Willpower attacks on a potential victim.

Immediately upon death, and each hour thereafter as the brain of their host decays, the characters must make Passable Sanity rolls. Failure means the character goes insane. An insane character cannot use psi-powers, and will resist any attempt to jump to a new body or return to Earth. The character must be subdued through Willpower attacks. Ironically, jumping to a new body or

returning to Earth will restore the character's sanity.

Once all the characters have gone insane, they experience a living death. Weeks later, when the host's brain has decomposed into putrescent mush, their psyches finally lose their grip on the corrupted flesh and drift into an unknowable eternity of madness.

By then, wise players will have already created new characters.

Combat

Many situations in Khaotic will evolve into a fight. Violence is commonplace on Xenos, and in a war, the outcome of every battle is extremely important. One slip can cost a character's life. While you shouldn't put the players in hopeless situations, you can't coddle them either. Just make sure that when a character dies, the death is traceable to a choice the player made.

A combat turn represents a few seconds--long enough for a character to swing a fist or fire a gun. A good rule of thumb is 5 to 10 seconds per turn. Being imprecise about the length of a combat turn enables the players to try one interesting action per turn. Remember, only the Boss makes rolls for the host body.

ATTACKING

Characters can only attack opponents who are in range of their weapons. A character coming within brawling range of a foe must deal with that enemy if it blocks or attacks him.

Every character has an Attack value and damage rating with his weapon. For example, an NPC might do Good x 4 damage with his 9mm pistol. His attack rating is Good and his damage multiplier is x 4.

Attacks do (attacker's Attack - target's Defense) x damage.

Example: Lisa is using a pistol with an Attack of 6 and damage of x3. She has an Agility of 5 and is experienced at Dodging (she has a check after it on her character sheet) which gives her $5 + 1 = 6$ dice she can add to her base Defense each turn.

Lisa: I'll fire my pistol at the Xenite.

Referee: Roll you attack.

Lisa: (She rolls her 6 Attack and gets a total of 11) I got an Amazing roll!

Referee: You hit. What's your damage rating?

Lisa: Three.

Referee: (Lisa's attack of Amazing (11) minus the monster's Defense of Good (6) equals 5. Multiplied by Lisa's damage of 3 gives a total of 15. A 15 equals a medium wound on the Wounds table.) You did medium damage. (The referee crosses off the first M on the monster's wound track of L L M M H H) It's still on its feet. It fires its plasma gun at you. Roll your Defense.

Lisa: (She chooses to add 2 dice from her Dodge to her base Defense of 3, and so rolls 5 dice. With her Agility of 5, this is the maximum she can roll versus an attack). I got a Good result.

Referee: (Notes the Xenite has a damage rating of Good x7 with its plasma gun). The heat from the plasma stream singes your hair as you duck.

CATASTROPHIC ATTACKS

If a player rolls Catastrophic on an attack, he must roll Passable on Dexterity or else drop his weapon. If the Dexterity roll is also Catastrophic, the weapon breaks. If a player fires a missile weapon on a target who is adjacent to a friend, the friend will be hit on an attack roll of Feeble or less. The Attack value of the accidental hit depends on how badly the player botched his roll, as shown on the Stray Missile table. The damage multiplier equals that of the weapon.

Stray Missile

| Missed Roll | Attack Value |
|--------------|--------------|
| Feeble | Passable |
| Pathetic | Good |
| Catastrophic | Great |

STANDING UP

A prone character can rise to his feet in one of two ways:

- The character uses an action to stand.

- The player rolls Passable on Agility. If made, the character can also act that turn. If failed, the character cannot stand.

Example: For reasons too complicated and embarrassing to go into here, Lisa finds herself on the ground, a Xenite looming above her. She tries to stand and attack the monster in one turn. Lisa rolls Passable on her Agility, and manages to get to her feet. She has just enough time to take a swipe at the Xenite before her turn ends.

DRAWING A WEAPON

A character can draw or pick up a weapon in one of two ways:

- The character uses an action to draw a weapon.
- The player rolls Passable on Dexterity. If made, the character can also act the same turn. If failed, the new weapon is dropped.

RELOADING A WEAPON

A player must keep track of how many bullets his gun fires. Once his gun is out of bullets, he must reload it before firing again. A character can reload a weapon in one of two ways:

- The character uses an action to reload the weapon.
- The player rolls Passable on Dexterity. If made, the character can also act the same turn. If failed, the weapon is dropped.
- Bows are reloaded and fired in the same action.

FLEEING COMBAT

A standing character may disengage from hand-to-hand combat in the following ways:

- His foe is blocked by another character.
- He rolls Passable on Dodge.

- He knocks his opponent back (see the Body Throw skill in Chapter 8: Abilities).

A character escaping from combat must roll his Run over the Run of his opponent to get away. If the foe does not pursue, the character automatically gets away.

FOE VS. FOE

Sometimes, foes fight between themselves. If the players are not involved, you control the fight completely. You decide how badly the combatants are wounded, who wins, how long it takes, and so on, according to logic and the dramatic necessities of the adventure.

Combat Modifiers

The players' tactics will have an effect on how well they fight. Foolish maneuvers make it harder to hit, while imaginative attacks can give them an advantage. If the players are attacking a prone or unsuspecting foe, you should reduce the target's Defense by 1. If the players are attacking an invisible foe, you would increase the target's Defense by 3. Unconscious foes are automatically dispatched by a player with a weapon.

USING TWO WEAPONS

A character may use two one-handed weapons to attack. An attack with his right handed weapon is at -1, while an attack with his left handed weapon is at -2 (this is reversed if the character is left-handed). A character may attack once per turn with each weapon.

MULTIPLE ATTACKS

You may allow a character to make more than one attack in a turn with a firearm. The player must decide in advance how many attacks he will attempt. For every attack over the first, he suffers -1 on all the attacks. If a player tried 3 shots with his pistol, he would be at -2 on each attack.

RUNNING INTO COMBAT

If a character wants to run across a room and punch a foe, you should ask for a Run roll; if the roll is Great or better, allow the attack to happen on the same turn.

BLOCKING

A character may wish to protect a companion by blocking a foe's attack. The character must roll Great on his Agility to interpose himself. If made, the character jumps in front of his friend and takes the attack instead of the intended target. Of course, you must judge whether the character is close enough to make this maneuver.

GRABBING A WEAPON

A character may try to take an opponent's weapon away from him. First, the attacker must roll his Dexterity over the defender's Dexterity. If this roll is made, the attacker has grabbed the weapon. He must then roll his Strength over the defender's Strength to pull the weapon away. If made, the attacker has the weapon. The same process may be used to disarm an opponent.

ATTACKING OBJECTS

Some objects, such as mirrors and pottery, can be easily smashed--there is no roll required. For more sturdy objects, such as a barricaded door, assign a roll required to destroy the object based on how sturdy the object is and how large of a weapon the character is using. Unlike living creatures, an object is either destroyed or unharmed.

Between Missions

After a mission, let the characters reach a safe location where they can rest and recuperate. You may want to make notes on what happened. In this way you can keep track of NPCs that the characters know, the things they've seen and done, and

incidents that may lead to future complications. Use the log to recap what happened in the last session when you are starting the next game. Not only will the log help you maintain continuity, it is also fertile ground for the genesis of new missions.

Between adventures, three things happen:

- Characters regain all lost Willpower and Wound Levels.
- Characters gain skill points.
- Characters may spend skill points to gain gear or to increase abilities (as explained in Chapter 4: Other Characteristics).

SKILL POINTS

After a mission, you'll award skill points to the players depending on the difficulty of their mission and how successfully they accomplished it. The value of a mission is set in advance, and can even be told to the players before they go on it. The Skill Point Awards table shows the base value for a mission. Multiply the base value by the degree of the players' success to determine the number of points each player receives.

BONUS POINTS

Players who were especially entertaining during an adventure deserve 1 to 2 bonus points each. It's easiest to give all players the same number of bonus points based on their role-playing as a group, not as individuals. This thwarts the possibility of bitterness and encourages cooperation. However, a player who is highly uncooperative should receive no bonus points at all. In this case, you must explain your decision after the game. This will help the player understand how to earn bonus points next time.

Skill Point Awards

| Difficulty | Base Value | Example |
|------------|------------|---------|
| Easy | 4 point | Recon |
| Moderate | 6 points | Raid |
| Hard | 8 points | Assault |

Skill Point Multipliers

| Degree of Success | Multiplier |
|---------------------------------|------------|
| Failure | x0 |
| Partial Success | x1/2 |
| Complete Success | x1 |
| Success beyond the call of duty | x2 |

CHAPTER 9

ISES

I expected the eggheads at ISES headquarters to turn up their noses at a grunt like me. It surprised me when they treated me like some kind of hero. They even asked me what I thought we could do to stop the menace from Xenos.

Imagine, me giving advice to a room full of professors.

ISES used to house just researchers and scientists. But since the invasion, they've been recruiting from the military more and more. Now when you walk down the halls of ISES, just as often as a Ph.D., you'll run into a marine stinking of gun oil and cordite.

ISES Headquarters

The ISES World Headquarters is located ten miles north of Dylan, Nebraska. ISES maintains a small airport, experimental crop lands and a small farm at the site. Altogether, more than 100 scientists, administrators, farmers and technicians work at the Dylan complex. ISES headquarters is the meeting place for the Board of Directors every quarter, and there is a guest wing where visiting dignitaries may stay in protected comfort.

The Dylan headquarters was designed by Griffen Shalcross and Micki Jeffries, two founding members of ISES. They used the flat surrounding plains and farmland to emphasize the quiet dignity of the facility. A clever use of space gives the compound a sense of immenseness that belies its actual size. A memorial garden at the back of the building draws the eye to the simple tomb of their friend and ISES co-founder Kaliq Dabir. Built several years after the original garden was planned, the tomb is in no way jarring to the overall design and layout of the headquarters.

Ground Floor

The Dylan lab has a light and airy look to it, in part because of the tall glass walls on either side of the main entrance. The building is flanked by carefully trimmed hedges. To the west of the building is an employee parking lot; to the east is a loading bay. Visitor parking is located in the front.

The approach to the main door is edged with lovely flowers and greenery. Five long low steps and two wheelchair access ramps ascend to the entrance. The one story ground floor is set on a rise, giving the windows a more expansive view.

The grounds are patrolled by four security guards during the day, and eight at night.

Guards

Great Alertness, Poor Charm, Good Cunning, Passable Fate, Passable Willpower, Poor Knowledge, Passable Mechanical, Good Agility, Great Dexterity, Passable Stamina, Passable Strength

Wounds: L L M M H

Ceramic armor: C C C

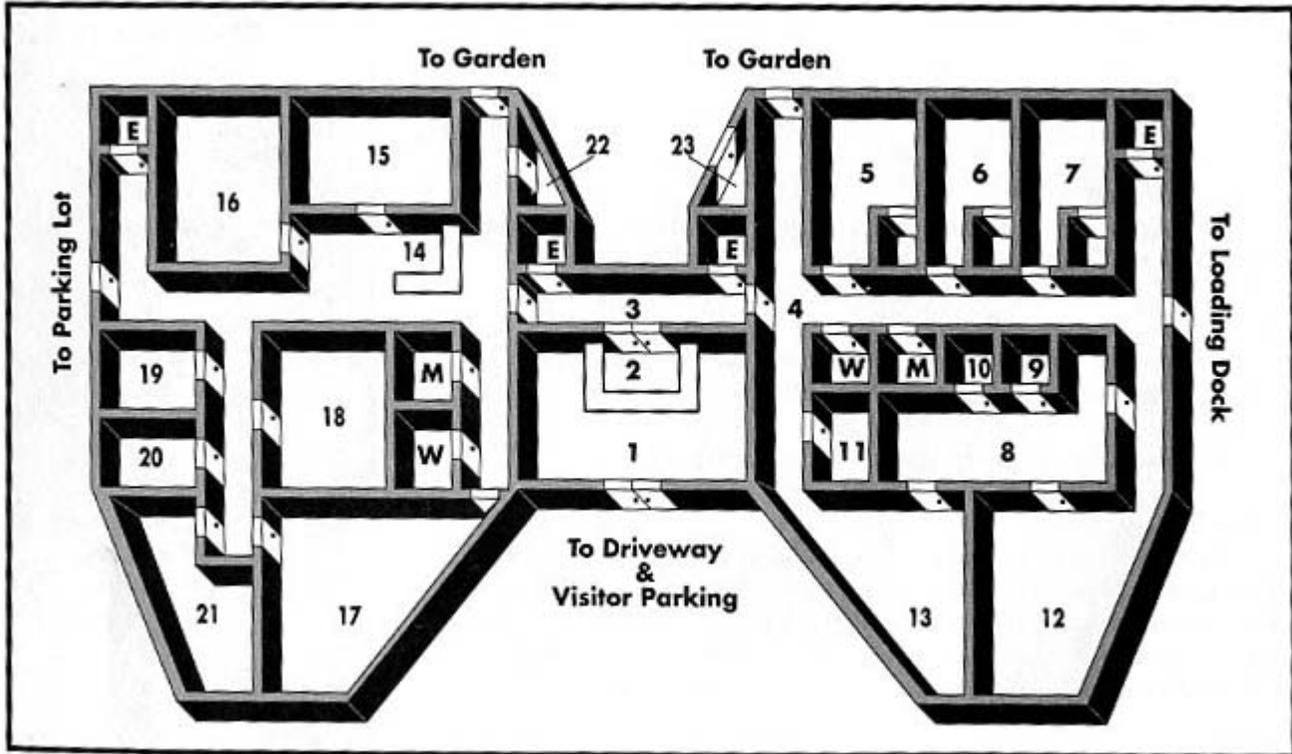
Half-helmet: M M

Weapons: Sony Self Defense Unit (incapacitates for (Good - Stamina) turns, 10 shots), SMG (Good x 5, 30 shots)

Appearance: The guards wear a dark uniform over their ceramic body armor.

Personality: No-nonsense. Their helmets are equipped with helmet arrays, putting them in constant contact with the Security Office and the front desk.

Motivation: To stop unauthorized entry into ISES.



1. The Lobby

The vast lobby is paneled in oak panels recycled from an old town hall in eastern Massachusetts. Displays of art are scattered throughout the room, showing a wide variety of world talent. Comfortable chairs and low tables are placed in strategic corners so that visitors can get the best view of all the artwork.

2. Receptionist Station

A receptionist station is directly opposite the front door. The receptionist, Stacy McKinnon will cheerfully release the computer-locked side panels that lead into the Dylan lab once a visitor has shown proper credentials. Stacy is a highly trained security professional and will politely, but firmly deny access to anyone who strikes her as remotely suspicious. If necessary, she will use a firearm to protect herself and the complex.

At night, Ty Rostanski comes on duty and works the night shift. Though not as engaging as Stacy is, he's twice as tough.

Stacy McKinnon

Superior Alertness, Good Charm, Great Cunning, Poor Fate, Superior Willpower, Poor Knowledge, Poor Mechanical, Good Agility, Good Dexterity, Superior Stamina, Great Strength

Wounds: L L M M H H C C

Kevlar Vest: M M M

Weapons: Pistol (Passable x 6, 10 shots)

Appearance: A 28 year old woman with straw-blond hair, blue eyes and a sardonic smile. Stacy is slim and trim, often dressed in stylish slacks. She is polite but firm to all visitors, and is very observant. Stacy is well-muscled and trained in a number of martial art techniques.

Personality: Stacy appears to be an efficient receptionist, but if pushed or threatened she will

show her true personality: that of a cold-blooded security professional. She takes great pride in her job and has dedicated her life to ISES. She hopes to someday become security chief of an ISES lab.

Motivation: To serve ISES; to protect its members from harm; to prevent unwelcome visitors from entering the facility.

Ty Rostanski

Superior Alertness, Inferior Charm, Poor Cunning, Passable Fate, Good Willpower, Poor Knowledge, Good Mechanical, Poor Agility, Good Dexterity, Awesome Stamina, Great Strength, Great

Wounds: L L M M H H C C D

Ceramic vest: C C

Weapons: Pistol (Good x 5, 10 shots)

Appearance: A 43 year old man with short black hair and beady eyes. Rostanski has a forbidding manner about him which most people find intimidating. He is always soft-spoken, even when angry.

Personality: Former police officer who fought in the US ethnic wars, Rostanski is a reserved man who keeps his thoughts to himself. He relocated from Los Angeles to Dylan with his wife and two daughters after his young son was killed in a fire bombing. His wife could not make the adjustment and left him shortly afterwards, taking the children with her.

Motivation: To guard the ISES facility at night. To oversee the four junior security guards that roam the halls and grounds in the evening.

3. The Elevator Hall

This small area contains two elevators. Both elevators have a glass wall that allows passengers to see a portion of the garden, specifically the courtyard. The elevator descends one floor, into the laboratory area.

4. East Wing

An unlocked door leads from the elevator hall into the East wing. Although it is less secure than other areas of the complex, it is still well monitored. The service elevator in the northeast corner of the building is commonly used by the staff.

5-7. Visitor Suites

Expansive, with a full bathroom, media station and computerlink, these rooms are primarily used

by visiting board members or distinguished scientists working on short-term projects. Rarely inhabited for more than three months at a time, the suites nonetheless have an inviting look and feel about them. All windows look out over the walled garden in the back.

8. Kitchen

The kitchen staff provides healthy meals to the more than 100 people who regularly work at the Dylan complex. The kitchen contains six ovens, twelve microwaves, a large pantry and a vast walk-in refrigerator. Supplies are delivered once a week at the side entrance which is normally locked and monitored on Stacy McKinnon's viewing screen in the lobby. The side door can only be unlocked from the lobby station.

The Kitchen manager is Sonny Paterson. Trained in a variety of techniques, he is particularly adept at crepes, croissants and Thai cuisine.

Sonny Paterson

Poor Alertness, Good Charm, Poor Cunning, Passable Fate, Passable Willpower, Passable Knowledge, Good Mechanical, Passable Agility, Passable Dexterity, Passable Stamina, Good Strength

Wounds: L L M M H

Weapons: Butcher knife (Passable x 3)

Appearance: A 37 year old man with a pleasant disposition and a great love of food. Sonny dresses in chef whites and is often seen with a cleaver or paring knife in hand. He is slightly rotund and always moans about his weight.

Personality: Though bluff and blustery to his staff, it is well known that Sonny is all bark and no bite. He likes a good joke and loves to sing, but more than anything else he likes to see people eat.

Motivation: To provide the visitors and regular employees of the Dylan complex with the tastiest, most nutritious meals they've ever eaten.

9. Walk-in Refrigerator

10. Pantry

11. Staff Room

The Dylan complex maintains a variety of support personnel, including kitchen help, maid service and security staff. When on break, they are

welcome to use the staff room to take a nap, watch a media show, make a phone call or catch up on the latest gossip.

12. Dining Room

This area has the ambiance of a fine restaurant. Marble-top tables are carefully arranged near the floor-to-ceiling windows to get the most of the afternoon sun and the best views. Near the back, semi-enclosed booths give patrons a sense of privacy. A salad bar and specials rack allows diners to serve themselves, though Sadie McCray, the hostess, supervises a staff of two waitpersons. The dining room is open 24 hours a day, though only cold food and self service is available from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. No payment is taken or given, though diners may leave tips if they like.

13. Banquet/Meeting Hall

Occasionally, special lunch or dinner meetings are held in the lovely banquet room. The east wall is paneled in several video display units that can be easily viewed by anyone in the room. The mahogany table can seat up to 30 people. Diners are served directly from the kitchen.

General staff meetings take place in the Banquet hall every Tuesday, unless a special event has been scheduled.

14. West Wing

This wing is locked from both ends, and only a person with a pass code can gain entry. Both entrances are monitored at the lobby reception desk. A desk sits at the east entrance to the wing. It is occupied by Danielle Dawson, Edmund Brackenberry's administrative assistant. Danielle is Edmund's daughter as well as his confidante and advisor.

Danielle Dawson

Good Alertness, Great Charm, Good Cunning, Great Fate, Good Willpower, Passable Knowledge, Poor Mechanical, Good Agility, Great Dexterity, Poor Stamina, Poor Strength

Wounds: L L M M

Weapons: Fist (Great x 1)

Appearance: A 21 year old woman with long brown hair and brown eyes. Danielle is quite attractive, but does not enhance her beauty with cosmetics or flashy clothes. She wears a wedding

ring. An observant visitor might notice that she wears a tiny hearing aid in her left ear.

Personality: Somewhat shy of strangers, she is gregarious and open with those she knows. Danielle is greatly devoted to her father whom she resembles in many ways. A little unsure of herself and her abilities because of her youth, Danielle strives do her job to the best of her ability.

Danielle recently married a young man named Paul Dawson after a six week whirlwind courtship. She is beginning to have doubts about the relationship but doesn't know how to discuss the matter with her father.

Motivation: To learn all she can about business practices from her father and co-workers. To make her marriage work.

Notes: A childhood illness resulted in partial deafness in Danielle's left ear. An ISES scientist created the nearly invisible hearing aid which gives Danielle nearly 100% hearing capabilities.

15. The Director's Office

This office overlooks the west garden area. It is decorated with over stuffed chairs and pictures of family members and friends, including Richard T'sung and the other ISES founders. Edmund Brackenberry can be found here on a daily basis, often conversing via vidphone or computer with other directors of ISES labs.

Edmund Brackenberry

Good Alertness, Superior Charm, Poor Cunning, Great Fate, Great Willpower, Good Knowledge, Good Mechanical, Passable Agility, Poor Dexterity, Good Stamina, Passable Strength

Wounds: L L M M H H

Weapons: Edmund has an old pistol (Poor x 5, 10 shots) in his desk, which he hopes he'll never need to use.

Appearance: A 54 year old man with a genial disposition and quiet manner. Brackenberry is 6'3" and slightly overweight. He generally wears jeans, cowboy boots and plaid shirts, and rarely dresses in a formal business suit. His hair is thin and graying but his eyesight and hearing are very sharp.

Personality: Edmund is known for his practical bent and focused manner. Only his closest friends and family members are aware that Edmund is deeply religious. Edmund views science as a gift from God, allowing humankind to battle evil forces

with knowledge and truth. He is humbly grateful to be a part of ISES, which he views as a tool for God's wishes.

Edmund is well-liked by many people who find his simple honesty refreshing. He is devoted to his only child, Danielle Dawson. This closeness between father and daughter was possibly intensified when his wife Marie died when Danielle was only eight years old.

Motivation: To run the Dylan lab safely and securely. To provide scientists with the well-equipped labs they need to make important discoveries. To protect his daughter from harm.

Notes: Edmund was sent to college in order to learn business practices that would be beneficial for the family farm. Shy and overwhelmed by life in the big city, he gratefully accepted Richard T'sung's offer of friendship during his freshman year. The two men remained close friends until the day Richard died.

16. CEO's Office

Delores Cline is the CEO of the ISES corporation. A no-nonsense woman in her early 50s, Cline's office reflects an austere personality. Though equipped with state-of-the-art computers and other technology, the furniture is reminiscent of classic Quaker woodwork. The only frivolous item in the office is a small teddy bear adorned with a faded red ribbon. It sits in its own miniature chair near her desk.

Delores Cline

Great Alertness, Poor Charm, Good Cunning, Superior Fate, Awesome Willpower, Superior Knowledge, Good Mechanical, Inferior Agility, Poor Dexterity, Passable Stamina, Passable Strength

Wounds: L L M M H

Weapons: Delores keeps a pistol (Poor x 5, 10 shots) close at hand ever since a botched kidnapping attempt took place in 2027.

Appearance: 52 year old woman with auburn-dyed hair, sharp blue eyes and a disapproving mouth. Delores is trimly built and always wears a suit with hose and sensible pumps. She wears a touch of make-up on her lips and eyelids.

Personality: Cold and disapproving. Delores was married several years ago and had a small son, Jamie. When her work kept her from home for several months at a time, her husband divorced her

on charges of abandonment and secured custody of Jamie. He then changed his name and disappeared. The only thing that Delores has of Jamie is the teddy bear she keeps in her office. Delores has not shared this story with any of her co-workers. She spends nearly every penny of her paycheck searching for her lost son.

Motivation: To make sure that the ISES budget remains in the black. To find her son.

17. The Board Room

This large room contains a small video viewing area, as well as a traditional board room table and chairs.

18. Communications Center

ISES maintains a constant link between all labs and numerous satellite groups and individuals who contribute to ISES projects. Not only is the communications center the hub of the ISES network, it also functions as information services for the facility. The most notable feature of the communications center is a mainframe computer nicknamed Freddie. Freddie is maintained by communication experts Emil Enderby and Peyo Vandillo.

Emil Enderby

Poor Alertness, Inferior Charm, Passable Cunning, Passable Fate, Passable Willpower, Great Knowledge, Awesome Mechanical, Passable Agility, Great Dexterity, Good Stamina, Passable Strength

Wounds: L L M M H H

Weapons: Fist (Great x 1)

Appearance: Thin man in his late twenties. Emil dresses in drab colors, often wearing wrinkled shirts and mis-matched socks. His shock of brown hair hangs forward into his eyes and a light stubble graces his face. Emil speaks slowly and precisely; he rarely has anything good to say.

Personality: Emil pretends to be a cynic, but he secretly believes in the goodness of his fellow man.

Motivation: Emil loves communications technology and ISES makes use of some of the best in the world.

Peyo Vandillo

Good Alertness, Passable Charm, Passable Cunning, Good Fate, Passable Willpower, Great

Knowledge, Superior Mechanical, Passable Agility, Good Dexterity, Poor Stamina, Passable Strength

Wounds: L L M M

Weapons: Pocket knife (Good x 2)

Appearance: Heavy set Mexican man in his early 30s. Peyo wears crisply ironed shirts and slacks in bright colors. He is always carefully groomed, though his clothing tends to be casual and comfortable. Peyo carries candy in his pockets and nibbles on it all day.

Personality: Peyo is cheerful, friendly and enthusiastic. He loves Emil like a brother, though Emil pretends disdain for Peyo.

Motivation: Though Peyo loves his job, his primary concern is to bring home a paycheck to his beloved wife Tila and their three children, Josefina, Luis and Emil. He also sends money to his aged mother and younger sister who live in Mexico City.

19. Marketing Office

ISES has a vigorous marketing campaign to make people aware of the benefits of cooperation in the area of scientific research. Margot Le Gras is a warm woman in her early forties. She coordinates all major publicity events, including college recruitment drives, advertisements and award ceremonies. Margot's father was Dr. Donald Le Gras whose breakthrough in lung cancer research has been recognized as the single most important discovery in medical science over the last 25 years. Her background has given her a keen perception into the mind of the scientific thinker and she enjoys hopping down to the labs for a quick look-see. Her bubbly enthusiasm is considered to be a major plus by the ISES staff.

Margot Le Gras

Good Alertness, Superior Charm, Good Cunning, Good Fate, Poor Willpower, Passable Knowledge, Inferior Mechanical, Poor Agility, Passable Dexterity, Inferior Stamina, Poor Strength

Wounds: L L M

Weapons: Fist (Passable x 1)

Appearance: A short woman of forty-two, Margot has short black hair, brown eyes and light brown skin. She dresses in the latest business fashions, most often skirts and bolero jackets. Margot habitually wears earrings and other jewelry, and has a fondness for scarves. Everything she

wears is always expensive and carefully coordinated.

Personality: Margot has an engaging personality which invites instant friendship and trust. Although some people view ISES with mistrust and question its motives, Margot's PR has helped soften any negative publicity. It is greatly due to her work that ISES has a 91% approval rating among all Americans and a 72% approval rating world-wide.

Motivation: Margot hopes to raise approval ratings of ISES to 100%. Bad publicity is the bane of her existence.

20. Personnel

Bonnie O'Deah is a sharp-tongued Irish woman who can be sweet as honey when she wants to be. Although she is in charge of hiring all Dylan staff, her primary duty is to review scientific petitions, glean the most worthy from the rest, and presenting the best to Brackenberry on a weekly basis. Since anyone can ask for funding from the ISES Foundation, Bonnie's job is a formidable one, and she deals with a number of crackpot inventors, arrogant doctors and socially inept scientists.

Since security checks are a routine part of the recruitment process, Bonnie works closely with the security chief, JJ Deerfield. The two of them maintain a sniping love-hate relationship which can seem quite vicious to those who don't know them. The other staff members have a secret pool as to who will break down first and ask the other out on a date.

Bonnie O'Deah

Good Alertness, Passable Charm, Great Cunning, Passable Fate, Good Willpower, Good Knowledge, Great Mechanical, Passable Agility, Poor Dexterity, Poor Stamina, Good Strength

Wounds: L L M M

Weapons: Fist (Poor x 1)

Appearance: Short, slim Irish woman of 35. Bonnie has red hair and blue eyes, with a lightly freckled face. She appears young for her age and has a generally boyish appearance. She dresses in simple, comfortable clothing, primarily blues and greens. She rarely wears jewelry or make-up. Bonnie has an Irish brogue which thickens when she's angry.

Personality: Bonnie is an impatient go-getter, who agonizes over every selection she makes. Her languages is occasionally salty, and anyone who crosses her or insults ISES will hear the rough side of her tongue. However, Bonnie can turn on the charm when necessary.

Bonnie has a number of female friends, but bemoans the fact that all her relationships with men seem to go to hell. She is attracted to JJ Deerfield, but believes he dislikes her intensely.

Motivation: To recommend only the finest scientists to Edmund Brackenberry, who will then present the best to the Board of Directors for final selection. Bonnie takes this selection process very seriously. Any of her picks that do not pass the psychology test or security clearance she views as personal affronts to her judgment.

21. Security Office

World-wide security of ISES is coordinated by JJ Deerfield, a former Captain in the US armed forces. Extensively trained in a variety of security techniques, JJ's primary concern is to make sure that trouble is stopped before it starts.

JJ's primary concern is for the Dylan complex and the people who work within it. However, he is also responsible for secure transportation of important or secret visitors, crowd control during award ceremonies and theft prevention of expensive equipment and chemicals.

JJ's two assistants are stationed in the front of the office. They monitor a bank of video displays which show all potential entrances to the complex as well as the elevators to the lower level. Though it is not his job to monitor the screens, JJ takes a certain amount of comfort in the fact that the Dylan facility is well watched and guarded.

The weapon's locker is located in JJ's office. Only he has the key. The locker contains four kevlar vests and eight Uzi submachine guns.

JJ Deerfield

Superior Alertness, Poor Charm, Passable Cunning, Poor Fate, Great Willpower, Good Knowledge, Superior Mechanical, Good Agility, Superior Dexterity, Superior Stamina, Great Strength

Wounds: L L M M H H C C

Kevlar vest: M M M

Weapons: SMG (Superior x 4, 50 shots)

Appearance: Short stocky man in his late forties. JJ looks young for his age, but has a hard edge about him. He has black hair and brown eyes and wears a simple suit reminiscent of his army uniform.

Personality: Seemingly crusty and hard-hearted, JJ has a soft spot for children and sentimental movies, two facts he keeps carefully hidden from his co-workers. JJ is very proud and doesn't like to make mistakes. He is suspicious of other people's motives, since everyone could be a potential enemy. He finds it hard to open up to others, and justifies it because of his line of work.

JJ was a Captain in the US Armed Forces and fought in the East Asian conflict where he was wounded twice. JJ was sent home with a Purple Heart, and occasionally suffers from a stiff leg, which he attributes to his artificial hip implant.

Motivation: To protect and serve ISES. To develop a deep and meaningful relationship with Bonnie O'Deah (see Personnel).

22. Office Supplies

Datapads, power ups for office equipment and other supplies are stored in this small room.

23. Gardening Shed

Tools for maintaining the garden in pristine elegance are kept in this shed. The only entrance opens onto the garden.

Bathrooms

There are a couple of men's rooms (M) and women's rest rooms (W) throughout the building. All bathrooms contain showers as well as toilets, sinks and large linen closets, which contain towels, robes and bath slippers.

Elevators

Elevators are marked E. The elevators are the only access to the laboratory level located eighty feet below the building's ground floor. The northeast elevator is especially heavy duty, with wide doors, and is used as a freight elevator.

For safety reasons, the elevators will rise from the lower level to the surface at the push of a single button. However, descending requires a passcard to be inserted into the elevator's control panel.

All elevator traffic is monitored by the security office and at the receptionist's desk. The elevators can be stopped and locked from either of these two points.

The elevator shafts are designed to restrict access to the labs. The shafts lack utility ladders, and the elevators do not have access panels in their ceilings. The cars completely block the shafts, making it impossible to get into the basement level without riding an elevator.

The Garden

The walled garden is lovingly maintained in the English tradition. A gardener visits twice a week to trim the grass, cut back the flowers and keep the area lush and clean. The garden includes stone benches, a gold fish pond, a centrally located sundial and the tomb of Kaliq Dabir, one of the

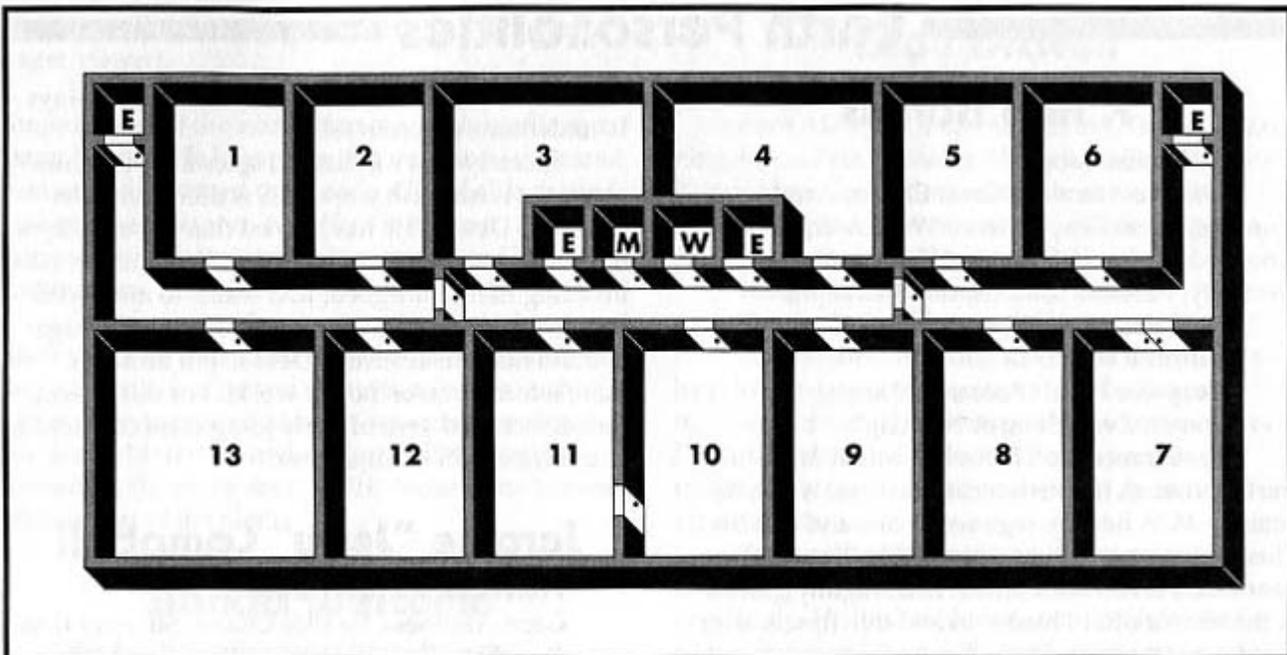
founding members. Sound is artificially muted in the garden, giving it an overall tranquil effect.

Lower Level

The lower level is divided into three sections, each accessed by an elevator. The sections are separated by locked doors which require a passcode to open.

Six laboratories can be found here, each assigned to a different scientist and/or project. The labs have all been nicknamed by whimsical visitors of the past; it is not uncommon to here a technician say, "Well, I've got to get back to Xanadu to see how my experiment is doing."

In case of disaster, the basement can be sealed off. Generators will keep electricity flowing and air can be recycled for up to three months. There is food and emergency items sufficient to maintain twelve people for six months. In Nebraska, tornadoes are a common threat, and the basement of the lab makes a comfortable shelter until danger has passed.



1. Storage

This room is locked. It contains emergency foodstuffs, a small backup generator, a short wave radio, medical supplies and protective clothing. The supplies are rotated every six months. The backup

generator will automatically kick in if the basement is sealed due to incursion, tornado or other disaster.

2. Archives

This small room is made pleasant with a hologram wall screen giving the area a pastoral air. All research is required by ISES to be recorded for posterity on a daily basis. Labs are equipped with microphones and scientists are asked to give a verbal summary of their day's work. Voice patterns are automatically translated into words and stored on the archival computer, but other transcriptions are performed by Zoe Slattenhern, a sullen, myopic woman in her late teens. Zoe complains incessantly, but it is clear that she truly loves her job and feels possessive about her work.

Zoe has a photographic memory and can recite any dialog she's heard over the last month (any farther back and the details become hazy). For this reason, she is a font of knowledge concerning all experiments that have occurred since she was hired two years ago. Zoe doesn't have a great grasp on scientific studies but her phenomenal memory makes up for her less than polished ways.

Zoe Slattenhern

Poor Alertness, Inferior Charm, Poor Cunning, Poor Fate, Good Willpower, Superior Knowledge, Good Mechanical, Passable Agility, Great Dexterity, Good Stamina, Passable Strength

Wounds: L L M M H H

Weapons: Knife tucked in boot (Great x 2)

Appearance: Tall, skinny woman with pitted skin, thick glasses and long, lanky black hair. Behind her glasses, Zoe has surprisingly lovely green eyes. She habitually dresses in loose trousers cinched in with a man's belt and baggy shirts.

Personality: Sullen, defensive and crude. Zoe knows her behavior is socially unacceptable, but she prefers to keep her co-workers at arms length. Zoe ran away from an abusive home at the age of 16, and spent her time aimlessly hitchhiking across the US when she found herself in Dylan. Begging for food at a prosperous-looking home, a man she assumed was the gardener took her in and gave her a sandwich. This was Edmund Brackenberry who quickly discovered her fantastic ability to learn and memorize facts and figures. He offered her a job at ISES, and Zoe accepted. She considers Edmund her only true friend, and he often visits her in the archives room, praising her work and encouraging her to further her education.

3-4. Winkie Rooms

These rooms each contain six cots and footlockers. Scientists and technicians use them to take "forty winks" while working on a particularly grueling experiment. Jump-team members are invited to stay in Winkie Rooms so that they are close at hand. However, they are not compelled to stay in these rooms, and may choose to live in Dylan.

5. Supplies

This large room contains a number of supplies ranging from paper clips and pencils to microscopes and centrifuges. It is always well-stocked, and any item may be written on a request form which is reviewed daily. The supply room is kept unlocked, and scientists and their assistants help themselves to whatever they need.

6. Decontamination Room

This room holds decontamination and disposal units for hazardous wastes.

7. The Loading Dock (Igor's Room)

All heavy equipment is delivered and stored in Igor. A fork lift parked near the entrance makes moving the crates easy. The fork lift is small enough to fit inside the northeast elevator.

8. Lab A (The Engine Room)

Named for the popular Star Trek TV show, the Engine Room is an engineer's delight. Containing tools to build the latest robot technology and revise current techniques, the Engine Room is a full of marvelous gadgetry. The most unkempt lab, it is also the one most commonly occupied for great lengths of time. Currently, the Engine Room is being used to research Xenite weaponry.

9. Lab B (The Saucer Room)

The smallest lab, the Saucer Room has an unusual lighting system that can simulate any view of the night sky. The Saucer is used by mathematicians, space technicians and others interested in space and time. It is currently being used in an as yet vain effort to locate the position of Xenos by comparing the star-coordinates described by returning jump-teams with the positions of known stars.

10. Lab C (The Alice Room)

Named after Alice in Wonderland, Lab C has a door leading into Lab D. The door is mirrored, and the name Alice alludes to the famous classic, *Through the Looking Glass*. Primarily a medical lab, it contains three cadaver tables, a freezer and refrigerator unit for specimens and a small contamination free area which can only be entered by an air lock.

11. Lab D (The Jungle)

Any animal studies take place in Lab D. Cages are set up to secure chimpanzees, dogs and rodents. ISES has a policy of non-harmful animal practices, yet the Board recognizes the need for animal research. Abuse of animals is not tolerated, but death is sometimes necessary for important research to be carried forward. Lately the Jungle has been used to research Xenite biology.

12. Lab E (Xanadu)

Xanadu is dedicated to the related studies of human behavior and psychic research. Currently, Xanadu is a clearing house for information on Spawn collected from around the world. Experimental research into psychic powers has just recently started, and is proving to be an elusive subject when studied on Earth.

13. Lab F (Frankie's Lab)

This lab contains the TransEgo Device. Frankenstein is reserved for the most important studies, those that need quick solutions. It is virtually self-contained, and the single, two-foot thick vault door can be sealed off from the rest of the complex. A black and white photo of Colin Clive, the actor who played Dr. Frankenstein in the 1932 horror classic *Frankenstein*, hangs on a wall.

Griffen Shalcross

ISES FOUNDERS

Richard T'sung

American. Deceased. Born in 1975 to Richard and Doris T'sung in Washington DC. In 1980, the family moved to California and Richard Sr. went into business with his brother Charles, importing and exporting computer parts. Richard Sr. was not a very good money manager and barely kept up with the family bills, but his unmarried brother was extremely frugal, and invested his money well. Young Richard was a favorite of his, and when Charles died young from stomach cancer, he left his fortune to him.

Richard T'sung won a full scholarship to the University of Berkeley, where he immediately began increasing his knowledge of computer technology. A man of many interests, he has helped develop such important technology as "Real Time", Virtual Reality arcades, computerized sight goggles for the blind and more.

Married in 1999 to Dawn Schuck. One child, Sabina T'sung born in 2002. Richard T'sung died in a car accident along with his wife in 2009.

Richard died at the age of 34. At that time he could be described as a tall Chinese American man with black hair and a round face. He dressed casually in simple clothing and had a penchant for hats.

Curious, friendly and visionary, Richard believed that ISES could change the world if given a chance. He sought to explore the limits of human knowledge for the betterment of humanity.

Kaliq Dubir

Arabian-English. Deceased. Born in 1969 in London, England to Wendy Kellock. Wendy named exchange student Hakim Dubir as the father, though he denied parentage and returned to Saudi Arabia without Wendy or the child. Wendy gave her son a traditional Arabic name, and eventually remarried another Arabian man, Yusaf M'ad.

Kaliq's specialty was mathematics. The oldest founding member of ISES, he was visiting a Canadian firm as a consultant on a six month visa when he found himself drawn to the camaraderie of the Internet. One of the most enthusiastic members of the group, Kaliq lobbied hard for ISES, giving

ISES Board Members

Anna-lise Bjarne
Agustin Granillo
Tovi Lev
Sir Kevin Mandeville
Dr. Kajikazi Mbita
Dr. Fedor Petrovich

speeches at colleges, and encouraging governments to share their scientific knowledge in an effort to gain world peace.

Dabir was assassinated in 2023 by fanatic Antal Stephano, who believed that sharing scientific information posed a danger to his country. At the request of his will, Kaliq's remains were interred in a vault at ISES headquarters. He is survived by his wife, Querida Estaban and two sons, Yusaf and Frank.

Kaliq was 54 years old when he died. At that time he was a plump man with a graying black beard, slightly long hair and a hearty laugh. Impulsive, witty and generous, Kaliq liked to have a good time. Kaliq was the most out-spoken of all founding members. He became a well-known public figure as he spoke on such topics as scientific freedom and world unity.

Tanjiro Tadashi

Japanese. Born in 1981 to Harue and Yoshino Tadashi in Tokyo, Japan. The youngest founding member, Tanjiro was a brilliant youth, with an IQ in the genius range. Though from a poor family, Tanjiro's talents were so noticeable, he received patronage from private donors, allowing him to attend MIT at the age of 15. It was at this time that he connected with the other founding members via computer modem. When his studies were concluded in 1999, he returned to Japan, though he never lost contact with his friends.

A bachelor, Tanjiro has been reclusive for the last 10 years of his life. Though an honorary member of ISES, he researches independently, and refuses to sit on the ISES Board of Directors. He currently lives in Seto, Japan.

Tanjiro is a slender Japanese man who looks younger than his 49 years. His movements are jerky and self-conscious. When nervous or threatened, he develops a nervous tic near his right eye.

Mildly Paranoid, Tanjiro has always had a difficult time developing friendships with people, for fear they may try to exploit his genius, as so many did in his youth. He became steadily more withdrawn after his closest friend, Kaliq Dabir, was assassinated. He appears intent to remain in seclusion.

Anna-lise Bjarne

Danish. Exact date of birth and parentage unknown (approximately 1977). Adopted by Jan Bjarne and his wife Jette in 1979. Jan Bjarne was a wealthy manufacturer of machine parts. He traveled all over the world, often taking his daughter with him. Though not as brilliant as other founding members, Anna-lise was the person who quietly emphasized world cooperation and trust as a main tenet of ISES. Her studies are primarily in areas of psychological and sociological research.

Anna-lise resides with her German born husband, Folke Buker, in Berlin. They have no children.

Although Anna-lise appears to be in her mid-forties, she is approximately 53 years old. Her hair is blond and bound into an intricate network of braids while her body is trim and fit. She has light blue eyes and a sweet smile. She was once a close friend of Kaliq Dubir, and it is rumored she was the cause of his first divorce.

Highly empathic, Anna-lise enjoys helping people. To her, ISES is a means to solve world problems. She is passionately non-aggressive and disapproves of ISES' occasional weapons development. She hopes to use her position on the ISES Board of Directors to bring about world peace and mutual cooperation.

Kijakazi ("Kazi") Mbita

African. Born in Kenya to Jonn and Nuru Mbita in 1976. Kijakazi's father was a doctor specializing in unusual tropical diseases. She followed in his footsteps, studying disease control, identification and eradication. She began working for the World Health Organization with her father when she was 18 years old, and was part of the team that discovered the A4 vaccination for AIDS, effectively curing 75% of all AIDS cases. Later she attended school in London and America.

In 2002, she married French citizen Pierre Costanza. They have five children, Sudi, Chane, Kito, Panya and Sidonie. They currently live in Paris, France.

Her voice is booming and authoritative, though it can be lowered to a sweet sing-song whisper when her patient is a child. Practical and non-nonsense, Kazi believes that disease is the battleground of the future. She is deeply committed to ISES, her research and her family. She sits on the ISES Board of Directors.

Mi-Ok (“Micki”) Jeffries

Born in Los Angeles, CA to Daniel Jeffries, and his Korean wife, Hyun-Ok. Raised a military family, Micki found herself moving to various installations in the US. Though bright and intelligent, Micki’s talents were often overlooked by her teachers, and she sometimes found herself ostracized in small towns for being Korean. When she was young, her father purchased a computer for her so that she could keep in touch with school chums around the country via the Internet. The computer was the perfect cover for her shyness and she soon became more and more confident of her abilities.

Micki graduated with a degree in engineering. Along with Griffen Shalcross, she designed the ISES world headquarters in Dylan, Nebraska. Her specialty is robotics.

Micki lives with her friend and companion, Shawn Tilley, in Rockwell, Maine. Shawn and Micki raise prize Maine Coon cats. Their cattery is called Meowzza.

A slender woman with wide eyes, dark hair and a slow, shy manner, Micki typically dresses in simple cotton clothing and flat shoes, her long hair bound underneath a scarf. She invariably has a cat in her lab.

Griffen Shalcross

Born in Toronto, Canada in 1976 to Samuel Shalcross and Diana Farber. Because of his mother’s American heritage, Griffen retained dual citizenship. Raised by his father’s family in Toronto, Griffen saw little of his father, who worked as a traveling salesman, and even less of his mother, who severed ties with him when he was seven.

Interested in mechanical engineering and architecture, Samuel won the coveted World Design Award in 1994, making him the youngest winner ever. The award-givers were shocked to hear that the young man had dropped out of school and had no intention of pursuing a higher education.

The award was enough to attract the attention of the up and coming car manufacturer Alternative Motors. Working with a team of engineers, Griffen was the principal designer of the Tiger T, the first electric car that was both cost effective and easy to maintain.

In 2001, he married Amie LaCroix. Their divorce in 2011 was made easier by their lack of

children. Griffen is now living with Janette Ferrara, a noted writer, in Toronto, Canada.

A handsome man in his early 50s, Griffen has dark brown hair and piercing black eyes. He dresses in slacks, sweaters and crisp shirts. He is a board member of ISES.

Agustin Granillo

Born in Argentina in 1974 to Gilberto and Jesusa Granillo. The Granillo family owns a vast amount of farm land in the region, and Agustin wanted for nothing as a child. Growing up arrogant and boastful, he dreamed of going to school at Cambridge, which he did at the age of 19. He found it a humbling experience. Unable to keep up with the regimen, Agustin dropped out after only a year and a half. Humiliated, he spent a year travelling the world, keeping in contact with his Internet friends via a laptop computer. His travels broadened his horizons, and he went back to school, this time in his native country. He concentrated his efforts on agriculture, weather and other aspects of everyday life that are so important to the average person. His studies on ways to enhance the natural growth of grains earned him a portion of the Nobel prize in 2014. His passion is to enhance the standard of living for all people, particularly the poorest farmers and laborers.

Agustin married Mary Gan, an American, in 2011. They have two children, Marisa and Ernesto. He lives with his family in San Francisco, California.

A stocky man with a neat goatee and mustache, Agustin often wears jeans and simple cotton shirts. He sits on the ISES board of directors.

Earth Personalities

F. ROD BARNES

Profession: Mogul

Passable Alertness, Great Charm, Awesome Cunning, Great Fate, Superior Willpower, Good Knowledge, Good Mechanical, Inferior Agility, Poor Dexterity, Passable Stamina, Good Strength

Wounds: L L M M H

Chitinite vest: D D

Weapons: Pistol (Poor x 7, 30 shots)

Quote: “Everything or Nothing”

Appearance: Rod looks like a man in his mid-thirties, though his birth certificate reveals that he is actually 48. A healthy regimen of diet and exercise, plus plastic surgery has given Rod his youthful appearance. He has thick brown hair, slightly grayed at the temples, hard blue eyes and thin lips. A wiry build gives the impression that Rod is not very strong, but this is untrue. Rod always dresses in the finest clothing.

Personality: Crafty and manipulative. An overwhelming fear of poverty and a drive for power has given Rod the edge to become the most successful businessman of the 21st century. In fact, not only does he own the largest corporation in the world, he secretly controls many more.

Motivation: To become the most economically powerful person on Earth. To crush or absorb ISES.

Background: Rod began his career as an obscure media monitor for the US Government. After a few years, Rod retired with millions of dollars from playing the stock market, though some suspected he parlayed his wealth via computer fraud. At any rate, he began a carefully planned assault on corporations dealing with information and entertainment. Soon Rod's company, EON ("Everything or Nothing") Enterprises owned most film companies, newspapers, computerlinks and media stations worldwide.

EON's public relations team has whitewashed any hint of scandal or corruption. Rod is seen by many people as a universal benefactor and friend of humanity.

EON Enterprises' control of the media is well known, but few realize that it has branched out into areas of pharmaceutical research, weapons development, mining and other high-return businesses. Many of these subsidiaries have been the focus for government inspections, but EON Enterprises has managed to keep its name out of any trouble.

F. Rod Barnes hates ISES and what it stands for. ISES lures away scientists that could be developing important technology for EON. ISES disperses information that Rod would prefer to keep secret--and in his control. Though positioning himself as a "friendly rival," Rod is constantly looking for ways to undermine and ruin ISES.

Recently Rod's industrial spies have told him about the hush-hush work ISES is doing with the TransEgo Device. He has learned that Isabella Bayne has set up her own dictatorship on Xenos and

is now invading Earth. Intrigued, Rod wants to meet with her, and perhaps negotiate an alliance. Rod is eager to build his own TransEgo Device, but he needs more information on how it works. For this reason, he has recruited several likely jump-team candidates to infiltrate ISES headquarters.

JEROME "JERRY" CAMPBELL

Profession: Earnest paranoid

Great Alertness, Inferior Charm, Superior Cunning, Poor Fate, Poor Willpower, Passable Knowledge, Poor Mechanical, Good Agility, Passable Dexterity, Good Stamina, Passable Strength

Wounds: L L M M H H

Weapons: Pistol (Passable x 6, 10 shots)

Quote: "Trust no one."

Appearance: Thin man, 27 years old, with red hair and watery blue eyes. Jerry's Adam's apple bobs prominently when he talks, which is often and fast-paced. He wears an old army jacket, jeans and t-shirts. He is extremely paranoid and fears for his life, so he occasionally disguises himself.

Personality: Full of boundless energy, Jerry can barely sit still for any length of time. He sleeps less than three hours a night, and spends the rest of his time laboriously typing tracts on an old typewriter. Jerry's personal vendetta is against EON Enterprises and its leader, F. Rod Barnes, whom he views to be an evil megalomaniac.

Motivation: To make people believe him.

Background: Jerry was a young enlisted man in the East Asian wars. He was captured and put in a Korean POW camp. While there, he observed F. Rod Barnes negotiating with the camp warden. A price was apparently agreed upon, and Rod had a camera crew set up in front of the POW compound. The Korean guards then torched the prisoners with flamers as Rod's crew filmed the atrocity. Jerry was the only one who managed to escape into the jungle. Later he was picked up by a roving Canadian patrol.

Upon reaching home, Jerry learned that EBS (EON Enterprises) was the only media company that was capable of transmitting film reports from war-torn East Asia; all other transmissions were blocked. In fact, EBS specialized in sensationalist "yellow journalism" stories that fueled hatred for the enemy. The famous POW burning story was just one of several horror stories to be transmitted to the homes of eager viewers.

Jerry immediately realized that Rod must have staged many of the stories that made his media company famous. He began digging into his background and soon discovered that nearly 95% of all information received via media station or Internet connection was monitored or manipulated by EON Enterprises.

Of course, nearly everyone dismisses Jerry as a shell-shocked, paranoid veteran who has manifested his fears onto one person. Almost no one takes him seriously except for Rod, who has secretly ordered his death. In the meanwhile, Jerry is frantically spreading the word about EON. As far as he knows, ISES is part of the plot!

WANDA WELCOME

Profession: Alien Safe House Founder

Great Alertness, Inferior Charm, Superior Cunning, Poor Fate, Poor Willpower, Passable Knowledge, Poor Mechanical, Good Agility, Passable Dexterity, Good Stamina, Passable Strength

Wounds: L L M M H H

Weapons: Fist (Passable x 1)

Quote: "How do we know they're not our friends?"

Appearance: Plump woman in her late sixties, with puffy gray hair and blue eyes. Wanda wears lots of bright make-up, long purple robes and a crystal tiara, which she claims gives her clarity of thought.

Personality: Wanda is pleasant, strong-willed and determined. Long a believer in UFO's and ancient astronaut technology, she embraced the first inklings of the alien invasion as a good sign. She believes that the destruction the monsters have caused is simply due to the fact that humans attacked them first--what could they do but defend themselves? She is eager to meet an alien in the flesh and try to communicate with it.

Background: Recently, Wanda has been preaching the coming of aliens from a distant planet. She established the "Alien Safe House Program" a few months before the invasion of Earth began. Members place a yellow star in their windows to indicate to aliens that they will be welcome in their homes. Wanda constantly preaches universal brotherhood, and is currently trying to save up enough money to fly to the next site of a monster sighting. "If I could only reason

with these creatures and show them I'm a friend," she says, "I'm sure they'd lay down their arms and teach us their noble secrets."

CODY DRAVEN

Profession: Sampler

Poor Alertness, Superior Charm, Passable Cunning, Good Fate, Passable Willpower, Passable Knowledge, Great Mechanical, Passable Agility, Good Dexterity, Poor Stamina, Passable Strength

Wounds: L L M M

Weapons: Fist (Good x 1)

Quote: "Life is the poetry of the past."

Appearance: A young man with brown curly hair, brown eyes and a quite voice. He dresses in tight leggings and billowing shirts and often wears Dracula Red contact lenses. When in concert, he traditionally throws dead roses to his audience of screaming fans.

Personality: Distinctly odd. Draven is quite and soft spoken, and often answers direct questions cryptically. He has few friends, and finds his fame somewhat bewildering. He loves music and poetry in any form, but is particularly fond of 19th century verse.

Motivation: To perform and compose music.

Background: Cody Draven is the most successful music sampler in the business today. A sampler makes an art of splicing together sounds, past recordings and musical notes to create a whole new musical experience. Cody's skill is extremely high, and his database of musical selections is vast. During concerts he asks people in the audience to name any three songs or composers. He then uses this information to instantly create a new piece before his adoring fans.

Draven has recently entered a mystical phase in his career, telling his fans that he can actually read a person's personality in the samples they select. He has also implied that his samples accurately predict the near future, and that he is the "Nostradamus of today's youth." Draven's recording company, SamplerCity, is owned by EON Enterprises.

DR. DARYL KASPARIAN

Good Alertness, Inferior Charm, Poor Cunning, Passable Fate, Superior Willpower, Awesome Knowledge, Awesome Mechanical, Passable Agility, Passable Dexterity, Poor Stamina, Passable Strength
Wounds: L L M M

Weapons: Fists (Poor x 1)

Appearance: When Dr. Kasparian was 25, he was involved in a terrible lab accident which resulted in the deaths of three colleagues. He was rescued, but his face and upper torso were badly burned. Though reconstructive surgery has been done, he is still badly scarred. Dr. Kasparian only has a few wisps of brown hair left on his head. His eyes peer from beneath melted flesh, and his ears are small lumps. He often wears floppy hats and dark glasses when going out in public, which is rare.

Personality: Energetic, perky, curious. Rather naive, he always believes the best about people. He idolizes Isabella Bayne, and doesn't believe that she is directly responsible for the attacks on Earth. He doesn't pity himself, though he knows that his horrible visage is frightening to some. He wistfully wishes that he could lead a normal life.

Motivation: To meet Isabella. To explore Xenos.

Background: Kasparian was born June 1, 2002 in Willmette, Illinois to Lily and Luther Kasparian. His mother was a librarian, his father a small business owner. His paternal grandfather was Armenian, and Daryl spent evenings listening to the fables and stories about this faraway homeland. He helped his father and mother run the family grocery store. The whole family lived in the apartments above the shop.

A brilliant student, Daryl was encouraged by his teachers to apply for scholarships at a young age. When he was 16, he was accepted to MIT. There, he began studying physics and chemical engineering. He soon discovered that someone else had preceded him in many of his theories--Dr. Isabella Bayne. He quickly read everything she published, and even bought her old lab notes from a collector. When he graduated, he decided to follow in her footsteps, and accepted an offer to join the Defense Department, but only if he was allowed to work on her TransEgo device. He has been working on her theories for about three years.

The accident that burned him resulted from an early experiment with the TransEgo Device. At the

time, he was engaged to Blair Llewellyn, but she broke it off while he was still in the hospital. Since then, he has deliberately avoided close contact with friends, family and colleagues, preferring to work alone.

Dr. Kasparian was left on Xenos at the end of his first jump. Whether he remained behind as a traitor to ISES or to spy on Isabella Bayne is unknown.

MARK CAIN

Good Alertness, Poor Charm, Good Cunning, Good Fate, Awesome Willpower, Poor Knowledge, Good Mechanical, Great Agility, Superior Dexterity, Awesome Stamina, Awesome Strength

Wounds: L L M M H H C C D

Chitinite body armor: D D D

Weapons: Assault rifle (Good x 6, 50 shots), Grenade launcher, Good Accuracy, does (Incredible - Stamina) x 10 damage

Appearance: Muscular Caucasian male, 6'2" with short blonde hair and ice blue eyes.

Personality: Very physical. Cain is a doer, and doesn't like to be still. However, he is not a fool, and will listen to cooler heads. He is generally polite to women and children, though blunt and forceful.

Motivation: To kill Isabella Bayne.

Background: Cain was born November 14, 2004 in Eugene, Oregon. His parents, Janice Wells-Hickson and Daniel Cain, are now divorced. His mother is a real estate agent and his father is an electrician. He has two older brothers and younger sister: Kevin, Larry and Melanie.

Cain's parents divorced when he was 12. He lived with his mother until he joined the army at the age of 20, just missing the East Asian Conflict. A rebel as a youth, he has a fierce abiding love for his mother, though he still has issues to work out with his father.

A weapons specialist in the army, Cain holds the rank of Sergeant. His intelligence and ability to get the job done has gotten a lot of notice from his superiors, but his smart-ass ways keep him from being considered for higher rank. Cain enjoys his job, and doesn't want to end up as a career officer pushing paper on a desk.

Cain led the squad that first captured one of Isabella's invading Xenites. The rest of his squad

was killed in battle. He has a personal vendetta against Isabella and her monsters.

NICOLAI ZLATAN

Poor Alertness, Passable Charm, Great Cunning, Inferior Fate, Great Willpower, Passable Knowledge, Poor Mechanical, Passable Agility, Good Dexterity, Poor Stamina, Passable Strength

Wounds: L L M M

Weapons: Pistol (Good x 3, 10 shots), knife (Good x 2)

Appearance: Black hair and piercing brown eyes. About 5'10", with a thin, wiry build.

Personality: Sullen and alienated. Nicky is suspicious of people. He feels guilty about his psychic powers, and fears his own abilities.

Motivation: To stay out of Klov and the endless regiment of experiments.

Background: Born April 6, 2012 in Klov, Russia. His parents, Alina and Aleksandr Zlatan, were second-generation members of the Russian military's experiment to breed psychics. Both had minor psychic abilities, and were raised in Klov, a military base with 30 families of inbred psychics.

The Klov base has been the secret base of the Russian Psi-Branch since it was first established in the early 1950s. Nicolai's mother, wishing to save him from the life of a guinea pig, smuggled him out of the compound when he was six years old. The peasant who delivered food to Klov dumped him off at the nearest orphanage and went off to spend his bribe on the black market.

Nicky hated the orphanage and ran away at the age of 14. He lived the life of a black marketer and hustler until he was picked up by the police. Not knowing who he was, they told him that he could either join the army or be imprisoned. At the age of 17, he was inducted into the Russian army. His psi powers were quickly discovered as he was playing poker in his barracks, and he was transferred back to Klov. There, he learned that his parents had died, but their deaths were "classified." Nicky fears that they were executed for refusing to reveal where they had hidden him.

Scientists who studied Nicky quickly realized he was the most advanced specimen they had ever discovered. They used drugs to enhance his powers, and a regime of disassociation to split the psychic part of his mind from the inhibitions of his rational

mind. Nicky is now addicted to the psi-drug, and finds it difficult to control the powers of his subconscious.

The Russian military knows that Nicky has dangerous powers that must be kept in check, but they don't know how to deal with him. They keep him in a drugged stupor when he is not needed.

Dr. Laszlo is the principal scientist working with Nicky. He has encouraged Nicky to develop a fatherly attachment to him. Nicky craves his approval and attention, but also resents the fact that he is nothing more than an interesting experiment to Dr. Laszlo.

Nicky's psychic powers include an ability to read surface thoughts, and to sense the immediate future. He also possesses an uncontrollable killing power, which works only if he wants deeply and sincerely for the target to die. It causes a victim's heart to stop.

SHAYNA JASI

Superior Alertness, Superior Charm, Great Cunning, Passable Fate, Great Willpower, Superior Knowledge, Good Mechanical, Great Agility, Good Dexterity, Good Stamina, Good Strength

Wounds: L L M M H H

Weapons: Pistol (Good x 5, 10 shots)

Appearance: A shapely Asian-American woman with long, twisted braids and deep brown eyes. She is always dressed neatly, usually in a suit or tailored dress.

Personality: Shayna has traveled around the world with her parents, and is comfortable in most social situations. She is friendly, calm and personable, but can be tough if the situation calls for it.

Motivation: To assess the situation and report to her superiors.

Background: Shayna was born October 17, 2007 in Atlanta, Georgia to Leona and Philip Jasi. Her father is a political writer, her mother is a respected ambassador living in Japan. Her younger brother, Lenn, is deaf.

Shayna's father is of Hawaiian descent, and was born in Honolulu, the son of a hotel owner. He met Leona Kagami when she was visiting the island on an exchange student program. They fell in love and married when they were both 20. Both sets of parents disapproved, but the marriage has proved

sound. Shayna remains particularly close to her mother.

When Shayna was young, her mother was appointed attache to the American embassy in Mexico during the tumultuous Union uprisings. Shayna observed labor and industry negotiations, and developed an interest in politics, which her mother encouraged. Determined to succeed in a

government career, she became a dedicated student of political history and the art of manipulation.

A trained sociologist, Shayna has an exceptional facility with languages and customs. She has found work for the US government as a covert agent. Her family and friends are unaware of this aspect of her career, believing that she is simply a member of the State Department often deployed to fetch and carry documents.

CHAPTER 10

XENOS

This your first jump to Xenos? Let me give you a piece of advice. The worst few moments are going to be your first. You won't know where you are, who you are or what you're doing.

I've jumped into a Spawn slaughtering rebels and another time into a Progeny doing implant surgery on an unwilling human. The worse jump was into a reject scrambling for his life with a loaf of bread in one hand and a pack of Garou on his heels. That mission almost ended as soon as it began.

You're always going to start out confused. Just play it cool, rookie, and you'll be all right.

Whatever you do, don't let them suspect you're one of us.

The World of Xenos

The scientists of ISES disagree about the nature of Xenos. Some contend it is a distant planet circling a faraway star. Others, pointing out the improbability of humans evolving on another planet, suggest Xenos is an alternate version of Earth itself, existing in a parallel universe.

Jump-teams have noted that the night sky of Xenos contains no familiar constellations, and the moon seems larger and brighter. This has thrown some doubt on the parallel universe theory, and has given rise to an even more radical hypothesis. The "dream" theory speculates that Xenos exists only in the minds of those who go there. When Isabella Bayne used the TransEgo Device in 1944, the essence of her mind created the world. Researchers who support the dream theory claim Xenos is a non-physical world made from psychic energy.

ISES is working to find out which, if any, of the theories are correct.

Jump-teams have explored little of Xenos. The TransEgo Device is calibrated with the settings Isabella Bayne first used, and ISES scientists are afraid to change the controls for fear of losing the connection with Xenos. All jump-teams arrive in or near the city of Kaleido. The area surrounding the city is virtually unexplored.

History of the Azvorians

The human natives of Xenos call themselves Azvorians. They were the original rulers of Kaleido and the surrounding territories. Before the arrival of Dr. Bayne, the Azvorians were culturally and economically advanced far beyond their neighbors, the Irorra to the South and the Calagros to the North.

Azvorica was a peaceful land. Its written history extends for nearly 300 years, and in all that time, there is no record of a war other than the one following Isabella's arrival. Though the society was static, the people of Kaleido prospered, lived happy lives and enjoyed the bounty of the land.

Government

The Azvorian Government was controlled by a group known as the Designators. They were ranked according to their social standing. Third Rank Designators, or Governors, were appointed to represent city-states far from the capitol of Kaleido. They were asked to visit Kaleido and represent their people at least one season a year.

Second Rank Designators, called Seers, were those born with psychic powers. Azvorians revered psychics, and viewed mental talents as a symbol of divine authority. Only psychics with highly advanced abilities were given the title of Designator, and then only if they passed a rigorous testing procedure. Seers were the religious leaders of Azvororia.

First Rank Designators, also known as the Ruling Council, were ten leaders nominated for life by the members of the Second Rank. All First Rank Designators were elected from the Second Rank. Chosen for their wisdom and healthy auras, the Council leaders made important decisions concerning every aspect of Azvorian life.

The Designators met frequently in the Chambers of Harmony to create new laws and rule on old ones. Third Rank Designators dealt with day-to-day grievances and complaints, applying the laws handed down by the Second Rank. First Rank Designators oversaw the entire political structure; their veto could change any ruling made by a Designator of lower rank. The Ruling Council were the benevolent leaders of the Azvorian Empire, and they guided the society wisely and well for many years.

The structure of the Azvorian Government did not allow a non-psychic to rise beyond Third Rank. A group of malcontents known as the Valsanya openly challenged their power, demanding representation in the First Rank. But most citizens found the judgement of the Designators to be just, and rejected the need for non-psychics to be in the Ruling Council. The system had brought them a peaceful existence for as many generations as anyone could remember, and they saw no need to change. They lived within the natural order, and

their world was as close to an idyllic paradise as humans had ever experienced.

RELIGION

The state religion of Azvororia was known as "The Balance." It taught that inner peace and outer harmony could be achieved by living a simple, natural life. War and conflict create a great disturbance in the universal aura, while peace strengthened the psychic bonds of the community.

Those who taught the Balance to the people were known as Seers of the Second Rank, generally older individuals whose psychic abilities were quite advanced. Seers believed they could tap the psychic aura that surrounds all living things and use the power for the good of the people. Azvorians who visited the Temples of Balance could shed themselves of extreme passions, and have calming psychic energy channelled to them through a Seer. They taught that all extremes are destructive, and even a person who meant well could upset the Balance.

In fact, the worst sin a person could commit was to tip the Balance, and upset the natural order. The goal of the Seers was to find perfect Balance and then maintain it.

The Seers also taught that when a person died, his personal psychic power was released into the universal aura. Every death expanded the pool of psychic energy, while every birth siphoned a little from it. The Seers preached against wars, for fear that the Balance would be overwhelmed by too many deaths. All that psychic energy would have to go somewhere, and the Seers feared it would manifest in destructive ways.

The Coming of Isabella

The minute her mind passed through the TransEgo Device, Dr. Bayne received heightened psychic powers. Such a shift of power did not go unnoticed by the Seers, who felt a tremendous drain in the Balance.

At first, the Seers believed Isabella to be the greatest psychic ever to bless Xenos. Her powers were more advanced than any they had witnessed.

The Balance had always manifested itself through the psychic powers of humans, and like the Balance, Isabella worked through human agencies. She was psychic powers without physical form--the ultimate expression of the universal aura.

Now, the Seers thought, the Balance was speaking to them directly. Surely great peace and tranquility would come from its revelations.

The Seers presented Isabella to the Ruling Council, and they decreed that the will of the Balance had to be followed. Isabella Bayne was allowed to do as she wished.

THE CHANGES

One of Isabella's greatest psychic powers was the ability to reach with her mind into the fabric of an animal and change it, making it more than it was before. The results, though unpredictable, were an endless source of amusement to Isabella. Her only dissatisfaction was that it did not work on higher life forms.

She told the Ruling Council she would make their pets fit for work in the fields, and they let her work her will, wondering at her powers. She bestowed knowledge and intelligence upon the beasts of Azvorica, and set them to work as laborers. In a scheme to industrialize Azvorica, she forced the beasts to build the first factories.

But the beasts had wills of their own. They rebelled against Isabella and years of slaughter began. The beasts killed humans not for any political reason, but simply because it was their nature. The changes Isabella had wrought in them could not change their primal essence.

THE WAR

Unaccustomed to fighting, the Azvorians were all but helpless against the marauding beasts. Isabella said her science would save them. With her knowledge of Earth weapons technology, she would manufacture arms at her new factories, and give the youth of Kaleido guns to battle the beasts.

Isabella's suggestion met with horrified resistance from the Seers. They had had enough of her changes. The Ruling Council rejected Isabella's proposal, and asked her to cease disrupting the Balance.

However, members of the dissident Valsanya, eager for a way gain power, disobeyed the Seers and volunteered to help Isabella. They became her soldiers, and with guns and rockets, they soon dominated the beasts.

The Valsanya saw no reason to hand their victory to the Designators. After defeating the monsters in a pitched battle, they overthrew the old ways, and choose Isabella as their new empress, a role she embraced with pride. The beasts were kept under check by the strength of the Valsanya.

The Ruling Council was at a loss. The Seers said it would be folly to go to war with the Valsanya. Already, the psychic essence of the legions who had died was unbalancing the universal aura. More carnage would simply disrupt the Balance further.

Badly outgunned and outclassed, those few Azvorians who resisted Isabella's troops were quickly crushed. Many Azvorians left the city of Kaleido and fled to the mountains. Realizing her labor force was shrinking, Isabella closed the city and relocated the stragglers in ghettos. Today the Azvorians in Kaleido exist as second-class citizens, afraid for their lives.

The Experiments

Firmly in control of Kaleido, Isabella, who never could master Azvorian, made English the official language of her empire. She mandated that her subjects could speak no other tongue.

No longer having to concede to the Designators, and with an ample source of test subjects, Isabella expanded her research into psi-powers.

Isabella knew her powers received energy from some source. The Azvorians believed it was from something called the universal aura, and that it was swollen with energy from the recent wars. She realized this untapped power source could make her firearms obsolete.

Through experiments on psychic Azvorians, Isabella discovered a method to mechanically exploit this unusual energy source. She created psychotronic devices that converted psychic energy into physical work, much as the mind of a psychic did. In fact, one of the key components of her psychotronic devices were the crystallized brain cells of a psychic.

Psychotronics provided a boundless energy source. Her research showed the devices were particularly adept at allowing a mind to control a machine. The psychotronic interface between flesh and steel opened a new field of cybernetics.

Isabella's Valsanya soldiers had always coveted psychic powers, and embraced the psychotronic implants and the mechanical enhancements they made possible. Isabella established a factory where she manufactured and installed cybernetic body modifications. The Cyberlab, where research was carried out on Azvorians, teemed with activity.

Eager to test her psychotronic weapons, Isabella sent troops against the Irorra nation to the South and Calagros to the North. Both countries submitted to her rule after being subjected to devastating weapons wielded by her monster troops.

As predicted by the Seers, Isabella grew stronger as more people died and added their essence to the universal aura. Fueled by death, her psychotronic weapons became ever more efficient. It is a phenomenon Isabella continues to investigate experimentally.

Progeny

The first humans to allow Isabella to enhance their bodies were the Valsanya. These young malcontents were bored by the society they lived in and eager to seize power from the ruling class.

When Isabella Bayne made English the official language of her empire, the Valsanya renamed themselves the Progeny. They call the elevated beasts they defeated the Spawn. All other humans they refer to as "worms."

Progeny have rejected the Balance. Instead of the old beliefs, they embrace Isabella's desire for technological advancement. They view cybernetic enhancements as a sign of prestige and power, a symbol of Isabella's largesse. Psi-helmets, which grant psychic powers to those who lack innate ability, are especially popular as a sign that the Progeny now possess everything the Designators used to keep to themselves. Progeny believe power is something that can be grafted to a limb, and morality is the ability to exert their will upon worms and Spawn.

It is punishable by death for a worm to wear cybernetic enhancements, although illegal "body shops" do exist. Few worms become Progeny, but it is possible. To become a Progeny, a worm must first pass a test of fealty to Isabella Bayne. The test requires a betrayal of the worm's friends and family--not just in words, but in a carefully designed act that will forever sever any ties the worm may have to the past. Upon passing the test, the new Progeny gains an initial cybernetic enhancement--and must be able to pay for its great expense. Progeny are encouraged to purchase as many additional enhancements as they can afford.

Psychic worms, the most reviled beings according to Progeny, are never allowed to become Progeny. They are the raw material for psychotronic devices, and they are treated as such.

Progeny hold all positions of power and respect in Kaleido. They serve as factory overseers and officers in the army.

Typical Progeny

Passable Alertness
Poor Charm
Good Cunning
Poor Fate
Good Willpower
Passable Knowledge
Great Mechanical
Good Agility
Passable Dexterity
Good Stamina
Good Strength
Wounds: L L M M H
Armored chest: H H

Weapons: Psychotronic rifle on left arm (Passable x 7), retractable spike on right hand (Passable x 4)

Spawn

The Spawn are the creatures Dr. Bayne raised from animals. They started as simple beasts, until she used her psychic powers to speed up the evolutionary process by hundreds of thousands of years. Within months, the beasts were becoming larger, more intelligent and distinctly human.

At first, the Spawn were uncontrolled and wreaked havoc on the human population of Kaleido.

But after being subdued by Isabella's Progeny, the Spawn were granted a place in society, one previously held by the human population. They understand that if they rampage again, the Progeny will destroy them.

In Kaleido, the Spawn have taken over the homes, factories and businesses of the Azvorians. The human worms have been pushed into small ghettos and work camps.

Isabella has taught the Spawn to behave like humans, or else suffer the lash of the Progeny. Only English is to be spoken; animal grunts and howls are forbidden, along with the Azvorian tongue. The Spawn do their best to emulate the humans they have usurped. They cram themselves into apartments too small for their bulk and undergo social rituals--such as drinking in bars--simply because they believe this is what intelligent creatures do.

The culture of the Spawn is very new, since only two generations have passed since their creation. Most mimic human culture, but in a twisted parody that retains elements of the Spawn's animal nature.

Typical Spawn

Poor Alertness
Inferior Charm
Passable Cunning
Passable Fate
Great Willpower
Poor Knowledge
Poor Mechanical
Passable Agility
Good Dexterity
Superior Stamina
Awesome Strength
Wounds:
L L M M H H C C

Weapons: Claws (Good x 3), bite (Passable x 4), psychotronic rifle (Good x 6), 3 pod rocket launcher (Good x 7)

Worms

A worm is any human who does not have cybernetic enhancements. They are treated with derision and contempt by Progeny and Spawn. They are completely unprotected by Bayne law, and are

subject to harassment, beatings and even murder at the whim of their tormentors.

Worms are forced to live in ghettos or labor camps. They cannot leave their ghettos except with a pass--most have work passes which allow them to labor in factories during the day. Worms are allowed to perform only the most menial chores. Those who do not toil in the factories fill low-level positions at restaurants and other service industries.

Humans wear poor clothing and have haunted looks in their eyes. They are generally thin and meek. The few that have psychic powers keep them secret for fear that their brains will be taken as raw material for a psychotronic weapon.

The most beautiful human women are taken to the palace to join Isabella's wardrobe. They serve as hosts for her mind. Believing that beauty can be inherited, Isabella breeds her hosts with the most handsome men in order to create beautiful daughters. She often sees to the breeding process herself.

Un-enhanced humans are considered second-class citizens by other inhabitants of Kaleido. They are subject to abuse, torture and psychic manipulations on a daily basis. According to Bayne law, Azvorians have no rights: they are not to use the Azvorian language, practice the Azvorian religion or use public transportation. Azvorians are limited to certain low-level jobs. They are taxed heavily and may be thrown into prison for any pretense.

Though some un-enhanced humans simply want to go about their lives with as little trouble as possible, others are quite sympathetic to the rebel cause. Those that are caught harboring rebels are immediately carted off to the dreaded Cyberlab.

At her Cyberlab, Isabella and her "scientists" experiment with new cybernetic equipment, using worms dragged from the street or their hovels. Her tests often result in mechanical limbs that don't work properly, or a tool--such as a drill--instead of a hand. Many of the so called enhancements are completely senseless, such as non-retractable claws or an unpowered weapon for an arm. Frequently, she'll sever a limb, try out a piece of experimental equipment, detach it for further development, and then release the hapless worm with a bandage over his stump.

Maimed humans are a common sight on the streets of Kaleido. These survivors of Isabella's

experiments have no choice but to try to struggle through life as best they can. They face ostracism from their families and the cruel laughter of Progeny. Even though they wear experimental cybernetic gear, they are not considered Progeny, and are often thought of as worse than worms. They live under constant fear, since it's not uncommon for Isabella to send her Spawn after a test subject to reclaim a piece of equipment.

The Azvorians are a simple people who believe that living in harmony with nature is the way to achieve inner peace. Isabella and her Spawn have disturbed the Balance. Some Azvorians view her as a sort of apocalyptic agent, while others see her as a punisher who has appeared because the Azvorians had sinned in some manner.

They have a strong attachment to the past, and in the privacy of their homes they may speak the forbidden Azvorian language. They teach their children their history and the way of the Balance. Though their religion is outlawed, many secretly visit the bombed-out shell which was once the great Temple of Balance. Here, the Seer Jabulani helps them to achieve equilibrium in a world that seems completely out of balance. Many have a small pair of scales in their home, a symbol of their faith.

Typical Human "Worm"

Passable Alertness
Passable Charm
Passable Cunning
Passable Fate
Passable Willpower
Passable Knowledge
Passable Mechanical
Passable Agility
Passable Dexterity
Passable Stamina
Passable Strength
Wounds: L L M M H
Weapons: Fist (Passable x 1)

Rebels

Some un-enhanced humans refuse to submit to Isabella. These rebels fight a constant guerilla war with Isabella and her troops. They sabotage her war efforts, undermine her teachings and work to overthrow her rule. The rebels are considered a

serious threat by Isabella, and they are hunted without mercy.

The rebels hope to one day assassinate Isabella and restore the Azvorian government. While they believe in the Balance, they realize bloodshed now will stop untold deaths in the future.

The rebels are led by Timmy, a victim of Isabella's early TransEgo Device experiments. Timmy was a child on Earth when Isabella snatched him from a park and sent him through the TransEgo Device. She thought he died in the experiment, but Timmy's mind was actually sent to Xenos.

Luckily, his mind ended up in the body of a young boy about his own age--other children before him had not been so fortunate. Though fearful of the strange change in their son, his foster parents raised him as their own. When he evidenced psychic powers, he received the careful training of Seers. Under their guidance, his talents grew in strength as his mind absorbed the teachings of the Balance.

When Timmy reached adulthood, Isabella's tyranny was in full reign. Timmy, outraged by her disregard for the Balance, led small bands of saboteurs into Kaleido to blow up her munition dumps. With each successful blow against Isabella's empire, more and more Azvorians joined the cause. Timmy taught the Azvorians that Isabella could be defeated if they all banded together. Today, the rebels are the biggest thorn in Isabella's side. She desperately wishes to kill Timmy, whose psychic powers are said to rival her own.

Only seven years old when he was stranded on Xenos, Timmy's beliefs are a combination of the Balance and the comic books and cowboy movies of the 1940s. He has taught these moral codes to his rebel followers who believe them unquestionably. Timmy has told the rebels that Isabella is an alien from a distant world, but few of them realize that Timmy himself is a native of that same world.

Typical Rebel

Good Alertness
Passable Charm
Good Cunning
Passable Fate
Good Willpower
Passable Knowledge
Poor Mechanical
Good Agility
Good Dexterity
Good Stamina

Good Strength
Wounds: L L M M H H
Reinforced Vest: M M
Weapons: Assault rifle (Good x 6, 30 shots),
haku blade (Good x 3)

Rejects

On occasion, the body of a Progeny rejects its cybernetic implants. The unfortunate might be left with a gaping wound instead of an infra-red eye or a stump instead of a hand-mace. These horrors are treated with cold contempt by their compatriots, and they are removed to a camp called Settlement, located outside Kaleido, where they are forced to work in a rendering plant.

The Progeny believe Rejects have betrayed Isabella by refusing her gifts of cyber enhancements. They are considered traitors for having rejected the chance to become Progeny. Isabella has done nothing to teach her people the truth about tissue's natural rejection of foreign objects.

Rejects can be seen scurrying around the city of Kaleido after dark. A few are Progeny who are trying to conceal the beginnings of the rejection process. Most are escapees from Settlement. They collect food from sympathetic family members, or steal it in order to survive. They always return to the compound before daylight, for Isabella's prime minister Krog has vowed to burn Settlement to the ground if anyone escapes.

The human rebels have long tried to develop an alliance with Settlement, but their overtures have been met with contempt. Even though the Rejects have been spurned by their own people, they still view themselves as superior to the humans.

Typical Reject

Good Alertness
Inferior Charm
Good Cunning
Inferior Fate
Poor Willpower
Passable Knowledge
Poor Mechanical
Poor Agility
Poor Dexterity
Poor Stamina

Poor Strength
Wounds: L L M M
Weapons: Club (Poor x 2)

Primary Races of the Spawn

Spawn come in an endless variety of shapes. Most are humanoid, with roughly human intelligence. They have sharp fangs and powerful builds. A few different kinds of Spawn are described here.

CYBOR

Cybors are hulking humanoids. Since they have no lips, their interlocking fangs are always bared in a grimace. The skin can range from dark brown to a light tan and is quite tough and rubbery.

Like most Spawn, Cybors shun clothing since their thick hides keep them sufficiently warm. They wear nothing more than an armored cod piece. Some exhibit a few strands of coarse hair along their heads, backs and arms. Many Cybors pierce their ears or neck wattles with rings, bone or decorative chains. Female Cybors are virtually indistinguishable from their male counterparts, except they are smaller in size.

Cybors were once the favored pets of the Azvorians, and were the first creatures enhanced by Isabella. More than any other Spawn, Cybors ape the actions of their former masters--they live in apartment complexes, visit the nearby tavern and shop at the market. But under stress, their bestial natures break forth, and they become ferocious fighters.

Cybors are the backbone of Isabella's vast army. None too bright, they are easily trained and eager to obey their superiors.

Cybors can be found in a variety of professions, the most common being soldier, guard or factory worker. Because of their low IQs, they are rarely in positions of authority, though they might take over a human business and try to run it as their own. Cybors who go into business generally choose family markets or taverns; some of them even keep on the former human owner as a consultant or slave

labor. Few manage to make a success out of their endeavors.

All Cybors strive to earn acceptance by their Progeny masters. They want to be viewed as intelligent, important members of the community. For this reason, they eagerly purchase cyber enhancements, join the army and behave as model citizens. Most Progeny view them as pathetic, and laugh at them behind their backs. Few would call a Cybor a friend or even a comrade. However, all Progeny realize that without the Cybors they would lose their powerful fighting force, so they tolerate their presence.

Cybors live in communal packs of five to fifteen. The males and females of the pack mate indiscriminately, and all offspring are considered siblings. Cybors are very proud of their family units, and loyal as well--an insult to one is an insult to all.

Loyal by nature, Cybors believe there is no greater honor than dying in battle. This philosophy has recently grown into a popular belief in reincarnation. Many Cybors eagerly accept the idea that to die for Isabella's cause means that they will be reborn as Progeny. Some Cybors claim to recognize dead family members now embodied in certain enhanced humans--at least two dozen Cybors claim they are close relatives to Prime Minister Krog. Though the Progeny vehemently deny the Cybor faith, Isabella encourages the philosophy.

Cybors are omnivorous, but are particularly fond of grush, a meaty paste made from insects and small beetles. They are also heavy drinkers, enjoying ales made by human workers. For entertainment, nothing will do but to pick on some poor human.

Ravi, Cybor Soldier

Good Alertness, Inferior Charm, Poor Cunning, Poor Fate, Good Willpower, Inferior Knowledge, Inferior Mechanical, Poor Agility, Poor Dexterity, Awesome Stamina, Superior Strength

Wounds: L L M M H H C C D

Weapons: Bite (Poor x 4), cybernetic arm (Poor x 4), shoulder-mounted mini-gun (Poor x 8, automatic)

Ravi lives in the Palace barracks along with several of his Cybor buddies. He is often sent out on routine patrols along the perimeter of Kaleido in an effort to root out rebel camps. Ravi enjoys wrestling and betting on ranoni fights. His family raises

ranoni for just this purpose, so Ravi is somewhat of an expert on these vicious cat-like creatures.

GAROU

Slightly larger than humans, the Garou have low, flat heads and eyes that bulge from their sockets like two hideous warts.

A Garou's main sense organs are large fleshy protuberances on either side of its head. Similar to miniature elephant ears, these appendages help the Garou hear and smell. Both senses are well developed. Its mouth and chin are approximately human-like, although its jaw tends to gape open in a disturbing manner, showing a double set of needle-like teeth. The Garou have pale brown flesh, which can be regenerated when wounded by dousing it with fresh human blood.

Garou pierce their ears with small chains and jewels; the chinking sound is supposed to attract Garou of the opposite sex. Both sexes wear cod pieces and many carry psychotronic weaponry and brutal implements of torture. Their long, flowing hair cascades from the crown of their heads.

Garou are humorless creatures who hate humans and torment them for pleasure. Many Garou join the elite forces of Isabella's army known as the Destroyers. The Destroyers guard Isabella from harm, and obey only her. They are responsible for the security of the palace, Cyberlab and Settlement.

The Garou have created a twisted culture based on sadism and domination. Those with superior powers and enhancements use them to bend others to their will. Underlings are routinely humiliated and mistreated in the belief that hatred will help them become stronger and more dominant. Power struggles between the Garou are constant and ongoing, sometimes resulting in death or madness. Garou young who do not learn to accept discipline with defiance are killed or left to die in the street.

Since domination is paramount to all Garou, any partnership, including marriage, is considered impossible. Relationships are brief, furious and impersonal. Offspring are raised in barracks by cold-hearted soldiers and psychic warriors; most Garou young never know their parents.

Manshik

Garou Overseer

Great Alertness
Inferior Charm
Superior Cunning
Good Fate
Superior Willpower
Passable Knowledge
Poor Mechanical
Awesome Agility
Great Dexterity
Good Stamina
Superior Strength
Wounds: L L M M H H

Weapons: 5 pod rocket launcher (Great x 7),
psychic disrupter (Good x 6)

Manshik works as an overseer in the breeding pit beneath Isabella's palace. Here, "worms" are forced to breed in captivity. The most beautiful girl children are raised to become body hosts for Isabella; unattractive children and many of the males are sent to slave factories or are instantly killed. Mothers may attempt to kill or disfigure their offspring before allowing them to be taken over by Isabella, and Manshik's job is to keep them from doing so, even if it means killing the mother.

GATOR

These humanoids have long powerful legs, short arms, and enormous jaws, reminiscent of an alligator. Their skulls are small, though they often wear helmets or head coverings that give the illusion of greater size. Gators are covered with sandy brown or green-gray scales. They have gills and are capable of spending up to one hour underneath water. They prefer warm, humid temperatures, and become sluggish when the weather turns chilly.

Gators live in enclosed compounds of three or more families. Unlike other Spawn, the Gators did not usurp the homes of humans; instead they razed them to the ground and used the ruins to build their own shelters. Their dwellings tend to be squat and dark, with a deep, underground chamber containing a sauna and sand pit, which serves as a common room.

Gators were enhanced from a species of giant sand lizard. They continue to follow their animal nature by laying 2-6 eggs in damp sand buried in the basement chambers of their homes. The eggs hatch after a few months, and the shells are crushed

into a powder and fed to the young. Born blind, the youth gain their eyesight after a few weeks, and then grow at a phenomenal rate. Weak offspring are often found dead in the nest, killed by their more aggressive siblings.

Absolute devotion to Isabella has earned the Gators high status in Spawn society. They worship her as their creator. Many Gator homes have a small room containing a statuette of a many-headed woman that represents Isabella Bayne. "The Cult of Isabella" is followed by most Gators, and they speak her name with reverence. Many feel that Isabella watches over them, and that they can have a personal relationship with her through prayer.

Although Gators obey Isabella without question, they have their own social hierarchy as well. The men are mostly soldiers and devoted civil servants to Isabella's government. Females care for the brood. Unmated females may become merchants. Since buying and selling goods is considered a low "human" profession, females who choose this life-style often remain unmated. Merchants tend to be large females who scorn intellectual pursuits and enjoy gathering profits above gathering knowledge. Children born of Merchant mothers will paint a pattern on their scales that identifies their class. Those children that later become soldiers are mocked as "shopkeepers," but they tend to be the most ferocious fighters, perhaps because they must prove themselves more than others.

Most males seek to become soldiers since it allows them to serve both Isabella and their own blood-thirsty nature. Others become overseers in the factories. Several Gators have been trained as medical personnel and work in the Cyberlab. A few have been named Designators by Isabella. This title, formerly held by ruling class Azvorians, allows the Gator to act as judges. Their sense of justice is swift and horrible: those found guilty of disobeying Bayne law may be de-limbed and sent to the Settlement, cannibalized, or tortured in the Cyberlab. Everyone trembles before a Gator Designator.

Gators have a sense of superiority over most other Spawn, but they are particularly annoyed with the Vermis, who mock their belief in Isabella as a divine entity.

Onopeido

Gator Soldier

Passable Alertness
 Inferior Charm
 Poor Cunning
 Passable Fate
 Awesome Willpower
 Good Knowledge
 Passable Mechanical
 Superior Agility
 Great Dexterity
 Inhuman Stamina
 Superior Strength
 Wounds: (L) (M) H H C C D D

Weapons: Grenade launcher, wide field flamer
 (Passable x 7, area affect)

Onopeido is a military leader with a unit of Cybor soldiers at his disposal.

HARVESTER

These squat humanoids have long arms and barrel chests. Harvesters have a foot-long snout, which is very similar to that of an elephant. Their hands have two stubby fingers and a large thumb. Harvesters are dusty gray or brown in color, with a slight mottling around the eyes. Their eyesight is poor, but their sense of smell is good. Harvesters have little, if any hair. Their hide is tough and is capable of withstanding intense heat and cold. They are vegetarians, eating only grains and vegetables.

Harvesters rarely carry heavy arms, though they may defend themselves with a sickle, whip or farming implement.

Once simple beasts of burden, Harvesters never developed the viciousness of other Spawn. Instead, they continue to work in the fields, tending crops and harvesting grains. Other monsters look upon them with disdain, but the Harvesters are left unharmed since their services are needed by all. Occasionally, a Harvester will be forced into service by Isabella's soldiers as a sniffer, or tracker. Their sense of smell allows them to track any creature if a scent is picked up within a few hours.

Though a few Harvesters work in Kaleido as shopkeepers or food brokers, most of them dwell in the countryside surrounding the city. They live in small homesteads made of mud and wattle, farming the rich soil around their homes. They sometimes use dried reeds and pulped roots to create household goods such as baskets or paper. Some of these goods are traded for tools and weapons in the

large cities. They tend to tolerate humans better than most monsters, and some are sympathetic to the rebel cause.

In fact, Harvesters are such outsiders that few of them wear cybernetic enhancements, and view those that do with suspicion.

Harvesters mate when the male has reached middle age and the female is capable of procreating. They mate for life and generally have large families—five or more offspring are not uncommon. The Harvester community is ruled by majority vote; the eldest male in each family votes according to the wishes of his family. All important decisions, including who can mate with whom and when, is decided upon by vote.

Although the land Harvesters work on is “state-owned” they have a strong sense of pride about their farms and crops. They will protect their farms with a vengeance, if necessary.

Harvesters are trusted to work unsupervised, though they are generally limited to these professions: farmer, harvester, sharecropper, and tracker. On occasion, Cybor patrols will pass through Harvester villages to make sure they are keeping up with their work quota and not harboring any human fugitives.

Blugh

Harvester Farmer
 Passable Alertness
 Poor Charm
 Inferior Cunning
 Poor Fate
 Good Willpower
 Inferior Knowledge
 Inferior Mechanical
 Inferior Agility
 Passable Dexterity
 Amazing Stamina
 Awesome Strength
 Wounds:

(L) M M H H C C D D

Weapons: Claws (Inferior x 4), Pitchfork (Inferior x 5)

Blugh lives in a village west of Kaleido. As a farmer, he specializes in Lenthien, a peppery spice used in popular dishes. He and his mate are busy raising a family of seven. Blugh loves farming and takes pride in his farm. He has not forgotten the time when Isabella sent Cybor troops marching across his crops in a futile exercise to capture

fleeing rebels. Blugh lost his harvest that year, and his complaints to the Designators went unanswered. He wishes the rebels go away so he could grow his crops in peace.

MORPH

Morphs are roughly biped in shape. Their jelly-like bodies constantly shift and roil underneath their flesh and their heads rest upon an elongated stalk. Morphs have no eyes, but their superior hearing allow them to maneuver easily in the world. Their faces are covered in fleshy tendrils, each performing a certain function: some act as ears, others are mouth-like protrusions, others can even sense shapes and distances. These tendrils are extremely sensitive to changes in wind and air pressure, and they can detect movement even in complete darkness.

Morphs have the power to twist and shape their bodies to appear as any other creature of roughly human size. They can maintain this shape for up to three full days before their stamina wears out. As a human, a Morph generally appears pale and thin, which isn't so unusual for un-enhanced worms. Their hair is long and limp, and they speak in a slow, deliberate manner. Their hands are stiff and they have difficulty handling items with any dexterity. Otherwise, they are indistinguishable from a true human.

Isabella uses the superior spying powers of the Morphs to help police her people, particularly the armed forces. Some Morphs are assassins, sent to kill rebels or dissenting monsters. These Morphs disguise themselves as a friend, and then revert to their true shape when they attack. They kill their prey by enveloping it in their gelatinous bodies. The Morph then secretes a powerful corrosive, causing the victim's flesh to break down into its chemical elements. These are then slurped up via a mouth tendril, leaving no evidence of their crime. Morphs are also capable of breaking down metal, plastic and other compounds with their natural acid.

When not infiltrating human and Spawn communities, Morphs dwell in an enclosed compound near the Cyberlab. Known as the Swamp by un-enhanced humans, it is often a target of sabotage by rebels who bitterly resent the spies who have invaded their ranks and killed their leaders. However, the Swamp remains impregnable.

Inside are several small domes grown from a crystalline compound. Each dome can be entered from an underground passageway which lead into a dark, labyrinthine inner chamber. In the center of the dome is a hollow orb formed from a Morph's stomach mucus. The outer mucus hardens into a thick, shell-like crust, leaving the inside with the consistency of jelly. Here the Morph rests. This slimy chamber protects the creature from harm and allows it to completely assimilate any foreign matter it has absorbed, including bone, metal or hair.

There are few Morphs in Xenos, and Isabella keeps their exact numbers a closely guarded secret. Their breeding process is long and dangerous. Once a Morph has mated with another (all Morphs are hermaphroditic), the impregnated Morph retreats into a mucus orb for several months. At this time the Morph is extremely vulnerable to changes in temperature. If the thick mucus that protects the body during gestation dries out, or a foreign body is introduced, the Morph will probably die.

Morphs are unharmed by fire and they can absorb and digest bullets that pierce their bodies. If a tendril is cut off, a Morph will grow a new one within a matter of days. One thing which has been found effective against Morphs is the use of psychotronic, corrosive and biological weapons. Their immunity to disease is low, and a sick Morph will often retreat to his mucus orb.

Thowen, Morph Assassin

Superior Alertness
Passable Charm
Awesome Cunning
Great Fate
Awesome Willpower
Good Knowledge
Good Mechanical
Good Agility
Passable Dexterity
Superior Stamina
Good Strength
Wounds: L L M M H H C
Weapons: SMG (Passable x 6, 30 shots)

A female Morph, Thowen has been accepted into a small rebel group where she is known as Treena. She has managed to maintain this deception for several months now, changing into her true form in secret. Her goal is to infiltrate the camp of Timmy, the rebel leader, and kill him.

SQUID

Squids have four tentacles instead of arms. These appendages are extremely facile. They also have no neck; instead, their head seems meld into the shoulder area. A small cluster of eyes is located in the center of their foreheads, and they have small, tube-like mouths. Squids have naturally oily skin, giving them a smooth, slick appearance. They are highly psychic, and can converse quite readily telepathically. Their psychic abilities tend towards telepathy and ESP (they normally do not have offensive powers). The males have pale bluish skin, while the females tend towards blue-gray. Squids find bright light and heat irritating and even dangerous, since it draws out their natural emollients. An unprotected Squid will die in a few hours.

In the comfort of their own homes, the Squids do not wear clothing, but when they associate with others they swathe themselves in light, long veils in an effort to appear more pleasing to the eye. These veils quickly absorb the natural oils of their bodies, but are treated with an herbal solution which keeps the material dry and flowing.

Squids often tattoo their flesh with striking patterns. These designs indicate their level of psychic ability, and are a sign of honor and devotion.

Squids cannot be inhabited by a jump-team. A psychic filter allows them to reject any intruders into their minds. Anyone attempting to inhabit a Squid will suffer a severe emotional blast which has been known to cause insanity.

The Squid's superior psychic powers are frightening to some creatures, while their appearance is considered disturbing to others. Though gentle and intelligent creatures, these two prejudices keep them from obtaining higher social status in Isabella's government.

Squids live in a matriarchal society. Their leader is a female, called the Psycress, who has amazing psychic abilities. Once every 24 days, she drains some of her own powers and distributes them among her people who have followed the teachings of the Psyclabra--The Psychic Code. This tome was written by one of the first Squids evolved by Isabella, a female named Tolerandas who studied the nature of psychic abilities from human Seers. She came to believe that psychic powers were not

just a gift for the chosen few, as the humans taught, but an ability that was available to anyone who wanted to dedicate their life to its study.

It is said that Tolerandas helped train and focus the psychic powers of Timmy, the leader of the rebel forces. Tolerandas disappeared about 20 years ago, and it is whispered that Isabella killed her.

The Squids form small communities known as Havens along well-travelled routes. Havens are run by lesser Psycresses, though both males and females may live inside the compounds. Havens have up to two dozen Squids living in the dwelling. They lead simple lives and spend their time meditating in an effort to increase their psychic abilities. Few have cybernetic enhancements.

Those Squids who do not live in Havens form families in which the eldest female makes all the day-to-day decisions. Lineage is traced from mother to daughter. Their homes are underground caves with large pools of oil and water in each chamber. Squids spend approximately half their waking hours and all their nights soaking in these pools. Females give birth while sitting in them, allowing the newborn to slowly bob to the surface on its own.

In Kaleido, Squids act as healers and teachers. Many work in the Cyberlab, tending to the injured subjects of Isabella's experiments. Of all the Spawn, they are the most compassionate.

Isabella is most disappointed in the Squids. She only tolerates them because they are the only Spawn with psychic powers--and therefore worthy of study. She has experimented with using their brain tissue in her psychotronic devices, but so far the strange matter has not worked as well as human cells. The work on Squids is done in secret, to avoid conflict with the Psycress.

Beyond helping the injured or sick, the Squids remain apart from Kaleido society. They are not interested in Isabella and her plans, nor do they wish to support the rebels in their efforts. They simply wish to study the Psychic Code and discover its secrets.

Shaboneet, Squid Medic

Passable Alertness, Passable Charm, Poor Cunning, Great Fate, Passable Willpower, Superior Knowledge, Poor Mechanical, Good Agility, Good Dexterity, Superior Stamina, Superior Strength
Wounds: L L M M H H C

Weapons: Tentacles (Good x 2)

Shaboneet volunteered to assist in installing cyberware on Progeny. Using her healing skills, she prevents infection and eases the pain of those undergoing the procedure. Though she is forbidden to do so, Shaboneet tries to psychically reach out and comfort the humans who are experimented on in the Cyberlab without benefit of anesthetic. She hopes to retire into a Haven someday and study the mysteries of the Psyclabra.

VERM

A prominent ridge along its spinal cord gives a Verm a distinctive appearance. The ridge comes up over its head and comes to a point over a small, barely discernible nose. It's eyes are large and have no pupils, and it's purple tongue is long and forked. The skin is extremely sallow. Vermis have webbing between their fingers and toes. They have no hair and dress in bright clothing. They also enjoy jewelry, especially heavy necklaces and bracelets. Many are cybernetically enhanced.

Vermis are mediators and leaders in the Spawn community, respected for their wisdom. All Verm take pride in their superior intelligence, which is actually on par with humans.

More than any other Spawn, the Verm see all creatures as part of one vast community. This society, they say, should be like a machine with interlocking parts, each doing its share of the work. In actuality, Vermis believe in a strict caste system, with themselves near the top of the heap.

Vermis revere justice above all else, but are notoriously prejudiced against humans, both enhanced and the un-enhanced. Several secretly believe that Isabella is simply a figurehead and the true leader of Kaleido is her cybernetically enhanced Prime Minister Krog. They are suspicious of Krog and believe that he rules only to serve his own purpose, and not for the good of all creatures.

Some Vermis would like to see all humans eradicated from the world, leaving the Spawn to inherit--with the intelligent Vermis as leaders, of course. These Vermis refer to themselves as members of the "Unity" and identify each other with the passwords, "More than Equal." A few of these radicals have made tentative contact with the rebels in an effort to help them overthrow Isabella's rule. Afterwards, the Unity would purge Kaleido of all

humans and choose their own leader. Isabella has declared Unity illegal, and all its members are sentenced to death by mental and physical torture at the hands of her Garou forces.

Vermis are extremely adept at technical problems, and are employed as technicians. Their facility with numbers, methodical minds and precise memories make them excellent accountants and clerks. In Isabella's military, they are trained in weapons technology. Several of them are loyal followers of Isabella, and can be found in her palace or Cyberlab.

Vermis have an uneasy relationship with the Gators, who are threatened not only by the Vermis' technical knowledge but their refusal to accept Isabella as a goddess. The Vermis regard the Gators as bores and blood-thirsty tyrants, while the Gators quietly fume at their disrespect and vow to take revenge on these non-believers some day. Isabella recognizes this conflict and plays upon it frequently.

Vermis were raised from an bright creature about the size of a large rodent. In this stage of evolution, they were occasionally kept as pets by the Azvorians, but more often they were viewed as clever pests who managed to circumvent traps and get into well-stocked larders. To this day, Vermis have a well-developed danger sense.

Vermis have created an intricate social ladder within their own race. The leaders are those that have proven their intellectual prowess by inventing new weapons or labor-saving devices. They are known as the Creators, and may only mate with those of their own rank. This upper echelon then designates the second rank by choosing certain Vermis to become their retainers, or Assistants. Those in the Assistant rank are arbitrarily paired with a mate and are expected to dedicate their lives, and the lives of their children, to the Creator who brought them together.

Below the Assistants are the Tinkers. These are Vermis who have limited abilities, and generally find themselves working on dreary projects such as waste management or garbage control. Tinkers may wed into the Assistant rank if a Creator deems them worthy. Some Tinkers spend their lives trying to create a new invention with which to impress a Creator, and thus raise their status.

Below Tinker is the Labor rank. These Vermis provide the labor to build items that are too advanced for other Spawn to work on, but not challenging enough for higher rank Vermis. Since

Laborers do not work with their own creations, they are pitied, since every Vermis feels that the power to create from the inspiration of one's mind is the ultimate achievement.

Vermis believe in educating their children, and they send them to schools that teach mathematics, science and similar skills. Once they have reached maturity, the youth are tested for their intellectual ranking. They are then apprenticed to a certain rank, depending on their ability. After one year, they are tested again. If a Vermis who had been apprenticed to the Tinker rank shows vast improvement, he is again apprenticed, but this time to the Assistant rank.

Though Vermis primarily enjoy creating things, they also partake in intellectual pursuits such as debate, philosophy and science. A favorite pastime is the creation of a small device with no apparent energy source. Without touching it, others try to figure out how the device operates.

Penya

Verm Technician
 Great Alertness
 Passable Charm
 Superior Cunning
 Good Fate
 Good Willpower
 Great Knowledge
 Great Mechanical
 Good Agility
 Superior Dexterity
 Poor Stamina
 Passable Strength
 Wounds: L L M M

Weapons: Psychotronic wrist beam (Superior x 5), retractable claws (Good x 4)

Penya is a young female who recently ascended to the Assistant rank. Chosen by Creator Yallsetch to help develop new cyberware for Isabella's elite forces, Penya is currently working in the Cyberlab. Though she finds the screams of fear and pain of her human subjects disquieting, she is more distressed by the fact that a mate will soon be chosen for her. Who will Creator Yallsetch select?

Fauna

Xenos is filled with alien creatures. Much of the natural fauna has been made stranger still by Isabella's cybernetic enhancements and psychic mutations. Here are some of the most common creatures found in Kaleido.

GURAPI

Nickname: Attack turtle

Poor Alertness, Passable Fate, Poor Willpower, Poor Agility, Unbelievable Stamina, Unbelievable Strength

Wounds: (L) (M) (H) C C D D

Shell: D D D D

Weapons: A gurapi strikes with its spiked tail, doing (Passable x 5) damage. On the same turn, it can bite for (Poor x 4) damage and strike with its front claws for (Passable x 6) damage.

Appearance: This horse-sized creature has a heavy spiked shell and tail, and a narrow snout with many needle-like teeth. It has two horns on its head and large claws on all four feet. A gurapi's shell is a bright crimson color, while the rest of its flesh is dark brown. Many have weapons mounted on them.

Personality: Stupid and obedient.

Motivation: To follow the directions of its driver.

Notes: Gurapi are raised as steeds and are used for brief forays when other transportation is not available. A few spikes are removed from the gurapi's shell to clear a space for a riding harness. If it survives the operation, it will be trained to not only carry a soldier, but to fight in battle.

It is very difficult to harm a gurapi due to its protective shell, which partially covers its head and tail. However, if the tender flesh of its neck or underbelly is pierced, the gurapi is almost certainly doomed. Gurapi hunt and eat small creatures for sustenance.

ONZA

Nickname: Blood-bug

Superior Alertness, Passable Fate, Good Willpower, Superior Agility, Inferior Stamina, Good Strength

Wound: L L M

Weapons: An onza can leap up to ten feet and attaches itself to its prey with its claws. Its fangs do (Good x 1) damage. A victim who is hurt by the fangs will take a light wound each turn thereafter as the onza drains blood. Removing the onza takes a Great Strength roll. As it drains blood, an onza's loose folds of skin will bloat to double its normal size in ten turns. A completely satiated onza will flop over on its back and lie in a stupor for 24 hours.

Appearance: Onzas are dog-sized creatures with an uncanny sense of smell and a terrible blood lust. Reminiscent of large tarantulas, they have six legs, downy hair and tubed fangs.

Personality: Tenacious, bestial.

Motivation: Used by Isabella's troops as trackers, once an onza smells blood, it will track the source unerringly, until it falls upon its prey.

Notes: Onzas develop in three stages: larvae, nymph and adult. Larvae are harmless, and look like large semi-deflated gray beach balls. The nymphs have rudimentary fangs that can hunt, though they are slow-moving and virtually blind. Adult onzas can be de-fanged; it is said that Isabella keeps a few as pets.

Originally the size of squirrels, onzas were once found in humid forests living in trees. Though carnivorous, they were harmless to humans if avoided. Today, mutated onzas live in the Cyberlab kennels and are treated as guard dogs. Onzas were psychically altered by Isabella to increase their blood lust, making them effective at tracking down rebels wounded in skirmishes around Kaleido.

RANON

Nickname: Brat (a combination of bald, cat and rat)

Good Alertness, Passable Fate, Poor Willpower, Great Agility, Feeble Stamina, Feeble Strength

Wounds: L L

Weapons: A ranon strangles its prey with its tentacles, doing (Good x 2) damage. They can also bite for (Poor x 2) damage.

Appearance: Ranoni resemble bald house cats, though they are slightly larger, have pronounced fangs and tentacles instead of legs. They sprawl on

the ground, propelling themselves with an eerie undulation.

Personality: Sneaky.

Motivation: These verminous creatures are the equivalent of earthly rats.

Notes: Ranoni are capable of squeezing into the smallest cracks and often make their homes in city sewers. Nocturnal, they like to come out to hunt small animals. Ranoni are capable of slithering up walls, and will do so if threatened. If cornered, a ranoni will attack with its fangs or try to strangle its captor with its strong tentacles. A ranoni will slither away rather than fight a large opponent. Garou are particularly plagued by ranoni, who infiltrate their nests and kill the unborn children.

Ranoni live in large nests and breed quickly. Though some people are forced by starvation to eat them, most abhor them for the disease-ridden creatures that they are. Some Spawn enjoy the sport of ranoni baiting--they pit ranoni against each other, betting on which animal will kill the other.

Kaleido

HISTORY

Kaleido is the largest city under Isabella's control. Formerly the capitol of the Azvorian Empire, Kaleido was a trade city and meeting place for intellectuals. Several libraries, universities and temples used to be here, but most were destroyed in the great monster uprising.

Over a thousand years ago, in a more barbaric past, Kaleido was a walled city. Seven gates allowed passage in and out of Kaleido, thus accounting for its ancient name, "City of Seven Roads." Most of the wall has been toppled, but in some places it still stands strong, most notably in the east behind the Palace and in the northwest corner.

TECHNOLOGY

Onto the old architecture of Kaleido, Isabella has grafted the necessities of an industrial society. The "look" has been described as "tech noir" by jump-teams.

Isabella brought to Xenos the science of Earth 1944. Since then, science has developed slowly. Isabella, a military scientist through and through, has focused her considerable skills on the perfection of cybernetics and psychotronic weapons. The other inhabitants of Kaleido have not contributed much to the advancement of science. The Spawn, with perhaps the exception of the Verm, lack the aptitude for creative works. Oppressed humans have neither the training nor the financing for scientific research.

Progeny are the only people working to advance the cause of science, and have certainly mastered the Earth technology Isabella brought with her. But Progeny are relatively few, and their attention to matters of genocide have dulled their inquiry into the sciences. Xenos has a very static history; the principles of change and innovation are still new to the Progeny. For this reason, science has advanced little beyond the technology of Earth 1944.

Kaleido is still undergoing an Industrial Revolution. Factories billow smoke, producing machines of the kind that might be found on Earth in the 1940s. The city is wired for electricity, and has a telephone system based on mechanical relays. Outside the city, an airfield harbors propeller driven aircraft. Radios and gasoline powered vehicles exist, though they are owned only by wealthy Progeny.

Isabella left Earth in 1944, four years before the invention of the transistor. Missing from Xenos are computers and microchips, and other developments that happened after Isabella left Earth. The most advanced computer Isabella knows about is ENIAC, which was still being developed in 1944. Building from what she knew of ENIAC was too much a challenge for even Isabella.

In Kaleido, there are no lasers or digital technology, and while Isabella understands television, she has seen no reason to introduce it as a form of entertainment--televisions are reserved for important government communications.

What Kaleido does have are advanced psychotronic weapons, and mean-spirited Spawn who aren't afraid to use them.

Isabella's psychotronic research has, in many ways, replaced the need for transistors. A psychotronic interface can operate any complex device. Its compactness rivals that made possible by Earth's transistor technology, and psychotronic

interfaces are especially adept at converting mental impulses to electrical signals that can be used to control a mechanical device. As an added advantage, psychotronic devices pull power from the psychotronic energy of all living creatures, and are self-recharging.

All this contributes to Kaleido's tech-noir feel. It's a gritty place, where life is as cheap as a submachine gun. Telephones have wires and pollution is a welcome sign of industrial development. Even Progeny clothing styles, inspired by Isabella's preferences, tend toward the garb of the 1940s--though with obvious native influences.

XENOS GEAR

Many of the items available on Earth in 1944 exist in Kaleido, but are limited by the needs of the city's inhabitants. A few movies are shown in seedy theaters, but they are either trash exploitation or state produced propaganda. Films have never quite caught on with the sedate Xenites.

Where Xenos excels is in weapons technology. The rules for creating firearms are the same as those for making Earth guns. On Xenos, players will find weapons that fit all the weapon skills. Rocket launchers are especially popular with Spawn, and many wear launchers with multiple missile pods.

Energy weapons on Xenos are radically different and much more common than those on Earth. Instead of lasers and plasma guns, energy weapons on Xenos are all psychotronically powered. They unleash psychotronic energy in a devastating burst. The main advantage of psychotronic devices are that they never need to be reloaded. However, they are all semi-automatic. Many weapons, psychotronic or otherwise, are directly implanted into the user's body.

CYBERNETICS

When Isabella left Earth, cybernetics was still a theory. The science of cybernetics was developed during World War II to overcome problems with the still-experimental electronic brains and automatic-control bombsights.

In 1944, cybernetics meant the study of control mechanisms in machines, organizations and living

creatures. It is the application of the organic mind controlling implanted mechanical devices that fascinated Isabella. And with her psychotronic interfaces, she had the perfect method to fuse the two.

Isabella produced assorted enhancements to improve the combat abilities of her soldiers. Lacking computer technology, she has relied on psychic interfaces created from the crystallized brain cells of psychic humans. Cybernetic implants are controlled by direct psychic link, using a psychotronic coupler.

A psychotronic device is anything that operates off of psychotronic energy. Most have specific functions, such as a psychotronic pistol or drill. These items do not have a cost to use, and never need to be recharged.

Some advanced psychotronic devices grant specific psychic powers. Any device that bestows a psi-power upon its user also has a number of psi-points per day which can be used to activate its powers. Once the psi-points are used up, additional power costs are subtracted from the user's attributes.

Cyberlab scientists have implanted virtually every conceivable tool into human subjects, from energy cannons to power drills. The most popular enhancements are listed below. But don't feel limited by this list. Let your imagination run rampant!

Any weapon can be implanted.

A psychotronic eye can enhance Alertness, and provide night vision or infra-red capabilities. Advanced units can grant ESP powers such as Remote Viewing.

A psychotronic ear provides improved Alertness, sonar, radio reception and transmitting, or possibly even radar.

A psychotronic leg can improve Agility. Booster jets can allow an enhanced creature to leap up to (Jump) x 10 feet. Secret compartments and hidden weapon holsters are also popular.

A psychotronic arm can improve Dexterity, Strength or both. A "grapple-hand" can be launched up to 100 feet to latch onto a protrusion; a motor within the arm retracts the 100 foot long cable to pull the user to the hand. Mechanical claws, sometimes retractable but usually not, are a common enhancement.

Psi-helmet

The most powerful psychotronic device is the psi-helmet. It grants its user a psychic talent as well as d6 of the associated psychic powers. To activate a psi-power, the user rolls on the attribute listed as the power's starting value.

Psychotronic Pistol

Accuracy + Damage = 10

Maximum Damage = 7

Weight = Damage/3

Shots = Unlimited

Range = Pistol

Skill = Energy Pistol

Conceal = Depends upon the size of the pistol. If it does x1 to x3 damage, it can be hidden in a pocket. If it has a damage of x4 to x6, it can be concealed under a jacket. If its damage is x7 or greater, it can only be hidden under a coat.

Psychotronic Rifle

Accuracy + Damage = 12

Maximum Damage = 8

Weight = Damage + 2

Shots = Unlimited

Range = Rifle

Skill = Energy Rifle

Cannot be concealed.

Psychotronic Cannon

Psychotronic cannons inflict their damage on everyone within brawling range of their target.

Attack + Damage = 14

Maximum Damage = 9

Weight = Damage x 2

Shots = Unlimited

Range = Sniper

Skill = Energy Cannon

Cannot be concealed.

NATIVE GEAR

In their war on Isabella, some rebels have adopted weapons from Azvoria's past.

Egg Grenade

A primitive weapon, the Egg Grenade is exactly what it sounds like: a large, 4" diameter insect egg

that contains a dormant insect. When the shell is broken, the ravenous insect pops out and begins to feed. Some egg grenades have a single large insect, while others have hundreds of smaller ones. Egg grenades do (Amazing - Stamina) x 2 damage to anyone they hit.

Digestive Sack

During the war with the beasts, some Azvorians learned to remove a digestive sac from a giant fly-like creature. The organ contains a highly corrosive fluid that digests flesh and other organic material on contact. They do (Great - Defense) x 10 damage to living creatures within brawling range of their point of impact.

BAYNE'S LAW

Isabella, of course, is the highest authority in Kaleido. Her appointed court of Designators can enforce her laws upon anyone other than Bayne or another Designator. If accused of a crime, Progeny are granted the right to appear before a court of Designators.

Spawn have fewer rights, and any Progeny can pass judgement upon a Spawn, though the killing of a Spawn is frowned upon.

Humans, slaves and Rejects have no rights. They may be abused and tormented freely by Isabella's Brood of Spawn and Progeny.

Minor infractions are punishable by a fine or temporary incarceration. Serious infractions are punished by the stripping of all cybernetic enhancements. A stripped Progeny loses his status and become a worm. Demoted Spawn become menial laborers. Repeat offenders and major criminals are executed.

Here are a few of the most important of Bayne's Laws. They apply only to Isabella's Brood. Humans can be killed for any reason.

Only English is to be spoken, no animal grunts or native speech is allowed. Violators will have their tongues seared from their mouths with acid.

A head-tax of 100 baynes is collected from every inhabitant once a month. Those who cannot pay the tax must work in the Slave Enclave for one month.

Aiding and abetting rebels is expressly forbidden. Any Progeny or Spawn found guilty of this crime will have all cybernetic enhancements

stripped from their flesh, and the guilty party will be turned over to the Barracks for target practice.

Aiding and abetting Rejects is forbidden. Any of the Brood found guilty of this crime must pay a fine of 10,000 baynes. If the Reject is captured, their benefactor will be forced to watch as they are tortured to death.

Black Marketeering is frowned upon. Anyone caught trading in illegal items or services must pay a fine of 5,000 baynes and will have their illegal goods confiscated.

Killing a slave unnecessarily is punishable by a fine of 10,000 baynes to be paid to the state.

All slaves are state-owned. Slaves are tattooed with a large "S" on top of the right hand, and a serial number for inventory purposes. Obscuring the brand is punishable by torture.

A reward of 1,000 baynes is offered to any Progeny or Spawn who returns an escaped slave to the Slave Enclave. Harboring a slave is punishable by torture.

THE "PERIL FROM EARTH"

After her first encounter with a Terran jump-team, Isabella alerted her Brood to the presence of these invaders. The host of a jump-team can be killed, if necessary, although capture is preferable. Captured jump-teams, whether their host is alive or dead, are taken to special cells at the prison. The cells have no windows, and their doors are sealed tight. The host body is placed into an energy field which blocks the passage of any psychic powers, and prevents the team from returning to Earth.

Suspicious behavior that may indicate possession by a jump-team includes talking to one's self and the use of psi-powers by non-psychic Spawn.

The Road to Conquest

Xenos is as large as Earth, with a variety of lands yet to be discovered. Many regions are fierce battle zones, where Isabella's legions are expanding the boundaries of her domain. Still, there are pockets of civilization where the name of Isabella Bayne is unknown, and life is as it was before her arrival.

Some Progeny act as governors of conquered cities. They rule with iron fists, subjecting captives to horrors never dreamed off.

The conquest of Xenos is driven primarily Prime Minister Krog, who enjoys the wealth provided by a growing empire. Isabella, while she appreciates the resources of her empire, has interests beyond Xenos. She intends to use the labor base of Xenos to launch her invasion of Earth.

Using her understanding of psychotronic energy, Isabella has constructed an improved TransEgo Device capable of transmitting matter to Earth. With it, she has sent Spawn armed with psychotronic devices to test Earth's defenses. The results have been encouraging. Her Spawn remain on Earth for as long as they stay alive; upon death, their bodies and all their equipment return to Xenos. Isabella concludes the psychic aura of the Spawn maintains its cohesion on Earth, and when the psychic energy is released, the body can no longer sustain the transference. It is automatically recalled.

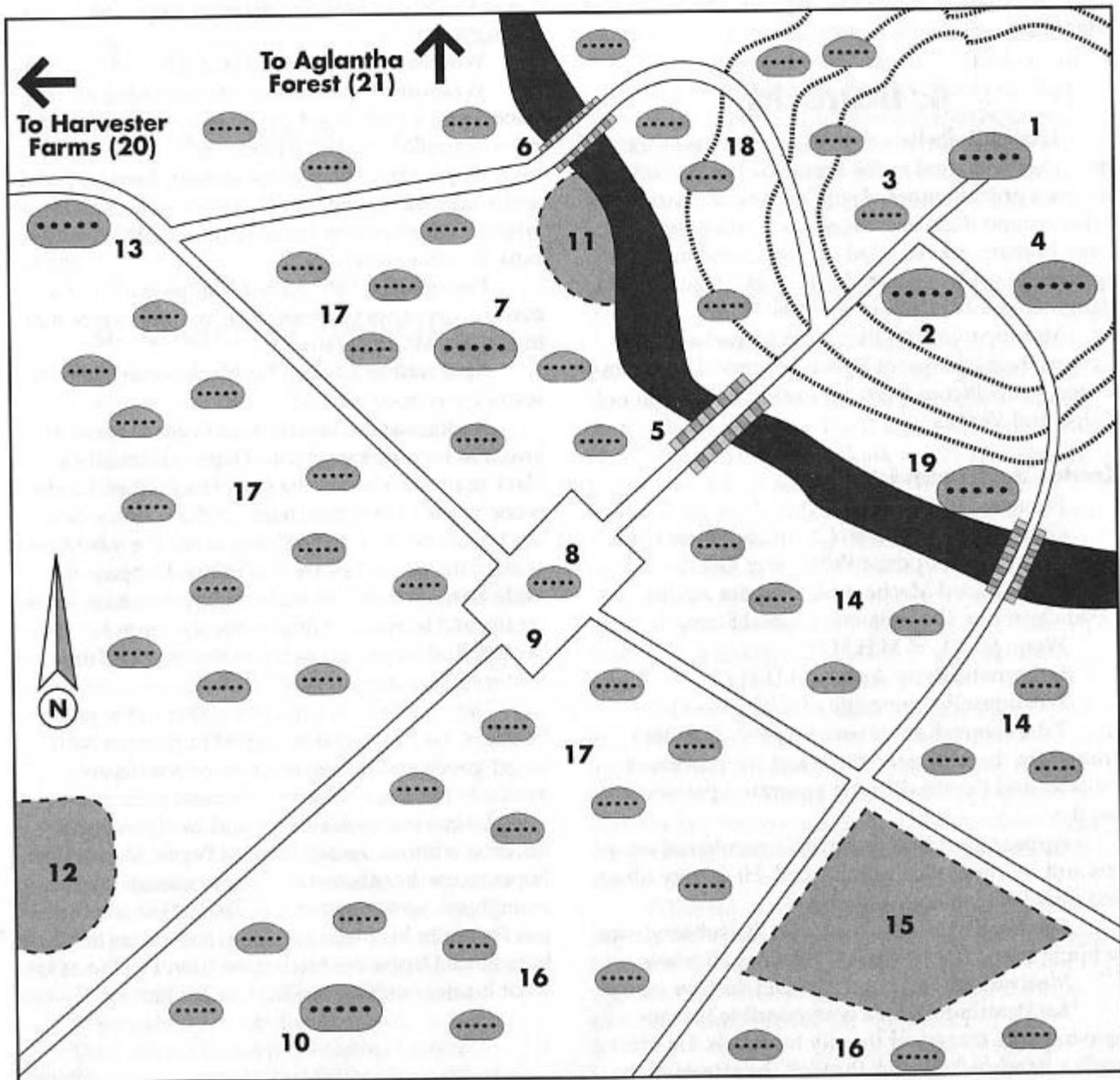
The TransAnima Device, as Isabella has named it, does not work on humans--it simply kills them. However, she is working on a standard TransEgo Device which will enable her to send her mind to Earth with her psychic powers intact.

In her palace, Isabella dreams of her triumphant return to her home world, and the red faces in the Pentagon when they realize she was right all along.

Map of Kaleido

KALEIDO KEY

- | | |
|----|-----------------------|
| 1 | Imperial Palace |
| 2 | Cyberlab |
| 3 | Kennels |
| 4 | Barracks |
| 5 | The Bridge of Sorrows |
| 6 | Trader's Bridge |
| 7 | Spawn Hostel |
| 8 | Church of Isabella |
| 9 | Market Square |
| 10 | The Temple of Balance |
| 11 | The Swamp |
| 12 | Settlement |
| 13 | Kaleido Haven |
| 14 | Industrial District |
| 15 | Slave Enclave |
| 16 | Worm Ghetto |
| 17 | Spawn District |
| 18 | Progeny District |
| 19 | Prison |
| 20 | Harvester Farms |
| 21 | Aglantha Forest |



1. IMPERIAL PALACE

Once known as the Chambers of Harmony, the palace was the seat of Azvorian Ruling Council. Isabella took over the vast structure and made it her personal abode.

Isabella constantly adds new rooms, towers and basement chambers to the Palace. At her whim, human slaves are made to work for days at a time, constructing a swimming pool or greenhouse to her specifications.

Though old floor plans of the original building may still exist, the many modifications that Isabella has made would make them nearly useless. All that is commonly known is that Isabella resides in the palace, along with a vast number of Spawn servants and Progeny lackeys. A dungeon for prisoners can be found in the basement, and occasionally the echoes of screams can be heard in the halls. There is another underground chamber known as the breeding pit. Here, un-enhanced humans give birth to babies that will someday serve as hosts for Isabella--if they are beautiful females, that is. On

occasion, these poor waifs are brought up from the pit and allowed to play in the palace gardens to keep them healthy. The select few will be given plush chambers in the palace proper, their bodies pampered until Isabella sends for them.

All human females must be brought before the palace at the age of 10. Those who are sufficiently beautiful will be raised to be a hosts for Isabella Bayne.

The Palace sits upon a hill overlooking the entire city. It has several entrances, but all of them are guarded by Spawn and electronic security devices.

Dr. Isabella Bayne

Passable Alertness, Great Charm, Superior Cunning, Awesome Fate, Unbelievable Willpower, Incredible Knowledge, Inhuman Mechanical, Superior Agility, Great Dexterity, Good Stamina, Good Strength

Wounds: L L M M H

Weapons: Pistol (Good x 5)

Psi-Powers: Isabella has unlimited psi-points for using psychic powers. She has the talents and all the powers of an id master, illusionist, oobie, peeker and telepath. She also has the unique talent of “evolving” lower life forms, turning them into Spawn and mutant animal “pets.” When threatened, Isabella can teleport her mind to any of a dozen specially prepared hosts secreted around the city.

Appearance: Isabella always inhabits beautiful, tall women between 16 and 24 years old. Her physical attributes may vary depending on her host body.

Personality: Driven and dedicated to science. She is indifferent to where her pursuit of inquiry leads her, or who suffers along the way.

Motivation: She seeks to bring Earth to its knees in retaliation for the disrespect inflicted upon her by the US Military.

Background: Isabella was born January 18, 1892 in Elsie, Indiana. Her parents were Estelle and Herman Bayne. An only child, Isabella was doted on by her parents, who encouraged her interest in science. A plain child, she was often mocked by other children, and developed no close friendships.

In 1910, Isabella Bayne was awarded a full scholarship to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She earned a number of degrees, including a doctorate in engineering and physics. She left MIT in 1918 to begin a long career working

for the US Government Defense Dept. She specialized in weapons engineering, and actually spent some time in Europe during World War I, observing warfare techniques.

In 1943 Dr. Bayne presented a theory to her superiors which proposed that troops and heavy artillery could be teleported to battle sites. Though considered speculative, Dr. Bayne’s high reputation convinced the Pentagon to give her funds for her project. Unfortunately, the so-called “Philadelphia Experiment” went horribly awry, and the entire incident was hushed up. Dr. Bayne was shuffled to another project. The K Project was supposed to develop a high protein snack made from chickens, but Dr. Bayne had little interest in it. Instead, she secretly began her own work developing a transporter she deemed the TransEgo Device. In her journal, she called her secret enterprise Project Khaotic.

She fled to Xenos on September 27, 1944. At the time, she was 52. She was short, with thin lips, blue eyes hidden behind black-rimmed glasses and gray-brown hair held in tight bun. The low appeal of her own body accounts for her preference for only the most beautiful hosts.

Krog

Progeny Prime Minister

Good Alertness, Great Charm, Superior Cunning, Good Fate, Awesome Willpower, Great Knowledge, Good Mechanical, Great Agility, Great Dexterity, Good Stamina, Good Strength

Wounds: L L M M H H

Cybernetic Body: D D D

Weapons: Psychotronic rifle (Great x 6)

Psi-Powers: Krog’s psi-helmet gives him the energist talent and the powers of Fire Blast, Lightning and Shock Shield. It generates 10 psi-points per day.

Appearance: A tall man in a cloak, the metal that replaces much of Krog’s body gleams sinisterly. Booster rockets in his legs allow him to leap up to 70 feet.

Personality: Completely servile in Isabella’s presence, Krog is a ruthless dictator who uses fear and intimidation to lead.

Motivation: To become the most powerful person on Xenos.

Background: Before the arrival of Isabella, Krog’s family were third rank Designators. Lacking psychic powers, they struggled against their

superiors to gain greater prestige and wealth. His family eagerly joined Isabella in the early days of her rule, excited at the opportunity for power.

Krog is devoted to Isabella, yet he realizes her strengths are weapon developments and science, not politics. Krog oversees all government institutions, including the treasury and Morph spy corps, and reports directly to Isabella. She relies heavily on his ability to handle the day to day functioning of her empire, and does not care when his policies directly benefit him and his family.

Krog hates all “worms” and much of their oppression results from his policies. He particularly hates Timmy, whom he views as the greatest threat to the Empire. If Timmy succeeds in killing Isabella, Krog would be out of a job.

Krog hopes someday Isabella will publicly recognize him as her consort, thus giving him more status and prestige. However, she is uninterested in him, and views him only as a loyal servant.

Jylehrter

Morph Torturer

Great Alertness, Poor Charm, Awesome Cunning, Superior Fate, Superior Willpower, Great Knowledge, Good Mechanical, Passable Agility, Inferior Dexterity, Superior Stamina, Good Strength
Wounds: L L M M H H C

Weapons: Psychotronic mind drill (Inferior x 6), anyone injured by it will rave madly for (Good - Sanity) x 10 minutes. Psi-helmet (grants Telepathy talent, Read Mind, Sense Lie and Mental Probe.

Appearance: These jelly-like creatures wear no clothing, but Jylehrter is distinguished by his great size and long, gray face tendrils.

Personality: Cruel and vicious.

Motivation: The chief torturer in Isabella’s vast palace dungeon, Jylehrter uses the tools of his trade to persuade, frighten or blast prisoners into revealing information or confessing crimes. He takes pride in his ability to drive his victims to madness or self-destruction. Jylehrter will also use his body’s natural acids to burn and maim his victims; he has been known to devour small children in front of their frantic mothers. A complete psychopath, Jylehrter has found the perfect career for his gross deviancy.

2. CYBERLAB

The Cyberlab is feared by Azvorians and rebels alike. Here Isabella develops new cyberware, biological weapons, and mind-altering drugs. Each is tested on an unwilling human subject, who may be dissected or killed outright when the experiment is done.

The Cyberlab develops cybernetic implants. Most Progeny go to the Cyberlab to have their hardware installed, but other cybershops are scattered throughout the city, though their inventories are more limited and their surgeons have dubious credentials. The cost of an implant is tremendous and the risk of rejection or infection is high, but the Progeny undergo the procedure for the sense of power and social esteem it gives them. They are often attended by Squids, whose healing skills give the patients a high chance of survival with minimal pain.

Isabella and her Progeny bureaucrats often grant free cyberware to those who have provided an exceptional service to the government.

Raydil

Progeny Technician

Poor Alertness, Superior Charm, Good Cunning, Poor Fate, Good Willpower, Great Knowledge, Superior Mechanical, Great Agility, Good Dexterity, Passable Stamina, Good Strength

Wounds: L L M M H

Weapons: Cybernetic fist (Good x 4), psychotronic drill (Passable x 5), SMG mounted on shoulder (Good x 5, 100 shots)

Appearance: A cybernetically enhanced female in her mid-twenties. Raydil has long red hair, gold metal eyes and inserts along her entire body. She is very intelligent and is one of the most gifted of all cyber-engineers. Her artificial eyes have microscopic viewing capabilities.

Personality: Cold and uncaring.

Motivation: As a child, Raydil was raised by her rebel parents, but she forsook them at the age of 12 when she became enamored with the technology she observed from afar. Betraying her parents to Isabella, Raydil earned her cybernetic eyes and the title of Progeny. Raydil quickly learned all that she could of cybernetics. She currently designs cyber enhancements, specializing in weapons design.

Raydil does not consider herself cruel, but she will experiment on humans against their will. Her reasoning is that they simply don't understand what a good thing they're missing. It is her goal to show all un-enhanced humans that there is nothing to fear from cybernetics, but much to gain. She secretly hopes to convince the rebels of this so she can end the strife that she feels cost the lives of her parents. She is currently working with Squids to create improved psychotronic links.

3. KENNELS

The Cyberlab kennels contain animals that have been mutated or warped by Isabella's psychic powers or chemical concoctions. They are bred for viciousness, and then unleashed on the many nations Isabella is at war with. The mutants in the kennels do not have human intelligence, though some have uncanny craftiness. Isabella has begun sending her mutated "pets" to Earth to harry her enemies. The feared onzas are bred in the kennels. Giant blood-sucking spiders, they are a rebel's worst nightmare.

4. BARRACKS

Though Isabella's army is spread across the land, they are based at the Barracks. The Barracks houses a great number of soldiers and the barren fields around it are used in weapons training. Sometimes humans are rounded up and forced to "fight" against the soldiers for practice. They are invariably slaughtered in a matter of seconds.

Most Spawn who live at the barracks are Cybors, the backbone of Isabella's army. These dim-witted, yet bellicose creatures are led by Gators, Garou and Vermis.

Kantos the Huntmaster

Progeny Huntmaster

Great Alertness, Great Charm, Superior Cunning, Great Fate, Superior Willpower, Great Knowledge, Good Mechanical, Superior Agility, Good Dexterity, Great Stamina, Great Strength

Wounds: L L M M H H C

Cybernetic Body Armor: H H H

Weapons: Psychotronic rifle (Good x 6)

Psi-Powers: Kantos wears a psi-helmet that grants him the id master talent and the powers of Psi-Scan and Psychic Blast. It generate 4 psi-points per day.

Appearance: Kantos carries a number of weapons and is cybernetically enhanced. He is very lithe and powerful looking.

Personality: Kantos demands the subservience of humans and Spawns alike. He hates all rebels.

Motivation: To hunt down and destroy rebels.

Background: Kantos is responsible for the Spawn packs that scour the city for rebels. He often leads a hand-picked pack through the streets of the ghetto, searching for suspicious worm activity. He enjoys battle, the thrill of the hunt, and striking fear in the hearts of humans.

Kantos' mother was a reject--a human who's cybernetic implants were rejected by her body. She was left with a stump for a right arm and a missing right eye, and was forced to live outside the city in a squalid camp known as Settlement. Her son grew up a ward of the state. He has never returned to visit his mother, and if asked about her he will claim that she killed herself.

Dappa

Gator Quartermaster

Passable Alertness, Poor Charm, Poor Cunning, Passable Fate, Awesome Willpower, Inferior Knowledge, Poor Mechanical, Superior Agility, Good Dexterity, Amazing Stamina, Superior Strength

Wounds: (L) L M M H H C C D

Weapons: Psychotronic rifle mounted on arm (Good x 6), 4 pod rocket launcher on back (Good x 8), cyber spike on hand (Good x 4)

Appearance: Dappa's scales are dyed both red and white, indicating that his father was a soldier while his mother was a merchant class, the lowest rank in Gator society.

Personality: Dim-witted. Dappa is a bit of a coward, and always refers to his mother before making an important decision.

Motivation: To keep his black market activity secret from other Gators.

Background: Though male Gators are not allowed to become merchants, Dappa is actually a black market trader on the side. His mother, Bejefe, is one of the richest merchants in the country. She has taught her son that fighting is not the most important thing--riches are. Therefore, Dappa puts aside Gator doctrine to trade with humans and

other creatures. He must do this on the sly, since his actions would be judged as traitorous by Zei-Krel, leader of the Gators.

Dappa works as a quartermaster at the palace barracks. He has access to a great number of hard-to-get goods and information, all of which are available to a buyer offering the right price.

Dappa is a mama's boy, and rarely makes a decision without the approval of Bejefe. She, in turn, hopes to use her amassed riches to someday bribe enough soldiers to overthrow Zei-Krel so she can put Dappa in his place, then rule the Gators through him. Since Dappa is a bit dim, he hasn't a clue as to what his dear mother has in store for him.

5. THE BRIDGE OF SORROWS

This stone bridge earned its name soon after the Cyberlab had been built and humans were rounded from their homes and driven to its doors. Several leapt into the swift moving Remorra River from the bridge in an effort to escape a fate worse than death; few survived the plummet into the cold waters.

6. TRADER'S BRIDGE

In the years of Xenos' glory, traders from the east would travel over this bridge on their way to market square. Eager shoppers and merchants who wanted to get a jump on their neighbors would meet the incoming salespeople on this bridge to purchase cloth, spices or rare herbs. Today Trader's Bridge is called "Traitor's Bridge" by the Azvorians, since primarily Progeny live on its far side.

7. SPAWN HOSTEL

This establishment provides a place for Spawn to rest and recuperate at the price of 30 baynes a night, meals included. It is one of the best deals in the city.

8. CHURCH OF ISABELLA

This imposing structure was built by the Gators, who believe that Isabella is their personal deity. The Gators razed the great Kaleido library to

clear the land for this black, gleaming tower in the center of Market square.

Zei-Krel

Gator Cult Leader

Passable Alertness, Poor Charm, Passable Cunning, Passable Fate, Awesome Willpower, Great Knowledge, Passable Mechanical, Superior Agility, Great Dexterity, Inhuman Stamina, Awesome Strength

Wounds: (L) (M) H H C C D D

Weapons: Psychotronic cannon (Great x 7), cybernetic claws (Great x 5)

Appearance: Zei-Krel has dyed several scales of his skin a bright blue to indicate that he is a Priest of the Zei-Isabella, or Cult of Isabella. He wears a helmet of shiny chrome, which resembles one of the machine parts used to develop the TransEgo Device, and has an enhanced right arm, which allows him to convert his fingers into drills or slashing claws.

Personality: Driven and fanatical.

Motivation: To keep the Gators loyal to Isabella; to make certain they follow the rules of the Cult of Isabella.

Background: Krel's parents were soldiers. They raised him in the teachings of the newly created Cult of Isabella was worshipped her as a divine being. Krel dedicated his life to its cause, and became Zei-Krel, or grand hierophant, while still a youth. A powerful warrior and a persuasive speaker, he was appointed ruler of all Gators by Isabella and is responsible for making sure they remain loyal.

Zei-Krel has not taken a mate, though he is free to do so if he wishes. He hates un-enhanced humans passionately, considering them offal beneath his contempt. He views Timmy, the leader of the rebels, to be a supreme evil being who defies the greatness of Isabella. Though he would enjoy seeing Timmy killed, he fears the rebel leader is as indestructible as Isabella.

Zei-Krel rules the Gators with an iron fist. He is harsh and uncompromising, but his people are content. Besides humans, he particularly dislikes Vermis, who refuse to acknowledge Isabella as a goddess. Since Isabella sees fit to use the Vermis' abilities for her own ends, Zei-Krel must tolerate them, though he would dearly love to see these heretics killed by slow torture.

9. MARKET SQUARE

For centuries, this was a trading center and market place. Nearly anything you wanted, from clothing to foodstuffs could be found here. Today, there is less commerce, but it is still the central business section of the town. Dank restaurants, smelly shops, sleazy bars and shady cybershops can be found along every side road. Merchants continue to hawk their wares, though most items are highly priced and low in quality. Produce is brought in by Harvesters approximately once every two weeks. The produce may be sold to the populace directly, or to the green grocers. There are no supermarkets, convenience stores or department stores in Kaleido.

The market is frequented mostly by Progeny and Spawn. Human worms are forbidden from buying items at the market. They must go through a broker who will charge them for the service. Some humans beg in the marketplace, though this can be a dangerous endeavor if a Progeny decides to teach them a lesson.

While humans still use barter, Isabella has introduced a monetary standard. Coins are pressed from plastics, and are imbedded with molecular signatures to discourage counterfeiting. The basic monetary unit is called the "bayne."

10. THE TEMPLE OF BALANCE

There was once several temples in Kaleido, but this was the largest. It's spires have been shattered and several walls have caved in, but it is still occupied by the Seer Jabulani, who preaches services every night. This is forbidden by law, but most of Isabella's minions ignore it, and leave the burned-out building and its pathetic occupants alone. Some Azvorians whisper that Isabella is afraid to eradicate the temple for fear of a direct confrontation with the psychic Seers.

Jabulani is sympathetic to the rebel cause, and often hides fugitives in a small underground room.

Jabulani

Human Seer

Passable Alertness, Good Charm, Passable Cunning, Great Fate, Superior Willpower, Great Knowledge, Poor Mechanical, Passable, Good Dexterity, Great Stamina, Good Strength

Wounds: L L M M H H C

Weapons: None. However, Jabulani is often accompanied by armed rebels.

Psi-Powers: Jabulani has the Id Master talent and all the attendant powers. He has 15 psi-points per day that he can use to activate psi-powers.

Appearance: Jabulani is a youthful-looking man with no enhancements. He wears long flowing robes, and his hair rises from his head as though filled with electricity. Despite his apparent fragility, Jabulani is quite hardy, and has lived through numerous raids.

Personality: Benign and brave.

Motivation: Jabulani struggles to keep his people hopeful.

Background: The Azvorians are a devout people, though most of them worship in secret, since Isabella has outlawed the practice. The Balance teaches that psychic powers can be used to create a harmonious existence for all living things. Seers siphon these powers from a universal pool, and channel the balancing forces into the souls of their congregation.

Jabulani is the last Seer of the Kaleido Temple of Balance. Though it has been bombed and used briefly as a brothel, Jabulani continues to teach and comfort his people. He has vowed never to leave, and the Brood have begun to respect his tenacity. They leave the bombed-out Temple alone for the most part, and Jabulani has made it a refuge for rebels.

Jabulani fears that the Balance will be permanently disrupted if Isabella is not soon stopped. Though he abhors violence and bloodshed, he can see no other way to save his people and the world they live in.

11. THE SWAMP

Along the Remorra River is a walled district. Nicknamed "The Swamp" because of its thick, musty smell, this is a small enclave inhabited solely by Morphs. Inside are small domes in which the slimy creatures dwell, rest and recuperate from their nefarious activities. Several rebel forays have tried to infiltrate the Swamp and destroy the domes, but none have succeeded; both the Morphs and their shelters are extremely hardy.

The Remorra River is the main source of drinking water for the entire city of Kaleido.

Exergan

Morph Assassin

Superior Alertness, Good Charm, Awesome Cunning, Good Fate, Great Willpower, Passable Knowledge, Poor Mechanical, Great Dexterity, Good Stamina, Good Strength

Wounds: L L M M H H

Weapons: Exergan uses only hand-held weapons; cybernetic enhancements interfere with her shape-changing ability. She carries a psychotronic dagger that extends upon impact, doing Great x 6 damage. She also has a heavy pistol (Passable x 6).

Appearance: Exergan is nearly indistinguishable from other Morphs, except that she has a pinkish tinge to her face tendrils and her head stock is rather short.

Personality: Cunning and clever.

Motivation: To kill those with psychic powers, including Isabella. To become the leader of the Ra M'nothi.

Background: Though not a confidant to Isabella, Exergan is becoming an indispensable tool. Unknown to Isabella, Exergan is a member of Ra M'nothi, or the Superior Ones. These fanatical Morphs believe that their shape-changing ability makes them the strongest creatures on Xenos. They are dedicated to destroying their greatest challengers to this title, those beings with psychic powers. Their primary victims have been Squids and humans, but Isabella herself is considered a choice target. Exergan is determined to become a member of Isabella's inner circle, then kill her when her powers are at their lowest. For now, she is simply stalking her prey. She hopes that this assassination will give her the power and prestige necessary to become the new leader of the Ra M'nothi.

12. SETTLEMENT

Settlement is a forced labor camp made up of Progeny whose bodies have rejected their cyberware. Many are maimed or missing limbs due to the surgical procedures performed on them. These Rejects were sentenced to live in Settlement for the crime of betraying their heritage.

Many Rejects are bitter people. Some blame Isabella for their plight, others their own weak wills. They work in a rendering factory until they

die of exhaustion or industrial poisoning. Those who give birth to healthy children try to smuggle them out of Settlement as fast as they can. At night, some Rejects can be seen lurking around the city, looking for scraps and meeting with sympathetic friends.

13. KALEIDO HAVEN

This Haven is a small shelter for travellers. It is maintained by twelve Squids who study the Psyclabra, or Psychic Tome. They are gentle, but distant to all. Though they know it is against the law, they will shelter and feed rebels and Azvorians for a short while.

Erythyna

Squid Psycress

Passable Alertness, Good Charm, Good Cunning, Awesome Fate, Awesome Willpower, Superior Knowledge, Poor Mechanical, Poor Dexterity, Good Stamina, Passable Strength

Wounds: L L M M H H

Weapons: Tentacles (Poor x 2)

Psi-Powers: An esper, Erythyna has the powers of Commune, Locate, Meditate, Psychometry, Remote Viewing, and View Aura. She has a number of psi-points equal to the number of days since the last disbursement.

Appearance: Erythyna has ritual tattoos along her belly, tentacles and legs which denote her high level of psychic ability. When appearing in public, she dons light, airy robes.

Personality: Caring and gentle.

Motivation: Erythyna is gentle and kind to all creatures. She knows the potential abuses of psi-powers, and hopes to teach her people to use them only for good.

Background: Erythyna was a student of Tolerandas, the female Squid who wrote the Psyclabra--the Psychic Code--which is revered by all Squid. As Psycress, Erythyna has the burden of increasing her people's psychic abilities by building up her own then disbursing the energy to everyone. Only those Squids considered worthy are given this gift; those who have not followed the Psyclabra are looked over until they perform an act of contrition. Erythyna meditates in near solitude for 24 days before she disburses her powers. Her powers are at their strongest right before the disbursement (or

gift-giving, as it is known to the Squids), and she is very weak for a few days afterward.

The Psyclabra predicts that the Squids will one day become pure psychic energy. In the meanwhile, Erythyna and her successors act as conduits of power as their time of the great change grows closer.

14. INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT

This area has been completely industrialized. Smoke belches into the sky, steam hisses and raw materials are converted into machinery day and night. Most workers are human slaves, though a few factories are manned by Spawn who are paid a pittance for their work.

15. SLAVE ENCLAVE

This forced labor camp is home to the lowliest human inhabitants of Kaleido. Probably forced into service by a roving Spawn patrol, these men and women may have once been rebels or Azvorians about to flee the city. Now they are stuck in an brief life of repetitive labor, malnutrition and ultimate death.

16. WORM GHETTO

All humans have been ordered to live in this ghetto so that other inhabitants of Kaleido “will not be polluted by their filth.” These humans hold lowly jobs, and are subject to daily mistreatment at the hands of their neighbors. Worse, Spawn patrols could sweep through at any time and drag inhabitants off to the Barracks, Cyberlab or forced labor camp.

Yoofi

Human Beggar

Good Alertness, Good Charm, Great Cunning, Passable Fate, Passable Willpower, Passable Knowledge, Passable Mechanical, Good Dexterity, Poor Stamina, Poor Strength

Wounds: L L M M

Weapons: Knife (Good x 2) and pistol (Good x 4)

Appearance: A young human male, about 13 years old, with brown skin, long black hair and dark eyes. Yoofi sometimes dons fake enhancements so he can freely mingle with Kaleido citizens without fear of harassment.

Personality: Rash, but quick-witted.

Motivation: To take care of his sister. To help the rebels.

Background: Growing up on the streets of Kaleido, Yoofi is an accomplished thief and pickpocket who is fast becoming a clever spy. Wearing his false enhancements, Yoofi has been able to infiltrate the homes of several influential persons, including Krog, the Prime Minister. He goes out of his way to strike up friendships with the children in the house, and learns much from them. He sells most of his information on the open market. His primary customers are the rebels, whom he sympathizes with.

Yoofi is alone in the world except for his young sister Dorra. She was horribly maimed in a street fight with Spawn, and her left leg barely functions. Yoofi is torn between the idea of purchasing an illegal cyber leg for his sister or leaving it in its natural state.

17. Spawn District

This is mostly a residential area inhabited by Spawn. There are a few hotels where a homeless Spawn or a soldier visiting from the front can spend a few days, for a price of about 30 baynes a night.

Ebu-Da

Cybor Vigilante

Passable Alertness, Poor Charm, Passable Cunning, Passable Fate, Good Willpower, Poor Knowledge, Poor Mechanical, Passable Dexterity, Awesome Stamina, Superior Strength

Wounds: L L M M H H C C D

Weapons: Shoulder mounted energy cannon (Passable x 8), 6 pod rocket launcher (Poor x 9) with 3 pods mounted on each hip, claws (Passable x 4)

Psi-powers: A psychotronic implant gives Ebu-Da the power of Locate. The device generates 5 psi-points per day.

Appearance: Ebu-Da is a cybor with a skull plate and mechanical claws.

Personality: Though not very bright, Ebu-Da is a dedicated soldier in Isabella’s army.

Motivation: To track down and destroy jump-teams; to serve Isabella.

Background: Ebu-Da's elder brother was Ebu, the first Xenite ever to host a jump-team. Ebu died under the jump-team's control. Ebu became a martyr among the Cybor and other Spawn, an eternal reminder of the Peril From Earth.

Ebu-Da doesn't care to live in the shadow of his famous brother, and strives to achieve his own fame. He hopes to do this by hunting and killing Terran jump-teams. He saved for months to buy a psi-helmet that grants him the power to locate jump-teams.

Dredani

Garou Hunter

Superior Alertness, Inferior Charm, Great Cunning, Good Fate, Superior Willpower, Passable Knowledge, Good Mechanical, Superior Agility, Superior Dexterity, Great Stamina, Great Strength

Wounds: L L M M H H C

Cyber Armor: C C C

Weapons: Psychotronic agonizer rifle (Great x 5 knocks unconscious but cannot kill), whip (Superior x 4), spear (Good x 6)

Appearance: Where it shows from his black cyber armor, Dredani's skin is pierced with numerous chains, bones and jewels.

Personality: Relentless and cruel.

Motivation: To hunt rebels and escaped slaves. Dredani hopes to someday become a Destroyer, one of Isabella's elite forces. Though young, he is sure he will be appointed over his older colleagues, because, after all, he is the best.

Background: The most vicious of the Garou hunters who make a sport of tracking and killing rebels. Dredani's home is decorated with the skulls and bones of many humans. Isabella has granted him the use of six slaves. They are all emaciated specimens, who live in terror day to day, for they know that Dredani may chose them as the next victim of his horrible sport.

18. PROGENY DISTRICT

This high-class district once provided homes to the Ruling Council and their families. The large dwellings are now the homes of Progeny.

19. PRISON

Accommodations at the prison are not as appalling as the Palace dungeon, but they aren't cozy, either. People are general held in the prison for less than a year, either as a punishment meted out by the Designators, or as a holding tank while their ultimate fate is considered. Long-term incarceration isn't practiced in Kaleido; prisoners are either put to work in the Slave Enclave or they are executed.

Flig

Verm Designator

Great Alertness, Passable Charm, Great Cunning, Passable Fate, Good Willpower, Superior Knowledge, Great Mechanical, Good Dexterity, Passable Stamina, Good Strength

Wounds: L L M M H

Weapons: Twin energy rifles (Good x 6) on shoulders, can each fire at a separate target once per turn.

Appearance: Designator Flig has several decorative implants along his spine ridge and between the webbing of his hands. They flash bright colors in a variety of patterns. He also wears long, flowing garments of bright yellow, purple and scarlet, along with necklaces of fine gold, silver and shell. Flig wears a "booster" on his head--a psychotronic implant that stimulates his brain, allowing him to remain awake, alert and physically efficient for up to two weeks without ill effects. He also has a psychotronic implant to enhance his hearing.

Personality: Stern and unmoving.

Motivation: To enforce Bayne's Law.

Background: Isabella appointed Flig Chief Designator of the Ruling Council. Though the Council is little more than a nod to Progeny tradition, Isabella has given them the duty to enforce Bayne Law.

Though Designator Flig prides himself on his sense of justice and his superior intellect, he is unquestionably prejudiced against those he views as inferior, especially un-enhanced humans, rejects and Cybors. He views Gators as dangerous fanatics, and is well aware that some members of this race view him as a godless traitor.

20. HARVESTER FARMS

Rich farmlands are found to the west of Kaleido. Harvesters live in small villages all around. After the harvest, many of them will bring their goods into Kaleido for a quick sale.

21. AGLANTHA FOREST

This large forest extends far into the northern mountains. Many Azvorian families fled into the mountains in an effort to escape persecution by Isabella. Though patrols sweep through the forest periodically, many Azvorians have escaped detection, including rebel forces.

Timmy

Human Rebel Leader

Superior Alertness, Great Charm, Superior Cunning, Awesome Fate, Unbelievable Willpower, Good Knowledge, Passable Mechanical, Good Dexterity, Superior Stamina, Great Strength

Wounds: L L M M H H C C

Weapons: Assault rifle (Good x 6), combat knife (Good x 3)

Psi-Powers: Timmy has, in effect, unlimited psi-points for using psychic powers. He has the talents, and all the powers of, an energist, esper, oobie and telepath.

Appearance: A handsome young man about 25 years old. Timmy is an un-enhanced human with blonde hair and blue eyes. He is muscular, though dressed in the drab rags of his people.

Personality: Leader of the rebels and dedicated to the cause of freedom.

Motivation: To destroy Isabella and her empire.

Background: Timmy was one of the first victims of Isabella's experiment in mental transfer. His consciousness was plunged into the body of an Azvorian boy about his own age. Though fearful of the strange change in their son, his foster parents raised him as their own. When he evidenced psychic

powers, he received the careful training of Seers. Under their guidance, his talents grew in strength as his mind absorbed the teachings of the Balance.

When Timmy reached adulthood, Isabella's tyranny was in full reign. Timmy, outraged by her disregard for the Balance, led small bands of saboteurs into Kaleido to blow up her munition dumps. With each successful blow against Isabella's empire, more and more Azvorians joined the cause. Timmy taught the Azvorians that Isabella could be defeated if they all banded together. Today, the rebels are the biggest thorn in Isabella's side. She desperately wishes to kill Timmy, whose psychic powers are said to rival her own.

Only seven years old when he was stranded on Xenos, Timmy's beliefs are a combination of the Balance and the comic books and cowboy movies of the 1940s. He has taught these moral codes to his rebel followers who believe them unquestionably. Timmy has taught the rebels that Isabella is an alien from a distant world, but few realize that Timmy himself is a native of that same world.

The rebels love and trust Timmy. When his original host body grew ill and was about to die, a young Azvorian male volunteered to become his new host body.

Timmy is believed by many Azvorians to be a living deity, a savior who will lead them from oppression into a world of happiness and wonder. Timmy doesn't believe that he is divine, he only wishes to avenge himself on the woman who cruelly wrenched him from his home world into a nightmare existence. He is the leader of the rebel forces, and much feared by Isabella. It is said that his psi powers are as strong as her own, though they have never faced each other in combat.

Timmy believes that other children used in Isabella's experiments might have survived the transfer and are lurking in the minds of monsters and humans. Perhaps driven mad, or simply frightened, they too may have superior psi powers. Timmy would like to recruit these people into helping him defeat Isabella.

CHAPTER 11

ADVENTURES

The Invasion of Dylan

This introductory mission allows your players to develop their characters individually while you to get accustomed to the game system. It takes place on Earth, and will make your games on Xenos more interesting, since the characters will have already developed independent personalities.

This mission takes place at the ISES World Headquarters in Dylan, Nebraska (see Chapters 7 and 9). This is considered an Easy mission, and is worth a base of 4 skill points.

BACKGROUND

The PCs are new recruits. They come from various locations around the world, and meet for the first time aboard a small private plane bound for Dylan. The pilot and co-pilot work for ISES, but all they know is that some kind of secret research is going on at the Dylan complex. Yesterday, the pilot flew a transport plane to Dylan containing a large crate. ISES security wouldn't let him get within twenty feet of it "for his own safety."

On the plane, the characters have time to introduce themselves and discuss any rumors they've heard about ISES. They touch down at the private ISES airport just before dusk.

HELP!

As the characters deplane, they see a small mini-van hurtling madly down the runway. As it

screeches into their midst, a young woman jumps out and pleads: "Oh, help me, please! They've escaped, and my father's trapped inside!" This is Danielle Brackenberry, daughter of ISES director Edmund Brackenberry.

Danielle tells the group that yesterday, a captured Spawn was delivered to ISES. It was installed in the underground storage area known as Igor's Room. She never saw it, since she doesn't go down to the labs, but from what she heard, it was bigger than a man and pretty formidable. The creature was kept tranquilized.

This morning, the entire complex was full of rampaging creatures! The ISES guards were overwhelmed. Her father went downstairs with his pistol to help defend the TransEgo Device. If the monsters destroy it, ISES's only access to Xenos will be severed. She hasn't seen him in over an hour.

Knowing that the PC team was about to arrive, Danielle came to pick them up, thinking they would be able to help stop the Spawn.

ARRIVAL

Danielle will pull up to the West entry and use her pass card to enter the building. Screams, gunshots and animal hisses can be heard coming from within. Danielle's slight hearing loss does not make her the best judge of safety; as she hurries towards the elevator hall (3) she runs smack into two marauding Scorpions. It is up to the players to save Danielle from a hideous fate.

Thanks to the work of the now slain guards, there are currently six monsters running rampant in the ISES facility. Their reproduction schedules are staggered, and unless the players kill some, there will be twelve Scorpions within 25 minutes, all sniffing out human meat.

SCORPION

Good Alertness
 Feeble Charm
 Good Cunning
 Passable Fate
 Great Willpower
 Inferior Knowledge
 Inferior Mechanical
 Good Agility
 Passable Dexterity
 Superior Stamina
 Superior Strength

Wounds:

L L M M H H C C

Weapons: Claws (Good x 5), bite (Passable x 7)

Appearance: Large humanoid creature with powerful arms ending in razor-sharp claws. Scorpions have sharp canines which they use to rend their victims' flesh. They also have long tails that are capable of stinging a victim; this aspect inspired Isabella to name them "Scorpions."

Personality: Vicious and predatory.

Motivation: To cannibalize humans.

Background: Scorpions are asexual and reproduce by cellular division once every 20 minutes. The Scorpion huddles in a quiet corner and covers itself with a thick mucus, which quickly forms a cocoon. Within five minutes, two smaller Scorpions burst from the shell. This process can be arrested if the creature is exposed to cold temperatures.

Scorpions understand English, though they will not necessarily speak to their attackers. They have been bred to consume human flesh, and are constantly hungry.

If exposed to low temperatures, the Scorpion's mutation cycle will be interrupted for one full cycle; prolonged exposure will make the creature increasingly sluggish and eventually it will fall into a stupor. If unconscious for more than 24 hours, the Scorpion will begin to shrivel and die.

Combat Note: Scorpions are immune to fire, but take double damage from cold attacks. Spraying one with a fire extinguisher takes a Passable Aim roll and causes the Scorpion to act only once every other turn for 5 turns.

CARNAGE

The PCs have only their personal weapons, if any. They can arm themselves by accessing the Security office (21). Without the key, the weapons cabinet will take an Awesome Unlock to open. Inside are four kevlar vests and eight Uzi submachine guns.

Players can also view any room in the complex on the security screens here, but it will take a Security roll to operate the controls. Director Edmund Brackenberry and two assistants in lab coats can be seen barricading the Frankenstein room where TED is stored; JJ Deerfield can be seen lying in pain on the floor of The Jungle Room; he is managing to hold off a monster using his gun and a fire extinguisher. The key to the weapon's cabinet is in his pocket.

As the players move through the facility, they will find the partially devoured bodies of guards and scientists. Though their armor is ruined, the players may appropriate the guards' weapons--though their clips will be half empty. Monsters lurk around every dark corner, waiting to pounce. Your players should have every opportunity to attack, run away and witness carnage; have a ball.

ESCAPEES

A number of people have fled the facility in terror, leaving the front door wide open. These include several support staff, visiting scientists, Delores Cline, Sadie McCray, Margot Le Gras and Peyo Vandillo. They will not be encountered at ISES headquarters unless you wish to include them.

BARRICADE

A number of ISES staff members have barricaded themselves inside the kitchen: Stacy McKinnon, Sonny Paterson and four kitchen staff wearing red aprons have pushed tables against the doors, but three Scorpions are slowly beating them in. If the humans try to escape out the door into the Banquet Room (13) and run away, they will find themselves hemmed in by the two elevator hall monsters. Only Stacy McKinnon is carrying a weapon.

One possible strategy is to lure the Spawn into the kitchen freezer. The cold will send a Scorpion into hibernation within just a few turns.

If the players help drive off the monsters, Stacy will lead the whimpering kitchen staff outside. She will give the players a pass key that will give them access to any locked room in the facility.

THE ELEVATORS

Once ISES came under attack, the automatic security system kicked in and all elevators shut down automatically against the incursion. An elevator in the Elevator Hall (3) has its floor torn out and its doors ripped apart. A Scorpion can climb up the eighty foot shaft with little trouble.

A Superior Security roll in the Security office will reactivate the elevators, or a Superior Electronics roll at any elevator panel will get it up and running. Bonnie O'Deah and Emil Enderby are trying to activate the East Wing elevator using a screwdriver. Bonnie is frantic to get downstairs and find out if JJ Deerfield is all right.

IN THE BASEMENT

There are a few survivors left in the basement; JJ is in the Jungle Room, fending off a single monster with a fire extinguisher. Players may notice that this creature is more sluggish than the rest, due to the cold chemicals that affect his cellular metabolic rate. If rescued, JJ can direct the players to a weapons cache located in the Igor Room. These weapons are primarily experimental, and have only a few rounds of ammunition. They consist of two hand bolters and a hand flamer (JJ doesn't realize the Scorpions are immune to fire). These weapons are locked inside a cabinet that takes a Great Strength or Superior Unlock skill to open.

Zoe is being menaced by a wounded monster inside the Archives. When the players enter the room, it will grab her as a hostage. This may be the first time that the players hear a creature speak. It will try to escape the complex.

Any remaining Scorpions are battering on the door to Frankie's Lab (13). Once they get in, they will sniff out Edmund Brackenberry and his two lab assistants. Edmund is mainly concerned about the TransEgo Device, fearing the creatures mean to

destroy it, but the Scorpions are really only interested in getting some chow.

CONCLUSION

The Scorpions can be defeated in several ways. The players can gather up as many weapons as they can find, hunt them down and blast them. If they tumble to the idea that the creatures falter in the cold, they may try to set off the sprinkler system, sending jets of cold water cascading down on the creatures. This will slow down their mutation cycle and may possibly knock some monsters out.

If you'd like, you may wish to allow one or two monsters to escape from the ISES facility and head for the town of Dylan. Though the brave farmers and townsfolk will try to drive the critters out, they'll need the superior fire power and skills of the jump-team to defeat the mutating invaders.

The Search for Timmy

This is the player's first mission to Xenos. After the massacre at Dylan, they should be eager to get revenge on Isabella!

It takes a week to clean up the Dylan complex. During this time, the PCs are briefed by Edmund Brackenberry (if he's still alive) on their upcoming mission to Xenos. They are to contact the rebel leader known as Timmy and establish friendly relations with the rebels. The rebels must be shown that Terran jump-teams are friends who wish to help overthrow Isabella Bayne. Previous jump-teams have discovered that Jabulani, a seer at the Temple of Balance, is a rebel sympathizer and may know how to contact Timmy.

A moderate mission, this one is worth a base of 6 skill points.

ARRIVING IN KALEIDO

The jump-team finds themselves in the body of a Cybor soldier named Ugg. The player who rolls highest on Willpower will start out as the Boss. Ugg and four other Cybors are in the midst of raiding a human dwelling in the Kaleido ghetto. About a dozen terrified humans stand in the filthy

street while the squad routs more people out of their beds. It is dawn.

“Uggu, go into that house and get more humans for slave camps,” the burly squad leader Zeboo directs, “We need ten more or Kantos will turn our hides into boots.”

At this point, the players can go into the dwelling as directed, try to sneak away, or turn their weapons on Zeboo and the others.

UGGA

Cybor Soldier

Poor Agility

Good Dexterity

Awesome Stamina

Superior Strength

Wounds: L L M M H H C C D

Weapons: Psychotronic rifle mounted on left arm (5 x 5), claws (6 x 4), pain stick (6 x 2) and anyone injured is incapacitated for (5 - Stamina) turns.

THE TEMPLE OF BALANCE

The Temple of Balance is located in the human ghetto. Here, the area has been devastated by fire fights and stands in ruins, though small shops and street vendors can be seen setting up their wares. This area surrounding the temple was once considered sacred ground; Isabella has decreed that it is now a marketplace where humans may buy food and goods at exorbitant prices. Nearly all the vendors are Rejects who feel lucky to have a job outside the Settlement. However, they hate their human clients and mistreat them in anyway they can. Any profits made by the vendors go to the government.

Inside the temple, Jabulani is escorted by three humans, all rebels. The rebels will be openly hostile to any Spawn or Progeny who enter the temple.

At first, Jabulani refuses to help the jump-team find Timmy. With his psychic powers, he can sense who they are no matter what body they assume. One of the rebels, a man named Vilsander, speaks up for the PCs and earnestly bids Jabulani arrange a meeting with Timmy. Jabulani finally relents and tells the group that Timmy will be at an illegal cybershop known as Zapp’s near the slave enclave

once the moon rises. He then asks the team to leave, since their presence draws too much attention to the Temple. The players are free to explore the city as they choose.

ZAPP’S CYBERSHOP

Fitting humans with cyberware is illegal without sanction from Isabella or a Designator. However, Progeny who wish to make some extra money sometimes perform the hideous procedure for a high fee. Zapp is known in underground circles as a Progeny who will do anything for a bayne--the plastic coin which is the standard currency in Kaleido.

Rebels pay Zapp what money they can scrape together to make false cybernetic gloves and other attachments so they can pass for Progeny. He has no idea that the most infamous of all rebels is supposed to be visiting his humble shop; he assumes that the rebels have requested a meeting to order more false cyberware.

THE MEETING

When the PCs arrive, they are quickly joined by five male rebels, one of whom introduces himself as Timmy. One of the others can be recognized as Vilsander, the rebel who was at the Temple when the players arrived. Vilsander looks especially nervous.

Unknown to the players, the man who calls himself Timmy is actually Mycholo, a trusted comrade. Timmy has asked Mycholo to assess the jump-team and discover if they’re genuine.

After the players have conferred with Mycholo/Timmy for a bit, they will be interrupted by the blast of psychotronic weapons. Shouts of “betrayers!” lash at the PCs as the rebels scatter in the confusion. Moments later a squad of ten Garou led by Kantos the Huntmaster enters the room. Without hesitation they fire upon Mycholo. He will be blown to pieces in one turn.

FRAMED!

At this point, the jump-team will receive the full blame for tipping Kantos to the meeting. They

will find it extremely difficult to regain the rebel's trust unless they expose the real traitor.

Figuring out that Vilsander is the traitor isn't too difficult, especially with the use of psychic powers. If confronted with evidence of his guilt, he will admit that his wife and daughter were captured by Kantos who told him that they would be dissected in the Cyberlab if he didn't betray Timmy. Kantos told him they simply wanted to capture Timmy, he had no idea they would try to kill him. If the jump-team agrees to rescue his family from the Prison (19 on the Kaleido map), Vilsander will admit his guilt to the rebels and clear their name.

Thinking it was the real Timmy killed by Kantos, the players may decide to return to Earth. If they want to, let them. Not all missions need to end in victory.

CONCLUSION

Rescuing Vilsander's family from the prison is easier than it at first sounds. The prison is designed to stop people from getting out, not in. The players will have to defeat (or bypass) two Gator guards, and if they make too much noise, there are six other Spawn guards in the building.

When his wife and daughter are restored to him, Vilsander will live up to his part of the bargain and confess his crime to Jabulani. The jump-team will be cleared.

If the jump-team have been especially helpful and polite to the rebels, Jabulani will tell them there is someone who would like to meet them. He then introduces them to the real Timmy, who will speak to them briefly before teleporting back to his secret base.

The Brain Thief

[This adventure was originally published in White Wolf Inphobia issue 53 and was not part of the original 1994 rulebook. —JW.]

BACKGROUND

After the disaster of the Philadelphia Experiment in 1944, the Pentagon discontinued

funding for Dr. Isabella Bayne's experiments into teleportation. They transferred her to Project K, a minor program committed to developing healthy snacks for military personnel.

A resourceful scientist, Bayne siphoned funds from Project K to continue her own project, Project Khaotic. Although she needed lab animals, her requests for chimps were denied. She continued her experiments with what "animals" she could lure from parks and schoolyards.

In a secluded warehouse, she built a prototype of her matter transmitter. The device didn't work quite as she expected. It couldn't project matter, just energy. It sent the minds of her test subjects to another world, leaving their bodies behind to die.

After many tests, Bayne retrieved the mind of a subject before its body became comatose. When asked what she had seen, the little girl gasped, "Beautiful things..." An inopportune raid by the police cut short Bayne's questioning. Shoving the girl aside, she strapped herself into the TransEgo Device and launched her mind into space.

The world thought Isabella Bayne was dead, and for 86 years, she had no contact with Earth. Then, in 2030, the first of her Brood invaded Earth.

Her disembodied mind had found a new home on Xenos, a distant world inhabited by innocent humans and strange beasts. Unbound by flesh, her latent psychic powers burst forth, enabling her to take over the body of any host she choose. With a thought, she could alter the beasts of the fields, turning them into her Spawn. Using psychotronic implants as an interface between mind and machine, she created cybernetically enhanced humans and armed them with weapons fueled by the aura of death. She called her cybernetic warriors her Progeny, and used them to keep the Spawn in check.

In her years on Xenos, Bayne made a version of the TransEgo Device that could transmit organic matter. She called it the TransAnima Device. Now, she used it to send her minions to Earth.

The International Society of Enlightened Scientists (ISES) rose to meet the threat from Xenos. Using Bayne's original TransEgo Device, they sent agents to Xenos. Leaving behind their mortal shells in life support pods, these committed agents find their minds plunged into the body of a Xenite. Their minds share one body, and while they can change hosts, they must always stay together. Only one personality at a time can control the host. The

accompanying personalities find their psychic powers, long dormant on Earth, magnified to an incredible degree. Control of the host can be swapped as needed, or wrenched from the controlling personality.

To prevent a panic, the covert war against Xenos is a carefully guarded secret. The recruitment of trustworthy members of ISES is a constant and difficult activity.

MISSION ORDERS 1

For ISES Jump-Team 83C

Mission Summary: Recruitment

Subject: Jasmine Deloren

Five years ago, Jasmine Deloren received world-wide fame for her predictions of the future. Many of her predictions have since come true. With an accuracy of 90%, she is possibly the strongest Esper on Earth.

Her final series of premonitions involved an invasion of Earth from another world. The invaders, she predicted, would be cybernetically enhanced monsters and humans. The media received her dire forecast with ridicule. Soon after, Ms Deloren disappeared. Her closest friends hinted that she had foreseen her own death at the hands of the invaders and had gone into hiding.

As agents of ISES, you know Deloren's prediction of an invasion from another world has come true. Her description of the Xenites is quite accurate. In our war against Xenos, we need people with psychic powers. Just as your own latent mental powers are amplified when you travel to Xenos, Jasmine Deloren's already considerable powers would be magnified to an incredible degree. We need her on our side.

Our agents have located Jasmine Deloren's hideout in a secluded cabin in the Washington rain forest. She has spent the past five years as a recluse, avoiding all contact with the outside world. Her cabin is guarded by armed bodyguards.

Your mission is to approach Jasmine Deloren and convince her to join ISES. We expect you to return with her to the Dylan Nebraska ISES headquarters within 48 hours. Transportation is awaiting you.

NIGHT DRIVE

The PCs begin the adventure in a van driving to Jasmine Deloren's cabin. Because of mechanical problems, their plane arrived late and the hour is now past sunset. They are on a dirt road, winding past moss-draped trees on their way up a steep hill. The ground drops steeply to the left into a valley. The interlocked branches of the trees block any glimpse of the night sky, pitching the road into darkness.

The characters can have any 0 cost equipment they desire. Although this is a "friendly" mission, ISES realizes its agents may have to defend themselves at any time, so weapons are allowed.

The PCs are about a mile from Jasmine's cabin. It's almost 9 pm. Ask the driver of the van if the headlights are on or off, and the van's speed.

As it rounds a corner, the van comes upon a crashed car blocking half the road. A Driving roll is needed to avoid hitting the car. The roll required is based upon the driver's speed and precautions. A Catastrophic roll will plummet the van into the valley, doing (12 - Stamina) x 3 damage to all inside. Hitting the crashed car does (6 - Stamina) x 2 damage to the van's passengers.

The car blocking the road is a sheriff's patrol car. The front is wedged against a tree, the windshield shattered. The driver's face is a bloody ruin. Next to him, a shotgun is secured in a gun rack. The key to the rack lies on the seat next to the driver's limp hand.

A Passable Search roll reveals bits of melted glass inside the car--as though the windshield wasn't broken by the collision, but was blasted out by intense heat. A Good Medical roll shows the wounds to the driver were caused by an energy weapon, and that he died less than a half hour ago. Energy weapons exist on Earth, but are very rare and experimental.

An examination of the road and a Good Track roll turn up a set of four booted, human tracks and a set of monstrous prints. They are heading in the direction of the cabin.

The driver is Sheriff Trotti. A call on the car radio to the dispatcher will confirm that he was responding to a call for help from the Deloren cabin. Such calls are common, and usually mean a tourist has stopped to ask her directions or a bear has wandered into her compound.

Getting the van past the ruined police car will take some effort. The car can be started with a Good Repair roll, or it can be pushed out of the way with an Incredible Strength roll.

THE CABIN

Jasmine's cabin, nestled among the trees, is a huge, two story affair with a large porch. A hundred hards from the cabin, a cyclone fence surrounds the compound. The fence is electrified, and danger signs are clearly posted.

A gate blocks the road to the cabin. The gate is defended by a man in a guard's uniform. He will open fire with his machine gun the moment he sees the van. The guard is actually a Progeny from Xenos, and his gun is mounted directly into his right arm.

At the sound of a fire fight, a hulking Cybor lumbers from the cabin. He will join in the attack upon the PCs.

Like all of Isabella's Brood on Earth, the guard and the Cybor will vanish along with their equipment when slain. Their minds keep them on Earth, and when their minds are no more, the matter they were maintaining returns to Xenos.

PROGENY GUARD

Great Alertness, Poor Charm, Good Cunning, Poor Fate, Good Willpower, Passable Knowledge, Great Mechanical, Good Agility, Passable Dexterity, Good Stamina, Good Strength

Wounds: L L M M H

Armored chest: H H

Weapon: Machine gun (Passable x 6) damage. May fire a burst or spray.

CYBOR SOLDIER

Good Alertness, Inferior Charm, Poor Cunning, Poor Fate, Good Willpower, Inferior Knowledge, Inferior Mechanical, Poor Agility, Poor Dexterity, Awesome Stamina, Superior Strength.

Wounds: L L M M H H C C D

Weapons: 6-pod rocket launcher (Poor x 10) damage, (Incredible - Stamina) x 5 blast damage, psychotronic energy rifle (Good x 6) damage.

INSIDE THE CABIN

The lights are on inside the cabin. Once they enter, the PCs are faced with a scene of horror. A woman's body lies on the living room floor. The top of her head has been carefully sliced open and the contents of her skull surgically removed.

On the coffee table is a strange device consisting of three small pylons connected by a lattice of blue energy. Inside the energy field is a silver box, its lid sealed by band of green light. As the PCs burst into the room, the box is just vanishing. Although it's too late for them to stop the box, a Good Mechanical roll will indicate to a character who asks that the device on the table must be a small TransAnima Device used to transport the box to Xenos.

On the face of the TransAnima Device, numbers rapidly count down on a digital display, "5...4...3...2..." The players have one turn to react before the countdown hits zero and the device explodes, taking out much of the cabin. Any attack on the device will also cause it to explode. All those in the room take (Unbelievable - Stamina) x 5 damage; those in the cabin take (Awesome - Stamina) x 4 damage; those right outside who are not under cover take (Awesome - Stamina) x 3 damage.

Survivors will probably report back to ISES for a debriefing.

MISSION ORDERS 2

For ISES Jump-Team 83C

Mission Summary: Locate and Destroy

Subject: Jasmine Deloren's brain

From your description of the events at Jasmine Deloren's cabin and our examination of the rubble, we can conclude the following.

A Xenite incursion occurred a mile from Jasmine Deloren's cabin at 20:00 hours. The Xenites were no doubt targeting her cabin, but like the TransEgo Device, their TransAnima Device has limited accuracy.

Jasmine Deloren radioed Sheriff Trotti at 19:00 hours, an hour before the incursion. She must have had a premonition of impending danger. Sheriff Trotti was killed by the Xenites on his way to her cabin. The Xenites proceeded to her farm, severed

her communication and overpowered her guards. Taking her prisoner, they cut open her head and stole her brain.

Using a small TransAnima Device that they brought with them, the Xenites transmitted her brain back to Xenos. The TransAnima Device had a self destruct mechanism that destroyed the cabin.

One of the key components of Isabella Bayne's psychotronic devices are the crystallized brain cells of psychics. Normally, she uses the brains of native Xenites. Like us, she must have realized the mind of a powerful Earth psychic, such as Jasmine Deloren, would be incredibly potent on Xenos.

We must conclude Bayne plans to use Deloren's crystallized brain in the most powerful psychotronic weapon she has ever created.

Your mission is to go to Xenos, locate Jasmine Deloren's brain, and destroy it before Isabella can execute her plans.

TO XENOS

Note: This rest of the adventure takes place in Kaleido, Isabella's capital on Xenos. A map of the city and descriptions of key locations are in the Khaotic rule book. Players are not limited to visiting just the locations listed here.

Because they lack Isabella's TransAnima technology, ISES cannot send physical matter to Xenos. While the bodies of the PCs recuperate on Earth, their minds are sent through the TransEgo device to Xenos.

Their personalities are plunged into the body of Lenni, a Gator boy. The players must all make Willpower rolls, the player who rolls highest has control of the host. This player is called the Boss. The other players are called crickets, and only they may use their psychic powers.

The PCs take over Lenni while he is in the Barracks of Kaleido. He is in the middle of a tremendous brow-beating by Kantos the Huntmaster, the leader of the Spawn packs that scour the city for rebels. Kantos is encased in cybernetic armor and his head, the only piece of flesh visible, bristles with plugs. His right arm has been replaced with a psychotronic rifle. For complete stats, see the Khaotic rule book.

"...and tell Dappa we need those psychotronic rifles right now!" Kantos bellows at the hapless

Lenni. "The pack is waiting outside. Hurry, Gator boy, or Isabella will have your hide!"

At this point, as with most Khaotic adventures, the story can go almost any direction. There's no way to predict what the players will do or where they'll go and with their psychic powers, almost anything can happen. The following sections cover some of the most likely events.

FIGHTING KANTOS

If the players try to attack or take over Kantos, they'll probably fail (Kantos is a tough hombre), and the huntmaster, realizing Lenni is inhabited by "demons" from Earth, will try to blow him apart. He'll shout for Cybors with incinerators to burn Lenni's body, and things could get messy real fast. Most likely, the PCs will have to evacuate Lenni's dead body and return to Earth.

JOINING THE HUNT

Outside the barracks, two dozen Cybors are standing at ease, waiting for their psychotronic rifles. The PCs come across a Cybor goldbricking behind some oil barrels. In the guise of Lenni, they can easily take the weak-willed Cybor over. Soon after, they'll be discovered by a group of Cybors who order them to join the pack. Under the command of Kantos, they march into the city to search for the mysterious box.

Kantos has been told by Isabella to perform a door to door search of Kaleido and not to stop until he finds a missing box that matches the one the PCs saw disappearing from Jasmine's cabin. He doesn't know what the box contains, but is determined to appease his sovereign.

The PCs are teamed with a Cybor named Mawgna. Before long, they're kicking open the door to a human's hovel. Mawgna opens fire on those inside. If the players stop the slaughter, they learn from one of the humans that he found a box like the missing one. He sold it to Bajeffe in exchange for a false cybernetic arm. He uses the arm to make himself look like a Progeny so he won't be persecuted on the streets. He can tell the PCs that Bejeffe (the mother of Dappa and the Aunt of Lenni) is a great underground source of ill-gotten goods.

To follow up on their lead, the PCs must figure out a way to get away from the pack. Kantos is watchful for deserters from his patrol, and will deal with them harshly.

VISITING DAPPA

The players might try to track down Dappa. Discrete inquiries will lead them to the quartermaster's office at the barracks, where Dappa works. If the PCs are in Lenni's body, Dappa will greet them with nervous excitement. "Cousin! Mother wants you at the warehouse. Something important has come into the city, and she needs you to make a delivery."

Bajeffe's warehouse is in the Spawn sector of Kaleido, in a region populated mostly by Gators. It's not too difficult to locate.

BAJEFFE'S WAREHOUSE

The warehouse is guarded by three Gators. If the players visit her in Lenni's body, she chastises Lenni for being late and then hands him a sealed box with orders to take it to the reject settlement across town. She then has her three gator bodyguards escort him out the door.

The box is electronically sealed. It weighs 2 pounds, and sloshes when shaken. It's the same one the PCs saw vanishing from Jasmine's cabin.

Bajeffe knows quite a bit about Jasmine's brain. When the brain was teleported, it did not wind up where Isabella planned. Like the TransEgo Device, the TransAnima Device has an accuracy of plus or minus a mile (which explains why Isabella's strike team had to walk to Jasmine's cabin instead of teleporting into the living room). The brain ended up in a back alley of the city. A human found the box and thinking it might be valuable, traded it to Bajeffe for a faux cyberarm.

Bajeffe has already sent the real brain ahead to Zapp's Cybershop, where it is being crystallized. Once this is done, Bajeffe will sell it to the highest bidder. She's sending Lenni out with the box to lead Kantos' hunt in the wrong direction. The box actually contains a soggy cabbage. If Lenni survives the night, she'll be quite pleased with her nephew's wily abilities and will congratulate him heartily.

After sending Lenni away, Bajeffe will head out to Zapp's Cybershop to pick up the real, crystallized brain.

BRAIN BAIT

If the players are foolish enough to carry the box toward the reject camp, they will be accosted by a group of crippled, bitter progeny. They have also heard of the brain, and hope by returning it to Isabella they will regain her favor. If they wrestle the brain box from the PCs, they will hurriedly take it to their settlement. Once inside, they take the box to Tromo, their leader, who will be enraged to find it contains only a cabbage.

OPENING THE BOX

The box is sealed with a psychotronic lock. Opening the box by force takes an Unbelievable roll and does (8 - Stamina) x 3 damage to any miscreant who tries. Otherwise, opening the box takes a Great Electronics roll; failure does the same (8 - Stamina) x 3 damage.

BEING DETECTED

Throughout the night, Cybor packs are doing a house to house search of the city. If they spot a citizen acting suspiciously, they will ask, "What is the law?"

The correct answer is "Isabella is the Law. There is no other." Of course, the players will not have the faintest idea of the answer. If they respond wrongly, they will be treated as invaders from Earth. The Cybors will attack their host, and if they manage to kill it, they will imbed hooks into its carcass so they can transport it without touching it (contacting a corpse inhabited by a jump-team would allow the PCs to transfer to a new host, a fact well known to Isabella's Brood). They'll then drag the body to the Prison, where there's a cell sealed by a force field that prevents the PCs from returning to Earth.

The Cybor patrols mean the players must move through the city in secret. A Spawn talking to himself is automatically suspected of hosting agents from Earth, so caution is necessary.

THE REBEL TEMPLE

Players who have read the background comic in the Khaotic rulebook may try to contact the human rebels in hopes of gaining allies. The logical place to meet these second-class citizens is in the battered ruins of their temple. Convincing the temple leader, Jabulani, that they are friends will take proof of their sincerity. Through his agents, Jabulani knows of the box. He knows it's in the possession of Bajeffe, and can give directions to Bajeffe's warehouse.

THE CYBERLAB

This is where Isabella expected the brain to arrive, and it's where Kantos will take it if he finds it. Should the PCs decide to invade the Cyberlab, they will have to pass several guards. Any search of the Cyberlab, whether physical or psychic, will quickly reveal that the brain is not here, and that the Progeny technicians are just as baffled by its location as the PCs are.

ZAPP'S CYBERSHOP

This is where the mission will most likely end. Fitting humans with cyberware is illegal without

sanction from Isabella or a Designator. However, Progeny who wish to make some extra money sometimes perform the hideous procedure for a high fee. Zapp is known in underground circles as a Progeny who will do anything for a bayne--the plastic coin which is the standard currency in Kaleido.

Zapp is just preparing to place the brain into the crystallization field. There are two Gators outside the building. Bajeffe, if she hasn't been killed or otherwise detained, is inside with Zapp and three more Gator henchmen. The building is filled with alien technological devices and parts.

The finale can be quite amusing, with the PCs doing all they can to destroy the brain. Remember, it must be utterly destroyed. Bullets will just damage part of the brain, leaving plenty of brain cells to be crystallized.

SKILL POINT AWARDS

Because it is moderately difficult, this mission has a base value of 6 skill points. If the players fail their mission, they gain no skill points. For partial success, they receive 3 skill points each. For complete success, they gain 6 skill points, and if they succeed beyond the call of duty, they gain 12 skill points apiece.