



**THE BROKEN  
AND THE LOST**

**THE BRETHREN**

**DARWIN'S WORLD**  
POST-APOCALYPTIC ADVENTURES

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# THE BROKEN AND THE LOST: THE BRETHREN

The people of the Twisted Earth are a scattered species, the dying remnants of a race that forfeited its technological claim to the world with the violent upheaval of the great Fall. In the years since the nuclear cataclysm that reshaped the face of the planet, the ruins of the ancient world have been all but erased; by the erosion of time, the slow dying of the climate, and by the barbaric hands of the mutant survivors of humanity whose numbers dwindle every day.

While in this violent world there are powerful groups, known as the great “factions”, who vie for control over their own miserable parts of the planet, these prestigious, feared - or even worshipped - groups are indeed the minority. For every Foundation fortress full of archived knowledge, every Brotherhood Mecca with its new-world religion, and every bustling trade city vainly promising a better life through the buying and selling of the world’s last treasures, there lies hundreds of miles of savage country. While they stand prominent in their corners of the wasteland, these places are dwarfed by the sheer volume of wild and untamed land separating each faction’s lands from another. These lands are the home of the Broken and the Lost.

Every sandwalker of the Twisted Earth has heard at least something of the tribal people of the old American West; the degenerate descendants of the Ancients who now know little or nothing of their long-lost heritage. Living in meager mud huts, or in caves hollowed from desert crags, wearing the furs of wild beasts brutally slain with only the most rudimentary tools, these painfully mutated people have truly been broken by the laws of nature.

Though they all share the same origin, from a technologically advanced civilization burned away in the Fall, time and the changing world have left them altered on a physical level. Few tribes are the same physically; more often than not it is only a few miles of lifeless sand that separate one entirely separate breed of man from another.

Only a handful of sandwalkers know the lore and customs of more than a few tribes, and those that do can testify to the diversity of superstitions and crazy beliefs fostered by these amazingly backwards folk. Some have vague recollections of the ancient world, or of the Fall, woven into their ancestral stories and in many cases forming the backbones of entire tribal religions. More often than not to these people the past is entirely forgotten, however, ultimately irrelevant in the struggle for day-to-day survival that consumes them. The yearning to recreate the past which burns in the hearts of many powerful factions is simply lost to them.

Tribal people on the Twisted Earth can be found virtually everywhere; their kind fill in the uncharted places between the known nexuses of the wasteland. Along the sun-seared trade routes that crisscross the land, among the peaks of distant mountain ranges, in the cool shadow of cliff country just out of sight of trade cities like Tucumcari or Styx. They live like nomads among the lifeless sands of the great deserts, and stubbornly cling to life in the kind of inhospitable places that would make even the most hardened animals think twice. While in this day some tribal cultures (especially those along the trade routes) manage to live alongside the rising powers that are the great factions, their lot is increasingly one

*Fear not the atom in fission:  
The cradle will outwit the hearse;  
Man on this earth has a mission –  
To survive and go on getting worse.  
- Samuel Hoffenstein, “Cradle Song”*



without any hope of longevity; their future lies in being made slaves, or paid to die as savage mercenaries fighting endlessly in the wars of their masters, or as dupes for the great traders who exploit their primal innocence for its corium value.

But beyond the trade routes, in the wild places where traders seldom go, where religious cults find little promise of converts, and the technically superior find little to scavenge, the Broken and the Lost thrive. As the new powers of the Twisted Earth rise, and their shadow dwarfs these primitives - the darkness also gives their own way of life a place to thrive. One group, one great “tribe” in particular, has defied the brutality of the centuries, survived the great trials set against man and animal to punish them for the past, and has begun taking up the flag to preserve the innocence of tribal humanity. They call themselves the “Brethren”.

## HOW TO USE THESE BOOKS

Welcome to *The Broken and The Lost*, a collection of source materials for *Darwin's World 2nd Edition* that offer a more detailed look at the “Tribal” background presented in the basic rules, bringing to life one of the most integral aspects of the post-apocalyptic genre: the barbarism of the post-Fall world. This series also looks at the “Brethren”, one of the major factions of the Twisted Earth setting detailed in the *Darwin's World 2nd Edition* rules.

In addition to being a gamemaster aid, *The Broken and The Lost* presents new material fleshing out the many aspects of the “Tribal” background as a whole, including new feats, equipment, drugs and poisons, and advanced classes, all with a decidedly “primitive” cast. These new additions will bring new possibilities to the creation of both tribal NPCs and players characters alike, making them more

vibrant and interesting, and allowing these, much misunderstood and maligned savages to play a more important role in your post-apocalyptic games.

The four books in *The Broken and The Lost* series consist of the following:

## PRIMITIVE CHARACTERS

This sourcebook presents a more in-depth look at the “Tribal” background, and offers GMs and players alike advice for running low-tech characters in *Darwin's World*, either as allies, villains, or even as player characters. This sourcebook includes suggestions for making characters that are not only tribal-themed, but also make the best use of existing base classes and advanced classes, as well as occupations. But *Primitive Characters* is more than just guidelines and player advice; it also touches on various aspects of “primitive” culture, and how to incorporate these aspects into games to help maintain the savage “feel” of the Tribal background.

Finally, *Primitive Characters* introduces a selection of new and unique advanced classes and feats that are designed to reflect the savage fury and cunning survival instincts of the primitive survivors of *Darwin's World*.

## THE BRETHREN

*The Brethren* brings to life the major Twisted Earth faction of the same name, describing their origins before the Fall, their survival through the apocalypse, and their slow and brutal evolution into the anti-technology “crusaders” that they have become today. *The Brethren* is a detailed history of this movement, and a sourcebook that describes the intricacies of their barbarous politics, philosophies, and organization. Included in this book are the statistics for many sample Brethren agents and foot soldiers,

their “guides” and “prophets”, and the shadowy, epic-level leaders that propel the Brethren’s zealous dedication from behind the scenes. A detailed look at San Francisco - the forbidden citadel from which they launch their crusades - is also provided.

## TRIBES OF THE TWISTED EARTH

This sourcebook is a veritable “encyclopedia” of the tribes that populate the seldom-visited regions of the Twisted Earth, from the deep deserts of Arizona to the high mountains of the Rockies. Each entry in this book details a specific tribe, with information regarding religion, specific beliefs, bizarre history, and in some cases, their unique role in their particular corner of the world. *Tribes of The Twisted Earth* not only details the vast collection of tribes known to populate the wasteland, it offers rules for making characters from each specific tribe, as well as presents sample NPC stat blocks so that these tribes can be put to use as allies - or enemies - in your existing *Darwin's World* campaigns.

## NEW TERRORS

*New Terrors* offers a sampling of new mutant beasts whose lore is specifically exclusive to the tribal cultures of the Twisted Earth. This GM aid presents a handful of new monsters that are known to exist on the fringes of the known world where only savages dwell, from curious beasts of burden to nightmare horrors that have become legendary in the minds of these primitive people.





## THE BRETHREN

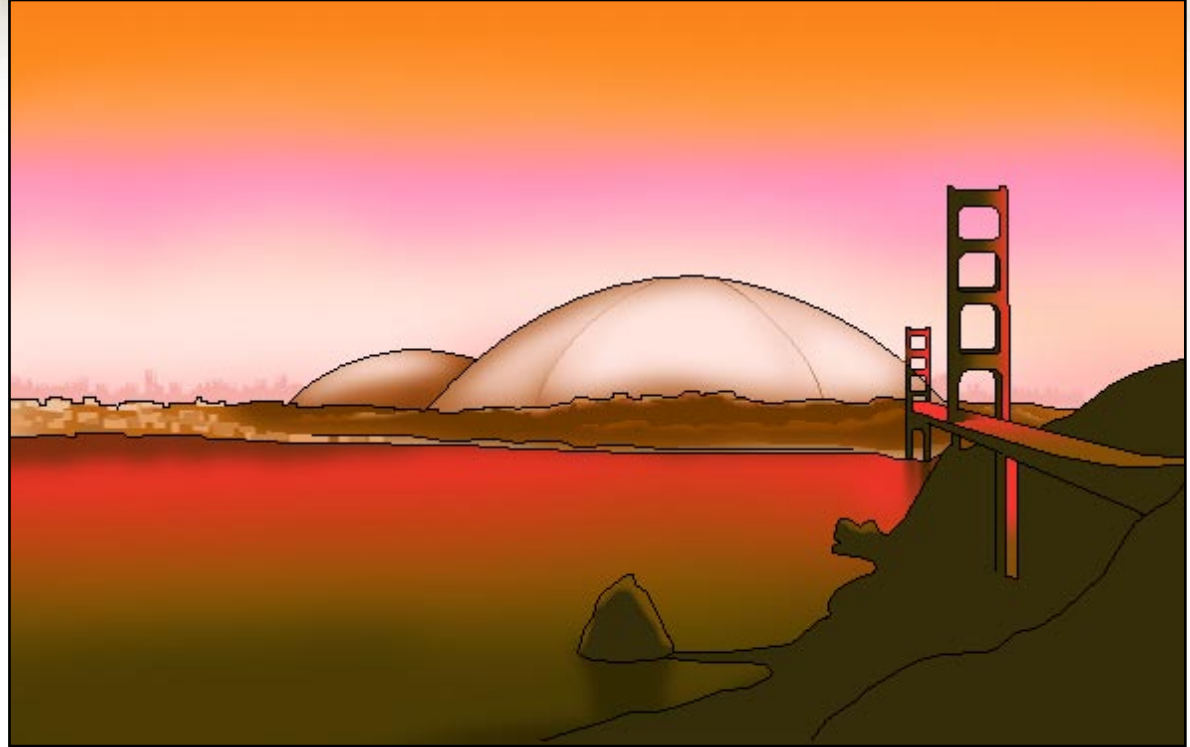
### HISTORY

*Technology is the root of all evil. Technology poisoned the earth, destroyed the natural order.*

*Where men had once been free to wander the world, stare at the stars whenever he liked and drink from any stream, hunt any animal – now he had to worry about borders, about ownership rights, about the value of every inch of land. He was a trespasser wherever he went. He had to give pause before he drank water, for not only did it belong to someone else – but also it might be poisoned by the industries of his fellow man.*

*Technology made man fearless against the natural dangers of the world – floods, fire, and even the animals. Without this fear of nature, man became arrogant – and set himself on the path of destruction. Wolves, bears, and lions, which once hunted man as his equal, were now tamed. There were no horizons, no frontiers for man to fear – he strode forward and conquered them all, settled them all, and turned them all into mirrors of his grotesque technological native land.*

*Technology destroyed the concept of the community; it stripped man of any humanity he had left. Fathers and mothers did not raise their children – surrogates were chosen to guide the young through childhood. Loyalty, kinship, and the cement of family were forgotten. Sons and daughters abandoned the elderly to “homes”, where they would live out their last days like lepers in a cave, smelling Death as it wandered*



*among them in cold white halls.*

*Weapons were made so precise and accurate, so safe to use, that war became too easy. There was no fear of fighting, and so the Great Powers waged war on a whim. Those who did not possess the technology of the Great Powers became mere slaves, their destinies subject to the whims of those who held technology in their hands. All lived under the shadow of technology, afraid of it.*

*Men, jealous of the technology of one nation or another, killed to acquire it. Even those who peacefully sought technology were victims of its curse. Countries destroyed others who simply*

*sought technologies that would make them equal in the community of nations.*

*A great inequality, technology was the tool of tyrants and oppressors.*

*The sky turned red, and the rays of the sun became deadly – all because of technology. Plants withered, animal herds thinned. The seas were turned to sludge; the fish became poisonous to eat.*

*Technology's artificial hand created new foods, or made the last herds invulnerable to the Laws of Nature. Without nature's hand to weed out the weak, however, or to curb the population, the numbers of man increased across the Earth.*

*They grew so much that the world itself was taxed to its very limit, so that in the End the entire planet gave off a tremendous sigh of exhaustion, stumbled, and collapsed under its own weight.*

*Technology brought the Fall. Weapons only intended to deter, to terrorize other kingdoms into submission and obedience, were actually used. The Great Bluff was called. Entire cities were wiped off the earth like greasy smudges of no consequence. Millions, billions of lives were ended in a single moment. The animals of the world, already herded into pens awaiting slaughter to feed man, let out a great scream of relief as the waves of flame took them too. Were they crying out in delight at the sight of Man, their enemy, dying in droves – or because at long last they could know release from their hellish existence?*

*The Earth itself seemed to embrace technology's last great display; in its wisdom Earth knew that this last explosion of technology would be its final, and that the world would be free of its shackles from then on.*

*Yet today technology rises again. There are those among the wastes who see the artifacts of the Ancients all around and forget the lessons of the past. The garbage of a monstrous civilization crumbled to ash, lying in heaps where it was struck dead by its own hand, it still calls to those of weak mind and will, beckons for them to bring it back to life. Ignorant men with notions of greatness work with greed and fever to resurrect these ancient machines. Many seek only to conquer, reviving technology as a means to defeat their enemies in the example of the Great Powers of the ancient past. Their goals are clear and malevolent. And there are others who,*

## THE ARTICLES

Though it is unclear to outside sources what truth, if any, is to be found among the Articles, the Brethren look to these important books as total, unequivocal truth. However, though many are entrenched in a rough attempt at poetics, there are undeniable elements within many parables that fit in with known history of the Fall and, especially, the fate of their ancestral home, San Francisco.

*though meaning well, foolishly believe that one extra water pump, one extra purifier, one extra gun, one extra bullet, will make life easier for them. Put food in their mouths where they have only known hunger. Make them invincible to the animals of the Twisted Earth. Save lives. Save generations of children. Save the world. Bring about a new era of Enlightenment where we, mutantkind, will use technology only for good – and never for evil.*

*But they are all Deceived! They promise “never again” even as they hungrily seek it out, technology, among the ashes. Even as they kill one another over it, looting each other and laying waste to entire communities to secure it. They are murderers, killers all, fools of the worst kind, and madmen in a world of Madness.*

*We are the Brethren. And we will not allow this wicked day to come.*

*- The Articles, Introduction*

The faction called the “Brethren” is a force feared across the known lands of the Twisted Earth. Composed of vast masses of illiterate, bestial mutants and various survivors of the wild diseases that infest the ancient necropolis like breeding pits, they are a twisted, scarred, and bitter people. Keeping their crippled mutant bodies alive, and their corrupted hearts strong, is a violent hatred of the Ancients – a hatred easily spawned in a world where only ruins remain and the blame for mutant kind’s misery and

desolation can be firmly traced to the arrogance of Those Who Came Before.

The Brethren are best known for their vocal condemnation of the Ancients and, especially, *technology*. It is technology, they believe, that made the Ancients mad with power and brought them to ruin. From scavenged copies of a particular book of ancient origins, they quote the biblical story of the Tower of Babel; they equate humankind’s technological rise to that mythical tower’s arrogant and foolhardy construction, and its inevitable collapse is likened (in their eyes) to the wars that the Ancients brought upon themselves as a result of their uncontrollable weapons and reliance on technology.

Vowing to prevent the same mistakes from occurring again - and possibly finishing the job of destroying all life on Earth - the Brethren have risen to become a considerable power in the wastelands and ruins of the world, striking from their ancestral home among the ruins of San Francisco. Though cruel and unforgiving to those who do not share their devotion, their message of erasing the hated history of the past – and tearing down all efforts to rebuild civilization in favor of a much simpler, more savage Order – has some very real appeal to the dying inhabitants of the world who have only the Ancients to thank for their present condition.

Preserved in a series of small books known only as the “Articles” - snippets of which will be referenced throughout this section - the Brethren maintain an unusual history of their people and, by virtue of



their remarkable longevity, an unbroken line back to the time before the Ancients (few factions of the Twisted Earth can boast such a strong tie to the past; it is ironic that a group so bitterly against the ancient ways would openly admit their origins). These Articles record, in a most unusual manner, the history of the Brethren “movement” through a long series of proverbs and parables - short stories that give a glimpse of what life was like at a given moment in time, while at the same time giving a moral lesson or exhibiting some important truth that the Brethren believe vital to their philosophies. Though seemingly complex, the Articles are essentially a Brethren view of history and, by extension, a tool so that future generations learn from the past.

In addition to explaining the origins and evolution of the Brethren’s bizarre and zealous beliefs, their history is also the history of the ancient city of San Francisco, and a saga with lasting implications for the Twisted Earth.

### PRELUDE

The latter days of the Ancients were a time of great changes, among them the drastic social upheavals that were a result of the ever-increasing pace that came with the advancement of technology in Ancient society. While it is true the efforts of Ancient man made machines that could walk, talk, and take the place of humans, as well as unimaginable medicines to cure all ills and a vast number of advances that turned their world into a virtual “utopia”, there was, as with all good things, a darker side to this paradise that man had made.

The history of the Brethren is a story of this darker side. The Brethren, for all that they are now known on the Twisted Earth, find their origins among the hobos, homeless, and street people of the pre-Fall world - the very sizeable population of people in

cities all over the country who benefited little if at all from the great advances being made by their fellow man. Ignored and indeed at times oppressed by the era’s institutionalized mistrust and prejudice for those who fell through the safety net of society, they were true outsiders in their own country.

In these days San Francisco wasn’t covered in sand, soot, or the dust of ages, but in the glow of all ancient cities, the pulsing light of thousands of cars on gaudily arrayed streets, and the radiance of willowy skyborne structures that rose like blinding pillars into the sky. Like all Ancient cities, San Francisco was publicly portrayed as a model of technology and a modern marvel, but while the Ancients strove to polish the images of its new, super-advanced cities with illuminated skybridges and brilliant domes to protect the city’s throbbing financial and entertainment districts, the shameful reminders of the ancient worlds’ failed ability to provide a “utopia for all” found their way in. Finding a modicum of sympathy in the loose anti-vagrancy laws of this traditionally liberal city (whereas in other Metropoli stricter measures were being enforced to prevent immigration by “unproductives”), the homeless found a home. Sheltering beneath the overpasses and in the forgotten places of subway tunnels, in back alley cardboard boxes and finding warmth on rusted sewer grates, these impoverished masses settled in.

The story of the Brethren begins before the Fall, in a time virtually forgotten by the survivors of that cataclysm, in this bustling West Coast metropolis. An exact, bigger picture of this time is obviously hard to come by, but by all accounts San Francisco was certainly one of the shining jewels of the Ancients’ era. A city rich with history, a symbol of young America’s spirit of adventure (immortalized in countless movies of the Old West as an almost

fairy-tale destination for pioneers, profiteers and adventurous immigrants looking for a new life), and a major port in its own right, San Francisco was a landmark city of the Ancient world.

The gold booms of California and the settlement of migrants from across the world brought even more life and vitality to this city, and though unforgivingly tested by nature in the fires of 1906, its spirit of survival carried it through. The economic highs and lows of various decades in history continued to see the city expand, depress, and explode once more, like a heartbeat. As the future approached, however, and the golden era of the Ancients seemed to be marching fearlessly into the unknown, the foundation on which the Ancients built their civilization was less sure than they hoped.

### THE BEGINNING

*He knows the fright of hunger and thirst,  
And of cold and rain as well;  
Of raggedy clothes and out-worn shoes,  
An awful tale he can tell  
- Hobo poem*

It is unsure how the “problem” first began; even Brethren records shed little light on the time before the Fall. Certainly the emergence of an actual homeless “population” was a societal sickness common to all ages, even those of great prosperity, which by all means the twilight of the Ancients appeared to be. Primarily in cities, but also in rural parts of the country where the world climate was becoming more hostile to large-scale natural agriculture (that is, agriculture that did not have some reliance on hydroponics or protective domes) and other staples of the rural economy, parts of the population either were falling through the proverbial

cracks or simply not buying into the futuristic age being pushed on them by their government. In the countryside, small-scale farmers were vanishing as huge government-subsidized or corporate-financed mega-farms took over the landscape, and ranchers, herders, and other independents were also hedged out of their livelihoods. With drastic population increases in the urban Metropoli, resources worldwide were in ever-increasing demand, causing costs to rise, threatening shortages, and compromising the domestic stability and global marketplace on which the entire system relied. In return, drastic measures were being introduced, in which automation and corporate control were key factors for success. Needing to produce more food faster, the confused web of small, independent resource producers slowly began to disappear, replaced by super-efficient robotic farms and state plantations.

While in the countryside this led to the creation of isolated “cells” (see sidebar), in the cities the problems of over-population had a different effect. Though certainly the nation as a whole was making leaps and bounds economically, not all members of society were benefiting from increasing social programs, buying into the bread-and-circuses of entertainment and pacification, or supportive of the way things were going - no matter how good they looked. As many Americans reveled in the successes of their country and used its prosperity as justification for its policies both at home and abroad, liberal thinkers were beginning to emerge that would question this established *status quo*.

No one knows exactly who the first domestic demagogues of the past were, but oral tradition among the Brethren speaks of a small group of priests working in various urban homeless missions in the San Francisco area, leaders of a prominent Bay Area women’s group, volunteers from a national union

### RURAL CELLS

During the time of the Ancients many parts of America were literally bought-up by the corporate giants of the area, their natural forests and vast tracts of wilderness liberated through intense government lobbying to create arable - and highly profitable - farmland. Citing the growing threat of worldwide climate change and the shortages it would bring (which ironically were the fault of sister or even parent corporations specializing in manufacturing), the corporations won a relatively effortless battle to turn America’s wild places into new and productive agricultural regions.

However, the introduction of vast robot-controlled, automated farms - some of which covered up to hundreds of miles - devastated a whole way of life. Private farms disappeared almost overnight, driving large sectors of otherwise unskilled people out of work. Removed from their land and deprived of the familiarity of their normal way of life, many of these people retreated into the growing wasteland to try subsistence farming in rugged, isolated corners of the desert, or abandon everything to live as true survivalists in the wilds. Private moisture farms (producing purified water for industry and consumption) rose briefly before these too were driven out of business by larger entities. Eventually, deprived of any living and any place to go, entire rural counties turned into the domestic equivalent of third-world countries. Separated by miles of robot-maintained highways and railroads, small towns dwindled and eventually vanished, and the few remaining inhabitants became isolationist and bitter.

As population outside the great cities decreased, so did government interest and intervention. As sabotage against corporate facilities began to rise, corporations were given the right by state governments to police their own land and eradicate trespassers. In general this simply meant garrisoning a farm or plantation with security robots, which protected corporate property securely - but did nothing outside their boundaries.

This evolution of enforcement led to the genesis of the first great raider gangs. Born from the ranks of impoverished and angry rural folk, as well as from the inordinate number of doomsday cults springing up all over the West and Midwest, the first raider gangs took advantage of the disappearance of state law enforcement. Taking to the vast open highways, these early raider gangs preyed on the few remaining small communities, fellow survivors, and robot-controlled corporate truck convoys carrying machinery and other supplies to distant farms. Remarkably, one such group was to become the “Dakota Destroyers”, a tribe described in *Prominent Tribes of The Twisted Earth*.

of sex workers, politicians from a fringe - some say *radical* - political party of the times, a cell of social educators from the Anarchist Black Cross, and even a disenfranchised professor of sociology who moved from Los Angeles to San Francisco to give everything up and start a small anti-establishment retreat for

like-minded “students of human nature”. Whoever they really were, in the years leading up to the Final War the general notion of the Ancients’ domestic bliss seems to have been shaken - at least in certain parts of the country.

By all accounts San Francisco seemed to be a



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hotbed for the experimentation of revolutionary ideas. Again, Brethren history is unclear, but stories hint at a time when a certain young priest, questioning his own faith, began speaking out in public about his dissatisfaction. Using the crowds of homeless who came to his mission as an audience, he began to bounce ideas around, trying to find meaning and sense in the misery and hypocrisy of the age. At first his tirades of “injustice” went ignored, heard only by the ears of the hobos and bums who would sit and listen if only to get a free meal. Soon, however, word began to spread; other speakers, whoever they were, picked up the message and began blending in their own ideas, giving hope to those who had no hope. Pride to the humble and homeless. A small core of speakers - who began to be called “guides for all brethren” (a name that would stick, at least in part, throughout the evolution of the Brethren) - began getting their message out and onto the streets, appealing to a much broader audience, and carried on the lips of a newly-invigorated people who had nothing to lose, and everything to gain.

Unfortunately, the new call for the social empowerment of the disenfranchised (and a moral reckoning of society as a whole) came at a bad time, not only as America was proudly expanding its image of futuristic success, but also as it struggled to gain control of the world’s resources. A crackdown was imminent, if only a subtle one. First and foremost began a campaign of discrediting, a deliberate manipulation of regional and national media that brought a harsh light to the varied backgrounds of many who were behind the new social movement. As several of the demagogues were wanted for petty crimes (solicitation, prostitution, vagrancy, assembling without a permit, etc.), the government’s next step was to move in and arrest key figures for minor crimes - all a maneuver to further devastate the

movement’s credibility. When three women’s rights activists were arrested publicly while on air at a public radio station in the Bay Area, the government hoped it had effectively put the final nail in the movement’s coffin.

Instead, what resulted was a riot. Though it began small, the riot broke out across the city almost overnight, as certain radical members of the movement capitalized on the event to electrify the masses into action. A large crowd of more than 500 homeless raided the police station where the three women were being held, freeing them after overcoming the precinct’s officers. During the standoff the government acted delicately, desperate to prevent a martyrdom that would infuse the riots with some semblance of legitimacy. When news crews arrived the rioters allowed an interview, in which the three women - badly bruised and obviously mistreated - appeared on television to denounce their treatment, and rip into a hastily-prepared speech that, when aired on live T.V., shocked what few revolutionaries were left sitting idle into acting.

## THE WAR

*They speak to us of the coming Apocalypse,  
An inevitable threat to Civilization!  
Mr. President calls us to do our part:  
Fight for him and save this Nation  
But I say Hell No, Mr. President,  
I have no faith in your word;  
Instead of serving turkey to the troops,  
How 'bout hooking me up with a bird?  
- Anonymous street poet, San Francisco*

The standoff between the rioters and government lasted for an unprecedented three days, in which the Tenderloin, Inner Mission, and South of Market

districts (all with large concentrations of homeless) were virtually shut down. However, the event ended without a shot fired, and the city appeared to return to normal.

Less than a week later, however, as the city’s more insulated inhabitants still pondered what they had seen on T.V., the first signs of a real impending catastrophe began to take shape. Following five years of intense strategic arms limitation talks overseas, a total breakdown of diplomacy occurred. As the teams of American negotiators returned with bleak news, at the same time a political union of “allied” foreign nations levied a series of bizarre ultimatums against the United States. A stunned national populace watched and listened as the President came on television - interrupting primetime programming - and addressed the recent events, and alluded, in the vaguest of terms, to the possibility of “hard times” ahead. In his speech the President made a fateful (some say deliberate) reference to the recent riots in San Francisco, blatantly besmirching those involved with unfounded suggestions they were in fact agents of a foreign power sent to instigate civil unrest before a planned attack - in a word, *traitors*.

The “hard times” alluded to by the President took shape soon after, as enemies of the United States, finally mustering their strength for an attack on an unprecedented scale, launched their first wave of air and naval assets against American shores. As war broke out and martial law was declared, the entire nation was turned on its head. Old stories speak of civilians moving to the coast (including along the San Francisco’s Ocean Beach) to witness naval battles unfold at sea, listening to distant rumbles on the stormy sea as warships battled out of sight of land. As if in a state of shock, many did not flee the urban centers, having faith in the daily government broadcasts that assured a quick repulsion of the





enemy invasion.

Bombing raids soon followed, taking out key power, transportation, and especially communications targets. As the days passed reports began filtering in to the few news sources in the city that the enemy had landed south in Los Angeles, and north in Portland, as well as all over the East Coast. The government was instituting a nationwide draft, and just days after the first bombing raids, the 40th Infantry Division of the California National Guard moved into the city to begin hasty preparations to defend against a suspected naval landing. While elements of the division began setting up in the eastern part of the city, other units (namely the 3rd Brigade) began escorting a controversial evacuation of select citizens south towards the vault constructed in the hills of Bernal Heights. This evacuation, which involved cutting a “corridor” through the city so that motorcades and foot traffic could pass, stood as clear evidence that the government expected something far worse than the “quick repulsion” they promised.

Worse, the evacuation - which set out to take only the city’s most prominent political/financial figures and their families - caused uproar among the on looking crowds. When word got out the speakers of the movement organized a protest, led by one of the young mission priests, but this soon degenerated into a chaotic melee; a row broke out between soldiers as a large crowd of bystanders, rallied to action, attempted to overcome the 3rd Brigade escort and rush for the vault. Some thirty men, women, and children were killed in the gunfire. However, in the chaos the organizers made their move, slipping one of their numbers into the crowds heading to the vault. They hoped this individual might be able to seize control of the vault somehow and re-open it for those waiting outside. That night the vault doors closed despite the growing crowds ringing the streets of



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Bernal Heights, but the Brethren plant, whoever he was, was never heard from again (though far in the future the Brethren would learn of his fate; see later for details).

Two days later, as the fear mounted and starvation began to set in, troops from the Reserve arrived to move selected draftees out of the city for training. Their arrival, which the inhabitants had mistakenly believed was to bring food supplies, created even more violence, especially as young men began being forcefully removed to join the war.

A few days later the enemy appeared off the coast, having bitterly wrested control of the waters from the last resisting squadrons of the U.S. Navy. The fighting for San Francisco must have been intense, as advance craft “prepped” the beaches and the city itself with naval guns, while aerial bombardment continued unabated. The defenders, hiding in the city, returned fire on landing craft, sending many of the overloaded black boats to the bottom of the Pacific. Smoke blanketed the city after only a few hours of fighting, and though the landing was bitterly contested up and down the coast, the enemy was able to land in force in the city proper and push towards downtown in the same day.

### ABANDONMENT

*When the city first fell, many who could afford it hitched rides with the army.*

*Countless others were left behind, trapped in the firestorm.*

*Those that survived fell under the flag of the Great Enemy.*

*“We are doomed,” said Fear, as the shadow encircled the city and the barbed wire of the camps began to rise.*

*“I would not pass such hasty judgment,”*

*Clarity said.*

*“Are they any worse than our last masters? Let us see what our new overlords offer.”*

*- Clarity 2:5 (The Articles)*

Two weeks later, the last resistance completely crumbled. The surviving elements of the 40th Division, having fought a brutal urban struggle, were badly reduced in operative effectiveness from the mounting casualties. Civilians - those left behind when the Bernal Heights vault doors closed - clogged the streets and neighborhoods directly behind the front lines, which stretched from the Castro in the south to the Theater District, Nob Hill, and North Beach in the north. Surveying the inevitable collapse of their lines the commanders of the 40th Division ordered a breakout, hoping to escape the city and hook up with other retreating elements of the Army and Marines moving back towards the Sacramento Valley.

In the surrealistic chaos thousands of citizens - said to be led by several of the original “speakers” who had incited the riots before the Fall - tried to flee the city as well. The sudden pullback of army troops caused a total panic, and Brethren stories speak of the bravery of these men and women in trying to organize the civilians and get out as many as they could. As the mechanized army units began to pull out of their defensive positions, they found the streets completely congested with the crowds of thousands trying desperately to escape. Individual commanders, taking advantage of the situation, began accepting cash, gold, and jewelry from civilians begging to go with them, allowing them to ride on their tanks and trucks as they moved slowly through the streets. As this became clear the less fortunate in the crowds - feeling left behind - began to gather and throw rocks at the passing war machines; several army

vehicles were swamped by the streams of civilians, and the sudden eruption of activity triggered an enemy response. Artillery came down in the vicinity of the rioting, and forward units of the enemy’s 650th “Prachanda” Infantry Division (named after a legendary Nepalese “freedom fighter”) began to move out from their positions along the line. In the chaos the commander of the 40th ordered his men to fire on any civilians blocking their pullback from the city; a sudden and unexpected bloodbath ensued, as the army mowed down countless hundreds of shocked and horrified civilians, clearing the streets and cutting a crimson path out of the city. In just 12 hours the remnants of the 40th managed to pull completely out of the city, leaving close to 100,000 civilians behind in their wake.

Within a month of the city’s abandonment the blasted cityscape was occupied completely by forces of the Pacific Union. As the smoke and fires died down, enemy tanks and battalions of foreign fighters marched through the streets, headed for the front lines east of the city as the fighting for California continued. Three security battalions from the 650th were left to control the city, and begin immediate construction of camps to temporarily manage the population that remained. Sporadic resistance by *ad hoc* civilian partisan groups - composed largely of police and college students - were put down quickly, in no small part because support was not immediately forthcoming from the general populace. Stunned and terrified, the majority of the public had not yet come to terms with the reality of their predicament.

### INTERMENT CAMPS

*When the patriots among us chose to rise up, our ancestors did not;  
Some would call us cowards.*



*Watching the carnage as the uprising was brutally quelled, Fear said this:*

*“If we do not fight, we are no longer Americans.”*

*Clarity’s response was this: “Were we ever?”*  
- Clarity 3:3 (*The Articles*)

Owing to the widespread devastation of the city, which left tens of thousands without shelter, Pacific Union forces were quick to round up civilian pockets throughout San Francisco and begin putting them to work constructing sprawling camps (which would later be nicknamed “gulags”). When the commanders of the enemy force learned of the “elitist vault” beneath Bernal Heights they were fascinated, and made every effort to locate the vault’s entrance. When they finally did, enemy engineers tried to blast through the vault doors and capture the people inside - an act that would have been the perfect propaganda victory for their side. When these efforts failed, they ordered their prisoners to dig through the reinforced concrete casing of the vault to get at the people inside, but these met with similar failure as well. When they eventually learned that the vault would not open for at least one hundred years, the Pacific Union troops lost interest and gave up.

Many died in the forced labor of these early days, including several of the actual founders of the pre-war movement (whose identities are now lost to history), leaving only a handful of the original speakers who had so inspired the “Brethren” before the war. Key among them was a man who would later be known only as “Clarity”, an apparent cynic yet one whose natural-born charisma would help shape those who stayed true to the message long after the war. Though forcing the masses to work under the shadow of their guns and tanks, Pacific Union leaders in the field began distributing propaganda

that claimed they were here to liberate the American people from a government controlled by a select few among the wealthiest percentage, using advances in technology and drugs to generate a hypnotic hedonism to lure the people away from realizing the truth of their situation. Pretty typical stuff, and most people were too afraid to do anything but stand obediently and hear the daily broadcasts, or listen to the Pacific Union political officers give slanted news of how the war was being won, proclaiming the inevitable collapse of the United States, and the glories of their own emancipation once America capitulated.

When prisoners began to arrive from the front, these defeated soldiers were forced to join the general population of the ever-growing camps. Many former homeless, already having established themselves as cooperative prisoners (after all, at least now they were being fed and sheltered), began to be given control over other prisoners as “trustees”. However, as the camp population began to grow in size, so did dissent and plans for action. Many of the newly-arrived soldiers, especially the officers, still had a lot of fight in them and wanted to rise up, overcome the camp guards, and start a general uprising. The plan was an optimistic one: to liberate the camp and retake the city, and hold on long enough for the news to get out and inspire other captives in cities up and down the coast. Quietly word spread through the camp, infecting the scattered military personnel (many still nursing wounds from the fighting), and the civilians who wanted to take part. When, just days before the planned uprising word accidentally slipped to the trustees, a clandestine midnight meeting was called, in which members of the resistance and the trustees gathered to discuss the turn of events.

Details of that meeting are lost, but apparently the

trustees still had some sympathetic connection with their fellow citizens, for they did not alert the camp commandant to their plans. Instead the trustees tried to talk the resistance fighters out of what they called a “suicidal” action, one, that if thwarted, would bring terrible consequences for all. The civilian organizers didn’t listen, and even went so far as to try and instill guilt in the trustees by calling on their sense of honor, their sense of loyalty to their country. As things seemed to reach an impasse, at the height of the meeting a high-ranking officer from among the military prisoners revealed that in fact he had been a *plant*, sent to infiltrate the camp masquerading as a POW to organize the resistance uprising. He assured the doubtful trustees that other agents like him were staging similar actions in other occupied cities, and pulled from hiding signed papers that proved his claims. Then, as they stared incredulously, he *ordered* the trustees to do their duty and take part in the coming fight. Without a response Clarity (the leader of the camp trustees) left, leading his followers close behind.

When the camp prisoners finally rose up it was a bloodbath. Though fighters in all three major camps set up among the ruins took up arms with makeshift weapons such as broom handle spears and zip guns, they were clearly outmatched. Even with patriotic fervor the efforts of the prisoners were futile; uninterested in endangering themselves by entering the gulag proper to sort out the provocateurs from the rest of the camp population, the camp guards simply cut the power to the gates, lined up troops outside the chain-link fence, and fired through at the rioters. The first night of fighting resulted in over 1,000 resistance fighters being killed in the camps throughout the city. The next day, as reinforcements arrived from the front to quell the uprising, the morale of the rebels collapsed. Emerging from the bunkhouses that

had served as bunkers with makeshift white flags in hand, they sought to surrender. But the Pacific Union commanders saw in the uprising an opportunity to end the possibility of any future rebellion, and had moved tanks and machineguns in overnight. To the horror of the surrendering civilians, the camp population was decimated as the Pacific Union forces tore down the camp wall with bulldozers, drove tanks into the compound, and engaged in a vicious slaughter against men, women, and children alike, indiscriminately killing anyone and everything that emerged from hiding. Estimates vary, but it is not unreasonable to believe more than 20,000 people were killed as a result.

Clarity, who had foreseen the results of a failed revolt, had ordered his trustees in the various camps to go into hiding underneath their bunkhouses, each cell with its own small cache of supplies, where they took cover during the blazing firefight the night before, and during the “culling” of the camp population that day. As their fellow countrymen were slaughtered within earshot, Clarity refused to allow his fellows to enter the fight.

The rebellion died in a fit of gunfire, to the sounds of thousands crying in vain for mercy. And with it died the last true Americans in San Francisco.

### SEEDS OF A NEW IDEOLOGY

*“We were fools to accept the flag of a new master,” Fear said one day as he and his brothers toiled in the fields in the winter cold.*

*Around them the red-colored guards watched sternly, thunder-sticks in hand.*

*Clarity merely smiled and shook the snow from his hair.*

*“While we wear their chains and bear their lashes, our new masters have unwittingly taught us to grow crops and support ourselves. When they have passed on our chains will be gone, the stripes will heal, but we will never again go hungry.”*

*- Clarity 3:9 (The Articles)*

Weeks after the uprising, the mood in the camps was understandably sober. The Pacific Union garrison had the few remaining survivors of the slaughter rebuild the camp walls; and repair the burnt-out rows of bunkhouses. Now more than ever, the survivors realized they had to obey, and set about their tasks without a word.

Though the Pacific Union soldiers continued to berate their American enemies and give optimistic predictions about the war in nightly propaganda events, as the weeks passed it became clear the war was beginning to turn sour for all sides. Cast-off food supplies that normally found their way into the bellies of the camp prisoners were no longer arriving, and even the guards seemed to get leaner as winter grew in intensity. Work details became more frequent, with the trustees being sent out of the camps into the nearby ruins to scavenge for food from old supermarkets and restaurants. In addition, orders were given to demolish the many empty bunkhouses that now stood vacant after the camp’s decimation, and create workable fields where hardy edibles (like potatoes) could be grown. Though it certainly wasn’t their place to ask, while the system was ostensibly suggested by the commandants to allow the prisoners to grow food to feed themselves, more and more of the crop was taken by the camp guards and, later, boxed up to be shipped off to starving Pacific Union soldiers on the stalemated front lines.

Remarkably, though the trustees cringed at the unknown future that loomed ahead (some had hope that the war might soon end, while others feared what the Pacific Union guards might do if forced to abandon the camps), Clarity, the newly-elected leader and liaison for the camp prisoners, seemed drawn away from the rumors and silent whispers - and instead seemed to be listening harder to the words of their captors, and watching their methods. Standing silent during the nightly newscasts, eyes glimmering, he seemed to be shell-shocked. Some feared their leader had finally lost it.

It was during this time, however, that in reality Clarity began formulating ideas that he would spread to his followers, and would serve as the seeds, which would shape the Brethren in the future. Though he had no love for his foreign oppressors, Clarity saw with clear eyes that in all things there is some value, and in all philosophies there is something worth taking. He absorbed the words of their brutal occupiers, who were attempting to change them into fellow communists, and realized that much of what they were saying had been applicable to their kind not only before the war, but might be useful - God willing - in whatever new world emerged from the current darkness. He encouraged the other prisoners to remember what their oppressive masters were teaching them, whether it was something as simple as planting potatoes to something as lofty as seeing reality through unclouded eyes, alluding to a time when they would be gone and those lessons would come in handy. Some scoffed, saying that once the war ended they would again be prisoners of old Uncle Sam, but Clarity said no more on the issue.

However some - especially those who recognized Clarity knew more than they did - followed his example.



## CONFLAGRATION

*The camp burned around them, and countless Brethren lay dead.*

*Fear stumbled into the barracks, heady from the stench of death within, the red shirt from a dead guard in hand.*

*In a frenzy, his eyes were blurred with tears. "Red is the color of our masters," he cried, "let us burn it before another master comes."*

*Suddenly a hand touched his shoulder, and a weak voice commanded him to stop.*

*"No," said Clarity, "the children are cold. A long winter is setting in. We face the future alone, with many enemies in the hinterland."*

*"Don the shirt."*

*- Clarity 4:1 (The Articles)*

Life in the camps continued relatively peacefully over the next few months, in no small part due to Clarity's leadership. Though the camp guards continued to take larger and larger portions of inmate-produced goods, the early Brethren managed to make ends meet and avoid confrontations with their captors at the same time, through a dedication to hard labor and their own ingenuity. When members of the camp population became sick, the Brethren had no one to rely on but themselves. Any decrease in crops would spell disastrous repercussions, so they arranged an inter-camp exchange program that drew healthy workers from one camp to make up for shortages in another. This had the secondary benefit of reinforcing unity among the camps, spreading the word of the population's representative "committee" (including Clarity, who was now just one of several speakers), preventing the outbreak of self-destructive patriotism as had happened before, and making sure everything the committee planned ran smoothly.

Though it was a phenomenal task balancing the slow rise of disease and starvation with the demands of their captors, the Brethren leaders earned the respect of the Pacific Union commandants, who slowly began to see the trustees as true "comrades", at least ideologically. In at least one instance a friendly Pacific Union commander offered to take the trustees back to the East after the war where they could start anew. A handful of pre-Fall speakers were still alive, and some were warming to their captors' propaganda and growing friendship. Others were not, however, including the few members of the camp population who had been relatively well-off citizens before the war; bankers, lawyers, and other members of the upper and middle class who were unable to escape to the Bernal Heights vault. But they were also very afraid; seeing the trustees becoming more empowered, taking over the roles of leadership, they felt threatened. But for now they remained silent.

The tranquility of the camps was abruptly shattered near the end of the year, as a much greater war erupted across the world. Though the reasons for the sudden outbreak of nuclear mutually-assured destruction were complex and entrenched in the waning hope for a peaceful resolution, to the Brethren the sudden End came without warning, entirely out of the blue. One day, as the Brethren worked the fields that now ringed the gulags, there was a sudden flash of light over the city. Sky-high nuclear fireballs erupted around the airport and port facilities - the main staging areas for Pacific Union forces in the city - and as they cooled, towering mushroom clouds rose over San Francisco. The initial heat wave effects, and the concussion from the blasts, devastated huge portions of the urban sprawl, including the gulags, flattening many of the barracks and burying *alive* hundreds of prisoners and trustees alike. Workers in the fields were incinerated, as were guards and

other security forces scattered throughout the ruins. Fires spread out of control (in the following weeks the conflagration would spread from San Francisco and to other neighboring cities like Oakland and Stockton, burning them to the ground).

Emerging from the holocaust was like the slow waking from a long nightmare. Power was gone, the city draped in darkness except for the orange light of the city's burning districts. The fire raged in countless quarters, smoke filled the sky, and the stench of burned bodies cast a grotesque cloud over everything. In the gulags, the few survivors - a mere fraction of what had once filled the camps to capacity - emerged from beneath the rubble to find the city around them devastated and in flames. Many were suffering from terrible injuries, including blindness from seeing the explosion firsthand, as well as the initial effects of radiation burns (which in later weeks would claim even more lives than the attack itself). Most of the Pacific Union's 650th Infantry Division was likewise decimated in the strike, as were supplies and other war materiel stockpiled in the south part of the city and supplying the front, miles to the east. Of the original division only about 20% remained; the camp population experienced similar losses.

The first week following the nuclear attacks was chaotic, but the camp prisoners rode out the madness almost in a trance. Scrambling to mobilize, reserve units still in the city headed east and away from the radiated ruins, as winds began to shift and spread fallout everywhere, leaving only a skeletal force to guard the gulags - which were no longer a priority. They were never heard from again.

Herded like hypnotized sheep, the Brethren - dazed and nursing many hundreds of injured fellows - stayed in their burned-out camps even though fences and walls had been blown flat, drawn to something familiar for comfort. The remnants of the 650th

abandoned the city; only a few shell-shocked soldiers stood alongside the city's top camp commandant (Comrade Zhu Dahal, an officer of Chinese-Nepalese descent), who seemed to have lost all reason in the attack either due to an injury or a nervous breakdown. Sitting in his burned-out office he polished his pistol holster and boots each day, even though it had no building standing around it. Commanding what few guards remained to "man the walls", despite the ruins and the growing threat of radiation, the mad commander then also ordered the prisoners "back to work". Amazingly, broken in mind and spirit, the Brethren picked up their tools and began to rebuild.

As the days wore on Pacific Union radios (and homemade radios hidden among the camp prisoners), buzzing wildly from atmospheric interference, spoke of detonations all across the country, first as strikes against military units in the field and later as strategic strikes, such as the ones against San Francisco that had leveled much of the city. Though the reports were sporadic and filled with the hearsay of a few dwindling broadcasters, it was clear that the initial exchange of tactical nuclear weapons had spiraled out of control, and that the homelands of the enemy had likely suffered an extent of devastation similar to San Francisco's.

A badly injured Clarity, for his part, listened eagerly to the broadcasts coming in from "Resistance Radio U.S.A.", a so-called "patriotic" radio station operating out of the Midwest. Before the station went dead a last message was broadcast by the Speaker of the House (apparently the new commander-in-chief), in which he spoke of "continuing the fight", of "never letting the dream die". Though his words promised that America would win and be rebuilt, in the Speaker's faltering voice and pleading promise Clarity seemed to hear something entirely different than the next man. In the Speaker's desperation

Clarity recognized his people's chance to start anew.

As the camp populace began to die from radiation-related illness and complications, the demand for medicine and basic supplies skyrocketed. Men, women, and children died in droves. Two or three Brethren leaders now came to Comrade Dahal, hoping to cash in the relations they had curried with him and his soldiers. Requesting the commandant contact friendly Pacific Union forces wherever they might be and try to requisition supplies, Comrade Dahal shocked everyone present (including his own guards) as he entered an unexpected rage. Pulling his weapon he immediately shot the leader of the speakers between the eyes, screaming as the man fell dead that there was "no one left to contact". Ranting, he spat on the dead prisoner and repeatedly screamed "Cockroach! Filthy traitor!". He then ordered his men to round up the rest of the camp's political leadership and execute them all for "betraying their country".

As screams erupted through the camp, Clarity, from his deathbed due to radiation sickness, called on his brother prisoners to rise up one final time. His pleas were met by a quiet gloom. Afraid their uprising might have the same consequences as the early camp riots, even as the guards (afraid of their own commander's wrath if they failed) went from barrack house to barrack house looking for the leaders of the prison population the people cowered. It was then that Clarity told them of his vision, in a weak and slurred voice, of a new world in which they would finally be masters of themselves. In a gulag barrack crammed with other prisoners hiding from the camp guards, Clarity's legendary address laid out in dramatic speech the mission of the Brethren from that point on: to survive, and to emancipate the downtrodden.

Though little is known of the man, his charisma and command were legendary. As one, men, women,

and even children took up primitive weapons - picks, shovels, and clubs - and poured from the barracks, surging towards the guards in mobs that raged all over the camps. Dozens of Brethren were killed as the guards opened fire, but the Pacific Union thugs were too scattered and outnumbered to pull back to the stockade. The prisoners overwhelmed the guards, took their weapons, and led by an emboldened leader (who is now believed to be the individual characterized by "Fear" in the Brethren's legendary Articles) assaulted the stockade of Comrade Dahal. After only three hours of fighting literally every single Pacific Union soldier was beaten, impaled, shot, or strangled to death. Comrade Dahal was hung on an impromptu gibbet, the flagpole that had stood over the camp bearing the tattered flag of the Pacific Union.

The Brethren were now free.

## DISSIDENTS

*The Guilty Ones look at us across the camp, with fear.*

*How long ago was it that they looked upon us with disdain?*

*Our people will not truly live until the Guilty Ones are purged from us.*

*They share our camp, our food. Today we are equals, because they need us to live;*

*But tomorrow they will rebuild their tyranny again.*

*- Fear 1:1 (The Articles)*

Clarity, the Brethren's first real "guide", died soon after the uprising. Though the violence died down after the last Pacific Union soldier was slaughtered, the mood in the camp was one of desperation. Without this charismatic leader the people didn't



## THE BRETHERN

know what to do. Furthermore, the vision he had inspired them with seemed to be in danger of fading fast.

The man who would later become known as “Fear” quietly took over in his comrade’s footsteps. Though he wasn’t a leader (and by all accounts he may have been a common laborer even before the Fall), the people in camp recognized him, and listened to his common sense - a sense he had learned only from his close friendship with Clarity. Fear realized that the people needed to be fed, medicines needed to be located for the ill, and shelters built. Much of his early “tenure” involved organizing construction efforts, as well as scavenging missions to find food and medicines that might still exist in the city. One of these missions into the ruins uncovered entrances to the old sewers and subway system; Fear immediately recognized the usefulness of the old underground, protected as it was from the atmosphere not unlike the “vault” that still sat secure up in Bernal Heights. Though it took some convincing, Fear ordered the people to relocate, at least in part, to the sewers beneath the city. He also spoke of trying to return to a state of normalcy, of building up stockpiles for the future, creating dormitories and infirmaries underground, urged people to marry and have children, and organized the assembly of committees to discuss what next to do, and pushed

for a communal gathering to determine the fate of their “movement”.

However, some among the people didn’t embrace the idea of starting a new “movement”. Most of these were prisoners who, before the war, had not shared the discontent of their current brothers; indeed, many were middle class, or even well to do. They didn’t want to live in the sewers, or remain in the city at all. They wanted to leave and try to contact other survivors like them, even head east to try and find American military forces to join up with. Some among them began to speak out, first in private, and then in committee meetings. They pushed for an abandonment of the city altogether, citing the miserable isolation and the growing radiation, and promising that there were fellow Americans elsewhere who would help rebuild the United States as it was.

Unfortunately for the dissidents, the invisible divide between them and their “fellow Americans” in the former camp population was greater than they ever imagined. To the majority, these dissidents were still recognized as the people they had been before the Fall: many were lawyers, bankers, or other white collar professionals, who had benefited from a system that kept the others down - or had simply steamrolled them on their way to a greater future. They found few converts, instead only ashen faces of

former beggars, prostitutes, drug addicts, and urban homeless that now stared at them incredulously and with *hatred*.

When Fear learned of what was going on, he reacted in the only way he knew. He called a committee to try and convince the dissidents of the validity of his efforts, and the folly of theirs. The committee meeting drew more than a thousand Brethren from all over the city, unruly mobs whose bitterness against the dissidents was growing. Naively the dissidents made an appearance, sending their best speakers to make their case.

The debate was heated, but it soon devolved into slurs and insults. Confronted by a much more hostile audience than they had anticipated, the dissidents - many of whom were highly educated and politically astute - accused Fear and his leadership of strong-arming the populace, of intimidating them. Anger rose in the crowds at these accusations. Continuing, the dissidents cited the criminal past of Clarity, Fear, and the other founding speakers, and questioned their ability to lead. They also brought up the ugly memory of the pre-Fall riots, accusing the founders of being mere anarchists, and recalled the President’s pre-war speech that called the San Francisco Brethren “traitors”.

Fear, normally peaceful, met their accusations with ferocity, and entered into an enraged diatribe that displayed the complex mix of pre-war anti-establishment sentiments, anger against the rich, and bitterness against the American way of life that a vast majority of the audience felt. And it further cast a nasty light that made perfectly visible the very real division between the Brethren and the dissidents.

Switching gears the dissidents began to pick apart Fear’s personal views, playing off the fact that he was a simple man basically carrying on the vision of a more brilliant mentor. Through a series of

### THE SIMPLING

While the Brethren came up with a name for the “Simpling”, similar purges took place all over the world following the nuclear war, either immediately or in the years following, by the now-nameless ancestors of the wasteland’s population. The sentiment that the Ancients had destroyed the world with their own folly was by no means limited to the Brethren, and waves of zealous destruction claimed cities all over. Most of these anarchists are now long dead, and the reasons for their vengeful vandalism is lost on their survivors, who now walk under the shadow of blasted monuments and squat in the hollow shell of the Ancient world’s great institutions wondering “why?”.



## THE BRETHREN

scathing question-and-answer blitzes the dissidents successfully attempted to make Fear look the fool, drawing out his ignorance, hoping that his lack of education (or even a real long-term plan) would shake the people's confidence. In a tremendous stroke of foolishness they even went so far as to recall the Brethren's role as "camp trustees", and warned that when America was re-established, their collaboration with the enemy would not be forgotten - or forgiven.

The night ended abruptly as Fear and a member of the dissident delegation engaged in a fistfight. But the two opposing viewpoints had been established. As the dissidents left the committee meeting they were assaulted by the crowds, who drove them out with thrown bottles and jeers.

Returning to their camp, it took time for the dissidents to recognize the true precariousness of their position and see the dangerous writing on the wall. Unfortunately, the Brethren moved too quickly for them to react.

## THE SIMPLING

*"Tonight let the Simpling begin," Fear whispered in the darkness.*

*He worked quickly to pass out machetes and knives to the outstretched hands of those gathered in the moonlight.*

*"Tonight we purge the past from memory. Let not the wail of their women, or the cry of their babies hold you back.*

*"It is they who brought about the Great Fire. It is they whose actions killed our own, murdered our children.*

*"They cannot be allowed to do this again."*

*Some muttered furious agreement, some stared unsure, and others wept with the knowledge of*

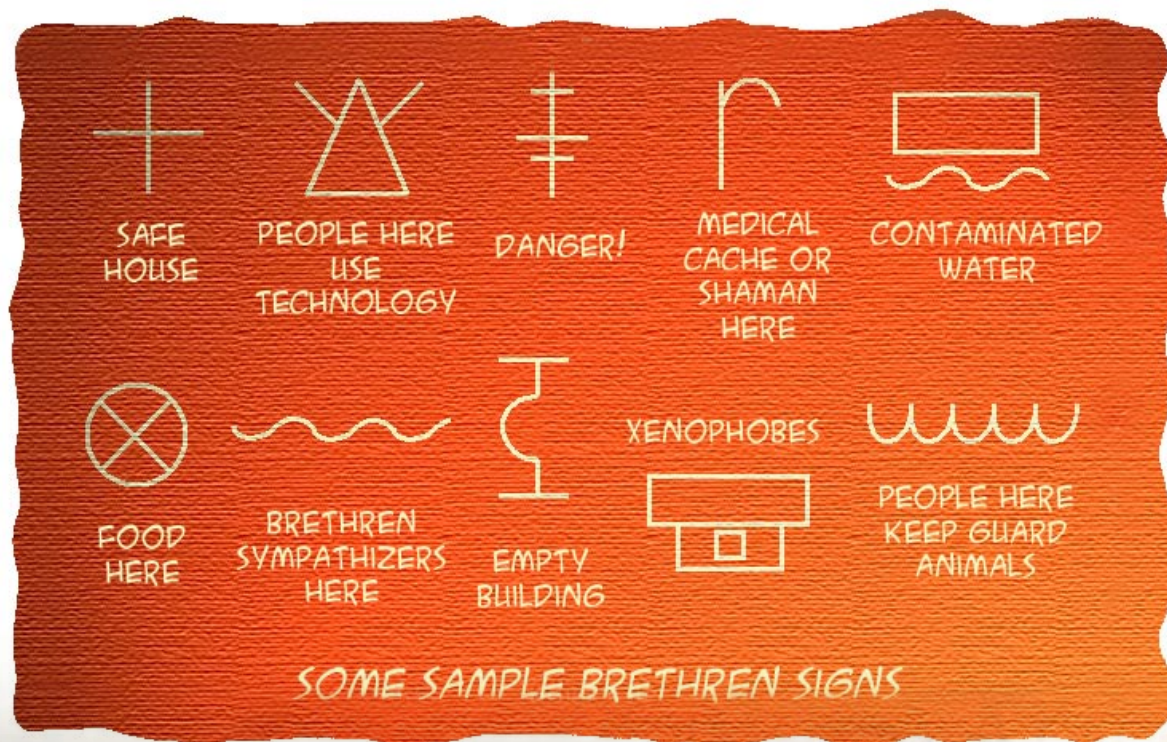
*the blood that was about to be shed.*

*But all hands took part. The Brethren were divided in their hearts, but in deed they were One.*

*- Fear 1:15 (The Articles)*

A few weeks after the committee meeting the last shutdown of dissention occurred in a brutal outburst of violence. Known now as "The Simpling", this event marked the beginning of a years-long effort to eradicate the dissidents in their midst. Fear, and other leaders of the Brethren movement, saw only one solution to their problems: the total destruction of those who had done them harm.

Though their threat to stability was certainly a motivator, the sentiment against the dissidents went far beyond the recent committee meeting. The reasons behind their mass execution were many, not the least of which were revenge for the miserable poverty they once instituted on the Brethren, but also their arrogance and stubborn refusal to recognize the real valor of the Brethren's struggle. In addition, the Brethren feared that the dissidents, if allowed to escape, would indeed make contact with other Americans and bring them back to San Francisco - and destroy what they had achieved. Underneath all of this, and now coming to a violent boil, was a belief that someone, somewhere had to be punished





for the Fall; not just for the political disasters that led to the war, but for the misery it had brought. In the dissidents the Brethren saw the faces of the very people who had brought about their pain - before the war, and the war itself: the *powerful*, the ungrateful elite who had constructed a corrupt world built with the blood and tears of the working masses; the *businessmen*, vile jackals whose greed had fueled the ancient world and made it such an object of desire that it became a blatant target; and the *educated*, who had built the bombs and weapons that ultimately destroyed the world and brought so much misery and death to the Brethren. Too many innocents had died from their mistakes, too many children, and now the words and efforts of the dissidents threatened to bring back that old and despicable order.

It started with a single night, but in reality the “Simpling” (as the Brethren call it) would carry on for years, turning from a simple roundup of political opponents into an Inquisition-like era of terror. The Brethren gathered and sacked the homes of the dissidents, and slaughtered them all. All over San Francisco they killed those who weren’t loyal; the streets ran with blue blood. They sought out anyone who had been rich or influential in the past and hung them, captured and beat to death anyone who had belonged to a corporation or even owned a business, and rounded up and hung those who not only contributed to the sciences, but anyone who could so much as read and write. They sacked the high-class businesses, restaurants, and department stores they had never been able to patron before; burned down banks and police stations, held impromptu book burnings in the streets in front of city libraries, before turning to set afire the libraries themselves, and even tearing down the great universities and other institutions that had once been bastions of American culture.

The Simpling devastated the Brethren population, it crippled their knowledge and culture for generations to come - but it also refined them into a streamlined society who now all shared the same views, the same ideology, and the same vision.

### PASTORA

*The night reverberated with the screams of young and old.*

*The fires in the city burned out of control. Politician, businessman, and engineer died together.*

*The rough hands of the Brethren descended on them from all directions.*

*By their blood the world was cleansed. And from it a new world would finally bloom.*

*- Fear 1:16 (The Articles)*

Following the horrendously violent era known as the Simpling, the Brethren of San Francisco entered a time they call “Pastora” - a time of general peace. This peace was to be relatively long-lived, and encompassed a number of years.

Following the nuclear war the extent of devastation became all too clear to its few survivors; in San Francisco, however, the community spirit of the Brethren allowed them to survive. While in the early years scouts were sent out of the city to see how badly the devastation had affected the state, these scouts inevitably returned sick from radiation, and speaking only of burning cities and millions dead. Indeed disease took its toll in the aftermath, and many of these scouts brought back deadly plagues from the killing fields elsewhere that would haunt the Brethren for years to come. Survivors, when encountered, were heavily armed marauders, lawless brigands who without a care left took what

they wanted and killed those who resisted. The old institutions of America were being torn down everywhere; it seemed throughout the world the past had become a communal shame. Yet many scouts were killed, and through this era the Brethren chose to lay low. As long as their enclave remained undetected, they were safe.

A prolonged nuclear winter set in, the result of a worldwide nuclear exchange that surpassed even the worst estimates of pre-Fall scientists. The Brethren continued to straddle their society above and below ground, while the first real “communes” (in reality just collective farms) were set up to grow small crops to support the Brethren population. At first these were constructed around the old gulags (where there had already been farms), and later beyond the city proper and in the countryside across the Bay. These communes, though fragile and prone to failure due to the changing climate, were instrumental in at least a core of the Brethren surviving the unnatural weather, the pestilences, and the devastation of their own immune systems by radiation over the years.

As time passed the Brethren began to establish themselves in the ruins of San Francisco. But their peace and relative prosperity was soon to be chipped away at - and then shattered.

### DWINDLING AWAY

*The dead they sleep a long, long sleep;  
The dead they rest, and their rest is deep;  
The dead have peace, but the living weep.  
- Samuel Hoffenstein, “The Dead They Sleep”*

Isolated and content the Brethren began to change in many ways. The war itself - with its lingering radiation and the more insidious diseases and chemicals that contributed to a toxic cocktail that

## THE BRETHREN

threatened life everywhere - did irreparable damage. Though their partial removal underground helped isolate the Brethren from the radiated atmosphere, disease found its way in. In the early years thousands perished, with children and the elderly making up a tragic majority of these deaths. Scavenging in the ruins of San Francisco and the outlying cities only garnered them a few years of food and medicine, and the communes - which struggled valiantly to churn out edibles - were only barely enough to support the surviving population in the best of times. As the prolonged nuclear climate of the first years scattered fallout across the world it killed off any wildlife the Brethren might have hoped to have hunted by sending scouts beyond the city, and decimated the crops being grown in cleared sections of the city. In this time the Brethren's ability to procreate and replenish their manpower was harshly tested; radiation, even in the mildest cases, spelled sterility and infertility, threatening to kill off the Brethren in only a few generations.

In addition to a natural degeneration, during this period the Brethren began to divide; at first subtly, then overtly as bolder minds took shape in the changing political climate. At first these comprised men and women with only slight variations in thought or policy, but later, when it became clear there would be little tolerance for breakaway philosophies, they became armed gangs. Salvaging pre-Fall weapons from the ruins the Brethren engaged in minor squabbles and conflicts, with various factions battling it out in pathetic brawls and street fights. It was a time of terror and chaos, which though seemingly tragic, allowed the last remnants of individuality among the Brethren to slowly beat themselves to death.

It was also during this time that the Brethren lived each day in the mysterious shadow of the Bernal

Heights vault, never forgetting the people who were safe and secure inside the man-made caverns beneath the hills. In the first few months' attempts were made to open the vault, or to somehow get a message through to the inhabitants inside that people were alive outside - and in desperate need of help. Trying to broadcast by radio, tapping on the vault doors, and even detonating dynamite to cause vibrations through the earth all met with silence.

In the end the efforts were abandoned when a number of women and children, drying clothes on a hillside, accidentally discovered a secondary entrance to the vault that not been uncovered for years. Finding themselves in a rocky cavern, they spotted an enormous polished steel door at the far end. Though the women warned against careless exploration, a few of the children innocently approached the door, awed at its size. They were totally taken by surprise when an automated gun turret - which had sat unseen in a niche - opened fire, killing them all. The women and the remaining youngsters fled in horror, telling the story of what they had seen.

One Brethren gang, horrified by what they heard and acting on their own, decided to return to the cavern to try and breach the door, which by all accounts was smaller than the main vault portal they had so far been unsuccessful in cracking. Armed with torches, dynamite, and guns (in case the occupants tried to fight them off), they entered the cave and set up their charges. Tragically, having neglected their training in demolitions for over a generation, there was a terrible accident - a charge went off earlier than expected, and collapsed the cavern burying the entire party in an instant. When word of the failed expedition reached the ears of the other Brethren factions, from that point on they mutually forbade going near the vault again.

While the Bernal Heights vault remained

unattainable, beyond its shelter the poisons of the Fall ate away at the miserable people on the outside. In addition to a slow "dumbing-down" of the Brethren (due to the irreversible damage they did to their own city's institutions, as well as the continued destruction being played out in their inter-faction fighting), physical changes were occurring as well. Among the Brethren (and indeed all across the Twisted Earth), the effects of the Fall were made incarnate in deformed children and, among those few who managed to survive to maturity, *mutation*.

Struggling to come to terms with the tragic inevitability of mutation - with almost entire generations dying off from genetic instability and others facing tremendous obstacles due to their increasingly feeble forms - it was during this period that the Brethren reinforced their concepts of compassion and care for the communal benefit, even if only among individual cells. Like during the Fall, when they tended their own ill to prevent the repercussions of their gulag overseers, now the Brethren saw that any prejudice, any "weaning of the weak", would only hasten their own self-destruction. Unlike other communities of the Twisted Earth, where the phenomenon of mutation was opposed (sometimes violently), the Brethren conceded to nature's angry retaliation for mankind's war, and embraced the mutants among them.

Like pitiful lepers the Brethren felt their way blindly through these hard times. Gangs rose, factions splintered, then re-coalesced into even more bitter unions. The last of the original speakers - the men and women who had led the Brethren from the gloomy alleys and streets of the pre-Fall world, through the terrible times of the gulags, and into an unsure future - were now gone, having died off one by one from the violence of the camps, buried alive in the nuclear war, or wasted away by radiation



illness in a few short years after. Without their moral compass and dedication to tie them to their pre-Fall past, the scattered Brethren were reduced to merely trying to survive, the message and visions of the past in danger of dying forever.

### STRENGTH IN UNITY, AND UNITY ALONE

*The lion roars, the echoes try  
To simulate that lordly cry;  
But having said their little say,  
The echoes quickly fade away.  
- Samuel Hoffenstein, "As the Crow Flies, Let  
Him Fly"*

As the Brethren fell deeper into despair, their suffering was answered by even more tragedy. One day from the north, from a quarter they long believed dead and lifeless, came a great army that held aloft no flag they had ever seen before. Driving other victims before them, this "army" came on rusted vehicles and machines of war salvaged from the battlefields of the Fall. As if to validate their right to conquest, these soldiers collected and used weapons and items of technology thought lost in the Fall, wielding them as a kind of "talismán" to clearly proclaim their superiority - and their right to create a new civilization from the ashes.

The Brethren were ill-prepared for the coming of this great new enemy, a literal army of brigands, rapists, and killers - a motley collection of men only one or two generations removed from the military deserters, road-born nomads, and pre-Fall urban gangs from cities across Northern California from which they were born. Calling themselves by the magnanimous title of "New America", this enormous raider legion had ransacked several ruined cities in the north, and was now sweeping south along

the coast pillaging everything in sight.

Other enclaves like the Brethren fell to the army as it moved south. As they advanced, New America's nihilistic marauding caused the few surviving communities to abandon their isolated settlements and flee - or else die. Hundreds of men, women, and children from varied groups came to San Francisco just a day or so ahead of the rampaging army. Surprised to find people living in the radiated ruins, they immediately began to attack the various Brethren factions in a desperate hope of carving a secure niche among the ruins from which to hold out in hiding (hoping that the radiation would keep the New America legions at bay).

The Brethren at first fought bitterly for their city, but with only sticks, stones, and a few rusting rifles they were unable to effectively fight back the surge of refugees from the countryside, in large part due to their own inability to unite. Their delicate communes, and several surface villages built outside the radiated heart of the city, were sacked and pillaged by these new arrivals who, as soon as the Brethren fled, turned on each other to fight over what was left.

When the dreaded New America finally arrived, they attacked with relish despite the glow that hovered over the cityscape, still recognizing its historic skyline despite the damage from the Fall and the years of neglect. Unlike the destroyed settlements they had laid waste to before, New America saw in San Francisco the possibility of creating a permanent home for their army - and a staging point from which to mount a campaign of complete domination of the West. Ironically driven by a similar hatred of the past shared by the Brethren, these criminals were determined to bring the city ruins - even if poisoned - under their banner, and create a new "empire" in which only the strong would have a right to rule.

Like the historical battle for Masada, for over a decade New America would lay siege to San Francisco, erecting a virtual tent city in the desert outside to support the fighting in the ruins. The smattering of groups that had dug in to resist the raiders fell one by one over the years, unable to unite against the common threat despite the looming danger. Face-to-face battles became infrequent, as the outnumbered defenders scattered to fight a persistent guerilla war. During this time the thinning presence of the Brethren became marginalized, so physically pitiful and unable to stand in a face-to-face fight that their presence was almost completely brushed away. When they did fight, when they did manage to get their hands on the more advanced weapons of their adversaries (through picking over the battlefields after the survivors had left), there were never enough guns, never enough ammo, and their use only drew the overwhelming attention of one enemy or another. Forced to adapt they learned to hide instead, or to lay traps to cover their trails and to dissuade pursuit, and to develop new skills that would help them strike out and quickly melt back into the shadows before enemy reinforcements could arrive.

One of the lessons of survival the Brethren learned well was that strength lies in unity, and unity alone. As former gang and faction leaders died off in the occupation, the feuds and philosophical divisions of the past were quickly forgotten. Survival became the only concern for the remnants, which heroically threw off the last barriers to unite as one.

Though they fought admirably under the circumstances for what they considered to be "their" city, as the war for control of the city raged on the newly united Brethren were forced underground, abandoning the surface altogether. Eventually removing themselves completely from the warfare

## THE BRETHREN

above, the remnants of various Brethren gangs fled to the sewers and old subway tunnels they had long kept in reserve beneath San Francisco. But even here the Brethren were endangered. Chemical toxins from the industrial height of the Ancient world, as well as the residual poison of the chemical and biological weapons used in the Final War had washed down to these subterranean depths. Here, in lightless tunnels and jagged sewer caverns, the Brethren would descend even further into primitive savagery. Exiles from the surface world, when they emerged years later they would not be the same.

### THE SMOKE CLEARS

*Victory walked to the corpse of the fallen raider general. A weapon of the Ancients lay nearby.*

*Sniffing at the air and crowding in the comforting darkness his long shadow made, the others watched, waiting.*

*With a cry Victory cast the weapon against the rocks, breaking it. The others lingered, confused.*

*Victory turned towards them, his deformities shielded by his hood, raising a gnarled, pale white finger tipped by a jagged yellow nail.*

*He gestured to the weapons, armor, and other artifacts scattered on the battlefield.*

*One by one our ancestors moved over the field of dead, picking up the weapons that lay strewn like flotsam on a beach.*

*One by one they said farewell to the violent memories of the past. And destroyed them.*

*- Victory 12:3 (The Articles)*

What was to become the glorious center of a new “raider empire” confounded and sapped the strength of New America, despite the tremendous resources

they hurled against it, the city of San Francisco. After more than ten years of fighting the city had still not fallen completely into their hands, and pressure from beyond their own borders, to the north and east, threatened the frontiers of their powerful empire. Resistance from a dying handful of wasteland holdouts was growing, and rumor was spreading to the forces in the city that the empire’s days were numbered.

Time dragged on, and the war for the city became secondary as enslaved populations in the cities to the north began to rise up, and barbaric desert-dwelling primitives from beyond the frontier attacked relentlessly. Morale was slipping across the raider empire, and the savagery of the conflict only grew bloodier and more destructive. Whatever lasting glory they had fought to create, the raiders and their enemies had now almost completely reduced to an unattainable fantasy.

Eventually New America dissolved, disappeared. Over the course of a few generations the great raider army began to fall apart, then crumble completely. First the armies fighting the relentless attacks on the frontier began to desert en masse, then, as the sporadic barbarian raids were no longer contested, individual settlements rose up in defiance of their tyranny. Exhausted by war, they had run out of ammunition, out of warriors, and of the medicines that kept them safe from the dying environment of the Twisted Earth. Diseases, many still lingering from the bio-weapons of the Fall, now overwhelmed the empire’s ability to recruit and maintain its violent presence. With a whimper, New America crashed and burned.

When the smoke cleared, the city was quiet. Crackling fires from abandoned war camps sent thin columns of smoke over the city. Thousands of bodies littered the streets, rotting in the sun and bloated with

maggots. Emboldened by the silence, vermin began to emerge to take advantage of the abundant carrion. Shuffling behind the hordes of rats and roaches came twisted figures clad in red robes.

Wincing in the light of a sun they had not seen for over a generation, the Brethren hobbled out into the daylight to witness what had become of the world. Faced with smoldering ruins, the weak and bitter Brethren wound their way through the sea of rats to the edges of the city. There lay the camps of the great raider army, abandoned in their retreat, and beyond that, the open desert. A few picked up weapons, remembering through them the violent ways of the old world. But all knew nothing good could ever come from possessing them. Burned into their collective conscious was an unshakable belief that the Ancient world had done this. The Ancient world, with all its technology, had brought this upon humanity. Their ancestors had known unforgiving poverty because of technology. The world had been destroyed by technology. And now, they themselves had been changed irreversibly by its lingering curse.

Casting these weapons down the Brethren returned to the only thing they knew. Cursing the ancient weapons of the battlefield they melted them down and made farming implements, and returned to the humble work of rebuilding their way of life.

### THE VAULT OPENS

Several years passed and the Brethren were steadily re-adjusting to life as the hunter, not the hunted. The red-robed mutants drove out the small squatter communities that clung on in the shadow of the ruins, and ringed their city with warnings to keep out all trespassers - proclaiming that bringing any technology into their city was to invite death.

Sometime during the spring months, however, an unexpected event occurred. One day children came



running down from the wind-swept ruins of Bernal Heights, where they often congregated on windy days to fly simple kites made from animal skins. Clamoring all at once it took the elders some time to calm them down, until at last the children conveyed what had shaken them so: the earth had “opened up” and the voices of men could be heard coming from below!

Terrified, the Brethren leaders gathered their war-weary people and marched *en masse* to where the children led them. Armed with sticks, rocks, and clubs, those Brethren who remembered the legends of the ancient vault feared the worst - that it had finally opened, ready to release those it had kept safe from the bomb onto the world again. They feared who they would meet, men and women descended from their past oppressors, who were no doubt armed with the preserved weapons and powered armor kept in the deep armories of the facility.

As the Brethren assembled in a sprawling crowd, painting the hilly neighborhoods with a sea of ragged red robes, dust was already rising into the sky from where the old vault had been blasted clear by those attempting to escape. Many of the onlookers cringed and took cover like scared animals; others outright fled, screaming as they dropped their weapons and scattered into the ruins. A few Brethren stood their ground, as if entranced; curiosity overcame their instincts.

Then, from the shadows of the yawning gulch in the hillside, came a single figure clad in drab grey clothes. Then another. Then another. From the onset they were recognizable as something different; unchanged by the poisoned earth and sky, they were human, one and all. But scarring their proud and handsome looks were hollow cheeks, and pale white skin. Troglodytes, they had lived so long underground that they winced at the sight of the sun.

As the Brethren gripped their weapons in anticipation of attack, the leader of the emerging vault-dwellers merely raised a hand in greeting. Then, with a tired gasp he cast the laser rifle he was carrying aside. His followers - perhaps a hundred at most - followed in suit. The Brethren had expected far worse; now, confronted by an unexpectedly peaceful gesture, they relaxed their posture - but remained wary.

The next few days were spent in a slow and curious repatriation. Though the vault-dwellers spoke differently (a less degenerate form of the Ancient tongue), eventually the two groups came to understand each other. The newcomers seemed starved for information, to learn what had happened to the “world outside”. And learn what had happened in the years since. The Brethren, though understandably guarded, told their sad story of the nuclear war, the gulags, and the terrible trials since. The vault-dwellers took all this in quietly (and if the Articles are to be believed, some even broke down and wept) - then told *their* story.

Their story, told for the first time just a few nights after their emergence, was fully recorded in the Articles the next day. These people claimed to be descended ideologically from the young priest who, during the Fall (just previous to the invasion of the West Coast) had been swept up in the crowds and sent into the vault as a Brethren “plant”. They told how the priest had been unable to re-open the vault, and when he was caught breaking into the vault command center had been imprisoned. Thrown into the security center penitentiary he lingered for years, facing life in prison.

Over time, the other cells came to be filled with other outcasts of the vault’s enclosed society, lawbreakers and those who had slowly gone mad from the thought of being sealed in for the rest of

their lives. In these outcasts the priest found fertile minds to inspire; though he died after almost 20 years, never having seen freedom since being locked up, some of the less-dangerous minds he influenced were freed during their lifetimes. Allowed back into the general vault population, they had kept the priest’s ideas alive. In secret meetings, in clandestine gatherings, they nurtured the priest’s message - and the message of all the early Brethren - evading discovery and capture for generations. A few of their kind were found out and executed over the years, their ideas considered a grave threat to the vault’s security. But despite this they persisted in keeping the dream alive, hoping they would see the day when the vault doors would open automatically and they would be free. In time they overcame their captors; the newcomers spoke of a “glorious uprising”, in which these men, in their own time, had seized control from their masters in a three-day battle that destroyed much of the vault, and killed every last resisting vault citizen.

Two years later the vault doors opened. The human Brethren - the only members of the vault population left - emerged, wondering what they would find on the surface, with thoughts of their long-lost brothers and sisters foremost in their minds.

When their story was confirmed in the blood-drenched halls of the vault, in corridors riddled with bullet-holes and badly damaged by explosives, there was a great celebration, unlike any revel before or since in Brethren history. Immediately the vault Brethren cast away the weapons they had taken from the cold hands of their dead oppressors, ceremonially destroying them to the joyful cries of their surface brothers. Seeing the weak and hungry women and children among the surface dwellers, they led their brothers underground to the vault’s subterranean storage facility, where preserved foodstuffs by the

thousands sat in bundles, the overall stockpile only partially consumed despite the ages. Smiles spread across all faces, as malnourished children sat on the dead bodies of fallen vault soldiers, eating more food than they had seen in their lives.

Reunited like lost siblings, the descendants of those who had lived out the revolution inside the vault met those who had bore the brunt of man and nature's hatred in the world outside. Both had generations of suffering and oppression to unite and reaffirm their bond, even though decades separated them from their shared past. The core ideologies at their heart of each group's philosophies were the same; in the months and years to come, they would meld their few divergent beliefs into a cohesive "code" that has since become the seed of Brethren dogma.

As these long-lost brothers returned to the surface world for good, all of the Brethren - human and mutant - entered into a sacred covenant that lasts even to this day: to rid themselves of technology, whether in the form of the weapons that had caused so much suffering, or in the re-establishing of the institutions that could in any way threaten to bring back the world of the past. In the coming weeks the Brethren collapsed much of the Bernal Heights vault, and destroyed its vast network of computers and automated systems. This once-magnificent refuge for the ancient elite would now become a home to beggars, a deep pit in which the albinos of the movement could find comfort in an unending subterranean night. But the raising of the mighty vault wasn't the only step in their final tearing-down of the past; threshing flails and sickles would forever replace guns and ammunition in San Francisco, and simple community gatherings would replace the tiered corruption of a faceless bureaucracy. They also vowed to dedicate themselves to the creation of a world free of the evils technology spawns; sloth

### PARABLES

A few Brethren "parables" are scattered throughout this book, samples from the Articles they hold so dear. Though often considered dramatizations (for one, they describe dramatic conversations using terminology that actual Ancients wouldn't have used), the parables of the Articles are based on historical events and portray the evolution of Brethren thinking. An examination of just a few of these parables are given here.

**Clarity 2:5:** This parable portrays the enduring open-mindedness of the Brethren. Always the underdog, the Brethren have learned this seeming paradox: the status quo is always changing, and to resist change, no matter how catastrophic, is not always the wisest option. With patience the Brethren will find a place in any new order, and their ability to bend and adapt will allow them to survive when more proud people die off as self-martyred heroes. As it was once said, in the end, it is the meek who shall inherit the earth.

**Clarity 3:3:** The sentiment of this seemingly traitorous parable is still felt today. The Brethren do not have the sense of connection to the Ancient past that some other factions might foster. Their view of the Ancient world is much different. While it is true their ancestors did live in the America of old, they were the poor, the homeless, and the disenfranchised. They did not benefit from the wealth, the opportunities, or the big business that made America the shining jewel that it was. They were the invisible caste; the people the government wished they could sweep under a rug.

**Clarity 3:9:** Clarity's parable again speaks volumes of the Brethren philosophy of adaptation and patience. More than this, however, it teaches the valuable lesson still stressed today: learn from your enemy. While the Brethren discard technology for many reasons, they watch and listen to the folly of other men in their pursuit of it. They also take note of the political and economic policies of others, their successes and failures, and with this knowledge assimilate what will work for them and what will not. Similarly, the ideas coming from their varied sub-factions all offer something constructive, and through this parable the Brethren are reminded to embrace this diversity.

**Clarity 4:1:** The Brethren find two meanings in this parable. They believe the parable means that the Brethren should do anything, whatever it takes, to survive. By donning the hated "red shirts", despite all that they stand for, the camp survivors are ensuring they will survive the cold winter. They also believe Clarity's words are doubly significant because by putting on the red shirt, the Brethren have symbolically declared themselves their own masters. This act erases the power of their captors over them, declares to their suffering families that their people can now care for themselves, and proclaims to the "enemies in the hinterland" (i.e. the people of the Twisted Earth) that they are no longer slaves.

in those who benefit from it, greed from those who peddle it, and jealousy and suffering in those who cannot acquire it. To dedicate themselves to the eradication of every last technological link to the

past, whether in the form of books or architectural reminders of what once was. Never again would the world be seduced by the "ease" of technology, or the lure of its illusory benefits; an abominable creation



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of man that, while it could serve humanity, would always spell his damnation. Erased from the world, never again would technology permit one man to dominate another; the brutal but honest equality of the natural order would be restored, and the sins of the Ancients would not be allowed to raise their ugly head again.

Never again!

### THE BRETHREN TODAY

*“The curse of the Ancients lives on around us, and in us, twisting our world and deforming our bodies, each passing year seeing more of the land waste away and the generations of children getting smaller and more grotesque. Yet so many of mutant kind still look up to, even worship the Ancients, and foolishly seek to rebuild that wretched way of life. NO! We will not, and cannot, let this happen. We march to this new city, as we have marched elsewhere, on naked feet and with bare hands, to tear down these misguided efforts. Those ways must be forgotten – their memory destroyed!”*

*- Unknown Brethren guide*

Over the years the Brethren have proven one thing - that even without technology, human endurance, in one form or another, will survive. The United States, the Pacific Union, “New America”, and the people who helped destroy it, are all now long gone. But the Brethren remain.

Since their emergence from the darkness beneath San Francisco the Brethren have retaken the abandoned ruins, and recovered some of what they lost. They have rebuilt the communes, and re-established primitive settlements among the wreckage. They have driven out the wild beasts that

strayed into the city after its abandonment, securing the peninsula from all outsiders. With the knowledge they fostered and improved since their days of being hunted in their own city they have entrenched themselves here, turning the entire city into a virtual fortress.

But establishing a secure enclave is no longer



enough. The philosophies of their leaders continue to evolve; quasi-religious superstition has begun to creep in, and barbaric zeal has in many instances replaced the rationale of their socially liberal origins. Security from technology - from the deprivations of those stronger than them - must be enforced. Expansion beyond the city proper has been successful; villages (or “jungles” in Brethren terminology) now sprout across the Bay in previously abandoned cities. Contact with outsiders has slowly been established, and from this contact the Brethren has learned the true extent to which technology now ravages the world in the hands of those ignorant of its poison. Others like them - embodied in the savage tribals of the mountains and the deserts beyond - need help against the rising major factions of the Twisted Earth, such as the Foundation, the Cartel, the Clean, and the Brotherhood of Radiation, who threaten to conquer, contaminate, or exterminate them all. The Brethren have taken it upon themselves to champion all people, and whether they want it or not the Brethren strive to free them from the continuing curse of the Ancients.

On the Twisted Earth, the Brethren’s mission to emancipate the descendants of the Ancients from the legacy of their past (namely technology, but also the establishments that defined the old world) is often overlooked, or misunderstood. To many, the Brethren are merely a savage and backwards faction that pursues nihilistic goals of material destruction, unreasonably hateful of everything linked to the Ancient past. Outsiders see all too vividly the book burnings, the crusades against the Foundation and other collectors of technology, and the relentless campaign of these people to hunt down technology and destroy it. Since the majority of wasteland people see technology for what it is intended - a tool to make life easier - the Brethren’s wanton

destruction is not only considered a needless waste, but also a crime.

The Brethren persist nonetheless. The years since the Fall, and the years trapped underground, have made their core membership utterly zealous in their mission to recreate a more “perfect” world, one that severs all ties to history. And their fearless dedication to the cause, no matter how bizarre, has won them many converts across the Twisted Earth; in the tribes of hunted people, in the villages of tribals threatened by more powerful factions, and among those who have suffered at the hands of technological enemies. The Brethren have made it their mission to spread the word beyond San Francisco and beyond their own people, infecting the impoverished inhabitants of the world with their promise of equality and solidarity in a benevolent new world order where all are equal in the simplicity that nature intended.

## BRETHREN VARIATIONS

The Brethren in the default Twisted Earth setting of *Darwin's World* play a unique role as the “champions” of primitive people everywhere. The echoes of real-world revolutions, and the threat barbarism poses to the fragility of “civilization” are strong elements deliberately mined in this book, and wherever the Brethren are mentioned. Yet, in home-brewed campaigns this over-arching plot might not be plausible (depending on the campaign model chosen), or even desirable (depending on GM and players alike). You can easily adapt the Brethren, however, even if only in concept. Here are just two ideas:

**Crazed Cult:** Perhaps the Brethren are just a localized force, a faction that solely lays claim to the ruins of San Francisco. By removing all references to their intervention and meddling outside of the city (such as with the tribals of the Sierra Gehenna region), you remove the over-arching insinuation that

## THE HOMELESS IN A TECHNOLOGICAL AGE

The paradox of an economically healthy and technologically progressive United States possessing a vast homeless problem as described in this book is not pure fantasy, but merely an exaggeration of real-life history. A prime example of the possible conflict between progress and those who are left behind by it can be found in the real-world history of the *hobo* phenomenon.

In the early 20th century hobos were the wandering laborers whose efforts literally built the nation that America was to become. They were the migrant workers who in winter cut the timber in the Northwest, and in summer tended the fields in the Midwest. Traveling by any means possible, they crisscrossed the early United States meeting the needs of the country's fledgling industries, which were struggling to modernize America and tear it from the economic depression of the Civil War era.

Laying the rails, the hobos would later ride them as these highways opened up more opportunities for work all across the country. But at the same time, in this era, technological advances were being introduced that began to decrease the need for migratory workers in agriculture, timber, mining, and even the railroads. Machines were developed that eased all facets of industry, slowly taking human workers out of the equation altogether. As opportunities dried up, the demand for migratory workers dried up as well, and as job opportunities began to become slim, local people began to view transients as a threat to their job security.

For all that they contributed to the building of America into the power that it was to become, the hobo population received no thanks, but rather a stigma as thieves, job-stealers, or worse. As the country began to lose its dependence on migratory human workers, settling in with stable local economies and a self-sufficiency in labor, hobos became a threat. Unable to find work wherever they migrated, many hobos turned to thievery to survive, “grazing” off of local citizens either by begging, soliciting, or stealing, as the need grew desperate. Hoboeing soon became illegal, with police cracking down hard, transporting newly-arrived workers out of county or state, or throwing them in jail (in Ohio, a law was passed that ensured three years in jail for “kindling a fire” alongside a highway; in New Hampshire, hobos could expect six months hard labor for begging; elsewhere, up to 30 days in jail simply for not having a fixed address or visible means of income). In the worst cases, local authorities authorized lacing food with strychnine or arsenic so that the hobos would die off, or at least be taught a lesson never to return to that part of the country again.

the Brethren are making leaps and bounds in their “noble fight” against the rebuilding of the world. This also makes San Francisco an exciting adventure location, a sprawling ruined necropolis infested with technology-hating barbarians perfectly suited as enemies in any post-apocalyptic campaign.

**New Dark Age:** Alternatively you can *expand*

the Brethren's role, so that instead of “freedom fighters” facing a long fight ahead they are in fact the established *status quo*. Imagine an entire world where the survivors of the Fall gave up on technology and the horrors of the past altogether in the hopes of preventing further misery, a kind of worldwide version of the “Simpling” described in the Brethren



history. The PCs could play a number of roles in such a world; depending on what campaign model the GM has in mind. Perhaps the PCs are members of this primitive society, who find technological artifacts on a journey, or hidden in some bunker long thought lost. Learning of the Ancient past (a past the Brethren have tried to erase), the PCs might make others curious, and themselves lead the beginnings of a movement to bring back technology for the betterment of man (something along the lines of *Fahrenheit 451*). Or perhaps the PCs take on the role of characters awakened from *stasis* (for instance, as the kind of characters portrayed in the *Darwin's World 2nd Edition* sourcebook, *Vault Dwellers*), trying to rebuild the America of the past despite the hatred of mankind's survivors. Everywhere the PCs turn they are confronted with axe-wielding zealots intent on preventing them from bringing back an age they believe was "evil".

A world such as this - in which everyone but the PCs wants to eradicate technology - is portrayed, if only in the backstory, in the marvelous book *A Canticle of Leibowitz* (during the so-called "Simplification", upon which the Brethren's era of "Simpling" was actually based).

## LEXICON OF BRETHREN TERMINOLOGY

Though their past is colorful and varied, the core of the Brethren trace their lineage and history to the poor of pre-Fall America. Many of the words, phrases, and sayings they still use find their origins in slang used by the homeless, poorer migrant workers, and rail hobos of the past. Here are just a few examples.

**Catch the Westbound:** Hobo colloquialism for dying, still used by the Brethren.

**Don the Shirt!:** Rallying cry of the Brethren, meaning to take one's destiny in one's own hands.

**Guide:** A term originally used to describe the "speakers" of the early Brethren, now used to describe low-level political leaders in the movement.

**Gun Boat:** An empty can used for cooking (an old hobo colloquialism).

**Hooverville:** Any shantytown made out of junk and garbage (a name originating from the time of Herbert Hoover).

**Jackroller (or Bull):** A derogatory term for any enemy of the Brethren; derived from an old term for the people who preyed on migrant workers.

**Jungle:** An ancient hobo term for an encampment or community. The Brethren use the term to describe their villages.

**Monika Song:** A song made up on the fly by the storyteller or song leader at a Brethren gathering, in which the names of all followers present are included as a kind of "introduction" for new members, and a reaffirmation of each person's inclusion in the brotherhood.

**Never Again:** A common chant of the Brethren.

**Prophet:** The Brethren name for the highest echelon of their leadership, men and women who continue to lead the movement forward in times of peace and war, both physically and spiritually.

**Rule of the match:** Giving an un-struck match to another person at the campfire; an insult, a way of saying, "go and start your own fire somewhere else". The Brethren use this ceremony to show their displeasure with a misbehaved member of a gathering.

**Son-Of-A-Gun Stew:** A.k.a. "Mulligan stew", an ancient tradition of the homeless in which everyone around the campfire or community contributes to a communal stewpot, throwing in whatever they have on hand; those who contribute share equally in the meal. The Brethren still adhere to this rule, reinforcing the duty of contribution to the

community.

**Trustee:** An ancient insult against the Brethren, referring to their shameful role in the San Francisco interment camps during the Final War.



## BRETHREN FACTIONS

*God was once in the minds of Man. Men used God to keep others in line, to keep their lessers in fear, to rule in tyranny. They used God to justify their acts of aggression, their relentless*

*murders, their conquests and crusades.*

*But that is the nature of Man. What was worse was their arrogance. They used God, and his promised "Afterlife", as an excuse to forget their responsibilities in this world; always looking and expecting another world hereafter, they found cause to ignore the corruption and cruelty of this existence. It was easier to give up on this world and expect something better in an ethereal fantasy, than to try and make this world a better one.*

*Today God is dead. There is no longer any excuse to neglect the world we live in. Morality, ethics, law, and justice – these are our responsibility now. If there is going to be a benevolent era of man and mutantkind, it will be the creation of Our hands and Our hands alone. None will thank God when that day comes. None will deny that credit for the conquest of this great challenge will belong to Us, to mortal men, and not to some wispy phantom that our ancestors once worshipped falsely.*

*- The writings of Zeal, a prophet of the Godless faction*

To outsiders the Brethren seem to present a united front, a faceless army of red or black-robed men, women, and even children armed with clubs and staffs and levying their unreasoning hatred against their enemies, whether in peace or in time of war. In reality, however, the phenomenal growth of the Brethren over the past few generations, due in large part to the number of converts making the perilous journey to their “forbidden city” over miles of war-torn terrain, has brought new blood - and with it new ideas. These ideas, springing from the superstitions of tribals and the political ideologies of other refugees (whether fleeing from the Foundation or other groups), have caused divisions in the Brethren movement as these populations are incorporated into the greater body, divisions which over the years have slowly amalgamated into a number of “sub-factions” unique to the Brethren. These factions represent widely varying philosophies concerning the past, the Ancients, and in at least one case, questions how the Brethren should continue their mission of freeing the world from technology.

## FACTIONS

The seven factions of the Brethren include the *Godless*, the *Havenots*, the *Simples*, the *Purifiers*, the *Hateful Ones*, the *Barefoot Order*, and the *Martyrs*. These factions are briefly detailed below, with a synopsis of their particular beliefs as well as suggested “benefits” for belonging to each specific order. Player characters or NPCs can gain these benefits with an Allegiance to the Brethren.

## SYMBOL

Each faction of the Brethren has an identifying symbol, usually in the form of a uniform code of dress, or some other customary insignia they wear to identify them as members of one faction or another.

These symbols are not always evident on individual Brethren members, however, but in large groups these visible markers crop up often enough that identifying a specific group of Brethren is usually easy enough.

## BACKGROUND OPTION(S)

The Brethren, as described in *Darwin's World 2nd Edition*, are a major faction characterized by the traditional *Tribal* and *Resentful* backgrounds. However, this book also introduces a new faction that could conceivably be classified as *Radical* as well. Not all factions of the Brethren have all of these backgrounds available to their membership, so this entry lists which backgrounds a player may pick from when making a Brethren character.

## BONUS FEATS

Since Brethren characters can be either of the *Tribal* or *Resentful* background (or *Radical*, if members of the “Martyrs”), they have access to a small selection of optional bonus feats (one feat for *Tribals* and *Radicals*, two feats for *Resentfuls*). Each Brethren faction entry also includes a list of feats that can, at the GM's option, replace the list of bonus feats from the generic *Tribal* and *Resentful* backgrounds for that faction only.

Feats listed with an asterisk are new feats introduced in this book; see New Feats for information on these.

## GODLESS

**Symbol:** The Godless continue to wear the traditional red colors of the Brethren, descended from the first rags they tore from their oppressors in the post-Fall “gulags”. Their strict adherence to this tie to their past also suggests that many of their beliefs can be traced directly back to the atheist propaganda

of the Brethren's former captors, but whether or not this is true is entirely speculative.

**Philosophy:** Religion was and is among the greatest obstacles to a world in harmony; a tool to control men, a trick to bend the concepts of right and wrong, and a distraction from the truth of the human condition - that suffering is not necessarily an inevitability. Overall, religion prevents people from seeing that they have a responsibility to their fellow man, and to the generations that follow. Instead of accepting the injustices and misery of this world as part of some deity's “cosmic plan”, the Godless seek to teach all followers of the Brethren that the power - and responsibility - for making the world a better place is in *their* hands. The Godless challenge their followers to make the world better by actively making the effort to do good, engage in social works, to provide for the underdog, cultivate talents and bring out the beauty in the most unlikely of sources, and defend what needs defending even if it means certain death.

**Background Option(s):** Resentful.

**Bonus Feats:** Attentive, Confident, Educated, Godless\*, Iron Will, Renown, Trustworthy.

The Brethren's half-dozen sub-factions are led by the so-called “Godless”, the current ruling faction of the entire movement. The Godless are perhaps the most astute of all the groups, however, using political guile and their control of the city to keep all sides united despite their differences. Many influential Brethren follow the so-called “Godless” path, a philosophy that embodies all of the traditional principles of the Brethren faction as a whole; this includes a hatred of technology, those who choose to use technology, the Ancients themselves, and any belief in the archaic notion of “gods” and an Afterlife. In this latter concept the Godless' find their focus,



their particular philosophies revolving around erasing the concept of religion, whether brutally vandalizing ancient texts or delicately eroding at the superstitions of the refugees and tribals who flock to San Francisco with each passing year.

The Godless fervently adhere to the notion that the Ancients' belief in gods made them a stagnant race, neglecting their responsibility to deal with society's evils for the betterment of all – a practice that may have prevented the Fall in the first place. The Godless work diligently to create a world free of the evils of the past, with a long-term vision of a future without the chronic problems often attributed to mankind. Part of their vision involves an indefinite “shakedown” period in which mutantkind must be made to understand that there is no going back to the old ways, and that they cannot count on outside forces to make the world a better place; they alone have the power and ability to change things (for better or worse). The Godless also see the rise of cults on the Twisted Earth (such as the Brotherhood of Radiation, the Movement, and even the Foundation, with its reverence for the Ancients) as a great threat to their mission, and work actively to enlighten - and liberate from superstition - those who flock to the Brethren's protection.

Though they are bitterly atheist, the Godless were also single-handedly responsible for nurturing the Brethren's long-standing traditions of helping those in need, keeping the Brethren's compassion alive even in their most difficult times. The Godless continue to preach that the community's strength lies in the weak as well as in the strong; they strive to make life better for those refugees who come to the Brethren for aid, and to bring out this sense of community support and responsibility in all of the movement's factions. In addition, the Godless have been instrumental in establishing the training programs that have in many

cases helped the hopelessly defective find a place as useful members in Brethren society.

### HAVENOTS

**Symbol:** The Havenots typically don robes of a gray color, not for any symbolic reason but because the sun-dried wool they have in abundance is typically colorless. In addition they receive frequent donations of old rags from other factions of the Brethren, most of which have already lost their color.

**Philosophy:** Without the fetters of greed and jealousy to turn people against one another, humans can actually get along. When men willingly forsake their material property and come to terms with living as nature intended (in spartan simplicity), they are no longer consumed by the hunger for the flashy, irrelevant things of the Ancient world. When survival is the paramount concern, comfort and station are no longer a consideration; if a man's head is focused daily on finding food and shelter, there is little else to distract him. And without the cold and inhuman edge of technology to set them above the animal kingdom, people can and will come to recognize their place as fellow charges (and custodians) of the earth, no better and no worse than the beasts that have patiently weathered man's arrogance and carelessness since the beginning of time, waiting for him to realize this Truth and take his rightful place on equal footing with his brother animal.

**Background Option(s):** Tribal or Resentful.

**Bonus Feats:** Animal Affinity, Athletic, Creative, Endurance, Guide, Havenot\*, Iron Will.

Though the Godless lead the battle against the resurrection of the past, the “Havenots” are by far the most numerous of the Brethren factions. These simple folk, rarely encountered by outsiders, explore the more extreme anti-materialist philosophies of

the Brethren, living a spartan existence among the ruins employing only the most rudimentary tools and materials. They have been active in establishing numerous villages on the outskirts of the city, however, especially near the Cataracts (see *The City of The Brethren* for details), and their role in maintaining the communes has helped the movement as a whole survive in times of shortage and drought.

Philosophically the Havenots believe that the temptations of the material world were at the core of the problem that ultimately made mankind flawed. Obsessed with riches, prestige, and comfort, the Ancients were driven to perform terrific evils all in the name of maintaining a decadent *status quo*; waging war against those who held the resources their industries needed, and developing weapons to force their greed on others that would ultimately lead to the great nuclear holocaust. In an attempt to live a life free of such hypocrisy the Havenots vow to give up all material possessions and live as simply as possible (“without progress there is no conflict, and without conflict there is no suffering” - a common Havenot saying).

Havenots also take an oath to use nothing that has not grown “naturally” from the Earth; this philosophy precludes the use of all extracted metals, animal flesh, animal bone, or other materials of even the most primitive nature. They solely employ plant fibers, wood, sand, and un-worked stone for their homes, weapons, and clothing - and are strictly vegetarian.

### SIMPLES

**Symbol:** In daily life Simples typically resemble other members of the Brethren, but they light their gatherings and book burnings with flaming torches. As such, the *torch* has become something of a “trademark” by which they are known.

**Philosophy:** It is a known fact that technology

## THE BRETHREN

bears no fruit that is not already poisoned, but nonetheless the survivors of the Fall pursue every rumor of it, and spend entire lives trying to resurrect its lofty power. If the lessons of the Ancients' folly is not clear enough in the mutations and ruins that ring the wasteland, then no amount of education, storytelling, or parables will keep the masses from following this same path. The only way then to assure technology's ultimate demise is to actively seek it out and destroy it. Not only it, but also the understanding of it, and the knowledge of how to bring it back from the ashes. Only by destroying every last vestige of scientific understanding can the threat of technology be permanently sundered - and the future secured.

**Background Option(s):** Tribal or Resentful.

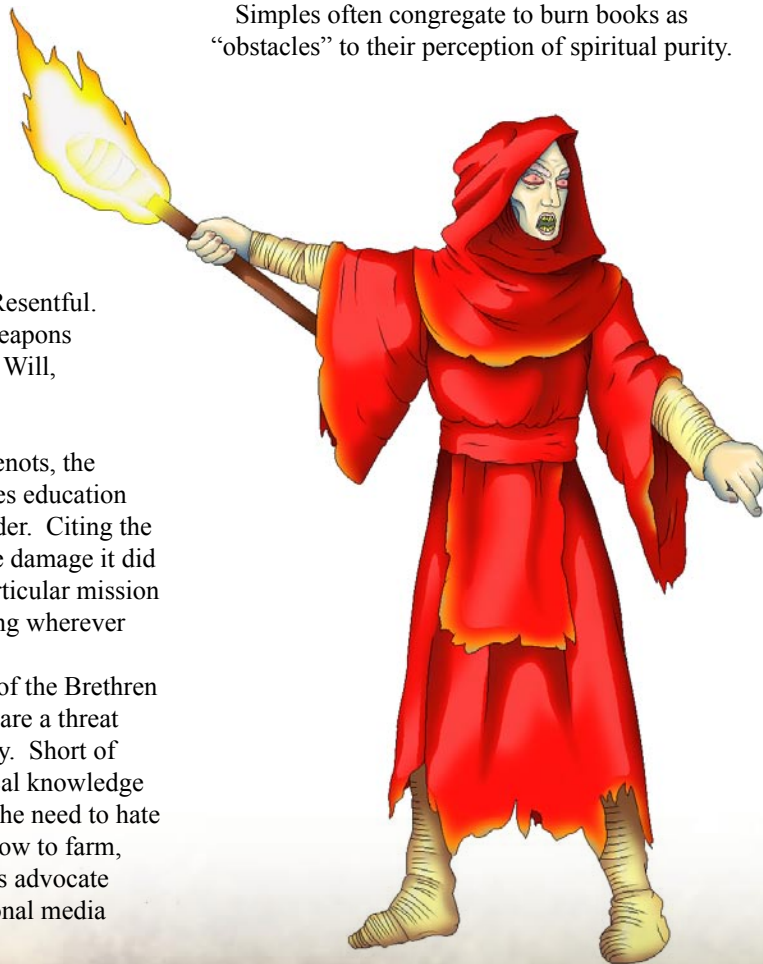
**Bonus Feats:** Alertness, Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Attentive, Deceptive, Iron Will, Meticulous, Simple\*.

Similar in many respects to the Havenots, the "Simples" are a brother faction that sees education and science as threats to the natural order. Citing the evils of technology and the irreversible damage it did to nature, the Simples make it their particular mission to destroy knowledge and understanding wherever they find it.

The Simples are an extreme faction of the Brethren that believe all learning and education are a threat to the purity of the Brethren philosophy. Short of maintaining a bare modicum of practical knowledge (i.e. preserving for future generations the need to hate technology and education, as well as how to farm, forage for food, hunt, etc.), the Simples advocate the destruction of all forms of educational media

- books, poetry, and literature from the Ancient era, as well as preserved knowledge normally shared by Brethren prophets in order to remind the people of the past. Needless to say they are not necessarily the most popular of Brethren factions, especially among the more moderate members who at the very least see value in keeping alive the thoughts and philosophies of ancient man, or using education as a means of showing just how terrible the Ancients were.

Simples often congregate to burn books as "obstacles" to their perception of spiritual purity.



Members of conquered technological communities with any scientific knowledge are often handed over to the Simples to be executed (and to placate their rabid hatred of the educated).

## PURIFIERS

**Symbol:** The Purifiers traditionally don black robes, the better to remain unseen underground and at night.

**Philosophy:** Let the other Brethren factions concern themselves with politics, philosophy, and bringing the people of the outside world into the fold; the Purifiers will defend the vision of the past prophets by hunting down those who would threaten society by breaking its laws. Though the Purifiers were originally formed to combat the spread of cannibalism (and thus disease), they have since dedicated themselves to eradicating all "poisons" that threaten the utopian order of the Brethren.

**Background Option(s):** Tribal or Resentful.

**Bonus Feats:** Alertness, Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Armor Proficiency (light), Guide, Lightning Reflexes, Purifier\*, Track.

The "Purifiers" are a branch of the Brethren established long ago, perhaps even before they emerged from underneath San Francisco, out of sheer necessity. In specific the Purifiers were originally set up to hunt down those members of the faction who turned to *cannibalism*.

Since the Brethren have always struggled with low supplies and resources in their part of the Twisted Earth, the idea of turning the abundant dead into a food source has always been especially tempting to their people. The emergence of "ghouls" among their own kind probably first occurred during their exile underground, when the Brethren's city was occupied by outsiders; strapped for food, members of the



## THE BRETHREN

population defied their leaders and engaged first in scavenging dead bodies from the battlefields of the surface city, then hunting their own in the unlighted depths of the sewers once they became outlaws.

Interestingly enough, the Brethren's prohibitions against cannibalism are entrenched less in religion and the sacredness of the human body than in the practicality of curbing the spread of disease. Dead bodies are often rife with germs, and their consumption by the half-starved has proven to

be a quick way of spreading plagues through the population. As such, the prohibition stands, more to prevent a devastating outbreak than anything else.

The Purifiers are particularly well trained in tracking and hunting the rare rogue ghouls among the Brethren population, using their advanced sense of smell to detect the stench of rotting flesh and congealed blood. They have a lot of experience working underground, chasing de-evolved "strays" of the faction. When they find enclaves of their

ghoulish brothers they are expected to wipe them out without mercy, to show that cannibalism – no matter how appealing it might be in times of famine – will not be tolerated.

Though they began merely as the hunters of ghouls, the Purifiers have evolved over time to become something of an enforcement arm of the Brethren, putting their particular skills (i.e. hunting) to good use finding and capturing those who break Brethren laws of any kind. Working close with inquisitors, Purifier squads are commonly sent on the trail of spies and infiltrators, as well as those members of Brethren society who have violated the laws against technology and attempt to hide from justice.

### HATEFUL ONES

**Symbol:** The Hateful Ones traditionally wear blood red robes, to disguise any injuries they suffer in battle both from their enemy and themselves. High on drugs, their inability to recognize their own pain makes them invincible in their own minds.

**Philosophy:** The Hateful Ones vow to protect the Brethren vision, its people, and its efforts through whatever means are required. Having faced great enemies of amazing power in the past, the Hateful Ones train for the inevitable conflicts, which forever hide just beyond the horizon. Whether armed with axe, tooth, claw, or simply the mettle of his own indomitable will, each and every Hateful One readies himself for the time he must lay down his life to destroy the enemies of the Brethren, and ensure the spark of the past prophets never fades away.

**Background Option(s):** Tribal or Resentful.

**Bonus Feats:** Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Endurance, Great Fortitude, Improved Damage Threshold, Power Attack, Ritual Scarification\*, Toughness.



## THE BRETHREN

More recent than the evolution of the other Brethren groups has been the rise of the “Hateful Ones”, a new faction that has become most appealing to Brethren converts coming from the tribes of the wasteland.

The Hateful Ones embody the Brethren ideal



of exhibiting fearlessness against the enemies of their collective vision, and are among their greatest warriors. Tribal warriors, and the more militant members of other groups, often join the Hateful Ones hoping to contribute their lives for the greater good of the Brethren. In training camps littering the shores of the Bay the Hateful Ones muster each morning to engage in martial practice, as well as brutal contests pitting one warrior against another in endless trials of skill. The scars of these constant battles, waged even in peacetime, help mark the members of the Hateful Ones visibly, as well as sharpen their battle prowess for when they are truly needed.

Though only armed with primitive weapons the Hateful Ones bolster their strength through the use of bizarre drugs and poisons (in many cases concocted using only the knowledge brought to the Brethren by new tribal converts), and combine massed battlefield tactics with a stubborn refusal to die. Berserkers of the most terrible kind, they are feared not only by outsiders, but by the other Brethren factions as well.

*Instead of having a faction-exclusive feat like other Brethren factions, members of the Hateful Ones have exclusive access to the Hateful One advanced class (see New Advanced Classes).*

### BAREFOOT ORDER

**Symbol:** Masters of the Barefoot Order are easily recognized for their long monastic robes, simple walking sticks/staves, and bare feet.

**Philosophy:** Though men now live as savages and seem to respect only force, violence cannot engender real belief in the philosophies of the Brethren among the people of the world. The inhabitants of the Twisted Earth will only come to realize the true evil of technology if they experience it firsthand; no amount of preaching or education will convince them. The Barefoot Order teaches that the Brethren

must allow others to decide their own fates and, in time, all will eventually come around to the Truth: that the revival of technology’s reign over man is the antithesis of peace and tranquility.

**Background Option(s):** Tribal or Resentful.

**Bonus Feats:** Acrobatic, Athletic, Combat Throw, Defensive Martial Arts, Elusive Target, Improved Combat Throw, Trustworthy.

At the opposite end of the spectrum from the Hateful Ones are the followers of the so-called “Barefoot Order”, members of the Brethren who have kept alive the memory of the Fall, and in particular the misery and the suffering that followed. The Barefoot Order believe the Brethren are headed down a self-destructive path, and seek to guide it through subtle means and delicate maneuvering towards more benevolent relations with the people of the wasteland. Unlike the rest of the Brethren, the “Barefoot Order” follows a philosophy of pacifism. Though they ardently believe in removing human and mutantkind from all technology and the “taint” of the Ancients, they believe that other communities, given time, will come around on their own. They believe the lives lost in trying to subjugate the other factions of the Twisted Earth to the Brethren cause is a waste of human resources – and a great sin.

The Barefoot Order preach that violence only begets violence, and that only by surrendering to this axiom can the Brethren ultimately hope to succeed in their mission. The Barefoot Order advocates isolationism, a return to nature and a simple way of life, and shutting out the rest of the world. They believe that, in a few decades, the last remnants of Ancient worship will be beaten out of all outsiders – and that, in their final exhaustion, they will realize the truth behind the Brethren’s message and convert willingly.



## THE BRETHREN

While they adhere to a peaceful philosophy, members of the Barefoot Order continually train in the defensive martial arts, and as a result even the lowliest initiate is a force to be reckoned with.

*Instead of having a faction-exclusive feat like other Brethren factions, members of the Barefoot Order have exclusive access to the Barefoot Master advanced class (see New Advanced Classes).*

### MARTYRS

**Symbol:** To mark themselves as the “walking dead” (i.e. living outcasts), members of the Martyrs faction drape themselves in flowing robes of deepest black, often reminiscent of funerary robes.

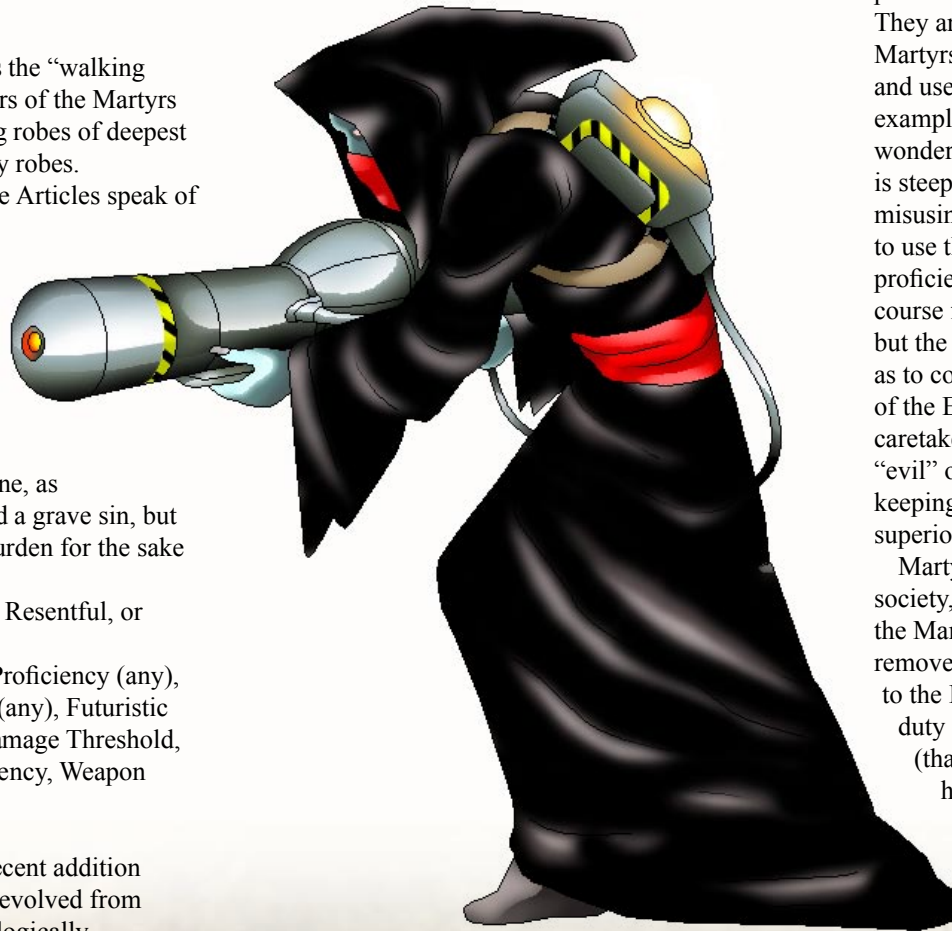
**Philosophy:** Many lessons in the Articles speak of the wisdom of studying the enemy and using his own strengths against him. The Martyrs embody this principle, taking up the hated and diseased artifacts of the Ancients and using them to defeat those who would threaten the Brethren’s very survival. This task is a thankless one, as any use of technology is considered a grave sin, but the Martyrs willingly accept this burden for the sake of their brothers and sisters.

**Background Option(s):** Tribal, Resentful, or Radical.

**Bonus Feats:** Exotic Firearms Proficiency (any), Exotic Melee Weapon Proficiency (any), Futuristic Firearms Proficiency, Improved Damage Threshold, Martyr\*, Personal Firearms Proficiency, Weapon Focus (any).

Rarest of all are the “Martyrs”, a recent addition to the factions of the Brethren that evolved from their bitter conflict with the technologically

superior Foundation (as described in the book, *The Foundationists*). Almost brought to the brink of destruction by the lasers, plasma weapons, powered armor, and aircraft of their enemy, the Brethren were forced to adapt. Secretly training an insulated portion of their society in the tools and weapons of their enemy, the Brethren created the Martyrs, whose



sole duty is now to die fighting the enemies of their people, utilizing those artifacts forbidden to the rest of the population. Kept secluded from the rest of Brethren society, Martyrs are generally only brought out to do battle against technologically superior foes when the fate of the entire faction hangs in the balance.

Martyrs are the only members of Brethren society permitted to pick up and use items of technology. They are trained by Martyr elders on the “Isle of Martyrs” (see *The City of The Brethren*) to recognize and use certain items of technology - firearms, for example, or grenades, explosives, and powered wonders of the Ancient world. Though this training is steeped in mysticism and grave warnings against misusing said technology, most Martyrs are able to use the items of Ancient war with relative proficiency. The knowledge they accumulate is of course forbidden to all other factions of the Brethren, but the Brethren as a whole are not so shortsighted as to completely eliminate this vital understanding of the Enemy. The Martyrs, therefore, are special caretakers of this darkest knowledge, a necessary “evil” of sorts that serves a definite function in keeping the movement safe from total annihilation by superior foes.

Martyrs are never allowed to mix with Brethren society, and live in isolated compounds. As the Martyr grows old (and unable to fight) he is removed completely from his people, and exiled to the Isle of Martyrs. Though this is a Martyr’s duty in life, after performing his one function (that is, being the bearer of tainted weapons) he is considered “diseased” – and cast out as a symbolic punishment. As such many Martyrs prefer to commit suicide rather than face this lonely future; as a result it is not uncommon for Martyrs to

blow themselves up or adopt suicidal tactics when engaging enemies in the field. However, many Brethren followers believe the life and ironic fate of the Martyrs is romantic, honorable, and dutiful, and thus their ranks are never short of volunteers.

### BRETHREN DOGMA

Though each faction of the Brethren has its own code and particular focus, the general dogma of all Brethren consists of four essential “tenets”, from community involvement and a recognition of the sins of the past, to compassion for one’s fellow man and adherence to a strict and spartan lifestyle free from the contaminants of technology. Their way is a grandiose one, looking beyond the present towards a future in which the world will heal the wounds of the past. All Brethren believe at their core that any going back to “the way things were” would be a mistake that mankind can ill afford.

Even if they fail to find a place among the seven factions, all who join the ranks of the Brethren are expected to live by this code, and understand the dogma of the movement. Those who violate these rules risk being ostracized, punished, exiled, or in the most threatening cases, execution.

The tenets of Brethren dogma are outlined below:

### COMPASSION

The Brethren teach respect for the varied mutations found in the people of the Twisted Earth, and forbid prejudice and favoritism based on race, appearance, or capabilities (or the lack thereof). All humans - and their mutant descendants - are to be equally considered as both charges and stewards of the earth, with equal rights and equal potential, with none more precious or more deserving than the next. This respect most visibly manifests as the Brethren dogma of *compassion*, in which all members of the Brethren

### HATRED OF PUREBLOODS

Rumors in communities touched by the Brethren claim these “tech-haters” are rabidly out for the blood of *humans*, a race that reminds them of the world’s terrible past. In reality the Brethren harbor no institutionalized hatred of humans, but the fact is most pureblood groups are attempting to recreate the past in one form or another. It is this resurrection of the ancient world that the Brethren oppose, and as a result they are often portrayed as being “mutant crusaders” bent on slaughtering the last remnants of unchanged humanity.

On the other hand, many new recruits to the Brethren come from tribes absorbed by Foundation expansion (a major faction of the Twisted Earth that has long been ruled by somewhat cruel and arrogant purebloods), and as a result these people are bringing anti-human sentiment into the movement. As time goes on there is beginning to be a bit of truth in the accusations of racism in the Brethren, as more and more tribal berserkers flock to the Brethren flag looking for an army to join in their bitter war against those former oppressors.

are expected to care for one another, and defend one another, even those whose mutations and defects are a burden on the community. Compassion for one’s fellow man - even if he is retarded or physically crippled - is what kept the Brethren’s sense of solidarity alive over the years, and it is a virtue they continue to foster fervently.

### COMMUNAL INVOLVEMENT

If no man has more value than the next, then all must contribute to the communal welfare - in labor, in defense, and in leadership. The Brethren system not only makes use of their belief in equality, it is founded on it. The people elect their leaders from among their own peers; they comprise the committees that examine issues, debate solutions, and take action on them; and they are expected to serve in the ranks of the Brethren’s armies and lay their lives down for the communal defense if necessary. These rules apply to all levels of society: from the young who work in the fields and patrol the streets as extra eyes and ears, to the unfortunate cripples who,

though they can’t walk or pull a plow, can provide education for the new generations. From every able-bodied adult who keeps constant vigil and marches headlong towards certain death to stave off defeat, to the leadership, who make the decisions that guide the Brethren and keep their vision unclouded - and are answerable to the people when they go astray.

### VILLAINY OF EXCESS

The years of deliberate self-deprivation have left the Brethren faced with squalor and only the most rudimentary tools with which to survive. To make the bleakness of their colorless existence tolerable, the Brethren continue to foster a “puritan” culture, in which dedication to self, family, and community provide an all-consuming purpose in life. Instead of being seduced by technology and the comfort it provides, the Brethren deliberately keep themselves hungry, simple, and spartan, in the belief that doing so keeps the human race free of temptation, vice, and jealousy. Similarly the repression of the natural desire for possessions and belongings prevents the



inevitable development of non-essential social tiers (more commonly known as “class divisions”), which in past history led to countless revolutions, counter-revolutions, and the toppling of the social order of many long-forgotten empires.

## RECOGNITION

The Brethren require of all their members a recognition of the crimes of the past, especially in the form of technology, the proverbial root of all evil, as well as the institutions of a hypocritical civilization in which too many sectors of the world population remained perpetually unrepresented and oppressed - pawns of the powers that be. Expounded upon in the Articles and in the speeches of various

Prophets throughout their history, the Brethren blame technology for the corruption of the Ancients, their poisoning of the world (through industry and the nuclear war), and for the current crippled condition of mankind. With this in mind, all Brethren strive to remove technology’s lingering influence from their own lives, in their community, and from the world as a whole. In place of technology, the Brethren patron a rediscovery of nature’s bounties, its natural medicines and resources, and in adhering only to the most basic tools that allowed early man to survive and live alongside nature - not conquer and ravage it.

While these tenets give a broad idea of Brethren dogma, in more specific game terms Brethren characters should be required to follow these rules:

## CRIMES

The Brethren code against technology is enforced through a number of strict laws. These severely reprimand those who deliberately (or even accidentally) use technology or preserve it, despite the prohibitions of Brethren law.

A sampling of common crimes and their typical punishments - usually involving being whipped - are given here. Obviously certain factions and persons in power are exempt from criminal punishment for several of these infractions (such as the Martyrs, who are allowed to use tech weapons).

Reading a book (other than the Articles or other approved texts)	20 lashes, 14 days in prison
Reading a book <i>aloud</i> (and thus poisoning others)	100 lashes, 30 days in prison
Using a weapon of technology	50 lashes, 7 days in prison
Saving a forbidden item from the bonfire	10 lashes
Collecting and hoarding technological items, forbidden books, etc.	50 lashes, 30 days in prison
Selling forbidden items instead of seeing them destroyed	50 lashes, 14 days in prison
Tinkering, with the hope of reactivating technology	20 lashes, 14 days in prison
Creation of an item suspected of being too “technological”	20 lashes, destruction of item
Failing to report any of these crimes to the authorities	20 lashes
Resisting the interrogations of an Inquisitor	20 lashes
Turning on an electric light, television, or other powered device	10 lashes
If any of these crimes can be proven to be done by accident	5 lashes only

## TECHNOLOGY PROHIBITIONS

Brethren characters cannot use, create, or trade in technology and technological items. In addition, the only weapons and armor they can use include the most basic (see *Revised Technology Prohibitions*). A character who violates these rules (and is discovered) is cast out of the Brethren; other punishments may apply depending on the severity of the circumstances.

## DESTROY TECHNOLOGY

A Brethren character is encouraged to destroy technology wherever it is found. However, she is also rewarded for delivering technology to her superiors, who will either destroy it in a public spectacle (and praise the PC), or else hand it over to the Martyrs to find some future use against their enemies. A character who does this repeatedly may be given rewards in the form of *mastercraft* items, a promotion, political favors and connections, or even a one-time increase in Reputation - at the GM’s discretion.

## PROSELYTIZE.

Brethren characters are expected to at least try to convert others they meet to the Brethren way of thinking. Brethren characters should try - strictly through role-playing - to sway others (including fellow PCs) to the Brethren cause, portraying their faction in the best possible light, and teaching by example. This rule should only be played sparingly, as a way of reflecting the character’s origins and ultimate motivations - not to turn the character into an annoying font of propaganda!

## SHARE AND SHARE ALIKE

The Brethren share their resources communally. With the exception of personal weapons and armor

used by the PC all “treasure” taken by a Brethren character on her adventures must be given to the Brethren community to be divided up equally for the benefit of all. To make up for the lost incentive for adventuring, a GM may allow Brethren characters to earn 10% of the total monetary value of all surrendered items as *experience points*.



## BRETHREN PERSONALITIES

The Brethren population is composed of both the weak and the strong, though to be certain only the fit thrive in the spartan harshness of their zealous pseudo-culture. In it the “strong” (those whose loyalty

is trusted) guide the “weak” (those who are new to the movement, and must be watched) like sheep who need constant tending, and ruthless measures are often called for to prevent any transgressions against their strict code of “no technology”. Wherever the Brethren go they burn and destroy vestiges of the Ancient past, and make unrelenting war against those groups that hold out against their drive to issue in a new Stone Age.

In addition to offering a potentially new faction for PCs, the Brethren also make ideal NPC villains. This section offers a handful of sample Brethren personalities, from Brethren warriors to the legendary mutants who make up the upper echelon of their movement’s powerful and charismatic leadership.

## SAMPLE NPCS

Individually many of the lower-level Brethren do not in themselves make for a real challenge, but their strength lies not in their individuality, but in their numbers. When Brethren footsoldiers are

encountered, for example, it will rarely be a one-on-one situation; instead, perhaps a half-dozen will confront a group of PCs, while another half-dozen lie in ambush in the nearby shadows.

The following offers examples of typical Brethren members, from humble laborers and common footsoldiers, to “guides” and sample members of the elite “Hateful Ones” and “Purifiers”.

## LABORER

The widespread caste of “laborer” is one that obviously fills a vital role in Brethren society. Laborers are men, women, children, and elderly who do not or cannot support the movement through the more visible contributions - as soldiers, for instance, or ambition in the political leadership. The “masses”, so to speak, laborers are the foundation on which the Brethren have managed to survive for generations since the Fall itself. Whether working in the fields to wrestle a meager crop from the polluted earth, or scavenging the ruins of the city for overlooked bits of rusted scrap, or merely helping to raise new generations and imparting in them the wisdom of generations past, the laborers make up what might otherwise be known as “civilians” in other societies.

However the rise in militancy among the Brethren in recent years, in no small part due to the encroachment of other Twisted Earth factions on their part of the world (including the emergence of the Foundation as a power), has caused the general manpower pool of the Brethren to fluctuate drastically, with more numbers being shifted from labor and peacetime pursuits to soldiery and so-called “missionary work”. As the labor pool has shrunk, the vacuum has been filled by members of Brethren society who were once considered “unproductive”. Cripples, the retarded, and mutants with other debilitating defects have now come to fill

the domestic roles that until recently stood vacant. Remarkably, the devotion of these pitiable, simple-minded individuals has created a reliable workforce that tirelessly labors to keep their people fed, and the home fires burning.

Two sample Brethren laborers are offered here, representing any of a variety of domestic workers. The first represents any general laborer, such as a farmer or builder in the ruins of San Francisco. The second is typical of a Brethren herdsman or animal trainer.

**Brethren Laborer, Tough Hero 1:** CR 1; Medium-size humanoid; HD 1d10+2; HP 8; Mas 14; Init +1; Spd 20 ft; Defense 12, touch 12, flatfooted 11 (+1 Dex, +1 class); BAB +0; Grap +2; Atk +2 melee (1d4+2, slung shot), or +1 ranged (by weapon); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ medical incompatibility; AL Brethren; SV Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +1; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 15, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 13, Cha 10.

**Occupation:** Craftsman (Craft [structural], Survival).

**Background:** Tribal (Hide).

**Mutations and Defects:** Stench, Terminal Limb Deficiency (Leg).

**Skills:** Climb +4, Craft (structural) +2, Hide +3, Knowledge (Current Events) +0, Search +3, Survival +3.

**Feats:** Endurance, Great Fortitude, Primitive Technology, Vulture.

**Talents (Tough Hero):** Second Wind.

**Possessions:** Sling shot, filthy robes.

**Brethren Herdsman, Tough Hero 1:** CR 1; Medium-size humanoid; HD 1d10+2; HP 8; Mas 14; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; Defense 12, touch 12, flatfooted 11 (+1 Dex, +1 class); BAB +0; Grap +2; Atk +2 melee (1d6+2, staff), or +1 ranged (by weapon); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ medical incompatibility, autism;



## THE BRETHREN

AL Brethren; SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +1; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 15, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 13, Cha 9.

**Occupation:** Herdsman (Handle Animal, Survival).

**Background:** Tribal (Hide).

**Mutations and Defects:** Autism, Aberrant Deformity.

**Skills:** Disguise -7, Handle Animal +3, Hide +3, Knowledge (Current Events) +0, Listen +3, Ride +4, Spot +3, Survival +4.

**Feats:** Alertness, Animal Affinity, Endurance, Primitive Technology.

**Talents (Tough Hero):** Second Wind.

**Possessions:** Staff, sling shot, filthy robes.

### FOOTSOLDIER

Though the Brethren originally hail from San Francisco, over the generations they have lured many to their cause. Followers of the cult now generally come from varied stock, but in many ways they are the same: a collection of ragged, desolate, and hopeless mutants who, in their own pain and misery, have banded together into veritable *armies*. Knowing that alone they will die but together they just might survive, they make up for their disorganization and ignorance through sheer tenacity and fervor. Since most never had a community or home to call their own, by and large they are uneducated savages who easily buy into the hateful belief that the rise of unholy technologies brought about the Fall - and, like a cancer, will certainly spell the doom of all life on the Twisted Earth if left to grow once more.

Since the masses of Brethren are so varied, three different examples of footsoldier are given here. The first represents those warriors who strike a balance between ranged and melee attacks, using thrown bolas to entangle opponents before moving in to chop them with the cleaver. The second relies on

pack tactics and brute toughness, attacking enemies en masse with huge clubs, relying on their above average hit points to see them through a fight. The final represents quicker, stealthier warriors, such as scouts and battlefield spies.

**Brethren Thrower, Strong Hero 3:** CR 3; Medium-size humanoid; HD 3d8+3 plus 3; HP 16; Mas 13; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; Defense 14, touch 14, flatfooted 12 (+2 Dex, +2 class); BAB +3; Grap +5; Atk +6 melee (1d6+4, cleaver), or +6 ranged (1d4+2, bola); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ medical incompatibility, blindness in light; AL Brethren; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +2; AP 3; Rep +0; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

**Occupation:** Predator (Hide).

**Background:** Tribal (Move Silently).

**Mutations and Defects:** Nocturnal, Photosensitivity.

**Skills:** Climb +6, Hide +4, Jump +6, Knowledge (Tactics) +2, Listen +2, Move Silently +4, Treat Injury +2.

**Feats:** Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bola), Eyes of The Blind\*, Primitive Technology, Toughness, Weapon Focus (bola), Weapon Focus (cleaver).

**Talents (Strong Hero):** Melee Smash, Improved Melee Smash.

**Possessions:** Cleaver, two bolas, filthy robes.

**Brethren Pack Fighter, Tough Hero 3:** CR 3; Medium-size humanoid; HD 3d10+3 plus 3; HP 22; Mas 13; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; Defense 16, touch 14, flatfooted 14 (+2 Dex, +2 class, +2 equipment); BAB +2; Grap +4; Atk +5 melee (1d10+2, greatclub), or +4 ranged (1d6+3, javelin); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ medical incompatibility, albinism; AL Brethren; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +2; AP 3; Rep +0; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

**Occupation:** Demagogue (Bluff, Knowledge [Current Events]).

**Background:** Tribal (Listen).

**Mutations and Defects:** Accumulated Resistance, Albinism.

**Skills:** Bluff +3, Climb +4, Knowledge (Current Events) +2, Knowledge (Tactics) +2, Listen +3, Spot +3, Survival +4.

**Feats:** Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Armor Proficiency (light), Pack Tactics\*, Primitive Technology, Toughness, Weapon Focus (greatclub).

**Talents (Tough Hero):** Remain Conscious, Damage Reduction 1/-.

**Possessions:** Greatclub, two javelins, leather armor, filthy robes.

**Brethren Sneak, Fast Hero 3:** CR 3; Medium-size humanoid; HD 3d8+3; HP 16; Mas 13; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; Defense 16, touch 16, flatfooted 14 (+2 Dex, +4 class); BAB +2; Grap +4; Atk +4 melee (1d8+3, pata), or +4 ranged (1d6+2, javelin); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ medical incompatibility, darkvision, albinism; AL Brethren; SV Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +2; AP 3; Rep +0; Str 14, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

**Occupation:** Predator (Sense Motive).

**Background:** Resentful (Survival).

**Mutations and Defects:** Sensitive Sight, Albinism.

**Skills:** Balance +8, Escape Artist +4, Hide +7, Knowledge (Current Events) +2, Listen +3, Move Silently +7, Sense Motive +3, Sleight of Hand +4, Spot +3, Survival +3, Treat Injury +2, Tumble +8.

**Feats:** Alertness, Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Lightning Reflexes, Primitive Technology, Stealthy, Track.

**Talents (Fast Hero):** Evasion, Opportunist.

**Possessions:** Pata, two javelins, filthy robes.

## MISSIONARY

The role of “missionary” is one that all able-bodied Brethren must undertake at least once in their life. Joining others who have reached maturity - and proven themselves reliable and resourceful - the missionary heads out into the wasteland to hopefully spread the message of the Brethren to those people in need of “emancipation”. Missionaries are expected to make contact with tribes and other victims of technology, offer their help and support, and to teach these natives how to fight back against their oppressors. Brethren missionaries (more often called “spies” and dealt with accordingly) can be found walking the lonely desert looking for lost souls to give purpose to, living alongside friendly tribals in isolated villages and giving them hope, or even mingling with the motley inhabitants of the trade cities of the Twisted Earth, spreading their poison to whoever will listen.

Currently the focus of Brethren missionary work is in preaching to the tribals of the Sierra Gehenna region, those mountain-dwelling savages who have a strong dislike for the Foundation. In particular the Brethren have found many allies in the Sulphur Peaks, who are rabid in their hatred of those armored paladins, who have turned their homeland into a battleground and made many of them slaves.

The actual strengths of each missionary varies from individual to individual; some show particular intelligence and an understanding of Brethren politics, while others have a natural charisma that makes them ideal preachers. Others are merely dedicated, simple fools who would walk 500 miles across the desert if their superiors ordered them to. Whether they have an aptitude for their work or not, Brethren missionaries live - and die - for a cause they believe in.

Three sample missionaries are shown here, the first being a general recruit who knows only the basics of his mission, with much still to learn about the Twisted Earth. The second is a more seasoned missionary, a practiced demagogue who has learned to survive in the wasteland and, as a result, met with some degree of success impressing and converting the people of the wasteland towards the Brethren movement. The third is a member of the Brethren Shadow advanced class, a Brethren missionary who spies on the activities of the Twisted Earth’s major factions, moving unseen in more civilized settlements such as Crux, Dis, and Styx.

**Brethren Novice, Tough Hero 1:** CR 1; Medium-size humanoid; HD 1d10+1 plus 3; HP 10; Mas 13; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; Defense 15, touch 13, flatfooted 13 (+2 Dex, +1 class, +2 equipment); BAB +0; Grap +2; Atk +2 melee (1d4+2, slung shot), or +2 ranged (by weapon); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ medical incompatibility, albinism; AL Brethren; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +1; AP 0; Rep +0; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

**Occupation:** Demagogue (Bluff, Knowledge [Current Events]).

**Background:** Tribal (Listen).

**Mutations and Defects:** Accumulated Resistance, Albinism.

**Skills:** Bluff +3, Climb +4, Knowledge (Current Events) +2, Knowledge (Tactics) +2, Listen +2.

**Feats:** Armor Proficiency (light), Pack Tactics\*, Primitive Technology, Toughness.

**Talents (Tough Hero):** Remain Conscious.

**Possessions:** Sing shot, leather armor, filthy robes.

**Brethren Mission Leader, Tough Hero 1/Dedicated Hero 1/Charismatic Hero 1/Demagogue 1:** CR 4; Medium-size humanoid; HD 1d10+1 plus 1d6+1

plus 1d6+1 plus 1d6+1 plus 3; HP 23; Mas 13; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; Defense 16, touch 14, flatfooted 14 (+2 Dex, +2 class, +2 equipment); BAB +0; Grap +2; Atk +2 melee (1d4+2, slung shot), or +2 ranged (by weapon); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ medical incompatibility, albinism; AL Brethren; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +4; AP 4; Rep +5; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 9.

**Occupation:** Demagogue (Bluff, Knowledge [Current Events]).

**Background:** Tribal (Listen).

**Mutations and Defects:** Accumulated Resistance, Albinism.

**Skills:** Bluff +4, Climb +4, Diplomacy +3, Gather Information +1, Knowledge (Current Events) +3, Knowledge (Tactics) +2, Knowledge (Theology & Philosophy) +6, Listen +2, Navigate +2, Sense Motive +2, Survival +4, Treat Injury +2.

**Feats:** Armor Proficiency (light), Guide, Pack Tactics\*, Primitive Technology, Toughness.

**Talents (Tough Hero):** Remain Conscious.

**Talents (Dedicated Hero):** Empathy.

**Talents (Charismatic Hero):** Fast-Talk.

**Talents (Demagogue):** Followers.

**Possessions:** Sling shot, leather armor, filthy robes.

**Brethren Shadow, Fast Hero 3/Brethren Shadow 4:** CR 7; Medium-size humanoid; HD 3d8+3 plus 4d6+4; HP 34; Mas 13; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; Defense 19, touch 19, flatfooted 17 (+2 Dex, +7 class); BAB +5; Grap +8; Atk +8 melee (by weapon), or +7 ranged (by weapon); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ medical incompatibility, darkvision; AL Brethren; SV Fort +3, Ref +8, Will +3; AP 5; Rep +1; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 7.

**Occupation:** Wanderer (Climb, Navigate).

**Background:** Tribal (Survival).



**Mutations and Defects:** Sensitive Sight, Aberrant Deformity.

**Skills:** Balance +7, Climb +8, Disguise -4, Escape Artist +4, Gather Information +3, Hide +10, Jump +5, Knowledge (Current Events) +2, Knowledge (Streetwise) +2, Listen +3, Move Silently +10, Navigate +2, Sleight of Hand +4, Spot +3, Survival +3, Tumble +8.

**Feats:** Acrobatic, Defensive Martial Arts, Elusive Target, Play Possum\*, Primitive Technology, Run, Sand In The Eyes\*, Stealthy.

**Talents (Fast Hero):** Evasion, Uncanny Dodge 1.

**Talents (Brethren Shadow):** Never Unarmed, Sneak Attack +1d6, Ventriloquism.

**Possessions:** Filthy robes, 2d3 caltrops.

## GUIDE

Brethren “guides” are as much the moral beacons of their people as they are the political officers who make sure they never stray. Ever watchful of the masses they are instructed to guide, these men (and women) walk a precarious line between being “father-confessors” to the masses and “spies” for the movement’s political leadership.

The guide is a member of the Brethren who has proven not only his loyalty to the cause after years of faithful service, but also his understanding of Brethren history and the complex teachings of the Articles, and volunteered to become a leader of others. If found to be an acceptable candidate, new guides are given groups of lesser Brethren to oversee. Such groups can be any portion of the population; a neighborhood, a commune, or an entire village - and in times of war, units of men in the field.

Though trusted by those above him to manage his flock and to make sure they remain loyal to the cause and untainted by technology and Ancient beliefs,

those beneath him often have varied views of the guide - as father, as teacher, as leader, as confessor, or as hated bully and taskmaster. The individual personality of each guide dictates how he chooses to keep his charges in line; some are brutal, while others are far more benevolent. Some allow their followers to confess their inevitable transgressions of the rules and help guide them back to the path without alerting their superiors; others, learning of lawbreakers, are harsh and corporal in their punishment.

To compound matters, even those who mean well and truly worry about the welfare of their followers know that their purpose as guide is not only to care for the Brethren people in peacetime and keep them productive, but also to rally them and coordinate them in battle (often from the front; most guides are forbidden to use ranged weapons to prevent them from hiding in the rear), even if faced with a suicidal mission. All guides recognize that some must die for the greater good, and the moral paradox faced by each guide (that is, caring for his charges while being forced to send them into often un-winnable battles as cannon-fodder) truly tests their convictions; some emerge spiritually stronger, while others soon find themselves changed for the worse, becoming cruel and bitter.

Sadly, as more tribal people join the Brethren, brutality and strong-arming to maintain discipline is slowly replacing the focus on educating and “politically emancipating” the masses that were once hallmarks of the guides, changing the reputation of the entire guide caste slowly but steadily. On the same note, while the more benevolent guides are certainly beloved in peacetime, many Brethren footsoldiers admit they would rather follow the more violent guides into battle, inspired by their fearlessness and brutality.

Two sample Brethren guides are shown here, one

representative of the gentler demagogues who inspire their followers and lead them by their good works and tireless dedication, the other for those simpler guides who use brute force to keep their followers loyal.

### Brethren Benevolent, Dedicated Hero 2/ Charismatic Hero 2/Demagogue 3:

CR 7; Medium-size humanoid; HD 2d6+2 plus 2d6+2 plus 3d6+3; HP 31; Mas 12; Init +0; Spd 30 ft; Defense 14, touch 14, flatfooted 14 (+4 class); BAB +3; Grap +2; Atk +2 melee (1d6-1, staff), or +3 ranged (by weapon); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ medical incompatibility, darkvision, blindness in light; AL Brethren; SV Fort +9, Ref +3, Will +9; AP 3; Rep +8; Str 8, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 16.

**Occupation:** Demagogue (Diplomacy, Knowledge [Current Events]).

**Background:** Resentful (Knowledge [Theology and Philosophy]).

**Mutations and Defects:** Sensitive Sight, Photosensitivity.

**Skills:** Diplomacy +14, Gamble +4, Gather Information +12, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (Current Events) +8, Knowledge (History) +6, Knowledge (Mutant Lore) +4, Knowledge (Theology and Philosophy) +10, Listen +6, Perform +9, Sense Motive +11, Spot +6, Treat Injury +6.

**Feats:** Alertness, Confident, Defensive Martial Arts, Eyes of The Blind\*, Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Leadership, Primitive Technology, Renown, Trustworthy.

**Talents (Dedicated Hero):** Empathy.

**Talents (Charismatic Hero):** Coordinate.

**Talents (Demagogue):** Followers, Lead Followers.

**Possessions:** Staff, filthy robes.

**Brethren Tough, Tough Hero 3/Demagogue 4:** CR 7; Medium-size humanoid; HD 3d10+6 plus 4d6+8 plus 6; HP 51; Mas 14; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; Defense 16, touch 14, flatfooted 15 (+1 Dex, +3 class, +2 equipment); BAB +4; Grap +7; Atk +8 melee (1d12+5, great axe), or +5 ranged (by weapon); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ medical incompatibility; AL Brethren; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +7; AP 3; Rep +4; Str 16, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 12.

**Occupation:** Demagogue (Diplomacy, Knowledge [Current Events]).

**Background:** Resentful (Knowledge [Theology and Philosophy]).

**Mutations and Defects:** Nocturnal, Aberrant Deformity.

**Skills:** Bluff +5, Diplomacy +8, Disguise -5, Gather Information +5, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (Current Events) +6, Knowledge (Theology and Philosophy) +8, Listen +2, Sense Motive +6, Spot +4, Survival +2.

**Feats:** Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Armor Proficiency (light), Cleave, Iron Will, Leadership, Power Attack, Primitive Technology, Toughness, Weapon Focus (great axe).

**Talents (Tough Hero):** Remain Conscious, Robust.

**Talents (Demagogue):** Followers, Lead Followers, Zealots.

**Possessions:** Great axe, whip, leather armor, filthy robes.

## PURIFIER

The Purifiers, as stated before, are a sect of the Brethren movement who have long been dedicated to hunting traitors among the Brethren. Even to this day the lure to betray the Brethren “vision” is strong; whether to consume the dead when times are rough

(i.e. cannibalism), or to secretly use technology to make life easier, these elite hunters are sent to track down those who violate the Brethren’s long-standing prohibitions and exact punishment.

Though they focus primarily on hunting rogue members of the Brethren, because Purifiers know the sewers and underground tunnels beneath San Francisco virtually by memory, player characters on the run from the Brethren in San Francisco will likely find themselves being tracked and hunted by small squads of Purifiers, especially if they attempt to get away by going underground...

**Brethren Purifier, Fast Hero 3/Skulk 4:** CR 7; Medium-size humanoid; HD 3d8+3 plus 4d8+4; HP 38; Mas 12; Init +2; Spd 40 ft; Defense 19, touch 19, flatfooted 17 (+2 Dex, +7 class); BAB +5; Grap +7; Atk +7 melee (1d8+2, pata), or +7 ranged (1d8, compound bow); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ medical incompatibility, albinism; AL Purifiers; SV Fort +3, Ref +8, Will +4; AP 4; Rep +1; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 8.

**Occupation:** Guide (Listen, Survival).

**Background:** Resentful (Knowledge [Mutant Lore]).

**Mutations and Defects:** Accumulated Resistance, Albinism.

**Skills:** Balance +7, Hide +12, Knowledge (Mutant Lore) +2, Listen +9, Move Silently +12, Search +10, Sleight of Hand +10, Spot +4, Survival +14, Tumble +8.

**Feats:** Alertness, Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Filthy, Know The Signs\*, Purifier\*, Primitive Technology, Stealthy, Track, Troglodyte.

**Talents (Fast Hero):** Increased Speed, Improved Increased Speed.

**Talents (Skulk):** Sweep, Sneak Attack +1d6, Skill Mastery (Balance, Listen, Search).

**Possessions:** Pata, compound bow, net, ammunition, filthy robes.

## INQUISITOR

The “inquisitor” is a special member of Brethren society who is called upon to expunge traitors from their midst. A form of “religious police”, the inquisitor spies on his or her own people to make sure they do not build, invent, or even accidentally re-activate artifacts from the ancient past (whether a laser rifle, a working automobile, or a pipe organ from the ruins of an old church). Most inquisitors come from the ranks of the Purifiers, but not all.

Inquisitors work closely with Brethren “guides”, who typically tip off inquisitors to suspicious activities or other noteworthy transgressions. In many instances an inquisitor is able to diffuse the situation without severe punishment; an accident is an accident, after all, and someone who merely presses a button or pulls a lever out of curiosity only needs to have a finger shaken at. But others, who secretly bring technology into the community, or worse, try to question the tenets of the Brethren’s way of life, are far greater threats. These individuals are the true quarry of the Brethren inquisitor.

Inquisitors have vast powers at their command, and depending on the severity of the reported violation they have a variety of resources at their disposal. The inquisitors answer only to the prophets of the Brethren, and their methods in investigation and tracking down criminals are deliberately obscured to create an air of mystery about them. When they do pursue a case, inquisitors are not only called on to investigate, but also to perform whatever necessary punishment the crime dictates. As a result inquisitors are often assigned soldiers to help them perform raids, capture renegade violators, and to keep order when he carries out a death sentence amid confused



and questioning crowds.

Though there aren't many inquisitors, most are reasonably educated individuals with a shrewd common sense. Like guides, inquisitors only attain their position through a period in which their loyalties are examined and put to the test. Unlike guides, however, inquisitors aren't expected to fight on the frontlines during war. Their role is primarily to hunt down forbidden technology (especially when it manages to pop up within Brethren territory) and destroy it.

**Brethren Inquisitor, Dedicated Hero 3/Smart Hero 3/Brethren Follower 5/Demagogue 1:** CR 12; Medium-size humanoid; HD 3d6 plus 3d6 plus 5d12 plus 1d6; HP 57; Mas 10; Init +0; Spd 30 ft; Defense 16, touch 16, flatfooted 16 (+6 class); BAB +8; Grap +9; Atk +10 melee (1d12+1, *mastercraft* great axe), or +8 ranged (by weapon); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ medical incompatibility, albinism; AL Brethren; SV Fort +9, Ref +5, Will +12; AP 6; Rep +10; Str 13, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 12.

**Occupation:** Demagogue (Diplomacy, Sense Motive).

**Background:** Resentful (Knowledge [Theology and Philosophy]).

**Mutations and Defects:** Nocturnal, Albinism.

**Skills:** Decipher Script +8, Diplomacy +7, Forgery +4, Intimidate +15, Investigate +11, Knowledge (Behavioral Sciences) +6, Knowledge (Current Events) +6, Knowledge (History) +6, Knowledge (Technology) +8, Knowledge (Theology & Philosophy) +8, Listen +10, Search +13, Sense Motive +14, Spot +10.

**Feats:** Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Cleave, Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Meticulous, Power Attack, Primitive Technology, Renown, Sunder, Super-Charismatic, Track.

**Talents (Dedicated Hero):** Empathy, Intuition.

**Talents (Smart Hero):** Savant (Search), Plan.

**Talents (Brethren Follower):** Trap Making 2d6, Technology Prohibitions, Technology Destroyer +2, Smiter Technology.

**Talents (Demagogue):** Followers.

**Possessions:** *Mastercraft* great axe, net, filthy robes.

## HATEFUL ONE

Savage mutants of the most degenerate kind, "hateful ones" are berserker warriors who have succumbed to the propaganda and brainwashing techniques of the Brethren, fully subscribing to the bitter hatred against technology stoked by their masters. Hateful Ones go well beyond a resentment of the Ancients however, as they are filled with a quasi-religious madness (fed by exotic drugs and ritual torture to increase their psychotic passions) and a fearless depravity.

Hateful Ones are the "elite" of the Brethren military, and in war they represent the most feared warriors of their society. Hateful Ones would make challenging foes for PCs who face the Brethren in open battle, or in one-on-one combat.

**Brethren Hateful One, Strong Hero 3/Brethren Follower 2/Hateful One 4:** CR 9; Medium-size humanoid; HD 3d8+6 plus 2d12+4 plus 4d10+8 plus 3; HP 69; Mas -; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; Defense 16, touch 16, flatfooted 15 (+1 Dex, +5 class); BAB +9; Grap +12; Atk +13 melee (1d12+5, great axe), or +10 ranged (1d6+3, javelin); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ medical incompatibility, darkvision; AL Hateful Ones; SV Fort +12, Ref +5, Will +4; AP 5; Rep +5; Str 16, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 14, Cha 9.

**Occupation:** Military (DW) (Knowledge [Tactics]).

**Background:** Tribal (Intimidate).

**Mutations and Defects:** Sensitive Sight, Aberrant Deformity.

**Skills:** Climb +5, Disguise -7, Hide +3, Jump +6, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (Tactics) +1, Move Silently +3, Perform (Dance) +1, Swim +5, Tumble +5.

**Feats:** Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Heroic Surge, Intimidating Strength, Primitive Technology, Power Attack, Sunder, Sworn Enemy (Technologists)\*, Toughness, Weapon Focus (great axe).

**Talents (Strong Hero):** Melee Smash, Improved Melee Smash.

**Talents (Brethren Follower):** Trap Making 1d6, Technology Prohibitions, Technology Destroyer +1.

**Talents (Hateful One):** 1/Rage, Student of Poison, 2/Rage, Damage Reduction 1/-, Unstoppable.

**Possessions:** Great axe, three javelins, 1d3 doses of *edge* (see *Drugs*), 1d3 doses of *rage* (see *Drugs*), filthy robes.

## PROPHETS

The previous section gave a brief sampling of generic Brethren characters, offering a look at what the average member of that faction can do. But in addition to the typical Brethren agents and citizens, there are members of the movement who have become legends. These men and women are known as "prophets", the charismatic and powerful coterie of leaders who guide the Brethren as a whole and ensure that their people never go astray of their established dogma.

A few of the most legendary Brethren prophets are detailed here. All of these Brethren leaders are currently alive and active, whether or not they operate openly as public figures, or act behind the scenes to lead the Brethren's efforts to eradicate the memory of the Ancients. They represent not only

high-level and high-power NPCs, but also the guiding minds behind the Brethren movement, as it exists in *Darwin's World*.

## DEUTERONOMY 28:18

*Deuteronomy 28:18* is an abnormality, even among the mutated and devolved Brethren – he is a master mentalist, whose eerie glowing eyes convey a ruthless inner power; those of weaker will have no chance against his hypnotic stare. Deuteronomy, though now wretched, pale, and almost ghostly, carries himself with poise and speaks with an educated voice. Descended from the unchanged humans who emerged from the Bernal Heights vault years ago, he was born to pureblood parents. Though as a boy he showed an aptitude for learning and a zest for life, he was one of a new generation of children born from purebloods who were showing the first signs of genetic illness - no doubt a result of the radiation lingering in the city mutating their genes.

Though for much of his youth he was handsome, as Deuteronomy aged his mutations became more visible, rapidly resulting in a slow withering of his body. The slow devolution has stripped him of his looks (though to be certain he is still quite striking) and driven him somewhat mad, inspiring him with a bitter hatred of the Ancients (for what, he perceives, their arrogance did not only to the Brethren, but to him personally) that is terrifying even among the Brethren.

Yet while his body shriveled away, Deuteronomy began to develop massively-powerful neural abilities beyond the ken of any Brethren seen in years. Able to influence minds, and dominate enemies, he became a force to be feared. His rise from common citizen to guide, and then later to inquisitor, were inevitable. He was personally responsible for hunting down and eradicating no less than 17 renegade

Brethren, whose underground efforts threatened the stability of the faction. On his thirtieth birthday he was elected to lead the Godless, and continues to represent their faction among the Prophets; in their particular beliefs he finds a vehicle for his hatred of any power - temporal or spiritual - beyond his control. Despite his personal obsessions, he is one of the most vocal proponents of the movement, using his unquestioningly powerful charisma to inspire the masses into action whenever a new crusade looms on the horizon.

### Deuteronomy 28:18, Charismatic Hero 5/Psionic

**10/Demagogue 5:** CR 20; Medium-size humanoid; HD 5d6+5 plus 10d8+10 plus 5d6+5; HP 101; Mas 13; Init +4; Spd 30 ft; Defense 19, touch 19, flatfooted 19 (+9 class); BAB +11; Grap +10; Atk +10 melee (1d6-1, staff), or +11 ranged (by weapon); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ medical incompatibility, albinism; AL Godless; SV Fort +12, Ref +7, Will +17; AP 10; Rep +12; Str 8, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 18.

**Occupation:** Academic (DW) (Knowledge [Current Events], Knowledge [Theology and Philosophy]).

**Background:** Resentful (Knowledge [Mutant Lore]).

**Mutations and Defects:** Neural Mutation - Precognition, Neural Mutation - Telepathy x7, Albinism x2.

**Skills:** Bluff +19, Concentration +11, Diplomacy +19, Gamble +5, Gather Information +14, Intimidate +24, Knowledge (Current Events) +15, Knowledge (Mutant Lore) +15, Knowledge (Theology and Philosophy) +20, Perform +12, Pilot +7, Sense Motive +13, Spot +18.

**Feats:** Attraction Trigger, Charm Person, Confident, Domination, Foresight, Frightful Presence,

Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Mind Crush, Mind Strike, Mind Stun, Mutation Advancement x5, Primitive Technology, Renown, Super-Charismatic.

**Talents (Charismatic Hero):** Coordinate, Inspiration, Greater Inspiration.

**Talents (Psionic):** Neural Specialization, Mutation Advancement.

**Talents (Demagogue):** Followers, Lead Followers, Zealots, Captivate Masses.

**Possessions:** Staff, filthy robes, two *juju potions* (1d4+10).

## WISDOM 5:17

Famous among the Brethren is *Wisdom 5:17*, perhaps one of their movement's greatest generals and military strategists. Originator of many of the cunning tactics of stealth, trap making, and ambush that the Brethren now employ (based on their many years of being the underdog), she is legendary as a tricky and wily commander on the battlefield. Wisdom has almost single-handedly transformed the crude, makeshift tactics of the past into workable, strategically useful battlefield innovations, advocating the widespread use of traps, poison, and hit-and-run attacks.

An aging albino, Wisdom no longer finds her strength in her body, but in her will and zeal for the success of her people's beliefs (though to be certain, she still has the claws and muscle to put up a fight). Her courage and unwillingness to surrender have often led her followers to victory despite the overwhelming tools of their enemies. To many Brethren, Wisdom embodies the image they have of themselves; ancient and tired, but with enough tricks still left up their sleeves that defeat is never an inevitability.

Though many of her fellow Brethren are hateful



beings, Wisdom brings a more moderate counsel to the gatherings of the Prophets as a leading member of the Havenots. However, she rarely intrudes in the politics of the Prophets, knowing full well that theirs is a dangerous and dirty business - and one she loathes to get involved with. Instead, the old woman finds comfort on the field of battle, finding her true calling in keeping her men from harm, defending the Brethren and their families (she herself has 30 grandchildren), and inspiring the young with the ability to continue the defense of their people until well after she is gone.

**Wisdom 5:17, Smart Hero 6/Brethren Follower 10/Skulk 2:** CR 18; Medium-size humanoid; HD 6d6+6 plus 10d12+10 plus 2d8+2; HP 113; Mas 12; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; Defense 19, touch 19, flatfooted 18 (+1 Dex, +8 class); BAB +14; Grap +16; Atk +17 melee (1d10+2, claw), or +15 ranged (1 plus *poison*, blowgun); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ medical incompatibility, adrenaline surge, claws, albinism; AL Havenots; SV Fort +10, Ref +13, Will +7; AP 9; Rep +7; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 10.

**Occupation:** Guide (Listen, Spot).

**Background:** Resentful (Knowledge [Theology and Philosophy]).

**Mutations and Defects:** Adrenaline Control, Claws x3, Albinism, Aberrant Deformity.

**Skills:** Balance +5, Bluff +4, Climb +9, Craft (structural) +12, Demolitions +5, Disable Device +12, Disguise -6, Escape Artist +5, Forgery +5, Gather Information +4, Hide +9, Intimidate +6, Jump +8, Knowledge (Current Events) +12, Knowledge (Tactics) +24, Knowledge (Technology) +6, Knowledge (Theology and Philosophy) +19, Listen +19, Move Silently +9, Navigate +12, Search +14, Sleight of Hand +5, Spot +19, Survival +11.

**Feats:** Alertness, Cautious, Cleave, Combat

Expertise, Cunning Trap-Maker\*, Deadly Trap-Maker\*, Great Fortitude, Know The Signs\*, Leaper, Lightning Reflexes, Meticulous, Mutation Advancement x2, Power Attack, Primitive Technology, Sunder, Weapon Focus (claws).

**Talents (Smart Hero):** Savant (Knowledge [Tactics]), Exploit Weakness, Plan.



**Talents (Brethren Follower):** Trap Making 1d6, Technology Prohibitions, Technology Destroyer +1, Trap Making 2d6, Smite Technology, Technology Destroyer +2, Trap Making 3d6, Technology Sunder, Technology Destroyer +3, Trap Making 4d6, Divine Damage.

**Talents (Skulk):** Sweep, Sneak Attack +1d6.

**Possessions:** Blowgun, 10 darts coated with *putrefied blood* (see *Poisons*), filthy robes, four *juju potions* (1d4+10).

## CHERISH 1:6

*Cherish 1:6* is the leader of the Simple movement of the Brethren, and her sudden and unexpected rise to power has brought the disapproval and loathing of several of the other factions. The reason is plain to see once one gets a look at her: Cherish is a nine year-old girl.

Cherish first entered the political limelight of the Brethren three years previous during a particular Simple crusade in the city. After the Purifiers uncovered a series of secret book stashes, the Simple mounted a campaign with several inquisitors leading the effort. Numerous citizens were rounded up and purged, and the libraries - in the Tenderloin district of the city - were burned to the ground. Despite the fervor of the Simple, several of these impromptu bonfires raged out of control, spreading to a nearby housing area where countless innocent civilians lived. In the fires many died, but one who survived was Cherish. It is recorded that no less than a hundred Simple witnessed her emerge from the burning inferno where her parents had been trapped and burned to death, “dancing” in the flames of the burning books on the street and laughing. Unharmful and unafraid of the fire, the Simple took this as a sign that she was some kind of “holy” child, and that

the tragedy of their actions was in fact the hand of fate guiding them to their new champion.

After it was established her parents were dead Cherish was communally adopted by the Simples, and she has since risen to become their leader - much to the chagrin of others. Though the Simples venerate her (even over other leaders who are certainly more competent than a child), the girl is a cruel and vindictive creature, who has become spoiled by the attention the Simples lavish upon her. She has also proven to be quite cunning, uniting other youngsters to organize book burnings throughout the city like some perverse version of the Hitler Youth. The other faction Prophets obviously consider Cherish a threat, and a liability to the Brethren as a whole; she is too young and too irrational to deal with, and to many she is obviously insane. Arrogant to the point of being foolhardy, she seldom has anything to contribute except to berate others for not being dedicated "enough". The other Prophets only barely tolerate her for now, in no small part due to the unreasonable fervor she whips up in the Simples.

Given to cruel and childish whims, Cherish has also become drunk with power. With an entire faction behind her, she has become used to getting what she wants, and threatening to call on the full might of the Simples against any who oppose or ridicule her (especially the latter).

Cherish resembles a freckled young girl with definite albino traits; pink eyes, white skin, and silvery hair. But her features are often twisted in a way that quickly betrays the true psychotic that is festering inside her. Suffering from a streak of pyromania even before the Simples adopted her, she has come to be obsessed with book burnings and uses them as a way to keep her faction followers amused - and their hatred on the constant edge of boiling over.

**Cherish 1:6, Charismatic Hero 3/Demagogue 2:** CR 5; Medium-size humanoid; HD 3d6-6 plus 2d6-4; HP 8; Mas 7; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; Defense 13, touch 13, flatfooted 12 (+1 Dex, +2 class); BAB +2; Grap -1; Atk -1 melee (1d4-3, slung shot), or +3 ranged (by weapon); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ medical incompatibility, fire resistance, albinism; AL Simples; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +4; AP 2; Rep +4; Str 5, Dex 12, Con 7, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 15.

**Occupation:** Demagogue (Bluff, Sense Motive).

**Background:** Resentful (Knowledge [Theology and Philosophy]).

**Mutations and Defects:** Energy Immunity (Fire), Albinism.

**Skills:** Bluff +13, Diplomacy +10, Disguise +4, Gamble +2, Gather Information +10, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (Current Events) +7, Knowledge (Theology and Philosophy) +8, Listen +4, Perform +8, Sense Motive +7, Spot +4.

**Feats:** Alertness, Confident, Deceptive, Primitive Technology, Sand In The Eyes\*, Simple\*, Super-Charismatic.

**Talents (Charismatic Hero):** Coordinate, Fast-Talk.

**Talents (Demagogue):** Followers, Lead Followers.

**Possessions:** Sling shot, 1d4 caltrops, filthy robes.

## FORTITUDE 5:14

*Fortitude 5:14* is the leader of the Purifiers, a seldom seen branch of the Brethren who specialize in tracking and hunting threats to the movement; in specific, those who endanger the Brethren culture as a whole. Fortitude has led the Purifiers for most of his life, but remarkably he has begun to question the validity of his life's work. Having hunted too many men, women, and children in the name of protecting the Brethren, in his mind he is stained with blood

that can never be washed away. His view of these degenerates, which he once bought at face value (namely, that they are a threat because they endanger society as a whole), has begun to crumble.

Fortitude is a quiet and unassuming leader, relying on his practical knowledge of the San Francisco ruins - including the vast underground - to speak for his competence. It is said that Fortitude knows the city better than anyone, and in fact he is often called on to advise when new defenses are being built, or when battle strategies are to be put to the test. Despite this his fellow Prophets have noticed a marked change in his attitude towards the "hunted", and some even suspect he has gone soft.

Fortitude leads his Purifiers like a true father figure, showing a deep understanding for those who appear to be in danger of cracking from the pressures of their job - hunting and killing civilians whose only crime is to fill their bellies to ease the torture of perpetual starvation, or those who have made the innocent mistake of reactivating a piece of technology out of ignorance or curiosity. He is best known for a phrase that he frequently uses to soothe the consciences of his men: "For the good of all." Despite this a few of his own followers question Fortitude's dedication, and rumor has it that on more than one occasion he has allowed Brethren ghouls to get away instead of slaughtering them when they were uncovered. Whether this is true or not, none can say, for none are foolhardy enough to accuse the grizzled tracker to his face - even the other Prophets.

**Fortitude 5:14, Dedicated Hero 3/Fast Hero 3/Brethren Follower 4/Skulk 7:** CR 17; Medium-size humanoid; HD 3d6+6 plus 3d8+6 plus 4d12+8 plus 7d8+14; HP 117; Mas 15; Init +6; Spd 30 ft; Defense 27, touch 25, flatfooted 25 (+2 Dex, +13 class, +2 equipment); BAB +13; Grap +16; Atk +18



melee (1d8+3, *mastercraft* pata), or +15 ranged (1 plus *poison*, blowgun); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ medical incompatibility, darkvision, phobia; AL Purifiers; SV Fort +11, Ref +14, Will +8; AP 8; Rep +9; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 8.

**Occupation:** Guide (Navigate, Survival).

**Background:** Resentful (Knowledge [Theology and Philosophy]).

**Mutations and Defects:** Sensitive Sight, Phobia (going hungry).

**Skills:** Hide +17, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (Current Events) +3, Knowledge (Tactics) +3, Knowledge (Theology and Philosophy) +4, Listen +7, Move Silently +17, Navigate +3, Search +11, Sense Motive +5, Sleight of Hand +8, Spot +7, Survival +13, Swim +4, Tumble +9.

**Feats:** Alertness, Armor Proficiency (light), Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Primitive Technology, Purifier\*, Renown, Ritual Scarification\*, Stealthy, Sunder, Track, Twist The Blade\*, Weapon Focus (pata).

**Talents (Dedicated Hero):** Empathy, Intuition.

**Talents (Fast Hero):** Evasion, Opportunist.

**Talents (Brethren Follower):** Trap Making 1d6, Technology Prohibitions, Technology Destroyer +1, Trap Making 2d6, Smite Technology.

**Talents (Skulk):** Sweep, Sneak Attack +1d6, Skill Mastery, Sneak Attack +2d6, Improved Sweep.

**Possessions:** *Mastercraft* pata, blowgun, 4 darts coated with *blindweed* (see *Poisons*), leather armor, filthy robes, four *juju potions* (1d4+10).

## BARUCH 2:29

Wild yet charismatic in a way that can't be easily described, *Baruch 2:29* is a rising Brethren patriarch - and the current "master" of the Hateful Ones. His own faith being nigh unshakable, he serves as a guiding light in the troubling times ahead, both

for his faction and for the Brethren people as a whole. Though the Hateful Ones are a relatively new phenomenon - and thus their methods are under scrutiny by the other Brethren factions - Baruch uses his savagery and seeming invincibility as a warrior to prove the loyalty of his followers.

In addition to being a grizzled combatant, Baruch is a natural speaker and ruthless taskmaster whose commanding persona have on more than one occasion put to rest the protests of political opponents. When not using subtle threats or psychological intimidation to keep his faction's behavior out of the political hot seat, Baruch sidesteps the Prophets and stages dervish-like gladiatorial gatherings that serve to awe and terrify the Brethren masses into believing the Hateful Ones are not only a necessary arm of their society - but one they definitely want on their side when the chips are down.

Something of a born showman, Baruch walks confidently among the masses of his Hateful Ones whether in battle or in their spartan training camps, reaffirming their beliefs through poetic reminders of the grotesque Ancient past, shouting the promises of the Brethren's "New Future", and whipping them into the bloodthirsty frenzies they are legendary for.

## Baruch 2:29, Strong Hero 3/Brethren Follower

**7/Hateful One 8:** CR 18; Medium-size humanoid; HD 3d8+6 plus 7d12+14 plus 8d10+16 plus 3; HP 139; Mas -; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; Defense 30, touch 21, flatfooted 29 (+1 Dex, +10 class, +4 natural, +5 equipment); BAB +18; Grap +21; Atk +23 melee (1d8+5, *mastercraft* spear), or +19 ranged (1d6+3, sling); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ medical incompatibility; AL Hateful Ones; SV Fort +16, Ref +8, Will +4; AP 8; Rep +8; Str 16, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 13.

**Occupation:** Military (DW) (Knowledge [Tactics]).

**Background:** Tribal (Intimidate).

**Mutations and Defects:** Protective Dermal Development, Neurofibromatosis.

**Skills:** Climb +9, Hide +3, Intimidate +24, Jump +9, Knowledge (Current Events) +2, Knowledge (Tactics) +7, Listen +5, Move Silently +3, Spot +5, Survival +1, Swim +5.

**Feats:** Archaic Weapons Proficiency, Armor Proficiency (light), Armor Proficiency (medium), Cleave, Great Cleave, Heroic Surge, Intimidating Strength, Leadership, Power Attack, Primitive Technology, Rallying Leader (see *The Foundationists*), Sunder, Toughness, Twist The Blade\*, Weapon Focus (spear).

**Talents (Strong Hero):** Melee Smash, Improved Melee Smash.

**Talents (Brethren Follower):** Trap Making 1d6, Technology Prohibitions, Technology Destroyer +1, Trap Making 2d6, Smite Technology, Technology Destroyer +2, Trap Making 3d6, Technology Sunder.

**Talents (Hateful One):** 1/Rage, Student of Poison, Damage Reduction 1/-, 2/Rage, Unstoppable, Damage Reduction 2/-, Veins of Poison, Damage Reduction 3/-.

**Possessions:** *Mastercraft* spear, 1d4 doses of *putrefied blood* (see *Poisons*), sling, chain mail shirt, filthy robes, 1d3 doses of *rage* (see *Drugs*), four *juju potions* (1d4+10).

## VICTORY 7:1

Though his name evokes visions of a warrior and conqueror, *Victory 7:1* is something quite different. One of only a handful of unchanged human beings in the Brethren; Victory follows a less violent path, and currently leads the somewhat controversial Barefoot Order. Though he was not the pioneer of the Order's

pacifist code, he sees in their message a far more logical path than the crusading zeal of the Brethren as a whole, something that he personally believes endangers the Brethren more than it helps them.

Though few know it, in another life Victory was a member of the Foundation, a paladin-commander whose unit was devastated during the Brethren-Foundation war in 2255. Having almost lost his life, he awoke after a particularly brutal battle to find himself in the care of mutants - men and women of the Brethren had taken him in and cared for his injuries. In the coming months he would try to escape his captivity again and again, but he was never able to make the dangerous journey by himself; time and again the simple mutant villagers found him in the wastes, and brought him back to selflessly nurse him back to health. Eventually his clumsy efforts drew the attention of the Inquisitors, who burned down the village that had harbored him, fearing an outsider had contaminated the people.

Through witnessing their ruthlessness to catch him, Victory had an epiphany, a revelation that in their quest to create their own “perfect future” both the Brethren and the Foundation were in many ways alike in their brutality. In time he came to sympathize with the suffering of the simple Brethren over his former people - the cruel masters who sought to rebuild America at any cost - and vowed to change their lot on this earth. Gone were his ambitions of returning to the Foundation, and buried were the memories of that past life. Throwing away the last vestiges of his former self, Victory decided to join the Barefoot Order (who accepted him and, after being told his story, vowed to keep his secret safe); he has since risen through the ranks from behind the scenes to become its leader.

In his lifetime Victory has seen the equality of purebloods in the Brethren dwindle into mistrust

and even blame for the Fall. As more mutants join the Brethren each day, humans have become an almost insignificant minority who only manage a tenuous position in the hierarchy. As rabid anti-human sentiment stirs in the ranks of new arrivals (such as tribals and those who join the Brethren after their communities were conquered by the racist Foundation), Victory finds it more expedient than ever to masquerade as a mutant whether appearing in public or leading in battle, so that his word is obeyed and not put in question merely because he is human. He deliberately sows rumors that he is in fact a mutant, so hideous that he must cover his face with a



featureless silver mask at all times.

Many of Victory’s followers in the Barefoot Order (who are aware of his identity) have taken to wearing identical masks to emulate their master, and it is rumored he sometimes walks unknown among them, or uses loyal members of his faction to stand in as “doubles” for him when in public. Though Victory is a strong proponent for peace, when his faction must do battle (usually for the good of all Brethren) his expertise drawn from years of experience as a warrior - and commander - take his opponents by surprise. He is often seen riding into the fray atop a white horse, clad in sweeping red robes, exhibiting a kind of selfless leadership that has made a hero of him. His silver mask is almost legendary among the enemies of the Brethren, especially among the Foundationists, who erroneously believe him to be the first in a new race of super-powerful mutants.

**Victory 7:1, Strong Hero 3/Foundation Guardian**

**7/Foundation Paladin 7/Barefoot Master 2:** CR 19; Medium-size humanoid; HD 3d8+3 plus 7d10+7 plus 7d10+7 plus 2d6+2; HP 116; Mas 13; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; Defense 24, touch 24, flatfooted 22 (+2 Dex, +12 class); BAB +19; Grap +21; Atk +21 melee (1d6+4, staff), or +17 ranged (1d6+2, bola); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ none; AL Barefoot Order; SV Fort +11, Ref +14, Will +5; AP 8; Rep +9; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 13, Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 12.

**Occupation:** Military (DW) (Knowledge [Tactics]).

**Background:** Guardian (Knowledge [Ancient Lore]).

**Skills:** Bluff +3, Diplomacy +5, Disguise +5, Gamble +2, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (Ancient Lore) +12, Knowledge (Current Events) +3, Knowledge (Tactics) +12, Knowledge (Technology) +8, Listen +11, Navigate +5, Search +2, Sense



Motive +4, Spot +11, Survival +4.

**Feats:** Advanced Technology, Armor Proficiency (light), Armor Proficiency (medium), Armor Proficiency (powered), Battlefield Leader (see *The Foundationists*), Combat Martial Arts, Confident, Deceptive, Defensive Martial Arts, Futuristic Firearm Proficiency, Post-Apocalyptic Technology, Primitive Technology, Rallying Leader (see *The Foundationists*), Renown.

**Talents (Strong Hero):** Melee Smash, Improved Melee Smash.

**Talents (Foundation Guardian):** Defender +2, Weapon Focus (pulse laser rifle), Tactical Aid, Weapon Specialization (pulse laser rifle), Defender +4.

**Talents (Foundation Paladin):** Command (Foundation), Improved Tactical Aid, Futuristic Weapon Expert, Armor Tolerance +1, Armor Tolerance +2, Futuristic Weapon Specialization, Armor Tolerance +3, War College.

**Talents (Barefoot Master):** Gentle Master, Decisive Blow (Str).

**Possessions:** Staff, two bolas, filthy robes, silver mask, four *juju potions* (1d4+10).

## FATHER 20:19

Grim and distant to some, *Father 20:19* personifies the selfless sacrifice of the Martyrs, a relatively new faction of the Brethren. Chosen for his dedication to the axiom that the end justifies the means, Father was terribly injured in the war against the Foundation in 2255, when he charged a Foundation machinegun nest and brutally butchered the occupants. Though he lost both eyes in the brutal melee, he continued to lead his men until his comrades overran the Foundation outpost he was charged with attacking. Father survived, and his ferocity earned him the notice of his superiors.

Father now leads the Martyrs, imparting his firsthand knowledge of the capabilities of technology - which ruined his sight - to new generations of zealous recruits destined to die on the field of battle. His ability to fight now gone (due to both age and injury), Father now resides on the Isle of Martyrs, where stockpiles of strange artifacts are kept by the Martyrs, to be sorted through and utilized if they can offer any benefit to the war effort. Father has become something of a tinker over the years, learning to fix many weapons and devices brought in from beyond the city, and has a special interest in machines of the Ancients that seem to have no useful purpose in the post-Fall world (things like hand-powered egg beaters, vinyl records, clocks of all kinds, gumball



machines, and especially mechanical children's toys) which litter his personal quarters in various states of repair. Intrigued to no end by these items, he practices his rudimentary mechanical skills by combining one seemingly useless item with another, creating unique objects that often have curious and bizarre uses (teddy bears that spout hot coffee from spigots in their bellies, or a full-sized carousel in which the mouths of the horses open and play pre-recorded presidential speeches from salvaged records as they spin round and round). All of this tinkering he does purely by touch and sound, which makes it all the more remarkable.

Father is respected by his men for his knowledge and past experiences, though some outside the Martyrs fear he is slowly going insane. His terrible wounds, the horrors of the Foundation war, and continued exposure to technology have certainly left him a bit demented.

### Father 20:19, Dedicated Hero 3/Scav 4/Tinker

**10:** CR 17; Medium-size humanoid; HD 3d6+3 plus 4d8+4 plus 10d6+10; HP 81; Mas 12; Init +0; Spd 30 ft; Defense 20, touch 20, flatfooted 20 (+10 class); BAB +10; Grap +12; Atk +15 melee (3d6+2, *mastercraft* chainsword), or +10 ranged (by weapon); FS 5 ft by 5 ft; Reach 5 ft; SQ medical incompatibility, blind; AL Martyrs; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +9; AP 8; Rep +8; Str 14, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 9, Cha 14.

**Occupation:** Corium Prospector (Search, Survival).

**Background:** Radical (Demolitions).

**Mutations and Defects:** Accumulated Resistance, Photosensitivity.

**Skills:** Computer Use +10, Craft (electronic) +13, Craft (mechanical) +13, Craft (structural)

+8, Demolitions +11, Disable Device +19, Gather Information +5, Hide +2, Knowledge (Ancient Lore) +9, Knowledge (Current Events) +5, Knowledge (History) +5, Knowledge (Physical Sciences) +10, Knowledge (Tactics) +5, Knowledge (Technology) +26, Knowledge (Theology and Philosophy) +12, Listen +10, Move Silently +2, Repair +21, Research +13, Search +24, Survival +10.

**Feats:** Alertness, Blind-Fight, Builder (Craft [electronic], Craft [mechanical]), Combat Expertise, Eyes of The Blind\*, Gearhead, Junk Crafter\*, Martyr\*, Post-Apocalyptic Technology, Power Attack, Primitive Technology, Radiation Sense, Renown, Sunder, Weapon Focus (chainsword).

**Talents (Dedicated Hero):** Skill Emphasis (Knowledge [Technology]), Faith.

**Talents (Scav):** Scav Scan, Sneak Attack +1d6, Scav Survival.

**Talents (Tinker):** Jury-rig +2, Tinkering, Tech Weapon, Tinkercraft, Jury-rig +4, Smart Weapon\*, Improved Tinkering.

**Possessions:** *Mastercraft* chainsword (tech weapon, smart weapon), power backpack, three satchel charge A's (concealed), filthy robes.



## THE CITY OF THE BRETHREN

San Francisco is no longer the proud jewel of the West Coast that it once was. The historic skyline, which gave form to the prosperity and vitality of the city in its heyday, has been blasted and scorched, the steel and glass of former world-record skyscrapers fused into monstrous monuments of the nuclear war. The glow of thousands of neon lights is gone now, replaced

### BRETHREN NAMES

Brethren names often mystify newcomers to the faction, for they seem to buck the trend of many outside cultures to adopt names that are in some part derived either from their ancestors or historical figures. In reality, however, Brethren names are more tied to the past than most appear to realize.

Upon joining the Brethren all new recruits must stop using their old name and adopt a new one (this is not uncommon among many Twisted Earth groups such as the Brotherhood of Radiation, and thus in this respect the Brethren are not unique). Brethren names are derived from the ancient texts comprising the Articles, as well as other books and Arcanum from the past that the Brethren still cling to. Some books, though heavily censored or even modified by Brethren leaders, still manage to provide kernels of wisdom that the Brethren use to teach moral lessons, perpetuate their philosophy, or else give it credibility. These range from the Articles themselves to books like the Bible and Koran, and even sensationalist political fiction of the time.

When a recruit joins the Brethren she is encouraged to find a parable in the Articles (or in other approved texts, depending on her faction's view of whether or not ancient writings are to be allowed) that best describes her, whether it reflects her current values, describes her personal philosophy, or gives form in words to something she aspires to. Once the recruit decides (a journey that ends only when she feels she is ready), the name of the parable - and if necessary, the specific chapter in which it is found - become the new name of the Brethren follower.

*The names of the Brethren prophets described in this chapter are thus reflective of their personalities; some reference the Bible, while others reference the Articles and even other parables not mentioned in this book.*

by an eerie, inexplicable aurora that throbs over the city like a glowing cloudscape, casting strange hues over the ruins night and day. Streets remain filled with thousands of rusted and crumpled cars, and the damage from the years of bitter fighting over the city and its ruins by invaders have left gaping craters and mountains of rubble throughout.

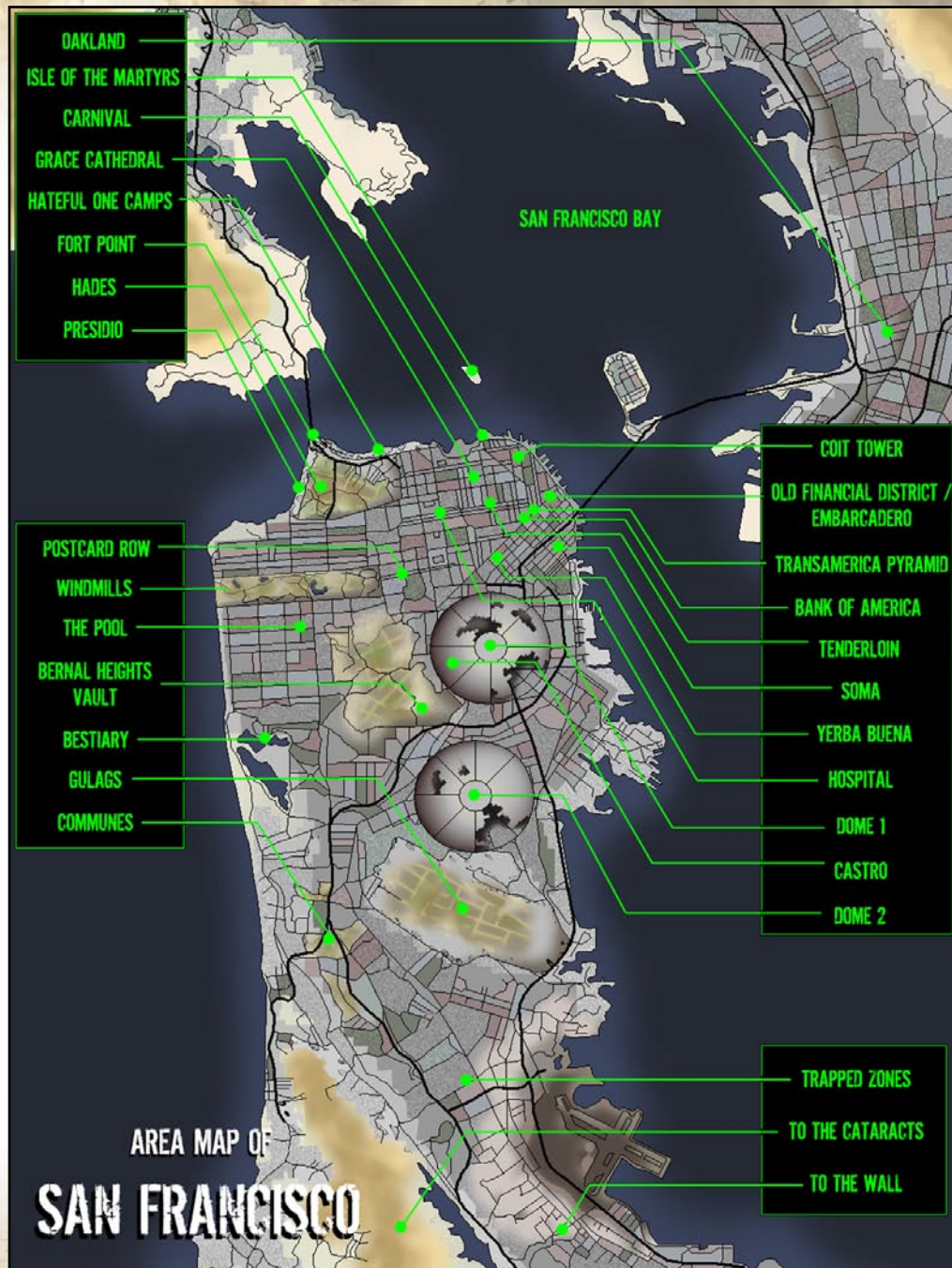
Standing over it all are the twin hemispherical domes of old San Francisco, once intended to create Eden-like habitats for the city's elite. Scorched, cracked, and collapsed in places, these domes still stand proud, hinting at a bounty of lost artifacts and wealth that many believe are still buried within the forbidden city of the Brethren.

### SAN FRANCISCO - THE RUINS

Like the city of Styx (detailed in the *Darwin's World 2nd Edition* rulebook), San Francisco would best be categorized as a city of survivors. This section of *The Broken and The Lost* offers a glimpse at the ruins of this city, the ancestral home of the Brethren movement. Their city, their fortress, and their philosophical Eden, the sprawling ruins of this once-magnificent metropolis have changed dramatically since the time of the Fall, leaving very little that Ancient man would recognize. In its streets and rubble-strewn blocks the Brethren have created their own harsh utopia, where their people continue to build a model of their self-styled "New Future".



# THE BRETHREN



Below are listed the major sites of interest in the ruins of San Francisco, their current purpose, and in some cases, an idea of how these sites have changed since the time of the Ancients.

## BANK OF AMERICA BUILDING

This 52-story building, at one time a contender for tallest structure west of the Mississippi, was, like most of San Francisco, badly damaged during the Fall. Though impressive, the building was briefly ransacked but never really occupied until recently.

The Havenots faction of the Brethren have begun to inhabit at least a few of the lower levels of this great building, making their homes in old offices along the exterior of the building (crowded with up to five families to a single domicile). With the windows and walls blown out in places, many of these squatters' homes face out into the city, and at night their small fires can be seen for quite a distance. Simple music from handmade instruments, off-key singing, and the sounds of domestic life (cooking, laughter, shouting, etc.) echo out into the streets below. The area is beginning to develop a smell, however, as laundry water, refuse, and the contents of chamber pots are emptied straight out of the building through these openings.

## BERNAL HEIGHTS VAULT

The Bernal Heights vault - a colossal construction from the time of the Ancients - is located in the hills south of the city, built directly into the cliffs of a low mountainside. A high-tech shelter facility designed to accommodate the city's more influential and important politicians and civic leaders during the crisis of the Fall, the Bernal Heights vault still exists despite its long and bloody history. Since it was ravaged and looted long ago it is largely empty, though its concrete halls still extend at least ten stories underground.

In the past generation the Brethren have come to occupy the ruins of the Bernal Heights shelter, using its larger, upper-level vaults for massed assemblies, high-level committee meetings, and as meeting places for the leaders of the Brethren's various factions. A kind of rudimentary home for their faction's communal government, the cold dark halls have been dressed up with tattered red banners and hangings, with large cavernous chambers lit by torches and blazing braziers. Here, in the comfort of cool shadows, the Brethren gather frequently



## THE BRETHREN

to discuss their strategies and plan the future of their self-designed utopia in San Francisco.

Though the upper levels are now home to the government, the darker corridors of the lower levels still bear signs of the tremendous fighting that took place in the vault, and the deepest levels are still littered with the bones of the Ancients who died trying to defend it. A very small number of pureblood Brethren still live in these lower levels, never having fully acclimated to life with the mutants of the surface city.

### BESTIARY (SAN FRANCISCO ZOOLOGICAL PARK)

The ruins of the San Francisco Zoological Park were long occupied by Brethren squatters, especially the simpler members of society who sought a place away from the rhetorical politics of the city. When the Brethren first began their war against the Foundation, the squatters were driven out of the old pens and zoo buildings to make room for animals and other beasts being trained by elite Beastmasters.

The Bestiary retains this purpose to this day, and here all manner of wasteland beasts caught by skilled Beastmasters are brought to be trained by the Brethren. In addition to raising and training predatory cats, Gronts, and Othydogs to fight alongside them in battle, the Brethren have begun to turn to newly-arrived tribals for animals to fill the Bestiary, offering bounties on animals captured intact and delivered to be trained as beasts of war.

### BRIDGE FORTRESSES (GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE, SAN FRANCISCO-OAKLAND BRIDGE, SAN MATEO BRIDGE)

Located on the largest bridges that connect San Francisco to the mainland, these enormous constructions resemble true “citadels” perched atop lofty ancient structures. The Brethren built these fortresses long ago as watch stations and guard posts

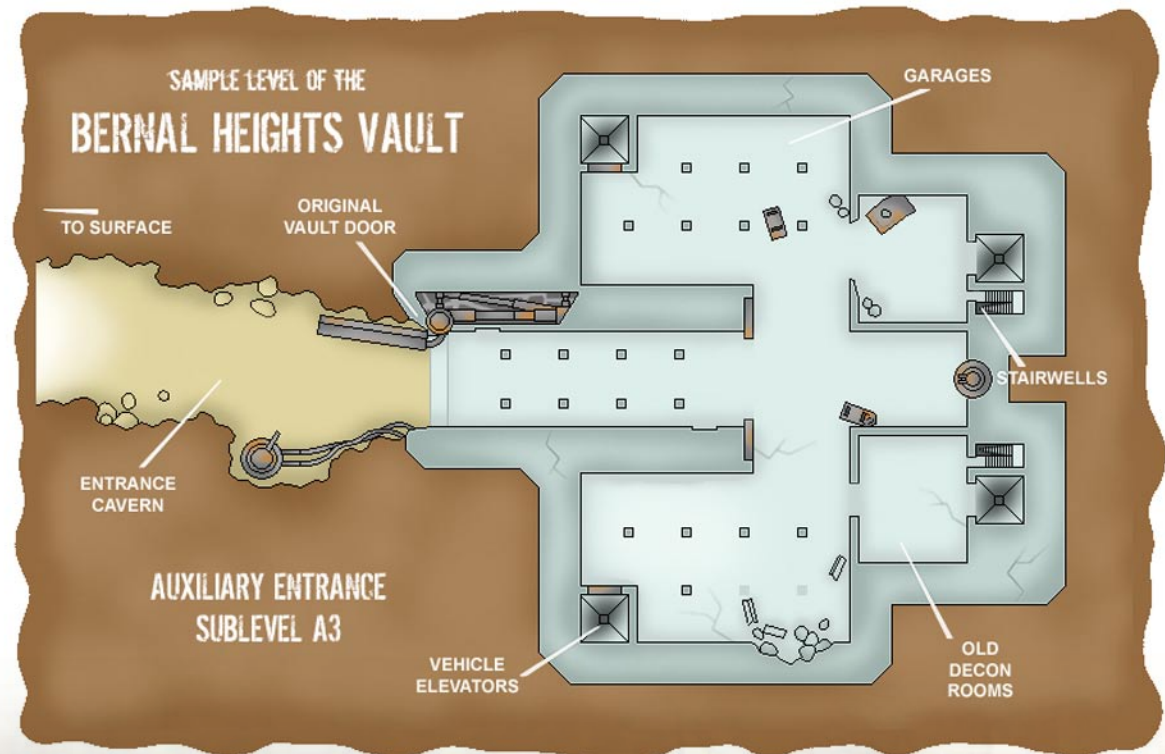
to prevent infiltration of the city proper, and over time they have grown to phenomenal sizes - sometimes even dwarfing the bridges they rest on with their patchwork scrap metal walls and spiraling towers. These enormous forts are made even grimmer by the hanging of skeletons and rotting corpses from their parapets, serving to warn outsiders against intrusion.

Though most of these forts have been attacked and/or destroyed in the past (especially during the war against the Foundation in the past), they are always rebuilt. Each bridge fortress holds a small contingent of Brethren forces, which stand guard at all hours.

Huge portcullises can be lowered to deny entry and stave off frontal attack, while piles of rubber tires can be ignited to send a signal to the city proper that the fort is under attack.

### CACHES (NOT DEPICTED)

To prepare for war the Brethren have created countless caches of pre-deployed weapons and supplies hidden throughout the city. These caches are often located in the bombed-out ruins of old buildings (where they can't be seen from the air), but can also be found in basements, vast underground car garages,





sewer and subway tunnels, etc. Typical caches contain everything from weaponry to medicines, as well as food and water for a prolonged siege, kept in piles or in deep pits. The materials in these caches are packaged in sackcloth, rags, and animal skins to prevent rust, weathering, and rot, and are regularly maintained/replaced as needed.

Though most neighborhoods require Brethren citizens to be aware of their local cache (so civilians can readily arm themselves if the city is attacked, and bolster the strength of the regular Brethren forces as “irregulars”), many Brethren factions also have secret caches that only their faction troops and leaders know about. This reduces the potential of an infiltration or sabotage attempt from disarming the Brethren completely.

## CATARACTS

Located south of the city proper, this amazing geographical anomaly marks an area utterly changed by the cataclysmic weapons of the Fall. In the Twisted Earth setting of *Darwin's World*, much of what was once California was greatly disrupted during the Fall by futuristic weapons of mass destruction. Among these were super high-yield weapons designed to strike at the fault lines of the American continent that, in addition to the initial damage from detonation, would cause devastating earthquakes during the exchange. The same seismic weapons that created the Rift Valley created a huge shift in the San Andreas fault (and several other minor faults in the region), a rift that literally runs from the lost ruins of Bakersfield in the south - which were entirely sucked underground - to just a few miles short of San Francisco Bay. When the collapse of the fault spread this far north it created a sudden drop in ground elevation that utterly devastated the region. Decades in the future, the dust has settled

into a broken and terraced slope, dozens of miles long, which slowly descends to the Rift floor far to the south. Virtually everything in this region was flattened and sucked under during the Fall; luckily the Rift did not extend all the way to the Bay, however, or else it would have flooded with ocean water and a shallow inland sea would now sit where the Rift lies.

Though it did not reach the city, the colossal tectonic changes of the Fall created a series of *cataracts* (a chain of low, terraced waterfalls), which continue to drain water from the surrounding broken hills into the northern reaches of the legendary Rift Valley.

The Cataracts are desolate territory; most of the terrain here collapsed completely when the earth sunk and gradually split apart. The waterfalls have washed much of the urban wreckage away, but the Brethren have settled this area and small primitive villages dot the terraced terrain and cluster around the waterfalls as they cascade dramatically into the misty gulf of the Rift Valley. In some places rope bridges have been constructed to allow villagers to cross these falls to neighboring villages (some of which are almost unreachable since they are perched on rocky promontories isolated by the flowing of the great cascades), while in others the only means of crossing the gulf is through climbing aboard wicker “cages” suspended on lofty ropes and cranked across by Brethren villagers on either side.

## CARNIVAL (FISHERMAN'S WHARF/PIER 39)

During the time of the Ancients this was a bustling place, a San Francisco landmark, and today the Brethren continue to patron the area for “entertainment”. Old theaters line the decaying wooden boardwalk, in which Brethren citizens come for continual “education” - sitting in crowded and crumbling cinema seats, sometimes 300 or more at

a time, and watching as Brethren demagogues shout out “up-to-date newscasts” to “keep them informed”. These “newscasts” are merely rants of propaganda, with zealous speakers reporting (with a definite slant, of course) on the Brethren’s current political situation, announcing new curfews or rationing restrictions, calling on citizens to contribute with food drives to support the faction’s missionary cells far from home, and relaying information and news from the “front lines” of the greater conflict against technology. Spun like old WWII newsreels, these gatherings have become more colorful (and more ridiculous) just to keep the general masses interested - and enthralled.

Also off the boardwalk are the half-sunken remains of the *USS Pampanito*, a rusted WWII submarine that served as a tourist attraction before the Fall. The submarine is completely wrecked now, having been vandalized during and after the Fall by rioting survivors, and scrapped for metal parts over the years.

## CASTRO

Among old neighborhoods dotted with the Victorian houses of 19th century settlers, the Castro became the hotbed of gay rights during the hedonistic height of Ancient civilization. Now lit only by rogue streams of light from the broken dome above (the neighborhood is part of *Dome 1*), the Castro is most notable for the Castro Theatre, which stands over the abandoned neighborhoods with its Spanish Colonial Baroque facade and titanic neon sign spelling “C - STRO”. Though it is no longer lit, the glittery marquees below this huge sign still bear the fragmented letters of obscene Ancient-era movie titles shown here in the days leading right up to the Fall. The interior of the theatre is a reminder of the frivolous nature of the Ancients, with extravagant

chandeliers, a great pipe organ, and a labyrinth of darkened, decaying halls - all long abandoned.

## COIT TOWER

This 210 foot tall tower, at the top of Telegraph Hill, was completed in 1933 using funds dedicated to the city for its refurbishment after the 1906 earthquake. Even so long after the Fall the impressive tower remains, providing a panoramic view of the city and the Bay, and a place for philosophical members of the Brethren to come to be reminded of the past.

The Brethren maintain the ruins of Coit Tower as a kind of “museum”, seeing in its collection of interior murals (created between 1933 and 1943) an imagery of the past that fits their skewed view of the Ancients. Distorted by their own hatred of the pre-Fall world, the paintings (which portray a surprisingly diverse panorama of the past through strange landscapes depicting vast industrial sprawls, the interior of factories, and images of faceless mass agriculture and meat packing industries; portraits of bankers, scientists, and members of other professions of the period; and seemingly everyday views of city streets overcrowded with people, cars, and their technological inventions) are seen by the Brethren as a reminder of how gray and ugly the past really was.

Brethren thinkers come here often to hold flickering candles up to these great murals, scrutinizing their fading details as if each depiction held secret warnings against returning to the ways of old.

## COMMUNES

Dotted throughout the ruins of San Francisco, the Havenots operate what are known as the “communes”, large farms where food is grown for the benefit of the Brethren population. The concept of communes originates early in Brethren history, and

though many of the original farms were destroyed in the various battles for the city, they continue to sprout up as the necessity of feeding the masses outweighs all other concerns.

Every commune in the city is different, though they essentially consist of a self-contained “village” in its own right, producing agricultural goods not only for the Havenots themselves, but also for the entire Brethren faction. Some communes specialize in grain and vegetables, others are more like orchards with trees and fruit, while still others are dedicated to raising small herds of livestock, many of them brought here by tribal people hoping to barter their way into Brethren society.

Many new arrivals eagerly join the Havenots, if only to be close to the abundant food of these communes (since they run the communes, the Havenots usually get the lion’s share of the harvest).

## DOME 1 (“THE GRAND MUSEUM”)

The northern dome of the ruins, built during the height of the Ancients’ civilization, can still be seen despite the ravages of time, the numerous battles for the city in the past, and the nuclear holocaust. This enormous dome, several miles in diameter, was constructed at tremendous cost over the historic Mission, Castro, and Diamond Heights districts, as part of a clever effort to create a hedonistic “playground” for tourists during the time of the Ancients. Building on the wicked reputation of some of the seediest neighborhoods of the city, the dome was to transform this depressed part of San Francisco into an “Eden” for adult entertainment and Vegas-like getaways.

While San Francisco’s southern dome is put to good use by the Brethren housing their more deformed and sickly brothers and sisters (see below), the northern dome - cracked and collapsed in spots -

is kept generally off limits, in as pristine condition as possible, its city streets an “exhibit” to the decadence of the Ancients. Though the Brethren frown upon any vandalizing of the neighborhoods within the old dome, the great holes overhead have allowed rain and wind to play havoc on the ruins inside. Huge “cascades” of lichen and moss hang down from these gaping openings, sometimes draping entire buildings. Rainwater coming in from the open dome pools on the rooftops of terraced, futuristic buildings as well as crumbling structures alike, until ages-old stonework gives way creating dozens of hauntingly serene waterfalls that thunder throughout the shadowy ruins.

Despite the irreversible damage, the Brethren do visit this eerie place once each year, usually bringing “guides” in training within the dome for a spiritual retreat; the environment itself is used by Brethren teachers to explain how decadent the past was. Though there is little light (except for what filters in through the foliage above), and the elements have eroded much of the cityscape, here and there can be seen old strip joints tucked in alleys or brazenly sprawling onto main streets; the towering marquees of movie theaters advertising the worst of adult movies; dilapidated, graffiti-painted, and depressingly bleak apartment buildings with boarded up doors and bars on windows; and the wreckage of hundreds of cars and the skeletons of people trampled and killed during the chaos of the city’s invasion during the Fall.

Though the Grand Museum is said to be “perfectly preserved”, in the past the Brethren looted the ruins for useful materials and resources. Though structurally it stands as an exhibit to the past, there is very little to be found here in the way of artifacts.

## DOME 2 (“THE LEPER COLONY”)

While “Dome 1” of the San Francisco revitalization project was intended to turn a depressed part of the



city into a decadent moneymaking tourist draw, Dome 2 of the project was intended to create new upscale living space for the city's increasingly polarized population. Building an outwardly identical dome over the Excelsior and Visitacion Valley neighborhoods of the city, the urban planners were able to create a high-tech, high-income community that rivaled the hive-like superplexes of other overpopulated Metropoli across the country. Living in a secure and artificially maintained environment, the wealthy families drawn to Dome 2 were generally corporate employed, and quite well-to-do. As the success of the project became evident, investors began sinking money into the dome, building exclusive interior parks, multi-level malls, and other entertainment facilities that allowed the occupants to do all their shopping, recreation, and living inside the inclusive community, enjoying the environmental protection of its dome - and its security.

Word of the Fall devastated the dome, as its thousands of occupants fled the city for the Bernal Heights vault. In the chaos many poorer citizens were able to penetrate into the community, and loot the high-class apartments ringing its interior. Later, when the Brethren took over, anything left was ransacked - and minor fires gutted large portions of it.

Over time the dome's built up and shadowy interior has become home to a specific portion of the Brethren population, those mutated members of the movement that, in particular, cannot abide natural sunlight. A common evolutionary defect due to their long presence underground, these people - inheritors of a legacy that reminds the Brethren of their hunted past - prefer the deep darkness of the domed interior to the relatively "cosmopolitan" city outside.

The Brethren living here do so as a simplistic commune, subsisting on a wide variety of bizarre

fungi grown within the dome, and collecting runoff coming through the cracks in the roof above. They live in simple shelters, or in the hollow ruins of Ancient-era buildings, complementing their subsistence living by collecting rags and scrap from the decaying superplex's apartments and mall shops and trading them to other Brethren factions. Peaceful, they only wish to live in isolation and to avoid the politics of their mother movement.

### EMBARCADERO

This sprawling boulevard, once home to street hustlers, impromptu crap games, and the carnival gimmickry of card sharks, has become a kind of "Red Square" for the Brethren movement. Owing to the wide open nature of the four-lane boulevard, under the shadow of some of the most impressive skyscrapers in the city, the Brethren political arm now hosts grand parades in which thousands of citizens from the various factions take part, exhibiting ranks of red-clad children singing songs, robed women carrying bouquets of red flowers (many made from tinsel or broken glass since real flowers are rare), and neatly-drilled masses of "volunteer soldiers" carrying whatever implements of war they can muster - spears, axes, even sticks and golf clubs.

These huge rallies - which rival the greatest gatherings of Nazi Germany - have no purpose other than to reinforce discipline and order, and to keep the people entertained and proud of their movement's accomplishments. They are also symbolic, standing as a proud reminder to the Brethren that they trample on the archaic institutions of the old order, and march victorious through the crumbling remnants of the Ancients' wickedness.

### FORT POINT

Sitting beneath the rusted metal of the Golden Gate

Bridge lies this venerable fort, a defensive structure that dates to at least the time of the Spanish in the 18th century (it was known then as "Castillo do San Joaquin"). The structure that exists today - a formidable brick bulwark with three tiers and a central courtyard reminiscent of a prison - was constructed later, however, and embellished throughout the Civil War era.

Following the Civil War, Fort Point was largely abandoned, its mission (to defend the entrance to San Francisco Bay) no longer necessary. Stripped down, the old fort stood as a historic landmark well up to the Fall, only seeing battle through the eyes of astonished citizens of the city who came here as bystanders to watch the landing craft of the Pacific Union approach the city from the ocean in a mighty armada.

Many years after the Fall, the Hateful Ones came to occupy old Fort Point, moving into the crumbling ruins of the bastion and populating the nearby rocky beaches with their camps. Isolated from the city proper, no one contested the Hateful Ones' claim to the old fort, and it continues to be the center of their faction to this day.

The charismatic leader of the berserk Hateful Ones resides in Fort Point with his best warriors, who dwell in relative security behind its ancient, 10-foot thick walls and layers of trenches. Gone are the cannons, of course, but in the eerily haunting ruins the chanting and wild dervish cries of the Hateful Ones can be heard echoing, contesting with the thundering waves that crash against the nearby rocks. By night the hellish orange glow of campfires peering through crumbling holes in the fortress, blood red war banners flapping crazily overhead, and the momentary sight of ghost-like Hateful One sentries darting from crenellation to crenellation are all that one sees from out to sea.

## GRACE CATHEDRAL (NOB HILL)

For much of the city's early life Nob Hill was home to San Francisco's rich and influential, ever since Gold Rush-era cable cars made the top of the hill accessible. Wealthy citizens built manors here above and away from the rest of the bustling city, and in later years the manors of these rail barons and early industrialists were replaced by exquisite hotels, especially clustered around historic Huntington Park.

Standing over this area is Grace Cathedral, started in 1928 and finished in 1964. Despite being badly damaged during the invasion of the city, and later from the nuclear blasts that struck the port facilities, the French Gothic cathedral still manages to dominate the ruins of Nob Hill. Grace Cathedral is the primary gathering place of the Godless faction of the Brethren, who cluster regularly under its two enormous towers. The cathedral's famous bronze doors (copied from the Duomo in Florence done by Lorenzo Ghiberti c.a. 1447) are filled with intricate Old Testament imagery, which make a strange backdrop for the indignant secularism spouted by the Godless to their followers.

## GULAGS

The so-called "gulags" are in fact sites where the original interment camps set up by the Pacific Union once stood. Damaged in the Fall and later ransacked by invaders, the original buildings were mostly razed (or disassembled in later years to build defenses elsewhere), but the Brethren have always clustered here, perhaps out of some vague psychological connection to the area.

Bustling villages ("jungles") now stand where the old sprawling camps once were, with primitive huts spilling well past the former walls and barbed-wire fence lines. Small plots of farmland weave through these villages, which are worked from dawn to dusk

by Brethren Simples, Havenots, and others. Though not large enough to rival the Havenot "communes" (see *Communes* for details), each individual village in the shadow of the old gulags generally makes enough to support itself, and life here is peaceful, if not happy.

## HADES

This part of the Presidio - cleared long ago - is populated by fields of wild rhododendrons that would, under normal circumstances, seem serene, like a picturesque plantation along the coast. However, the sea breeze that sweeps the cliffs also hums night and day with the buzzing of millions of bees, which the Hateful Ones keep in a complex of wooden shacks that resembles a large ramshackle village.

Here, in the broad grassy glades that lay between seemingly random groves of trees, the Hateful Ones have constructed a primitive "factory" where a special kind of poison can be manufactured. In specific the berserkers of this bizarre faction use the plantation to produce "Hadean nectar", a violent and painful poison cultivated from the honey of special bees (see *Poisons* for more on *Hadean nectar*).

## HATEFUL ONE CAMPS

In the shadow of Fort Point, along the rocky beaches, the Hateful Ones have come to erect a small city of their own from tents and wooden buildings built with the composite skills and styles of dozens of Twisted Earth tribes. During the day smoke from smoldering campfires obscures much of these mysterious camps, but they are lit by bonfires most nights; in their glow the regiments of Hateful Ones gather to tell stories of their past exploits, and train and fight each other in gladiatorial combat, naked and armed with only tooth and claw.

Outsiders are generally not welcome to the camps

of the Hateful Ones, and are driven out or killed for trespassing.

## HOSPITAL (UCSF MEDICAL CENTER)

This ancient hospital, which predates the Fall, appears to have been badly damaged during the fighting for the city during the Final War. Bullet-ridden and with gaping holes from artillery hits dating from when it sat on the frontlines of the battle for San Francisco, the hospital nonetheless remains in use by the Brethren so far in the future. Gone are the advanced machines that once provided life-saving services, however; now members of the simplistic Barefoot Order walk the cracked white halls, tending to the sick and dying with what little medicine they grow in the small courtyard outside. It is a somber place of little light, save for that which pours in from collapsed exterior walls and the motley holes created by machineguns and cannons during the Fall.

The upper stories of the hospital have given way to a three-level ward for the insane, who by Brethren law must be treated and cared for despite their drain on society as a whole. Little can be done for them, however, and so the Barefoot Order valiantly attempts to at least make their lives comfortable. In addition to feeding and clothing the patients, the order also sees to their hygiene. Alas, communal showers for the deranged merely consist of a gaping hole in the roof, through which members of the order pour huge buckets of water down onto the half-naked patients, who stumble giddy in the rubble below.

Secret passages throughout the old hospital - constructed years after the Fall - lead underground to where the patients of the hospital are taken in time of war; these underground shelters also store secret stashes of food and water, as well as alleged tunnels for escape into the sewers. The Barefoot Order is said to hold meetings here by candlelight, and



rumor has it that enemies of the Brethren are given sanctuary by the order here before being whisked out of the city.

### ISLE OF THE MARTYRS (ALCATRAZ)

The so-called "Isle of the Martyrs" is located in the middle of San Francisco Bay, on the rocky promontory once known as "Alcatraz". Here the Brethren send those members of the Martyrs faction who have fulfilled their duty in life, keeping them separate and isolated from the rest of the Brethren population for the rest of their days.

The island is by no means a paradise. Here the outcasts of the Martyrs spend the rest of their lives contemplating the sacrifice they made for the good of the Brethren, living in a cloistered community far from prying eyes. Young Martyrs are brought to the island to train; the island is said to have a small but considerable collection of scavenged weapons and other armaments from before the Fall that the Martyrs keep in case these hated weapons are ever needed.

Members of the Barefoot Order make regular trips by boat to the island to deliver needed supplies (including food and water, but also a few technological weapons so that they can be studied by the Martyrs for teaching future generations in their use), and bring news of the world outside. Beyond that they live the remainder of their lives in almost total isolation. The Brethren believe the Martyrs and the technological objects they preserve to be tainted, and thus give the entire island a wide berth.

### OAKLAND

The city of Oakland, like Stockton to the east, was almost completely incinerated in the weeks-long fires that spread from San Francisco on the ocean winds just following the first nuclear attacks. The city remained uninhabited for decades, though it served

as a main staging area for New America in its efforts to control San Francisco. When the empire of New America disintegrated, the ruins of Oakland again fell silent.

Today the ruins of Oakland are inhabited by the Brethren, who use the crumbling ruins on this side of the Bay as a kind of "gateway" to their city; tent camps have since risen in the shadow of burned-out buildings, and life has returned.

The entirety of the Brethren presence in Oakland consists of a sprawling "indoctrination center"; it is here that tribal refugees and others drawn by the Brethren message from across the Twisted Earth arrive, hoping to join their movement. Arriving in the form of huge warbands looking to "join the war against the Foundation", or entire tribes displaced by more powerful groups and only seeking the refuge the Brethren promise, the tent city in Oakland has exploded in population, with warriors as well as women, children, and the sickly.

Due to this unparalleled influx of newcomers the Brethren have found it expedient to set up their processing camps here - keeping San Francisco proper safe from infiltration - and from being overrun. Among the ruins the Brethren have virtually created a "second city" to house these newcomers, at least until the Brethren leaders can figure out what to do with them - and whether or not they can be integrated into Brethren society. The tent city is complete with spartan housing for new arrivals constructed by the Simples, missions where preachers from the Godless teach the Brethren message night and day, nurseries for orphaned children run by the Havenots, and hospitals where the sick and dying can be administered to with natural medicines by members of the Barefoot Order.

Though it shouldered the burden of coping with the great numbers fleeing the Foundation to the

north admirably, Oakland is almost full to capacity. With so many different tribes gathered in one place outbreaks of inter-tribal violence are common (as old feuds die hard), the threat of disease is growing, and food shortages are an everyday occurrence. Yet despite this the very sight of the overcrowded city - with its thousands of multi-ethnic inhabitants from the four corners of the known world - is giving new hope to the displaced people who arrive each day.

### OLD BRETHREN HIVES (NOT DEPICTED)

The old Brethren "hives" beneath San Francisco consist of a labyrinthine complex of old tunnels and warrens built in the time of the legendary Brethren prophet "Fear", and later expanded when the Brethren fled underground during the era of the New America occupation. The early Brethren made great use of existing subway runs and the crumbling sewer network, linking the diverse variety of tunnels into a sprawling maze of passages and corridors - some no more than crawlspaces - with caverns and sewer junctions. In these spaces the early Brethren constructed living areas and ghetto-like complexes, that when finally laid out resembled a claustrophobic honeycomb of crude underground domiciles some fifty to one hundred feet beneath the surface.

Though many of these warrens were condemned in later years when the Brethren relocated to the surface, many Brethren continue to live here, hiding their mutations from the light - and retreating from the increasingly aggressive politics of the Brethren movement. Others returned to the caves searching for some semblance of comfort and security, still nursing memories of the terrible war against the Foundation (in which bombings and air attacks did great damage to the city and killed many Brethren civilians, leaving them scared of future attacks from out of the sky).

In addition to serving as a possible refuge, water collects in many of the caverns of the old Hives, making the underground alluring for citizens to come here seeking free water (to supplement their normal water rations). Because chemicals from the Fall still pollute many underground waterways, however, the Purifiers have been called on to drive many of these squatters out for their own safety. The warrens beneath the city also attract *ghouls*, who are known to live in isolated caverns; heaps of bones give evidence to the creatures' habitation, and stealthy Purifier patrols armed with torches are often the only refuge from the perpetual black of these long-abandoned Hives.

### OLD FINANCIAL DISTRICT

Once the bustling and vibrant heart of San Francisco's financial quarter, this part of the old city seems, in many ways, to be the best preserved - considering the years since the Fall. The landmark silhouettes of the Transamerica Pyramid, and the Bank of America Building, still stand tall against the coruscating San Francisco sky - though their glass panes are blown out and their upper stories scorched from the airbursts over the port. The Financial District is a throbbing part of the Brethren city even today; while long-gone are the corporate interests and banks, these monumental buildings have defied every attempt by the Brethren to be torn down and beaten to gravel. Having given up long ago, the Brethren now dwell in the shadow of these mighty buildings, satisfied that they will at least never see use again.

### POSTCARD ROW

The quaint Victorian houses lining this park (nicknamed "postcard row") were icons of San Francisco before the Final War, and though dilapidated this far after the Fall, persist as homes

for the Brethren population. Today the scene is decorated by red clothing drying in the wind, children running and laughing in the grass, and kites flying overhead.

### PRESIDIO

Located at the northernmost end of the peninsula, the "Presidio" - and its numerous coastal batteries - was long used as a defensive installation by the Spanish, the Mexicans, and finally the Americans, before it was eventually relegated merely to a logistical role. During the Fall the Presidio was bombed more or less incidentally during the conventional attacks on the city (intended to "soften up" the defenders before the landings), and once the Pacific Union made headway the Presidio grounds served as a vital part of the invaders' beach head in the city.

Far after the Pacific Union presence in America disappeared, the Presidio was rediscovered by the Brethren. Dismantling what was left of the ruins, they have since let the Presidio grounds return to their natural state, except for the cultivation of fields of wild flowers they use to manufacture poisons for their most elite warriors, the *Hateful Ones* (see *Hades*).

### PSION HIDES (NOT DEPICTED)

Located at the top of several ancient skyscrapers around the most built-up parts of the city are a number of "hides", camouflaged hidey-holes accessible only by scaling the structure from the city streets below. The idea of these hides was first conceived during the Brethren's war against the Foundation in 2255, when Foundation helicopters played a devastating role in scattering the masses of Brethren fighters in the streets below. During the chaos Brethren leaders sent a handful of Godless psionics up to the top of some of the skyscrapers in the downtown area, from which they launched mental

attacks on Foundation chopper pilots as they whisked by. Though it was a desperate attempt it ultimately worked, and though a few hides (and psionics) were destroyed by cannon and rocket fire the Brethren mentalists were able to *mind crush* and *dominate* several pilots, causing them to crash - or ordering them to turn their gunships on their own ground forces.

The Brethren have constructed numerous hides since the end of the war, preparing for any future attack by air. These hides are even more cleverly hidden than those previously; it is certain that any airborne attacker would now fly into an "invisible crossfire" of numerous psionics working in unison, making any attacks over the city a deadly prospect indeed.

### SAN FRANCISCO BAY

Though the city of San Francisco is in itself a sprawling metropolis of survivors, the Brethren's presence has, since their emergence from the darkness below the ruins, grown to neighboring regions across the water. The ruins of Oakland, devastated by fire, and the broken and barren reaches along the south side of the Bay, are now home to small, peaceful villages of Brethren farmers and the large camps of warrior converts.

To the Brethren, San Francisco Bay separates their city from the mainland not just geographically, but also psychologically. The Bay's dark and stormy waters serve as a kind of protective barrier, isolating their "utopia" from the chaos and uncertainty of the wasteland to the east. Only a handful of bridges connecting the mainland to the city proper remain intact, and these are guarded by colossal fortresses constructed of junk and scavenged steel, controlling all access to the peninsula. The Bay's cold and turbulent waves make boating hazardous,



and swimming impossible, and its thundering, wave-battered shores are patrolled night and day by Brethren warriors, ever-vigilant and intent on keeping the city and its inhabitants free from danger.

### SOMA

Once a center of arts and entertainment in San Francisco, the urban neighborhoods of the SoMa district were almost completely burned to the ground during the most violent years of the Simpling. Huge mobs of Brethren, turning their misery into a hatred of the Ancients, marched through these streets attacking boutiques, upscale restaurants, and ransacking the famous art museums that once populated the area. Dragging priceless works into broad boulevards, bonfires were set alight to mark the beginning of the Simpling - and an end to many unique aspects of ancient culture.

During the period the barbaric zeal of the movement's members allowed many of these fires to burn out of control, but the early Brethren didn't try to control them, letting the fires claim large sections of the neighborhood. Today SoMa is a black and sooty wasteland, with block after block of cindered ruins from which only sporadic building shells rise, broken and disintegrating.

### TENDERLOIN

Getting its name from a time when policemen were paid higher wages to patrol its mean streets (and thus able to afford more expensive cuts of meat), the Tenderloin district of the old city was at one time home to the largest number of homeless in San Francisco. The famous strip clubs, adult movie theatres, and gay bars such as the Mitchell Bros. Theatre, Aunt Charlie's Lounge, Divas, Gangway, and Lush Lounge are now all abandoned, but the Brethren have left these decadent spots exactly the

way they were when the Ancients abandoned the city, as reminders of the kind of degeneration Ancient culture was truly rooted in.

### THE POOL

The local San Francisco landmark known as "The Pool" formed as a result of natural processes only a few generations ago. The Pool is a huge cavern, created by a sinkhole that formed some time between the Fall and the present (though it may be the sinkhole's formation is in some way connected to the same weapons that created the Rift Valley). Brightly lit by the sun during the day as it pours through the roof above, the Pool cavern is naturally cool, damp, and inviting to those accustomed to the dry world above.

The Pool's enormous cave is flooded to a depth of forty feet - about half its total depth - with murky water from years of rains, save for a rocky beach skirting the rim. Each day the Pool thunders to life as thousands of Brethren women and children descend into the cave (via sewers, stairs along the shaft walls, or in cages lowered down by rope) to fetch the fresh, potable water for domestic use, or to cluster on the rocks to wash clothes and bathe. As a result the sounds of hundreds of conversations, laughing children, barking animals, and Brethren folk music fills the place roughly from sunup to sundown.

Since the cave first formed it has become a site where gossip, rumors, and sometimes inter-faction vendettas are played out in a public spectacle. A sort of "Town Square", the cave remains almost invisible from the city surface, its enormous mouth concealed by the surrounding camps and ruins.

### THE WALL

The "Wall" is not a single construction, but merely a series of primitive wooden towers erected at the

southernmost reaches of Brethren territory. Here the broken terrain of the Cataracts gives way to the beginnings of an unnatural and alien forestscape, which grows thicker and more foreboding the closer one gets to the ancient ruins of San Jose.

The Brethren have long considered entry into the forests to the south of San Francisco forbidden, due not only to the bizarre aberrations of the trees and plants, but also to past encounters with the legendary "plant people" that are said to dwell at the heart of San Jose (see the *Plantmen of Paradise* tribe in this book for more details on the inhabitants of San Jose). To guard against these mysterious creatures - whom the Brethren know virtually nothing about - they built the towers that together form the "Wall".

Each tower is nothing more than a covered platform, 30 to 40 feet above the ground, that allows 1-2 Brethren footsoldiers inside to keep an eye out on the forest line, night and day. From here they can use signal horns or start signal fires to alert other towers down the line - raising the alarm in response to a potential "attack".

In over ten years the towers have not reported any intrusion by the alleged plant people, but strange sightings in the woods have triggered the alarm on occasion; investigation always proves fruitless. Though they have no reason to suspect the plant people of any real aggression, the Brethren continue to watch their southern border warily.

### TIRE YARDS/TAR PITS (NOT DEPICTED)

The Brethren have hauled literally thousands of old rubber tires from across the city (and other ruins) to these areas, usually hilltops or other high spots where strong winds are common. Creating huge heaps of tires and garbage throughout the ruins, the Brethren ignite these when the city is under attack, in effect creating gigantic smoke clouds (sometimes more than

a mile wide) that will obscure the entire skyline. The idea is to make pinpoint accuracy by aerial attack next to impossible, giving some modest degree of protection to the Brethren in a surprise attack until they can effectively disperse and hide. Tactics such as these were used centuries ago by enemies of the Ancients, and the Brethren are no exception.

In some areas pre-constructed pits and channels are ready to be flooded with tar or oil salvaged from the industrial ruins, which when ignited will create even thicker screens of oily smoke in their parts of the city. Though the coverage depends largely on the wind, the Brethren have had years of experience with this type of defense and have placed tire yards and tar pits all over the city to get not only the best possible results, but overlapping coverage as well.

### TRANSAMERICA PYRAMID

This futuristic building, long a landmark of San Francisco and once the tallest building in the United States, is now used as a gathering place for the horrendously backward “Simples” faction of the Brethren.

Though the spindly spire of the Transamerica building still towers over the city, large sections of the first eight floors of the ancient structure collapsed during the Fall, creating a tremendous hollow “cavern” inside. Here, amidst the fallen rubble from the collapsed upper structure, the Simples gather on special occasions for faction rallies, lighting their massed gatherings (often numbering 500 or more) only with torches and bonfires in the empty ground floor mezzanine. With their jubilant cries echoing in the emptiness, reflecting up into the long-abandoned stories far above them, the Simples engage in their fervent book burning, deliberately “blaspheming” the technical skills it once took to erect this mighty structure.

### TRAPPED ZONES

Owing in no small part to their past as hunted creatures, the Brethren have turned the city itself into one enormous “defensive structure”. Putting to good use large sectors of the city that they themselves have no current use for, they have built booby traps and other ingenious, low-tech devices to turn entire blocks of city ruins into “trapped zones”. Outwardly these areas merely resemble empty and abandoned neighborhoods, ideal places for invaders to move through “unseen”, but in reality the homes, shops, and even whole buildings have been turned into a maze of lethal booby traps. Constructing virtually thousands of punji traps, digging concealed pits, and caging wild animals (which are released when the trap is sprung), the Brethren have made these places extremely hazardous to cross for even the most experienced soldier.

In addition to traps, numerous low-tech alarm systems - from bells on wires to entire buildings set to collapse if entered - dot the landscape, so that any intrusion will alert the Brethren that an attack from that quarter is imminent.

### WINDMILLS (GOLDEN GATE PARK)

This part of what was once Golden Gate Park is now home to a dozen ramshackle windmills, their lofty arms creaking and groaning as they methodically spin with the fickle ocean breeze. Constructed by the mutant hands of Brethren followers over several decades, the windmills stand over an area of the city now given over largely to farmland (cleared with the back-breaking labor of hundreds of workers), and as carts filled with grain arrive beneath these towering structures, the scene becomes reminiscent of a lively medieval village.

Originally the Brethren got the idea to erect the mills from previous constructions found at the west

end of the park (two historic windmills originally erected in 1901 and 1905 respectively to pump water for the park’s irrigation system), though these were constructed with millstones to grind meal for their hungry bellies - not to bring water to the frivolous gardens of the Ancients.

### YERBA BUENA

At the heart of the SoMa district lays this sprawling ruin, covering numerous cultural facilities from before the Fall. All of these were ransacked and destroyed by the marauding Brethren during the Simpling, and fires from their ad hoc book burnings were allowed to rage free and consume the once-magnificent buildings here. Among the total losses were the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the California Academy of Sciences, and the technological wonder that was at one time the Sony Metreon.



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