

CORVUS BELLI

INFINITY

THE ROLEPLAYING GAME



MÖDIPHÜSTM
ENTERTAINMENT

NOMADS

FFFGTM

ANYTHING BUT THE NORM

Bakunin. Corregidor. Tunguska. Three gigantic motherships, one diverse Nation. Each traversing the Human Sphere as they see fit in order to deliver their own unique blends of chaos and colour to the distinctly bland lives of their planetary cousins. A Nomad Nation with one unified purpose: to stick it to The Establishment.

Often viewed as little more than a collection of criminals, misfits, and thugs by the censored citizens of the other G5 nations, the Nomads themselves tell a very different story if ever given the chance. Life is hard on the motherships because it has to be. Space is a premium and even the air costs money on *Corregidor*. Every Nomad gladly pays the price, however, for every single one of them knows it is part of the cost of their freedom. Their liberty to be who they want to be in their lives in whatever body they choose to live it, with no-one to judge and very few strictures to observe. They are also fiercely proud to be the only remaining souls still free of the oppressive will of ALEPH, who they view as humanity's greatest threat.

Progressive, rebellious, independent, passionate, and bizarre are just a few of the monikers that encapsulate the Nomad spirit. Never standing still and always changing, the Nomad Nation hops from system to system onboard their motherships, selling their unique services to the highest bidders and keeping their secrets away from the prying eyes of the sole AI with their own chaotic datasphere, Arachne. Each mothership is also fully prepared to deploy their own capable troops should anyone be foolish enough to try and snoop. With guidance on creating Nomad characters, new gear to tinker with, and extreme body modifications to indulge in, this sourcebook delves into the excesses of the Nomad Nation as never before.

- Details on each of the motherships, from their turbulent histories and the ghosts of their pasts to the secrets of their inner workings.
- Focused Lifepaths that allow players to create truly unique and individual Nomad characters, plus an additional chapter to cater for the ultimate in extreme body modification.
- Additional armour, equipment, and adversaries specific to the Nomads, including Praxis-designed augmentations, Nomad-specific armour and weapons, and stats for several unique adversaries.
- Advice on creating Uplifts, plus an entire chapter dedicated to the virtually undefinable rating and ranking system that drives lifestyles and transactions on *Bakunin* — Social Energy.

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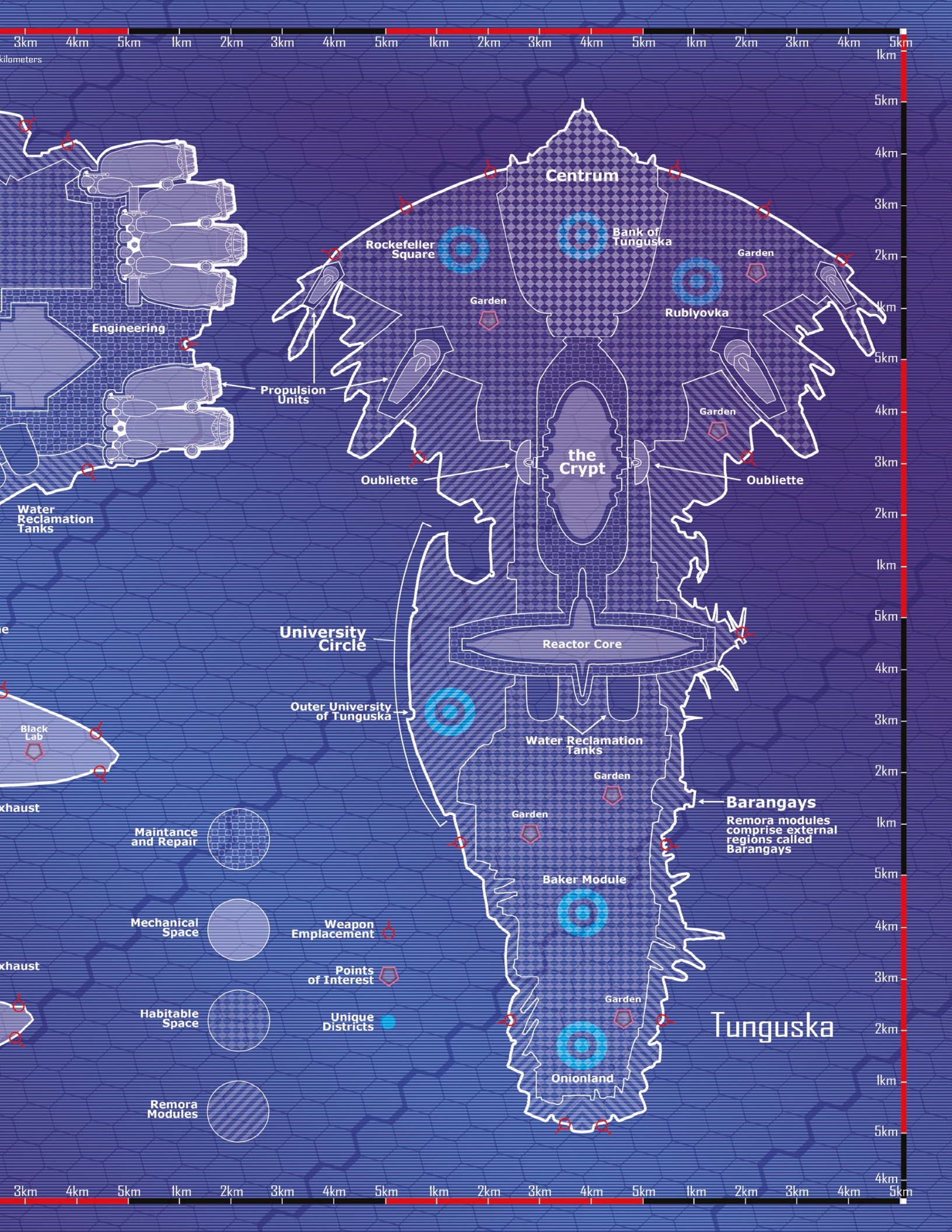
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Motherships of the Nomad Nation





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INTRODUCTION
REBELS WITH A CAUSE

Space is like a winter sea – while it may be beautiful, it's also cold, merciless, and utterly indifferent to human life. Venturing out among the stars is one thing, but what kind of person makes their home out there? Rebels. Vagabonds. Free-thinkers, dangerous idealists, and transgressive radicals of all stripes. People with no home, nowhere else to go. So they carved one out of the sky itself.

CHAPTER 1—
FACTION: NOMADS

Get an in-depth look at the Nomad Nation. Join the improbable journey through the tumultuous early years of the Nomads, up to their modern incarnation. Visit Commercial Missions, dive into Arachne, and learn about the culture of rebellion that informs the Nomad's every action. Witness the Krugs; equal parts concupiscent celebration, black market bazar, and political conclave, these quadrennial gatherings are unlike anything else in the Human Sphere.

CHAPTER 2—
THE MOTHERSHIPS

Take a closer look at the triad of Motherships that comprises the bulk of Nomad society. From deck plans to cultural traditions, from topography to tradition, dive into these massive sidereal vessels and find out what makes them tick.

Head to *Bakunin*, the Radical Mothership, and discover a collective of pocket utopias, where everything's legal somewhere, and one person's taboo is another's already-passed fad. Walk amongst mad scientists and passionate revolutionaries. Stop by the BouBoutiques and get a whole new you, or have a night to remember on Sunset Boulevard. But whatever you do, be nice to the cats; they remember everything.

Swing by *Corregidor*, to see how the toughest crew in the Sphere gets by. Raise a toast with mercenaries, discuss urban legends with bounty hunters, and catch the action at the Human Sphere's most notorious underground fighting rings. But don't forget to spend some "G-Time" in a heavy-gravity module, lest the constant weightlessness wreak havoc on your insides.

But don't forget *Tunguska*, the flying tax loophole among the stars. Visit the prestigious Tunguskan Outer University, where Submondo crime barons send their heirs to learn tax evasion, blackmail, and how to avoid police raids alongside traditional subjects. Enjoy your stay, but try to avoid becoming a target on their leaderboards lest someone make a name for themselves by livestreaming the complete destruction of all you hold dear.

"Everything's legal on *Bakunin*."

–Technically untrue (though close) Nomad proverb.

NOMADS

There's *Bakunin*: a collection of private utopias, big ideas, and innovative research. A place where mad scientists create monsters, interplanetary tastemakers create trends, and the revolutionary Social Energy system holds it all together. At least, on most days.

Corregidor wears its rough-and-tumble origins so prominently on its sleeve that it might as well be tattooed there. A collection of criminals, refugees, and other societal unwantededs, they've turned themselves into an interplanetary labour force providing meteor heads, mercenaries, and miners – all tough as nails, and about as friendly – to the rest of the Human Sphere.

But if *Bakunin* is the heart, and *Corregidor* the muscle, then *Tunguska* is the Nomad Nation's sharp, twisted mind. A collective of hackers, bankers, and organised criminals have gone just legitimate enough to be frustrating. Or helpful, depending on your perspective.

A collection of Motherships. Home of the Arachne dark-web datasphere. The eternal opposition to ALEPH's hegemony. The list goes on and on, but never ends because the Nomad Nation is a bastion of individuality, a beacon of defiance, shining brighter than the stars that they call neighbours. And they wouldn't tone it down even if they knew how.

WHAT'S IN
THIS BOOK

More than just an expansion, this sourcebook aims to provide a "one-stop shop" for all things Nomad, including everything you need to create characters, run campaigns, or just immerse yourself completely in your character's faction.

"Never headbutt a *Corregidoran*: there's nothing but rocks in there."

–Technically untrue (though wise) Nomad proverb.

"Everyone has a price. If they say differently, you were insufficiently creative."

–Technically unprovable (though likely) Nomad proverb.

CHAPTER 3— SOCIAL ENERGY

A democratic forum, cryptocurrency, social network, and reputation economy all rolled up into one, Social Energy is one of the most uniquely Bakunian concepts to ever grace the Human Sphere. Learn about its origins, where it came from, what it does, and how something so audacious works so smoothly. In the *Nomad Spirit*, expanded rules for smoothly integrating Social Energy into your campaigns are included. As they say on *Bakunin*: once you've felt it, you've grokked it.

CHAPTER 4— NOMAD CHARACTERS

Life among the stars has its own advantages and challenges, and Nomads explore both to the fullest. With expanded rules tying characters' heritage and status to their ship of origin, new Adolescent and Career events, and eleven new careers – from the triple threat of *Corregidor's* Tomcats, Hellcats, and Wildcats, to *Tunguska's* weaponised Barrister Corps, and *Bakunin's* Chimera and Provocateurs – Nomad characters have a wealth of new options to explore.

CHAPTER 5—GEAR

Revel in the product of rampant, unchecked, gleeful innovation. The Nomads create, modify, or otherwise acquire bleeding-edge technology, and don't apologise for its quirks. Between surplus CrazyKoalas, Viral Spiked Chains, Slag-cannons and more, there's no shortage of new ways to bring the pain. Of course, hackers aren't left out, with an assortment of new programs, augmentations, and armour – and of course, the latest designer drugs – there's something for everyone.

CHAPTER 6—UPLIFTS

From humble beginnings with quasi-sapient cetacean shuttle pilots, Nomad scientists have never been shy about trying to increase an animal's intelligence. Well, they succeeded – far more than anyone expected. Get a closer look at *Bakunin's* latest bit of science run amok with uplifted Cephalopods, Suidae, Avians, and more that were suddenly introduced to the Nomad Nation, turning existing thoughts on consciousness upside-down.

You won't just learn about these creatures, though. With rules for Uplifted player characters across all seven currently feasible Uplift types – and a custom Lifepath system, from awakening to freedom, complete with nine unique careers – these distinctive entities are ready to tell their stories in your *Infinity* campaign.



CHAPTER 7— RADICAL BIOMODS

In contrast to the safe, tested, and clinically proven augmentation that most of the Sphere employs, Praxis's Black Labs engage in radical biomodification with unrestrained joy. Xenografts, beast-tissue, and radically invasive gene-therapy are just the tip of the iceberg; there's also a thriving industry of hyper-modified creatures, from savage Pupniks to one-of-a-kind monstrosities. If you absolutely, positively need a fantastical creature, Praxis is happy to oblige.

More than just an overview, expanded rules for biomod augmentation packages, endless combinations of custom-built monsters, and expanded rules for directing your own pack of crimes against nature will ensure your campaigns will never be the same again.

CHAPTER 8— ADVERSARIES

The Nomad's thorny reputation isn't for show. The Nomad Military Force (NMF) has no qualms about deploying its forces anywhere in the Human Sphere and won't hesitate to protect their interests – or retaliate in violent escalation against perceived threats. From Alguaciles to Zeros, the Nomad Nation is more than content to play the adversary.

A collection of richly detailed NPCs rounds out this sourcebook, with unique capabilities and their own story hooks to introduce to your campaign. From Tunguskan Interventors to Sin-Eater Observants, these Nemeses each inject a unique flavour to your *Infinity* campaign, while weaving story hooks for your own adventures throughout.

"Praxis could leave well enough alone: they simply choose not to."

—Posted on a wall, *Bakunian* Moderator Corps Office.

CHAPTER 1

FACTION: NOMADS

Radical experiments of this nature aren't supposed to last. The Nomad Nation, with all of its idiosyncrasies, should not have survived this long, let alone be thriving. Who could have predicted that this rag-tag bunch of vagabonds, rebels, and miscreants would last this long on the O-12 Security Council with the other G-5 nations? Certainly not the Nomads. Yet here they are, stubborn as ever, having not lost a step.

And whether they're thumbing their noses at convention, warning the Human Sphere of the evils of ALEPH, or dominating niche industries through virally memetic sabotage, the Nomads' stubborn individuality shines through. In many ways, they consider this their role in the Human Sphere – shining a light in the darkness, exposing lies, and illuminating the dark shadows where nightmares dwell.

Except, of course, the shadows they're hiding in.

A TURBULENT HISTORY

Before *Bakunin*, before *Tunguska*, before the rise of the Nomad Nation in 1 NC, there was a station full of convicts, refugees, and terrorists floating aimlessly in space. The privatisation of the *Corregidor* project was no kindness. By washing their hands of the whole sordid affair, nations could join the nascent PanOceania bloc without the blood of thousands on their hands. Unable to support an orbital full of their "surplus population," the remaining South American nations cut the cord, granting *Corregidor* its independence. In a bitterly ironic twist, the denizens of *Corregidor* were now free, but it seemed they were only free to die in space. Soon they were running out of both funds and breathable air, as well as power, food, and every other resource necessary to sustain life among the stars. Barring something drastic, *Corregidor* didn't have much time.



SOMETHING DRASTIC

Facing the prospect of slow but inevitable death, *Corregidor's* warden – Luis Orozco, the first major decision-maker of what would become the Nomad Nation – had some difficult choices ahead of him. The solution was brutally pragmatic in its simplicity. *Corregidor* needed resources, so it would trade anything it had of value to acquire them. Never mind that *Corregidor* had but one type of cargo. Survival wouldn't be cheap, and it wouldn't be clean, but with any luck, there would be future generations to curse his name. And that would have to do.

Orozco quickly sorted his sleeping charges into three categories:

Useful: Contract killers, gang lieutenants, experts in fraud and blackmail. Essentially, anyone who could help the ship make its way through the stars.

Valuable: Mafia Dons, Triad Dragon Heads, and the “nobility” of the Submondo. Many bidding wars – and a few gang wars – raged over the right to acquire these individuals. Usually between those who wanted them back, and those who wanted to see them dead.

Surplus: Petty criminals, impoverished communities, and individuals with mental health issues. All mercilessly sorted into the “surplus” column were earmarked to be taken off life support first in case of emergencies.

Throughout this process, Warden Orozco was impartially capitalistic. High bid wins, no discussion, no questions asked. Unfortunately, this also led to certain undesirables and intelligence agencies concluding that it'd be easier to raid *Corregidor* and take what they wanted by force. With yet another life-or-death crisis facing the ship, this was a critical moment for *Corregidor*; luckily, the Warden still had one ace up his sleeve.

THE MEXICAN GENERAL

No discussion of Nomad history can take place without mentioning Juan Sarmiento who was the self-styled Count of Moctezuma and *Corregidor's* saviour. Even though Juan was the most coveted name on the Red Auction list – terrorists, governments, and Submondo alike were bidding furtively for the right to kill the man – Orozco decided that Sarmiento's knack for finding a way to survive, no matter the odds, was worth the risk.

And it paid off. A man of unsettling politeness and ruthless efficiency, Sarmiento successfully defended the Red Auction with a makeshift force, relying on trickery, knowledge of the ship, and the ruthless capacity for brutality that had been his hallmark. Having secured the Auction, he took to delivering

the most valuable purchases personally. Sarmiento converted the new standing forces of *Corregidor* into a mercenary company. After all, armies are expensive. Why not make someone else foot the bill for your troops' training and maintenance? The foundations of *Corregidor's* financial independence were finally secured.

BLACK OPS 2.0

Following the founding of the Nomad Nation, it would be years before another life-or-death crisis reached the Motherships. But when it did, it came like a tidal wave. The Violent Intermission, in addition to being one of the greatest tragedies in the Human Sphere's history, was in many ways a proving ground for the political leviathans to test new methods of conflict. Thousands of Bakunians died at the hands of ALEPH, yet no one else lifted a finger. The successes of the Violent Intermission, temporary though they were, helped set a new precedent for inter-factional conflict in the Human Sphere.

Militaries had long relied on black ops and deniable assets to get around openly declaring war, but with ALEPH's domination of interplanetary media, keeping these strikes quiet was increasingly feasible, provided you had the AI's cooperation. Thus, the Violent Intermission served as a sort of paramilitary beta test for PanOceania and Yu Jing. If, by focusing on small, clandestine strikes, they could successfully attack the Nomads without political blowback, what was to keep them from employing the same methodologies against each other?

Precious little, as it turned out. Once the Phantom Conflict was in full swing, this infighting would provide just enough space for a clever, ruthless, and determined individual to make the fight too financially, politically, and emotionally expensive to continue. Someone who could make the opposition regret picking the fight in the first place. The sort of mad, sociopathic genius that even ALEPH and its lackeys couldn't predict.

As luck would have it, the Nomads already had someone who fit the bill.

Due to his unconventional approach, Sarmiento found success where others failed. Sarmiento had been a guerrilla leader, a smuggler, even a contract killer for “legitimate” intelligence agencies, and this unorthodox résumé lent him both a brutally efficient pragmatism and a flair for unconventional tactics. He knew that an eye for an eye wasn't going to cut it. His enemies had too many eyes for that to work out in the Nomads' favour. But Sarmiento hadn't gotten this far by fighting fair, and while he possessed his own code of honour, gentleness and restraint did not seem to merit his concern.

Nomad Nation (6 NC), p. 19,
Infinity Corebook.

SHADES OF RED

Steeped as it was in the blood of its inmates, the purging of *Corregidor* to ensure the continued survival of the few was rather aptly named the Red Auction.

Violent Intermission, p. 20,
Infinity Corebook.

SPECIAL SQUADS

At the dawn of the Nomad nations, ad-hoc “Special Squads” were used to great effect. Comprised of various commandeered troops, they proved remarkably effective in striking deep behind enemy lines and seizing the initiative from their enemies. Their legacy carries over into the modern Nomad military, where combatants are expected to be battle-ready at a moment's notice, and thrive in irregular squads and situations. Initiative is rewarded, daredevils, cowboys, and hotshots are welcomed, and ruthlessness and creativity are prized.



“You started this war under the assumption that it’s over before it starts. And you’re correct. Just not in the way you’d hoped. There is no tidy little war to be had here, because you are not fighting a civilised nation. You are fighting the Nomad Nation.

We will go where you will not. We will do what you would never consider. We will cross lines you didn’t realise you possessed and won’t stop once we’ve gone too far. We’ll never stop. Not until your broken shell serves as a warning your peers cannot ignore, in a language you obsolete mules can understand. Have a pleasant day, amigos.”

—Juan Sarmiento, in his first and only conventional message to the enemy, dawn of the Phantom Conflict.

THE FATE OF SARMIENTO

So what became of the Mexican General? After the Phantom Conflicts, he disappeared from the public eye, though that merely shows that *Tunguska* has been thorough in covering his tracks. Still, it’s no secret in the intelligence community that Sarmiento found his true calling as the deputy director of the Black Hand, a position he holds to this day.

Expressive, foul-mouthed, and stubbornly attached to the same archaic, obviously artificial Lhost he inhabited back on Earth, Sarmiento is perfectly capable of keeping a low profile. But like any artist, he prefers to sign his work. When the world comes crashing down around someone, he wants them to know it was him.

So he did what he’d always done – escalated. Going above and beyond what military convention considered reasonable, Sarmiento introduced his viciously innovative brand of retribution to an interstellar scale. Strike at the Nomad’s outer defences, and the next day you’d find your house burnt down, your accounts emptied, and every bit of blackmail that you swore was buried on an open Mayastream. And that is just the opening salvo. The Count of Moctezuma knew that he’d never succeed in convincing the powers of the Human Sphere to leave well enough alone. But, he could make every victory so entirely pyrrhic that these political leviathans would think twice before attacking the Nomads.

NOMAD LIFE

What is life like for a Nomad? Ask three Nomads, and you’ll get four answers, more if a Bakunian is involved. Beyond the Motherships, whose cultural influence on their residents is difficult to overstate, there exists a Nomad identity that transcends societal, cultural, and geographic boundaries. It has to if it wants to exist. The Nomads are simply too spread out and too different for it to work any other way. A unified cultural identity of any sort is impossible for Nomads given the challenges it would face.

For their part, Nomads see no contradiction in this. Of course their cultural identity shouldn’t exist. And yet, it does. How could it ever truly be their identity, if it didn’t confuse outsiders, fly in the face of convention, and basically have no right to exist? Contradictions, as it turns out, are part of the deal.

COMMERCIAL MISSIONS

Not every Nomad hails from one of the three Motherships. Scattered across the Human Sphere, hundreds of thousands call the commercial

missions home. Living in a Commercial Mission is an experience unlike any other.

Neighbours, travellers, and visitors are far more frequent and diverse than on a Mothership. However, the most prominent cultural blending happens within the Nomads themselves. In a Commercial Mission, representatives from each of the three Motherships live and work side-by-side in a space jointly owned and operated. While a focus on certain types of business can provide hints of a particular Mothership – such as a Corregidoran flavour being more prominent in major mercenary hubs – without a Mothership to set the tone, the blend of perspectives creates a diverse array of unique, but distinctly Nomad, hybridised local cultures.

DIPLOMATIC...

To live in a Commercial Mission is to be a not only a merchant, but also ambassador and spy. While some are more strongly associated with one of these roles than the others, everyone has a bit of all three in them. For most denizens of the Human Sphere, a Commercial Mission is the only contact they’ll ever have with the Nomad Nation, which makes every resident Nomad a diplomat in their own right.

While most official envoys happen at the embassies, it’s the smaller, personal interactions where the true diplomatic battles are fought. If the Nomads have their way, the next time someone sees a news report about those dastardly Nomads, they can remember the cool mercenaries who stood up for them in a bar, the cute hacker who showed them how to access new streaming content, or the new friends their kids made on an otherwise lonely trip. Bakunian social scientists know that winning in the battlefield of public opinion makes the next action against them that much more costly. Thus, effort is made to make everyone’s visit to the Commercial Missions as pleasant as possible.

AGGRESSIVELY PROGRESSIVE

Whether it’s the hyper-individuality of *Bakunin*, the rough pragmatism of *Corregidor*, or the practical libertarianism of *Tunguska*, the Nomad motherships are each fiercely protective of individuality in their own way. The same goes for commercial missions and Nomads traveling abroad. Individuality is basically a sacred right in the eyes of a Nomad, and they don’t have to like someone’s choices – or the person in question – to defend their right to make them.

A Corregidoran might not understand *why* a Bakunian considers themselves genderqueer, but they’ll be the first to gut a jeering drunk who insists on using the wrong pronouns when addressing their fellow Nomad. While they don’t always get along with each other – the cultural gulfs between them often preclude actual camaraderie – the Nomads are aggressively protective of their “in-group” when facing the rest of the Human Sphere.

At the end of the day, if you’re a Nomad, you’re family. Like many siblings, they fight all the time. But make no mistake, any outsider trying the same is going to quickly regret their decision. Nobody picks on the Nomads except the Nomads.

...IMMUNITY

A pleasant visit to the Nomad Commercial Mission can mean different things to different people. It can be a chance to indulge in behaviour that would be otherwise socially difficult, if not patently illegal, and it's an open secret in the intelligence community that the Black Hand operates out of these Missions. For most visitors, a trip to the bazaar for something that's legal to purchase – though interesting to get through customs – is as far as this ever goes. For some, however, this is not enough. Sensationalised tales of Nomad debauchery, which somehow manage to both understate and blow out of proportion the reality, have captured the imagination of more than one traveller. For these intrepid souls, there is only one option.

They need to meet with “Madame Lu.”

Who is Madame Lu? The answer varies by location, but the result is always the same. They are the outsider's guide to the Mission Underground. Comparatively tame when contrasted with *Bakunin's* Ultraviolet Quarter, each Mission Underground is nevertheless an anarchic spectacle. Whether they're looking for contraband, esoteric or erotic services, or simply a place to conduct business away from ALEPH's prying eyes, the Mission Underground is more than happy to oblige – provided that the customer can pay.

REBEL REBEL

Outcasts by definition, Nomads categorically refuse to be defined by the systems and structures they reject, opting instead to chart their own course. Shared opposition makes for ready allies, and many Nomads find solidarity in their shared circumstances, varied though they may be. As most Nomads have lived on the Motherships for generations, this rebellion is in many cases hereditary. Because the rest of the Human Sphere is quick to label Nomads as deviants, outcasts, or far harsher terms, the outlaw mentality that's such an integral part of the Nomad identity is reinforced.

Even among their allies, Nomads stand out as idiosyncratic. Nomads and Ariadnans tend to see themselves in each other. They are both scrappy survivalists, managing to hold their own against much bigger entities that would love nothing more than to destroy – or better yet, colonise – them. While their shared opponents may be the only thing they have in common, Nomads are used to common enemies as the glue that holds society together.

The Nomads' first and strongest allies, Haqqislam, still don't quite know what to make of them after all these years. Haqqislamites tend to believe the

Nomads' hearts are in the right place, even if their hands usually aren't. Still, the two factions have been steadfast allies for decades. Most Nomads think of Haqqislam as their slightly uptight distant cousins, probably too straight-laced, but family whether they like it or not. And they don't get a say in the matter. Whether the Haqqislamites feel the same or whether political necessity and a hospitable culture have given the Nomads that impression is difficult to say. Either way, Haqqislam tends to be remarkably tolerant of the Nomads.

Indeed, many Haqqislamites point out that they tolerate them with all their heart.

ALEPH

No discussion of Nomad rebellion would be complete without mentioning ALEPH. While their feelings about the AI are abundantly clear as a nation, what's often missed in the propaganda is the Nomads' deep sense of pride in their oppositional status. Humanity has all but handed the keys to their destiny over to a machine, a soulless creation that is slowly removing people's ability to take care of themselves, eroding privacy and personal freedoms, and generally creating a society that cannot in any way offer it meaningful opposition.

To the Nomads, it's only logical that the AI wouldn't try to wipe out humanity right away. It's a machine. It's patient by nature. And if nobody speaks up, humanity is eventually doomed. Not today, not tomorrow, but doomed all the same. They see themselves as the heirs to the whistleblowing legacy of those who came before them. All one has to do is look at Earth's depleted resources and ravaged environment to see the cost of ignoring the warnings. But this time, there will be no new planet to find, no refuge among the stars. ALEPH's ubiquity means that if humanity doesn't stand up to it, it will eventually lose all ability to do so.

Their second major source of pride in defying ALEPH is much more practical: it's their continued survival. They're living proof that humanity can stand up to ALEPH, and not only survive, but thrive. Proof that you don't need a godlike AI to succeed financially or even have a comfortable life. One has but to take a look around Praxis to realise that ALEPH does not have a monopoly on technological innovation, or cool toys for that matter. Nomads would argue that their quality of life is just as good, if not better, than what anyone in PanOceania enjoys. So what if the Hyperpower's metrics would disagree? They obviously created them as propaganda to show how great it is in their nation.

And this leads us to the third aspect of Nomad culture defined by opposition: an instinctive distrust of Maya, and not just as a datasphere, or a source

“It is progress we believe in, and the power of science and technology to propel us beyond what we are today. We believe in the power of change. There is danger in the unknown, yes, but there is beauty also. Fear must never hold back the march of progress.”

–Fragment of Dr. Fuchs' speech, representing Praxis for the *Bakunin* delegation during the Nomad Nation's foundational meetings in Centrum, *Tunguska*.

THE SECRET ORIGINS OF MADAME LU

Like most Nomad urban legends, there are countless explanations for how the “Madame Lu” phenomenon got started. Some say that there was an influential brothel owner, whose wares proved invaluable in establishing the first Commercial Missions. Some say it's a tribute to a Hiraeth culture silent film about the only trustworthy soul in the German underworld. Others share the story of an O-12 ambassador, so drunk they couldn't remember where they were, asking for someone who wasn't there, but liking what they found anyway. Whether any (or none) of these stories is true is irrelevant to the Nomads. What matters is that they have a reliable way to find both customers and customs agents who ask to meet with Madame Lu for some discreet advice.

“Why hasn’t ALEPH killed Arachne yet? I’ll tell you what I think. If it was me – and I’m as close as you’re ever gonna get – I’d be beyond worried that the Combined Civilisation’s EI was going to infect Maya. That’s where it lives, right? So tell me: what happens when your house burns down? You need somewhere to run to.

So where does it go? You tell me. What other datasphere could possibly support ALEPH’s weight? Sure, it’d have to change – dramatically – but it’d still be alive. Wouldn’t that be worth it? If you were ALEPH, wouldn’t you want to keep the little spider around, just in case?”

– Overheard transmission from the Rogue AI Svengali to *Tunguska*, intended recipient unknown.

ARACHNE FOR DUMMIES

“Any datasphere that doesn’t have network neutrality is an implement of societal control, full stop. If your datasphere isn’t treating all data that passes through it equally, then you have to assume that it’s using that power to influence you. So who wields that power? In Maya, it’s ALEPH. And what, exactly, does ALEPH want?”

Interesting question, isn’t it? Are you confident you know the answer? No? Then you need an open, neutral, and free datasphere. You need Arachne.”

– Dr. Cory Payne, professor of quantronic ethics (and sometimes Wardriver), *Bakunin*.

of information. Some Nomads avoid using Maya as a matter of superstition, worried that spyware will infect their comlogs as the AI searches for any opportunity to subjugate them. Whether true or not, Maya is seen as strictly inferior to Arachne in every way that matters. Even if they want to watch a Mayacast, which happens more frequently than most Nomads than would care to admit, they often won’t do so until it’s completely divorced from Maya and running on safe, reliable, Nomad tech. Any attempt at a reasonable discussion about these two dataspheres is a disaster waiting to happen. Much like someone with a favourite operating system or automobile brand, there’s no room for debate, only a holy (flame) war.

A TANGLED WEB

Arachne shouldn’t even work. An interplanetary datasphere based on surreptitiously placed nodes with a networking protocol purposefully modelled on irrational, mythological, and outright contradictory logical systems should not be able to function at the level that it does.

While it’s inarguably slower than Maya, the fact that a direct competitor, under constant attack from an empowered AI is not only still in operation, but thriving, is nothing short of remarkable. The security of its networks, however, is much easier to explain. While it’s said that Arachne is inscrutable to the AI because it’s built on a foundation of mysticism, that’s a gross oversimplification. After all, ALEPH’s owes its very name to the Kabbalah. It’s clearly comfortable with some spiritual and mythological concepts. So, what makes Arachne so difficult? As it turns out, there’s more than one school of mystic thought.

People tend to grow into their names, and it seems that ALEPH is no different. Named for the first letter of the Kabbalah, symbolically beholding the entire universe, ALEPH has never had issues with sacred geometry. Regardless of the infinite depths they’re revealing, the sephiroth don’t change their meanings when you’re not looking. Each symbol consistently and reliably means the same thing. ALEPH is comfortable with these structures.

To follow the metaphor, if ALEPH is a Kabbalistic concept, then Arachne is pure chaos magick. The meaning of an individual symbol or glyph is given by a community and understood by an individual. Arachne’s pathways aren’t linear or rigid, they’re constantly being re-interpreted, re-purposed, and reimagined on the fly. Rather than mathematical logic, Arachne operates on principles of semiotic constructivism. Essentially, reality is defined by consensus and intent, and constantly undergoes iterative changes. In the beginning, Arachne’s

structure was largely based on the neuronal pathways of early Christian martyrs and saints as received from the Observance. No one bothered to ask how they happened to come by these neural maps; it didn’t matter whether they were objectively real or not, so long as the Observance believed that they were. Faith and intent governed these initial structures, and faith and intent have guided their chaotic evolution since.

And ALEPH seems to hate it. Any system, regardless of how illogical, can be learned if just holds still. But not only does Arachne make no sense to the AI, the laws that govern it are likewise antithetical to its understanding of reality.

WALKING THE THREADS

For most users, the differences between Arachne and Maya are remarkably pedestrian. The first is speed. Arachne is slow, while Maya is fast. But, Maya tends to guide your search, while Arachne doesn’t. So, if you’re looking for something that those controlling Maya want you to find – official news, shopping options, *Myrmidon Wars: The Animated Series* – then there’s no contest. However, if your search is more esoteric, you must wade through all the content that Maya thinks you want, or perhaps thinks that you should want, before your queries succeed. Thus, many Nomads contend that Arachne’s often quicker to use, despite being nowhere near as fast.

Secondly, though more importantly for most, is the question of content. Maya is vast, but it’s curated. Arachne is a wild frontier of content, both professional and otherwise. And while Channel Oxyd proudly appends “only on Maya” to every episode of the *Go Go Marlene!* show, most Nomads would be quick to add “unless pirated” as a suffix. The process of siphoning Maya content through the Arachne darknet, Mayatapping, is easy enough for those with some hacking proficiency. However, more than a few would-be content pirates have found their comlogs unexpectedly riddled with malware. As luck would have it, hypercorps have become frighteningly proficient at booby-trapping their content.

KRUGS

Once every four years, the Nomad fleet gathers in one system for the Krug, coalescing in a single location to trade, intermingle, or even switch vessels. It’s an irreplaceable conclave, an opportunity to strategise, enjoy cultural and economic exchange, and ensure that the bonds of solidarity between the Motherships aren’t weakened over time.

As the one holiday that all Nomads not only celebrate, but get to experience together, it’s also the biggest party that the Nomad nation can throw.



Krugs are usually greeted by a host system with an inevitable dread often reserved for significant natural disasters. Admittedly, distinguishing between the aftermath of a Krug and a hurricane can be difficult for anyone.

COMMERCE

For all the headache that they represent – which to be clear, might as well be measured on the Richter scale – other factions remain keenly aware of the opportunities that a Krug provides. Trade prospects are lavish and plentiful, and everyone is invited to the table. Corporations, entrepreneurs, and less-savoury entities all come to explore the unique and irreplaceable opportunities the Krug provides.

The number and value of deals made at a Krug is astronomical. Anyone in the right place at the right time can make a tidy little fortune, so long as they're willing to absorb a little risk. However, anyone who doesn't fully grasp the stakes they're playing with can just as easily lose their fortune here, though few would consider themselves among the latter group. For their part, the Nomads' open philosophy holds sway here. Nobody's going to keep you from the opportunities; nobody will save you either.

PARTIES

Of course, not everyone is coming to the Krug for commerce. For most Nomads, the Krug is a quadrennial party without equal in the Human Sphere. Though to call it a single party is something of a misnomer as a Krug is hundreds, if not thousands of parties, held across the Motherships, and catering to every taste imaginable. While the parties change at every Krug – it's considered a point of pride to repeat yourself as little as possible – several different types of party have emerged as perennial favourites:

The gRAVE Yard: These massive raves combine pulsing dance music, some of the most avant-garde combinations of AR patinas and live lightshows, and every narcotic imaginable, and given its close proximity to Praxis, a few that aren't. Its name has less to do with its organiser or the spooky aesthetic, and more to do with the number of fatalities that occur each Krug. This Krug, organiser Dylan Graves is trying for an unprecedented milestone: three Krugs in a row without breaking into double-digit fatalities. Given the introduction of several new nitrocaine variants, and several corrupt gambling rings taking an interest, Tunguskan odds-makers are not enthusiastic about Graves's chances of succeeding.

SUBMONDO AND THE KRUG

Outside of the Nomads themselves, no one looks forward to the Krugs more than the Submondo. With a Krug providing unprecedented access to criminal syndicates, Hypercorp executives, intelligence operatives, government diplomats, and of course the Nomads themselves, there's no shortage of wealthy, influential people about. Whether they're looking for work, resources, easy marks, or just new contacts, there are few opportunities that compare to a Krug. If nothing else, the parties are unreal.



KRUG BABIES

While not all inter-ship children are conceived during a Krug, the nickname stuck for inter-ship babies. Regardless of the circumstances of their parentage, inter-ship children face a unique set of challenges. Both *Corregidor* and *Tunguska* can be touchy about lineage, resulting in a childhood that runs the gamut between awkward and genuinely dangerous. But regardless of their origin, the Radical Mothership just sees a Nomad Citizen, and considers any other perspective to be uncouthly regressive. Thus, a plurality of Krug Babies make their home on *Bakunin*, where they're far from the strangest sight in its halls.

"If there's discretion that you haven't already abandoned; now would be a good time."

— Sergeant Major Carlota Kowalsky, to a new Tomcat recruit. Hostage rescue on board the pirate ship "Blood Talon," Human Edge

"ATTENTION: Use of this weaponry is prohibited by the Concilium Convention. Violators shall be prosecuted by international courts."

— Standard warning on military-spec flamethrowers. Routinely ignored within the Nomad Nation.

Krug-Chug: A self-described "roving pile of drunken revelry," the Krug-Chug is an extension of the traditional Corregidoran pub crawl, taken to its logical extreme. Known to pass through all three Motherships as well as any nearby vessels, space stations, or planets, if you serve alcohol of any sort, you might find yourself "blessed" with a visit from the Krug-Chug Train and its conductor, the gruff mercenary Javier Martinez. Anyone looking for a rowdy drink and an honest brawl should swing by. Anyone hoping to avoid those things should stay out of their way or stick to bars the Train has already visited; the Chug is a bit iffy on participant consent.

Soirées: Held by too many hosts to list, these elegant galas boast incredibly complex rules of etiquette, so much so that custom software for attendees' geists is complimentary, allowing everyone to keep track of what they're expected to do. Attempting to subvert the cybersecurity in these suites is often a game within the gala, with clandestine deals, applied blackmail, and general mayhem all trying to slip past the watchful gaze of the host's Infowar security. Intrepid hackers should take note: the hosts tend not to take interruptions lightly, and jail time is usually preferable to the undivided attention of the wealthy and powerful in attendance.

PLANNING

Innovation is the lifeblood of the Nomad Nation. Getting the Mothership's decision-makers in a room together is vital for the free-flowing exchange of ideas and information so critical to Nomad policy. Long-term solutions are plotted out, current courses evaluated, and analysts, commanders, and politicians can all hash out what's working and what isn't.

Ideas aren't the only thing exchanged. It's entirely common for large numbers of Nomads to change Motherships during the Krug. A large, but finite population means that maintaining biological diversity must be considered. This is yet another reason why the Motherships support the smorgasbord of wild parties. The number of inter-ship children conceived during Krugs is higher than anyone admits.

Determining the next Krug's location is the last order of business and is a spectacle in and of itself. Inverting the norm for events of its size, rival governments compete with bribes, favours, and political leverage for the honour of the Krug to go somewhere besides their system. Particularly savvy negotiators who sweeten the deal enough, can look forward to their rivals dealing with the wormhole congestion and criminal activity that surely follows each Krug, far away from anything the negotiator cares about.

THE NOMAD MILITARY FORCE

Dirty war, done dirt cheap. Whereas PanOceania can throw money at a situation, and Yu Jing can throw numbers, the Nomad Military Force tends to throw something a bit more crude and foul-smelling directly into the fan. If the Violent Intermission is any indication, the weird heart of the NMF's strength can be found beating in *Bakunin*. Praxis's radical innovations allowed the NMF's forces to keep pace with the Human Sphere's military-industrial behemoths. In no world should a guerrilla army running on salvage stand toe-to-toe with the heavyweights of the era, let alone come out on top. And in fairness, all the technological marvels in *Bakunin* wouldn't be enough to keep the NMF on their feet in a straight-up slugfest against modern opponents.

Luckily, the Nomads seem almost religiously offended at the idea of a fair fight.

No one specialises in applied unfairness like Bakunians unless you consider Tunguskans. And Corregidorans, for their part, take ironic satisfaction when the deck is stacked in their favour for a change. Employing the "three T's"—Technology, Tenacity, and Treachery—the NMF enjoyed great success against overwhelming odds and have every expectation that they will continue to do so, provided that the three Motherships continue to work in harmony.

Observing cooperation between the different Jurisdictional Commands is like seeing the Nomad Nation in microcosm. Nowhere is the interdependence of the Nomad motherships so visibly manifest as when their security apparatus responds to existential threats. By now, everyone knows how it works; *Corregidor* provides the muscle, which only succeeds because of *Bakunin*'s technology, which is only possible due to *Tunguska*'s funding, which is only secured and protected due to *Corregidor*'s muscle, and so it goes, on and on. One can't hope to survive long without the others, but together? Together, they're unafraid of any challenge. For good or ill.

NOMAD MILITARY PHILOSOPHY

"Win if you can, lose if you must, but always cheat."

This quote, attributed to American politician Jesse Ventura, was a favourite of the Mexican General, a pithy way to impart his military vision to the poor souls tasked with executing it. The Nomads

are unlikely to bring the amount of firepower necessary to match their adversaries blow for blow. Outnumbered, outgunned, and outspent, without copious amounts of lateral thinking, the NMF wouldn't stand a chance against most modern powers.

Fortunately, lateral thinking is a Nomad specialty. The Mexican General knew that true victories would be rare. Seizing opportunities as they came would be vital. He also knew that victory wouldn't always be achievable. For the Nomads to win a war, heavy losses would be inevitable. Not every battle was going to prove winnable, so sometimes a lengthy, costly, delaying loss would have to do, and his troops would need to make them count.

And finally, it was imperative that his troops banish any semblance of discretion, propriety, or fairness from their minds. To a Nomad soldier, these ideas were contemptible, weaknesses to be exploited. So while it's true that every military fights at least a little dirty, the Nomads are downright filthy, skirting ever closer to war crimes. Even when they aren't violating the Concilium Convention, traditional commanders are routinely flustered by their unorthodox tactics. While NMF tactics are decidedly not pretty, by hook or (more often) crook, they get the job done. And, at the end of the day, that's all the NMF can afford to care about.

ALWAYS READY

Whatever storm is lurking on the horizon, each Jurisdictional Command knows they might have to weather it alone. Thus, their forces have to be ready to fight at a moment's notice. To the NMF, "Always Ready" is more than a motto; it's a way of life.

The Mexican General knew better than to try to corral so many free spirits into a conventional military, and his successors have heeded the lesson. Compared to other nation's militaries, the NMF seems like an undisciplined mess. As always, there's a method to the madness. While Nomad forces might have more vacation time, ability to pursue personal interests, and so on, there's a mandatory level of readiness that they pride themselves on maintaining. "More off-days, but no days off," as the saying goes.

Their weapons? Close at hand. Their physical condition? Religiously maintained. Surprise inspections are just a way of life, and they need to be able to pass a fitness exam at any time. This has led to the gamification of NMF soldiers' personal training complete with dynamic quantum leaderboards, leading to fierce, ongoing competition between soldiers to set the week's top score.

On top of that, the NMF is always armed, even in their downtime. It's not uncommon to see young soldiers poolside with Combi Rifles slung over their swimsuits, or getting coffee with a Panzerfaust leaning up against their table. Nomad military doctrine demands that they be ready to fight, so the tools of their trade are never far.

TENETS OF NOMAD WARFARE

Nomad military doctrine is based on three central tenets.

Firstly, war cannot be allowed to reach the Motherships. Fragile and filled with civilians, open war in the corridors of any of the three Motherships ensures catastrophe of immeasurable scope, a lesson learned all too well during the Violent Intermission.

Secondly, wars must be brief. An extended conflict would be murder on the Nomads – quite literally – as their economy, industry, and population could not possibly hope to match the leviathans that oppose them. Adrift in an ocean of stars, the Nomad Motherships are especially susceptible to siege tactics. Fighting a traditional defensive war would be tantamount to suicide.

And thirdly, the Nomad Nation must seize and hold the military initiative, controlling the framework of the war and the conditions of their battles. To slay a giant, one must be elusive, two steps ahead, and overcome strength with cleverness and agility. If the giants dictate the pace and terms of the fight, there's little hope. Thus, the NMF is reliably proactive. Their defensive strategy tends to answer the smallest infraction with gratuitous overkill in hopes that the thorny response will dissuade further prodding.

As a rule, the Nomad Nation doesn't start wars, but if provoked, there's very little off limits. The NMF knows they can't hope to defeat an opposing army, but those armies rely on financial and political support. If the line can be held long enough for PanOceanian Lobbyists' accounts to be frozen, or a Yu Jing general's affairs made public, support for a costly incursion can dry up quickly.

Therein lies the heart of Nomad military doctrine; if someone hits you, hit back three times as hard. Then rob them blind. Then get them fired, destroy their private life, get their family to disown them, and don't stop when you've gone too far. Make every step towards you a harrowing experience, so costly that your opposition stops to think twice before committing troops. And then use that time to hit the enemy on their home soil.

CHAPTER 2
MOTHERSHIP: BAKUNIN

“*Bakunin* is kinda like a bubble. It’s not like the rest of the ‘Sphere. It exists in its own little world. I wonder what that’s like?”

– Señor Massacre, explaining the dynamics of Nomad Motherships mid-firefight. Ariadnan Commercial Conflicts.

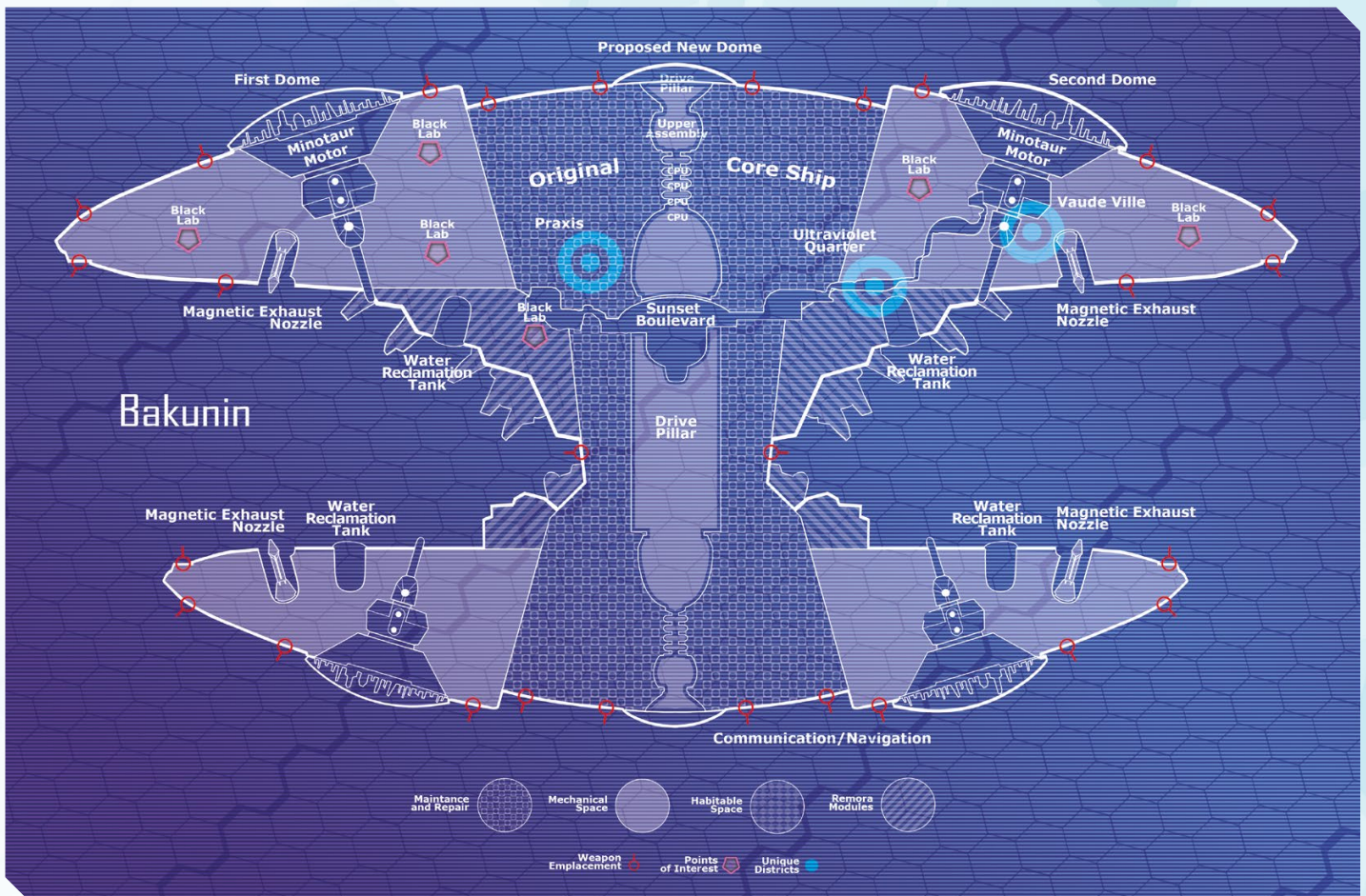
Before *Bakunin*, words like “revolution” had been all but reduced to marketing slogans. The Human Sphere was enjoying unprecedented economic growth, and the prevailing wisdom suggested that people were more or less content with their lives. *Bakunin* proved that not everyone was satisfied with the status quo. To many, *Bakunin* seemed doomed to failure: an anarchistic collective of radicals, dissidents, and activists. Most assumed that *Bakunin* would inevitably collapse under its own weight.

Decades later, not only has the Radical Mothership survived, but it has weathered numerous military and ideological attacks to take its place at the forefront of the Nomad cultural zeitgeist. Today, *Bakunin* is the catalyst for ongoing societal, cultural, and memetic revolution. *Bakunin* is the genuine article; no matter how the rest of the Human Sphere appropriates the word, its revolutionary approach has, well, revolutionised life as we know it.

CLIMATE AND TOPOGRAPHY

The aesthetics of *Bakunin* are similar to its populace: chaotic, vibrant, and unapologetic in their diversity. To an outsider, it can look as though someone took a random sample from cities across the Human Sphere, and lashed them together with duct tape and prayer. However, as with the rest of *Bakunin*, the truth is more complex than it initially appears.

First-time visitors often wonder if they’ve arrived during some kind of cultural festival, and it’s easy to see why. Strings of coloured lights, bright hues, and music, dance, and other forms of live performance assault the senses like a jolt of caffeine to the brain. It’s sometimes said that *Bakunin* never sleeps, which seems like a reasonable assumption when entering



the neon bazaar for the first time. The AR element of the ship has a seductive, nested quality. The distilled essence of “just one more click” permeates the ship’s quantronic environment, with the hint of exotic mystery residing in every nook and cranny.

The layers of augmented reality cues are analogous to the construction and layout of the ship itself; *Bakunin* is replete with redundant systems, failsafes, and resilient infrastructure. Though the decks may look like a carnival, and the exposed cabling and vents give it an “under construction” vibe, this is a superficial layer. The exposed wires and machinery are a purely aesthetic element. Nothing important would be placed at such obvious risk. This curious design serves two purposes: first, it gives the ship a sort of stylized, adventurous feel that many Nomads associate with feelings of home. And second, while they certainly don’t do anything important, that doesn’t mean they do nothing at all. Many of these consoles hide teaching games for young troublemakers. It’s assumed that Bakunian kids will try to get into everything, so there are superficial systems for them to mess with in a consequence-free – or at least light – environment. This has led to no end of frustrations when children visit *Corregidor* and quickly find themselves assigned to a punitive maintenance team for tampering with the ship.

BAKUNIAN FAUNA

Stray cats. Stray cats everywhere.

Once upon a time, someone thought it would be a great idea to introduce large quantities of domestic felines to the Mothership. Hoping to make a tidy profit – or at least a dent in the ship’s vermin – the population quickly outpaced demand. But as it turned out, between the ship’s massive rat population (blame Praxis’s desire for lab specimens) and the scraps left by tourists, these feral felines have become a staple of *Bakunin*, in much the same way that squirrels or pigeons crowd some terrestrial urban centres.

Of course, eating garbage at the intersection of travellers from radically different ecosystems is a recipe for introducing new and interesting types of intestinal parasites to a population. The average Bakunian alley cat is a festering hive of alien tapeworms, inflicting unwitting passerby with bouts of explosive incontinence.

Bakunians have some complex feelings about their cats, as is evidenced by their prominent role in the ship’s many and varied urban legends. Using Jungian philosophy as a stepping stone, early Bakunian philosophers theorised that a person’s soul possessed a sort of duality: the inner self or “anima” lay dormant within a sleeping sheut, and

the outer self or “persona” would require a different sort of storage. Given the emotional toll that the Phantom Conflicts took on the populace, many Bakunians swore that they observed the tell-tale traits of their deceased loved ones expressed in feral tomcats. What this implies regarding the deceased is another matter altogether.

The belief that these cats play host to human spirits – or parts of them, anyway – has fuelled countless urban legends, quietly informed local culture, and completely scuttled public support for any widespread removal of the creatures. Nomads love their urban legends, but on *Bakunin*, even the most outlandish tales have an outside shot of being true. Thus, the mystique and attachment to these feral felines grows, as public health warnings become increasingly insistent.

Of course, this is *Bakunin*, the home of ideas. More than one module has taken the exact opposite view. Though after more than a few near-incidents, cat dissenters are reluctant to raise the issue in public, lest they find themselves shunned by the general populace.

ECONOMY

All of the Motherships are dependent on trade, but nowhere is that so culturally inexorable as on *Bakunin*. Whereas *Corregidor* exports labour, and *Tunguska* concerns itself with finance, the Radical Mothership provides experiences – and the Human Sphere has shown an insatiable appetite.

TOURISM

A year-round destination for holidays, university students on break, or anyone looking to step outside of the mundane for a while, the Bakunian tourism industry is a dominant economic force, perhaps only rivalled by Varuna in popularity. While a far cry from PanOceanian resort ships or Hypercorporate pleasure yachts, *Bakunin* boasts a vibrant nightlife, more artistic performances than one could possibly attend in genres and disciplines many never even knew existed, and of course, the most vibrant live shopping experience that the Human Sphere has to offer.

This contributes heavily to *Bakunin*’s travel schedule. To keep things fresh, it travels much more frequently than its fellow Motherships, the increased revenue more than offsetting the price of fuel. Equal parts travelling circus, gambling hall, and anything-can-happen den of iniquity, *Bakunin* plots its course to coincide with major planetary holidays and off-seasons. They set coordinates to the intersection of disposable income and free time.

QUANTRONIC SUBSTRATA

Not every rabbit hole hides something pleasant. *Bakunin* promises to provide unique and novel experiences, but at no point does it guarantee that those journeys will be agreeable. But journey farther down the nested patina cues, and the underlying structure of *Bakunin*’s AR is revealed, the Social Energy-fuelled quantronic layer that locals call the substrata.

It is here where Bakunians engage in memetic discourse, debating existential philosophy through quantronic graffiti tags, pondering paradox esviahymic cyphers, or simply have a laugh at some wide-eyed tourists’ expense. In the substrata, hacking and conversation might as well be one and the same. It’s not uncommon for a local to be interacting with a very different reality than a visitor. So if they laugh at an inappropriate time, there’s a good chance it has nothing to do with what’s going on in the physical world.

BAKUNIAN FLORA

In contrast to the industrial pragmatism of *Corregidor* or the meticulously cultivated gardens of *Tunguska*, *Bakunin*’s plant life is a haphazard potpourri of anarchic gardening. Some modules carefully tend private gardens, while others try in vain to get terrestrial flowers to thrive in the artificial environment.

If there is any unifying element, it’d be the cacti. Colourful, spiky, and difficult to kill, many Nomads find much to love about the little plant. The more industrious cultivate cacti for their succulent fruit, or to harvest psychoactive agents.

BAKUNIAN URBAN LEGENDS

Not just cats! Mostly cats, though.

A cat interrupting as you're closing a deal is a bad omen.

A resurrected sheut doesn't remember its persona's time as a cat, but the feelings remain. Mistreat a stray, and the newly revived will hold a grudge; leave out a saucer of milk for strays, and they'll remember your kindness once reborn.

Bay 21 is haunted by the ghosts of sheuts lost during the Violent Intermission. The spirits' anguished cries can be heard at night, and communes residing there are doomed to fail.

Polydactyl cats got that way by hosting multiple souls. They're a sign of good luck.

Johannus Montauk was a brilliant, but quite mad, Praxis scientist whose tachyon field research was considered too dangerous. The Violent Intermission was staged to cover his assassination and the destruction of his lab. Beliefs on the lab's position vary, but strange temporal distortions can be experienced if visited under the right circumstances.

BAKUNIN'S TRAVELS

Given its frequent location changes, *Bakunin* tends to travel with Circulars more often than its fellow Motherships. Easily one of the largest ships to travel in this fashion, *Bakunin* rides the C2 and C5 Circulars to popular destinations on wealthier planets. It also occasionally slips from Sol to Human Edge on the C3, spawning rumours that Praxis is using the frontier to ensure privacy for its edgier research. *Bakunin* is by no means confined to Circulars though. With proposed modifications to the Mothership's drive pillar coming daily, including a custom Minotaur Motor, you never quite know where they'll show up next.

Of course, such a snare requires tantalising bait. This has led to the development of a carefully cultivated aura of raw, transgressive abandon. Accurate enough on the surface, Bakunians nevertheless embellish, misrepresent, and flat-out lie in order to craft a compelling lure for hapless targets. And it works, too: the number of tourists muttering phrases like "the voluptuousness of sin" as though it were some secret code grows with each passing year. These "marks" are usually identified with a Social Energy-locked patina cue, identifying them to locals as someone with more money than sense, and prime candidates for tourist prices, a hefty increase above and beyond what locals pay.

ENTERTAINMENT AND MEDIA

But while tourism is thriving, media is by far *Bakunin*'s most prolific industry, and its best-known export. Whether users are searching for news, entertainment, answers, or even blackmail, the Arachne web delivers more content than anyone could possibly hope to sort through in a lifetime. While it's true that it still comes nowhere close to the juggernaut that is the Maya platform, Arachne's dedication to a free, unregulated, neutral net has allowed niche voices to rise to prominence based on their own merit, rather than the ALEPH-curated, corporate-sponsored, mass-marketed content that dominates Maya.

The lack of regulation means that the riskiest, edgiest, and most unfiltered media in the Human Sphere tends to live on Arachne. Most of the media on Arachne originates from *Bakunin*, and it promises experiences unlike anything produced elsewhere. Innovative webseries, no-holds-barred interviews, and edgy, boundary-pushing holomovies, and senseries are enriched with sensory and emotional content, fed straight to your brain

through your Comlog. Independent filmmakers thrive in *Bakunin*, leading to a virtual explosion of content in underserved and underexplored areas. *Bakunin* is a content creation juggernaut – and that's before mentioning its cutting-edge music scene. Live performances have enjoyed a renaissance, adding a raw vitality to the Mothership's sonic exports that most competitors are sorely lacking. No social taboo is off-limits, no topic is too controversial, and no approach is too avant-garde. In Bakunian media, the people are the ultimate arbiter of what's good or not. And judging by the amount of money brought in, most people seem to like Bakunian media quite well.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

For all the attention that *Bakunin*'s tourism and entertainment industries garner, R&D is where the bulk of the ship's revenue comes in. In all of Praxis, but especially the Black Labs and Black Ships, the allure of truly unregulated research has attracted many of the Human Sphere's top minds. Unfettered by focus groups, ethics boards, or a need to justify their actions to a corporate board of directors, the research coming out of Praxis has provided a massive boost to myriad scientific endeavours across fields. It's also led to more than its share of horror stories. As it turns out, plenty of rules exist for a reason. Still, it's difficult to deny the quality of their work.

Discovery, though, doesn't pay the bills, and acclaim won't put food on the table. Thus, many researchers split their time between passion projects and more lucrative areas of research, usually with a medical, military, or narcotic application. And while external parties rarely want to know the details, when it comes to pure, unfiltered creativity, *Bakunin* produces innovative solutions that simply aren't found anywhere else.

WEAPONS-GRADE MEMES

Nomad Memetic science is a finely-honed art form, with its foundations in rigorously tested social persuasion theories. While it isn't taught formally, most Bakunians have picked up the basics of Social Judgement Theory, the Elaboration Likelihood Model of Persuasion, the Extended Parallel Processing Model of Fear Appeals, and other compliance-gaining techniques around the same time that they were learning to walk.

Every Bakunian believes in the power of change. But those tasked with inciting change in the opinions of the Human Sphere know that while revolutions happen suddenly, persuasion is a more gradual process. These Machiavellian memes are designed to slip unnoticed into the cultural zeitgeist, seeding ideas, questioning assumptions, and doing it all with a wink and a smirk.

Of course, it also helps that *Bakunin* has its collective finger on the pulse of trends. Any attempts to copy their tactics or subvert their iconography tends to leave would-be hijackers left holding last year's fads. Most notably, ALEPH's attempts to subvert these memes have gone over with all the grace of a grandparent trying to use current slang and missing by a decade.

DEMOGRAPHICS AND CULTURE

Narrowing down a discussion of *Bakunin's* culture is a bit like finding a needle in a needle-stack. That's not to say that the ship lacks a cohesive identity, merely that to truly understand that identity, one must embrace the full spectrum of its iconoclastic rainbow.

COLLECTIVELY INDIVIDUAL

Nomads are among the most individualistic people in the Human Sphere. But even among their fellow Nomads, the Bakunian commitment to individuality stands out. Beyond the tourists, the spectacle, and the bright lights are the people who comprise *Bakunin*. And a more diverse collection of souls would be difficult to find.

Yet, despite this religious commitment to individuality, there is a definite solidarity, an *esprit de corps*, as it were. Bakunians think of themselves as individuals first and foremost, but that doesn't preclude membership in a larger group. Many Bakunians largely define themselves by group associations, and it's not uncommon for a citizen to think of themselves as an individual who is also part of a module, but also a Bakunian, and finally, a Nomad. The order can vary, but the hierarchy doesn't preclude strong feelings of attachment and belonging to the various groups. Rather, it provides them with context.

The *prioritised* – some would say fetishised – role of the individual in Bakunian society is its essential building block, but to imply that *Bakunin* lacks a cohesive identity would be disingenuous. The Mothership has an identity. It's just a messy hodgepodge of seemingly-contradictory elements, somehow persisting despite itself. Kind of like *Bakunin*.

BALANCED ON A BLEEDING EDGE: DAILY LIFE IN BAKUNIN

To the rest of the Human Sphere, *Bakunin* is a destination, an exotic, wondrous, almost alien thing. But to those who live and work there, it's simply home. Exciting, sure. But the exotic is commonplace when you live somewhere nicknamed "The Neon Bazaar."

AUTONOMOUS COMMUNES

The building blocks of Bakunian culture, the Mothership's modules form the core of its multiphase national identity. Inside a given module,

reality is whatever the members of the commune say it is. Sometimes literally: VR-primary communes paint virtual worlds for their members to inhabit, conjuring up a home environment quite unlike the rest of the ship (or the Human Sphere, for that matter).

However, most communes are refuges of thought, rather than environment. Want to live in an egalitarian consociational state that doesn't legally recognise the construct of gender? Maybe you'd prefer a "might makes right" kraterocracy, where decisions are made by those strong enough to seize power for themselves? Or perhaps you just want a place where you can gather with other members of your religion and actually live by the tenets of your faith? Whatever your desire, *Bakunin* probably has a module for you; and if not, you could always campaign to start a new one.

THE BATTLEGROUND OF IDEAS

While *Bakunin's* modules present unrivalled opportunity for expression, they also present a unique challenge when stepping into the core: at no point in human history has such a multicultural metropolis been attempted, and the dynamic between core and commune ensures that significant homogenisation is unlikely to occur. *Bakunin* prides itself on its manifold heterogeneity, though the balancing act between different cultures can sometimes feel like a tightrope walk across a razor blade.

The Social Energy system helps regulate the interactions between groups and factions on *Bakunin* by introducing both social and economic repercussions for public behaviour that's perceived as unhealthy. There's also always the opportunity to return to one's module where your rivals' governmental philosophies have no impact on your personal life, and this has lent an unexpectedly civil tone to many discussions. Indeed, *Bakunin* is one of the few places in all the Human Sphere where members of fundamentally incompatible beliefs can regularly discuss them with any modicum of civility. As it turns out, it's much easier to remain calm when one's life and liberty are not – and cannot – be at stake.

LOUD AND PROUD

If there is an underrepresented philosophy in *Bakunin*, it is likely to be moderation, though even that can still be found. From fashion, to music, to cuisine, what passes for understated on *Bakunin* would be considered unconscionably vibrant in the rest of the Human Sphere. As the performer's eyes adjust to the spotlight, so too does the Bakunian's tastes calibrate towards a volume of expression that would leave others deafened.

PLAYTEST TIP

TOURIST PRICES

Non-Nomad characters can be attractive targets for Bakunian hucksters. Spending Heat to indicate that a character's been "Marked" – doubling the effects of any Tariffs rolled when making purchases – can provide a unique challenge for characters to navigate

SHIP EXPANSION

The physical structure of *Bakunin* has always existed in a state of slow but constant changes. Recently, there's a particular change causing concern: *Bakunin* is rapidly running out of space. Historically, new modules were formed by "remora" ships or other affiliated vessels incorporating themselves to the Mothership's construction or the occasional revamping of existing or abandoned modules. But it's fast becoming too unwieldy to travel on the Circulars, forcing would-be expansions to get increasingly creative.

Limit your population to a couple hundred citizens, and you can get just about anything to work."

– Lucius Aldington, Business Analyst for Hesperia Consulting. For *Confidentes Confidential*, a Mercury Media exclusive!

"Looking for the neon bazaar? My friend, you're on *Bakunin*. You're already here."

– A local, giving reliably Bakunian directions to a tourist. Overheard in Vaudeville.

AVERAGE DOESN'T EXIST: A BAKUNIAN DAY

Any discussion on the average Bakunian... well, it generally doesn't get very far before someone from Praxis butts their head in, wondering if you meant to imply the statistical mean, median, or mode. Discussion is constantly ongoing, often occurring in substrata patina cues, and that means getting up, exiting your module, and walking around the Mothership for a bit.

The divide between module and core can be sharp, though many modules tend to cluster around the front of their territory. It's like passing through a thousand different micro-cultures as you walk by. An ordinary stroll might take you past a group of communist utopians, discussing how best to seize the means of production in a philosophical sense. You might find yourself wading through a neo-anarchist protest that's blocked out the corridor, exchange nods, and be let through without issue – much to the chagrin of the Megacorporate executives still trapped on the balcony of their hotel. You might even pass a group of kids, some not yet in their double-digits, trying to assemble a railgun out of scavenged parts.

The little scamps.

While the research, production, and media fields are all big employers, most Bakunians work in client-facing industries. After the day's labour, it's common to relax with a quick stop on Sunset Boulevard, maybe picking up fresh seasonings for dinner from a local specialty shop. On your way home, you might stop to weigh in on some substrata conversations. Everything's on Arachne, of course, but the good stuff tends to be localised. Coming home means something different to everyone, but whether you're greeted by a half-dozen partners and your collectively adopted kids, a commune of like-minded roommates, or that rarest of all commodities on *Bakunin* – silence – it's a place uniquely suited to the individual's taste.

"If PanOceania is a tropical bird, then we're a peacock with its feathers dipped in phosphorous neon. Restraint is not an attractive trait in design. Or anywhere else, for that matter."

Philippe Delange, Fashion designer and creative director, LoroLooco. Interview with Go-Go Marlene, only on Oxyd!

MORLOCK GROUPS

For most Nomads, getting assigned to one of *Bakunin's* Morlock Groups is the furthest thing from a goal. Primarily comprised of the violent and antisocial and controlled by invasive MetaChemical compounds, the Morlock Groups are a colourful example of the Nomad's "waste not, want not" philosophy, brought to life in violent fashion. Here, the dregs of society can find a way to contribute to the welfare of the ship, even if it's just as cannon fodder. While many Chimera wear their time served as a badge of honour, it would be a stretch to assume that any of them wound up there on purpose.

For *Bakunin's* tiny-yet-growing Uplift population, it presents a unique opportunity to blend in. Sure, you might be a hulking boar hybrid, but there's a catgirl to your left, and the guy to your right's got gills. And as far as anyone knows, they were born human. The ability to contribute something to the ship, albeit under harsh conditions for little pay, appeals to many Uplifts. Most don't have any MetaChemistry alterations whatsoever. Turns out that they don't need them in order to behave, and their instincts are already violent enough as it is.

CIVIL DISORDER: POLICING BAKUNIN

The Moderator Corps don't have it easy. Tasked with maintaining a semblance of order in a society that revels in chaos, Moderators must not only uphold the laws of Core, but they also need to keep in mind the societal expectations that different Modules bring to the table. *Bakunin* isn't exactly overflowing with space, so if an incident can be resolved without having to throw anyone in jail, Moderators will give it a shot. Thus, communication, psychology, and cultural anthropology are often more important to a Moderator than criminology or investigation. More often than not, a punitive impact on citizens' Social Energy reputation is enough.

But not every dispute can be resolved peacefully. So, when talks break down or residents just aren't interested in dialog, the Moderator Corps isn't in the habit of pulling punches. Other societies might have separate police, anti-terrorism task forces, and militaries, but *Bakunin* has the Moderator Corps, and that's enough. While they sometimes draw on other groups for support – most notably the Observance and the Morlock Groups – each Moderator is more than capable of holding their own and is unlikely to be particularly fazed in the face of even the most bizarre criminal activities.

"I just want to put something to rest. The stories about this 'Robin Hook,' some kind of Rogue AI? Hero to the people? Steals from the rich, and looks out for the underclass? Look, it's a nice story, but that's all it is. A story. Fairy tale. We've seen Rogue AIs with slave bodies, or duplicates, whatever you want to call them, and Svengali's no joke. And even if there was a Robin Hook, we'd probably have to arrest her, and then you'd all riot. So, let me be clear on this: Robin Hook? Is. Not. Real. No such thing.

...She's right behind me, isn't she?"

– Moderator Chief Argot Winslow, holding a press conference while Robin Hook was, in fact, right behind them.

THE OBSERVANCE

Out of the plethora of religions have been founded, or found refuge, in *Bakunin*, perhaps none is so uniquely Bakunian as The Observance of Saint Mary of the Knife, Our Lady of Mercy. While not technically a cloistered order, they don't proselytise, and new members are put through gruelling, difficult trials. The order's roots are steeped in rebellion, radical interpretations of common assumptions, and a fanatical determination to stay true to themselves, regardless of the cost.

Most Nomads don't really understand them. *Bakunin* doesn't understand them either, but it doesn't have to: they're part of the family. Admittedly, the part you give a wide berth at holidays, but their fanatical hatred of ALEPH has proved invaluable in providing the quantronic security necessary for *Bakunin* to function.

THE ROLE OF THE OBSERVANCE

Ask your average Bakunian about the Observance, and you're likely to get a shrug. Sure, they're a scary blood cult, but there are dozens of those on *Bakunin*. The important thing is their role in the Mothership's cybersecurity. While most citizens don't have cause to interact with the hermetic cyberwitches, the Radical Mothership's live-and-let-live philosophy has afforded them a measure of respect on *Bakunin*. Even if that respect is offered at a healthy distance.

Many people assume that the Observance is a mono-gendered sect, which means their PR wing is working as intended. Through a combination of precedent, cultural inertia, and the faith's hyperfeminist ideology, the Observance is a female-exclusive sect, though not all of its members were born that way. They see power in the feminine divine: males simply cannot achieve purity or enlightenment, making them entirely unsuitable for membership in their sacred Sisterhood.

Ultimately, the Observance is open to anyone with the fortitude to endure their particular vision of pursuit of purity, including men, though their role in the Observance's cosmology is a particular one. The masochistic zealots known as Sin-Eater Observants are an exclusively masculine order. They seek purity and atonement through suffering, and while they're an important part of the

Observance's operational apparatus, they're never trusted to act in a leadership capacity.

In the Human Sphere's functionally gender-egalitarian society, the thought of a militant, mono-gendered sect of zealous militants can be an alien and frightening thought, one that the Observance uses to great effect. Superstitious terror comprises a major component of the Observance's strategic plan. In the war against ALEPH, any advantage could be meaningful, so every advantage is pursued.

Salvation isn't for everyone. Not when the spectre of ALEPH hangs over humanity's heads. Call them cultists, radicals, or dangerous terrorists; the Observance cares little. Their work is everything. And their work is far from done.

OBSERVANTS IN THE LIFEPATH

While creating an *Infinity* character, many things are randomly determined: but a character's sex and gender aren't among them. That said, there are no two ways about it: during their time in the Order, Observants are female, with the exception of Sin-Eater Observants, who are male. However, that says nothing about what biological sex the character was before – or after – their time in the career. This is *Bakunin* after all: sex reassignment surgery is hardly the most difficult medical procedure to come by.





THE SPOILED BRAT OF PRAXIS

To some people, things just come easy. That's certainly been true for Fabio Varese, whose genius touch with evolutionary supercomputers has given him the wealth and status to work on basically whatever he likes. So, whether it's designing amusement parks or Salyut Zonds for the NMF, any project with Varese's name attached instantly becomes a big deal, much to the chagrin of his fellow researchers. And while it would be a stretch to imply that most Rogue AIs are the result of his tinkering, that hasn't stopped a recent smear campaign from implying just that. But the allegations slide off of him like water from a duck's back, and rumour has it that his rivals are considering something more drastic....

NOTABLE DISTRICTS

While *Bakunin's* makeup is largely determined by its modules, there are some primary districts that merit special mention.

STANDARD DEVIATIONS: PRAXIS'S BLACK LABS

To paint all the Black Labs with a similar brush is a grave disservice. Technically speaking, kittens and *Jorōgumo* are both animals, but you wouldn't want to get them confused. In much the same way, two Labs might seem superficially similar, but looks can be deceiving. Each Lab operates under a shroud of mystery, jealously guarding its secrets, no matter how trivial. Membership often has more in common with initiatory occult traditions, terrorist cells, or secret societies than a typical research environment, but given that many come to Praxis trying to put their past behind them – whether it be criminal, Hypercorporate, or something darker – the cloaks and daggers suit them just fine.

The personnel of a given Lab can be as varied and mysterious as its organisational structure. Here,

disgruntled corporate researchers rub shoulders with self-taught virtuosos, reclusive academics, anarcho-futurists, and mad thinkers of every conceivable stripe. Hailing from every corner of the Human Sphere, their work is mysterious, their process enigmatic, their methods arcane, but their results?

Unprecedented. Unexpected. Unparalleled, unequalled, and unconventional. Any strategic advantage, no matter how small, is worth its weight in gold to the Nomads. Ingenuity and innovation often come from unexpected sources. While some might not see the immediate link between efficient waste recycling and close-quarters TAG performance, the Nomads pride themselves on turning even the smallest innovations into competitive leads.

BESPOKE HORRORS

Praxis's Black Labs require a constant stream of funding to stay solvent, and many scientists have a morbid curiosity, a drive to see just what happens "if." Thus, custom-ordered creatures are something of a staple of the Black Labs. From grotesquely mutated gang muscle, to hybridised "guard dogs," as long as someone can pay, Praxis is willing to make their dreams – or nightmares – come true.

Most famous among these are the Pupniks, demi-uplifted human-animal hybrids. Animal uplift research has made exponential strides, recently exploding in discovery, but its history is littered with failed prototypes, dead ends, and stunted, brutish mutants. Thus are the roots of the first Pupniks. Today, Pupniks are manufactured to a precise degree, with their intelligence being deliberately stunted to ensure that they can legally be treated as property, but with increasingly humanoid figures. Kept as sentries, used as cage fighters in gambling rings, or kept for more personal uses – some of which are improbably dark – Pupniks are a favourite status symbol among *Bakunin*'s Submondo kingpins, precisely because of how uncomfortable they tend to make people.

VAUDEVILLE: A DESTINATION LIKE NO OTHER

Like a neighbourhood that's always having a street fair, the sprawling district known as VaudeVille must be experienced to be truly appreciated. The primary attraction for tourists, VaudeVille is technically part of the Core, and the shops, kiosks, hotels, and public areas that comprise the district have a Balkanised feel with different Modules providing their own spin on the VaudeVille experience.

Walk a few metres, and things can radically change, yet it somehow all works together, like a sanitised microcosm of the ship itself, a unique blend of experiences unlike anything else in the Human Sphere. VaudeVille is more than a shopping and entertainment district; it's the cultural heart of *Bakunin*, snaking its way through the Mothership, refusing to be confined to any given neighbourhood.

VaudeVille is the epicentre of avant-garde, the soul of haute couture, and the destination of choice for *bon vivants*, bohemians, and expressive visionaries of every stripe. The bleeding edge of self-expression – sometimes quite literally – VaudeVille is where boundaries are pushed, limits are broken, and tomorrow's hottest trends find their footing in a test environment, a sort of beta environment for popular culture.

BLACK MARKETS AND BOUBOUTIQUES

Just about anything can be bought in VaudeVille provided you know who to talk to. Visitors looking for the address of its Black Markets are doomed to frustration. The Black Markets aren't a place you go, they're a parallel economy, woven directly into the fabric of VaudeVille. Just about every place of business in the district has a "secret menu" of sorts, where discerning customers can acquire just about

anything. Black Market Resurrections, Concilium Accord-violating arms and armaments, pet mutants, or designer MetaChemicals – very little is truly off-limits here.

Nowhere is this truer than in the BouBoutiques, facilities specialising in body modifications of every type imaginable, and the destination of choice for those truly wishing to express themselves through a physical canvas. To many, this is a godsend. For those suffering from Body Dysmorphic Disorder, Gender Dysphoria, or simply looking to overcome physical disabilities or limitations, modification often represents their best chance at a normal life. For others, augmentation provides an opportunity to express themselves, to stand out from the crowd. For others still, the allure of starting a trend, and the subsequent stardom that follows, proves impossible to resist. And of course, some are just bored, and looking to stir things up a little.

However, they come by the desire, they eventually feel the inexorable pull of VaudeVille. Whether circumventing religious or political red tape, directly defying their local authorities, or simply seeking out the very best in the field, people from every corner of the Human Sphere flock to the BouBoutiques, who famously welcome all...so long as they can pay. And while the price can be high in more ways than one, there's little dispute as to the quality of the work provided. A good BouBoutique sculpts bodies into living works of art, hailing from their client's strangest dreams, wildest fantasies, and weirdest nightmares. The sky is not the limit – again, that would be the bank account – and rival BouBoutiques are constantly pushing the envelope of what's possible.

GENETIC THERAPY

Gene modification is ubiquitous throughout the Human Sphere. Outside of Ariadna, very few children are born without some degree of genetic alteration. A time-tested, proven methodology, gene therapy is safe, reliable, and predictable. There are, however, some limitations.

Firstly, and primarily, is Silk. Originally designed as a vector for gene therapy, there's still no better way to tweak a subject's DNA than via Silk courier strands. Any procedure relying on an expensive and rare biogenic substance is bound to be expensive and slow. Even assuming a best-case scenario – a locker full of Silk, and no waiting list – the process of genetic alteration in an adult host is, by necessity, carried out at a ponderous pace. Even relatively minor cosmetic alterations are best handled gradually, and dramatic effects exponentially increase the wait time from weeks to months, sometimes years.

AUGMENTED SOLDIERS

While Haqqislam's biomedical research produces the finest super soldiers that conventional science can offer, the Black Labs are anything but conventional.

Given the friendly relationship between the two factions, one might expect to see more collaboration, but the methods used in Praxis tend to be a non-starter for Haqqislam.

"Adrenaline. Sex. Danger. The streets of VaudeVille are positively dripping with possibilities. It's an adventure with every step! To live in *Bakunin* is to live in overdrive. And I love it!"

Go-Go Marlene, interactive trendwatching Mayacast. Only on Oxyd!

While accelerants do exist, they're more likely to trigger anaphylactic shock in the subject than meaningfully speed up the process. Anyone willing to take on risk for a faster, more dramatic effect, is probably using a biotech graft.

BIOTECH GRAFTS

In contrast to gene therapy, biotech grafts offer virtually limitless customisation, even more dramatic effects, and a faster turnaround period. The process of surgically attaching body parts is a centuries-old medical tradition, though its cosmetic applications are a decidedly Bakunian innovation. Under normal circumstances, receiving a biotech graft is a fairly routine surgery, practiced all across the Human Sphere. Vat-grown body parts are genetically tweaked to better match the host's DNA, reducing risk of rejection, and otherwise tailored to the desired effect.

VaudeVille, however, is not known for normal circumstances.

Cat ears, prehensile tails, retractable claws. The selection of "off-the-rack" options is wildly different from what you might see in corporate clinics. And though the process may seem similar to conventional augmentation procedures, the wildly exotic nature of these grafts means DNA-matching

treatments are all but impossible and rejection prophylaxis becomes significantly more important. In theory, this should be perfectly safe. With a combination of immunosuppressants, Silk-delivered genetic integration therapy, and common-sense health precautions, even the most alien of biografts can be successfully integrated with little-to-no side effects.

In practice, asking a VaudeVillian to take it easy – remembering to take their medication, and completely abstaining from alcohol, narcotics, most stimulants, and sexual activity of any sort – is an exercise in futility. For many, these augmentations represent their ticket out of poverty, their chance at a better life. And for the residents of *Bakunin's* many ghettos, a sterile, disease-free environment is simply asking too much. Those who turned to the underworld to finance their augmentations may not have much of a choice in the matter. Prostitution and bloodsports are a common landing point. But of course, there's only one way to truly avoid side-effects, and that's to get an entirely new body.

CUSTOMISED LHOSTS

Vat-grown bodies, bespoke biomorphs, and industrial-grade neomaterial frames. With the exception of the odd Siren-class Lhost – usually acquired via dubious means – most BouBoutiques don't carry finished Lhosts, preferring instead to custom-tailor their creations on a client-by-client basis. While there are certainly resurrection clinics in Praxis that can provide more conventional services, a BouBoutique is first and foremost an artistic endeavour, its designers' artistes. Freed from societal constraints, and given the ultimate canvas, BouBoutique artisans can transform their clients into just about anything imaginable, provided they can pay. And make no mistake, acquiring a customised Lhost is a painstakingly detailed and excruciatingly expensive process, but for the truly dedicated, there is simply no substitute.

No matter how fantastical, unearthly, or impractical the request, the sky is the limit. BouBoutiques will happily transform customers into the figure of their dreams, or someone else's nightmares. Usually a bit of both.

THE ULTRAVIOLET QUARTER

When the shopping's done, the shows are over, and the artificial sky over Sunset Boulevard twinkles with stars, there's another side of *Bakunin* to be seen. Though this is strictly metaphorically as the Ultraviolet Quarter is open for business around the clock.

SUNSET BOULEVARD

Bakunin may be billed as "the ship that never sleeps," but just like every other space habitat, on-board time is structured in twelve-hour cycles, providing a natural circadian cycle for its inhabitants. Unlike most sidereal vessels however, *Bakunin* takes the concept of night life quite seriously. When the clock strikes 20:00, the ship-wide artificial daylight recedes, but the iridescent lights of VaudeVille shine all the brighter.

Nowhere is this more pronounced than on Sunset Boulevard. The main district of Vaudeville, and the centre of spectacle, grandiosity, and wonder for *Bakunin* – and perhaps the entire Human Sphere – the Boulevard celebrates and revels in nightfall, and nobody celebrates like VaudeVille. Every evening, in what is perhaps *Bakunin's* most famous spectacle, the sky-blue dome of the district melts into an artistically rendered sunset. Blazing oranges sear into red and yellow haze, watercolour splashes of violet and blue drip across the simulated horizon, as shafts of iridescent light dance across the neomaterial chrome of the boulevard, and the gathered crowds quietly drink it in.

A moment of Zen.

For one, perfect instant, the district comes together to enjoy the show. Artists, vagabonds, misfits, tourists, and outlaws of every stripe gather to observe this uniquely Bakunian spectacle. Bars, restaurants, hotels, and apartments, every building in the district has a glorious view of the show. Nomads typically consider this the perfect time to sit back, relax, and share a drink with whoever happens to be nearby. In a place as fantastical as VaudeVille, sunset is the most romanticised event of all – the perfect moment, that magical instant, where anything can happen, and dreams can come true.

No travel agency uses actual footage of the UV in a holo-brochure. While plenty of tourists think that they want to embrace the transgressive, not everyone is going to be ready for the reality of the Ultraviolet Quarter. Putting conventional red-light districts to shame, the UV goes above and beyond what any other part of the Human Sphere has on offer.

While it's treated more like a district, technically the UV is a module complete with its own laws and ordinances. Nobody's going to enter by accident, and those without a healthy bank account – or hard cash on-hand – are politely turned away at the remarkably unremarkable checkpoints. In the UV, you can get your hands on just about anything for the right price, but they don't take credit. If would-be patrons want to do business with the predatory loan sharks circling around neighbouring modules, well, that's their mistake to make.

Inside its walls, the transformation is revelatory. There's a saying: "everything's legal under Black Light." And while that's not entirely true, the Plutocratic Commune provides a great deal of leeway. Thus, it stands to reason that just about anything could take place in the UV, provided that it's sufficiently profitable. And this is absolutely the case.

The Ultraviolet Quarter is an unapologetic celebration of raw anarcho-capitalism, and unrestrained vice including prostitution, gambling, gladiatorial death matches, experimental narcotics that even Vaudeville's Black Market won't sell. The UV boasts collectively bargained standard rates of pay for most activities, illustrating the transactional nature of the district. Even the smallest exchange is likely governed by a Tunguskan smart contract, if not also a shadow contract.

EVERYTHING HAS A PRICE

Not everyone who goes into the district comes out, at least, not officially. Smugglers of all sorts operate out of the UV, including those who deal in people. Those looking to cover their tracks, mislead a pursuer, or otherwise vanish for a while can willingly participate in the district's thriving human trafficking trade, and many do just that. Others are a bit more cautious. Although *Bakunin's* distaste for slavery is well-known, many are understandably hesitant to trust their continued freedom, health, and well-being to people who literally put a price on everything.

In the Ultraviolet District, every person, possession, and piece of property is automatically assigned a *wergild* – a financial valuation of their worth – which is paid in reparations should damages occur. Based on Social Energy, publicly available

financial data, and whatever dirt their hackers can dig up, absolutely everything in the UV has an LAI-calculated *wergild*, updated in real-time. Visitors are no exception, underscoring the cold, hard reality of the UV: everyone and everything has a price, whether they like it or not. And absolutely everything is for sale.

TWEAKS, CHIMERA, AND OTHER BIOMORPHS

Few social movements are so thoroughly Bakunian as Biomorphing. A riff on transhumanism unlikely to exist anywhere else in the Human Sphere – even among other Nomads – Biomorphs aren't unified in appearance, motivation, goals, or location. Yet, they remain linked by a bond that has proven nigh-impossible to break. If the Nomad Nation is a gathering of extremists and outcasts, and *Bakunin* are the misfits of the bunch, what does it say that Biomorphs find themselves on the fringes of even the Radical Mothership?

Even so, most Nomads can't help but respect anyone so committed to an idea that they undergo irreversible, transformative surgery. Even if it makes no sense to them, there's no denying that Biomorphs possess considerable conviction in their beliefs. And if that means that they wind up with cat ears, ram horns, and a rabbit tail? Well, it takes all kinds.

MOTIVATIONS

Why do people become Biomorphs? The answers are as varied as their appearance. As with tattoos, piercings, augmentations, or other less-dramatic body modifications, many reasons exist. Some are looking to stand out in a crowd. Others believe, right or wrong, that the change will help them professionally, or to gain acceptance in an insular social circle. And for some, it's about feeling at home in their own skin, a complicated issue in a complicated society. But like anything else in *Bakunin*, it's the loudest voices that tend to get the most attention. And while all Biomorphs can get pretty loud, Chimera can be deafening by any standard.

While some have used the term to describe any Biomorph, a Chimera is quite literally an altogether different beast. Moving past the cosmetic, a Chimera's Biomorphing is radical, transformative, and often quite dangerous. Combat augmentations, untested xenografts, unchecked metachemical enhancements, and a bevy of other untested and

"If the whole point is that it goes farther than a red light district, why Ultraviolet? Why not Infrared?"

Simple, darling: it's all about subverting expectations."

– Diva Davina, media sensation and self-proclaimed "Empress of Vaudeville."

ULTRAVIOLET SECURITY

"What happens under Black Lights disappears once the lights come on," or so the saying goes. Marketing aside, it's important that the quarter can ensure the privacy of its clientele, if for no other reason than to maintain the proprietary nature of any blackmail acquired. Tunguskan infowarriors, augmented (or Uplifted) muscle, and the best mercenaries that money, blackmail, or a hefty discount can buy – the UV spares no expense in preserving their business model.

"Biomorphing: the catch-all term for radical host modification. Basically, if someone's cosmetically modded themselves past the point of what could ever occur in nature, they're a Biomorph. Related sobriquets include:

Chimera: illegally combat-modified humans, often fiercely animalistic in appearance... and behaviour

Tweaks: individuals with obvious – but limited – inhuman features. Given *Bakunin's* preoccupation with cats, feline eyes, ears, and/or tails are a common expression" – Traveller's guide to *Bakunin*, third edition.

THE TRAVELING CIRCUS: BAKUNIAN INTERFACTIONAL RELATIONS

Every Faction has its own unique relationship with the Nomads. And nobody does “unique” quite like *Bakunin*.

Ariadna: On one hand, the freedom-loving USAriadnans see a lot of themselves in the individualistic Bakunians. On the other hand, when the two meet, it's been described as “anaphylactic culture shock,” and they have even less in common with the rest of Ariadna. Still, there's a mutual respect between the two, forged in telling the rest of the galaxy to get stuffed.

Haqqislam: Long-time allies, the ideological battles between Praxis and Bourak are almost as numerous as the medical advances that occur when the two partner up. Haqqislam knows that it can always count on *Bakunin* when it's time to try something truly reckless; look through some of the Hassassins' most audacious operations, and you'll find a *Bakunian* with a Cheshire grin, along for the ride.

PanOceania: No fun. Though the countless PanOceanian citizens who patronise *Bakunin's* tourism industry seem to like it well enough.

Yu Jing: Somehow, even less fun than PanOceania, a feat that is both impressive and infuriating. The Party flies in the face of the Radical Mothership's most sacred ideals. Both parties can agree on one thing though: if the other died in a fire, that'd be great.

ALEPH: The most commonly volunteered opinion is hysterical laughter, peppered with creative cursing. More poignant criticisms revolve around ALEPH's painting all Nomads with the same brush, when radical differences exist between Bakunian modules, let alone with their fellow Motherships. But beyond the bitter conflict, most Bakunians don't see ALEPH as being all that special. After all, what's the difference between ALEPH, and a Rogue AI like Svengali, if not infrastructure?

Well, that, and the fact that Svengali's honest about its criminal intentions.

O-12: Bakunians actually have a lot of sympathy for O-12; it's like playing Moderator for the entire Human Sphere. Not the most enviable task. For its part, Bureau Noir has found its share of useful assets on *Bakunin*, though it can prove to be more trouble than it's worth.

unstable alterations to their hosts are par for the course. Often packing mods that are illegal pretty much everywhere except *Bakunin* – and restricted even on the Radical Mothership – Chimera are self-engineered to be the brightest stars in the sky.

Of course, rising stars are rarely as bright as falling ones.

Ultimately, there's as much tragedy as there is opportunity. Novelty and attractiveness are a potent combination for anyone looking to over-clock their career in media. Chimera combine exotic looks, undeniable swagger, and a raw, dangerous edge, excellent ingredients for any budding star. Unfortunately, there's only so much room at the top. And while some people will do absolutely anything to be famous, it's still no guarantee of success. Thus, many Chimera who hoped to achieve fame and renown can often be found in the Ultraviolet Quarter, taking whatever kind of work they can find: prostitution, deathmatch fighting, or if they're lucky, exotic bodyguards.

It's not all doom and gloom, however. One of the benefits of living in the Nomad Nation is that there's always an opportunity around the corner. And it's not that nobody cares what you look like – Nomads are as opinionated as anyone else, often more so – but getting the job done will always take priority. Thus, while a disproportionate number of Chimera can be found acting as “booth babes” at Vaudeville kiosks, they also count engineers, NMF soldiers, and countless other professions among their number.

BIOMORPHS, DOG-BLOODS, AND FITTING IN

Most Dogfaces have never been outside of Ariadna, let alone off of Dawn. So, to say that relatively few Wolveres or Dogfaces have ever set foot on *Bakunin* would be putting it mildly. However, the few times that it has happened, it's been a revelation.

Having spent their whole lives as an ostracised minority, a Dogface on *Bakunin* is not only spared the gawking, the staring, the fear and whispers, they might not even be the strangest-looking person on the street. Most get confused for Chimera and aren't in a hurry to correct the mistake. If nothing else, it's exponentially easier to find a tailor who can not only deal with your size and likelihood to get into fights, but also has experience making pants for people with tails.

CHIMERA DREAMS

“Am I human? What does that even mean? To accept the traits you're born with? We haven't done that for generations. To look human? Humanity is a spectrum, and Chimera embody every point on the gradient, and more. Besides, is humanity supposed to be intrinsically superior, when we stand shoulder-to-shoulder with Helots and Tohaa?”

So, what am I? A sapient being. My frame is androgynous, my mind is my own, and my body transcends antiquated notions of humanity. I am something new, something different, and something uniquely, unequivocally mine. I am more than human. I am Chimera. And that cannot be taken away from me.”

– Shine Antique, transhuman activist, performance artist, and of course, Chimera.





CHAPTER 2.2

MOTHERSHIP: CORREGIDOR

“Ugh. It’s like a prison and a warehouse had an ugly baby. It smells like antifreeze and gym socks. When do we head to *Bakunin*?”

— Go-Go Marlene. Unauthorised behind-the-scenes footage, surreptitiously released on *Arachne*.

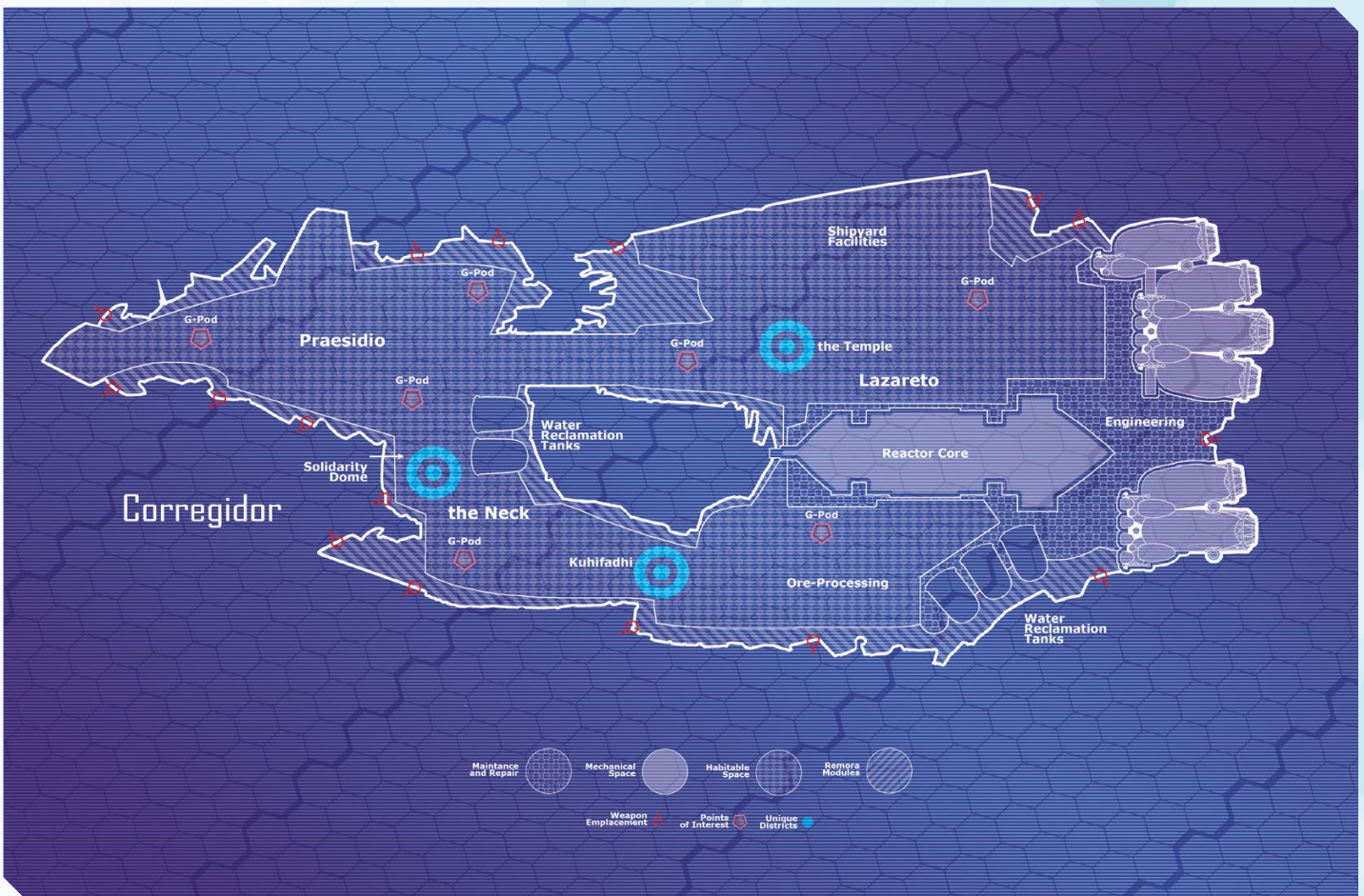
Space is cold. It doesn’t care who your parents are, what degrees you have, or how much is in your bank account. Given half a chance, the uncaring vacuum of space will snuff out any life it comes across. To *Corregidorans*, life is a series of transactions, a philosophy they’ve internalised far more than even the bankers of *Tunguska*, or the most unrestrained capitalist module on *Bakunin*. Because on *Corregidor*, these economics are not a matter of philosophy, nor ambition, but rather one of survival.

freighter and the hyper-crowded slums of modern terrestrial cities, *Corregidor’s* interior is a testament to efficiency. While it can look cruelly spartan to outsiders, the reality of life among the stars has led *Corregidorans* to treasure every cubic centimetre of space and waste nothing.

The result is a stark, efficient landscape with little effort spent on frivolity. Except for the Vaudeville-designed “Solidarity Dome” in the Neck, visitors will find no public parks in *Corregidor*, no sculptures, and no free-standing benches. Any seemingly extraneous element is undoubtedly an attempt to dress up a bit of functionality. Thus, a bulky power converter in the middle of a walkway becomes a “heated bench,” a necessary element that incidentally radiates bright light is elevated becoming a “streetlight,” and so on. What can look haphazard to the casual observer is nothing more than *Corregidor’s* famous pragmatism at work.

CLIMATE AND TOPOGRAPHY

Bakunin is a chaotic, jury-rigged neon carnival, and *Tunguska* is an enclave of brushed alloys and smooth bevels. *Corregidor*, however, is neo-brutalism writ chunkily large. Somewhere between the blocky utilitarianism of an industrial



In general, the neo-penal construction of the Mothership prioritises function over form, and then prioritises function again, just to be sure. Heavy tungsten alloys make up the flooring, walls, and ceilings of the bulkhead jungle in a stark, brutal landscape, where strength is a necessity, space is at a premium, and optimism is a luxury few make time for. The people who proudly call *Corregidor* home would have it no other way.

HOUSING

Ironically, in space, personal space is at a premium. *Corregidor* was never truly designed to sustain a population of this size. While getting an exact census on Nomads is an exercise in futility, Corregidorans tend to think in terms of “enough room” and “not enough room.”

They haven't really had enough room for generations.

In response, Corregidorans are remarkably efficient with what space they do have. *Corregidor's* residential cabins seem more like military barracks or prison cells than a row of apartments. Newer districts call to mind the unholy offspring of industrial warehouse design and megaslums – like Earth's old Kowloon Walled City, albeit much tidier. However, a closer look reveals that most Corregidorans are studiously neat. Clutter is a luxury reserved for those with more elbow room. Even the slums are far cleaner than their counterparts, more like a greasy machine shop than the archetypical “bad neighbourhood.”

Inside, most Corregidoran homes continue the spartan trend. Beds fold up into walls, turning a sleeping space into a public one. Garments are

vacuum-sealed when not in use, and individual toiletries are eschewed in favour of multipurpose compounds, anything to free up a few more cubic centimetres. Since more than half the ship is usually out on assignment at any given time, many workers rent flats as a group, with whoever's currently residing on the ship getting the bunks. Two Corregidorans can technically be roommates for years and never meet, and many change residences frequently. For them, home is where you set down for the night, like backpackers moving within one massive hostel.

Personal privacy on *Corregidor* is an alien concept. Some homes have thin screens dividing different sections, but many don't bother. Modesty is likewise a casualty of overcrowding. If someone doesn't want to hoof it to a restroom stall to change, they're probably doing it in sight of a family member or roommate. For Corregidorans, this is neither embarrassing nor titillating. As the saying goes, “Only outsiders stare.” These lessons are culturally ingrained in Corregidorans, which has the bonus of easing the transition from civilian life into military and work teams.

“G-TIME”

Some parts of the Mothership – such as large sections of Lazareto – are generally kept weightless when not in navigation burns. Seatbelts adorn most furniture, and everything from storefronts to restrooms is designed with an eye to three-dimensional space. Visitors might easily come away with the impression that Corregidorans spend their lives in a state of perpetual weightlessness, which raises the question: if they exist in a constant state of microgravity, how in the world are they so hardy?

CORREGIDORAN FAUNA

Corregidor has little non-sapient life on board. Unlike *Bakunin's* need for experiments, or *Tunguska's* relative fondness for luxuries, Corregidorans and animals don't usually mix. Between space constraints, resource scarcity, and the fact that most domesticated creatures do very poorly in microgravity, *Corregidor* is all but devoid of animal life.

One notable exception to this is arachnids, spiders in particular. Prospectors, work teams, and mercenaries are constantly coming and going between *Corregidor* and various alien biomes. Insectoid stowaways are an inevitable side effect. These unwanted guests can spread disease, ruin food supplies, and otherwise be a nuisance. But spiders? Spiders keep to themselves, eat pests, and are generally only a problem when provoked. Regular infusions of arachnid predators helps keep the bug population from getting out of hand.

Being the closest thing they could have to pets growing up, spiders tend to hold a special place in the hearts of Corregidoran children. Outside of the rare arachnophobe, most citizens avoid harming the creatures if they can help it. Due to their toughness, adaptability, and general resilience to the hazards of living on a ship, the little weavers have become something of an unofficial Corregidoran mascot, with spider motifs proving increasingly popular as the younger generation comes of age.

PERSONAL EFFECTS

Except tools and clothing, most Corregidorans keep personal belongings to a minimum. Possessions are almost exclusively limited to software of one sort or another. Belongings that include something without obvious practical use likely mean tremendous sentimental value. Given the space constraints, most home decoration involves rugs, tapestries, or other flat, durable accoutrements, often with Spartan AR overlays. Fibre arts are a popular hobby regardless of gender, and many children create customised decorations for “their” section of wall.

“*Corregidor's* resources are tightly managed out of necessity, it seems. I'm confident that the Warden has detailed population records. They'd have to. However, getting them to share that information has been like pulling teeth from a bear.

Without tools. While covered in honey.

Suffice it to say, population figures aren't publicly available. But ask anyone on-board, and they'll point out that half the ship's population is off-board right now, maybe more. And that seems to be the norm. So, what if *Corregidor* ever had to house its entire compliment of citizens at the same time? If it were anywhere else, I'd tell you they wouldn't all fit. But having seen the place first-hand, I'm confident they'd find some way to pack 'em in.”

– Mei Li Silva, *Loğanto Confidente*. Proprietary report for Hesperya Consulting.

TRI-BEAM VILLAGE

Seeming cramped at the best of times, *Corregidor* has to get creative during a Krug. For the last few, that's meant three large vessels manoeuvring in close proximity and synchronised rotation. The addition of rapid, temporary constructions effectively creates a "bubble zone" that smaller ships can embrace to erect temporary villages in the middle of space. Protected from micrometeorites by the larger vessels, "Tri-Beam Village" provides temporary housing for the influx of residents and guests.

CORREGIDORAN FLORA

There isn't much in the way of publicly visible plant life on the Mothership. Importing food is often more space-efficient than growing it, and space on its hydroponic plantation decks is extremely limited. While it's hardly ideal, the psychological importance of being able to survive without imports – even if it's only for a short time – is difficult to overstate.

Agave is by far the most common type of plant life aboard *Corregidor*. While its nectar provides a steady supply of sweetener, its popularity likely has more to do with distillation to make tequila. Outside of these distinctive succulents, *Corregidor* is all but devoid of plant life when compared to the other Motherships.

"You're seriously telling me how to do my job? Kid, you couldn't do my job on your best day. Run home to your little office. Adults are at work."

– Brock Zúñiga, Meteor Head.
Endearing himself to the new foreman, Asteroid X-3970.

Two words: Gravity Time.

Sections of the Mothership are designed to be rotated to create artificial gravity of varying strength. Every day, citizens have a mandatory fitness quota they need to fulfil. Everyone works up a good sweat under some G-forces during the usual morning calisthenics, thereby combating negative effects of weightlessness such as muscle loss or skeletal deterioration. While it's technically a punishable offense to skip your mandatory Gravity Time (or G-Time, as it's colloquially known), social pressure and unpleasant side effects are more than enough to compel most people to hit their weekly quotas. Anyone skipping out is likely to suffer the effects when the ship enters full burn.

However, there's nothing stopping people from taking it farther. Subsections of the Mothership can spin up some truly impressive gravitational forces. Soldiers are required to train in excess of Svalarheim's 1.6g environment, sometimes going as high as 1.8 to 2.0g, and it's not uncommon to see everyone from labourers and mercenaries to priests and bureaucrats taking advantage of the G-Pods for intense strength training.

ECONOMY

Corregidor's labour force never stays in one place for long, and brings valuable skill, expertise, and experience to any job. Of course, their willingness to take jobs that others can't – or won't – plays a role, as does their willingness to accept payment in a variety of under-the-table formats, allowing many corps to enjoy significant profit margins while skirting costly regulations.

This is hardly uncontroversial. Many corps use their workers' quasi-legal status to throw their weight around, and use of undocumented Nomad labour is a favourite target of political rhetoric. Even so, their use is virtually ubiquitous in the field of heavy industry. Trying to get a large-scale project off the ground without Nomad workers is definitely playing the game on hard mode.

Despite their obvious skill, relatively few Corregidorans have been brought on by corps or other governments to work in-house. Something about years of trying to kill them off has left most citizens dubious of outsiders to say the least. So while they're happy to take the money, most meteor heads wouldn't consider leaving the Nomads, no matter how good the offer is. Thus, most Corregidorans make their living as independent contractors.

MINING

Mining is in *Corregidor's* DNA. Its early crew of cast-offs and convicts were relegated to taking whatever jobs they could find, and some of the convicts even had experience doing hard labour in African mines. Mining was one of the few legitimate trade skills that the nascent Mothership had in ample supply.

Today, citizens still bring a mix of savvy and toughness that the big mining corps find indispensable. Despite lacking the resources to set up its own large-stake mining operations, *Corregidor* is the Human Sphere's premier supplier of independent contractors, prospectors, and other mining technicians.

Media portrayals of miners are often ripped straight from 19th century history and given a modern sheen. But, *Corregidor's* miners don't swing around pickaxes any more than *Tunguska's* bankers rely on abacuses, or *Bakunin's* doctors – the accredited ones anyway – use leeches. (Not that you couldn't find someone in Vaudeville willing to try.)

Instead, modern mining is more about the process of setting up, guiding, and maintaining automated equipment. It almost never occurs planetside, instead harvesting the Human Sphere's mineral-rich asteroids. While the technology exists to create powerful automated mining structures, the cost in deploying them far outweighs the potential reward in most circumstances. So rather than construct expensive station-grade mining operations, only to abandon them in a matter of years, if not months, it's much more economical to use lightweight, repurposed equipment, and pay miners to set up, maintain, and operate the equipment.

The work, though, is not only hazardous, but also requires technical expertise. LAI-run automated operations have typically been fool's gold, labouring for years without producing results, and needing just as much maintenance in the end. The most successful of these wasn't even what it appeared, as the Rogue AI Svengali had taken over operations and was not only running a successful mining operation but subsidising it through a lucrative smuggling business as well.

Being on the cutting edge of extraplanetary mining, however, is anything but safe for the Corregidorans. During the Helicon Miner's Revolt, workers were brutalised, people died, and the regulations came too late to benefit the original miners. Still, the Human Sphere is hungry for ore, and *Corregidor* is happy to feed the need. But no one should be surprised when Corregidoran Assault Commandos, colloquially known as *Intruders*, embed themselves in work crews, just in case.

PROSPECTORS

Freelance prospectors working individually or in teams provide reach and flexibility that doesn't require mobilising an entire mining operation for a comparatively small vein. In exchange, freelancers typically enjoy the steady work and pay that comes with working for a big company.

Still, that doesn't mean there's no place for solo miners or small teams. Anyone who gets their hands on a small driller-freighter can try their luck among the stars. But, they'd better be lucky indeed. It's not easy finding a minable vein in an asteroid that can be legally mined that is both lucrative enough to be worth the time and small enough that a single person or small crew can manage to extract value on their own.

These prospectors live a life of adventure, but it's hardly a glamorous one. For every success story, there are dozens who barely make enough to cover fuel costs, and dozens more who lose everything in search of hidden treasure. Like compulsive gamblers, many prospectors keep chasing that elusive big score until it bleeds them dry. Still, it's one of the last great frontiers. Anyone with enough grit, sense, and stubbornness has a chance to control their own destiny. For many Corregidorans, that's enough.

CONSTRUCTION & REPAIR

Repair, construction, demolition, and excavation. If something can't be safely automated, or it's easier to simply hire out to independent contractors, *Corregidor* usually gets the job. With more satellites, orbitals, and large spacecraft in operation than at any other time in humanity's history, there's a lot of wrenches being turned in microgravitational environments. And nobody works in zero-g like a Meteor Head.

As with mining, however, the same financial incentives that make hiring Corregidorans attractive can also lead to the hazardous conditions that have plagued the Mothership's workers since its inception. That Corregidorans are more likely to survive dangerous conditions doesn't make them any safer, though many a corporate executive argued that exact point. Either way, space is full of busted stuff, and someone's got to fix it. More often than not, that someone calls *Corregidor* home.

MERCENARIES

A Corregidoran standby. In the early days of the Mothership, its bills were largely paid by exporting nasty, brutish criminals to commit disturbing acts of violence at the behest of paying customers. A lot has changed over the years, though. *Corregidor* has

BOUNTY HUNTERS

In addition to its mercenary teams, *Corregidor* proudly boasts the largest number of bounty hunters per capita in the Human Sphere. When it comes to tracking down notorious gang bosses, nobody sports a better success rate than *Corregidor's* rough-and-tumble hunters. Any Submondo with a sufficient price on their head knows how to cover their tracks on Maya, and most can even manage the same in Arachne.

Thus, anyone planning on bringing them in needs to get their boots on the ground and do some good old-fashioned Psyop legwork. It's precisely this sort of situation where Corregidoran bounty hunters thrive. Most gang members can spot a cop from a mile away, with the right augmentations, sometimes literally. Straight-laced, professional law officers are likely to find more frustration than leads when hunting their prey. On the other hand, a Corregidoran hunter flags as a kindred spirit to most of these toughs and heavies. And if the gangsters are feeling tight-lipped, these bounty hunters not opposed to walking into a pub, cracking a few skulls, then having a calm chat with the bartender while somebody sweeps the loose teeth off the floor.

In other words, they're perfectly suited to the particular brand of blood-under-your-fingernails legwork required to bring in a certain calibre of mark and charge accordingly for their services, which makes hiring them ironically impractical for the Mothership itself.

vastly expanded its industry, and new generations of citizens means that the percentage of criminal records among the citizenry is at an all-time low.

But the brutal pragmatists of *Corregidor* aren't going to fix what isn't broken. And with micro-conflicts flaring up, industrial espionage on the rise, and the arrival of the Combined Army, the Human Sphere's demand for competent, reliable, and durable mercenaries is as high as it's ever been. And while that might be bad news for the Human Sphere in general, it is money in the bank for purveyors of *Corregidor's* traditional export of applied, professional violence.

NARCOTICS

Corregidor's original inhabitants included many Narco gangs, most of whom were exiled to the void. Unsurprisingly, knowledge of how to run a drug cartel has survived the trip, and *Corregidor* boasts a thriving drug trade. Though still quite illegal, canny *maras* gangs can turn a tidy profit, so long as they don't make too much trouble – and remember to pay their taxes. This “Miscellaneous Income” is a significant contributor to the ship's bottom line, and greedy gangsters quickly discover that the Alguaciles harshly punish those who conveniently forget to pay their taxes.

“It's an unspoken assumption in *Corregidor* that for every one incident that gets attention, there are ten more that no one ever hears about. If that is truly the case, then it's no wonder that Corregidorans are slow to trust outsiders.”

– Excerpt from *Corregidor: Built to Last*, by Johur Ali al Sefi. Produced by Haas, Al Boushra's travel channel: only on Maya!

“If life gives you lemons, you make lemonade, right? Well, life gave me crap, so what do you think I did with that? That's right! I bought guns.” [Sounds of indiscriminate slaughter.] “Also, I made lemonade! The alternative sounded gross. You guys want any?”

– Señor Massacre, having a chat with his co-workers during a boarding action. Haqqislamite corsair ship *Kara Gölge* (Black Shadow), Human Edge system.



"To us! The unholy spawn of the devil and an automatic rifle. We eat rivets and sweat concentrated acid. Call us warriors, cosmonauts, or whatever names you can think up. We are sovereign citizens of *Corregidor*, and we're not surrendering to the likes of you. So, greet the devil for us, you motherless dogs. When next we meet, we're sending you straight to hell!"

— Sergeant Gómez of the Intruder Assault Commandos, delivering a toast via secure comms during the Phantom Conflict.

"Space can hear you scream. It just doesn't care."

— Corregidoran Proverb.

"Name: Caitlyn Mwangi. Rank: Corporal. Blood type: Tequila. May she return in glory, or drag those bastards down to hell with her!"

— A group of Wildcats toast their missing comrade.

"This ship doesn't maintain itself, but you'd be forgiven for making the error."

— Excerpt from *Corregidor: Built to Last*, by Johur Ali al Sefi.

DEMOGRAPHICS AND CULTURE

Corregidor's history is a tale of tough people making tough decisions in tough circumstances, and that legacy of difficult choices laid the foundation for the brutal pragmatism that is the hallmark of modern *Corregidor*.

METEOR HEADS

Paragons of obstinacy, Corregidorans have a reputation for being gruff, rude, foul-mouthed, and tougher than nails. And they do their honest best to earn it. Though they work with clients across the Human Sphere, one could hardly describe those relationships as warm. From the moment the first convict was thawed out of cryogenic storage, Corregidorans have been outsiders. Their treatment at the hands of the rest of the Human Sphere has done little to thaw their cold shoulders.

Still, there is a quiet contentment in their self-imposed exile. The cold vacuum of space is a constant threat, but it is also beautiful in a way that nothing else is. Life as an eternal freelancer is demanding, but the work is honest. To be a meteor head is to be native to the uncaring void of space, to live and work within arm's reach of oblivion. To stare deeply into the abyss, until your next job stares back.

Other Nomads see something profound in *Corregidor*. In response, the meteor head shrugs and gets on with the day's work.

URBAN LEGENDS

True or not, Corregidorans love a good story. They mythologise their traditions, sometimes creating fictitious people and entire events to better contextualise their world. These tall tales can grow large, but there's a thread of proverbial wisdom running through them all. Categorically, the Corregidoran urban legend is more fable than rumour.

For example, design decisions that are common across the Nomad Nation are attributed to remarkable individuals who reliably refused to back down when pushed. These folk heroes take several shapes, but the unifying theme is one of stoic determination in the face of oppressive power. Whether their foils are ALEPH, other O-12 nations, fellow Nomads, or even the void of space itself, Corregidoran folk heroes are always seen punching up on behalf of the downtrodden. While these stories tend to have a grain of truth, Corregidorans are more concerned with the lessons of the story than the particulars. As one such proverb goes: "Facts are nice and all: but don't let them get in the way of the truth."

TOASTS

Ignoring the torrents of profanity that accompany equipment maintenance, combat situations, and most forms of cooking, the Meteor Heads of *Corregidor* seem reserved, even introverted, especially when compared to their fellow Nomads.

One notable exception to this is the Corregidoran fondness for toasts. Other cultures might break into a toast at significant events: weddings, funerals, graduations, and so on. Corregidorans do not require nearly so much prodding. For outsiders, it can come as quite a shock to see them boisterously extolling each other's virtue, flasks raised high. A Corregidoran might toast your health over lunch, toast the delivery driver for finally dropping off the parts they need, and toast a job well done, all over the course of a few hours.

The flasks themselves can contain everything from nutrient paste to black coffee, though tequila remains the libation of choice for Corregidoran adults, as well as a fair share of kids who think they can get away with it. Like a bare-knuckled brawl, most citizens are willing to look the other way when it comes to alcohol consumption, believing it to be good for one's character.

Tequila also holds a special place in Corregidoran society and is used for a variety of purposes beyond consumption. Tequila spritzing is used in lieu of dry cleaning, and the liquor is used to remove mould spores in bathrooms, to disinfect wounds, and to enhance baked goods. Tough old meteor heads have been known to soak their feet in the cheap stuff to get rid of funky boot odour, and more than one broke worker has tried drinking the resulting sludge to embarrassingly disastrous effect.

So entrenched in the Corregidoran psyche is the utility of the stuff, that tequila is often applied in applications where any benefits it conveys are purely psychological in nature. Unsurprisingly, the phrase "put some agave on it" endures as a uniquely Corregidoran method of telling someone to tough it out and get on with their day.

PARIAHS IN THE VOID: DAILY LIFE IN CORREGIDOR

Ask a non-Nomad about Corregidorans, and they're likely to conjure up an impossibly tough, hard-boiled spacer who is gritty, coarse, and stoic. Ask a Nomad, and your answer won't be that different. But ask a Corregidoran, and you're more likely to get a shrug, cold glare, or uncomfortable silence than an answer in so many words.

Many would think that they've been brushed aside.

WORK. LIFE. BALANCE: A CORREGIDORAN DAY

Corregidorans don't always share much in common with their neighbours. But even the most wildly disparate citizens often get to know each other through the shared tradition of constant and demanding ship maintenance. *Corregidor* is in a constant state of maintenance and repair, and it's every citizen's duty to do their part. Thus, after working a late-night shift, a labourer might make small talk with their mercenary neighbour over a busted door console, an overheating circuit, or the nearly ubiquitous coolant leaks that plague the Mothership's design.

Corporate stooges may have "water cooler" conversations, but in *Corregidor*, there are "coolant maintenance" conversations, where the latest Aristeia! matches are discussed, politicians are groused at, and dirty jokes are freely exchanged with knowing winks to kids who think they've managed to hide. Regardless of their upbringing, social class, or economic status, everyone pitches in. Corregidorans take pride in their maintenance. Everyone's learned it growing up, and immigrants catch on quick by necessity. The thought of delegating these minor tasks is akin to insinuating that they can't lace their own boots or dress themselves. Repairs are something you simply do.

Shopping, religious observances, your day job – even during trips to the restroom – if minor repairs are needed, people stop and make them, usually sharing the work with passers-by. Thus, most Corregidorans don't stay strangers for long. You never know who you're going to be handing a spanner to.

But a closer look reveals a deeper truth. More than any of their siblings, Corregidorans are children of the void. Space can be your worst enemy, or your greatest friend, but nobody gets along with it without putting in some work. And Corregidorans are their mother's children.

LAW OF THE JUNGLE: PEACEKEEPING IN CORREGIDOR

Corregidor's law enforcement has its work cut out for it. Trying to keep the toughest crew in the galaxy from ripping each other apart isn't a job for the faint of heart, nor those averse to confrontation. With any conflict holding the potential to boil over into shocking violence, *Corregidor's* peacekeeping forces need to stay on their toes at all times.

In general, law enforcement is more lenient here than elsewhere in the Human Sphere. So long as the ship isn't damaged, the mantra of "no blood, no foul" provides a better framework for understanding it than any legal code. Alguaciles know better than to break up an honest brawl between consenting adults. As they keep their dispute contained, Mothership Security usually has more pressing matters to attend to. Assault charges are nearly unheard of – it's assumed that most people can take care of themselves in a fight, so anything short of attempted murder tends to merit a slap on the wrist at most.

Of course, the Alguaciles can't be everywhere. The Corregidor Jaguars, one of Sarmiento's more innovative recycling plans, walk the toughest beats in *Corregidor*, and their particular style of enforcement has resulted in a stable, if violent, sort

of equilibrium. Most Jaguars are former *maras* and are usually more than happy to turn a blind eye to gang activity, so long as it doesn't spill out into the rest of the ship. Because most Jaguars came from neighbourhoods similar to the ones they now protect, they know all too well the dangers of a stray bullet, unhinged junkie, or rampaging corridor thug. When they do step in, their retribution is swift, violent, and often excessive combining gang-style violence with paramilitary training and equipment.

RED LEGACIES

Nomads are, by and large, a freedom-loving, independent folk. Corregidorans, as the first Nomad Mothership, like to think that they embody those virtues as much as anyone. But there is a spectre looming over their liberty, a dark past to go with their uncertain future. Because for all the platitudes, assurances, and justifications, one fact remains inarguably clear: Corregidoran freedom was bought and paid for in human trafficking (see *Nomads: Faction* p. 4)

Once they'd been categorised, the useful were put to work, the valuable were put on the auction block, and the surplus were demarcated for disconnection if the ship hit a resource crunch. Technically speaking, once the ship gained financial solvency, the classifications were subsequently dropped, never to be mentioned again. But people don't forget such things so easily, and the effects can be felt in Corregidoran culture to this day.

Corregidorans, as a rule, don't like talking about the Red Auction. If pressed, they'll volunteer any number of justifications – it was do or die, desperate times call for desperate measures, and so on. They don't

PAY-PER-BREATH

In *Corregidor*, nothing is free, not even existence. In stark contrast to the iota-scarcity world the rest of the Human Sphere lives in, a philosophy of economic scarcity is an integral part of the hardcore survivalist spirit of *Corregidor*. Keeping the lights on, the ship moving, and the air breathable doesn't happen by accident – these things cost money, and nobody gets a free ride. Whether in currency or maintenance duties, everybody pays. Those who don't, or simply can't? Arrested, and forced to perform community service until their debts are paid.

And when that fails, more than one soul has wound up "going for a stroll" outside the ship. Without a suit

"It's real simple. Don't make a mess you can't clean up. If you wanna get in someone's face, don't expect them to back down. And if you're pushed around? It's expected that you'll push back. Extend others the same courtesy."

– Tomcat Sergeant Major Carlota Kowalsky, advising some freshly-rescued trafficking victims on Mothership etiquette.

"You think he was scary when we were fighting PanOceania? His little sister lives in this 'hood. We're gonna have to ID the suspect by DNA... if there's enough left to even do that."

– Ricardo Díaz, Alguaciles corps, explaining Jaguar jurisdiction to a fellow officer.



“Every Nomad is equal. The messy history of the Red Auction is behind us now. We are against the very idea of slavery. Fine ideals. Good thoughts. And utterly false. One has but to look at the stratification of Corregidoran society to see the influence of the Red Auction today: if someone cannot be exploited, or perform valuable services, they’re considered ‘surplus’ to this very day.

You cannot force children to engage in physical labour in order to purchase the right to breathe your air, and in the same breath, say that you have changed your ways? Sorry friends: I don’t buy it. If Corregidorans want to be seen as a trustworthy people, the first group they should stop lying to is themselves.”

— Jeremiah Duggar, Lobbyist for FamilyFirst. From The Duggar Report: available on Maya.

THE UNWANTED

Pragmatism notwithstanding, nobody likes the idea that they’ve been marked as “surplus to requirement.” Some of the survivors decided that if their so-called “fellow citizens” in Corregidor could so easily cast them aside, then they’d look after each other. Tattoos of SURPLUS or S.T.R. in industrial stencilling were common amongst these former “surplus,” signalling to fellow castaways that this person, at least, would stand with them. Somewhere between a union and a deck gang, the Unwanted still look after their members and count many commandos among their number.

see the point in further discussion. To their eyes, it happened, it was necessary, and it worked. Nothing more needs to be said on the matter.

CORRIDORS OF CORREGIDOR

Corregidor is prone to understate its hazards to the uninitiated. Its reputation for danger is real, and earned, but to locals, said dangers only come to those who go looking for them. Thousands of little signals that an outsider might miss are as clear as day to a native. Things that are common sense to the local are completely alien assumptions to the visitor, and these misunderstandings can be incredibly dangerous. On *Corregidor*, the key to staying safe is knowing which parts of town to steer clear of and when, trusting instincts honed by years of observation. Of course, good luck getting a local to explain any of this to an outsider.

DECK MAPS

Having grown up among *Corregidor’s* groaning bulkheads, constructing internal “deck maps” is as natural as breathing. Corregidorans pay attention to what’s under construction, which gangs are fighting this week, and what parts of the ship to avoid unless they’re looking for trouble. Like denizens of terrestrial urban centres, a local’s knowledge is so integral that it goes without mention. Thus, Corregidorans are routinely confused that people think of their home as being “unsafe.” Tough, sure. Gritty, ok. Sure, it boasts a per-capita murder rate closer to a war zone than a resort, but if you don’t go looking for trouble, trouble tends to leave you be. Most of the time.

As long as people stay out of the roughest neighbourhoods, most Corregidorans are more than

happy to leave well enough alone. To an outsider, the ship can seem xenophobic, but it bears repeating: most Corregidorans don’t warm up to others quickly. If someone spares a greeting while walking down the corridor, they’ve probably known that person for years.

LAZARETO: A GANGSTER’S PARADISE

Corregidor’s worst neighbourhoods get pretty rough, and Corregidoran gangs have benefited from the “no blood, no foul” philosophy of the Mothership’s law enforcement. Packing absurd numbers of refugees in a confined, resource-scare environment is a recipe for disaster, no matter their origin. The original Lazareto was exactly that – and then they shot it into space. And while the modern Lazareto module is significantly improved in every conceivable regard, most would be hard-pressed to call it a nice neighbourhood.

In those early days, the *maras* gangs were all that stood between the module and unrestrained chaos. And while it’s not publicly talked about, the Black Hand actively works with elements of both *vatos* and *tsotsis*. The Jaguar and Bandit programs, and in a less-official manner, collaborating with local gang leaders, the Black Hand keeps some semblance of the peace.

BANDITS

Packed into a tin can and hurled into space, many of the Sub-Saharan refugees of Lazareto rightly felt abandoned. This led to a resurgence in Reconstructionist observance of traditional religious beliefs, with many taking on the role of protector for their community. In keeping with *Corregidor* tradition, many of these vigilantes donned masks to protect their identities. And in



keeping with his pattern of co-opting the toughest and smartest *Corregidorans* he could find, the Mexican General cut deals with the spiritual leaders of these communities. He provided training and equipment for the vigilantes, in exchange for their use as covert assets.

A piece of old air force jargon, the “Bandit” designation was chosen for its lack of association with the religious groups, as well as the skill with which these operatives slipped unnoticed past enemy defences and neutralised their opposition. Though it’s also considered a tip of the hat from Sarmiento to the Bandits’ various patron figures, a recognition that if he failed to keep his end of the bargain, the chosen would disappear, like bandits in the night.

UNDERGROUND FIGHTING RINGS

There are places in the Mothership where the *Alguaciles* don’t go. Not because they’re afraid, but because it’s rarely worth the fight. These sub-holds and boiler rooms tend to be hot, cramped, and dirty, the perfect place for illegal fighting rings to set up shop.

The existence of these unsanctioned combat leagues is something of an open secret on *Corregidor*. So open, in fact, that matches tend to be well-attended, even by off-duty law enforcement personnel. And while promoters and staff can generally expect a blind eye turned to their antics, the competitors can’t always count on the same courtesy.

As such, it’s traditional for competitors to don masks – often with outlandish personas to go with them – before entering the fighting pits. Inspired by equal parts superhero and Mexican *lucha libre*, these personae provide shelter from unwanted attention, as well as inspiring cult followings that translate into massive bets and merchandise sales. So whether they’re a criminal with a rap sheet, someone with a price on their head, or just a corporate stiff who doesn’t want to explain their hobby to management, fighters have plenty of reasons to keep their identities a secret.

SANCTUARY ZONES

While the *Corregidor* can be a dangerous place, even the toughest soul occasionally needs to cool their heels for a while. When they do, many make their way to *Corregidor’s* Sanctuary Zones. Vengeance, violence, and vindication are all fine things to pursue, but they’re off-limits in the sanctuaries. This is enforced in the old *Corregidoran* way, with the threat of even more violence.

SEÑOR MASSACRE

No discussion of *Corregidoran* deathmatches is complete without mentioning the rise, fall, and rebirth of Señor Massacre. During his prime, his natural agility and fighter’s intuition made him a safe bet in the ring. Combined with his trollish antics and oddball charisma, this meant a lot of money coming in attached to his name. Seemingly overnight, he’d gone from one more poverty-stricken *vato* to an exciting, dangerous celebrity of sorts.

To say that he handled it poorly would be an understatement.

Drugs, gambling, and vanity went to his head. Soon, he’d lost a step in the ring, but accumulated some impressive debts. Hoping for a fresh start – or at least to get away from the loan sharks – he enlisted in the NMF, hoping to regain some semblance of what he’d lost. He served with aplomb, though his *Interesting Times* had just begun. During the NeoColonial Wars, he boarded the *Sun Jiao* battle cruiser with a group of commandos. He found himself broken, burned, and abandoned during the battle and subsequent shipwreck.

But fate was not done with Señor Massacre just yet. Between the radiation burns and military-grade bioweapons, his body – and some would say mind – was twisted and scarred. He adopted his old persona once more, a little more soldier of fortune than *luchador* this time around. He soon found a taste of his old fame as an incredibly skilled mercenary, albeit a hyperviolent and caustically irreverent one.

Some say that this is a mask, a persona. A way for Massacre to distance himself from the horrors he’s experienced. While people speculate the merc has a self-destructive streak, others assume that his grip on sanity is irrevocably shattered. Either way, if you need an efficient, ultraviolent killer for-hire, and you’re willing to endure some quirks, Señor Massacre has re-entered the fight, with all the Human Sphere as his arena.

CANTINAS

Corregidor is full of bars and restaurants, but one particular fusion of the two is treated with superstitious caution. According to local legend, Juan Sarmiento, the Mexican General, once had his meal interrupted by a tavern brawl that escalated into lethal violence. Upon having his margarita ruined by arterial spray, he allegedly proceeded to take out each and every one of the offending individuals.

Stories differ on what was done to them, but they all agree on its unpleasant severity. True or not, while cantinas are home to more than their share of brawls, nothing will get sworn enemies to cooperate faster than someone else breaking the unwritten rule against lethally escalating a fist fight. There’s no faster way to imperil yourself than to pull a weapon during an honest brawl between hardworking folks.

KUHIFADHI

The original *Corregidor* Cantina and still one of the best-known, the *Kuhifahdi* module (Swahili for “preserve”) stands as a bulwark between the objects of vengeance and their pursuers. Arms dealers, black-market hitmen, and mercenaries with

THE TEMPLE

While there are several different fighting rings, the organisation known only as “The Temple” is by far the most successful. Run by an enigmatic figure known only as *El Jefe*, the Temple is steeped in Mesoamerican mysticism, and strange, occult trappings. That isn’t why people come to the temple, though. They come for the violence.

El Jefe pays more than his competitors, and his sadistic match conditions whip his bloodthirsty crowds into a frenzy, resulting in massive sums being bet. He attracts some of the top talent in the underground – notably hosting the biggest matches of Señor Massacre’s mercurial career – but entering his Temple is hardly a safe bet for competitors: they’re called “deathmatches” for a reason.

SANCTUARY CODE

Though not everyone does it, many sanctuaries mark their location with a simple sign: VVV. Three v's struck through meaning no vengeance, violence, or vindication is permitted on these premises. Ironically, the individuals most in need of sanctuary are often in too much of a hurry to notice the subtle markings.

"You know how the Cossacks are all grumpy because of the cold winters? Corregidorans are like that, except their winter is an unending darkness actively plotting your murder."

— Adjutant Henri Tallon,
Ariadnan Expeditionary Corps.

varying degrees of scruples can all find themselves the target of a vengeance-obsessed hunter and can all find refuge in Kuhifahdi. Many of its inhabitants have become semi-permanent residents, selling difficult-to-acquire weapons with significant discounts for anyone who'll take care of the people hunting them.

THE HIRING HALLS

Scattered throughout the Mothership, *Corregidor's* hiring halls are as welcoming as possible to visiting clients. Requiring less enforcement than other locations, hiring halls tend to self-police remarkably well. After all, if you're chasing away clients, you're taking air out of everyone's lungs. Not even the sanctuaries would protect someone who commits such a selfish act. Costing the Mothership a client through carelessness or malice is considered tantamount to treason and is a reliable way to go skinny-dipping out an airlock.

THE MOTHERSHIP'S RELATIONSHIPS

Due to the nature of their work, Corregidorans often find themselves working with other factions outside the familiar confines of their Mothership, providing a unique perspective when compared to their sibling ships.

Their relationship with Ariadna is distant, but carries a quiet undercurrent of mutual admiration. Arguably no one fought harder on Ariadna's side than the Jurisdictional Command of *Corregidor*. They may not have lent the political and technological support of *Bakunin*, or the financial and legal

muscle of *Tunguska*, but they were in the trenches with the Ariadnan armed forces; neither party will soon forget that.

Flashy Submondo tend to work out of "everything's legal in" *Bakunin*, while leaders see peers on *Tunguska*. But for hardworking, roughneck, workaday criminal muscle, there are few places better to throw back a drink than on *Corregidor*. Many Submondo grunts are based out of the Mothership's shadier districts, taking advantage of the lenient police force.

In contrast, *Corregidor's* relationship with PanOceania and Yu Jing is long, storied, and violent. The next positive thing that *Corregidor* has to say about those political juggernauts will be the first. Based on this, one might expect them to have similar feelings towards hypercorps, but the truth is somewhat more complicated. The thinking goes that most corporate entities are soulless monstrosities that only care about profit – but at least they're honest about it. *Corregidor* doesn't like the corps, but they do an awful lot of business with each other.

Haqqislam presents something of a conundrum. The Kum are kindred spirits of a sort, and car-avanserai are frequent ports of call for many a meteor head. However, the Search for Knowledge is a bit high-minded. Most Corregidorans have little interest in discussing anything so abstract and see Haqqislamites as a little "floaty." Even so, they were the Nomad's first real allies, and remain their strongest supporters to this day. So while they might have their head in the clouds, most Corregidorans acknowledge a debt towards Haqqislam, a debt that they're constantly repaying. To Corregidoran eyes, a Haqqislamite's curiosity is probably stronger than their self-preservation instinct. More than one traveller on the Search for Knowledge owes their continued existence to the timely – if grumbling – intervention of a meteor head.

And as for ALEPH? It's complicated. *Corregidor* suffered immensely during the Phantom Conflict, but most Corregidorans feel that they won that conflict, handily. So yes, they're not that far removed from ALEPH trying to kill every last one of them, but half the Human Sphere has tried to kill them at one point or another, and it's getting hard to keep track. It's not that they don't hold a grudge – they absolutely do – but these days, ALEPH seems to have given up on scrubbing them out of existence. Now it's just one more entity trying to run their lives from afar, without much to make it stand out among the others. *Corregidor* though enjoys a good bit of schadenfreude at the AI's expense, and seems to take a special delight in frustrating the efforts of Bureau Toth agents on the hunt for Rogue AIs.

INTERSHIP ATTITUDES

Corregidor's the muscle, but in many ways, it's also the heart. Many, including other Nomads, often conflate "tough" with "dumb" – and that's insulting.

It's never a good idea to insult a Corregidoran.

Without *Tunguska*, they wouldn't be able to exist, and they know that. But it's rough for a construction worker – even the foreman – to really connect with the business side of things. They can work on the same project as part of the same company, but their experiences are so different that there isn't much overlap. But they understand one another, which is more than can be said for the Meteor Heads' relationship with *Bakunin*.

Honestly, they never quite know what to do with them. *Tunguska* they understand. But nobody understands *Bakunin*. If *Corregidor's* a patient bulldog, then *Bakunin* is the yappy chihuahua that keeps getting them into fights. This is ok because more often than not, they enjoy the fights, but they see The Radical Mothership as their loud-mouthed, brilliant little sibling that doesn't know when to keep its head down.

CHAPTER 2.3

MOTHERSHIP: TUNGUSKA

From the *Raubritter* of medieval Germany to the “Robber Barons” of early American capitalism, the history of humanity is rife with people who used legitimate positions to gain political power, wealth, or even get away with literal murder. But it wasn't until *Tunguska* that criminals so openly leveraged the tools of their trade to become a legitimate legal, political, and financial power, eventually becoming the recognised head of a G5 nation.

Thus was the genius of *Tunguska*. In a world increasingly controlled by ALEPH, there was more need for privacy than ever. With the old tax shelters closed up, there was an opportunity to create an entity constructed from the ground up to provide financial benefit in an AI-monitored society. The three groups who best understood how to exploit tax law – organised crime syndicates, low-profile banks, and hacktivist cryptomancers – might have been unlikely bedfellows, but it is the intersection of these diverse elements that would forge *Tunguska's* unique identity. A new form of governance, designed from the ground up by thieves, a haven of their own making.

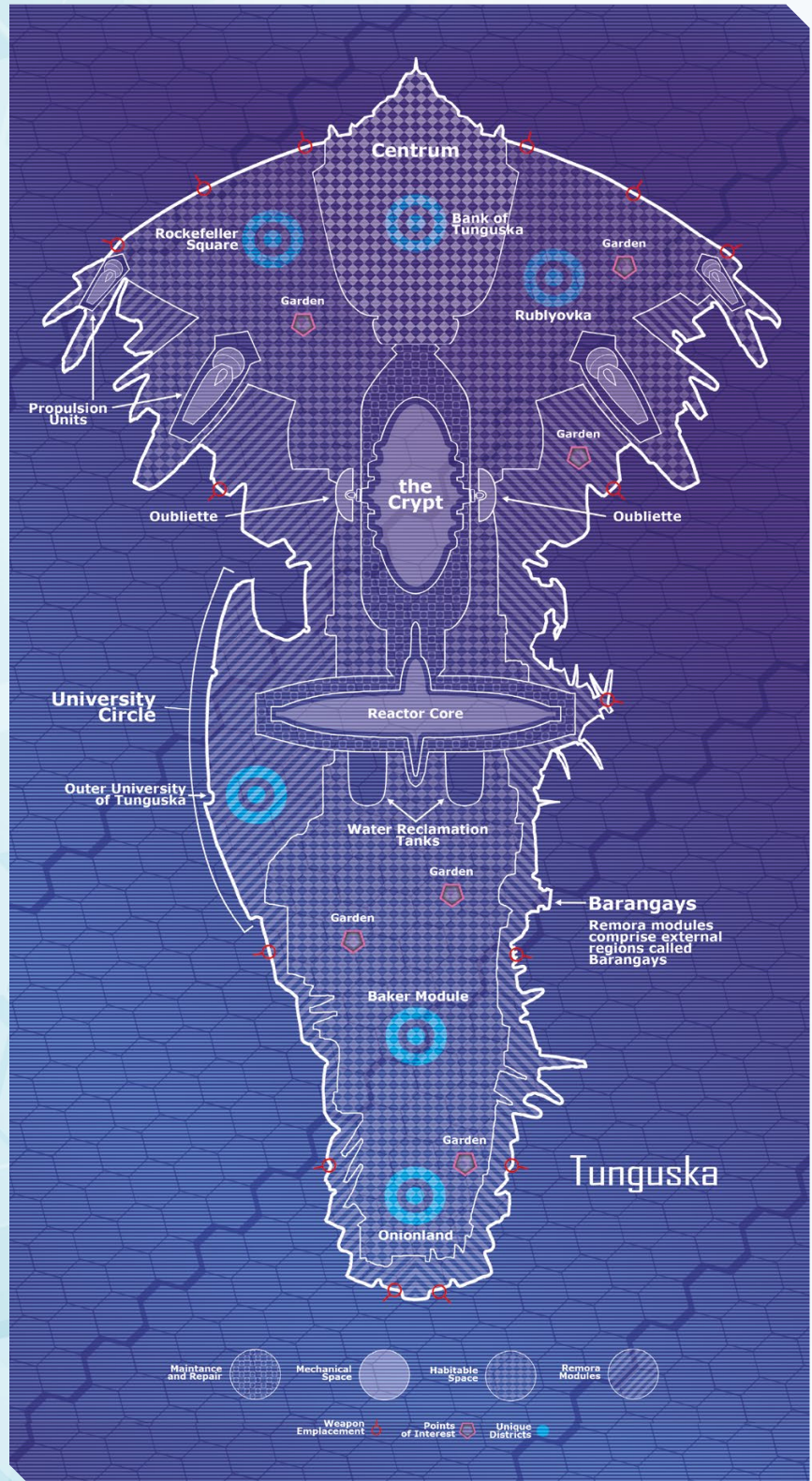
A kleptocracy, if you will.

TUNGUSKA: A LIMITED LIABILITY NATION

When bankers, hackers, and organised criminals came together to found a nation, getting the right structure in place was of the utmost importance. They settled on a corporate model, dividing the nascent mothership into smaller shares, distributed among the three founding groups. Sussing out how these would be distributed was a contentious matter, and a defining moment in Tunguskan history.

Each group was essential for *Tunguska's* success, though they disagreed on their relative importance. Without the hackers, the Crypt – the foundation of *Tunguska's* economy – couldn't function. Without the financial knowledge of the bankers, as well as their existing relationships, arrangements, and infrastructure, *Tunguska* might never get off the ground, figuratively or literally.

But without the mafias, all of this was merely academic, an idea in the night sky, just so many empty hopes. These criminal syndicates were *Tunguska's*





“Money should be clean. If it must first go through the laundry, then so be it.”

– Maximillian Waldheim, one of the Bank of *Tunguska*'s founding executives, announcing its opening to select partners.

TUNGUSKAN FLORA

Of the three Nomad Motherships, *Tunguska* has by far the most plant life. From the moment someone sets foot in a docking bay, there's at least a trace element of vegetation throughout the station. Praxis has bioengineered the chlorophyll and anthocyanin content of several species of plants in order to thrive under ambient stellar light and for use in dye-sensitised solar cells. Observation windows are often lined with various plant life, which not only helps with air circulation and passenger morale but plays a small part in subsidising the Mothership's massive energy consumption.

“Never trust an amateur; they've got nothing to lose.”

– Tunguskan proverb

first clients and main economic support. They not only provided the network of contacts necessary to set the project in motion, but most importantly the knowledge and will to make sure that the correct permits got signed. Whether greasing palms or making threats, they knew all the right buttons to push to get things done. One way or another, they made offers that others couldn't refuse, ensuring that *Tunguska* became a reality.

The initial distribution was as follows:

- The *Entente* – the gathering of crime syndicates – received 39% of the total shares
- The Bank – comprised of discreet Central European financial institutes – received 29% of the shares
- And Tortuga – the hacker collectives – received 19% for their role

These three groups are collectively referred to as The Nines, due to the common final digit in their share percentages. The remaining thirteen percent was left open to bait external investors and new citizens. Tunguskan corporations like Trysterion were quick to acquire shares, though a great many citizens also possess shares. Everything from wealthy individuals sitting on multiple shares, to like-minded friends splitting a share between them, these citizen-shareholders enjoy the ability to vote directly, wielding unadulterated influence upon *Tunguska*'s decision-making process.

In a nation where one share equals one vote, The Nines hold enormous sway over determining the Board of Directors' makeup.

CLIMATE AND TOPOGRAPHY

In contrast to the other Motherships, *Tunguska* is remarkably clean. Outside of ALEPH's fleet, most starships have a lived-in quality to them, but *Tunguska*'s common areas can feel more like a technology showroom than a gargantuan space vessel.

While its variety comes nowhere near the barrage of colours that makes up *Bakunin*'s interior, *Tunguska* still boasts a lively and varied appearance, a precisely curated exhibit contrasted to *Bakunin*'s never-ending street faire. Its interior is particularly manicured for its sheer size: all smooth corners, bevelled edges, open spaces, and light hues. High-stakes negotiations often happen on *Tunguska*, and its design is calculated to give a home-court advantage to its residents.

ECONOMY

The Bank of *Tunguska* might not be the largest financial entity in the Human Sphere, but it's arguably the most powerful. Corporate financial entities are bound by intricate accounting regulations and other safeguards enforced by O-12's interfacional M-Corp law, and other national-scale entities are beholden to the plodding regulations that governments impose on their financial sectors, to keep them from seizing too much power.

Tunguska was created in the negative space between those realities. Unburdened by M-Corp law due to their status in a G-5 nation and already holding governmental power, the distinction

TUNGUSKAN FAUNA

Due to extensive maintenance efforts, *Tunguska* has virtually no “wild” animal life. Domesticated pets, on the other hand, those it has in abundance. Most of these creatures are consigned to relatively small habitats. Rodents, lizards, and a smattering of aquatic and amphibious pets round out the animal companions of most of *Tunguska*'s residents. Considered a pest on their homeworld, gliding mammals from Yutang have enjoyed life as pampered pets on *Tunguska*.

That, however, is not the whole story. Rublyovka residents often keep smaller domesticated animals around their estates. Designer-bred small dogs – and things that look more exotic, but still act like a purse puppy, thanks to Praxis – are a staple among the neighbourhood's elite. Adventurous residents have been known to keep avian pets, with birds of paradise, tropical songbirds, and doves a common motif. To survive the rigors of life on a starship, the rarest of these creatures are the product of genetic alteration and augmentation and come almost exclusively from *Bakunin* with the occasional peacock from Haqqislam. However, most of them are actually remotes with special “pet geists” implanted.

Some would say that expensive Silk-based biotherapy for your pet bird is an extravagant show of wealth, and they would be entirely correct. However, a few augmented pets have nothing on the reckless extravagance that the “new money” crime families of Rockefeller Square indulge in.

between Tunguskan finance and government is practically non-existent. This positions them uniquely in between existing regulatory practices and makes the formation of new ones politically complicated. Compounded even further by the poorly-kept secret that many influential members of G-5 nations make extensive use of *Tunguska* for their private finances, any regulatory proposals are often killed before seeing the light of day.

This does, however, present some challenges. Their ability to skirt regulation complicates their relationship with other financial institutions, who rely on common accounting practices to do business. To get around this, *Tunguska* maintains a massive sovereign wealth funds (SWF) of pure capital across different jurisdictions that predate its inclusion in O-12. These SWFs not only provides security against volatility in the Tunguskan economy but have proven invaluable in interfactional economics.

PRIVACY

In the hyper-connected reality of the Human Sphere, privacy is an illusion. ALEPH's integration to nearly every facet of modern life means that anything and everything about an individual is tracked, monitored, and filed away for future reference. Governments, corporations, and determined hackers can learn virtually anything about someone with alarming ease.

Enter *Tunguska*: re-introducing privacy into a world without it.

Whether it's safe boxes, virtual private datasphere access, or just some very, very good hackers to ensure that your private conversation stays that way, *Tunguska* takes pride in counteracting ALEPH's panopticism with the most robust privacy services in the Human Sphere.

Eighty percent of *Tunguska's* economy is tied to the security provided by the data crypt at the Mothership's core. The Crypt is one of the few locations in the Human Sphere that is genuinely off-limits to ALEPH's prying eyes, despite the AI's best efforts. The oubliettes that separate the Crypt from the rest of the Centrum district provide a sort of airlock. So far, it has foiled the attempts of would-be bank robbers and omnipresent AIs alike. This ironclad security is the foundation on which the Tunguskan economy is built.

FINANCE

Tunguska is a dominant player in the financial services industry, the living embodiment of unchained big banking. Freed from the shackles of regulation, investigation, or anything resembling ethics laws,

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Tunguska is governed by a Board of Directors, functioning in much the same way as a publicly traded company's board. In addition to designating the Executive Director – sometimes called the Chairman, due to the frequency with which *Entente* hold the seat – the board also appoints a President to guide and shape *Tunguska's* evolution, as well as holding the primary legislative power in their government.

The *Entente* families vie and jockey for position within themselves, but, it's usually a *Struktura* member who holds the title of Executive Director. Tortuga tends to consolidate their influence in the Chief Operating & Information Officer, who is directly responsible for the daily operations of the Crypt, and thus, immensely important in the mothership's continued survival. The office of President is historically dominated by The Bank, providing a respectable face and voice to represent the council internationally.

Judiciary power rests with the Dagnet, an independent agency that has strong ties with Tortuga, given their shared responsibility in the mothership's security. Still, the fiercely independent Dagnet pulls no punches in their administration of justice. A security firm built out of necessity, it has taken on the roles of judge, jury, and in some cases, executioner. Dagnet operates mostly independent from the rest of the Board.

Of course, this is *Tunguska*. Everything's negotiable, if you know the right questions to ask.

the Bank of Tunguska is the single most impenetrable tax shelter in human history. World leaders, criminal masterminds, media moguls, sovereign wealth funds, and intelligence agencies' black budgets – anyone above a certain wealth threshold has two options, either work with *Tunguska*, or risk billions by playing with a severe handicap.

INVESTMENTS

The Mothership boasts extensive investment holdings to round out their financial dealings. While their portfolio boasts the manifold diversity necessitated by their size, they also enjoy a special relationship with the Black Labs of Praxis. And as befits dealings with *Bakunin*, the relationship is anything but conventional. *Tunguska* does not dictate project development, nor do they suggest or approve fields of research. *Bakunin* strongly believes that if creativity and innovation are to be truly revolutionary, they cannot be stifled by arbitrary dictation.

Tunguska, however, doesn't care about methodology. They're interested in results.

To that end, *Tunguska* simply presents the Black Labs with an array of problems, challenges, and opportunities, and puts up the money to see them addressed. In addition to its own sizable assets, *Tunguska* manages Praxis's Black Bounties – outside requests usually of hypercorporate origin for scientific results that simply can't be acquired through more conventional means.

TUNGUSKAN MIRROR BANKS

Tunguska leverages its SWFs with impunity across the Human Sphere. Customers request access to regional funds, which are made available from the stockpiles consolidated in their local region.

Back on *Tunguska*, Centrum is littered with Mirror Banks, institutions which obey regional legislation, but only service business accounts for organisations based in *Tunguska*. Many of these only exist for as long as it takes to move the funds. The magic show occurs behind the closed doors of the Crypt, leaving the Mirror Banks as scrupulous bastions of honesty. Teams of Tunguskan lawyers ensure the Mirror Banks' legality and have an uncanny knack for highlighting the illegal activities of their closest competitors



“Remember those late-20th century Wall Street movies? ‘Greed is good,’ mountains of cocaine, no moral compass? I wonder what happened to those guys. Anyway, some suit from *Tunguska* said I should make you an ‘offer you can’t refuse’ after I killed your dudes. So how about this: I got this coupon for half-off at SoyBoy, and I’ll trade you for a briefcase full of cash. And, uh, you can’t refuse. ‘Else I’ll cut your head off. With like... like a spork or something. Whadda ya say, sport?’”

— Señor Massacre, dipping his toes into the world of Hypercorporate espionage.

WHAT’S YOURS IS MINE; WHAT’S MINE IS ALSO MINE

The Bank of *Tunguska* is giddily enthusiastic regarding the hostile expansion of its own holdings. Keenly aware of the many ways that financial attacks can occur, they have likewise taken steps to ensure that their own tactics rarely work if turned against them: never owning more than 20% of a given investment and obfuscating even legal holdings behind a shell game of front operations.

This makes attacking the *Tunguskan* financial empire an exercise in frustration, as by the time a rival has navigated the human shield of pension schemes, mortgage providers, and other financial institutions, not only has the target moved around, they’ve now gained the attention of an angry Bank of *Tunguska*.

However the funding comes, to the winner go the spoils. Providing the winning solution means a substantial amount of money, but far more interesting to Praxis is the prestige and renown of beating your peers to the punch. In a hypercharged interpretation of academic rivalry, the practical implications of new discoveries have upped the stakes considerably, leading to fierce, and sometimes bloody, competition between rival labs. Incidents such as the Holistic Confrontations, which lead to the expulsion of the Equinox group from *Bakunin*, have resulted in a thick veil of secrecy over the Black Labs.

Ironically, this has revitalised the market for industrial espionage within *Bakunin*, much to *Tunguska’s* private amusement.

LEGAL SERVICES

While PanOceania is generally assumed to be the Human Sphere’s premier supplier of legal expertise, there are certain cases where *Tunguska’s* particular expertise is unmatched. No one knows the law quite like a career criminal, and when it comes to finding loopholes, their expertise is unmatched, especially in the fields of inter-factional tax law.

CONSULTING

Tunguskan Business Analysts provide serious expertise and a useful perspective that’s difficult to come by via purely corporate channels. Like white-collar mercenaries, if you need an analyst, project manager, or team lead, *Tunguska* has severe, ruthless professionals available for hire. And just like any other mercenaries, if a given firm can’t meet their asking price, they’re more than happy to work for the competition.

ADVERTISING, SALES, AND MEMETIC MARKETING

The art of revenue-generating persuasion has been honed to a keen edge in *Tunguska*. The latest advances in Bakunian memes and Haqqislamite advancements in the social sciences are combined into sniper-precise commercial appeals and deployed with merciless efficiency by *Tunguska’s* sales teams. They negotiate hard, close deals like snapping jaws, and have literally been able to sell sand to Bourak.

INFOWAR

It’s no secret that *Tunguska’s* hackers are among the best – if not *the* best – in the entire Human Sphere. It’s less well-known, however, that they do a fair amount of security consulting for various mega and hypercorps from testing new systems to trying to bring down the competition. If money is no object, *Tunguskan* hackers can assure superior quantum superiority in a variety of applications. Or, if the client prefers, they can just as easily make a mockery of their rival’s quantum security.

So long as the job doesn’t directly oppose Nomad interests, *Tunguska’s* hacker modules are more than happy to charge an exorbitant fee to provide their services. The rumours have never been substantiated that these jobs come with a free gift in the form of a backdoor for the hacker’s later use. Then again, if the hackers live up to *Tunguska’s* reputation, there’d be little evidence either way.

DEMOGRAPHICS AND CULTURE

Bakunin was born in a blaze of revolutionary passion. *Corregidor* came together out of necessity to survive an untenable situation. But *Tunguska* was

THE OUTER UNIVERSITY OF TUNGUSKA

While universities aren’t always a lucrative proposition, *Tunguska* has a particular knack for making just about anything profitable. Based out of University Circle in the Barangays, The Outer University of *Tunguska* has a reputation unlike any other in the Human Sphere.

Ask yourself: where do Submondo tycoons send their children to become proper heirs to a criminal empire? Where can students take classes in cleaning dirty money? Where could they learn not just to cook the books, but to Cajun-fry them like an experienced chef? Where do physical education classes cover all the finer points of fleeing from a shootout or escaping a police raid?

There’s only one answer: OUT.

Nefarious reputation aside, and despite the remarkably successful Black Propaganda publicising the school, it’s actually a top-quality university with the best professors that money can buy. Other institutions might bring in real-world experts to provide guest lectures, but at TOU, students can sit under the learning tree with hitmen, business analysts, and Praxis scientists, all before lunch.

designed from the deckplates up, purposefully and intentionally to be something very specific. That deliberate conviction informs Tunguskan culture to this day.

TRICHOTOMY IN MOTION

Tunguska is a criminal enterprise. Constructed by Submondo families explicitly to benefit themselves and their business interests, the codes of conduct that allowed these organisations to thrive in the underworld are alive and well in the Mothership's DNA.

Tunguska is a corporate enterprise. The need for a mobile legal loophole brought multiple conglomerates together, acting in concert to secure their financial future through creative means. Some have posited that between the corporate and the criminal, there is no true distinction, and that's certainly become true on *Tunguska*.

Tunguska is a rational anarchist's utopian society. The neo-libertarian cryptomancers who make up nearly half of *Tunguska's* population differ from their Bakunian peers in several key fashions. If *Bakunin* is a collectivist assortment of privately-maintained (and often mutually exclusive) utopias, *Tunguska's* hackers are bound by one unifying thread, the idea that rules and regulations throttle the spirit. And any who would sacrifice someone else's freedom for their own security, should live just long enough to regret that decision.

Most importantly, *Tunguska* sees no contradiction in any of those things. Its society is an amalgamation of them, with each happy to pursue its own ends, careful to allow space for the others to do their thing, and entirely comfortable with living a double life so as not to scare away the customers. *Tunguska* is inviting and friendly, but its shadows are deep, and well acquainted with each other.

A NECESSARY EVIL

Tunguska isn't necessarily well-liked across the Human Sphere. As the primary political arm of the Nomads, they are more likely to be encountered at a high level and much harder to dismiss. The advantages that working with the Bank of *Tunguska* provides are simply too massive to ignore, and there aren't really any viable alternatives. Corporate institutions have to deal with a public perception as legitimate entities. Submondo lack the scope and infrastructure to truly keep pace.

Tunguska possesses neither of these limitations.

Love them or hate them, most entities past a certain size have no choice but to work with *Tunguska*, at least, if they want to stay competitive. Even

the Nomads' sworn enemies would rather work with *Tunguska* than be cut off from their services. And they certainly don't want to make an enemy of a financial and quantronic juggernaut with a reputation for spite. So, they grin and bear it, even if they feel the need to shower immediately after every encounter.

A CUT ABOVE: DAILY LIFE IN TUNGUSKA

The rest of the Human Sphere has strong opinions on *Tunguska*, though they can be fairly divorced from reality. But in fairness, it's not like Tunguskans make it easy on them. The notion that everyone has at least two faces – one for public consumption and one that's closer to the truth – is widely accepted on the Mothership. Of course, the Human Sphere sees them as cold, sociopathic power brokers: that's the mask they choose to present. Of course, no one ever promised they'd keep the number of masks down to two.

COMPETITION, FRIENDLY AND OTHERWISE

It would be disingenuous to suggest that living in *Tunguska* is an entirely cutthroat affair. Between the criminal, executive, and hacker cultures that make up the Mothership's culture, an aggressive need to excel is one of the few reliably common threads. From scaling the cryptomancers' dynamic skill rankings to advancing in the hierarchical ziggurat of the key banking families, Tunguskans are constantly in competition with one another, and it isn't always gentle.

However, the Human Sphere has provided no shortage of external targets, and Tunguskans can pretty reliably be called on to channel their aggression towards outsiders. Thus, competition often takes the form of who can do the most damage to the Nomads' various enemies, with hackers, Submondo, and business people all competing to see who can do the most damage, comparing high scores in dynamic online leaderboards.

The Black Hand has recently taken an interest, heavily gamifying the tradition to suit their purpose. By assigning point multipliers, achievements, and limited-time bonus objectives, *Tunguska's* competitive drive can be levelled at targets around the Human Sphere at a moment's notice, bringing ruin without warning. One moment, everything is normal, and the next, there's a small war to see who can empty your bank account the fastest, while hackers unearth your most embarrassing secrets at whiplash-inducing speed. Just one more tool in the Black Hand's arsenal of disincentives.

"Why do they call us 'Cryptomancers'? Because if what we do isn't sorcery, then there's no such thing."

—Bowie M-12, Tunguskan Interventor. Interview with Go-Go Marlene, interactive trendwatching show. Only on Maya!

SERVICE VOUCHERS

As *Tunguska* is technically a corporation, it pays yearly dividends to its shareholders. Even if they aren't part of The Nines, a citizen shareholder can make a killing, though the payout isn't always financial. Since state resources are extremely limited, private contracts handle everything from health care to utilities. However, by taking pay-outs in Service Vouchers, citizens can exchange these credits to access executive-level services, get to the front of the line in inquiries, or simply "grease the wheels" when necessary. It's essentially an institutionalised form of corruption. But many find it appealing for its transparent honesty. The way that citizens tend to see it, governments are, by their nature, corrupt. Theirs is at least honest about it and gives citizens a straightforward way to participate.

"Much to everyone's surprise, the fox has proven a capable henhouse guard. The danger lies not in the birds' safety, but in the increasing cost of eggs."

—Saladin, providing a first-hand report on *Tunguska*. Concilium Prima.



TARGET MISERY INDEX

A high score is only worth bragging about if the numbers are objective. To ensure fair play on the Nomads' side and maximum suffering for their targets, *Tunguska's* cryptomancers have developed a sophisticated scoring system for the objects of their wrath.

Net worth, political influence, Maya followers, mood, and other factors are combined into a single score. Damaging these factors raises the individual's Target Misery Index, or TMI. Intervenor-developed LAIs keep track of changes in TMI and assign credit to the individuals responsible. These values are monitored, displayed on public leaderboards, and updated in real-time. Valuable targets are assigned point multipliers, making attacks against them more efficient. More than one political opponent has had their evening ruined by a limited-time score multiplier.

PRODUCE VS. PRODUCED

Between massive deep-freezers and self-contained greenhouse labs, *Tunguska* is more than capable of satisfying the nutritional needs of its inhabitants. However, time between shipments can be delayed, so like the other Nomad Motherships, *Tunguskan* residents find more synthetic foodstuffs on the menu than the average citizen of the Human Sphere.

Tunguska is also among the largest per-capita importers of luxury consumables in the Human Sphere. *Tunguskans* don't have an issue with rehydrated noodles and frozen protein patties provided that they have access to fresh berries from Varuna, exotic coffee blends from Paradiso, and the finest hand-made chocolates that Earth's old-world chefs can concoct.

In their eyes, the quality difference between Demogrant-level meals and good imports is negligible. But in fresh produce or artisanal products, the difference is astronomical. Thus, a *Tunguskan* might spend as much as twenty percent of their income on food – roughly double the average among G5 nations – but have three quarters of that is on exotic cheeses.

TUNGUSKAN FASHION

In *Tunguska*, personally tailored clothing is by far the dominant paradigm. Executive or barista, regardless of their status, most *Tunguskans* wouldn't dream of wearing something off the rack. The devil's in the details, and *Tunguska* has a rapport with him. Little touches in the quality and make of the garment are everything.

Even the hacker modules adhere to this notion, with a DIY punk ethos echoed throughout the subculture's many styles. From custom-engraved

hacking tools to laser-guided hairstyle gradients, the cryptomancers' commitment to unique attire can border on the obsessive, and that's just the parts that are visible to the naked eye.

MERITOCRACY

Each Nomad Mothership is harsh in its own way. *Tunguska* however, considers itself to be one of the few truly fair societies in existence. Corregidorans are often one bad break from dire straits, and Bakunians are at the mercy of whatever mad idea someone's talked themselves into today, but on

Tunguska, a citizen's fortune is determined by their own actions. Loyalty, cleverness, and above all, not getting caught are the ingredients that have fuelled many a rise to the top and continue to do so to this day.

In many ways, it's not unlike the utopian experiments of *Bakunin*. A harsh but fair meritocracy, where ambition and ruthlessness can run virtually unchecked by outside regulations or governmental oversight. To some, this is a utopia in its own right.

The statisticians of *Tunguska* are always trying to find ways to improve this process. Lately, the Board of Directors has been reevaluating the utility of Bakunian Social Energy as a means of quantifying an individual's productivity, loyalty, current shares, and risk factor into a single, utilitarian score. Being able to measure a given citizen/employee/goon's value at a glance is an appealing thought, though *Bakunin* seems less than thrilled with the application.

QUANTIFIED VALUE: LAW AND ORDER IN TUNGUSKA

The idea of utility to the Mothership is at the heart of the Tunguskan legal system. What constitutes a criminal act in a society founded and run by criminals? The answer, as it turns out, is the same as it's always been: don't let your actions negatively affect the family.

Tunguskan police work is based around a specific set of criteria. Actions that penalise *Tunguska*, its citizens, and the Nomad Nations – in that order – constitute societal debt. Actions that benefit them make up societal revenue. Tunguskan criminal justice is an accounting system about balancing that margin. Thus, a good defence lawyer is an expert in both economics and criminal justice leading to compelling cases that minimise their client's negative impact on the societal bottom line while puffing up their contributions.

Punishments can be extremely severe, but in a reversal of the normal expectation, offering bribes to get out of a conviction is not only allowed, it's highly encouraged. A sufficient influx of funds can tip the balance back to neutral, or at least significantly reduce the amount of societal debt owed. On *Tunguska*, there is no distinction between conviction and settlement. If a sum is paid to keep a verdict out of the public records, the bribe is recorded as such, and everyone moves on with their lives.

A TUNGUSKAN DAY

If there's one thing that every Tunguskan day has in common, it's an early start. Life doesn't wait, and sleep is for people who can't afford designer stimulants. The extra hours don't go to waste. Conference calls in the shower, geist-curated newsfeeds pouring in over breakfast, updating your living resume on the way to lunch – and that's just for waiters or students.

That's not to say that Tunguskans are trapped in a vicious cycle, or that they don't know how to let their hair down. They're used to living fast and don't like wasting time. They work hard, and when they're dialled-in, their focus can be intimidating.

But when it's time to cut loose, they do so without reservation. The exact nature can vary wildly from person to person. Whether it's an investment banker's nitrocaine-fuelled nightlife, a hacker module's video game tournament, or a kingpin sitting down with a cup of fresh-brewed coffee and a physical book, they're linked by commitment to their indulgence. Even less-affluent Tunguskans don't skimp on their recreational investments. They might live in a small apartment, but their tea is imported fresh from Shentang.

However, there exists a special kind of hell for those who even threaten the life of a shareholder. The victim's contribution to overall revenue is estimated, often generously, across what would be their normal lifespan. If convicted, the guilty party is sentenced to pay that amount back to the bereaved parties, usually a parent corporation. Unless the perpetrator is independently wealthy, this usually results in a sort of indentured servitude, and the convict essentially enslaved by the corporation in question. While values vary, it's essentially a *de facto* life sentence for those convicted.

RAISING THE BAR

Some of the savviest in the Human Sphere, Tunguskan lawyers steer right into the public perception of lawyers as untrustworthy and just keep going. After all, nobody knows taxes like a tax shelter. Nobody understands criminal justice like a criminal. And nobody, nobody, exploits loopholes like a Tunguskan lawyer. They're the best at what they do largely because they have no illusions that what they do is particularly nice.

When it's your neck on the line, who would you rather have on your side? Someone who plays by the rules, or someone who will stop at nothing to succeed on your behalf? The Tunguskan Bar Association assumes that it's the latter, and acts accordingly.

In stark contrast to other legal organisations, Tunguskan lawyers are not expected to show proficiency in the minutiae of different legal codes, provided that they can successfully incite emotional breakdowns, fluster orators, and provide a credible enough threat to induce "temporary amnesia" in star witnesses.

NANO-STITCHING

At first glance, many Tunguskan hackers seem fond of simple t-shirts and tank tops in seeming defiance of the trend towards custom outfits. Most of these shirts, however, have distinct patterns in the stitches on their seams to encode a wealth of information. Song lyrics, personal details, poetry, Comlog codes, and even passwords to unlock various programs – whatever the hacker feels like embedding.

Reading these nano-stitches is an exercise in frustration, requiring intense vision magnification from a wide variety of angles. More than one hacker has infiltrated an area's quantronic security for the sole purpose of using surveillance cameras to read somebody's shirt.



BILLION-YUAN "TYPOS"

In both legal documents and quantum programming, a single errant character can massively alter a section's meaning.

One particularly nasty Tunguskan trick involves embedding a time-released virus in smart contracts, introducing single-character "typos" on the opposing side, treating them like they'd existed all along. Due to the dynamic nature of smart contracts, it can be difficult to prove when the typo was introduced, as all copies of the document contain the dormant virus.

Rare, and difficult to engineer, this tactic is particularly effective in Yu Jing, where the shame of being tricked, combined with the possibility of genuine error, means that such disputes are often settled as quietly as possible... which is exactly how *Tunguska* likes it.

GRENZ SECURITY TEAMS

In the early days of *Tunguska*, attempted bank heists were as common as worms in a Bakunian alley cat. Increasingly sophisticated attempts threatened the sanctity of the Crypt in search of the biggest score in the history of the Human Sphere. Facing the prospect of being overwhelmed by would-be bank robbers, the Waldheim family, an old and powerful Vienna banking dynasty, tasked their personal mercenary force with cleaning up this mess.

Led by the battle-hardened Colonel Nikolai Steranko, these mercs quietly integrated with the Dragnet Special Actions Department, uprooted *Tunguska's* covert enemies, and quietly disposed of them. So successful were these mercenaries, that Dragnet signed them on full-time to simply handle such problems in the future.

The Crypt has never been successfully breached.

The team of primarily Croatian mercs took the name Grenzlers, in deference to the old *Krajišnici*, or *Graničari*, Croatian mercenaries who fought for the Austro-Hungarian Empire in antiquity. If the Black Hand is the public bogeyman, the threat that lurks around every corner, then the Grenz Security Team is the threat no one thinks about until it's too late. Not quite a police force, they see themselves as a border patrol. Like the Grenzlers of yore, they tirelessly work to keep their adopted homeland safe.

Their list of successes is as long as it is obscure. Each crisis they avert is unceremoniously added to the stack of triumphs that just aren't worth mentioning. In the end, the Grenzlers don't consider it a job well done if people know there was a crisis in the first place.

NEOTERRAN LAWYERS V. THE TUNGUSKAN BAR ASSOCIATION

Neoterra not only boasts the highest population of lawyers in the Human Sphere, and is widely renowned for producing the best, if also the most expensive. Prestigious academies, dignified orators, and encyclopaedic knowledge of interfacational legal codes all are hallmarks of the Neoterran lawyer.

Tunguskan lawyers, on the other hand, boast a very different sort of approach.

Tunguskans are devoid of that finesse, but willing, able, and eager to use every dirty trick, brutish technique, and underhanded tactic in the book – whatever it takes to win, no matter how distasteful. In fact, the more unpleasant the technique, the more appealing it becomes. Tunguskan lawyers pride themselves on being so unpleasant to deal with, that settling out of court – or dropping the case altogether – is often preferable to the filthy slugfest that awaits them.

THE 101ST BARRISTER CORPS

Nowhere is this willingness to fight dirty more pronounced than in the Barrister Corps, an informal association of weaponised legal chicanery, mercifully without peer among the stars. Forming their association during the Phantom Conflicts, a group of law students took the accumulated knowledge of the worst parts of legal history and proceeded to become as much of a nuisance as they possibly could.

No trick was too dirty, no litigation too frivolous, and no nuisance too trivial to be off the table. Those attacking the Nomads were subjected to a barrage of litigation. Mass takedown notices, property disputes, information requests, patent trolling – you name it, they tried it. As it turns out, by throwing propriety out the window, they could generate enough legal spam to give anyone pause especially with Tunguskan hackers causing issues for geists and sorting LAIs.

They dubbed themselves the 101st Barrister Corps, and their legacy persists to this day. Many law students take a semester or two to harass *Tunguska's* enemies in a tour of duty with the Corps, and alumni routinely provide scholarships, stipends, and other financial incentives to keep the tradition alive. They consider themselves to be among the Mothership's most effective defenders, and thus far, no one has disputed the claim.

SHADOW CONTRACTS

Tunguskan smart contracts are a perfect storm of quantronic and legal expertise, and what they can accomplish is nothing short of amazing. Self-enforcing, automated expert systems, smart contracts provide a “one-stop shop” for sufficiently large projects. Bridges are built, orbitals maintained, and interplanetary concert tours booked, all essentially maintaining themselves.

Shadow contracts take it a step further. A smart contract can build your new corporate headquarters, but your rivals will be able to find out with relative ease. A shadow contract operates on a need-to-know basis. Construction of the same corporate headquarters might take a bit longer and cost a bit more when managed via shadow contract. But, the labourers, materials, and permits would all be acquired through different means, and construction occurs at different offsite locations. Until the day of its completion, the true nature of the project could be essentially kept secret, seeming to materialise out of thin air at the eleventh hour.

Certainly though, *Tunguska* is hardly opposed to using them for less scrupulous means. More than one unsuspecting individual has triggered a shadow cascade in their smart contract, leaving them legally culpable in ways that could rightly have been assumed to be outside the scope of their original agreement.

Tunguska has no sympathy for those who don't read the fine print, nor does it particularly care that it's written in moving cyphers. To quote an old Tunguskan proverb: “When you dance with the devil, you don't get to lead.”

SEMI-SECRET ORIGINS OF THE BLACK HAND

It's often said that the strength of the Black Hand lies in how little is understood about it. Even its deputy director, the infamous “Mexican General,” has privately admitted that he doesn't know exactly how it all works. And while Sarmiento certainly isn't above a little purposeful misdirection, there's reason to believe the statement.

History is replete with clandestine cell-structured organisations, but few have so directly benefited from the applied sociopathy of their designers. Phantom cells and fault-tolerant structures have long been a staple of insurgents, but the fledgling Nomad Nation needed something more.

Clandestine cells usually need to form in the shadows, away from prying eyes. But the Black Hand was different. In order to make good on the Nomad's military doctrine of responding to pokes

with a chainsaw to the nethers, they needed next-level intelligence, tactical, and quantronic response capabilities, and they needed them to be a credible threat anytime, anywhere, to anyone.

They needed the perfect monster. This being the Nomads, they built one.

The opportunity to create the perfect clandestine structure proved enticing to the scientists who fashioned its models. Other governmental intelligence agencies needed to maintain some semblance of scruples, but the Black Hand would be different. Its mission was advanced by precise, weaponised fear. Too strong to resist, the allure of creating the academically perfect terrorist organisation then unleashing it on the entities trying to stamp them out lured sociologists, mob enforcers, mathematicians, hitmen, economists, hacktivists, and more. The collective knowledge of the Nomads came together to create a monstrosity, and they more than succeeded at their aims.

Game theory was wedded to gang enforcement, with advanced behavioural prediction models providing the framework for a new type of clandestine cell. The Black Hand – the Human Sphere's first “Fault-Irrelevant, Parallel Phantom Cell Structure” – needed no leaders, and no assignments, just a mission statement. While the original organisation was clearly inspired by Haqqislam's Hassassins, the Black Hand has no singular voice to guide their actions, no mystical enlightenment to pursue, and no illusions of nobility. Instead, they have material support, astonishing leeway, and a mandate to make the Nomads' enemies regret ever having been born.

While its internal hierarchy remains obfuscated, many have correctly observed that the Black Hand could function just fine without a clear command structure. Once agents are sorted into the intelligence, tactical, and quantronic divisions (Black Eyes, Black Fists, and Black Widows, respectively), barring the occasional direct mission, they seem remarkably free to act. Increasingly, the Human Sphere's intelligence agencies have become convinced that the Nomads simply rounded up the most violent and capable sociopaths they could find, gave them top-level training and equipment, and set them loose on the Human Sphere.

True or not, the thought is enough to keep more than one would-be adversary out of the Nomads' business. Which shows that the Black Propaganda machine is working as intended.

“What I'm saying, Your Honour, is that despite the pile of bodies, destruction of property, and wanton disregard for human life – including his own – my client's guilt or innocence in the matter is completely irrelevant. As per the terms of this contract, signed by the prosecution's own hand, any loss of property, personnel, or sanity is to be the sole liability of the client.

The prosecution will suggest that these terms – again, which they agreed to, whether they realised it or not – are unreasonable. The defence happily cedes that point. The defence will also humbly submit that if they wanted something reasonable, they should not have explicitly sought my client's services.”

– Faye Bettencourt, defence attorney for Señor Massacre, during the “Catfish Williamson” fiasco.

“We know that Sarmiento is their deputy director. So, ask yourself, who's the director? Who has that madman's leash? Now contemplate the possibility that the answer is ‘nobody,’ and you'll begin to understand why just mentioning the words ‘Black Hand’ can make people nervous. The Nomads, as is their way, created a monster that they can't control and couldn't stop even if they wanted to.”

– Mei Li Silva, Hesperia Consulting. Briefing on Nomad Intelligence agencies for Moto. Tronica.



OPTIONAL RULE

JUVENILE HOSTS

Whether they're Lost Children from Baker Module, suffering from rogue metachemistry viruses, or they've ordered something custom from the BouBoutiques, some people live in juvenile hosts (or Lhosts).

If you want to represent this mechanically, this can be done a couple different ways:

Juvenile Host Quality:

Characters with an incongruently juvenile host gain the following qualities: +1 difficulty on all social test where being taken seriously as an adult is a factor +3 complication range on all Social tests

-1 difficulty on Lifestyle tests to blend in as the age they appear to be

+1 bonus Momentum on successful Acrobatics or Stealth tests where size is a factor

Cosmetic Augmentation:

For a less-involved solution, simply treat the character as possessing a Cosmetic Augmentation with a value from 3-5.

Trait: A character trait like Juvenile Body or Lost Child can make the character's life more complicated, and also pairs well with either of the above options.

NOTABLE DISTRICTS

Unlike *Corregidor's* utilitarian conversion, or *Baukunin's* modular construction, *Tunguska* favours larger districts within its habitats, roughly creating neighbourhoods. Though it technically contains modules, that's something of a misnomer. On *Bakunin*, module describes both a pocket society and a physical location, on *Tunguska*, modules indicate a social construct. Early Tunguskan hackers borrowed the terminology to distinguish between different subcultures, and it's been confusing outsiders ever since.

CENTRUM

Old-world opulence juxtaposed with new-world tech, Centrum is *Tunguska's* core district. Home to the Crypt, and by extension, the financial, quantronic, security, and governmental institutions that surround it, some of the biggest deals in the Human Sphere are made in the confines of its lavish halls.

Among spacecraft, Centrum's design is an anachronistic outlier. Its vaulted ceilings, marble pillars, and glided hardwoods lend an opulent, old-money feel in keeping with the oligarchical banking dynasties who funded its construction. When people think of *Tunguska*, it's usually the smooth, bevelled curves, white and gold aesthetic, and surprisingly open spaces of Centrum.

THE WELCOME MAT

While ships that dock with *Tunguska* tend to linger toward the outside of its hull, there are few entrances on these external locations. Each guest's entrance is instead a curated experience, shuttled to the Centrum. From the moment that they set foot on *Tunguska*, they're greeted by an unfolding spectacle of calculated grandeur, luxury, and commercialism.

While Centrum contains both *Tunguska's* seat of government and its financial district, there's considerable support for visitors as well. From lodgings to restaurants, this visitor-friendly array of establishments – colloquially known as “the Welcome Mat” – provides everything that a traveling businessperson, tourist, or diplomat could need. On the Welcome Mat, *Tunguska* puts its best mask forward. Everyone is pleasant and polite, if not exactly friendly. But most importantly, there is an implicit undertone to the area. People, architecture, everything about the Welcome Mat is designed to communicate a feeling of safety and security.

Of course, the inverse is true. Step off the Welcome Mat, and you're swimming with the sharks. Enter at your own risk.

THE BARANGAYS

Surrounding the core of Centrum, the fractally nested habitats of the barangays comprise the remainder of the Mothership. Grouped together into loose neighbourhoods, residences and common areas form unique districts, each with their own character. While the barangays have plenty of variety to them, each is unquestionably situated towards the refined end of Nomad living.

RUBLYOVKA

Named for an ultimately failed Moscow district, Rublyovka is impossibly posh, impeccably stylish, and impenetrably secure. From the palatial estates that make up its residential “cabins” to the combination public park and shopping district that spans the entirety of its common area, Rublyovka is an example of old-world luxury, refined through generational wealth, and somehow elegantly suited to its place among the stars.

In Rublyovka, extravagance is the order of the day. While any Tunguskan bakery would seem upscale by most standards, in Rublyovka, the same fresh-baked croissant you can pick up in Centrum is

BAKER MODULE'S “LOST CHILDREN”

Enjoying a longstanding partnership with the Black Labs of Praxis, the technowizards of Baker Module undertook a grand experiment using experimental genetic therapy to augment modified clone Lhosts with heightened neuroplasticity and an increased lifespan.

On one hand, the experiment could be considered a success. The students showed an enhanced capacity for rapid decision-making and aptitude with complex concepts. On the other hand, tying the augmenting retrovirus to growth hormones was probably a mistake. The subjects' physical and often emotional growth was slowed to approximately 20% of that experienced by baseline

humans. A variety of treatments were attempted to accelerate growth during the first decade of the experiment, but these were a failure. The corresponding metabolic damage mandated the removal of such accelerators until Lhost technology had improved to the point that it could bear such enhancement until adulthood.

Some of these “lost children” turned out to be some of the best hackers in *Tunguska* – no mean feat. While being trapped in a child's body has innumerable disadvantages, it also allowed for unparalleled infiltration opportunities. To this day, anyone who's come into conflict with them tends to get a bit twitchy when they see kids on their comlogs.

drizzled in a floral honey sauce, flecked with actual gold, and priced even higher than one might expect. Everything is a curated experience for refined palates and is priced accordingly. Like a living museum to old Earth oligarchs, the district doesn't go out of its way to make outsiders feel uncomfortable; it just happens as a matter of course.

ONIONLAND

The professional hacker's paradise. Named in honour of an archaic Darkweb, it is here where the soul of Arachne could be said to dwell. All the freedoms of a Bakunian anarchist module combined with the affluence, stability, and resources that *Tunguska* can offer, Onionland considers itself the best of both worlds, and it's difficult to argue. Unlike on *Bakunin* however, there's no Social Energy here. Citizens are expected to follow all the laws of *Tunguska*, namely, don't endanger the Mothership, don't work directly against Nomad interests, and above all, don't get caught.

Tunguskan hackers specialise in that last one.

The layout is a sort of correlated chaos. While never exactly cluttered, Onionland eschews the manicured grace of Centrum and the effortless luxury of Rublyovka in favour of a kinetic individuality. Every habitat, storefront, and public bench has a slight variation to it. Even the tiles are said to sport subtle differences between them, allowing an informed native to know exactly where they are just by looking down.

Tech shops are popular, but the district's common area is famous for its quantronic cafes, where veteran hackers and neophytes alike can share a cup of coffee and bond over the latest hacking tools, while catching an Aristeia! match or comparing their place on various leaderboards.

ROCKEFELLER SQUARE

Splitting the difference between the prior two districts, Rockefeller – a name synonymous with showy displays of wealth long past the relevance of the actual family – is home to those who wish to flaunt their wealth, real or imagined. Consisting primarily of *Tunguska's nouveau riche*, Rockefeller's residents come from all over the Nomad Nations and to a lesser extent, the greater Human Sphere. Where Rublyovka is refined, Rockefeller is celebratory and occasionally a bit gaudy in its display of wealth. Whether they grew up in *Tunguska*, or recently defected to the Nomads, living in Rockefeller Square is a prized, yet accessible, goal.

Unlike the exclusive nature of Rublyovka, Rockefeller goes out of its way to seem attainable. Home to mob bosses and holomovie stars, there's also no shortage of young professionals living just

beyond the edge of their means. Working extra hours is a small price to pay for the chance to rub elbows with celebrities or the possibility of being invited to the neighbourhood's legendarily orgiastic parties.

The district is also a premier shopping destination. Rockefeller shops are a tantalising combination of exclusive and posh, while priced just barely within an aspirational Nomad's reach. Bakunian designers often create one-of-a-kind outfits, accessories, and other items specifically for sale in Rockefeller's exclusive boutiques.

UNIVERSITY CIRCLE

Home to the prestigious but sketchy Outer University of *Tunguska*, the Circle is an idealised version of the archetypical terrestrial college town, filtered through the lens of Mayaseries and half-remembered nostalgia. Some of the finest Nomad emergency responders have cut their teeth working in the Circle, as there's nothing quite like a steady stream of stim overdoses, ill-conceived stunts, and alcohol poisoning to sharpen one's medical skills.

Quieter parts of the district do exist, but they're notoriously difficult for outsiders to locate. As it turns out, neither the university's faculty, nor the more dedicated students particularly appreciate their peace and quiet being interrupted by a party that's spilled out into the common area. Those who find these hidden nests can often be found conversing with some of the Human Sphere's premier scholars with wildly diverse fields of expertise.

INTERFACTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

While their interactions with the outside world might not be as colourful as *Bakunin's* or as numerous as *Corregidor's*, *Tunguska's* relationships tend to be layered with complexity and comprised mainly of mixed feelings. By far the most politically active arm of the Nomads, *Tunguska* is far more likely to politically engage with its fellow G-5 nations. Though many would prefer if they didn't.

Alongside Haqqislam, they proved instrumental in securing Ariadna's status as a G-5 nation, and *Tunguska* is intensely interested in the prospect of adding another member to the resistance block. For their part, Ariadna is not particularly interested in standing up to the Hyperpower or StateEmpire. They're much more focused on survival for the time being, and tend to be wary of getting too involved in the Mothership's plots.

Haqqislam values *Tunguska* for its adroit political support and appreciates its honesty. Truthfulness is not a trait often assigned to the oily Tunguskans,

"I'm hardly poor. In most circles, I'd be considered a social elite by whatever metric you care to use. But walking around Rublyovka, it felt like I was, I don't know, trespassing? Like they were going to call the cops, because someone let a vagabond in."

– Carlos Arroyo, VP of sales for Aigletech, following a business trip to *Tunguska*.

QUANTRONIC CAFES

A throwback to an old Earth tradition, quantronic cafes trace their roots to wired dataspheres. Due to the scarcity of these connections, people would gather at these "net cafes" and engage in everything from mundane daily use, to collaborative multiplayer games. In an inspired fit of Hiraeth reconstructionism, Onionland's quantronic cafes attempt to recreate that spirit by providing a wealth of tools – programs, hacking devices, and various geists, LAs, and expert systems – all location-locked to the café.

"Aaaaand here we have OUT! The only school I know where carrying a gun to class isn't just legal, it's practically mandatory! Good thing your favourite go-getter's got ace security!"

– Go-Go Marlene in "Beyond Bakunin: An inside look at the Nomads." Available on Maya, and for a limited time on Arachne via special consideration from Oxyd Media.

INTERSHIP ATTITUDES

Tunguska's relationship with its fellow Nomads is complicated at the best of times. Although they might consider themselves the leaders of the Nomad Nation, only the lightest touch of governance is tolerated, despite their privileged position on the Nomad Executive Board.

Most of these complications arise from fundamentally different perceptions of the same event. *Tunguska* believes that *Corregidor* tries to oversimplify everything. The Corregidorans believe that the inverse is true, and *Tunguska* isn't satisfied until a matter is too complicated for anyone else to understand.

Interestingly enough, *Tunguska* holds the opinion that no one understands nor values *Corregidor* the way that they do – up to and including *Corregidor* itself.

Their relationship with *Bakunin* is comprised of equal parts admiration, symbiotic business relationship, and a near-constant desire to throttle them. Which part is stronger depends entirely on the day. Still, *Tunguska* couldn't secure its assets without Bakunian technology, and *Bakunin* would get nowhere fast without Tunguskan funding. And on top of that, the relationship between Onionland hackers and some of *Bakunin's* anarchist modules is unambiguously warm, with more than a few Nomads splitting time between the two communities.

but to Haqqislam, they see a collection of people who are quite honest about who they truly are, not just to others, but to themselves as well. Self-deception is an impediment to the Search for Enlightenment, so while Haqqislam might not trust a Tunguskan farther than they could throw them, they usually have a pretty good idea of just how far that would be.

PanOceania and Yu Jing are seen as two sides of the same coin – invaluable business partners, and the deadly foes who came close to destroying the fledgling Nomad Nation. They consider PanOceania little more than an ALEPH puppet state, but by their reckoning, the AI would face little difficulty in manipulating the StateEmpire to its own ends. Yu Jing treats them the way that they might treat any other *Jopok*; as foreigners they're fundamentally untrustworthy. For their part, the Hyperpower will work with anyone, so long as they believe they're getting the better deal. Or in *Tunguska's* case, because they can't afford not to.

To the surprise of many, most corporations enjoy a cordial relationship with *Tunguska*. Much like the Mothership, corps are under no illusions as to their true purpose and have little difficulty in keeping their relationship professional. Some degree of poaching exists on both sides. For every hacker that gets out of the game for a white hat and steady paycheck, there's an account executive who steps out of the boardroom and into their new "family." Hard feelings and burnt bridges are comparatively rare in this case. Since they are likely to be working together either way, both sides do a fair job of keeping matters cordial.

But perhaps the most peculiar of these relationships is the Mothership's interactions with O-12. As the *de facto* leaders of the Nomad Nation, *Tunguska* knows a thing or two about herding cats. And as the closest thing to a governing body that the Human Sphere has, O-12 is certainly no stranger to the difficulty of keeping wildly disparate elements on something resembling the same page. Thus, *Tunguska* feels a kinship with O-12, often stating that they have more in common with them than any other faction.

No matter how this topic is broached, it never fails to make O-12 incredibly nervous.

THE NOMAD RECURSIVE TRIANGLE

There's an old truism in the Nomad Nation: everybody's responsible for everything. While many assume that's a discussion of individual's responsibility to the collective, it's actually in reference to the three Motherships' interdependence. *Corregidor* provides the muscle, which only succeeds because of *Bakunin's* technology, which is only made possible by *Tunguska's* funding that is secured and protected, of course, by *Corregidor's* muscle.

But look deeper, and you'll also see Tunguskan lawyers arranging for Corregidoran workers' rights, while Bakunian marketers secure them contracts across the Human Sphere. And that's before the realisation that each Mothership quite literally contains multitudes: Corregidoran accountants, Tunguskan street fighters, and so on. Look hard enough, and you can even find respectable citizens on *Bakunin*, though they're loathe to admit it in public.

In the end, each Mothership is interdependent, but also independent. They can survive on their own, but together, they form the crux of the Nomad Nation: an entity that has proven to be far more potent than the sum of its parts.

CHAPTER 3

SOCIAL ENERGY

Of all the radical neo-Bohemian ideas to come out of *Bakunin*, none has so quintessentially captured the spirit of the Radical Mothership as Social Energy. Like the ship that spawned it, Social Energy is difficult to categorise. A combination of countless, often contradictory elements, Social Energy somehow forms a conceptual mosaic that is not only remarkably expressive, but inarguably functional. *Bakunin*'s Social Energy is a system of social rating or ranking that serves as an ID, a currency, and a self-policing system for social interactions.

A structure that is constantly tweaked, maintained, and otherwise altered by *Bakunin*'s denizens, Social Energy is more than just these systems. It's the collective unconscious of *Bakunin*, given material weight and real authority. It's the fuel that keeps its society going, and the tangible expression of what passes for order in the Human Sphere's most chaotic environment.

But beneath the semiotic nomenclature, there's a Teseum-solid foundation that keeps it all running. With military grade quantronic security

and information on its citizenry that would be the envy of any surveillance state, Social Energy is comprised of innumerate factors, measuring individuals, interactions, trends over time, and shifts in paradigm. All of this flows through a recursive data stream, where it's constantly reinterpreted and represented in a fluid, dynamic process.

Which sounds nice. But it's a royal pain to keep straight.

WHERE IT COMES FROM

The history of Social Energy is, like the Energy itself, in a constant state of semi-understood flux. While the basic facts are agreed upon, their order and relative importance remains a hotly contested subject.

Bakunin has been described as a series of pocket utopias, held together with duct tape and prayer. But one person's paradise, can very easily be



WHAT IS SOCIAL ENERGY?

SOCIAL ENERGY AND ARACHNE

Arachne and Social Energy have a lot in common. Both are sprawling quantum systems, described in mythical and spiritual terms, and built on radical, unusual architecture.

Social Energy makes extensive use of Arachne's unique structures, having been designed to integrate specifically with the Arachne dark web, even outside of the Bakunian Datasphere.

Whether or not Social Energy could truly function without access to Arachne, which is simultaneously more open, yet more closed than Maya, is a topic of considerable debate with few reasonable voices in the mix.

THE ATTRIBUTION WARS

Disagreements about who coined the phrase that lends Social Energy its name is one of the most flame-hot debates going on *Bakunin* at any given time. There exists surveillance footage that clearly shows who uttered the famous phrase. In fact, there are about thirty-seven different, mutually exclusive versions of the footage each of which has been independently verified to be as authentic as all the rest. At this point, the debate is less about what's real and what's not. It's a somewhat transparent attempt to align one's chosen ideology with the mythical founder of Social Energy, lending an authoritative weight to your discourse.

"The pulse of *Bakunin*. Its heartbeat." — Calamity Jana, Bakunian bartender.

"Social networking, with the weight of a brass knuckle to the gut." — Mei Li Silva, Hesperya Consulting.

"Real debate. In Social Energy, Comlog warriors can't hide behind anonymity. At least, not for long." — Puck, Chimera and Lazaretto arms dealer.

"A hell of a way to run an economy" — Rudy Kirilenko, Bank of Tunguska.

"The voice of the people, distorted and out of phase, which suits it just fine." — Diva Davina, self-proclaimed "Empress of Vaudeville".

"A system. And just like any other system, it can be hacked." — J4R37H, Tunguskan Hacker. Currently banned from 13 different Modules.

"A way to ensure that people behave, by hitting them where it hurts — their wallets." — Svengali.

"Social Energy? Reality's true nature. As seen by madmen." — Charis Colson, underground poet.

"Hippie friendship money for degenerates." — Jerrie Dougan, Lobbyist for *FamilyFirst*, during his 12th fact-finding mission on *Bakunin*.

"Proof that Bakunians have good taste!" Go-Go Marlene, who consistently boasts one of the highest standings of any individual outside the Nomad Nation.

"Useful." — Konrad Sokolov, Xperydes Omninational Valuation Analyst. Requests for clarification were politely declined.

another's private hell. While this is fine when everyone stays inside their communes, in the core some conflict is inevitable. Outside observers have often wondered how the Radical Mothership's myriad and mutually exclusive worldviews manage to keep from tearing each other apart. The truth is, they haven't always. And a lot of Bakunians paid the price.

DISSONANCE IN THE EQUILIBRIUM

Bakunin's first decade, dubbed the Equilibrium Phase, was a tumultuous time in the Nomad's history and remains a delicate topic to this day. The ship was a grand experiment: a pebble in the

sky, stuffed to the brim with agitators, radicals, and social outcasts of every stripe. With little common ground besides their rejection of existing society, settling these disparate groups into some kind of balance was the dominant struggle of the Radical Mothership's early days.

It all came to a head in a clash that would come to be known as The Dissonance. Accounts differ on the specifics, but no fewer than twelve different communes were involved in the incident, with Kairos Module's rigid totalitarianism clashing violently with the now-defunct Unbound Voices group and the Children of Reinvention's hyper-progressive philosophies. Equinox was there too, though few would assign any importance to the fact until much later on.

Bakunin has always been home to revolutionary social memes, but during the Equilibrium Phase there was nothing to keep their viral nature from spreading like wildfire, transforming the core area into an ideological battleground. Eventually, it became a physical one. When the Children of Reinvention's flash mob protest coincided directly with Kairos Module's proselytising, conflict was inevitable. But, no one was prepared for how violent it would become. As with most details from the Equilibrium Phase, accounts on who exactly threw the first punch vary wildly. Then when Praxis's Beauvoir and Equinox modules arrived on the scene, it was like trying to fight fire with gasoline: explosions were inevitable. Though few expected that to be so literally true.

The fighting sprawled into every corner of the core, rapidly escalating in violence and scope. What began as a garden variety street brawl crescendoed in a cascade of homemade explosives, breaching the Mothership's hull, and putting all of *Bakunin* at risk. Horrified by the damage they'd caused, *Bakunin*'s citizens came together to try and absterge the damage. People who'd been tearing each other apart mere moments ago worked side-by-side to rescue trapped civilians. It might have been heart-warming if it wasn't a tragedy of their own making. As it was, it was more of a chaotic scramble than the heroic act of solidarity that most accounts describe.

When all was said and done, ninety-seven Bakunian citizens died in the hull breach, most of whom weren't even involved in the original disagreements. As a sombre, mournful *Bakunin* tried to make sense of the tragedy, an onlooker was reportedly overheard saying, "It goes against everything that's good about *Bakunin*'s social energy. We've got to do better."

In the wake of their self-inflicted wounds, The Radical Mothership was determined to try.

QUANTIFYING THE CHAOS

It's one thing to recognise a need for structure. It's another thing altogether to get a population as diverse as *Bakunin's* to agree on what that structure should look like. In the wake of the hull breach, most Bakunians were keeping their tempers in check, but even so, tensions remained high. No one wanted to see the structure that would govern their existence dominated by an oppositional worldview, though very few had a suggestion that wouldn't inflict something similar on a different module. It was gridlocked.

Then, arriving just as suddenly as they had during the crisis, a new movement appeared. Comprised of the front-line rescue workers, volunteers, and circumstantial heroes who kept the hull breach from becoming an even worse incident, this diverse collective of disparate individuals proposed something drastic.

Calling it the Moderated Discourse Project, individuals from different modules, walks of life, and philosophical perspectives gathered to create a kind of societal scaffolding. Something that could support the impassioned debate that formed *Bakunin's* fiery heart, while keeping those disagreements confined to the semiotic and dialectic realms, albeit in expressive, multi-layered fashion.

Together, they sketched out the architecture of a self-regulating engagement protocol, a living forum where discussion was encouraged, diversity was applauded, and civility was enforced – physically, if need be. Across a furtive span of sleepless nights, extended brainstorming sessions, and more than a bit of mad social science, they presented the bones of a living, moderated engagement structure, a dialectic scaffold that wouldn't buckle under the weight of *Bakunin's* passion. They crafted a masterpiece.

And then they handed it over to people who couldn't care less if it died in the womb.

THE PANDEMOS SOLUTION

The Moderated Discourse Project was comprised of idea people, and their project reflected that. Like many Bakunian ideas, there was genius in the plan. Like many Bakunian ideas, there wasn't a clear roadmap as to how the details would be implemented. So, like many Bakunian ideas before and since, the Moderated Discourse Project faced an uncertain future, with no outside assistance to be found. During the Equilibrium Phase, the motherships that would eventually form the Nomad Nation had no idea what to make of each other just yet. Thus, the Radical Mothership would live or die by its own hand, and *Bakunin* was doggedly determined to live.

Unwilling to watch their masterpiece die in committee, the Moderated Discourse Project reached out to the Pandemos Commune – a reclusive group of communication scientists, hostage negotiators, and subversive marketers who as far as anyone could tell, had come to *Bakunin* to document its eventual collapse – and all but dared them to craft an implementation plan. Pandemos had come to observe, but the scientific competitiveness that would come to define Praxis burned brightly in them. They accepted the challenge on one condition: if they found a working solution, it would be implemented, no questions asked.

With their backs to the wall, the Moderated Discourse Project had little choice but to acquiesce. Much to their own surprise, Pandemos was handed the keys to the revolution and told to make it go. They set about the task of taking Social Energy from fever dream to functional policy and were ready to prove that it could be done, or die trying.

First, the underlying economic principles received a sound foundation, based somewhat ironically on the nascent Bank of Tunguska's operational precepts. Next, Bakunian hacker collectives created a quantum blockchain to securely host the massive amount of real-time feedback necessary to keep this new system running. And finally, Pandemos's own crisis experts laid out a roadmap for what would eventually become the Moderator Corps, a legally empowered paramilitary strike force that would add some teeth to the tenets of Social Energy. A literal ban-hammer, if you will.

What the Moderated Discourse Project got back wasn't a utopian vision of a perfect future, nor an elegant example of theory-crafted simplicity. What they got was something that with effort, support, and a little luck could genuinely reshape the way that Bakunian society functioned without collapsing under its own weight. In what was easily the most lopsided vote in the Radical Mothership's history, this new structure – named "Social Energy" for the commentary that inspired it – passed with 87% of citizens' approval. The Moderated Discourse Project spun out into the Department of Social Energy (DSE), and the Moderator Corps who were both entrusted to implement, manage, and enforce *Bakunin's* Social Energy, a duty that the two organisations carry out to this day.

WHAT IT DOES

"If you've felt it, you've grokked it," goes the popular saying amongst Bakunians, and not without reason. On its surface, Social Energy seems intricate, but ultimately not that complicated: it's a state-sponsored form of social networking, with elements of a

"The Equilibrium Phase was all about brinkmanship, radical difference, and a stubborn refusal to let the dream die, a tightrope walk on razor wire, stretched between skyscrapers. The Social Energy negotiations were the era in microcosm."

– Mikalah Prokhorov, Bank of Tunguska. From *Social Energy: Birth of a Movement*: available on Maya & Arachne this summer.



“Trying to describe Social Energy with clinical definitions is a bit like calling a symphony a series of timed vibrations. Technically, you’d be correct: you’d just be missing the entire point of why anyone cares. It’ll be easier to show you: once you feel it, you’ll grok it.”

—Satch, Bakunian tour guide.
Interview with Go-Go Marlene:
channel Oxyd. Only on Maya.

FAKE IDS AND SOCIAL ENERGY

Every ID system in the Human Sphere is a complex cypher in its own right, a labyrinthine nightmare of interlocking systems, and Social Energy makes most of them look downright quaint by comparison. Using a Fake ID on *Bakunin* will generally work fine, but any in-depth examination such as trying to make a purchase using your counterfeit Social Energy Rank quickly exposes the lie. That said, Bakunians generally don’t mind people concealing their identity so long as they’re not defrauding businesses. So while Fake IDs are less effective on the Radical Mothership, they’re scrutinised far less frequently.

CIRCLE EVALS

From newcomers to children to those with more ambition than caution, there’s always someone who thinks that they’ve figured out how to game the reputation system. This usually involves a small group, giving each other positive evals over slightly different metrics. These “circle evals” don’t usually go anywhere. Not only are they insufficient to trick the algorithms that watch for such abuses, but between the LAIs, “other” AIs, and human Infowarriors, these tricks have all been tried before, and aren’t fooling anybody.

reputation economy baked in. And while that’s technically correct, it misses a lot of what makes Social Energy different from say, a Hypercorporation’s Omni-Sided Platform, or a Shentang resident’s Citizen Score.

Social Energy is the heart of *Bakunin*. And like any heart, it’s hard at work making sure that all the individual parts and pieces are functioning.

INDIVIDUAL STANDING

Social Energy starts with the individual. Everyone who sets foot on the Radical Mothership has a place in and an impact on Social Energy. Thus, every individual needs to exist as a distinct entity within it. Without this foundation, the rest of the system crumbles. For Social Energy to function, it needs to be able to tell people apart.

It goes without saying that identity theft is a massive concern, though a well-managed one by any standard. Social Energy is only as strong as people’s confidence in it; one skilled imposter could do significant damage to that surety. Thus, the DSE is deadly serious about its information security, often quite literally. More than one hacker has taken an involuntary stroll outside the ship for their attempt to subvert Social Energy, though such incidents have become increasingly rare as time goes by.

Most hackers who like the idea of testing themselves against Social Energy’s legendary quantronic security do so in DSE-sponsored hacking challenges, with significant rewards awaiting anyone who can find exploitable weaknesses in the Energy’s quantronic labyrinth. And any mercenary Wardrivers, corporate spies, or intelligence operatives who would risk taking on *Bakunin*’s best Infowarriors probably have grand designs that go beyond fifteen minutes of identity theft and are spending their efforts elsewhere. With that foundation in place, people generally trust what they’re seeing in Social Energy. Which is important, as they see a lot.

HERALDRY 2.0

There’s an old saying on *Corregidor*: “If you don’t have your reputation, you don’t have anything.” That takes on a literal weight within Social Energy, as an individual’s actions follow them wherever they go. At its most basic level, there’s a rudimentary evaluation that’s always available within Social Energy, a simple thumbs up or thumbs down. While this does provide a useful metric for calculating a user’s reputation score, nobody pays it much mind.

In *Bakunin*’s Social Energy, reputation is everything, though it’s anything but simple. Based on stories, anecdotes, and impressions, an individual’s place

in Social Energy is a ridiculously complex construct, based on the semiotic impression that they leave upon it. Every action – from social pleasantries to political discourse, graffiti tags to gardening – leaves an impression on those around it. Geists record the context of these impressions, feeding them into the larger system. Each evaluation is weighted against the circumstances of the moment, the individual’s prior actions, and all parties’ current standings within Social Energy.

This results in a living, dynamic reputation, existing somewhere between personal branding, popular rumour, and individual styling. These neo-heraldic banners provide the bedrock of *Bakunin*’s Social Energy: an ID so complex, dynamic, and volatile, that trying to fool the system is usually a waste of everyone’s time.

That said, it’s still a system. This being *Bakunin*, people have, of course, attempted to game the structure. There are many reasons why this doesn’t work – the DSE’s custom LAIs looming large among them – but there’s a simpler force at play: Social Energy doesn’t track what it considers duplicate evals. Each individual ID has a general approve/disapprove flag attached to them which unloads a barrage of frequent, shallow, positive impressions and generally has no effect on their standing within Social Energy. At best, *Bakunin* gets the impression that you’re fond of someone; at worst, it might get you flagged as a spammer.

Opinions can, and do change, and evals do with them. Still, there’s a real, tangible weight to a lot of positive or negative evaluations. A lot of small, positive interactions can really build up over time, resulting in a rock-solid reputation rating.

One of the more controversial additions to Social Energy has been the introduction of weighted rankings. The idea is that an eval from someone with a lot of Social Energy behind them should count for more than an eval from someone in poor standing. Feeling that this went against the spirit of *Bakunin*, and not wanting to see a sort of “reputation elite” emerge, the initial backlash was so loud and severe, that the idea was scuttled almost immediately. And while modern Social Energy algorithms do take the evaluator’s current standing into account, it’s merely one of the innumerate factors that go into an individual’s score, a small enough factor that no one’s up in arms about it. At the end of the day, there’s only so much that one person’s opinion matters. To really make waves in the Social Energy, you need to influence people in numbers.

SEMIOTIC CONSTRUCTIVISM

Any individual, no matter how influential, is still just one voice among the cacophony that is *Bakunin*. But when those voices begin to make patterns, rising in unison? That's when things start to get interesting.

Social consensus, as the concept is generally understood, doesn't really exist within Social Energy, at least, not for very long. Consensus implies an agreed-upon truth, something that people uniformly hold to be self-evident, which is far too static a principle to exist within *Bakunin's* Social Energy. Instead, it shapes society through principles of semiotic constructivism, a postmodern philosophy with an empirical centre. Dreams brought to life in a tangible way.

The semiotic landscape of Social Energy is a clash of ideas, symbolism, revolutionary branding, and other memetic forces, virally spreading across *Bakunin's* quantronic patina in unpredictable, organic ways. If, at any point, patterns begin to emerge in this chaos, it's usually a sign of consensus starting to build. Social Energy is notoriously difficult to hijack, so any appearance of agreement

is usually an authentic social movement, expressed by Bakunian citizens, and coalescing organically.

The fundamental concepts of semiotic constructivism deals with a philosophical question – what is real? – and boils it down into tangible chunks. Ignoring (mostly) spiritual and existential concerns, it looks at the realities of Social Energy and attempts to identify and codify them. These constructs are ephemeral in nature, existing in the moment, then shifting to become something else entirely. As the DSE is fond of saying, Social Energy can tell you what's real, just don't expect it to stay that way for long.

Still, the semiotic constructs floating about Social Energy at any given time provide an invaluable way to understand the Radical Mothership's current thoughts on everything from fad diets to interstellar politics.

PURCHASING POWER

One of the more practical aspects of Social Energy is its use as a sort of cryptocurrency. *Bakunin* has always been home to several different sub-economies, and attempts to reconcile them into discrete, yet compatible, systems had proved to be enough

"Fundamentally, it's a question about the nature of reality. What is real? How do you know? We can talk about physics, biology, but when it comes to ideas, it gets messy.

Semiotic constructivism is the acknowledgement that outside of empirical, physical phenomena, 'reality' and 'truth' boil down to whatever people say they are. More specifically, they're whatever people agree upon at that moment in time. These truths are ephemeral, dynamic. They don't stay where you put them. It's one of the elements that makes Social Energy a living, breathing entity. Truth is out there. But it moves when you're not looking."

– The Artful Codger: quantronic university lecture. Freely distributed on Arachne.





“Power to the People: even if they don’t know what to do with it.”

– Quantronic graffiti: Sunset Boulevard: Promenade Layer.

of a headache that most had given up hope of ever seeing them connect.

But with the introduction of Social Energy, these micro-economies found themselves a fiscal *lingua franca*. Here was a heavily encrypted system that was already tracking an individual’s reputation, as well as their overall contributions to the welfare of the Nomad Nation. Plenty of successful cryptocurrencies have been built on less, and the allure of bending a quantronically assisted democratic platform to other purposes had a definite appeal to the Radical Mothership’s denizens.

It didn’t hurt that it worked. Buyers, sellers, deal facilitators, every step of the transaction was reflected in participants’ Social Energy, allowing Nomads to buy and sell with increased confidence. Built on Tunguskan banking principles, Social Energy was actually well-equipped to serve as a sort of self-regulating line of credit, implicitly available to every Bakunian by virtue of their participation in the ship’s Social Energy.

Today, Social Energy Credit (SEC) is used seamlessly alongside or in place of other currencies anywhere that Nomads do business, a subset that when all is said and done, encompasses huge swaths of the Human Sphere. Other factions, and indeed, other Nomads have been slow to adopt Social Energy as a currency. In fairness, without extending the system in its entirety, its value as a cryptocurrency becomes much more volatile. While relatively stable for most Nomads, investing in SECs is a risky proposition for most financial actors.

After all: how much money do you really want to have tied up in *Bakunin’s* opinion of you?

DAILY USE

For most Bakunians, however, it’s a simpler proposition. The barter economy has blossomed into an entirely functional reputation economy, and most day-to-day purchases are easily handled entirely in Social Energy.

Want a cup of coffee? A new hat? Early access to a new senseries pilot? If you’re in good standing within Social Energy, the transaction is simply associated with your profile, and you go on your way. This line of soft credit transcends industries on the Radical Mothership. Until you start talking about massive purchases, most people can simply exchange goods and services based on reputation, cutting banks and conventional currency out of the transaction altogether.

For larger purchases though, the system functions like a credit rating. Much like a bank extending a line of credit to someone with a dodgy financial

history, most exchanges over a certain SEC value will automatically flag as risky. But, this is still *Bakunin*. Beyond a friendly warning, nothing about the Radical Mothership is designed to stop people from making terrible mistakes. Quite the opposite, in fact.

DEMOCRATIC PROCESS

Bakunian governance is, by design, an elegant mess. Given the impossible mosaic of microgovernments that comprises its modules, one could be forgiven for expecting a tangle of bureaucracy slowing *Bakunin’s* governmental apparatus to a snail’s pace. Yet, the Radical Mothership is famously able to act with decisive swiftness, changing metaphorical and sometimes literal course with surprising alacrity. How does something so unapologetically heterogeneous move with such agility?

Some mysteries are better left undisturbed. But a big part of it is surely the role of Social Energy in Bakunian decision making. When contrasted with other heads of state, *Bakunin’s* Conciliator is comparatively unburdened with bureaucracy. Most societal referendums are resolved via Social Energy, rather than governmental action, leaving the Conciliator to focus on the big picture.

A tour through *Bakunin’s* modules coughs up everything from lineal monarchies to neo-conso-cialational microstates and everything in-between. Anthropologists have tried to classify its myriad governmental systems into a cohesive superstructure. To date, the churn of ideas just moves too fast for anyone to keep up with.

Yet the Conciliator is remarkably unburdened by this. Social Energy not only provides a quantronic forum for the discussion of ideas, but the means of civic engagement, democratic or otherwise. Each module is essentially left to govern themselves, with their chosen representatives working with the Conciliator when necessary, but otherwise minding their own business.

For the Conciliator’s part, most of their job entails resolving disputes between modules and keeping *Bakunin* in the air, so to speak. When decisive action is required, a brief survey of the prevailing Social Energy can produce a ready-made consensus – or at least, a reasonable facsimile – at a moment’s notice. This allows the Conciliator to make decisions quickly, while staying true to what *Bakunin’s* citizens actually want.

At least, as close as a politician could ever hope to get.

HOW IT WORKS

Bakunians talk about Social Energy like it's a living, breathing entity, and it takes on an almost mystical quality, a subtle reality that permeates every facet of existence. Flowery descriptions aside, the practical realities of Social Energy are seamlessly interwoven into Bakunian society in ways that might not be immediately obvious.

SRSLY, THOUGH

The preferred method of communicating one's standing within the Social Energy is expressive, but nebulous. While it might be technically correct to describe one's current standing in *Bakunin's* Social Energy as "like a wave reaching a crest on a shore of jagged obsidian," or the less prosaic "better than yesterday," many Bakunians desire greater transparency – and a description that doesn't make their head hurt.

So the DSE set for themselves the unenviable task of creating a metric that could not only capture enough of the nuance of Social Energy to be a useful reference point, but also be communicated in a fashion that human beings could readily understand. The results were a derived statistic that no one was quite happy with, but could do in a pinch. Or in other words, as good as this was ever going to get.

Thus, the Social Energy Ranking System Logarithmic Yardstick (SRSLY) was created.

Shortened to an acronym in a cheeky nod to the protesters who opposed the idea of reducing Social Energy's distinctly qualitative metrics down to a number, SRSLY is the product of countless variables, weighted, tested, and converted into a positive integer. Ostensibly rankings are between 1 and 10,000, though in a practical sense, values below 2,000 and above 8,000 are extraordinarily rare. These numbers aren't static. Like everything about Social Energy, they're constantly shifting and swirling, but it usually takes a significant event for a shift of more than three digits to occur over the course of a day.

SUB-ZERO RATINGS

Within SRSLY, it's mathematically impossible to achieve a score of 0. On *Bakunin*, being a Zero has an altogether different meaning. There is, however, a sub-zero rank, reserved for entities who've become *persona non grata* aboard the Radical Mothership and are functionally excluded from its Social Energy. Currently, only ALEPH and the Equinox group boast this status, and it would take an act of significantly destructive scope to add another name to it.

A SAMPLING OF DIFFERENT BAKUNIAN COMMUNES' GOVERNMENTS

Under the assumptions that power corrupts and seeking power benefits the already-corrupt, the Rycatcher commune operates under a procedurally generated demarchy, choosing its political officials by way of random sample. In clear defiance of the Sole AI Bill, the BombCluster commune created an advanced algorithm that straddles the line between LAI and self-aware entity, choosing civil servants from its population based on longitudinal evaluation of their standing within local and ship-wide Social Energy.

Several mythocracies have surfaced of late: a uniquely *Bakunian* amalgamation of mythological superstructure, and governmental ministries. Technically a form of parliamentary democracy, mythocracies appoint officials to mythic archetypes, who oversee matters in keeping with their divine portfolios.

Most famous among these is probably the Asgard Cluster module. Natalie Bremming currently holds the Odinseat, entering her third term of being a hands-off decision maker who occasionally lays down the law. Ola Sigurdson is doing a fine job in his first year in the Thorseat, solving crises where they exist, and causing crises that will need solving where they don't.

And of course, there's the Lokiseat, currently held by an individual simply known as Loki, entering their fourth term. Initially, there were official guidelines as to the seat's duties and areas of authority, but seeing as how they've consistently been replaced with pranks of increasingly elaborate nature, the general consensus is that Loki knows what they're doing, and should be left alone to do so.

Thus far, no one has managed to successfully object to the notion.

Many ideological purists worried that this would reduce Social Energy to a popularity contest, a race to achieve high scores among society's most privileged. As it turns out, they needn't have worried – *Bakunin's* tendency to rebel against the powerful and mainstream automatically paints a target on anyone who ascends to too lofty a height in the informal SRSLY leaderboards. And, as the DSE is quick to point out, the SRSLY metric is merely meant to give a rough idea of one's standing in the complex vicissitudes of Social Energy. By themselves, the numbers are all but meaningless.

Still, SRSLY remains the most accessible, understandable way to suss out one's place within Social Energy at a glance, ensuring that for now at least, the metric isn't going anywhere.

QUANTRONIC BATTLEFIELDS

When someone thinks of Social Energy, what comes to mind? For many, it's the vibrant quantronic graffiti, spattered across *Bakunin's* collective sensorium. A battleground of colourful ideas, viral memes, and

"You'd think that all Aspects would automatically qualify for Sub-Zero ratings, right? Not necessarily. Between AI liberation activists, more conciliatory modules, and people who just think that Achilles is hot, there's enough support that nobody's gonna be pre-emptively pariah'd. We Bakunians pride ourselves on seeing the individual, even if the individual is part of a malevolent artificial intelligence bent on galactic domination via the subjugation of all sapient life.

...What? Do I have something in my teeth?"

– Calamity Jane, who did not have something in her teeth, on the *Go-Go Marlene* show: Only on Oxyd!

contesting manifestos, that are all spread out across augmented reality like a neon turf war, brilliant, beautiful, and remarkably contained. Like remotely observing a volcano, the heat, violence, and power are obvious, if not immediately threatening.

SRSLY RANK BRACKETS

1–1,000 (Soft Exile): Getting the prevailing Social Energy to agree on anything is legendarily difficult. So if the legendarily tolerant *Bakunin* holds such a uniformly low opinion of you, something terrible must have happened. For most individuals, this is indicative of exile, reserved for traitors and sworn enemies, and not even all of those make it this low.

1,001–2,000 (Troublemakers): Not the Fun Kind, Either: Anyone in this range is either a sworn public enemy of the Radical Mothership, or *Bakunin* has decided that they might as well be.

2,001–3,000 (Griever): Anyone whose contributions to the prevailing Social Energy are outweighed by the drain they're placing on it.

3,001–4,000 (Disfavoured): At this bracket, the prevailing wisdom considers you to be more trouble than you're worth. Usually. Lucky for you, *Bakunin* has a soft spot for trouble.

4,001–5,000 (None More Grey): The uninspiring side of average, this is a common place for Bakunians to find themselves following a particularly spectacular failure. That said, achieving a rank this high is considered quite the accomplishment for a PanOceanian.

5,001–6,000 (Promising): The average Bakunian spends most of their time in this bracket, rarely falling too far below, or rising much above it. It's here where some of the most vital debate occurs: in the eyes of many Bakunians, if this many people agree and disagree with you simultaneously, what you're saying probably has some merit.

6,001–7,000 (Pot-Stirrers, The Useful Kind): A seriously contributing member to the Radical Mothership's Social Energy, and probably someone who helps to shape it. At this rank, there's enough activity to be constantly noticed, and the positive outweighs the negative, not an easy balancing act.

It's worth noting that this doesn't mean that everyone likes the individual in question. It's more that they're a consistent dialectic contributor, and their efforts are spurring productive discourse. Even if relatively few individuals like or agree with them, they've got *Bakunin's* Social Energy buzzing. That's valuable.

7,001–8,000 (Opinion Leaders and Agenda Celebrities): At this bracket, not only does the individual have the ability to get people to listen to them, the Social Energy is usually glad they did. These individuals often have an ephemeral cult of personality formed around them. Ignoring or derailing their posts is difficult, leading to a greater number of people being influenced by them, leading to more in their movement, and so on.

8,001–9,000 (Ideological Rock Star): Some of the highest heights one can hit within the Social Energy. Most never spend more than a few hours in this bracket before the inevitable backlash brings their rankings hurtling back down to reality.

Over 9,000: This ranking holds a near-mythical status among Bakunians. Very few ever achieve it, and no one stays there for very long.

LAYERS

One of the most unique aspects of Social Energy is how much of its business is conducted in public spaces. AR-graffiti tags, meme-wars, and even the occasional level-headed discussion are all constantly occurring throughout the Radical Mothership. But what many don't realise is just how deep this rabbit hole goes. While this discussion is technically occurring in public spaces, the quantronic reality that a tourist interacts with is not the same one that a Bakunian native does. A native's experience is going to be richer and deeper than that of a tourist's and not in a metaphorical sense.

Bubbling just beneath the surface, Social Energy's most vital discourse occurs in *Bakunin's* quantronic substrata, hiding in plain sight, and intricately tied to the Radical Mothership's topography. The localised datasphere that coats *Bakunin's* interior is actually a stack of interconnected, but otherwise discrete layers. The debate you really want to engage in might be happening across the ship, which requires people to get out and move around *Bakunin* for discourse.

These quantronic substrata allow for the discussion, debate, and ideological battles that Social Energy needs to function, without overwhelming visitors or being constantly interrupted by those without an understanding of the topic at hand. It's not seen as being exclusionary. To the contrary, it's considered good housekeeping. Not every visitor is going to want to become embroiled in Bakunian politics, nor be assaulted by competing manifestos with every step. By stratifying its quantronic patina, *Bakunin* creates an environment that isn't overwhelming or hostile to non-Bakunians as long as they remain in core.

While the fractal nature of nested substrata can grow to nearly boundless lengths, there are three generally acknowledged layers to *Bakunin's* quantronic substrata: the Promenade, Jareth's Labyrinth, and the Undercurrent.

THE PROMENADE

Also known as "general," the "starter area," or the "newbie zone," the outer layer of Social Energy is not entirely unlike similar quantronic environments to the degree that any environment can be similar on *Bakunin*. Designed to be welcoming to guests, and a comfortable environment that any Bakunian could exist in while still interacting with Social Energy, the Promenade manages to tow this line with a fair share of success.

However, it wasn't always this way. While the Promenade of today sports an AR Patina awash in competing graffiti, the imagery is more interactive

mural than unmitigated assault upon the senses. Historically, the latter held sway; images designed to shock, disturb, and otherwise disrupt people's daily routines were all the rage in revolutionary meme-tags. But while they may have been effective in disrupting people's assumptions, they were also making the core downright unhospitable and not just for outsiders, but for plenty of Nomads as well.

An unhospitable environment is the kiss of death for a tourism industry, so at the Conciliator's direction, the DSE initiated a migration to a deeper layer of the quantronic substrata, as well as incentivising would-be influencers to keep the sensory assault to a dull roar.

The idea of moving most discussion to a deeper stratum held appeal for all involved. Today's Promenade layer is a more mischievous, playful take on Social Energy as a memetic battleground. Enticing aesthetics carry the day, where the hint, the promise of something more just beneath the surface is the dominant style. Aspiring towards allure, the Promenade has blossomed into one of the more artistically pleasing AR environments in the Human Sphere. And it's just scratching the surface.

JARETH'S LABYRINTH

Honouring the classical musician, performance artist, and auteur David Bowie, this quantronic substrata takes its name from a mythical realm and its enigmatic ruler, described in one of his cinematic landmarks. In tribute to its namesake, this domain is a place of fearless art, bold ideas, and unimpeachable style. Jareth's Labyrinth, often just called "the Labyrinth," is a place where ideas have power, and reality itself can be rearranged if that's what's necessary to make a point.

Making one's way through the logic gates, authorisation prompts, and other quantronic airlocks in place isn't a trivial task – though it can certainly look like one when observing a Bakunian native in their home environment. But all the obstacles aren't meant to keep anyone out. Rather, they're meant to ensure that no one wanders out into the layer on accident.

Blindly stumbling into the Labyrinth is sure to be an adventure, to say the least.

In the Labyrinth, discourse occurs free of constraints, structure, or a need for decorum. However, the layer isn't simply just a cacophonous wasteland of militant ideas, dissonantly shouting each other down without regard for anyone around them, though that's certainly an element. This is the wild frontier of Social Energy: raw, unfiltered, and passionate. Very few matters are actually decided

in Jareth's domain, but countless ideas have been forged in its crucible.

THE UNDERCURRENT

If you don't get lost in the Labyrinth, there exists yet another layer. Purposefully obscured, accessing this layer requires genuine effort on the user's part. Always tied to a physical location, and requiring non-trivial effort to access, the goal is not to be accessible. Instead, these nodes are deliberately antagonistic. One day, it could require the answer to a riddle; the next, a complicated quantronic oubliette. The day after, it might be identity-locked to only allow a few specific individuals in, or have moved to an entirely different area of the ship.

Colloquially referred to as the "undercurrent," this sub-layer of engagement requires genuine quantronic aptitude to be able to identify, much less access and interact with. Like a nightclub with a hidden entrance in a bodega, these nexuses of Social Energy are hiding in plain sight, nested deep within otherwise mundane locations. Public art installations, guide terminals, cafes, and coffee shops all host these hidden nodes on a semi-regular rotation.

Once an individual has gained access to a particular undercurrent, however, worlds of possibilities reveal themselves. The exchange of ideas unfettered by egos, clandestine meetings deciding the future of the Nomad Nation, or just finding a place to receive genuine constructive criticism, free of the subjective maelstrom of subjective viewpoints crashing around the Jareth's Labyrinth at any given time – these and more are nestled in the undercurrent.

Gaining access to the Social Energy Undercurrent is often a rite of passage on *Bakunin*, with a number of modules not considering their residents to be full adults until they've shown that they can locate and meaningfully interact with the Undercurrent at least once. Ultimately, it's not the best, or most important substrata, merely the most exclusive. The Undercurrent is a members-only club, with but two criteria: you must have something to contribute to the Social Energy, and you must be willing to go out of your way to do so.

GONE FISHING

None of this works if the Social Energy is compromised. And while its quantronic security is second to none, that still leaves numerous avenues to exploit. Like the old Tunguska maxim suggests, any sufficiently complex system can be hacked, and many an enterprising soul has attempted to hijack the Social Energy and direct it to serve their own ends.

PLAYTEST NOTE

SRSLY, SER?

Later in the chapter, rules for Social Energy are introduced, including a 1–5 ranking of a character's Social Energy Rating (SER). If you want a quick and dirty translation, take a SRSLY rating, and divide it by 2,000, rounding to the nearest non-zero whole number. This will result in a rating from 1–5, hopefully giving the player some context as to where their character sits in the prevailing Social Energy.

"It's not that I have a problem with reproductive organs. I don't. But when they're everywhere, they're kind of nowhere, you know?"

—Christine Aldington, Bakunian art curator. Commentary on the Quantronic Cleanup Initiative (better known as the Shred of Dignity Act) of 65 NC.

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE

It's not uncommon for a Bakunian citizen to spend hours contemplating public works of art. There are many reasons for this, including traditional ones; some people just like sculptures. Most, however, are delving deeply into the nested undercurrent that tends to congregate around such landmarks.

"Question: how many LAIs would pass the new sapience test? How many geists? Answer: as many as we can manage. All of them, if we can swing it."

—Quantronic graffiti. Sunset Boulevard: Undercurrent Layer.

ACCESSING THE LAYERS

Gaining access to the different layers of Social Energy's quantronic substrata can be its own special challenge. While the specifics are likely to change from moment to moment, here's a rough guideline for accessing the different layers in *Bakunin's* substrata.

THE PROMENADE

- Requires a successful **Average (D1) Hacking test** to access, though anyone who can perceive AR can observe the Promenade freely.

THE JARETH'S LABYRINTH

- Requires a minimum Hacking Expertise of 1, or a successful **Average (D1) Education test** to interact with or observe.

THE UNDERCURRENT

- Requires a combined Education and Hacking Expertise of 3 or more, or a successful **Challenging (D2) Analysis, Education, or Hacking test**. May require a **Daunting (D3) Analysis test** to locate a specific Undercurrent.

THE FISHER KING

Countless would-be saboteurs have found themselves "hooked" on one particular hacker's line: an enigmatic Infowarrior who goes by the handle of The Fisher King. Boasting an impressive Social Energy rating due to their tireless defence of the construct, many theories as to their true identity exist, though the reclusive King hasn't come forward in physical space to enjoy the attention. Popular theories include:

- A veteran of the Phantom Conflicts, unable to move due to a retrovirus, taking their revenge on the powers that wronged them
- A collective, perhaps even an entire module of Infowarriors, dedicated to the defence of Social Energy
- An AI, created in Praxis's Black Labs for the sole purpose of hunting down threats to Social Energy
- A particularly gifted, if tormented, Sin-Eater Observant, chained to a medieval torture device and channelling their pain into a never ending thirst for quantronic retribution
- The speaker's cousin's partner's friend, or a similarly convoluted chain of connection

Whatever the truth behind the Fisher King, a few things are beyond dispute: there's a top shelf, military-grade Infowarrior (or several) behind the persona, and they have an uncanny knack for finding, outing, and publicly humiliating anyone attempting to disrupt Social Energy from the outside.

Historically, this has been a recipe for embarrassment, with many Bakunians taking pride in rooting out these outside agents. Fish Tales – stories of how one hooked and humiliated a foreign actor – are remarkably popular. Tales of bumbling spies, lobbyists, and other agents being led in circles are a sure-fire hit at any Bakunian bar. Several individuals have made a hobby of exposing these agents, in a process affectionately referred to as "fishing."

ACTING OUT: RULES FOR SOCIAL ENERGY

More than just a local flavour, *Bakunin's* Social Energy has a tangible impact on the lives of its citizens. For *Infinity* games dealing heavily with the Nomads, or just looking to inject a little Bakunian flair into their sessions, the following rules will help you to integrate Social Energy into your campaign.

Note: These rules are optional. Not every game, even those focused on Nomads, will want to model Social Energy to this amount of resolution. While the rules are meant to be minimally intrusive, and add to the experience without becoming cumbersome, ultimately, each gaming group should decide what will best suit their needs.

FINDING YOUR PLACE: SOCIAL ENERGY RANK (SER) RATING

The details that make up an individual's current standing within the Social Energy are hopelessly complex, consisting of innumerable rankings, trends over time, purchase records, and numerous other qualitative and quantitative factors. These are then expressed with a combination of numerical, anecdotal, and semiotic indicators. There's no such thing as a simple Social Energy Rating.

Even with a hot-rodged geist sorting it all out for them, most Bakunians grasp of their standing within Social Energy boils down to an occasional query of "how am I doing?" sent to their geist. Thus, even though it isn't exactly accurate, many Bakunians rely on the DSE's SRSly metric to provide a rough indicator of their current standing. In a practical sense, most individuals' places within the Social Energy are best explained by where they fit within a few distinct ranges or categories.

To that effect, in *Infinity* games that utilise the Social Energy rules, characters have a Social Energy Rank rating, or SER rating, represented by a number between 1 and 5 and an indicator describing whether their momentum is trending upward, downward, or remaining neutral. A character's SER rating is not a permanent attribute. Just like the Social Energy itself, an individual's standing will ebb and flow in a constant state of flux. A character's actions, as well as shifting trends within Social Energy, keeps their ratings in constant motion.

Every character begins play with a SER rating. Your current faction plays a significant role in

determining this, but don't worry: these ratings aren't set in stone. They can and likely will change a great deal over the course of play.

GENERATE STARTING SER

First, determine your group from the list below. Roll 1d20 and consult the *Starting Social Energy Table* to determine your beginning SER rating. Then, roll 1d20 and consult the *Social Energy Inertia Table* to determine whether your star is rising, falling, or holding steady.

GROUP A

ALEPH, PanOceania, Submondo, Yu Jing

GROUP B

Corporations, Mercenaries, Minor Nations, O-12

GROUP C

Ariadna, Haqqislam, Non-Bakunian Nomads

GROUP D

Bakunian Nomads

STARTING SOCIAL ENERGY TABLE				
ROLL 1D20				STARTING RANK
A	B	C	D	
1-9	1-5	1	-	1
10-18	6-11	2-8	1-5	2
19-20	12-19	9-15	6-12	3
-	20	16-20	13-19	4
-	-	-	20	5

SOCIAL ENERGY INERTIA TABLE				
ROLL 1D20				STARTING RANK
A	B	C	D	
1-6	1-5	1-6	1-8	Falling
7-18	6-15	7-12	9-11	Stable
19-20	16-20	13-20	12-20	Rising

SOCIAL ENERGY IN PLAY

Outside of *Bakunin*, a character's SER rating might not matter much. But when dealing with Nomads, and especially on the Radical Mothership itself, it can massively alter the dynamics of an interaction.

When making a Lifestyle test involving a Bakunian, other Nomad, or in situations where the GM deems it appropriate, compare the two characters' SER ratings. If there's no difference, then proceed normally. If, however, there's a difference between

SER: WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

For a more thorough explanation of what different standings within Social Energy can look like, see *SRSly Rank Brackets*, p. 52. But for a quick guideline:

- **Rank 1:** Despised or mistrusted
- **Rank 2:** Difficult, unproductive
- **Rank 3:** Average: no strong opinion either way
- **Rank 4:** Insightful, valuable: a boon to the Social Energy
- **Rank 5:** Influential and beloved: very few remain here for long

the two, then subtract the smaller number from the larger number: this results in a value between 1 and 4. We call that value SERge.

This value can affect play in a number of ways, benefiting the side with the greater SER rating:

- The SERge value becomes additional Momentum (or Heat)
- Adding +X[Ⓝ] to the character's Morale Soak (where X is equal to the SERge value)
- Increasing intransigence to a given Metanoia effect by +X[Ⓝ] (where X is equal value) to the SERge value)

NPC SER RATINGS

The Social Energy rules assume a SER rating for every NPC: but that doesn't need to be an arduous process. In general, most Nomads will have a SER rating between 2 and 4, with the majority coming in at 3. There are a lot of stories to be told around unexpected placement in Social Energy, but if all you need is a quick guideline:

- **SER 1:** Foreign spies, serious bad news
- **SER 2:** Most foreigners, Nomads in a bad way
- **SER 3:** Well-liked foreigners, most Nomads
- **SER 4:** Influential Nomads
- **SER 5:** Almost nobody

AS A CRYPTOCURRENCY

Plenty of Nomads — and other factions as well — use Social Energy as a means of economic exchange every day. But just as there isn't a separate system for making transactions in Sol, Oceana, or Dinar, transactions made with Social Energy Credit (SEC) are handled using the acquisition system from the *Infinity Corebook*. There are some additional options for SERge when making an acquisition:

PLAYTEST NOTE

BOOKKEEPING AND SER

In the world of *Infinity*, a character's place within the Social Energy is the product of millions of individual calculations: tracked by their geist, and represented in a mixture of qualitative and quantitative terms. A character's SRSly rating is more quantifiable, but understood to be essentially inaccurate.

In a roleplaying game, that much bookkeeping would detract from the experience so the value is boiled down to the much simpler SER, keeping it more manageable. Characters use an exponentially more expressive score; it's an abstraction, designed to facilitate gameplay. That said, if you want to suss out your character's rough SRSly bracket, see p. 52 for guidelines on how to do precisely that.

PLAYTEST NOTE

EXISTING CAMPAIGNS

If introducing the Social Energy rules to an existing campaign, you may come across some incongruities when generating characters' starting SER ratings; the numbers might not feel reflective of the events in your campaign. In this case, you generally have one of two options: you can either ignore it, freely assigning values that fit the characters, or try to find a way to explain the seeming incongruity. Some amazingly rich stories can come from the latter, but ultimately, there's no right or wrong answer. Just go with what makes sense for your game.



PLAYTEST NOTE

ADDITIONAL FACTIONS

The starting Social Energy groups exist primarily as a quick way to get players started on the Social Energy scale. As such, it focuses on the factions of the Human Sphere.

If player characters from an alien civilisation, or a different Human Sphere faction (such as post-Uprising Japan), it's usually safe to assign them into Group C, as Bakunians love novelty, but that doesn't mean that they trust it.

A notable exception to this is characters from the Combined Civilisation, who can be reliably lumped into group "shoot on sight."

DOES IT STACK?

A character's SER rating provides no benefit to SER Migration tests.

PLAYTEST NOTE

SRSLY DYNAMIC CHANGES

Sometimes, player characters do something so massive, so dramatic, and so unexpected, that their environment can't help but react. If this happens on *Bakunin*, GMs should feel free to increase or decrease a character's SER rating by 1 step in either direction. In general, try to avoid doing so more than once a session, and it's even more impactful if such immediate shifts in SER are rare.

SERGE VALUE EXPENDITURES

SPEND	EFFECT
Press Advantage	Gain SERge value in Momentum
The Weight of Reputation	Add +X ^(IN) to Morale Soak (where X=SERge Value)
Dig in Your Heels	Increase intransigence to a given Metanoia effect by +X ^(IN) (where X=SERge value)
I Know Someone	Subtract the SERge value from (or add to) an item's Tariff rating (min: 0, max 5)
Social Energy Credit	Gain "phantom Assets" equal to have the SERge value, rounded town, useable only on this roll

- Subtract the SERge value from (or add to) an item's Tariff rating. Tariffs can only be reduced to 0, or raised to 5 in this fashion.
- Gain "phantom assets" equal to half the SERge value, rounded down, usable only on this roll.

SER MIGRATION

Social Energy is dynamic. It's constantly waxing and waning, shifting due to forces both in and out of the characters control. If we stopped to reassess SER ratings every few minutes, the game would become an exercise in tedium. To avoid this, changes in a character's SER generally happen at the end of, or between sessions.

As noted above, there are three types of Social Energy inertia: Falling, Stable, and Rising.

Falling: If a character's SER is Falling, they need to succeed at a **Lifestyle test**, with a difficulty equal to their current SER rating, or risk reducing their SER rating by 1. If they succeed, then they avoid any loss. By spending 2 Momentum, they can change their inertia to Stable. If they fail the test, however, they reduce their SER by 1, and their inertia remains Falling.

Stable: If a character's SER is Stable, then they don't need to take any actions, and can stay exactly as they are. If, however, they wish to increase their inertia, they can attempt a **Lifestyle test** with a difficulty equal to their current SER rating. If they're successful, they can change their inertia to Rising. If, however, they fail the test, their inertia changes to Falling – such are the risks of pressing your luck within Social Energy.

Rising: If a character's SER is Rising, it's an advantageous, if precarious, position, with a small window of opportunity. If the character does nothing, then their inertia resets to Stable, and no further actions are needed. However, if they succeed at a **Lifestyle test** with a difficulty equal to their current SER +1, then they can increase their SER rating by 1 point (to a maximum of 5), and set their inertia to Falling. If they fail the test, then there's no change in their SER, though they still set their inertia to Falling.

SER 5: If a character reaches the top of the charts, a few additional elements come into play. Firstly, at SER 5, a character's inertia is automatically set to Falling, and can never improve while they remain at the top. Additionally, any SER Migration tests they make are at +1 difficulty while they remain at SER rating 5. In short, it's lonely at the top, and it comes with a massive bulls-eye on your back.

CHAPTER 4

NOMAD CHARACTERS

Coming of age among the stars isn't like growing up on a planet. The Nomad Nation is a different experience than in the rest of the Human Sphere, and even the three Motherships have massive cultural differences. Through it all, the uniquely punk sensibilities of the Nomads get into every nook and cranny of life. Whether doctors, lawyers, hackers, or radical performance artists, there is a thread of defiant rebellion running through the Nomad DNA.

Nomad characters can be created using the variant rules in this chapter, rather than those in the *Infinity Corebook*. If doing so, the entries presented here supersede their counterparts in the Corebook.

DECISION FOUR: NOMAD STATUS

While Nomads have a remarkable amount of social mobility, the status they're born into still plays a key role in determining a Nomad's path through life. Where they call home plays an even bigger role.

STEP ONE: SOCIAL CLASS

Before determining their Social Status, characters in the Nomad faction need to determine their background. Consult the *Nomad Heritage Table* to

determine the specifics of your heritage and gain the listed Heritage Trait.

NOMAD HERITAGE TABLE

REGION	HERITAGE TRAIT
<i>Bakunin</i>	Bakunian
<i>Corregidor</i>	Corregidoran
<i>Tunguska</i>	Tunguskan
Planet, Other Faction	Lub'
Commercial Mission	Missionary
Orbitals, Human Edge.	Vagrant

After determining your heritage, roll on the *Nomad Social Status Table* to determine your Status, matching your result with your Heritage Trait. Consult the *Nomad Social Class Table*, and increase the listed attribute by one point and set your Earnings equal to the number shown.

HERITAGE TRAITS

In addition to behaving like a normal trait, Heritage Traits also come into play throughout the Lifepath. While the three motherships should be self-explanatory, there are some additional Heritage Traits for those who don't hail from *Bakunin*, *Corregidor*, or *Tunguska*.

Lub': Short for "land-lubber," those who hail from outside the Motherships have a different perspective, at least in the eyes of their fellow Nomads. Whether it's said with affection or disdain, it's assumed that a Lub' has no idea how to survive in space. Note: characters with a heritage other than Nomad are assumed to be Lubs, regardless of their environment. If you defect to the Nomads, you automatically gain the Heritage Trait Lub'.

Missionary: Not to be confused with the Observants who don't proselytise — anyone from a Commercial Mission gets to dip their toes into every bit of Nomad society, though their understanding is assumed to be broad but shallow. It's also assumed that they know people from every corner of the Human Sphere. An assumption that is only strengthened by the number of people they've met in passing over the years.

Vagrant: Nomads in a true sense of the word, these independent souls live on Orbitals or make their way through the Human Edge, living, for all intents and purposes, on their ships. Whether they're Corregidorian labourers, Bakunian artists, Tunguskan consultants, or something else entirely, Vagrants still pledge allegiance to their Motherships even if they rarely see them. When gaining this Heritage Trait, roll 1d6 to determine your Mothership of origin: *Bakunin* on a result of 1–2, *Corregidor* on a result of 3–4, and *Tunguska* on a result of 5–6.

NOMAD LIFEPATH DECISIONS

DECISION ONE— BIRTH HOST

If you roll a 20, you are an Uplift; roll on the Uplift Host Table.

DECISION FOUR— STATUS

The heritage of characters in the Nomad faction grants them a Heritage Trait. In addition, they roll on the Nomad Social Status Table.

DECISION SEVEN— ADOLESCENT EVENT

Characters in the Nomad Faction roll on the Nomad Faction Adolescent Event Tables.

DECISION EIGHT— CAREERS

Instead of rolling on the appropriate Faction Career table in the Corebook, characters in the Nomad Faction roll on the Nomad Faction Career Table as well as the Nomad Faction Career Event Tables. Their Heritage may adjust the difficulty of hazarding certain careers.

NOMAD SOCIAL STATUS TABLE

2D6	BAKUNIAN	CORREGIDORAN	TUNGUSKAN	LUB'	MISSIONARY	VAGRANT
2	Underclass	Underclass	Demogrant	Underclass	Underclass	Underclass
3-4	Demogrant	Underclass	Demogrant	Demogrant	Demogrant	Underclass
5-6	Middle	Demogrant	Middle	Demogrant	Middle	Demogrant
7-8	Middle	Middle	Upper	Middle	Middle	Middle
9-10	Upper	Middle	Upper	Middle	Upper	Middle
11	Elite	Upper	Elite	Upper	Elite	Middle
12	Hyper-Elite	Elite	Hyper – Elite	Elite	Elite	Upper

PLAYTEST TIP

HERITAGE TRAITS

Heritage Traits are broad by design, perfect for when a character's upbringing might cause trouble. There isn't a specific trait that articulates it, but Heritage Traits can be an incredibly useful tool, though both the GM and players should be careful to not shoehorn them into scenes. Some common invocations:

Bakunian: Radical views, problems with authority, talking yourself into trouble

Corregidoran: Stubbornness, social faux pas, others assume you're indestructible

Tunguskan: Criminal ties, financial volatility, powerful rivals

Lub': Zero-G difficulty, awkwardness with other Nomads, galactic rivals

Missionary: Underworld connections, vengeful acquaintances, blackmail

Vagrant: Smuggler connections, unpaid debts, attention from law enforcement

NOMAD SOCIAL CLASS TABLE

2D6	SOCIAL STATUS	ATTRIBUTE	EARNINGS
2	Underclass	Willpower	1
3-5	Demogrant	Personality	2
6-8	Middle	Willpower	3
9-10	Upper	Agility	4
11	Elite	Personality	5
12	Hyper-Elite	Willpower	6

STEP TWO: HOME ENVIRONMENT

By necessity, Nomads are highly communal. Even on *Tunguska*, the surrounding environment can influence a child's upbringing as much as their family, if not more so. Roll 1d6 and consult the *Nomad Home Environment Table*. The result describes the dominant social structure you grew up with. For example, if you had a Bohemian environment as a Hyper-Elite from *Tunguska*, you might have had Bakunian tutors, and their kids were your main peer group. If you had an Old-School upbringing, your parents probably weren't first-generation Corregidorans, but they might be 5th generation Nomads, proudly carrying on their tradition.

HOME ENVIRONMENT TABLE

D6	ENVIRONMENT	ATTRIBUTE	SKILL
1	Bohemian	Personality	Education
2	Violent	Brawn	Acrobatics
3	Garage Rat	Awareness	Tech
4	Old-School	Willpower	Pilot
5	Regimented	Intelligence	Discipline
6	High Society	Personality	Lifestyle

DECISION SEVEN: NOMAD ADOLESCENT EVENT

Across the Human Sphere, adolescence is recognised as a rebellious time in one's life. In a faction defined by rebellion, that can take some extreme forms.

Characters in the Nomad Faction roll on the *Nomad Faction Adolescent Event Tables*. If the character's heritage and faction are different, then they may choose to roll on either faction's unique table on a roll of 1-3.

NOMAD ADOLESCENT EVENT TABLES

D6	TABLE
1-3	Nomad Adolescent Event Table
4	Adolescent Event Table A ¹
5	Adolescent Event Table B ²
6	Adolescent Event Table C ³

¹ *Infinity Corebook*, p.49-52

DECISION EIGHT: CAREERS

In the Nomad Nation, careers are more than just a job; they're often a way of life. Becoming a Jaguar or an Interventor is more than a simple change in vocation, it's a response to implied events. By reading between the lines, Nomad characters can gain a rich, complex history, as varied and colourful as the Nomad Nation itself.

NOMAD ADOLESCENT EVENT TABLE

D20	ADOLESCENT EVENT	SUGGESTED CHARACTER TRAIT	OPTIONAL EFFECT
1	Dragnet caught you trying to hack into the Bank of <i>Tunguska</i> . But instead of throwing you in jail, they simply made some introductions.	Known Black Hat	Increase Hacking by 1 rank. You may take Interventor as your first career.
2	You got spaced. You survived, thanks to your vacuum suit, but you screamed your throat bloody raw just the same.	Void Terror	Decrease Morale by 1. Increase the complication range on Extraterrestrial tests by 2.
3	Tinkering with your geist, you attempted to overclock its processor. You succeeded, though the end result left you a little exposed.	Obsessive Tinkerer	Increase your geist's Intelligence by 1, but reduce your Firewall by 1.
4	While doing a little zero-G vandalism, you wound up tagging a Bureau Noir agent's ship.	Jinxed	Spend 1d6 years in prison before starting your first career. Gain 1 rank in Extraterrestrial and gain a rival or contact in Bureau Noir.
5	You take an internship on one of Praxis's Black Ships. Even better, you survive the process with most of your bits intact.	Insatiable Curiosity	Increase Science by 1 rank. You may take Praxis Scientist as your first career.
6	You volunteered for an experimental neural augmentation procedure. They say they'll have the bugs worked out any day now.	Glitchy Augs	Increase Intelligence by 1, but increase the complication range on Intelligence-based tests by 1.
7	Fed up with your home life, you stole a ship and went joyriding. Did they ever catch you?	Reckless	Increase Pilot by 1 rank.
8	You were beaten within an inch of your life, but they couldn't make you stay down.	Stubborn	Reduce Vigour by 1, but increase Morale by 1.
9	A nasty explosion leaves you badly burnt; your dermal replacements work a little too well.	Hyper-Sensitive Skin	Reduce Brawn by 1.
10	You get accepted into the Tunguskan Outer University's prestigious School of Law, an honour you can't possibly afford. That is, until you're made an offer you can't refuse.	Mafia Connections	Increase Education by 1, but gain a 10 Asset debt. Gain a contact at the university, and you may take Barrister Corps as your first career.
11	They said that replacing your lymph nodes with neomaterials would boost your immune system. It's certainly had an effect.	Shredded Immune System	Increase the complication range on Resistance tests by 2. Repairing this damage is possible, but the procedure will cost 4+4 (and you probably want a different clinic).
12	You got your first exotic augmentation. It felt better than good: it felt right.	Inhuman Appearance	Gain Cosmetic Augmentation 2. You may take Chimera as your first career.
13	You fell in with a rough crowd, running with the <i>maras</i> gangs of <i>Corregidor</i> . Caught red-handed, you were offered a choice: prison or something exponentially tougher.	Trouble Magnet	Gain a Criminal Record (see <i>Infinity Corebook</i> , p. 54). Either spend 1d6 years in prison before starting your first career or select Jaguar as your first career.
14	You get heavily involved in the protest art scene; footage of your numerous arrests goes viral. At least they got your good side.	The Usual Suspect	You gain 1 rank in Thievery, but all Stealth tests are increased in difficulty by one step in situations where being recognised would cause you a problem
15	You fell ill, and the Praxis doctors were convinced that carbon nanotubes in your spleen were the solution. Regardless, it didn't kill you; perhaps it made you stronger?	Experimental Insides	Increase your complication range on Resistance tests by 2. Increase Vigour by 1.
16	You did it, you got caught, and earned yourself a year of mandatory labour. At least you learned a thing or two about starship maintenance.	Bad Company	Gain a Criminal Record (see <i>Infinity Corebook</i> , p. 54). Spend one year in prison before starting your first career, but gain 1 rank in Tech.
17	You fell in with a group of anarchist hackers, taking pot shots at Maya. An Aspect – or maybe ALEPH itself – found you and torched your friends. It saw you, but let you escape, declining to explain its actions.	Person of Interest	Gain 1 Rank in Hacking.
18	You signed up for an experimental military enhancement program. It surpassed expectations.	Early-Access Wetware	Increase Brawn by 1.
19	You always wondered if the struggle was worth it. A better offer came, and you took it; what's the harm in that?	Sellout	You defect to a new faction. Roll on the <i>Faction Table</i> (see <i>Infinity Corebook</i> , p. 41) to determine your new allegiance. On a roll of 5, 6, or 20, you haven't actually defected; you're a Double Agent.
20	The Praxis doctors were convinced that they could make you immune to disease. They were correct, after a fashion. The dead don't exactly catch cold.	Cynical	Your character died and was resurrected. See the rules for <i>Resurrection</i> in the <i>Infinity Corebook</i> , p. 54.

DOUBLE AGENTS

In the espionage-rich world of *Infinity*, double (and even triple) agents are rare, but not unheard of. Whether a character is sent to infiltrate, or develops divided loyalties, Double Agents have a lot to keep track of.

They have two factions: their current faction, and their “true faction” where their loyalties lie. By default, Double Agents use their current faction when determining careers, restriction, tariffs, etc. If they wish, they can use their true faction in its place, though this is risky. Any rolls involving your true faction double their complication range (so a complication range of 1 becomes 2, a range of 3 becomes 6, and so on).

In a Wilderness of Mirrors campaign, Double Agents have two different handlers, one each for their current and true factions. When giving out covert objectives, the true faction handler will be cognisant of the Double Agent’s need to protect their cover. This may require altering covert objectives. GMs are encouraged to use their discretion.

If a Double Agent’s current faction becomes suspicious, it will take steps to ascertain the character’s true loyalties. And of course, if their cover is ever blown, a Double Agent can no longer use their current faction when making rolls, though that’s likely the least of their concerns.

IT’S ALL WHO YOU KNOW

Nomads of similar backgrounds tend to look out for each other. Thus, your character’s Heritage Trait can play a useful role in their career path. Consult the *Heritage Careers Table*. If you elect to hazard a recommended career, you may reduce the difficulty by one step.

HERITAGE CAREERS TABLE

HERITAGE TRAIT	RECOMMENDED CAREERS
Bakunian	Chimera, Clockmaker, Provocateur
Corregidoran	‘Cat Squad Member, Jaguar, Heavy Industry
Tunguskan	Barrister Corps, Hacker, Interventor
Lub’	Infiltrator, Investigative Journalist, Pilot
Missionary	Bounty Hunter, Diplomat, Negotiator

Life among the stars presents its own special challenges, as does being the birthplace of Arachne, leading many Nomads to pick up skills that might otherwise be deemphasised. Compared to other factions, the Nomads stress the Hacking and Extraplanetary skills.

Nomad characters may roll on the *Basic Career Table*, spend 1 Life Point to pick a career from the *Basic Career Table*, or spend 1 Life Point to roll on the *Nomad Faction Career Table*. Additionally, whenever they would normally determine a career event they roll on the *Nomad Faction Career Event Tables* to determine which *Career Event Table* to roll on.

NOMAD FACTION CAREER TABLE

D20	CAREER
1	Special Forces ¹
2	Intelligence Operative ¹
3	Reverend Agent ^{1,2}
4	Heavy Industry ¹
5	Investigative Journalist ¹
6	Hacker ¹
7	‘Cat Squad Member
8	Jaguar
9	Negotiator
10	Barrister Corps ²
11	Chimera
12	Praxis Scientist
13	Infiltrator
14	Interventor ²
15	Praxis Scientist
16	Mothership Security Corps ²
17	Clockmaker ²
18	Provocateur
19–20	Roll on <i>Faction Table</i> of Your Choice

¹ Career from *Infinity Corebook*.

² Career has a prerequisite of belonging to this faction. You can’t hazard this career unless you’re of the matching faction. If you roll into this career, you automatically fail your defection check. You can override these limitations by spending 1 Life Point (in which case you were somehow under-cover while working the career).

NOMAD FACTION CAREER EVENT TABLES

D6	CAREER
1–3	Nomad Career Event Table
4	Career Event Table A ¹
5	Career Event Table B ¹
6	Career Event Table C ¹

¹ *Infinity Corebook*, p.56–58

NOMAD CAREER EVENT TABLE

D20	CAREER EVENT	GAME EFFECT
1	An old contact from Praxis gets you into an experimental program after the first test subjects found the risks. Most of them.	Either increase an Attribute of your choice by 1, gaining a 10 Asset debt along the way, or gain a contact in Praxis's Black Labs.
2	While on assignment, a hypercorp purchases a controlling interest in your client, resulting in mass layoffs. You're in the process of organising a noisy response when an executive approaches you with a juicy offer.	If you take the offer, increase Earnings by 1, but gain a character trait related to accepting the offer. Otherwise, you are Fired (see <i>Infinity Corebook</i> , p. 54).
3	Someone looking exactly like you crashes through a window, accuses you of stealing their identity, and opens fire. After they're chased off, you receive a notice: the technician who does your Cube backups has disappeared.	Gain trait: Cube Doppelgänger.
4	Coming back from a job, your pilot has a medical emergency, and you get shoved into the cockpit. It was certainly a learning experience.	Gain 1 rank in Spacecraft.
5	During some routine external repairs, a sudden impact knocked you and your fellows loose. Your quick thinking managed to save some but not all of the crew. How did you choose?	Gain contacts in a random faction.
6	You're involved in spreading a memetic virus through Maya. ALEPH thanks you for your contributions with a quantum virus of its own.	Reduce Firewall by 1.
7	When your ship was damaged in transit, everyone looked to you to make the zero-G repairs.	Gain 1 rank in Extraplanetary.
8	Tinkering with your geist's personality emulator, you wind up with mixed results.	Gain Trait: Quirky Geist and increase your geist's Personality by 1.
9	While working planetside, you get a rare taste of terrestrial weather when you're stranded for a week. Did it rain? Snow? Something worse?	Gain 1 rank in Survival but gain a 2 Asset debt to your eventual rescuers.
10	Whether in salvage, falling off the back of a truck, or other means, you find a perfectly good Tinbot just lying around.	Gain a Tinbot Remote. Gain a character trait describing the Tinbot's unique and troublesome quirks.
11	After a workplace accident leaves you hospitalised, you opt to get some structural reinforcement.	Reduce Vigour by 1 but gain a Subdermal Graft Augmentation in a hit location of your choosing.
12	The good news is that experimental brain surgery managed to remove all the shrapnel. The bad news is that some of your synapses are firing a little slower. The worse news is that you had shrapnel in your brain; how'd it get there?	Reduce Intelligence by 1.
13	You met the love of your life. But over time, you've come to suspect that they're an Aspect of ALEPH. Do you confront them?	Gain a contact in a random faction. Work with your GM to determine if they're an ally, rival, or something else entirely.
14	You become part of a truly esoteric subculture.	Gain a character trait describing your new association.
15	You find yourself caught up in a controversy. A <i>Tunguskan</i> lawyer can help, but it won't be cheap.	Either reduce Social Status by one step, or gain a 6+6  Asset debt, as expensive legal trickery saves you.
16	You come across a <i>Tunguskan</i> Elite in some serious hot water. They lean on you to help them out, while Bureau Aegis tries to warn you away. Either course will have benefits and consequences. What do you do?	If you choose to help them, gain a Criminal Record (see <i>Infinity Corebook</i> , p. 54) and spend 1d6 years in prison, but gain 10 assets in gratitude payoff. If you choose not to, reduce Social Status by one step, but gain 1 rank in Discipline.
17	A hobby invention of yours becomes a brief fad.	Gain 5 Assets.
18	You strongly disagree with your supervisor, and in grand Nomad tradition, express this by punching them in the face.	You are Fired (see <i>Infinity Corebook</i> , p. 54). Gain an appropriate trait.
19	Whether by accident, recklessness, or something more sinister, you found out exactly how well those airlocks work and what it's like to experience the wonders of space without a suit.	Your character died and was Resurrected. See the rules for <i>Resurrection</i> (see <i>Infinity Corebook</i> , p.54). Gain a trait related to the experience.
20	There's a running joke that the only law that every Nomad obeys is Murphy's law. Well, anything that could go wrong is currently doing so.	Roll again three times on the <i>Career Event Table</i> for this career phase. (When spending a Life Point to choose a specific event, you may not choose this result. If you roll duplicate events, it means some similar event has occurred. If you roll Murphy's Law again, add additional rolls.)

CAREER PROFILE

'CAT SQUAD MEMBER

Associated more by nomenclature and a shared aesthetic than anything else, Corregidor's Tomcats, Hellcats, and Wildcats are nonetheless bound together by a singular thread: it's difficult to imagine the Nomad Nation surviving without them. Whether defending the Motherships, rescuing stranded workers, or out on consignment, life in the NMF's 'Cat Squads is many things, but it's never dull.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
+1	+1	+2	+2	+2	+1	+1

SKILLS

Mandatory	Ballistics	Extralaentary	Hacking
Elective	See 'Cat Squads		

EARNINGS

See 'Cat Squads

GEAR: See 'Cat Squads

SPECIAL: When taking this career for the first time, roll on the 'Cat Squads Table to determine your Squad. Once you've determined your Squad, you no longer roll upon taking this career, but if desired, you can attempt an Average (D1) hazard test to repeat this career in the Squad of your choice. In any case, you can instead spend 1 Life Point to simply choose your Squad.



'CAT SQUADS

Hellcats: The epitome of the NMF's "Always Ready" motto, Hellcats keep themselves in top shape year-round, as at any moment, they may need to deploy in record time, possibly faster. Frequently dropping out of aircraft with little more than a "good luck," Hellcats are not only tough, but disarmingly jovial. After all, if they can survive their missions, what else is there to worry about?

Tomcats: Heroes to the core, Nomad kids fantasize about being Tomcats when they grow up. The Tomcat Special Emergency and Rescue Team is the NMF's answer when things hit the fan. Search and rescue, hostage liberation, or even rapid response military operations, the goal is always the same: save lives.

Wildcats: Unlike their counterparts in search and rescue, rare is the young Nomad who wants to be a Wildcat. Originally comprised of veterans from Africa's "Road Wars"—though survivors might be a more appropriate term—the modern Wildcats are a no-nonsense team of shock troops, drawn from street toughs, violent criminals, and folks with few other immediate options.

Each Squad has a distinct set of Elective Skills that it teaches its troops. When working the 'Cat Squad Member career, roll on the 'Cat Squads Table below or spend 1 Life Point to select a Squad, then use its Electives. At your GM's discretion, you may also use your Squad's Elective Skills in place of the standard for the Special Forces or Intelligence Operative careers, or other careers on a case-by-case basis.

'CAT SQUADS TABLE

D20	SQUAD	ELECTIVE SKILLS	GEAR	EARNINGS
1-7	Tomcats	Medicine, Spacecraft, Tech	MedKit or Powered Multitool, Light Combat Armour, Combi Rifle	2+2
8-12	Hellcats	Athletics, Medicine, Pilot,	Combat Jump Pack, Spitfire or Assault Hacking Device, Light Combat Armour	2+1
13-20	Wildcats	Discipline, Resistance, Thievery	Boarding Shotgun or Assault Hacking Device, Medium Combat Armour	1+2

CAREER PROFILE

BARRISTER CORPS

If the pen is mightier than the sword, the 101st Barrister Corp's legal briefs are the equal of any TAG. A *Tunguska* tradition dating back to the Phantom Conflicts, the Barrister Corps repays aggression towards the Nomads with weaponised legal assaults; geists, LAIs, and more than a few botnets help unleash torrents of legal spam upon their targets. While most documents they produce are only dangerous if ignored, if an inbox is flooded with hundreds of thousands of such memos, one eventually slips through. The 101st prides itself on using unconscionably vile techniques such as takedown notices, zoning disputes, information requests, or good old-fashioned patent trolling that would surely be considered war crimes to their combat equivalents. Considering themselves among the Nomad's most efficient defenders, everyone knows better than to argue with them.

ATTRIBUTES						
AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
+1	+2	–	+1	+2	+2	+2

SKILLS				EARNINGS
Mandatory	Analysis	Education	Psychology	2+5
Elective	Ballistics	Education	Persuade	

GEAR: Neural Hacking Socket, Assault Hacking Device

CAREER PROFILE

CHIMERA

Though anyone can get cosmetic augmentations, Chimera, by definition, take them to a transformative extreme. Bushy fox tail? Ram horns? Maybe some cat ears? Where other Nomads might dabble, Chimera are likely to combine them all. For some, it's a way to stand out in a crowd, and for others, an imperfect journey towards a body they can finally feel comfortable in. Progressive by necessity, many end up in prostitution, pornography, and Submondo-run fight clubs. Capable in defending themselves, a rare few join the *Überfallkommandos* tasked with infiltrating and disrupting these illegal and exploitive rings. Regardless of their vocation, Chimera saunter through life with a pronounced swagger, even if it engenders trouble more often than not.

ATTRIBUTES						
AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
+2	+1	+2	+2	–	+2	+1

SKILLS				EARNINGS
Mandatory	Acrobatics	Athletics	Close Combat	0+4
Elective	Animal Handling	Lifestyle	Thievery	

GEAR: Cosmetic Augmentation 2, Implanted Wetspike or Climbing Plus, SecureCuffs, Recorder

SPECIAL: If working this career multiple times, you can either take a new Cosmetic Augmentation, or increase the value of an existing Cosmetic Augmentation by +1

CAREER PROFILE

CLOCKMAKER

While Clockmakers may or may not be *Bakunin's* most valuable contribution to the NMF, they're probably its most beloved. Consummate tinkerers, the Clockmakers are called in to rebuild, repair, and reinvent, often in extremely hazardous situations. Like most of the NMF, they live in a state of constant readiness, never knowing when the call to action will go out. Unlike most of their peers, however, their skillset is best sharpened by constant interaction with civilian projects. As such, it's not uncommon to see a garage, forge works, or even the occasional boutique watch shop act as a combination of home base and playground for the Clockmakers when they're not on deployment. Specialists in non-linear thought, Clockmakers are known for unorthodox and forward-looking technical solutions, though their tendency to tinker with everything in sight—including themselves—can sometimes get them into trouble.

ATTRIBUTES						
AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
+2	–	+1	+1	+3	+1	+1

SKILLS				EARNINGS
Mandatory	Discipline	Education	Tech	1+2
Elective	Acrobatics	Lifestyle	Tech	

GEAR: Neural Comlog, D-Charge (3), Powered Multitool, Repair Kit

CAREER PROFILE

HACKER

Nearly any conceivable information exists on the Maya network. Hackers make a living breaking down electronic barriers and uncovering secrets, or taking data from others for the purposes of fraud, theft, or mere thrills. Hackers also work with law enforcement, helping to track those with similar skills or counter their efforts. Some specialise in hacking corporate networks, like those of the massive banks and producers of consumer products. Others see it as an art form, hacking challenging military networks or plunging into the depths of Maya in order to find something no one else can.

ATTRIBUTES						
AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
+1	+2	+1	+2	+2	+2	–

SKILLS				EARNINGS
Mandatory	Thievery	Hacking	Tech	2+2
Elective	Observation	Ballistics	Stealth	

GEAR: Deployable Repeater (x3), Powered Multitool, Assault or Defensive Hacking Device

CAREER PROFILE

HEAVY INDUSTRY

While expert systems and automation has reduced the number of workers involved in industrial pursuits, those that remain are all the more critical, providing skills and judgment. Modern materials require vacuum purification in electron-beam furnaces; titanic terraforming processors need calibration and adjustment to local conditions before being set to automated operation; volatile planetary core taps demand human decisions where predictive physics break down; and even automated maintenance systems want for their own upkeep. Industrial specialists are an increasingly rare breed that understand the link between sweat and advanced technology. Their knowledge spans grease guns to exclusion fields, and they have the experience to apply either to a problem. Professionals in this field are the gears that keep the Human Sphere turning.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
+1	+2	-	+2	+2	+1	+2

SKILLS

Mandatory	Resistance	Pilot	Tech
Elective	Close Combat	Persuade	Thievery

EARNINGS

2+1

GEAR: Gruntsuit (with Respirator 1), Powered Multitool, Painkillers (x3), Repair Kit

CAREER PROFILE

INFILTRATOR

Nomad military doctrine is massively reliant on the ability to counterstrike anyone, anywhere, without warning or preparation time. For retaliatory strikes to be effective, Nomads rely heavily on Infiltrators. *Bakunin's* Zeros – codenamed for their exceptionally low number of failed missions and casualties – scout deep behind enemy lines and acquire critical info for the Nomad's deterrence strategies. Bakunian Prowlers' aggressive, no-holds-barred tactics offer creative solutions to the enemy's continued respiration. *Tunguska's* Spektr troops specialise in industrial espionage, often undertaking small "additional objectives" while working for third parties. And the Corregidor Assault Commandos (Intruders) routinely conceal their presence amongst Corregidoran work crews, ensuring a safe working environment for their shipmates. Preferring to work in the shadows, stealth isn't always an option, so Infiltrators are every bit as comfortable kicking down a door as they are staying hidden.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
+1	+1	+1	+2	+2	+2	+1

SKILLS

Mandatory	Hacking	Observation	Stealth
Elective	Ballistics	Discipline	Lifestyle

EARNINGS

2+1

GEAR: Boarding Shotgun or HMG, Armoured Clothing, Chameleonwear or Cosmetics Kit

CAREER PROFILE

INTERVENTOR

Tunguska's economy is entirely dependent upon information security. Without ironclad assurances that their funds, data, or other information is safe, confidence in the Bank of Tunguska would plummet. Leaks, downtime, and other compromises are simply not an option. Fortunately, *Tunguska* is home to arguably the best and most creative hackers in the Human Sphere, with the Interventors foremost among them. Leaving no stone unturned in their search for the best Infowarriors available, *Tunguska's* Dagnet often turns to problematic "black hat" hackers, offering them the chance to take on the biggest challenges, with the best support, working alongside some of the most notorious hackers. Interventors do more than just secure financial transactions. These Infowarriors ensure quanontric superiority across a wide array of battlefields, many of them quite literal.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
+1	+2	+1	+1	+3	-	+1

SKILLS

Mandatory	Hacking	Observation	Tech
Elective	Hacking	Resistance	Stealth

EARNINGS

1+4

GEAR: Hacking Device Plus, FastPanda



CAREER PROFILE

INTELLIGENCE OPERATIVE

The tense state of conflict in the Human Sphere means every agency looks for an edge over its competitors. Intelligence Operatives conduct corporate espionage, deep-cover spy missions, acts of sabotage, and other acts which risk their life and limb for agencies that would disavow any knowledge of, or connection to, their operations. An Intelligence Operative is quick-witted, highly disciplined, and often alone in a place surrounded by enemies unaware of the traitor in their midst. They trade in secrets – information that can turn the tide of small-scale conflicts, like raids on secret warehouses holding valuable experimental gear or data – and they can influence the large-scale skirmishes that take place between rival nations. The intelligence an operative collects can cause wars or end them with equal facility.

ATTRIBUTES						
AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
+1	+3	–	+2	+2	+1	+1

SKILLS				EARNINGS
Mandatory	Observation	Stealth	Analysis	3+1
Elective	Hacking	Education	Thievery	

GEAR: Fake ID 2, AP Pistol (with 4 Reloads), Breaking & Entering Kit, Recorder

CAREER PROFILE

INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALIST

Maya has more than its fair share of tabloid reporting and fluff stories, but the Investigative Journalist seeks the real stuff. Journalists hunt the truth, bringing word to the public about enemy action, the heroic efforts of national forces, and of course the latest scandals to haunt politicians and entertainers alike. Investigative Journalists often face hostility from those they investigate, and tend to have more than a few criminal skills like shadowing, breaking and entering, and sometimes falsifying data to gain admittance to places otherwise barred from them. Some see their cause as bringing the truth to light, while others simply have an insatiable curiosity and a penchant for getting into (and hopefully out of) trouble.

ATTRIBUTES						
AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
+2	+2	–	+2	+1	+2	+1

SKILLS				EARNINGS
Mandatory	Stealth	Persuade	Observation	1+2
Elective	Hacking	Education	Thievery	

GEAR: Recorder or AR Eye Implants, Analysis Suite, Breaking & Entering Kit

CAREER PROFILE

JAGUAR

In the early days of *Corregidor*, *maras* gangs were running wild. While everyone else (correctly) saw a problem, Juan Sarmiento, “the Mexican General,” saw an opportunity. He offered the rowdies a choice: skinny dipping out an airlock, or join his new Jaguar unit. Over time, these thugs, gangsters, and troublemakers were hammered into a cohesive – if brutal – unit. A police unit.

It worked so shockingly well the practice continues to this day. Nobody knows gang territory like a Jaguar, and if local *maras* can avoid stirring up too much trouble, most Jaguars are happy to turn a blind eye. Given the Jaguar’s history and frequent deployment as NMf shock troops, most gangsters are only too happy with the arrangement.

ATTRIBUTES						
AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
+2	+1	+3	+1	–	+1	+1

SKILLS				EARNINGS
Mandatory	Athletics	Close Combat	Resistance	1+2
Elective	Acrobatics	Extraterrestrial	Thievery	

GEAR: Chain Rifle (with 1 Standard Reload), Knife, Smoke Grenades (3) or Nitrocane (2 Doses)

CAREER PROFILE

MOTHERSHIP SECURITY CORPS

Whether it’s *Bakunin’s* street savvy Moderators, *Corregidor’s* reliable Alguaciles, or the Tunguskan Dragnet’s grim Securitate direct tactical response force and tenacious Grenzer counter-intelligence teams, the Nomad Motherships require a flexible and adaptive security force. Protecting a Nomad Mothership is no walk in the park. Part military police, part detective, part riot cop, Mothership Security forces can be investigating a homicide on one day, then find themselves on mercenary deployment the next, only to spend the next week as mercenaries on the opposite side of the conflict, and finally return home to address a new wrinkle in their investigation. While each uses a variety of different assets to handle law enforcement and counter-terrorism actions, Motherships and Commercial Missions all rely on their security forces to evolve on the fly. Faced with no other option, they reliably do just that.

ATTRIBUTES						
AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
+1	+2	+1	+2	+2	+1	+1

SKILLS				EARNINGS
Mandatory	Ballistics	Extraterrestrial	Observation	1+2
Elective	Command	Hacking	Medicine	

GEAR: Armoured Clothing (Uniform), Hacking Device or MediKit, Combi Rifle or Spitfire

CAREER PROFILE

NEGOTIATOR

Words are powerful. Wars have been started, fortunes lost, and empires founded on the premise of a few carefully chosen words. It's no secret that the Nomad Nation needs every edge that it can get. When dialogue is the battlefield, they deploy their Negotiators to devastating effect. From the logic-fuelled arguments of the Tunguskan debaters, to the enticing persuasion of trendsetters from *Bakunin* and the *Corregidorans'* coercion techniques, these aggressive orators are experts at their craft. Whether making deals, negotiating over hostages, mediating disputes, or verbally eviscerating lobbyists, these wordsmiths excel in the science of communication, constantly pushing the state of the art forward. Nomad Negotiators understand what buttons to press.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
-	+2	-	-	+1	+3	+3

SKILLS

Mandatory	Discipline	Lifestyle	Persuade
Elective	Command	Observation	Persuade

EARNINGS

1+4

GEAR: Aletheia Suite, Negotiator's Suite (7 days rental credit), Armoured Clothing (High Fashion), Cosmetics Kit

CAREER PROFILE

PRAXIS SCIENTIST

Genius isn't clean. It's often messy, uncouth, difficult. Hard to deal with, even harder to understand. How could someone ever hope to regulate or control what they don't understand? Only in an open environment can genius reach its full potential. So goes the thinking of the Praxis Scientist, anyway. Whether they work in the fabled Black Laboratories, assist someone else, or have their own private setup, Praxis Scientists blaze a trail to the future. They code intelligent software, push the boundaries of xenomedical research, or simply build a better bomb, and Praxis offers the opportunity to pursue their research virtually unchecked. Of course, there's a flip side. Rogue AIs pop up unexpectedly, alien viruses can pose problems, and more than one lab has gone up in flames. But as long as they don't sink the boat, *Bakunin* gives them free reign, and they make ample use of it.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
+1	+3	-	-	+3	+1	+1

SKILLS

Mandatory	Analysis	Education	Science
Elective	Ballistics	Discipline	Lifestyle

EARNINGS

0+6

GEAR: AnyRez (1 Service, redeemable when necessary; roll on AnyRez Defects Table to determine the catch), Glavar Powder (2 Doses), Analytical Kit or Basic Medical Supplies

CAREER PROFILE

PROVOCATEUR

A Bakunian specialty, Provocateurs are famed throughout the Human Sphere, though for what, exactly, varies wildly. Some are performance artists *par excellence* whose evocative displays elicit tears from the hardest of hearts. Some are punk vandals whose protest art invades popular Mayacasts with rhythmic stink bomb detonations or defaces corporate headquarters with multi-layered AR graffiti programs. Others work quietly, but perhaps to greater effect, by disseminating information behind the scenes for insurgent groups or broadcasting their target's sins across Arachne. As agents of radical change, they're sometimes harnessed for viral marketing campaigns or funnelled into weapons-grade memes that dominate conversations in the Human Sphere. And sometimes, they turn on the Nomads, because no one is safe and nothing is sacred to a Provocateur. Their code is simple: be the defiance you wish to see in the world.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
+2	+1	-	+1	+2	+2	+2

SKILLS

Mandatory	Lifestyle	Persuade	Thievery
Elective	Acrobatics	Hacking	Tech

EARNINGS

0+4

GEAR: Freedom Kit, Fake ID 2, Recorder, Stealth Repeater, Optical Disruption Device

CAREER PROFILE

SPECIAL FORCES

The most elite soldiers in the Human Sphere carry out spec ops missions across known space... and sometimes upon unknown worlds. Special Forces units operate in covert missions of international warfare, hunting down war criminals, striking important assets, and retreating before anyone can blame their acting governments. These elite units also carry out the most difficult ops in the war for Paradiso, attacking Combined Army commanders and bases, rescuing allies caught far behind enemy lines, and countering the threat of elite enemy units. Governments deploy Special Forces when discretion is needed—all too common in the shadow warfare fought between nations of the Human Sphere—and when regular mercenaries or law enforcement simply aren't enough. A Special Forces soldier receives the finest training, equipment, and most important missions, demanding as much from themselves as their people do.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
+2	+2	+2	+1	+1	-	+2

SKILLS

Mandatory	Survival	Resistance	Ballistics
Elective	Close Combat	Hacking	Discipline

EARNINGS

2+1

GEAR: Medium Combat Armour, Combi Rifle or AP Rifle (with 5 Standard Reloads), Climbing Plus or Combat Jump Pack, Garrotte

CHAPTER 5

NOMAD GEAR

They have no planetary territory to draw on for resources or host heavy industry, and with a kaleidoscopic diversity of ideologies and cultures unwanted and discarded by their original nations. Locked in opposition with the sole legal AI and forced to fight for survival in the cold expanse of space, the Nomad Nation should have imploded within months. A year, at most. And yet, impossibly, they thrive.

Their response to these seemingly overwhelming problems is rampant, unchecked iterative innovation on every front – genetic engineering and cybernetic augmentation, ideological experimentation and memetic subversion, cutting-edge Infowar hardware and software competition, uplifted allies and samsara exploration, reinvention of contracts and workflows, and miniaturisation and environmental adaptation, across hundreds of small distributed modules, manufactories, habitats, startups, Black Labs, and Black Ships. The remarkable cultural surface area of Arachne's ubiquitous distributed network, their embedded Commercial Missions, their Motherships' migrations, and the fertile synthesis of their Krugs allow rapid exposure, discovery, exploration, correlation, competition, and cross-breeding of ideas and research, unfiltered by ALEPH's influence or governmental meddling.

Despite being unbounded by Yu Jing's stultifying hierarchies, PanOceania's ALEPH addiction, Haqqislam's high-minded abstraction, Hypercorps' sociopathic greed, or Ariadna's suspicious conservatism, the Nomads still find plenty of ways to get in their own way. So many voices pulling in so many directions can lead to inefficiency. Scarcity makes it easy to fixate on personal survival at the expense of the community. And with so much at stake, interpersonal matters of taste can easily metastasise into schismatic squabbling. The threats they face are paradoxically their greatest asset; there's no way to survive except by working together. The Nomads possess vital resources that would cost dearly elsewhere. Every person counts, and there's no margin for waste.

In motherships' and habitats' cramped spaces, ideology and affinity are often worn on one's sleeve or blazoned on one's halo, expressions of wealth and taste and style are close to or even beneath the skin, and even an extreme aesthetic will hardly raise an eyebrow, instead drawing an interested eye. More than anything, connections to each other and the community are the most valuable resource

the Nomads have. To access unique resources, start making friends and doing favours. It'll cost, but you can usually find what you need, a few things you didn't realise you needed, and have the time of your life along the way.

Adhesive Solvent: A go-to for troublemakers, rioters, and the law enforcement and security teams that immobilise them, this spray dissolves the gelatinous adhesives used in common crowd-control ammo. With a **Tech (D1) test**, a solvent canister can be used several ways. If sprayed on a Scale 0 vehicle, the wielder, or on a person in Reach, it renders them immune to all damage and effects from Adhesive and Goonade ammo for the scene and frees them if already immobilised. If sprayed into an adjacent zone, it has the Area (Close) quality, and gives a Scale 0 vehicle or person or immobilised by those munitions' effects a chance to escape at -2 difficulty (minimum 0).

Amygdawire Augmentation: Developed in Praxis's Black Labs, this invasive procedure links a user's neural hacking device directly into their brain's emotional centres, leveraging their subconscious for an Infowar edge. It requires a neural hacking device and activating or deactivating it requires a Minor Action. When active, it grants a bonus d20 to Infowar Hacking tests, but all quantronic damage is also taken as the same amount of mental damage.

AnyRez: It's an open secret that Praxis's Black Labs happily provide black market resurrections, with all the price-gouging, hand-wringing, and anxiety such a dodgy exchange entails. That said, a resurrection is the sort of thing one can't acquire when they need it – since they're dead. To address this need, Praxis provides illegal resurrection services, redeemable later when the buyer is dead. Compared to legal resurrections, or even the "conventional" black market resurrections, providers of AnyRez are downright accessible and will happily sell their special brand of resurrection insurance to virtually anyone, hence the name.

Getting them to hold up their end of the bargain can be another story. At the time of death, a character acquiring an AnyRez service makes a **Persuade test** with a difficulty based on the service previously purchased. On a success, the resurrection is arranged, and can be redeemed at a future date with no further strings attached. However, if the test is failed, then the GM rolls on the *AnyRez Defects Table*, adding the Difficulty

WHAT YOU'LL FIND IN THIS CHAPTER

A catalogue of new augmentations, weapons, armour, programs, tools, and remotes made in or available in the Nomad Nation.

ANYREZ DEFECTS TABLE

1D20	DEFECT	EFFECT
1	By some miracle, it's actually better than you expected. Keeping it that way, however, will be expensive.	Add +1 to your Maintenance cost, but add +1 to your Firewall, Resolve, and Vigour for as long as you keep up the payments.
2-3	It was easy to integrate with your new Personal Area Network. One problem: it's easy for everyone.	Reduce Firewall by 1.
4-5	It's got the upgrades you asked for, and some that you didn't. They work. Mostly.	Gain AR Eye Implants but increase the complication range on Observation tests by +2.
6-7	It looks fine. It works fine. But it feels... off.	Reduce Morale by 1.
8-9	Everything is perfect, but they got the biological sex wrong.	Your new host is the opposite sex from what you intended.
10-13	Your new host looks fine on the outside, but it seems to be missing some crucial bits.	Suffer -1 to an Attribute of your choosing.
14-15	Corners were cut in construction; you're just not as sturdy as you'd expected you'd be.	Reduce Vigour by 1.
16-17	Your squishy bits are considerably squishier than you'd hoped.	It only takes 4 points of damage to inflict a Wound, instead of the normal 5.
18-19	Something's weird with the voice box. It's not entirely unpleasant – you can sing better now – but your melodic voice can make it hard to take you seriously.	Your singsong voice makes life interesting. Increase the difficulty of all Intimidation tests by +2. Additionally, increase the complication range on all Persuade tests by +1.
20	When they said it might cost you an arm and a leg, you had assumed they were joking. You were very, very wrong.	The Lhost is missing one random limb and is fitted with an unconvincing, useless prosthetic.

of the test and notes the results. If and when the AnyRez is redeemed, apply the modifications to the character's new Lhost.

Breaker Bar: Somewhere between a massive scalpel and a crude short spear, a breaker bar is a few feet of plasteel pipe embedded with an industrial-grade blade used to cut through fences, bolts, padlocks, chains, cables, and even nano-reinforced glass for break-ins, vandalism, urban exploration, and theft. They count as Thievery tools and add a bonus Momentum to tests to bypass physical security measures or destroy objects. When wielded as a two-handed weapon, it deals 1+4 **(N)** Physical damage, and has the Anti-Materiel 2, Piercing 1, and Improvised 4 qualities.

Carbon4 Outfit: A FastWeave microbrand used by the Nomad underclass when they want to impress, Carbon4 clothing is available for Underclass clothing costs, and can give the appearance of Middle-class apparel for the first week each month that clothing maintenance is paid, but anyone with Lifestyle expertise of 2 or more will immediately recognise it for what it is. Available in a variety of cuts and styles, the outfits are made of a black quickfab material that lasts for decades, but wears down to a muddy grey with use, chafes when sweat-soaked, and stains easily, adding +1 complication range to Persuade or Command tests with individuals of Middle social class or higher.

CLAW-2 Black Widow: Created by *Tunguska's* secretive 3C-NK hacking collective, this program forces targets to reset their systems, and then interferes

with those systems' recoveries. On a successful attack, 3 Momentum can be spent to inflict a special Breach Effect to force the target's systems to reset. The target fully recovers their Firewall, but any actions they take using items with the Comms or Expert qualities will increase their difficulty by four steps and inflict 1+4 **(N)** quantronic damage per action. This penalty decreases by one at the start of each of the target's turns, and the associated damage decreases by 1 **(N)** as well, to minimum of 1+0 **(N)**. This final damage per action lingers until the Breach Effect is removed. The target can spend Momentum to reduce the penalty and damage by one per two Momentum spent.


Conlang Voicebox: The use of constructed languages, or conlangs, is a common way for Nomad subcultures to consciously construct how they communicate and make it difficult for outsiders to eavesdrop. Modern linguistics can construct extremely intricate languages but are heavily constrained by the human larynx and articulators. A conlang voicebox solves this issue by replacing the user's larynx and portions of their tongue, palate, cheeks, and sinuses with precise xeno-grafted tissues. It also adds neural grafts to their cerebellum and auditory nerves for higher-resolution control and fidelity, allowing them to speak and understand complex conlangs, as well as easily mimic accents, voices, and sounds.

The voicebox adds a bonus d20 to Observation tests based on hearing, Stealth, or Lifestyle disguise tests that involve speaking. When communicating with someone who also has one and

Resurrection (Black Market),
p. 394, *Infinity Corebook.*

knows a shared conlang, the voicebox allows the use of the *Imply Psywar* action as a Free Action. Attempts by outsiders who do not know the conlang to interpret what is said requires an **Analysis (D4) test**, an **Education (D3) test** if it is related to a topic they are very familiar with, or a **Lifestyle (D2) test** if they are a member of the conlang's subculture. These tests are at -1 difficulty if the interpreter also has a conlang voicebox, sensor array, or a Geist with Education Focus of 3 or more.

CrazyKoala: Made by Yu Jing's Aizuri-sho and purchased in large quantities by the NMF, these adorable mine chassis can be controlled directly or given one of a few simple orders for a round. The remote mechanism's complexity prevents payloads beyond simple explosives, but they more than make up for it with the element of surprise. Sold in pairs, they have 1 Armour and 3 Structure, and detonate if they receive a Fault. As a Minor Action, anyone with network permissions to a CrazyKoala can give it one of the following commands:

- Move from its current zone to an adjacent zone.
- Follow an ally in its current zone and move with them when they move.
- Leap at and detonate on anyone without permissions who moves into its zone.
- Rush a target in its current or an adjacent zone and detonate for +1  damage.

Domovik Apprentice: Named for mythological helpful spirits, these Nomad-made AI assist with complex informational tasks. Commissioned to help Tunguska's Dragnet operatives quickly filter data during undercover operations, each Domovik is unique and evolves a personality to best fit their user's needs. The device is small, easily carried in a pack or on a belt, and can be set to fuse its quantronics, rendering it useless, to keep it out of enemy hands. This is crucial, because while they appear to be LAI to cursory examination, each Domovik skirts dangerously close to a breach of the Sole AI law due to their capacity for learning and self-modification. When acquired, each has 1d6 charges, and if the user spends a day or night indulging its interests and interacting with it, it gains a charge. It acts as a Rating 1 Expert System for the Analysis skill, and adds 2d20 to the user's roll when assisting, but loses a charge if any Complications are rolled on a test it assists on. If it runs out of charges, it burns out and dies.

Experimental Waldo X: Experimental Waldos are articulated mechanical arms that can provide a scientist with an extra hand. An Experimental Waldo counts as a kit, granting 1 bonus Momentum to Science tests. One or more Waldos can also assist on a Science test with a target number of 10+X. Each additional Waldo used in an experiment halves the amount of time it takes to complete

but adds +1 complication range. Alternatively, Experimental Waldos can be used as remotes, allowing their user to perform science tests without being physically present. (The normal penalties for operating a remote apply.)

FastPanda: A half-metre tall, these tiny humanoid automatons vaguely resemble panda cubs and carry a repeater with a high-output battery. Their battery only lasts an hour, and they are cheap enough that only the most impoverished or sentimental operatives retrieve them after use. They function as deployable repeaters, except that when deployed as a Standard Action, they move under their own power to any point their controller designates within Medium range. On reaching their destination (usually within Reach of cover), they sit down and devote all remaining power to their repeater. They have Structure 3, are destroyed after suffering a single Fault, only move when first deployed, can take no actions besides waddling to a destination and activating their repeater, and take an hour to recharge once used.

FFP Repeater Rounds (FFP): Specifically designed for use with Foomp Flingers, Pako repeater rounds (Albanian for "parcel," Tagalog for "wing," and Central Bikol for "nail" or "fern") are durable miniaturized repeaters. Smart-material spring-fins ensure accuracy, a kineto-spongiform casing allows them to survive impact at ballistic speeds, and their resonant neo-material batteries and transmitters provide surprising signal clarity while they last. As a result, they are indispensable for griefers, criminals, and the Moderators that pursue them. An FFP round activates and functions as a repeater for one scene when successfully fired into a zone. If fired from any device besides a Foomp Flinger, the ammo adds +2 Complication range to the weapon.

WALDOS FROM WHERE?

Bakunin's Redstripe module is a well-regarded manufacturer of experimental waldos, and they are incredibly common on that mothership due to generous barter and licensing deals with other modules. Simple rank-0 versions, called "Walli Waldos", are common gifts for students with scientific aspirations or whose parents are on good terms with Redstripe.



SRS FLAMEWAR

In addition to their popularity with mercenaries and corsairs for boarding actions and urban combat, Fulgor rifles are standard issue for many elite NMF units and Nomad security forces, including Grenzer Security Teams, Tomcat Emergency and Rescue Special Teams, *Corregidor's* Intruders, *Bakunin's* Prowler specialists, and the veteran Wildcats of the Polyvalent Tactical Unit.

MODERATOR RFCS

When *Bakunin's* Moderators have a technical issue they can't solve in-house or need a new piece of standard-issue equipment, they issue a Request For Contributions, a special Black Bounty with strict, even patently unreasonable acceptance criteria: several have been open for years. In addition to a commensurate fee, the Moderators' favour is intensely valuable, and contributors can annotate and comment on each another's submissions, leading to intense — and even surprisingly productive — debates and revisions. Winners go through a closed final review and development phase to ensure their solution is confidential and free of subtle exploits.

J-FARR KOLLECTIV'S FOOMPS

Named for their distinctive sound when fired, Foomp Flingers were initially J-Farr Kollektiv's contribution to the Tsyklon Sputnik development effort, but Moderators quickly became their most avid users. Foomps solved an RFC — open for almost a decade — for a more portable means of rapidly expanding Mods' quantronic reach in emergencies. J-Farr's members have enjoyed a frankly scandalous degree of latitude ever since.

Flexwear Outfit: *Bakunin* smart-material fashion designed for rapid reconfiguration, Lorolocco Flexwear — and its many imitators — leverage nano-pumped, inflatable string-tube segments and selectively-adhesive display fabrics to create a single large piece of cloth that can be used for hundreds of unique looks, mimicking many ordinary fabrics and materials. A character can quickly create a disguise with one full round of complete attention, and Flexwear counts as a kit with one bonus Momentum to Disguise tests or to Lifestyle tests to imitate a subculture's aesthetic. It possesses the Comms quality during the round of reconfiguration but can be placed into Non-Hackable “dumb mode” without penalty once set.

Foomp Flinger: Like ordinary pitchers, J-Farr Kollektiv's Foomp Flingers fire deployable repeaters as Reloads just as grenade launchers fire grenades. Unlike their bulkier cousins, Foomps and the fired FFP repeater rounds are miniaturised for easy incorporation with weapons that have the MULTI Light Mod quality, such as rifles. They can even be added in pairs to weapons with MULTI Heavy Mod, like HMGs. They inflict no damage and target a zone rather than a normal target with a Ballistics (D1) test, modified as normal for range. If successful, the FFP repeater lands in the targeted zone and deploys immediately. (Range M, Burst 1, 1H, Munition, Speculative Fire)

Freedom Kit: ALEPH governs even basic activities like food production and human waste disposal in the Human Sphere, but reliance on it is an anathema to self-respecting Nomads. Freedom Kits contain older technologies carefully constructed to allow Nomads to visit the worlds of the Human Sphere for extended periods corruption-free. These kits contain items like heat filaments for cooking, filters for purifying water, and comm-relays with manual signal boosters for communication with Arachne nodes or Nomad ships. They prevent any penalties avoiding ALEPH's services would otherwise incur in daily life and provide a bonus d20 to all Discipline tests while supplies last. Each kit contains sufficient supplies for a year's travel in the Human Sphere and can be converted into a crude shelter and back again with a **Survival (D1) test**.

Fulgor Rifle: Fulgor (Spanish for “blaze” or “bright”) is the nickname among elite Corregidoran forces for a FrancoGermanique Armements SG-5 Alraun2 Combi Rifle when it's combined with a pre-installed, underslung LF-4 light flamethrower. While slightly more expensive than a standard combi rifle, after characteristically vociferous feedback from Corregidoran troops it now comes with a specialised customisation kit that simplifies repair or swapping its secondary weapon to a **Simple (D0) Tech test**.

They are prized by Nomad veterans. Whenever a Nomad would gain a combi rifle as career equipment during Lifepath Decision Eight while serving in the NMF, they can choose to gain a fulgor rifle instead. (Range C/M, 1+5 **N** damage, Burst 2/1, 2H, Expert 1, Multi Light Mod (with light flamethrower installed), Vicious 1)

Garn Grub: Named for an ancient measurement of space sickness, these medicinal rations alleviate the symptoms of extended exposure to zero-g conditions. Usually sold in sealed palm-sized wafers and stored in airlock first aid kits, they end conditions suffered from zero-g exposure once eaten and add a bonus d20 to future Resistance or Extraterrestrial tests to avoid those conditions for the next 2d20 days, as well as preventing the usual long-term cardio-vascular degeneration. Popular with tourists to the Nomad Nation, they are offered freely and included with any Nomad-made basic medical supplies or survival rations.

Gestalt Geist X: Sharing on a level most find unbearably intimate, this basic geist variant splits into multiple instances (one per user it supports), acts as each users' geist, periodically recompiles to integrate its varied experiences into a coherent whole, then splits again to repeat the process. This means that every participant has access to what every other participant has used the geist for, and their preferences and priorities are only a portion of the geist's development. Due to its integration architecture's complexity, the geist has +1 complication range on all tests for each user beyond 2X, can only receive a single Skill Expertise upgrade per skill, and Attribute upgrade costs are doubled. If the geist generates a complication on a test, or if the GM spends 2X heat, it is unable to act for two rounds due to a re-integration and re-splitting cycle.

Why bother? The constant influx of new tasks and priorities, combined with its revolutionary architecture, allow the geist to learn and evolve on its own over time. When it cycles, either when it generates a complication or the GM spends 2X Heat, it temporarily gains X **N** ranks — rolled separately — in each skill it has at least one rank in until its next cycle. If one or more effects are rolled, it permanently gains a rank in the skill, to a maximum of 2X Focus and 2X expertise. Urban legends claim sufficiently long-lasting gestalt geists can evolve into Rogue AI, but due to the frustrations and exposure of sharing a geist, the human sides of gestalts rarely stay together for more than a few years. Instead, each user goes their own way, either taking a truncated instance for their own use — removing the geist's ability to cycle but also removing its Attribute cost penalties — or starting anew with another geist.

Glavar Powder: Named for an ancient musician and available in myriad formulations, this entheogenic powder is usually mixed into a heavily spiced smoothie to disguise its bitter taste. Glavar Powder is prized by Nomad seekers and Haqqislam's Haqq Tasawwuf neo-Sufi pilgrims as a gateway to self-study. Once ingested, the user enters a semi-lucid state and takes a 2d20-hour trip through their own subconscious. (Ingested, Instant 3, Day)

Special Effect: Each hour the user is under the drug's effects, they can make a **Psychology (D2) test**, and spend 1 Momentum to recover all Resolve, 2 to recover a Metanoia, or with GM permission, 6 Momentum to gain or lose a trait. Other tests are at +2 difficulty and +1 complication range, and they can only move one zone per round.

Headclamp: Also known as chipbags or faraday hoods, these quantronically sealed helmets allow their wearer to breathe and consume nutrients through an integrated tube, but otherwise completely block their sensory nerves and prevent transmissions from head-implanted Neural devices. Wearing a headclamp adds +4 difficulty to all tests that rely on the senses and to all attempts to use head-implanted Neural devices, and inflicts 1+4^(N) mental damage every four hours.

Jitterbug Rations: Available in dozens of flavours, brands, and form factors ranging from dense nutrient bars to shakes or instant noodles, these cases of shelf-stable meal-replacements provide nutrition sufficient for one person for a week, including contain slow-release stimulants and vitamin supplementation to reduce the user's dependence on sleep. The difficulty of Resistance tests to avoid fatigue from sleep deprivation is reduced by one, and they gain a bonus d20 on tests to avoid becoming unconscious or stunned. The rations are damaging if used continually. Each week beyond the first a user relies on them reduces Vigour by 1, to a minimum of the user's Resistance focus. Each week without restores 1^(N) Vigour, with complete recovery if an effect is rolled.

J-Tabby Socks: Named for their resemblance to traditional Japanese jika-tabi (split-toed heavy socks) and the catlike feats skilled wearers can pull off, these thin, dense, tight-fitting socks are selectively magnetic and selectively adhesive for easy grip in zero-g. Ubiquitous mothership wear, they are free for any Nomad maintaining a Middle or better lifestyle clothing rating and available in styles to suit nearly any sartorial taste, even for those without the skill to take advantage of their affordances. If the wearer has Agility + Acrobatics expertise + Extraterrestrial expertise of 12 or more, the socks grant -2 difficulty on Agility-based tests in zero-g environments, and a bonus d20 to climbing tests in full gravity. They

reduce leg Armour Soak by 1 (to a minimum of 1) if worn in combination with armour, and Called Shot Momentum spends targeting the legs allow attackers to completely bypass a wearer's Armour Soak.

Khat/un Augmentation X: Named for the East African stimulant and the Turkish feminine term for "Khan," this augmentation heavily alters the user's RNA to encourage healthy genetic expression, at the cost of some enzymatic transcription efficiency. It is based on research stolen from Yu Jing's imperial houses and reworked for general use by Praxis' Moga/dish Black Lab. Khat/un Augmentation requires regular ingestion of a specialised but easily-fabricated supplement and ceases to function if its maintenance cost is not paid monthly. It halves the XP cost to increase X attributes to a maximum rating of 13, while doubling the XP costs to increase another attribute above 7. Effected attributes are chosen at the time of installation, and if multiple complications are generated by a single test during installation, the augmentation hinders a second attribute.

Krab Gauntlet: Krab Gauntlets are a Zondbot arm replacement that can also be worn armour over a person's hand and forearm. Their servo-muscular structure allows remarkable delicacy and precision and is sold in one of three specialised designs. If worn without 12 or more Brawn, the gauntlet adds +2 complication range to Agility-based tests. If two are worn without 12 or more Brawn, the penalties stack to +4 complication range.

- **VaNk (Assault):** Armoured 3 and 3^(N) Armour Soak to one arm, replaces the adhesive pistol and Modhand when attached to a Zondbot, incorporates a 2-shot panzerfaust that only requires a **Tech (D1) test** to disassemble and reload, and adds a bonus d20 to Ballistics tests when attacking with it at Long range.
- **Ka-3 (Medical):** Armoured 2 and 2^(N) Armour Soak to one arm, contains a MediKit, basic medical supplies, a bioscanner, and six loads of Serum, removes the complication range penalty for remote control on Medicine tests when attached to a Zondbot, and its MediKit's range penalties are reduced by one for users with 3 or more Medicine expertise.
- **N3V (Technical):** Armoured 2 and 2^(N) Armour Soak to one arm, contains a powered multitool and six Parts, removes the complication range penalty for remote control on Tech tests when attached to a Zondbot, and grants two bonus Momentum (including multitool bonus) on Tech tests to repair items for users with 3 or more Tech expertise.

Laboratory, Personal: A personal laboratory is a small Science facility often fitted into a room within a home, habitat module, or other secluded

SENSORY CONFINEMENT

Headclamps are a powerful deterrent. Anyone caught attempting a heist on the Crypt can be sentenced to up to a year's isolation inside one in lieu of execution or life imprisonment. Within a month, most convicts develop severe psychiatric symptoms that last long after their release. Unlike any other crime against societal welfare, attacks on the Crypt are a matter of existential survival for *Tunguska*, so while bribes can be accepted from the guilty party's allies in return for carefully phrased "sentencing considerations", final sentencing is never for less than a month. Despite protests from human rights groups, the Board of Directors has repeatedly upheld sensory confinement as crucial for the Crypt's defence.

"Jitterbug profitability" is Tunguskan slang for making just enough to get by.

KRABS IN A POT

First invented and sold by Nauka-3MV module's child prodigy Amanda Kidd under the brand name Kidd Gloves, krab gauntlet schematics were leaked onto a remote-otaku datasphere during her tenure evaluation. Exactly who was at fault provides ongoing flamewar fuel among Nomad remote engineers and makers. Regardless, Nauka-3MV split into VaNk, Ka-3, and N3V soon after, each offering mass-produced variants of Kidd's original multi-modal design at low enough prices that they drove hers completely off the market. Kidd now works alone out of a small Vaudeville shop for an extremely selective client list. Circumstantial evidence and code references to an "1MeV ray" have led Black Eye analysts to tentatively classifying these events as the work of Hexas agents.

UPLIFT SPIKE RUGS

“Narwhal Augmentation,” forehead-mounted wetspikes, are popular implanted weapons for cetacean uplifts and neo-cetaceans. Cephalopod uplifts often implant customised linkspikes into one or more arms. They usually construct their own out of characteristic introversion, although OxFEEDFACE Black Lab produces a handful of well-regarded full-hectocotylus replacements that incorporate a linkspike.

LARI'S LIST

Vulkanja module's all-female armourers, led by blacksmith Lari Tamar, produce the best lounge-lizard suits. They carefully tracks each suit's performance to check her team's work, refine the design, and gather marketing testimonials. With a surprising level of influence, Lari's List is a private feed of suit owners and their tandem work. Transferring or selling one of the suits without informing or consulting Lari is a grave faux pas.

Obtaining one to flaunt off-duty, particularly during Krugs or on frontier outposts and commercial missions, is a rite of passage for elite TAG jocks, jaes, and janes. In the wrong bar, wearing one without an NMF service record, proof it was an approved gift from a TAG jock or given as a reward for a major favour to the Nation, or, most importantly, without an entry on Lari's List is a sure passport to a savage beating or a trip out the nearest airlock. With proof, it ensures a warm welcome, and even free drink or ten.

space for private research and experimental Science tests, granting 1 bonus Momentum and capacity for three uses of Reagents and a single experimental waldo (purchased separately). If a character fails a Science test to analyse something, they can use their lab to try again.

Linkspike: Like wetspikes, linkspikes use synthetic long-chain protein springs to piston a blade into their target. Instead of injecting poison, the blade is lined with retractable quantronic interface barbs and a surge capacitor, allowing the attacker to disable otherwise inaccessible augmentations and internal systems. They are usually implanted in the attacker for the advantage of surprise. With a successful Close Combat attack that deals at least one damage, the attacker can make a 3-Momentum spend to target one of their victim's augmentations or internal systems and inflict the Disable Function Breach Effect on it. The attacker cannot selectively disable functions unless they have both a Hacking and Tech focus of 3 or more. (Melee, 1+4^N damage, 1H, Piercing 1, Subtle 3).



Lounge-lizard Suit: NMF TAG models are usually named after lizards, since they are repurposed from the Reptile series of PanOceanian TAGs, and the infantry dubbed the NMF TAG pilots lounge-lizards since they get to relax in cramped cockpits while grunts have to walk. The suits, named for these pilots, are dense but thin light combat armour suits incorporating a holdout pistol in a shoulder holster, pockets for a Reload on each thigh, a serrated boot knife, and an up-armoured helmet, ensuring pilots are well-armed and protected if forced to eject or otherwise “step out.” The added weaponry and special tailoring to maximise flexibility take up space usually devoted to quantronic filters, reducing the BTS provided by 1, a trade-off most lounge lizards are happy to make.

MaiSa Armour: Lazareto's Lagos Developments Ltd.'s premier product, MaiSa armour (from *maisha saba*, or “seven lives” in Swahili and a common Corregidoran parting phrase), are standard issue for the Tomcat Emergency and Rescue Special team. MaiSa Armour is renowned for flexibility, manoeuvrability, gloves that don't interfere with the wearer's dexterity, perfectly placed attachment points for gear, and built-in climbing plus pads and manoeuvring jets not only on the gauntlets and boots, but in a dozen other unexpectedly useful surfaces. The armour grants a bonus d20 and one bonus Momentum on Pilot tests in freefall or Extraterrestrial tests in zero-g, provided the user has Agility + Pilot expertise + Extraterrestrial expertise of 12 or more.

Mess: Mess is a muscle relaxant and anti-anxiety party drug pill, rendering the user stress-free, incredibly relaxed, and hyper-aware of visual stimuli, but also prone to overheating, sensory overload, and difficulty focusing. Once ingested, the user recovers 1d20 Resolve and gains a bonus d20 to Analysis and Observation skill tests for 1d6 hours, but is at +2 difficulty to all Intelligence-based tests. It is a popular export that is illegal outside Nomad territory in most jurisdictions. (Ingested, Instant 2, Hour, 1+1^N physical damage)

Addiction 1 (10 doses), *Compulsion* 1
Withdrawal 1+2^N mental, Harm Effect (user adds +1 complication range to Intelligence-based, Resistance, or Observation tests, +1 additional complication range per Wound they are suffering from)

Mgomo Tube: Ideal for boarding actions and close-quarters combat, particularly in areas where hostiles are intermixed with innocents, the Corregidor-made Mgomo is a compact, single-shot, underbarrel adhesive launcher with a psychoactive aerosoliser. Bandits are particularly fond of it, and often combine it with an FGA FS-3 Gaucher (French for southpaw) light shotgun for an unexpected

close-range surprise. Thanks to a fool-proof perma-bond adhesive, a Mgomo tube can be added to any Unbalanced or 2H weapon that does not already have a secondary weapon attached, even if the weapon does not have a Multi Light/Medium/Heavy Mod quality, with a **Tech (D0) test**. Doing so also adds **Improvised 1** if the installer has **Tech Expertise** of 2 or less, and removing it requires a **Tech (D2) test**. It adds the following secondary mode:

- *ADHL Mode*: Range M, 1+5 **N** damage, Burst 1, Disposable, Stun

Monkey Bar: Kitbashed by *Bakunin's* Electronic Pariahs urchin gang, “monkey bars” are a hollow plasteel bar with magnetic clamps on either end for grabbing onto nearby pieces of metal, wired to a power cell, which is good for ten minutes of continual use and taped inside the tube. This allows the wielder to catch themselves when falling, create an impromptu ledge for second-story work, or swing themselves into otherwise inaccessible spaces. They can be used as a crude weapon akin to a Plasteel Pipe, and adds a bonus d20 to **Acrobatics**, **Athletics**, **Extraterrestrial**, or **Thievery** tests involving climbing, swinging, or clambering around.

Naughties: Bloodborne nanites taken in daily pill form to manage hormonal stress levels and reinforce the user’s personal firewall, these grey-market Nomad knockoffs of ALEPH nannies are commonly available from Submondo dealers. They add 1 **N** to the user’s ordinary **BTS**, taken and rerolled daily, but any **Effects** rolled grant the GM a complication. Taking multiple variants simultaneously is profoundly dangerous. Their maintenance costs and benefits stack, but each effect generated deals the user a **Wound** and generates a complication. They are usually purchased by the month, although individual daily doses, called **naughts**, are available from less savoury dealers.

Nemesis Gloves: Falsely claimed as *VoodooTech*-derived, the gloves are worn only by the truly determined or suicidal, particularly fighters in lethal *Aristea!* **Underground** bouts. **Nemesis** gloves contain a barely-contained radioactive power source on the back of each glove for a fine layer of fractal monofilament microstructures on the palm and fingertips, and this adds **Anti-Materiel 2**, **Backlash 1**, **Monofilament**, **NFB**, and **Vicious 2** to unarmed strikes the wearer makes with their hands. The gloves must be charged before each attack with a **Resistance (D1) test** as a **Free Action**. If the test is failed, the gloves can still be used to make a single attack, but the wearer immediately takes 1+2 **N** **Radiation 2** damage. (Melee, covers hands, **Anti-Materiel 2**, **Backlash 1**, **Monofilament**, **NFB**, **Vicious 2**)

Neurocinetics Augmentation: Illegal throughout the Human Sphere, this nervous system augmentation enhances the user’s reaction time and reflexes but can cause serious nerve degeneration over time. Users must constantly control their reactions and are easily recognised by their obsessively slow and cautious movements. They can make warfare reactions for one less **Heat** but take 1 **N** of **Vicious 1** physical damage each time they do so. If this damage inflicts a **Wound**, the user permanently loses one **Vigour**, to a minimum of their **Resistance Focus**. Additionally, they have the **Ballistics** and **Close Combat Quick Draw** talents while it is active, but if the augmentation is deactivated – for example by a **Breach Effect** – they lose access to dependent talents.

Nomad Spear X: Often improvised from available materials for frontier hunting or back-corridor warfare, Nomads’ throwing spears incorporate monowire tethers, fast-fabbed micro-thrusters, guidance packages for zero-g combat, or other DIY modifications. A Nomad spear has X of the following qualities or features (Melee, 1+4 **N** damage, 2H, **Extended Reach**, **Vicious 1** + features below):

- **Concealed 1**, thanks to a collapsible smart-material shaft.
- **Guided**, with added micro-thrusters and onboard software package.
- **Piercing 2** instead of **Vicious 1**, utilising a narrow metamaterial spearhead.
- **Retrievable** with an **Athletics (D1) test**, using a monowire tether and bracer reel.
- **Toxic 2**, from a neurotoxic coating on the spearhead, removed on a **Complication**.

O2 Spray: This nanobot-laden muscle-relaxant oral spray coats the user’s lung tissues to increase gas exchange efficiency, while slowing their respiration. Sold in 3-dose canisters for easy attachment to vac suit air supplies, it is named for oxygen’s most common allotrope, as well as its inventor, *Orville Oxford*. Each dose lasts 3d20 minutes, and when determining if an **Oxygen Load** is depleted while under its effects, the character only needs to succeed at an **Extraterrestrial (D1) test** (instead of the usual **D2**). However, reduced lung capacity adds +1 complication range to **Agility** – and **Brawn**-based tests, and if multiple complications are generated, the user begins to suffocate, taking a **Wound** each round until they succeed at a **Resistance (D1) test**.

Old Steely: Named for the sense of cold, focused detachment it generates, this drug powder’s aftereffects cause extreme emotional swings, known as “*Riding Old Steely*” amongst the Nomad zero-g workers who rely on it. Often mixed into **XO** suits’ water supplies, a dose of **Old Steely** provides +2d20 to **Willpower**- and **Awareness**-based tests for six hours. When it wears off, the user takes

MAISA ARMOUR VARIANT

BUKIT

MaiSa suits are popular with workers from Singapore and Shentang’s Hou Tu region due to a happy coincidence: *Maisa Centre* was a key arcology in Singapore before annexation. *Lagos Developments* sells an inferior but highly profitable MaiSa “Center” version with a handful of Wanhou-made quantronic components and basic climbing plus pads, but without zero-g optimisation. Yearly limited-edition releases with unique colourways and elaborate culturally inspired motifs are popular retirement gifts for Wanhou corporate executives – and a key profitable product for LD Ltd.

ARISTEA! UNDERGROUND: NEMESIS BOUTS

Profoundly illegal and hounded by O-12 investigators, *Aristea!* **Underground** bouts and related betting are so lucrative that new Submondo “leagues” regularly spring up in obscure corners of the Human Sphere. Named for the Greek goddess of inescapable retribution, the **Underground’s** “**Nemesis Bouts**” require one or more participants to wear the eponymous gloves. They end with only one survivor, with few winners surviving a second match. Faked **Nemesis Bouts** abound, with supposedly dead fighters re-appearing in some backwater brawl a few months later, but *Corregidor’s* **Temple** is notorious for its exclusive, and genuinely lethal, “**King of the Ziggurat**” grand melees.

STEELHEADS

Many meteor heads use **Old Steely** to endure daily work stresses and dangers. The resulting off-shift mood swings, however, only reinforce their surly reputations with employers and locals.

WHO NEEDS A RIDE?

Private vehicles are rare for Nomads, particularly on the motherships, and even on Commercial Missions. Instead, they rely on communal infrastructure – strap-loops, slideways, elevators, induced wind tunnels, even magnetic-wheeled bicycles and RedX suit stations. In the cramped conditions and short sightlines on ships and habitats, moving around too quickly is a reckless mistake, particularly in zero-g, where inertial velocity is difficult to redirect. Unconscious acceptance of these restrictions under most conditions is just common sense for most Nomads, even Bakunians, and is a constant source of surprise for outsiders.

UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL

Slammers are illegal throughout the Human Sphere, but are easily found in shady markets, albeit with the usual wild variations in quality and safety. Fabrication recipes of similarly variable quality for combining innocuous materials into slammers are common on Arachne's darknets. Their disposability makes them the perfect weapon for street violence and murder. They are especially popular with Lazareto's *maras* for back-corridor rumbles and turf wars, since local Submondo dealers refuse to sell them heavier weaponry.

1+4 **(N)** Mental damage from a sudden emotional cascade and is at +1 difficulty to Personality- and Willpower-based tests for 3 hours, +1 hour per effect rolled.

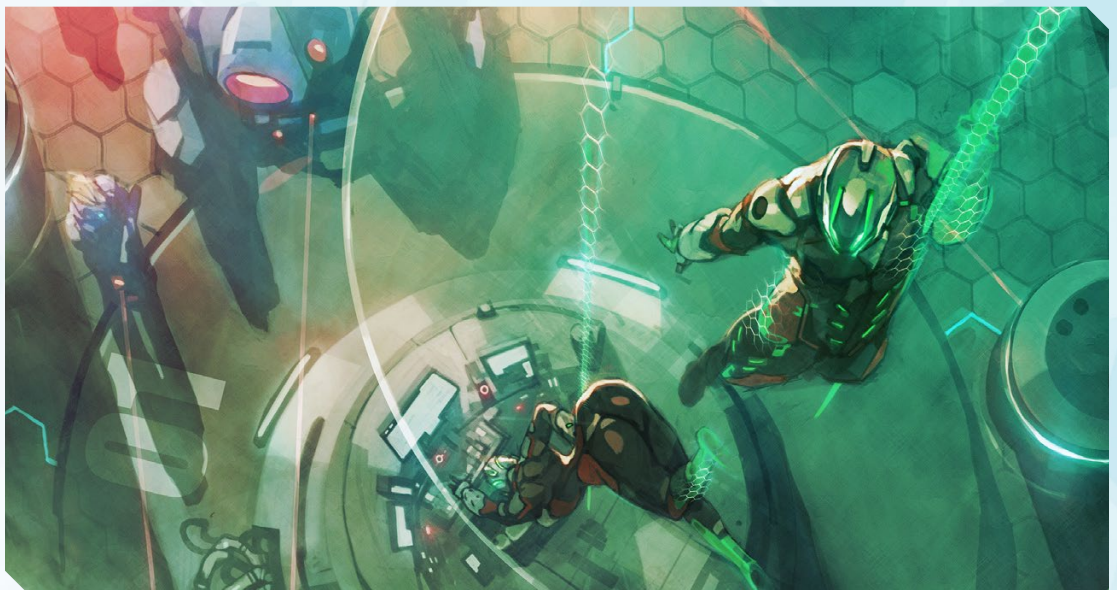
RedX Jumpsuit: RedX hooded jumpsuits are designed to be worn as daily wear inside a habitat and are lightweight vac suits with built-in emergency beacons, but only a single Oxygen Load, one Part's worth of sealant and patches, and BTS 1 filtering. Named for the sign in public AR for exits to vacuum, they are included in the Nomad demogrant from five-years-old onward and can be exchanged once for free each year in case of wear, growth, or bodily alteration. They are something of a generic baseline for Nomad fashion and are especially popular on Commercial Missions and frontier habitats. *Corregidor's* childhood versions are coloured according to maintenance team, and learning to hack the suit's beacon and AR tags is an adolescent rite of passage.

Slag-cannon (Ranged): An asteroid-miner's take on a chain rifle, this bulky weapon's chamber can melt magnetically-charged materials into dense white-hot slugs and magnetically fire them through vacuum at a target. Often incorporated into XO suits on shoulder-mounts for use as mining equipment in Human Edge and Sol's asteroid belts, they are an ideal deterrent for claim jumpers and pirates. Loading one requires a Standard Action, a **Tech (D1) test**, and a piece of iron-rich ore, a slag-slug, a Part, or another magnetically-charged item. When fired in atmosphere, their Range is reduced to Close and range penalties are doubled, but in vacuum they can be fired at targets from Close to Extreme range without penalty. (Range (any), 2+5 **(N)** damage, 2H, Anti-Materiel 1, Improvised 1, Incendiary 2, Munitions, Piercing)

Slag-slug Ammunition: Often carried by asteroid miners who want to ensure they have appropriate ammo on-hand for their slag-cannons, slag-slugs are solid darts of highly-refined ferromagnetic materials, ideal for zero-g conflict. When fired from a slag-cannon or other magneto-propulsion weapon in atmosphere, they reduce the weapon's range to Close, and range penalties are doubled, but in vacuum they remove any Improvised quality. Regardless of environment, they add the Knockdown and Piercing 1 quality, to a maximum of Piercing 3.

Slammer (Ammo Type): A disposable weapon for the truly desperate or vicious, a slammer is a short length of tubing with a built-in round of ammunition – usually Special – and a crude trigger. The slammer is jammed into direct contact with the target and fired, sending the round into the target and wrecking the cheaply fabricated casing, which then degrades into forensically distinctive materials. Slammers' damage is caused as much by the high-pressure gas of the round as by their payloads, rendering them deadly even underwater. They can only be made with ammunition types without the Area, Indiscriminate, or Nonlethal qualities. (Melee, 1+4 **(N)** damage, Disposable, Improvised 1, Subtle 1, Unforgiving 1, and qualities per ammo type)

Spektr Armour: When *Tunguska* or their well-paying clients need a covert action made with traceless surgical precision, be it theft, espionage, industrial extraction, or cold-blooded murder, they rely on the very best: Spektrs. Spektrs, in turn, depend on their armour. Made from the most sophisticated thermo-optical camouflage and adaptive smart-materials money can buy, it is invisible to almost all surveillance equipment, self-repairing, and allows the wearer to ignore up to 2 difficulty due to



terrain or weather conditions. A thermal-diffusion layer means its TO camo is only compromised if the wearer suffers a Wound from Incendiary damage, and it can collapse into an innocuous piece of baggage easily carried in one hand, with a sensor-thwarting layer that adds +2 difficulty to all tests to identify its true nature.

Sputnik, Lunokhod: While the NMF has used remotes since its inception, the NeoColonial wars strongly demonstrated their tactical potential for tirelessly outpacing and outmanoeuvring opposition. They rarely lasted long in direct combat, leading to the Sputnik series of improvements – reworked mobility systems, increased armour and quantum defences, and most importantly cost-saving fabrication updates, allowing wide-spread manufacture and deployment. Their light weight and small size are ideal for rapid assaults. The Lunokhod (Russian for “moonwalker”) model, in particular, is made to probe and outflank its opposition, bypassing mines and sensor defences to strike at the enemy’s rear and supply lines.

ELITE

LUNOKHOD SPUTNIK

ATTRIBUTES						
AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
11	10	8	10	11	5	8

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE								
Combat	+2	1	Movement	+2	1	Social	–	–
Fortitude	–	–	Senses	–	–	Technical	+2	2

DEFENCES					
Firewall	13	Resolve	8	Structure	8
Security	–	Morale	–	Armour	1

ATTACKS:

- **Electric Pulse:** Melee, 1+4 (N) damage, Immobilising, Stun
- **Heavy Shotgun:** Range C, 2+8 (N) damage, Burst 1, Knockdown
 - *Normal Shells Mode (Primary):* Area (Close), Spread 1
 - *AP Slugs Mode (Secondary):* Piercing 3
- **Heavy Flamethrower:** Range C, 2+5 (N) damage, Burst 1, 2H, Incendiary 3, Munition, Terrifying 2, Torrent

GEAR: Climbing plus, deactivator kit, repeater

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Common Special Abilities:** Inured to Disease, Poison, Vacuum
- **Arachne-Powered:** When controlled by a geist or its native LAI, the remote gains a Security Soak of 4.
- **Electric Pulse:** Makes Close Combat Defence Reactions against melee attacks for –1 Heat (minimum 0). If it wins the face-to-face test, deals electric pulse damage and prevents the attack.
- **Minesweeper:** A scanning array allows Tech tests to detect or subvert explosives to be made at up to Medium range.
- **Quadrupedal Mobility:** Can move to a zone within Long range as a Minor Action, or for 2 Heat, as a Free Action.

Sputnik, Tsyklon: The Tsyklon (Russian for “cyclone”) model shares the same chassis and overall design

philosophy as the Lunokhod but is optimised for use as a precise firepower platform, and as an extension to friendly infowarriors’ reach. Its vision systems test even skilled pilots.

ELITE

TSYKLON SPUTNIK

ATTRIBUTES						
AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
11	12	8	11	8	5	8

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE								
Combat	+3	1	Movement	+3	1	Social	–	–
Fortitude	–	–	Senses	+3	1	Technical	+2	2

DEFENCES					
Firewall	13	Resolve	8	Structure	8
Security	–	Morale	–	Armour	0

ATTACKS:

- **Electric Pulse:** Melee, 1+4 (N) damage, Immobilising, Stun
- **Spitfire:** Range M, 1+8 (N) damage, Burst 3, Spread 2, Unsubtle
- **Pitcher:** Range M, Burst 1, Munition, Speculative Fire

GEAR: 360° vision, climbing plus, repeater

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Common Special Abilities:** Inured to Disease, Poison, Vacuum
- **Arachne-Eyed:** When controlled by a geist or its native LAI, the remote gains a Security Soak of 4, and can see in all directions, granting a free d20 roll on Observation tests. Remote pilots add +2 complication range unless they have at least Pilot Focus 4.
- **Electric Pulse:** Makes Close Combat Defence Reactions against melee attacks for –1 Heat (minimum 0). If it wins the face-to-face test, deals electric pulse damage and prevents the attack.
- **Pitcher:** This modified grenade launcher fires deployable repeaters as Reloads. On a successful attack, the deployable repeater lands in the targeted zone and deploys immediately.
- **Quadrupedal Mobility:** Can move to a zone within Long range as a Minor Action, or for 2 Heat, as a Free Action.

Stashpocket X: Stashpockets are flat, shielded pockets without quantum tags or other identifying branding, a simple sealant-strip along one edge, and a press-adhesive coating one side. They are commonly used by agents and criminals to conceal flashbills, drugs, or other small items. Expensive versions incorporate photoreactive coatings to match skin tone, clothing, or surrounding materials, and even embedded E/M countermeasures to baffle sensors. They have Concealed X and add Concealed X to One-Handed or smaller items stored inside but require an additional 1 Momentum to re-stow the item after use. They can be added to any article of clothing at purchase, but increase its base cost by X, and its tariff by +T(X-1). Adding multiple pockets only increases tariff, not base cost.

SWORD-1 Fritz: A favourite of Tunguska’s Interventors, this non-lethal brain blast variant disrupts the vestibular system and the optic and auditory centres of the brain and can only be used

MEDIUM COMBAT ARMOUR VARIANT

RIOT GRRL

The pride of Vulkanja module, these armour suits are carefully personalised for Beauvoir Module’s fearsome warriors at no charge, to their exacting specifications. In line with their KIY (Kill It Yourself) philosophy, each Riot Grrl works alongside their armourer and does a significant portion of the work themselves, learning skills they can use for field repairs. The resulting pride and confidence in their gear grants +3 Morale soak when wearing it. The armour also incorporates a Multispectral Visor 1, and Vulkanja’s precision engineering grants a bonus d20 on Acrobatics Defence Reactions, and Swift Action Momentum spends in the armour only cost 1 Momentum if the additional action is an attack.

HEART-STASHED

Implanted stashpockets are referred to as Internal Pocket X (see *Infinity* Corebook, p. 346 and 372) and remove the Momentum penalty to stow away items after use. Popular augmentations in the Nomad Nation, particularly with *Corregidor* work crews, internal pockets allow easy transportation of personal effects while in a vac or XO suit without counting against baggage mass limits. Stashing a thin keepsake from a sweetheart or partners in an internal pocket over one’s heart is a popular way to stay connected without a ring’s safety risks.

**FREEDONIA
INFRASOUND**


Either an extended running joke or signs of a deeper conspiratorial truth, rumours persist on Arachne wardriver forums of ways to induce Fritz-like effects through infrasound via auditory demotics, like the speakers installed in most vehicles and comlogs. Among devotees of the theory, many seemingly accidental celebrity deaths, particularly vehicle accidents, are due to precisely timed distractions from a "Freedonia" attack. Creating false documents cryptically referencing the fictional nation of Freedonia and links to supposed victims is a common pastime for Otaku hoaxers, only fueling true believers' zeal. After all, they argue, some of those files must be the real thing if so much effort goes into confusing the issue... it's just a matter of figuring out which is which.

SPIKE RAVES


Toque-Farra spines are commonly worn as ear or body piercings during Malamanya Krew's underground music parties, and their *maras*-run imitators. They are one of the few scenes where both *vatos* and *tsotsis* eschew violence, instead demonstrating their ferocity through zero-g dance inside a sphere of inward-facing speakers while pierced by as many spines as they can handle – and often more.

against targets using Neural equipment. For one Momentum or as a Breach Effect, the program can deal its damage as Physical damage with the Biotech and Nonlethal qualities instead of Quantronic damage. For each effect generated, the user can add one of the following qualities to the attack: Deafening, Blinding, Immobilising, Knockdown, or Stun.

Teseum Hardcase: Made from a small fortune of Teseum, these hard shells for hacking devices were gifted to Wardrivers as thanks for their invaluable aid by Ariadnan employers at the end of their service in the Commercial Conflicts and are available in limited quantities to hackers who prove themselves Dawn's allies. They add Armoured 4 to the hacking device of any type they were made to house, provide +2 BTS vs attacks with the E/M quality, and grant a bonus momentum on Psywar techniques against Ariadnans and Wardrivers.

Toque-Farra Spines: Toque-Farra (an ancient word and modern slang for "party" in Spanish) spines are grown on miniature stingrays with gene-hacked venom by *Corregidor* back-corridor narco-breeders. Once used to slice or pierce the skin (dealing 1+2  Toxic 1 damage), the user undergoes intense auditory-tactile and gustatory synaesthesia, experiencing sounds as touch and taste for 3d20 minutes, adding a bonus d20 to tests based on hearing, +2 complication range to tests based on touch or taste, and +1 complication range to all other tests from the distracting sensations.

UPGRADE Fadeware: Veteran hackers know it's not the getting in that's dangerous, it's getting out. By dedicating a significant portion of onboard memory to tracking and pre-loading escape vectors, this Supportware ensures Tunguskan hackers see their next sunrise. Incorporating Fadeware into a hacking device allows the hacker to make quantronic Withdraw and Terminate Connection actions as a Minor Action and gives +1 difficulty to Link actions or CLAW-2 Monkey Trap attacks against them.

UPGRADE Lightning: Based on stolen Haqqislamite neurological research, this Supportware dedicates onboard memory to a library of malicious cognition and haptic feedback exploits, adding +1  damage and the Breaker quality to SWORD attacks against targets using Neural equipment. On a successful attack, the hacker can make another SWORD attack against a second target within Close range of the first target for 1 Momentum. (This action cannot be repeated.)

UPGRADE Solifugae: Named for the swiftest order of arachnids on Earth, this Nomad program rapidly explores networks, filtering for notable traffic and affordances, then reports its findings to the

user. Effectively deploying the program requires a **Hacking (D1) test**. On success, it extends the user's Quantronic Observation range one zone beyond the range provided by their Hacking expertise, until they suffer a breach. Secured zones block the user's line of sight as usual.

VaudePet X: It was only a matter of time before someone applied Black Lab technology to a beloved family pet. Naturally, it happened first in the Black Labs of Praxis, then filtered quickly into Vaudeville boutiques that claimed all the credit. Every VaudePet is based on an existing animal but gains a variety of unique abilities. Most depend on quantronic interaction to do anything beyond what the original breed could, although for the right price, anything is possible, from turtles with opposable thumbs, to cats with magnetic tails, to corgis with grafted engineering waldos.

Special Abilities

- **Odd Fit:** It's not that you can't find a ballistic vest to fit a Chihuahua, it just costs extra. When purchasing worn gear such as armour, add +2 to the item's base cost and tariff rating. Gear not acquired in this fashion is essentially unusable. Tailoring gear to fit the VaudePet is a unique skillset, requiring a complex **Tech test (D4, 4 Momentum, 2 failures)**.
- **Out of Sight, Out of Mind:** VaudePets gain a bonus Momentum on successful Stealth tests and take -2 difficulty on Lifestyle tests to blend in as a pet (min 0).
- **Small Target:** Ranged attacks against a VaudePet are made at +1 difficulty.
- **Domestically Engineered:** The VaudePet has X of the following benefits:
 - **Cyber-Brain:** There's not enough room for serious mental computing power, unless someone gets creative. This adds 2 Intelligence, but also reduces Vigour by 1.
 - **Durable:** Those who've replaced a pet at great cost tend to worry about its safety and add Implanted Armour 1 to its torso. Other hit locations are generally too small to effectively armour.
 - **Implanted [Equipment]:** More than one intrepid hacker has implanted a repeater inside a stray cat over the years. Now, this time-honoured Bakunian tradition is available for a modest fee. (Equipment must be purchased separately and needs to conceivably fit in the pet.)
 - **Implanted [Weapon]:** Only the truly deranged would implant a pistol in a parrot, unless they were planning something truly entertaining. Either way, Praxis is happy to oblige. 1H Weapons can be implanted in a VaudePet, with ranged weapons activated by mental commands. This is hardly ideal, adding +3 complication range when using the weapon.

(Weapons must be purchased separately.)

- **Thumbs!**: Whether a simian, or someone just got creative, this body can interact with technology like a human, though they treat One-Handed items as Two-Handed, and usually can't operate anything larger.

Viral Spiked Chain: Chimeras often wear smart-material spiked chains for menacing decoration and to ensure they have a weapon at hand wherever they go, in addition to their innate weaponry. The particularly intense lace those chains with viral coatings based on the natural toxins of creatures they have an affinity for or those found in those creatures' habitats. Wielding one effectively requires either considerable skill or a hardy constitution. If the wielder does not have a Close Combat Focus of 3 or more, they deal the weapon's damage to themselves whenever they fail on an attack with

the weapon. If they have a Resistance Focus of 2 or more, the damage suffered on a failed attack is halved after rolling **(N)**, round down. (Melee, 1+6**(N)** damage, 1H, Biotech, Concealed 1, Extended Reach, Grievous, Piercing 1)

"BASH THIS!"

Praxis' Check Out Black Lab specialises in deadly augmentations based on wildlife, and toxic coatings and poisons derived from naturally occurring substances. Chondri Eyes and Rabbi Fish, the lab's lead developers, have become increasingly fixated on personal defence after the brutal murder of their partner Callor two years ago. They offer personalised viral spiked chains at reduced rates to fellow chimeras or other heavily augmented individuals for self-defence against hominid-supremacists and aug-phobes.

AMMUNITION TABLE

NAME	CATEGORY	QUALITIES ADDED TO WEAPON	RESTRICTION	RELOAD COST	TARIFF
FFP Repeater Rounds (FFP)	Heavy	See Description	4 (Nomads 2, Bakunin 1)	3+4 (N)	T2
Slag-slug	Heavy	Knockdown, Piercing 1	2 (Human Edge 1)	3+1 (N)	T1

ARMOUR TABLE

ARMOUR	TYPE	ARMOUR SOAK				BTS	QUALITIES	RESTRICTION	COST	TARIFF	MAINTENANCE
		HEAD	TORSO	ARM	LEG						
J-Tabby Socks		-	-	-	-1 ¹	-	See Description	2 (Nomads 1)	3+3 (N)	T2 ²	-
Krab Gauntlet, Ka-3		-	-	2	-	1	Bioscanner, Heavy Armour, MediKit ¹	3 (Nomads 1)	5+2 (N)	T2	1
Krab Gauntlet, N3V		-	-	2	-	1	Heavy Armour, powered multitool ¹	3 (Nomads 1)	5+2 (N)	T2	1
Krab Gauntlet, VaNk		-	-	3	-	1	Heavy Armour, panzerfaust ¹	3 (Nomads 2)	9+2 (N)	T2	1
Lizard Suit		2	2	1	1	-	None	3 (Nomads 2)	7+3 (N)	T2	1
MaiSa Armour		1	2	2	1	2	Combat jump pack, grip pads	3 (Nomads 1)	7+3 (N)	T2	2
Spektr Armour		1	1	1	1	3	Concealed 2, Self-Repairing, TO Camo ¹	5 (Nomads 4, Tunguska 3)	9+6 (N)	-	-

¹ Armour has additional effects. See description.

² No tariff for Nomads

³ Free for Nomad Middle or higher Lifestyle.

AUGMENTATIONS TABLE

AUGMENTATION	CATEGORY	TYPE	QUALITIES	RESTRICTION	COST	TARIFF	MAINTENANCE
Amygdawire Augmentation	Cybernetic	Implant	Aug, Neural	5 (Praxis Black Labs 2)	6+2 (N)	-	-
Conlang Voicebox	Biograft/Silk	Replacement (mouth and throat)	Aug, Neural	3 (Nomads 1)	10+2 (N)	T3	-
Khat/un Augmentation X	Silk	Full-Body	Aug	X+1 (Nomads 2)	10+X (N)		
Neurocinetics Augmentation	Cybernetic	Full-Body	Aug	4 (Nomads 2)	8+2 (N)		
Nannie-Pump	Cybernetic	Replacement (Heart)	Aug, Comms	1	+ (N)	T1	1

DRUGS TABLE

DRUG	RESTRICTION	COST	TARIFF
Glavar Powder	3 (Haqqislam 2, Nomads 1)	6+3	T1
Mess	3 (Nomads 1)	3+1	T2
O2 Spray	1	2+2	–
Old Steely	2 (Nomads 1)	2+2	–
Toque-Farra Spines	4 (Corregidor 1, Illicit 1, Nomads 2)	1+3	T1

EXPLOSIVES TABLE

EXPLOSIVE	CATEGORY	DAMAGE ¹	SIZE	QUALITIES	RESTRICTION	COST (PER 3)	TARIFF
CrazyKoala	Mine	2+5	2H	Comms, Disposable, Indiscriminate (Close), Unsubtle, Vicious 1 ²	3 (Nomads 2, Yu Jing 2)	9+3	–

¹ Do not add Bonus Damage from attributes to explosive devices.

² See entry for additional abilities.

MELEE WEAPONS TABLE

NAME	DAMAGE	SIZE	QUALITIES	RESTRICTION	COST	TARIFF
Breaker Bar	1+4	2H	Anti-Materiel 2, Piercing 1, Improvised 4	4 (Nomads 2, Illicit 1)	4+3	T2
Linkspike	1+4	1H	Piercing 1, Subtle 3	3 (Nomads 2)	3+4	T2
Nemesis Gloves	1+3	Covers Hands	Anti-Materiel 2, Backlash 1, Monofilament, NFB, Vicious 2	5 (Nomads 3, Illicit 2)	6+4	T3
Nomad Spear X	1+4	2H	Extended Reach, Vicious 1 + added features ²	X-1	3+2X	T1 ¹
Slammer (Ammo Type)	1+4	1H	Disposable, Improvised 1, Subtle 1, Unforgiving 1, and qualities per ammo type	3 (Illicit 1, Nomads 2)	1+cost of Reload	T1
Viral Spiked Chain	1+6	1H	Biotech, Concealed 1, Extended Reach, Grievous, Piercing 1	3 (Nomads 1)	6+3	T3 ³

¹ No Tariff for Nomads.

² See entry for details.

³ No Tariff for Chimaera or heavily augmented.

RANGED WEAPONS TABLE

NAME	RANGE	DAMAGE	BURST	SIZE	AMMO	QUALITIES	RESTRICTION	COST	TARIFF
Foomp Flinger	M	–	1	1H	FFP	Munition, Speculative Fire	3 (Nomads 2)	9+2	T1
Fulgor Rifle	C/M	1+5	2/1	2H	Standard ¹	Expert 1, Multi Light Mod (w/light flamethrower installed), Vicious 1	3 (Nomads 1)	7+3	T2 ²
Mgomo Tube	C/M	1+5	1	2H	GOO	Disposable, Stun	3 (Nomads 2, Corregidor 1)	4+2	T3 ²
Slag-cannon	C, M, L, E ¹	2+5	1	2H	Ore or Parts ¹	Anti-Materiel 1, Improvised 1, Incendiary 2, Munitions, Piercing 2	2 (Nomads 1)	2+5	T2 ²

¹ See entry for additional abilities and details.

² No Tariff for Nomads.

REMOTES TABLE

REMOTE	RESTRICTION	COST	TARIFF	MAINTENANCE
Sputnik, Lunokhod	4 (Nomads 2)	10+3	T3 ¹	2
Sputnik, Tsyklon	4 (Nomads 2)	10+2	T3 ¹	2

¹ No Tariff for Nomads.

PROGRAMS TABLE

TYPE	RATING	PROGRAM	DAMAGE	QUALITIES	RESTRICTION	COST	TARIFF
CLAW	2	Black Widow	1+3	BE ¹	3 (Nomads 2, Tunguska 1)	4+3	T2
SWORD	1	Fritz	1+4	Nonlethal, Piercing 1, Vicious 1 + Deafening, Blinding, Immobilising, Knockdown, or Stun ¹	3 (Nomads 2, Tunguska 1)	3+4	T3
UPGRADE	–	Fadeware	–	Supportware (Personal) ¹	4 Nomads 2, Tunguska 1)	4+4	T1
UPGRADE	–	Lightning	+1 ¹	+Breaker to SWORD attacks, Supportware (Personal) ¹	4 (Nomads 2)	4+4	T1
UPGRADE	–	Solifugae	–	Supportware (Personal) ¹	4 (Nomads 2)	4+4	T1

¹ See entry for additional abilities.

TOOLS TABLE

TOOL	QUALITIES	RESTRICTION	COST	TARIFF	MAINTENANCE
Adhesive Solvent	Disposable, Area (Close) ¹	2 (Illicit 1, Nomads 1)	3+1	–	–
AnyRez (D4)	None	1	6+6	T2	–
AnyRez (D3)	None	2	6+6	T3	–
AnyRez (D2)	None	3	6+6	T3	1
AnyRez (D1)	None	3	7+7	T4	2
AnyRez (D0)	None	3	8+8	T5	4
Carbon4 Outfit	Armoured 2	1	0	–	–
Domovik Apprentice	Comms	5 (Nomads 3)	7+2	T3	1
Experimental Waldo X	Comms	X (Nomads X-1)	7+X	T(X+1) ²	X
FastPanda	Comms, Repeater ¹	2 (Nomads 1)	4+2	–	–
Flexwear Outfit	Comms ¹	3 (Nomads 1)	8+3	T1 ²	–
Freedom Kit	Comms	3 (Nomads 1)	6+2	–	2
Garn Grub	None	1 (Nomads 0)	2+1	T1 ²	–
Gestalt Geist X	Comms	4 (Nomads 1)	2+4X	T(X)	2
Headclamp	None	4 (2 <i>Tunguska</i>)	6+4	T2	–
Laboratory, Personal	Comms	2	6+4	T1	2
Lounge-lizard Suit	Vac Suit, Pistol, Knife ¹	4 (NMF 1, Nomads 2)	10+2	T3 ²	1
Naught (1 day's dose of Naughties)	Comms	2 (Illicit 0, Nomads 1)	1+3	T1	–
Naughties (1 month)	Comms	3 (Illicit 1, Nomads 1)	1+6	–	1
Portable Monkey Bar	Comms	3 (Illicit 1, Nomads 1)	4+3	T1 ²	–
RedX Jumpsuit	Locational Beacon, Vac Suit ¹	3 (Nomads 1)	5+3	T3 ¹	1, Nomads 0
Stashpocket X	Concealed X ¹	X-1	X+X	T(X-1)	–
Teseum Hardcase	Armoured 4, +2 BTS vs E/M	5 (Ariadna 3, Nomads 4, Wardrivers 3)	8+4	T2	–
VaudePet X	Comms, Locational Beacon	X+1	4X + X	T(X)	X+1

CHAPTER 6
UPLIFTSNEO-CETACEAN
PILOT INSTINCTS

The augmented dolphins, tucuxis, and porpoises who comprise the Nomad's neo-cetacean shuttle pilots have a variety of instinctual responses to danger, but it usually isn't to flee. Rather, a panicking Neo-Cetacean is likely to ram into trouble with its nose. An excited pilot can be much worse. Accounts of shuttles attempting to, as far as anyone can tell, mate with other starships aren't frequent, but have been known to occur.

It started innocently enough. At least, as innocently as anything involving scientists from Praxis's Black Laboratories can ever hope to be. The plan was to use cetaceans – dolphins, specifically – to pilot Nomad shuttles, freeing up Human pilots for more tactically demanding positions.

Specially designed VR implants and submerged cockpits were constructed, but it still wasn't enough. The cetacean pilots naturally took to three-dimensional spaceflight, but when the unexpected happened, they were still fundamentally animals. Like a spooked horse driving a carriage, they needed to be calmed before they could get back on course. Training could only help so much. For the program to succeed, they needed to be smarter. And as luck would have it, Praxis has never

suffered for a lack of scientists willing to push the envelope.

There were plenty of hiccups along the way. The original neo-cetaceans were clever, but still not quite on a human's level. Early dead-end research gave rise to countless developmentally stunted human-animal hybrids such as the Pupniks and left countless other dangerous experiments in their wake. But, the cetacean pilot program was a success. Submerged in nutrient tanks, fitted with custom wetware, and wired directly into specially-tuned remote presence gear, these early Starswimmers soon took over piloting duties for the Nomad Nation's shuttles and in-system vessels, a role they continue to fill to this day.

But some people just can't leave well enough alone.

UPLIFTING NEWS

What started as a project to supercharge the Nomad Navy's neo-cetacean pilots rapidly became something much more. As is tradition with Black Lab projects, it quickly spiralled out of control.

Projekt: Volaré, taking an unsubtle pot-shot at ALEPH's Recreations, was the first to crack the code. Working with a petite female tucuxi – about 130 centimetres from tail to snout – and using a proprietary, unstable Silk derivative, they engaged in extensive neurotherapy, cybernetic augmentation, and other experimental procedures to stimulate the cetacean's cognitive process. It was risky, volatile, and damnably expensive. Though tucuxis were much smaller than other possible candidates, the subject named Maria, in tribute to the heroine of Fritz Lang's *Metropolis*, was still a creature built for wide-open spaces confined to what was essentially an enclosed bathtub. Despite these conditions, Maria showed an incredible capacity for learning, giving the Volaré team confidence that they had the perfect candidate. They were positive that they could make it work. And they were right.

Outfitted with custom wetware, a neural comlog, and a bleeding-edge vizier geist, Maria was picking up language, strategy games, and cultural context at an amazing speed. But it wasn't until she began asking questions about her status as a citizen of *Bakunin* that the team began to wonder if they might have succeeded a little too much. In trying to create a more teachable animal, they wound up with a person, or at least, something very like one.



The project had spiralled out of control, and they had inadvertently unleashed a monster of their own making on the Human Sphere, as is tradition for the Black Labs. Besides existing, Maria wasn't going to cause any serious trouble. But she existed. And that needed to be addressed.

THE SAPIENCE SCALE

Slavery is illegal on *Bakunin*. Plenty of things are and go more or less unchecked, but completely depriving another person of their personal agency is a slap in the face to the Radical Mothership's core beliefs. Thus, while you'll find illicit dealings of every stripe on *Bakunin*, by and large, you won't find them selling people. Animals, sure. Mutant hybrids, why not? But for a faction still working to distance itself from the Red Auctions, trafficking is usually a non-starter.

This put the nascent Uplift population in a tricky position. They weren't human, but Bakunian legal precedent didn't discriminate between humans

and aliens. Why would these creatures be any different? On the other hand, outside of a few radical modules, you'd be hard-pressed to find anyone clamouring to get equal status for their housecats. So where does one draw the line?

Praxis was tasked with answering that question. Their answer was the Nuendorf-Skalski Sapience Analytics Test, usually abbreviated to "The Sapience Scale" for ease of reference. By administering a suite of neurological and psychological tests, they aimed to take an ontological measurement. While the methodology was hotly debated and the instrument was woefully ill-equipped to measure the distributed intelligence of an Antipode or the purely synthetic mind of an AI, it was more than up to the task of evaluating organic beings. And while not all Uplifts passed the test, many of them did.

Tunguska swiftly drafted documents recognising all entities with a Sapience Rating of 1.0 or above as people, making them legally indistinct from

ORINOCO FLOW

A freshwater dolphin native to the Amazon Basin, the tucuxi is a pink-bellied, petite creature that forms tight-knit social groups and typically fares poorly in captivity. Facing extinction from the toxins, a group of environmentalist activists, Actionow!, scooped up the Orinoco's entire population of tucuxis. This group would eventually splinter in two. The more radical elements comprised the heart of Eko-Atktion, while the conservationist side joined the *Bakunin* project.

As for the tucuxis, extensive genetic therapy allowed them to conceptualise humans as part of their social group, staving off their terminal depression. This unleashed what might have been Earth's most gregarious species upon the Nomads, creating individuals who were extroverted even by the Radical Mothership's standards.

SAPIENCE, SIMPLIFIED

"Are you smarter than your dog? What about a gargantuan pig-monster? The animal Uplift cases coming out of *Bakunin* have certainly got the scientific community talking. But with O-12 withholding comment, is this 'Sapience Scale' more junk science from the Nomad Nation, or a legit breakthrough?"

Well, our crack team of analysts have gone through the hundreds of pages with a fine-toothed comb, and we've come to two conclusions. First, wow, is the methodology dull. Dry as dirt, no question. Also, even though it looks like a simple, linear scale, that's not actually the case. Even the test's creators admit that it breaks down at higher values. So, while the difference between a 1.0 and a 1.1 is immense, and accurately measured, the jump from 1.8 to 2.4 could be smaller, much smaller.

But our second conclusion? For what it's trying to do, the test works like a charm. Looks like those mad scientists are on to something! Rather than bore you with the grisly details, we figured we'd get right to the good stuff. So, without further ado, here's a sampling of average sapience scores from the study:

Laboratory Rat: 0.4

Domestic Housecat: 0.5

Wild Octopus: 0.87

"Pupnik": 0.91

Sapience Baseline: 1.0

Uplifted Feline: 1.3

Uplifted Canine: 1.5

Uplifted Suidae: 1.55

Uplifted Avian: 1.6

Uplifted Simian: 1.62

Uplifted Cetacean: 1.63

Helot: 1.64

Human: 1.65

Uplifted Cephalopod: 1.66

So, there you have it! Be nice to the squiddos, kiddos. Before we say goodbye, we are contractually obligated to mention that the Nomad scientists are disputing the Helot's average score, citing 'biased results' from the PanOceanian scientists who performed some of the tests. To that I say, maybe we should ship'em some Libertos, and see who's biased then!"

— Skyler Blue, for *Skyler Explains Everything* for Mercury Communications: available on Maya and Arachne.

SAPIENCE, QUANTIFIED

While its methodology can seem impossibly arcane to a layperson, the Nuendorf-Skalski test's results were designed to be easy to understand. A 1.0 on the Sapience Scale is the minimum threshold to be legally considered a sapient being by the Nomad Nation. With the understanding that developmentally disabled individuals were still considered people under the law, the 1.0 number does not necessarily represent an ability to take care of one's self, merely the recognition that the person is, categorically, a person.

EXPERIMENTAL BRAGGING RIGHTS

By their own admission, the Nuendorf-Skalski test doesn't measure intelligence, rather the raw capacity for it. Even so, this hasn't stopped people from bragging about their abnormally high Sapience Scores, or degrading – and in some cases, terminating the employment of – people who score lower on the scale. Still, most people never subject themselves to the intrusive and demanding tests, though it's become yet another bizarre thing for tourists on holiday to do while visiting *Bakunin*.

humans, Tohaa, or any other thinking, acting, sapient race. Reactions throughout the Nomad Nation ranged from jubilant to noncommittal since most Nomads had long since abandoned the thought that traditional social norms were being terribly important. If these new citizens could pull their weight, then they were welcome. If not, well, the airlocks still worked.

Needless to say, the response across the Human Sphere was a bit more mixed. Given its sudden emergence, O-12 has remained noncommittal on the Nuendorf-Skalski Test and has thus far been reluctant to extend citizen privileges such as the Demogrant to Uplifts for passing a test cooked up in the heart of Praxis. Other corners of the Human Sphere have responded differently. PanOceania's initial enthusiasm for the measure saw a sharp decline when Helot subjects scored about the same and occasionally a little higher than the average PanOceanian. Yu Jing faced small pockets of rioting when a member of the Ministry of Ancestral Fidelity suggested that Japanese citizens be subjected to the measure.

UPLIFTS IN SOCIETY

Despite the massive amount of media attention and the ensuing legal proceedings, the number of recognised Sapient Uplifts has barely reached triple digits in the Nomad Nation. And while the Frankensteinian doctors of Praxis' Black Labs are certainly working overtime in this new field, most of the results are stunted, broken things, too unstable and violent to function in society, often falling just shy of the sapience threshold.

Many Uplifts come into the world the proud owners of a massive debt given by their creators to pay for the cost of their awakening. Others simply need to attend a few conferences and be presented to the larger scientific community. Once they've served to verify the researchers' findings, they're sent off into the world with a pat on the back and little else. Far more common than anyone wants to admit, however, is Uplifts being created by request or sold on the black market, though usually not in so many words. Unscrupulous "agents" purchase the rights to "represent" the Uplift to various clients, usually Submondo kingpins, brothel owners, and the occasional pirate. The Uplift is technically free to do as they wish, but in practice, they aren't really given a choice.

In truth, society doesn't really know what to do with Uplifts as of yet. Most have never left *Bakunin*, let alone ventured outside the Nomad Nation.

Even Maria is content to advocate for Uplift civil rights via her custom Zondbot. As far as anyone knows, she hasn't left her tank in the Black Ships since before her Awakening. The next steps will be massive. The first Uplifts to interact with the wider Human Sphere will have a titanic burden on their shoulders, their actions speaking for all Uplifts and shaping society's opinions with every breath.

No pressure.

UPLIFT TYPES

Awakening an animal to sapience is no easy task. Projekt: Volaré proved that it was possible for cetaceans, but not every species has enjoyed the same success. Most attempts result in a tortured, monstrous beast-thing. One can look no farther than the Pupniks to see what a stunted, demi-sapient creature looks like. Still, through many trials and countless errors, a few species have emerged as prime candidates for uplifting:

AVIANS

Forget the songbirds and tropical parrots. Crows – ravens, to be precise – are the clever birds who took well to Uplift research. Presenting unique challenges due to their smaller brains, Avians nevertheless do remarkably well with personality recording. Chatty, creative, and possessed of a razor-sharp, sardonic wit, Avians have carved out a niche as airborne Remote pilots.

CANINES

Arguably the first species to receive experimental uplifting treatments, the field of Canine Uplift research is littered with failed experiments, nightmarish monsters, and the occasional very good but otherwise unremarkable dog. Even so, looking at the few successful Uplifts, it's easy to see why there's so much interest. Canines are loyal, enthusiastic, and good at taking direction. While they're easily distracted and tend to mope, their moods are rarely sour for long, and their ability to take direction is an invaluable and rare trait among Uplifts.

CETACEANS

Neo-cetaceans laid the groundwork, and Maria blazed the trail. Little wonder that Cetaceans remain the most common type of Uplift. Gregarious and clever, they are social creatures, though are terrible with boundaries. Dolphins in particular have a hard time taking "no" for an answer, but all cetaceans possess a predator's instincts. They're used to throwing their weight around and respond with deadly force when they feel threatened. Still, they're natural pilots, great team players, and possess an infectiously cheerful demeanour.

CEPHALOPODS

Possessing massive brains by animal standards, Cephalopod Uplifts have enjoyed a higher success rate than even Cetaceans, with the added benefit of taking up far less space in a lab. Insatiably curious, easily bored, and fond of sandpaper-dry humour, Cephalopods also tend to be supremely introverted, avoiding social situations to an extent rarely observed in humans. Still, their instinctive grasp of three-dimensional movement and comfortability with precise motions has proven useful when operating Remote Presence Gear. An added benefit of this method of interaction is that it allows them to stay at arm's length from the more outgoing races. Which, to be clear, is all of them.

FELINES

Something of a cautionary tale, Feline Uplifts present a suite of unique challenges. Initially created at the request of powerful Submondo, their sponsors imagined something akin to feline Chimera. They forgot one important rule about cats: they're only cute so long as they're not bigger than you. And with housecats proving unsuitable, researchers turned to leopards, lynx, and other big cats to get the job done. The good news is that it worked. The bad news is that cats tend to be aloof, enigmatic, and sadistic in any incarnation; Feline Uplifts generally aren't the exception to that rule.

SIMIANS

Requiring less drastic modification than other species, Simians are seen as a beginner's project in the Uplift research community, nothing you'd build a reputation on. Despite this, horror stories persist including everything from drug-addicted primates crawling around in the vents to cannibalistic chimpanzees breaking free and eating babies. (Though the latter is certainly conjecture; there's a ban on chimps for this very reason.) Frankly, once researchers found success working with less temperamental, more predictable, and frankly, nicer species, there was less incentive to experiment on the "damn dirty apes."

Still, a few Simian Uplifts have seen the light of day. Smaller subjects like the family-oriented Titi monkeys have enjoyed some success while biomorphed gorillas have flourished in tasks where their massive frames prove useful. But, they're hardly popular. Despite their neural suitability, Simians make up somewhere between five and ten percent of all Uplifts.

SUIDS

On the other hand, Suidae, or as they're more commonly known, swine, have enjoyed much greater success than anyone predicted. Affable, smart, and — much to the surprise of casual

"We taught them to speak, and they haven't shut up since."

—Praxis's own Ivana "Doctor Despair" Nowitzki, commenting on Maria's first public speech. Channel RedPublika, Arachne.



observers – neurotically hygienic, Suids are sociable creatures. They're phenomenal at packing on muscle and using it effectively, making them prime candidates for hybrid biomorph bodies. Although they are remarkably laid-back, their calm demeanour isn't always reassuring since they are also prone to sudden, brutal violence. Rage isn't really their style; Suidae Uplifts have been observed ripping human beings to shreds without ever so much as raising their voice.

■ PRACTICAL PHYSIOLOGY ■

Awakening an Uplift creates some very real logistical concerns. Beyond the societal factors or philosophical implications, there are some very real, very practical challenges. No matter how smart you are, the world is built for humans. Without significant augmentation, Uplifts would be hopelessly crippled. Luckily for them, extensive modifications are an integral part of the deal. While neural comlogs and custom geists are common to every Uplift, there's usually much more that goes into making them functional. Over time, three categories of Uplift adaptation have emerged: Lhosts, Remote Operation, and Biomorphic Hybrids.

CUBES, LHOSTS, AND THE CHALLENGES OF NOVELTY

How does an Uplift interact with an Lhost? The same way that everyone else does, though the journey is complicated and prohibitively expensive. Modern Cubes are a mature technology, refined over time with a mountain of data from which to draw conclusions.

Uplifts are a genuinely new phenomena. There is no extant research to build on, no shoulders upon which to stand. Any memory recording would be an entirely custom-built project. Cubes are designed to interface with the relatively homogenous encephalic structure of humanity, and each Uplift is essentially a new and different species. Without custom Silk derivatives, a completely hand-tailored neural interface, and commissioned Cube-equivalent, obtaining a digital sheut is next to impossible. Some of the more ambitious Uplifts have attempted to start work on this project. While the Uplifts are new enough that none have yet perished from natural causes, with an estimated lifespan of 35–40 years, any and all anti-aging treatments carry an undeniable appeal.

If acquiring a Cube or Lhost for an Uplift, increase any tariffs up to 3, calculate the cost as normally, and then double it. Any Uplift transferring into a Lhost must succeed at an **Epic (D5) Discipline test** or suffer from Resurrection Dysmorphic Disorder (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 394). Beyond this, once an Uplift is slotted into a Lhost, their experience is much like anyone else's, though it still takes time to get used to their strange, humanoid body.

REMOTES

Many uplifts rely on Remotes, the original and the most popular option to handle most tasks up to and including feeding themselves, and Remotes are the preferred method of Cetacean and Cephalopod Starswimmers. Many Uplifted pilots will hop between the ship's controls and a customised Zondbot without ever leaving the comforts of their custom habitat. This hyper-sedentary lifestyle can lead to some long-term health issues so most Remote-primary uplifts make time for daily exercise as well as the occasional holiday.

BIOMORPHIC HYBRIDS

For some Uplifts, separating the mind from the body is a recipe for disaster. In other cases, tapping into their unique physiology is part of the appeal. And sometimes, a mad scientist just wants to build a better monster. Whatever the reason, Praxis scientists have been known to create their fair share of custom biomorph hybrid hosts. And while many of these tortured experiments go awry, resulting in hulking abominations, insane nightmare creatures, or simply leaving their subjects dead on the operating table, the labs occasionally cook up a stable solution.

These Biomorphs are each a one-of-a-kind creature, fusing their original DNA with human, xenobiological, or synthetic vat-grown tissue. Usually, this results in a bipedal hominid with distinct animalistic features, not entirely unlike Ariadna's Wulvers or Dog-Warriors, though depending on the source material, potentially much smaller.

UPLIFT CHARACTERS

If nonhumans are uncommon in the world of *Infinity*, then Uplifts are exceptionally rare. The tiny population of unique individuals has yet to make any significant steps into the wider Human Sphere. Uplift Characters will likely be the first of their kind, first to venture out into the stars, first to visit other worlds, and certainly the first Uplift that most people have ever met.

DECISION ONE: BIRTH HOST

Uplift characters roll on the *Uplift Species Table* to determine their origins. They may instead spend 1 Life Point to simply choose their species. Note: Modifiers from a Species template affect your attributes directly, but

don't go on the Host section of your character sheet. They represent the unique perspective of your animalistic mind, holding true no matter what body you're in. If you are unable to meet the Life Point Cost of the Species, you can either select a Species that you can afford, or simply continue on the Lifepath as a Human.

UPLIFT SPECIES TABLE

D20	HOST
1	Simian
2–5	Cephalopod
6–8	Avian
9–13	Cetacean
14–16	Canine
17–18	Suidae
19–20	Feline

After determining your Species, you must choose whether your character resides in an Lhost, interacts primarily through Remotes, or is a Custom Biomorph. Nothing prevents your character from picking up a Remote if you begin play in an Lhost, but every Uplift has to start somewhere. Select one of the Host options and pay the listed Life Point cost. Apply the modifiers from your Host to both your attributes and the Host section of your character sheet, and make note of any special abilities or gear.



"Two hosts. Two sheuts inhabiting them. I was born human, but Blue here used to be a jellyfish or – wait, one second – okay, he's something called a "vampire squid." Well, we all identify as something a little different, don't we? Anyway, two very different origins, but what's the difference between us now? His host is a custom biomorph; mine is a Siren Lhost. But at the end of the day, we're both sheuts in a – Blue, where are you going? We're in the middle of an interview...."

All right, fine. One difference is that he's shy. But that's just a personality thing. Philosophically, spiritually, and existentially, what's the distinction? Humanity – no, personhood – is so much more than genetics."

–Dana Schäfer and (briefly) Blue Nocturne of the Salted Deep: interview for Transhuman Transmission, only on Arachne.

UPLIFT RESURRECTIONS

The process of Awakening an Uplift creates a lot of data. That said, it's not like one can just acquire an Avian-spec Cube off the shelf. Thus, most Uplifts' heads are a tangle of tissue and wire, hacked together to create a working prototype. No one knows an Uplift like their creators. If an Uplift dies during character creation, they have the option of choosing a Custom Biomorph as their new host, provided that they can pay the associated Life Point cost.

Once they're out in the world, it's a different story altogether. Needless to say, standard Resurrection isn't an option. Reviving a deceased Uplift from its onboard memory storage is going to be an uphill battle and possibly an entire campaign arc in itself.



UPLIFT LIFEPATH DECISIONS

The Lifepath Decisions outlined on p. 38 of the *Infinity Corebook* should be followed with the following exceptions for Uplift characters.

DECISION ONE— BIRTH HOST

In order to use this Lifepath your Birth Host must be an Uplift. This may have been randomly determined or purchased with Life Points. Either way, Uplifted characters roll on the *Uplift Species Table*, then select either an Lhost, Remote, or Custom Biomorph as your initial Host.

DECISION TWO— FACTION AND HERITAGE

Uplift characters automatically take Nomad for both Faction and Heritage, and gain skills accordingly.

DECISION THREE— HOMEWORLD/ HOMELAND

Uplifts are created on *Bakunin*, or on board one of Praxis' Black Ships. They roll on the *Uplift Mothership Table*.

DECISION FOUR— STATUS

Uplifts gain the Heritage Trait Bakunian, and roll on the *Uplift Social Status Table* and *Uplift Home Environment Table*.

DECISION FIVE— AWAKENING EVENT

Uplift characters roll on the *Awakening Event Tables*.

DECISION SEVEN— ADOLESCENT EVENT

Like other characters in the Nomad Faction, Uplifts roll on the *Nomad Faction Adolescent Event Tables*.

DECISION EIGHT— CAREERS

Instead of rolling on the *Nomads Career Table* in the *Infinity Corebook* or *Nomad Faction Career Table*, Uplift characters roll on their respective *Uplift Career Table* as well as the *Uplift Career Event Tables*.

UPLIFT SPECIES

AVIAN

- **Hawkeye:** Gain 1 rank in Awareness
- **Natural Flight:** If you begin play in a Small Biomorph, gain the Aircraft vehicle quality. You may freely fly in atmosphere using either the Athletics or Pilot skills.
- **Gain Species Trait:** Inquisitive
- **Life Point Cost:** 2

CANINE

- **Who's a Good Dog?:** Gain 1 rank in Willpower
- **Enthusiastic:** Gain 1 rank in Athletics. If you begin play in a Biomorph, gain the Common Special Ability, Keen Senses (scent).
- **Gain Species Trait:** Loyal
- **Life Point Cost:** 2

CETACEAN

- **Gregarious:** Gain 1 rank in Personality
- **3D Native:** Gain 1 rank in either Extraterrestrial or Spacecraft. Gain the Space Ace talent.
- **Aquatic:** If you begin play in a Biomorph, you can breathe underwater, gain the Common Special Ability: Inured to Cold, and begin play with one rank of the Strong Swimmer talent.
- **Gain Species Trait:** Boundary Issues
- **Life Point Cost:** 4

CEPHALOPOD

- **Uplifted Intellect:** Gain 1 rank in Intelligence
- **Aquatic:** If you begin play in a Biomorph, you can breathe underwater, gain the Common Special Abilities: Inured to Cold, and Inured to Aquatic Pressure, and begin play with one rank of the Strong Swimmer talent.
- **Gain Species Trait:** Antisocial
- **Life Point Cost:** 3

FELINE

- **Predatory Instinct:** Gain 1 rank in Agility
- **Hunter's Grace:** Gain 1 rank in Acrobatics. If you begin play in a Biomorph, gain 1 rank of the Catfall talent.
- **Gain Species Trait:** Sadistic
- **Life Point Cost:** 3

SIMIAN

- **Nimble:** Gain 1 rank in Coordination
- **Natural Gymnast:** If you begin play in a Biomorph, gain Climbing Plus as an augmentation. If it's a small or medium Biomorph, gain a prehensile tail as well.
- **Gain Species Trait:** Foul-Tempered
- **Life Point Cost:** 2

SUIDAE

- **Tough as Nails:** Gain 1 rank in Brawn
- **Naturally Calm:** Gain 2 ranks in Morale
- **Gain Species Trait:** Neurotically Hygienic
- **Life Point Cost:** 3

CUSTOM BIOMORPH, SMALL

ATTRIBUTES

AGILITY	+1	AWARENESS	-	BRAWN	-2	COORDINATION	-
INTELLIGENCE	+1	PERSONALITY	-	WILLPOWER	-		

Odd Fit: Almost nothing is tailored to fit Biomorphs, especially ones this small. When purchasing gear meant to be worn, such as armour, add +1 to the item's restriction and tariff rating. Gear that is not acquired in this fashion causes the Uplift to suffer a +1 complication range to all skill tests. Tailoring gear to fit the character requires a Complex Tech test (D3, 4 Momentum, 2 failures).

Out of Sight, Out of Mind: You generate +1 additional Momentum on successful Stealth tests.

Small Target: Ranged attacks against a Small Biomorph are made at +1 difficulty.

Tiny: When using items of a size larger than One-Handed, you suffer +1 difficulty and +2 complication range, though you may remove these penalties by taking the Brace Action. Either way, you cannot wield items of Unwieldy size or larger

Life Point Cost: 0

CUSTOM BIOMORPH, MEDIUM

ATTRIBUTES

AGILITY	-	AWARENESS	-	BRAWN	-	COORDINATION	-
INTELLIGENCE	-	PERSONALITY	-	WILLPOWER	-		

Custom MetaChemistry: Increase one attribute of your choice by 1 rank.

Uncanny Valley: Close enough that you might pass for a modified Human at first glance, but far enough that no one's making that mistake on their second glance, people find your appearance unsettling. Increase the complication range on all Personality-based tests by one step.

Life Point Cost: 1

CUSTOM BIOMORPH, LARGE

ATTRIBUTES

AGILITY	-	AWARENESS	-	BRAWN	-	COORDINATION	-
INTELLIGENCE	-	PERSONALITY	-	WILLPOWER	-		

Monstrous: They certainly made you big. Increase the difficulty of tests where great size or weight would be problematic by one step. Monstrous creatures are not required to brace Unwieldy weapons, can use two-handed weapons in one hand without difficulty or penalty, and can wield Massive weapons in two hands freely, or in one hand by increasing the difficulty of all skill tests to use the item by two steps. Additionally, they may spend 1 Momentum to add Knockdown to all of their melee attacks for a turn.

Odd Fit: Almost nothing is tailored to fit something this large. When purchasing gear meant to be worn, such as armour, add +1 to the item's restriction and tariff rating. Gear that is not acquired in this fashion causes the Uplift to suffer a +1 complication range to all skill tests. Tailoring gear to fit the character requires a Complex Tech test (D3, 4 Momentum, 2 failures).

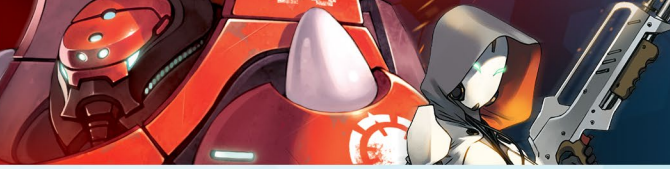
Life Point Cost: 3

AVERAGE BIOMORPH SIZES

Small Biomorph: 1 metre or less, 20–45 kg

Medium Biomorph: 1.5 to 2 metres, 70–125 kg

Large Biomorph 2.25 to 3 metres, 150–200 kg



A NOTE ON LHOSTS

For ease of use, these entries use existing Lhosts, but it's worth noting that the models used are customised, one-off units. Acquiring an Lhost that easily interfaces with the slapdash mess that is an Uplift's head isn't a trivial task, hence the doubled cost of Lhosts once play begins (see p. 84).

LHOST

ATTRIBUTES

AGILITY	–	AWARENESS	–	BRAWN	–	COORDINATION	–
INTELLIGENCE	–	PERSONALITY	–	WILLPOWER	–		

Cubed: Gain a Cube.

Hosted: Select a Lhost for your character from either the *Infinity* Corebook (p. 354) or another *Infinity* supplement.

Life Point Cost: Pay the listed Life Point cost for your selected Lhost. If the cost cannot be paid, you may take the Antiquated Lhost at no cost.

REMOTE SPECIALIST

ATTRIBUTES

AGILITY	–	AWARENESS	–	BRAWN	–	COORDINATION	–
INTELLIGENCE	–	PERSONALITY	–	WILLPOWER	–		

Just like the Real Thing: You begin play with 1 TinBot, as your “body.”

Gear: Remote Presence Gear or Cube 2.0 (choose one)

Life Point Cost: 2 (1 for Cetaceans and Cephalopods)

DECISION THREE: UPLIFT MOTHERSHIP

While the day may come when Uplifts are created somewhere other than the auspices of *Bakunin*, it hasn't come yet. Instead of the *Nomad Mothership Table*, Uplift characters roll on the *Uplift Lab Table*.

UPLIFT LAB TABLE

D20	REGION	LANGUAGE	ATTRIBUTE	ATTRIBUTE	SKILL
1–9	Praxis Black Labs	German, English	Willpower	Agility	Science
10–18	Praxis Black Ships	English*	Willpower	Awareness	Extraplanetary
19–20	Undocumented Orbital	German*	Willpower	Intelligence	Resistance

* Roll again on the *Nomad Mothership Table* (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 43) to determine a second language you're fluent with. If you roll the same result, that's the only language you're fluent with.

DECISION FOUR: UPLIFT STATUS

Uplifts are still residents of *Bakunin*. They gain the Heritage Trait: Bakunian. However, their upbringing is necessarily quite different. Thus, Uplift characters roll on the *Uplift Social Class Table* and *Uplift Home Environment Table*.

SOCIAL CLASS TABLE			
2D6	SOCIAL STATUS	ATTRIBUTE	EARNINGS
2	Criminal Underclass*	Personality	2
3-5	Underclass	Willpower	1
6-8	Middle	Brawn	3
9-10	Upper	Intelligence	4
11	Criminal Upper Class*	Personality	4
12	Criminal Elite*	Brawn	5

* Renegades even by Nomad standards, your creator(s) dealt with Submondo more than with the rest of *Bakunin*. Gain a Criminal Record; you may join the Submondo faction at any time.

HOME ENVIRONMENT TABLE			
D6	ENVIRONMENT	ATTRIBUTE	SKILL
1	Underworld*	Brawn	Thievery
2	Violent	Brawn	Acrobatics
3	Virtual	Intelligence	Hacking
4	Clinical	Willpower	Resistance
5	Regimented	Awareness	Discipline
6	High Society	Personality	Lifestyle

DECISION FIVE: AWAKENING

Uplifts don't really have a childhood. They have the time before their awakening and everything that comes afterwards. The transition into sapience is many things – shocking, traumatic, unreal – but it is never gentle.

Uplift characters roll 1d20 and consult the *Awakening Table*, adding the listed skill and talent. You can spend 1 Life Point to choose from the table, or after your initial roll to reroll the result.

DECISION EIGHT: UPLIFT CAREERS

When creating your character, you can choose to select the Test Subject career to gain 1 Life Point. (You can gain a maximum of 2 Life Points in this way. You do not gain the Life Point if you are forced to become a Test Subject by a random roll, event, or hazard test.)

Even if they've changed faction, Uplifts roll on their respective *Uplift Career Table*. At the GM's discretion, when directed to roll on a Nomad faction table, they may substitute their current faction's unique tables instead. If you roll an Uplift career but fail to meet its prerequisites, you can still proceed by hazarding the career, though your attempt suffers +1 difficulty. Attempting to hazard an Uplift career without meeting the prerequisites likewise suffers +1 difficulty to the hazard test. Additionally, whenever they would normally determine a career event, they roll on the *Nomad Uplift Career Event Tables* to determine which *Career Event Table* to roll on. You may spend 1 Life Point to choose any career from your species' career table, or to roll on the *Faction Career Table* indicated.

PLAYTEST TIP THE HAZARDS OF UPLIFTED CAREERS

Though they can't normally be randomly rolled, there's nothing preventing Human characters from working as an Entertainer or joining Die Morlock Gruppe, and in the world of *Infinity*, many do just that. There's no reason why Human characters can't hazard an Uplift career, or with the GM's approval, roll on the *Uplift Career Table* by spending a Life Point. Though if they don't meet the prerequisites for a career, they fare no better than anyone else.

For Uplifts, it's a little different. Barring special circumstances, they can't take Human careers; there simply aren't many opportunities for a Frankensteinian crow-monster, no matter how slick their resume is. Uplifts require GM approval to hazard any career that does not appear in their respective *Career Table*.

AWAKENING TABLE

D20	EVENT	SKILL [TALENT]
1-4	Shapes, glyphs, symbols – how could anyone hope to make sense of this informational deluge? But slowly, over time, patterns began to emerge.	Analysis [Pattern Recognition]
5-8	You remember screaming. Pain. The procedures tore your siblings apart, but you managed to survive. Your first self-aware thought was the realisation that you were very much alone, in more ways than one.	Resistance [Sturdy]
9-12	They said you were a failed experiment, a dead end. Furious at the dismissal, you determined to make them eat their words.	Discipline [Stubborn]
13-16	When the lab lost power, your fellow subjects were gripped in raw, animal panic. Not you, however. You calmed them all down, even as the stark differences between you and them took shape in your mind.	Animal Handling [Wild Empathy]
17-19	They thought they had you secured tightly, but you soon gave your habitat the slip. It would take them weeks to find you, giving you time to think.	Stealth [Scout]
20	The raid came at the worst possible time. Not just for your siblings and your creator(s), but for your attackers: you were awake, you were angry, and you were fully in control. You made them regret it.	Ballistics or Close Combat (choose one) [Quickdraw]



CAREER EVENT TABLES

D6	TABLE
1-3	Uplift Career Event Table
4	Career Event Table A ¹
5	Career Event Table B ¹
6	Career Event Table C ¹

¹ *Infinity Corebook*, p.56-58

AVIAN CAREER TABLE

D20	CAREER
1-2	Test Subject
3-5	Smuggler ¹
6-8	Entertainer
9-14	Tinkerer
15-16	BouBoutique Clerk ²
17	Die Morlock Gruppe ²
18	Starswimmer
19	Clockmaker ^{2,3}
20	Roll on <i>Nomad Faction Table</i>

CANINE CAREER TABLE

D20	CAREER
1-2	Test Subject
3-7	Personal Security
8-15	Die Morlock Aufstand Gruppe ²
12-13	Entertainer
14-15	Military ¹
16-17	Ship Crew ¹
18	Wrench
19	Mothership Security Corps ²
20	Roll on <i>Uplift Career Table</i> of your choice

CEPHALOPOD CAREER TABLE

D20	CAREER
1-2	Test Subject
3-7	Starswimmer
8-12	Tinkerer
13-14	Hacker ¹
15-16	Medical ¹
17	Remote Operator ¹
18	BouBoutique Clerk
19	TAG Pilot ¹
20	Roll on <i>Nomad Faction Table</i>

CETACEAN CAREER TABLE

D20	CAREER
1-2	Test Subject
3-12	Starswimmer
13-14	Remote Operator ¹
15	Negotiator ³
16	Pilot ¹
17	Entertainer
18	Medical ¹
19	Corsair ¹
20	Roll on <i>Nomad Faction Table</i>

FELINE CAREER TABLE

D20	CAREER
1-2	Test Subject
3-5	Entertainer
7-10	Personal Security
11-13	Die Morlock Gruppe ²
14-15	Criminal ¹
16-17	'Cat Squad Member ³
18	Special Forces ¹
19	BouBoutique Clerk
20	Roll on <i>Uplift Career Table</i> of your choice

SIMIAN CAREER TABLE

D20	CAREER
1-3	Test Subject
4-8	Wrench
9-11	Die Morlock Gruppe
12-13	Criminal ¹
14-16	Tinkerer
17	Ship Crew ¹
18	Infiltrator ³
19	Personal Security
20	Roll on <i>Uplift Career Table</i> of your choice

SUIDAE CAREER TABLE

D20	CAREER
1-2	Test Subject
3-8	Personal Security
9-11	Heavy Industry ¹
12-15	Die Morlock Gruppe
16	Military ¹
17	Wrench
18	Criminal ¹
19	BouBoutique Clerk
20	Roll on <i>Uplift Career Table</i> of your choice

¹ Career from *Infinity Corebook*.

² Career has a prerequisite of belonging to this faction. You can't hazard this career unless you're of the matching faction. If you roll into this career, you automatically fail your defection check. You can override these limitations by spending 1 Life Point (in which case, you were somehow undercover while working the career).

³ Career from *Nomad Characters Chapter*, p. 63.

NOMAD UPLIFT CAREER EVENT TABLE

D20	CAREER EVENT	GAME EFFECT
1	During a routine checkup, the doctors discover an incompatibility in two of your artificial organs; at least one is going to need replaced.	Increase either Awareness or Agility by 1. However, decrease the Attribute you didn't select by 1.
2	An Arachne series runs a feature on you. It isn't exactly flattering, but it gets your name out there.	Increase Lifestyle by 1 rank, but all Stealth tests are increased in difficulty by one step in situations where being recognised would cause you a problem.
3	You spend some time in a Vaudeville amateur performance troupe.	Gain 1 rank in Acrobatics.
4	Your geist was acting up, so you got it examined by some Clockmakers. Bad news: the quantronic virus wreaked havoc on your network. Good news: your geist is running better than ever.	Reduce Firewall by 1 but add 4 skill ranks to your geist.
5	Doctors discover a strange growth. It's removed without complications, but your musculature atrophies from the treatments.	Reduce Brawn by 1.
6	You enter a high-stakes card game and lose, badly.	Gain a 4+4  Asset debt.
7	When your shuttle pilot has an accident, everyone looks to you to take the helm.	Gain 1 rank in Spacecraft.
8	Sick of being treated like a mascot, you express your displeasure in dramatic, public fashion.	You are Fired (see <i>Infinity Corebook</i> , p. 54). Gain an appropriate trait.
9	Arrested for crimes real or imagined, two figures offer to make it all go away. The Submondo wants a favour; the Tunguskan lawyer wants money. But what do you want?	If you take the Tunguskan's offer, gain a 3+3 Asset debt. If you take the Submondo's offer, you must either take Criminal as your next career or owe a large favour to the Submondo. If you take neither offer, gain a Criminal Record (see <i>Infinity Corebook</i> , p. 54) and spend 1d6 years in prison.
10	When some of your biografts start wearing out, you don't repair or replace; you upgrade.	Increase Brawn by 1. Gain a 5 Asset debt.
11	Most people are immune to animal-specific diseases, and vice versa. You, however, seem to have gotten the worst of both worlds.	Reduce Vigour by 1. Gain Trait: Allergic to Everything.
12	You overclock your personal area network; while your Comlog sometimes runs hot, the results speak for themselves.	Increase Hacking by 1 rank. Gain Trait: Overclocked Network.
13	You spend some time on assignment with <i>Corregidor</i> . Did you make any friends? Enemies?	Increase Extraplanetary by 1 rank. Gain a contact on <i>Corregidor</i> .
14	You enter – and win – a high stakes card game though the Submondo running it are convinced you cheated. Did you?	Gain 4+4  Assets. Gain a Submondo rival.
15	Caught in the same firefight, you're saved by a Reverend Healer-Killer. After some tense discussion on whether or not Uplifts have a soul, you think you hit it off.	Gain a contact in the Observance of Saint Mary of the Knife.
16	As someone who underwent an Awakening, you can't help but notice that your geist is asking increasingly self-aware questions.	Gain Trait: Rogue Geist. Increase your geist's Awareness and Intelligence by 2 points each.
17	Your supervisor puts you in charge of a charity petting zoo. Jokes aside, it goes well.	Gain 1 rank in Animal Handling.
18	A minor celebrity freaks out when they see you at work, and their rant goes viral.	You are Fired (see <i>Infinity Corebook</i> , p. 54). Gain an appropriate trait.
19	Clandestine operatives abduct you, but Nomad Infiltrators puts a bullet in your head before the vivisection begins. Much to your surprise, you wake up in Praxis.	Your character died and was Resurrected. See the rules for <i>Resurrection</i> (see <i>Infinity Corebook</i> , p.54). Gain an enemy in a random faction.
20	Some of your first memories are assurances that everything will be fine so long as no Unexpected Complications arise. Of course, they always do.	Roll again three times on the Career Event Table for this career phase. (When spending a Life Point to choose a specific event, you may not choose this result.) If you roll duplicate events, it means some similar event has occurred. If you roll Unexpected Complications again, add additional rolls.

CAREER PROFILE

TEST SUBJECT (SPECIAL)

Sometimes, there just aren't any good options. Steady work is a dream for many Uplifts, but far too often, it's a dream out of reach. But when all else fails, when no one is hiring, and there's nowhere left to turn, the Black Labs of Praxis always have room for another Test Subject. Ingesting strange fluids, testing new MetaChemistry treatments, and donating litres of blood, life as a Test subject is rarely pleasant, but at least it isn't dull.

ATTRIBUTES						
AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+1	+3

SKILLS				EARNINGS
Mandatory	Animal Handling	Resistance	–	0+1 (N) (max 0)
Elective	Any 2 Other			

GEAR: None

CAREER PROFILE

DIE MORLOCK GRUPPE

On an orderly battlefield, superior discipline, tactics, and firepower rule the day. Amidst the chaos, however, it's all about who can improvise. Enter Die Morlock Gruppe. Comprised of the dregs of Bakunian society, the Morlock Groups are experts in violence, chaos, and inflicting serious damage. Employed primarily as an anti-riot force, they're also unleashed on battlefields around the Human Sphere as ultraviolent and effective, yet difficult to control, shock troopers. They are organised into three main segments, the Aufstand (rebellion), Chaos, and Schaden (damage) groups, and are about as subtle as a bat to the face. Inhuman in appearance, methods, and membership, the Morlocks gleefully introduce bloody chaos into any situation, transforming the crisis into an entirely new sort of problem, one they proceed to pound into the floor.

ATTRIBUTES						
AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
+2	+2	+3	+1	–	+1	–

SKILLS				EARNINGS
Mandatory	Athletics	Close Combat	Thievery	1+3 (N)
Elective	Ballistics	Close Combat	Psychology	

GEAR: Combi Rifle (with 1 Standard Reload) or Chain Rifle, D-Charges (2), Smoke Grenades (2), Sword

SPECIAL: Each time you take this career, roll 1d20 and consult the *Chaotic Gear Table*, gaining the listed gear.

CAREER PROFILE

BOUBOUTIQUE CLERK

In the iridescent sea of commerce that is *Bakunin's* market, few wear its transgressive verve as proudly as the BouBoutiques. Experts in body modification, BouBoutiques can transform you into anything you like, provided you can pay. With no better advertisement than a living canvas, many BouBoutique clerks boast exotic and inhuman appearances. A recent synergy with *Bakunin's* nascent Uplift population has led to inquisitive and visually striking Uplifts acting as the face of their business. Skilled in sales and walking encyclopaedias of fashion knowledge, BouBoutique Clerks also acquire a fair share of experience in modifying Lhosts, Biomorphs, and other physical hosts. BouBoutiques often run with a lean staff, so Clerks offer a little of everything – all with a smile and a wink.

ATTRIBUTES						
AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
+1	+2	+1	+1	+2	+2	+1

SKILLS				EARNINGS
Mandatory	Lifestyle	Persuade	Tech	1+4 (N)
Elective	Discipline	Education	Medicine	

GEAR: Powered Multitool (with 6 Units of Parts), Internal Pocket 1 or Geist Upgrade (+2 ranks in Tech, or the Pattern Recognition talent for Analysis)



CAREER PROFILE

ENTERTAINER

Nomads – especially Bakunians – seem to have an insatiable appetite for novelty. Exoticism is prized and is in comparatively short supply. A tourist walking down Sunset Boulevard will have their senses assaulted by a barrage of unfamiliar, wild sights and sounds. But for a Nomad, it's nothing they haven't seen before. Fortunately for them, *Bakunin* is always producing something new and exciting.

Products, services, or people, the Radical Mothership is only too happy to raise its supply of weird to meet this ravenous demand for novelty. If they are nothing else, Uplifts are unmistakably novel. Whether they're dancing, serving drinks, or taking on clients in the Ultraviolet District, if you've got a striking look – which many Uplifts can claim by default – there's work to be had. Even if most of it is being gawked at by strangers.

ATTRIBUTES						
AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
+2	+1	+1	+1	–	+3	+1

SKILLS				EARNINGS
Mandatory	Acrobatics	Persuade	Psychology	2+1 ^(N)
Elective	Athletics	Lifestyle	Observation	

GEAR: Cosmetics Kit, SecurCuffs, Recorder, Nitrocane (2 Doses), Naughties

CHAOTIC GEAR TABLE

D20	GEAR
1	Mess (1 Dose), Old Steely (2 Doses)
2	Smoke Grenades (2), Tear Gas Grenades (2)
4	Goonades (8)
5	Breaking & Entering Kit, Locational Beacon, SecureCuffs
6	Micro-Torch, USAriadnan Entrenching Tool
7	Signal Flares, Bottled Water (1 Week's Supply), Survival Rations (1 Week's Supply)
8	Busted Old Tinbot (Increase complication range by 1, Challenging (D2) Tech test to repair)
9	Puraza (1 Dose), Stims (2 Doses)
10	Animal Habitat, Painkillers (5 Doses)
11	Recorders (2), Sports Padding
12	Naughties (1 Month Supply)
13	Adhesive Solvent, Portable Monkey Bar
14	Freedom Kit
15	Hard Hat, Plasteel Pipe
16	Non-Functional Tinbot, 3 Units of Parts
17	Fake ID 3
18–20	Roll Again Twice, Combine the Results

CAREER PROFILE

STARSWIMMER

This is where it all began. A staple of the Nomad navy, the original Neo-Cetaceans' instinctual understanding of three-dimensional navigation was invaluable in keeping pace with the technological juggernauts of the Human Sphere. The introduction of uplifted Cephalopods to the program has reinvigorated Nomad naval tactics, as their instincts add another unpredictable twist to the Nomad bag of tricks.

Other pilots might ghost into a Remote, or dabble in VR-based piloting, but a Starswimmer goes further. For all intents and purposes, they become their ships in flight. This grants Starswimmers unprecedented grace and control, but it comes at a cost: they feel every strain and impact as though the hull was their own body. For Starswimmers, the risk is worth it. The chance to become their ships is the ultimate adrenaline rush. Just don't call them "blowholes."

ATTRIBUTES						
AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
+1	+2	+1	+2	+1	+2	+1

SKILLS				EARNINGS
Mandatory	Discipline	Stealth	Spacecraft	2+2 ^(N)
Elective	Extraplanetary	Stealth	Spacecraft	

GEAR: Immersive Pilot Gear, Crashesuit

CAREER PROFILE

TINKERER

Some people are just born curious. And for certain types of Uplift, the instinct to tinker with things irresistible. It's not uncommon to find young Avians studiously disassembling their surroundings, though it's less common to find one who puts them back together again. Constantly deconstructing things, Tinkerers are ceaselessly inventing, reverse-engineering, or tweaking anything to hand. The wealth of technological know-how that these Uplifts possess can be surprising, but to a Tinkerer, it's quite literally in their nature. Many find success in chop shops, with black market arms dealers, or even in legitimate work on a drydock. Some have even joined the NMF as battlefield technicians, though there's always the risk they'll disassemble a soldier's Combi Rifle just before they need it...

ATTRIBUTES						
AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
+1	+2	+1	+2	+2	+1	+1

SKILLS				EARNINGS
Mandatory	Anayliss	Tech	Thievery	1+3 ^(N)
Elective	Education	Hacking	Science	

GEAR: Powered Multitool (with 6 Units of Parts), Internal Pocket 1 or Geist Upgrade (+2 ranks in Tech, or the Pattern Recognition talent for Analysis)



CAREER PROFILE

UPLIFTED MUSCLE

From Tunguskan investment bankers' private bodyguards, to a *Corregidor maras* gang's heavies, to a BouBoutique's storefront security, every Nomad could use some intimidating muscle from time to time. Sure, there's no shortage of ruthless, violent, or heavyset folks available for the job, for many the ordinary just won't cut it. And that's when having some muscled Uplift as your Personal Security really shines. Using Pupniks in an obvious security role has long been a favourite tactic of Submondo crime bosses. Once they realised they could get their hands on similarly intimidating specimens with a roughly human intellect, the idea really took off. For the discerning underworld tycoon, there's little that flaunts your power like a hulking boar or gorilla at your back. Attack dogs and big cats on a leash have long been a symbol of black-market power, but with Uplifts it's been taken to a whole new level.

ATTRIBUTES						
AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
+2	+1	+3	+1	-	+1	+1

SKILLS				EARNINGS
Mandatory	Close Combat	Discipline	Persuade	2+1 ^(N)
Elective	Athletics	Observation	Resistance	

GEAR: Modhand or Nanopulser, Armoured Clothing, Deflector-2

CAREER PROFILE

WRENCH

Nomads live and die by their ships. The cold void of space doesn't care where you came from; you either survive, or you don't. So, when it comes down to ship and equipment maintenance, the Nomads are similarly pragmatic. It doesn't matter what school you went to, who your parents are, or how many people up-voted your viral video. You can either do the work, or you can't. As it turns out, plenty of Uplifts can do the work. Sure, some Nomads find it strange to see the person next to them gripping a Multitool with their tail, but if the work is sound, they can only bring themselves to care so much. Nicknamed "Wrenches," these Uplifted mechanics can be found working the most dangerous assignments in the guts of a fallen TAG, repairing a ship's hull from the outside, or anything else where you need a skilled – but expendable – mechanic.

ATTRIBUTES						
AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
+1	+1	+2	+1	+2	+1	+2

SKILLS				EARNINGS
Mandatory	Discipline	Extraplanetary	Tech	1+2 ^(N)
Elective	Pilot	Survival	Tech	

GEAR: Engineering Waldo 1, Repair Kit, Plasteel Pipe

CHAPTER 7

BIOENGINEERING

To walk through the streets of *Bakunin* is to see just how modified the body can become, while still technically remaining human – or with the arrival of the Tohaa, ascension of the Uplifts, and the first Helot explorers all dipping their uniquely-shaped toes into the larger Human Sphere, whatever else they started as. While biografts are not uncommon, Nomad bioengineering takes it a step further, then another, and another. They don't stop when they've gone too far. In fact, that's when things start getting interesting.

ALLURE OF THE UNDISCOVERED

How Nomad bioengineering differentiates from standard biografts – such as those produced by Haqqislam, PanOceania, or any number of corporations – is complicated. Standard biografted augmentations rely on carefully calibrated retroviruses and genetically neutral xeno-transplants. It's a safe, cautious, deliberate process, with innumerable protections in place to ensure that everything goes smooth.

Nomad bioengineering offers no such reassurances. What it does offer, however, is the prospect of radical transformation, unshackled by norms, regulations, or concerns for the long-term health. In the hotly contested secret wars of the Human Sphere, the slightest advantage can tip a conflict, and having a trick or two up your sleeve can be the difference between a successful mission and an interplanetary fiasco. Praxis is more than happy to tip the balance in their clients' favour.

XENOGRAFTING

Most augmentation clinics incorporate some manner of xenotissue in their procedures. While more exotic materials such as synthetic Antipode glands are sometimes used, most of this work is done with carefully cultivated, lab-grown tissue. It's safe, thoroughly tested, and well-understood.

In Praxis, however, they do things a little differently. No line of inquiry is off-limits, no topic is taboo. The exploration of possibility is their primary concern. The respect and acclaim of their peers comes next. The well-being of their patients is a distant third, if it registers at all; they knew the risks and decided to roll the dice. It's not the bioengineers' fault if they get more than they bargained for.

"Oh, it's completely unreasonable. We're in agreement there. No reasonable person would allow these mad scientists to experiment on them. My mission is not reasonable. The risks are not reasonable. And my opposition refuses to listen to reason.

When faced with an unreasonable task, you need an unreasonable solution. For those, I come to *Bakunin*."

– Lieutenant Paula Whitaker, Texas agent.
Hexahedron expense review, undisclosed location.



ANTITHANATICS

Most of the Human Sphere uses antithanatic – or anti-aging – treatments to counteract the ravages of time. Popular treatments such as Haqqislam's tameer (تَمِير, Arabic for longevity or immortality) are applied gradually over the course of years, subtly slowing senescence. While such treatments are available in the Nomad Nation as well, more radical procedures are also quite popular. Most recently, this has manifested as an attempt to create subtly radioactive cells within a host, not only locking them in stasis but preventing the cells from becoming cancerous. At least, that's the idea. Mostly, people are getting radiation poisoning. The search for true immortality in one's birth host continues.

RADICAL GENETIC THERAPY

Outside of Ariadna, virtually every citizen of the Human Sphere has undergone genetic therapy at some point, usually before they were even born. Slow, gradual gene therapy is frequently used to provide a robust immunisation against disease or employed to deal with the effects of aging.

However, that's not all that genetic alteration can do. Radical change requires radical treatments, and with enough Silk, physicians can attempt nearly anything. Whether it's a good idea or not is a different matter entirely. Every non-Nomad jurisdiction has banned rapid, radical genetic therapy, declaring it "woefully and wildly unsafe," a distinction that Praxis has never bothered denying.

Still, throw enough Silk at an idea, and astonishing things become possible. Getting one's hands on that much of the substance is another story entirely, so most Nomad clinics have several other options available to their clients. From splicing animal DNA to accept muscle grafts, to a steady regimen of anti-rejection drugs to deal with your new xenotissue, options abound.

CUSTOM GENEMOD PACKAGES

Applied bioengineering is not for the faint of heart. But for those willing to embrace the risk, there are worlds of untapped potential just waiting to be explored. Unlike traditional augmentation, there is an element of volatility to the process. In the *Infinity Corebook*, the only random elements of

augmentation surgery lie in acquisition. Once the goods and services have acquired and paid for, it's generally smooth sailing from there.


Custom GeneMods are not smooth. They're a wild frontier, fraught with unexpected results, both positive and negative. In addition to increasing the cost, restriction, tariff, and maintenance of an upgrade package, bioengineering uses an additional tally: *Risk*.

As more varied and potent treatments go into the GeneMod package, its Risk increases. After acquiring their GeneMod package, players consult their Risk tally and roll on the *Bioengineering Side Effects Table*, adding the effects – positive, negative, or both – to their character.


GETTING MODDED

In game terms, bioengineering can be considered a special kind of biograft. Even though it occurs through the application of GeneMod packages, bioengineering is still subject to the same rules and limitations as other biografts. Each GeneMod package is considered a Full-Body augmentation, though new GeneMod packages can be grafted into the existing one later, adding +1 to the package's Maintenance cost and replacing the existing Full-Body augmentation, rather than adding to it.

GENEMOD STEPS

1. Start with a base of 1+5 
2. Add Modification options
3. Tally the Cost, Maintenance, Tariff, and Risk of your package
4. Consult the *Custom GeneMod Table* to determine the package's final cost
5. Roll on the *GenoMod Side Effects Table* to determine any other effects

Restriction / Cost: Instead of each modification having its own Restriction or Cost, the following tables are used to determine the Restriction and Cost of a custom bioengineering package, a bundle of modifications obtained and applied together. Given that a large portion of the expense is in acquiring the time, expertise, and undivided attention of a Nomad Bioengineer, purchasing several modifications as a large package is quite cost-effective compared to buying individual augmentations. However, the more specific the demands, the more difficult it is to find someone who can do the job in addition to the increased risk of having yourself modified.

When creating a custom Gene-Package, before selecting any options, there's a base cost of 1+5 . This baseline represent the cost and difficulty of getting a Praxis Bioengineer to agree to work with

WHY WOULD ANYONE DO THIS?

Traditional augmentation is safer, often less expensive, and offers some very potent results. If that's not enough, getting a new Lhost opens up possibilities that traditional augmentation simply doesn't, without exposing the character to the volatility inherent in bioengineering GeneMods. So why would a reasonable character – or player, for that matter – attempt something so risky?

Several reasons. GeneMods offer some options and capabilities that simply can't be acquired elsewhere. Even if new gear is invented and acquired, there always exists the possibility that the character won't have access to it. GeneMods are a part of the character; they can't be taken away outside of vivisection, and if that's occurring, the character has other problems. They can be smuggled in anywhere and always relied upon.

Also, the volatility of GeneMods can work both ways. Yes, there exists significant risk, up to and including the character's death. But within that volatility, there is also opportunity. Many bioengineering side effects are positive, or at least, a mixed blessing. Yes, they're statistically less likely to occur – especially as players accumulate Risk – but some folks just can't resist the thrill of pushing their luck.

you in the first place. It's the foundation you'll build your custom GeneMod package on. While it doesn't do anything by itself, its cost is divided alongside your upgrades. Next, select the options you want, add up their respective costs, and then consult the *Bioengineering Gene-Package Table*.

Total the number of modifications. This will indicate your GeneMod package's restriction, the amount of Risk you've accumulated, and a value to divide your Cost and Maintenance by (rounding down), resulting in the GeneMod package's final Cost.

Maintenance: Some modifications can introduce a Maintenance cost. Unlike tariffs, there is no ceiling on Maintenance increases; Nomad bioengineers aren't in the business of protecting their customers from themselves. They do know a few good loan sharks, though. Maintenance costs are divided by the values indicated in the *Custom Genemod Package Table*, and there are additional options that can reduce Maintenance costs. Note that these only

CUSTOM GENEMOD TABLE

RISK	RESTRICTION	DIVIDE COST & MAINTENANCE BY...
1-3	+1	1
4-6	+2	1
7-10	+3	2
11-14	+4	3
15-18	+5	4
19+	+5	5

GENEMOD SIDE EFFECT TABLE

RISK	SODE EFFECT TAB;E
1-7	Side Effects Column A
8-14	Side Effects Column B
15+	Side Effects Column C

BIOENGINEERING SIDE EFFECTS TABLE

ROLL D20			INCIDENT	EFFECT
A	B	C		
1	-	-	The enhanced neural lining not only ties your package together but now you feel invincible.	Increase Firewall, Morale, and Vigour by 1 each.
2	-	-	The bioengineer slips in a little something extra. To everyone's surprise, this goes quite well.	Gain +1 to an Attribute of your choice.
3	1	-	Getting your new mods to integrate required extensive neural modification.	Increase Firewall by 1.
4-5	2	-	The biochemistry is a near-perfect fit: you feel stronger than ever.	Increase Vigour by 1.
6-7	3-4	1	Bad news: they needed to replace most of your skull. Good news: your new, reinforced skull is probably better than the old one.	Add Armour Soak 1 to your head. This replaces any existing Armour, such as from Subdermal Grafts or integral Lhost Armour.
8-9	5-7	2	Echoes of someone else's memories linger in the genetic payload.	Gain Trait: Mnemonic Echoes. Choose a skill; you can treat your Focus as 1 rank higher when purchasing Talents.
10-12	8-10	3-5	Your anti-rejection medication has some side effects: while you're less sensitive to physical pain, emotional distress is intensified.	Reduce Morale by 1 but increase Vigour by 1.
13-15	11-12	6-8	Your brain chemistry is on overdrive, flooding you with positive emotions, but also amplifying your physical nerves.	Reduce Vigour by 1 but increase Morale by 1.
16-17	13-14	9-10	They got creative. Your body works, but things are... different.	Reduce one Attribute of your choice by 2. Increase one Attribute of your choice by 1.
18-19	15-16	11-12	To everyone's surprise, the GeneMods hypercharge your metabolism.	Gain 1 rank in Athletics. Increase Maintenance by 1 and gain the Trait: Hair-Trigger Temper.
20	17-18	13-14	The pieces fit. Mostly. But you get queasy at the most inopportune moments, and you've started craving flavors you used to abhor.	Gain Trait: Unstable Biochemistry.
-	19	15-16	Everything's where it's supposed to be, but you feel... sluggish.	Reduce Agility by 1.
-	20	17-18	You nearly died on the operating table. A last-minute injection of a small fortune in Silk saved you. Now you owe a small fortune to a loan shark.	Gain a debt worth 10 Assets. Increase your Maintenance by +1 until it's paid off.
-	-	19	Everything worked fine. They just needed to scoop out some muscle tissue to make room. It'll grow back. They think.	Reduce Brawn by 1.
-	-	20	You violently reject the treatment dying suddenly on the operating table.	Your character dies. See the rules for <i>Resurrection</i> in the <i>Infinity Corebook</i> , p. 392.

EXAMPLE: GENEMOD PACKAGE

On holiday on *Bakunin*, Yasmin decides to acquire a suite of BioMods. She selects ChameleonSkin 2, Environmental Adaptation 1 (Desert), Immuno-Booster 1, Inured to Heat (1), and Superhuman Awareness 1. Her player starts with the baseline cost of 1+5 (N), and then adds the selected items, coming to a total of 13+15 (N), T6, with a Maintenance of 5, and a Risk of 10. Expensive, but the price will be reduced later. But first, Yasmin's going to do some tweaking.

The Maintenance cost seems daunting, so she reduces it to 4 by taking on an additional 2 Risk, leaving her with a total of 12. That makes her nervous, so she spends 4 Assets to reduce her risk back down to 10. Consulting the *Custom GeneMod Package Table* she notes that her Restriction will be 3, and she'll be dividing both Cost and Maintenance by 2. That takes the package down to 6+7 (N), and drops her Maintenance down to 2. However, even the extended Tariff range doesn't go up to 6, so she reduces it to T5 and adds 1+1 (N) to her cost, giving her GeneMod Package a final value of 7+8 (N), Restriction 3, T5, Maintenance 2.

Consulting the *GeneMod Side Effect Tables*, she'll be rolling on Column B on the *Bioengineering Side Effects Table*. Yasmin's player grits her teeth and rolls the dice, hoping that the increased risk doesn't get her more than she bargained for.

apply to the package itself; you can't reduce the upkeep on your Powered Armour by cutting corners on your GeneMods.

Qualities: All GeneMod packages possess the Aug quality. Some modifications add additional qualities to the package, listed in their descriptions.

Risk: The more experimental a package, the more risk it entails. Untested technologies can be powerful but hazardous, and every additional modification increases the chance that things take an unexpected turn. For each modification in the package, increase the Risk tally by +1. Some options will add additional Risk to the package; these are in addition to the +1 Risk that each modification provides. After finishing the package, consult the *GeneMod Side Effect Tables*, and roll on the appropriate column of the *Bioengineering Side Effects Table*.

Note: If the amount of risk is 19 or greater, they're playing with fire. Every point of Risk beyond 19 is added to the results of their roll on the *Bioengineering Side Effects Table*. Accrue too much risk, and you're literally gambling with the character's life.

Tariffs: Several different modifications can increase the tariff rating of the package. Unlike most other cases, this can push the total tariff rating beyond T3, up to T5. If this would ever raise the tariff rating beyond T5, add 1+1 (N) to the package's final Cost for every value above T5. This increase comes after applying the divided Cost increase from the *Custom GeneMod Package Table*, so these increases are not divided.

RISK MANAGEMENT

While the Cost of a GeneMod package can be quite reasonable, the risk and maintenance costs are often anything but. If players are staring down some oppressive Maintenance costs, they can always add the Bootleg modification to represent less than sterling ingredients. But if that's still not enough, they have the option to exchange their Maintenance for Risk, reducing the Maintenance tally by 1 for every 2 Risk added in this fashion.

And if the Risk becomes too much, there are few things that giant piles of money can't solve or at least help with. Risk can be reduced by spending Assets; every 2 Assets spent in this fashion reduces Risk by 1.

BIOENGINEERING MODIFICATIONS

Amphibious: A xenograft that usually involves gills, this allows the user to breathe normally when submerged in either salt or freshwater, chosen at the time of installation. While black-market Helot gills are coveted, all manner of aquatic and amphibious life is used in the procedure.

Bootleg X: Not every xenograft can use top-quality ingredients. Not every GeneMod has the luxury of custom-tailored, silk-delivered DNA. Using gills from sea bass instead of Helots, gorilla meat instead of Morat muscle tissue, and a dog's nose and DNA instead of the Antipodes' powerful olfactory apparatus – sometimes you just have to work with what's on-hand. Or what's cheap.

Add X Traits describing how your new GeneMod is problematic in some way (such as Twitchy, Unexpected Allergies, Obviously Inhuman, etc.), and reduce its Maintenance cost by X, and Risk by 1+X, each to a minimum of 0. Between 1 and 3 of these Traits can usefully be applied to a given host: 1 is common, 2 is rare, and 3 is essentially unheard of. One can only skimp so much before hitting diminishing returns: regardless of their source, a Bootleg value greater than 3 provides no cost reduction, as complications drive the price right back up.

ChameleonSkin X: While popular speculation implies that grafting Shasvastii xenotissue results in this capability, the true source is closer to other pigment-altering lizards such as chameleons. Still, this natural camouflage grants +X bonus Momentum on face-to-face Stealth tests against targets at Long range or farther. However, the technology isn't exactly stable; it increases the complication range on Stealth tests by X as well.

Technically, this augmentation stacks with Chameleonwear, but using both in conjunction doubles the total complication range. (So a character

WIDE SPECTRUM IMMUNISATION X

Some creatures, such as the striped bass, can survive with little issue in either fresh or saltwater environments. Mimicking this capacity can provide a degree of the same protection to the user, reducing the difficulty on Resistance tests involving water filtration by X, to a minimum of 0.

FISH OUT OF WATER

A character with the Amphibious modification can still breathe the type of water they didn't select, though they run a serious risk of infection.

In every scene where they do so, they must succeed at a **Daunting (D3) Resistance test** or suffer an attack with the Biotech quality for 1+6 (N) damage.

using Chameleonskin 1 and Chameleonwear would have a complication range of 17–20). Chameleonskin is available in ratings from 1–3.

Direct Stimulant Applicator X: A fancy way of saying “drug delivery augmentation,” this modification uses Silk to create custom neural pathways, allowing the user to deliver hits of their drug of choice directly to their brain through thought instructions. The user can take a hit of their drug of choice as a Free Action by issuing a mental command. Direct Stimulant Applicators can deliver X number of specific drugs, chosen upon installation. There is no limit to the value of X that can be purchased, though each modification is custom work. Users looking to add a new type of stimulant will need to have the old pathways completely redone, purchasing the new modification from scratch.

Enhanced Attack X: Spines, barbs, calcium deposits – whatever the delivery method, the user’s natural weapons get a boost. Calcium deposits for punches, weapons-grade claws, even horns and fangs can be acquired. While it does nothing for melee attacks with a weapon – including Nemesis Gloves and other similarly-designed gear – their unarmed attack gains X of the following enhancements:

- **Grievous:** Adds the Grievous weapon quality. This also adds +3 Risk.
- **Parry:** From Xenografted Shrike Tardigrade hide, to calcium deposits, or good-old synthetic bone lacing, add the Parry 1 weapon quality. This can be taken a second time to make it Parry 2.
- **Piercing:** Vampire fangs to unicorn horns laced with titanium, hyper-dense bone, or just straight Teseum, this modification adds the Piercing 1 weapon quality. This can be taken a second time to make the quality Piercing 2.
- **Venomous:** Allows the character to deliver the contents of a Venom Gland X augmentation via their unarmed attack. If no Venom Gland modification is present, then it simply adds the Biotech weapon quality.

Environmental Adaptation X: Through a combination of xenografting, radical genetic alteration, and – according to at least one Observance member – “black magick,” the character becomes adapted to a particular type of environment, allowing them to ignore all difficulty modifiers due to environmental conditions or terrain and to reduce difficulty caused by environment-specific weather (such as blizzards for Arctic Adaptation, or sandstorms for Desert Adaptation) by two steps. The user selects X of the following environments: **Arctic, Desert, Jungle, Mountain, Forest, Plains, Subterranean, or Urban.**

Inured to X: Expensive, untested, and highly unstable, radical gene-therapy can nevertheless

do some amazing things. To many, that’s worth the cost... and the risk. Tissue samples from ancient *kossomn* Helots, Shrikes, and other exotic life forms have been used to create these mods. The user selects X of the following qualities (which differ slightly from their counterparts in the *Infinity Corebook*, p. 418):

- **Aging:** Powerful antithanatic treatments completely halt the aging process.
- **Cold:** Provides immunity to the effects and damage of extreme cold.
- **Heat:** Provides immunity to the effects and damage of extreme heat including fire, though the users’ hair and skin receive no such protection, to say nothing of their clothing.
- **Pain:** Incapable of feeling pain, the user continues undeterred despite the most horrific agony. They cannot be Dazed or Staggered by physical attacks.
- **Poison:** Provides immunity to all forms of poison, venom, and toxin.

Immuno-Booster X: By supercharging the immune system with Silk-laced (or close enough) micro-organs, the body’s response to viral attacks is significantly bolstered. It increases BTS by +X, up to a rating of 3. This bonus is cumulative with the Bioimmunity Organ augmentation, but interactions between the two can be unpredictable, adding +X complication range to Resistance tests when both augmentations are present in the body.

Keen Senses X: Harkening back to the very first xenografts, improving the senses via questionably ethical science is a time-honoured Nomad tradition. Keen senses reduce the difficulty of Observation tests using the specific sense by one step, though an option can be taken twice to increase the reduction to two steps. The user gains Keen Senses in X of the following senses: Scent, Sound, Sight, Touch, or Taste.

Super-Jump: Just because the process of grafting Antipodean DNA has been refined, doesn’t mean that it can’t also be part of a GeneMod Package. Super-Jump augmentations allow their user to vault over obstacles up to their height without penalty. They also enjoy –1 difficulty on skill tests to move through difficult terrain.

Superhuman Attribute 1: Arguably the height of Nomad Bioengineering, this treatment might not reach the lofty heights of Haqqislam’s Runihura supersoldiers, nor ALEPH’s latest and greatest Lhosts, but it comes closer than anyone else, and its customisability is second to none.

As per the Common Special Ability (see *Infinity Corebook*, p. 418), this adds Superhuman Attribute 1 to a single attribute:

INTEGRATED RESERVOIRS

When you have the ability to deliver stimulants directly into your brain, heading out to acquire more can be a real pain. Instead of needing to buy their drug of choice in doses, users who acquire this modification can have a steady supply of their favourite inebriant on-hand by adding Maintenance equal to the drug’s Restriction rating to the GeneMod package. This provides enough for the user to take one dose of the drug per scene, should they be so inclined. If they wish to use it more frequently, then they can still traditionally acquire doses and expend them whenever using more than one dose in a scene.

“Everyone assumes that the need came first, and Praxis delivered. It’s actually the other way around. They just so happened to have a couple dozen cybernetically augmented porpoises lying around, so we put’em in ships.”

– Text embossed on a support pillar inside the ArTechnodivarius Module, *Bakunin*.



BIOENGINEERING MODIFICATIONS TABLE

MODIFICATION	EFFECT	COST	SPECIAL
Amphibious	Breathe normally underwater	+1	+1 Maintenance
*Wide Spectrum Immunisation X	Reduce the difficulty of water toxin-based Resistance tests by X	+X	-
Bootleg X	Add X traits to your character.	-	-X Maintenance, -1 +X Risk, -X Tariff
Chameleonskin X	X Bonus Momentum on Face-to-Face Stealth tests at Long+ ranges	X+6	+1 Maintenance, +X Tariff
Direct Stimulant Applicator X	Use your drug of choice as a Free Action	X+4	+X Risk
*Integrated Reservoirs	Gain an integrated supply of your drug of choice	2+2	See Entry
Enhanced Attack X	Adds a variety of modifications to unarmed attacks	3+X	+2 Tariff, +X Risk
Environmental Adaptation X	Ignore terrain modifiers, reduce weather-based difficulty by 2 steps in chosen environment	X+1	+X Tariff, +X Risk
Inured to X	See Entry	2+X	+1 Maintenance +1 Tariff, X+X Risk
Immuno-Booster X	Adds BTS X	2+X	+X Maintenance, +X Tariff
Keen Senses X	Reduces the difficulty of Observation tests	1+X	+X Risk
Super-Jump	Adds Super-Jump Augmentation*	1+1	+1 Tariff, +1 Maintenance
Superhuman Attribute 1	Add Superhuman Attribute 1 to a single attribute**	4+1	+1 Tariff, +2 Maintenance, +2 Risk
Synthetic Dopamine Regulator	+1 Morale Soak	3+1	+2` Risk
Venom Gland X	Adds a venom gland with a variety of options	1+X	+1 Maintenance, +X Risk, +X Tariff

* See *Augmentations*, p. 346, *Infinity Corebook* ** See *Common Special Abilities*, p. 417, *Infinity Corebook*

- Adds 1 automatic success on tests with the relevant attribute
- If the attribute normally grants bonus damage to a particular type of attack, add +1 damage to the attack
- If the attribute is normally used to determine a type of incidental stress, add +1 to that damage track

Multiple instances of Superhuman Attribute are not cumulative with each other; characters only benefit from the highest instance, regardless of the source.

Synthetic Dopamine Regulator: Through a combination of drugs, neural rewiring, and good old electromagnetic shocks to the brain, the user's mood is permanently bolstered, granting +1 to Morale Soak.

Venom Gland X: For the person who has everything: what could be better than their very own venom sac? While it doesn't create enough venom to usefully distribute, and it doesn't last long outside the user's or a victim's body, bioengineered venoms can do some truly terrifying things to an unsuspecting target. This venom can be surreptitiously placed in food or drink, dealing 1+3 damage and possess any weapon qualities acquired below. However, using venom in this fashion does not gain bonus damage from high attribute scores.

The venom possesses the Biotech and Toxic 1 qualities, and the user gains the trait Venomous and X of the following qualities:

- **Breaker:** The venom gains the Breaker quality.
- **Immobilising:** Potent neurotoxins grant the venom the Immobilising quality.
- **Spitter:** The user gains the ability to spit their venom at some truly impressive ranges. They gain a spitting attack, Range C, 1+3 damage. While they can attempt to spit beyond Close Range, their range penalties are doubled when doing so.
- **Toxic:** Replaces the Toxic 1 quality with Toxic 2.
- **Vicious:** Adds +1 Vicious to the user's venom. May be taken up to 3 times, though the third instance increases complication range when using it by +1.

BESPOKE BEHEMOTHS

Of course, no one ever said that Nomad Bioengineering was limited to self-aware humanoids. There's a thriving shadow economy of made-to-order creatures including vat-grown beasts that never existed in nature, augmentation of existing species, and even personal self-defence pets. The subset of Praxis – nicknamed the "Pupnik Factory" – that specialises in their creation is none too picky about their clientele.

PRAXIS' ANIMAL FARM

When *Bakunin's* first Uplifts became public knowledge, the Human Sphere was stunned. Well, not that stunned actually, more like confused. The Neo-Cetaceans made sense at least; their instinctual comfort ability with three-dimensional movement made them a natural fit as starship pilots. But why, exactly, were scientists stuffing pigs full of cybernetics? What did they hope to gain from trying to link a murder of crows to form a hivemind? What was the point of it all? The truth is, there wasn't a point, and there never really was. They simply wanted to discover the limits of what was possible.

And transgress them.

The allure of Praxis is largely about having absolute freedom to pursue whatever research its inhabitants desire. The idea is to discover what is possible, and then trust in *Bakunin's* bleeding-edge marketers to find a way to make it profitable. Creating something that people can use is often a side effect, something you work into your projects to keep the lights on. Pushing the envelope of human understanding has

always been the true goal, discovery and innovation the only objectives worth pursuing.

That's not to say that Praxis is opposed to practical applications of their tech, just that it's secondary to the thrill of scientific discovery. Juggling passion projects with those that pay the bills is an ongoing concern, with many scientists partnering with Fixers to ensure a constant stream of high-value requests. Especially within the Black Labs, there's little thought wasted on why a client wants something. As long as they're willing to pay, Praxis will make just about anything.

ORIGINATING SPECIES

Praxis isn't the only place where such creatures can be found, nor is it the first. In fact, most immediate precursors trace their roots back to Pre-Nanotech Wars Earth. Biological drones had become a popular alternative to their mechanical counterparts. Project Osprey fitted birds with sensory recorders, long-range communications devices, and other mechanical augmentations, offering surreptitious surveillance on battlefields that had become accustomed to the sight of mechanical drones.

NOMAD FIXERS

Equal parts talent scout, agent, smuggler, and negotiator, the Nomad Nation's Fixers serve an important role in its ecosystem. If a Submondo crime boss wants modified Bengal Tigers as sentries, who do they talk to? If a Praxis scientist is running low on funding, and needs a big payday, who sets that up? And when a corporation wants to set up a Black Bounty, but is leery of revealing their identity to *Tunguska*, who manages the double-blind exchange?

Fixers. *Bakunin* is crawling with them, but they can be found in just about any corner of the Human Sphere, provided that one knows where to look.

PUPNIKS, ABOMINATIONS, AND OTHER ASSORTED HORRORS

While her early canine uplifts fell far short of sapience, Dr. Maureen Schröder eventually hit upon a formula for a hyper-intelligent breed of animal sentry. Dubbed "Pupniks"—a wry phrase initially coined by JFK—these beasts are easily her most enduring creation, though they're far from the only horrors to emerge from Praxis's Black Labs.

While Pupniks became a coveted commodity for increasingly sordid applications, Schröder continued to tinker with her design. These augmented creatures weren't much smarter than a chimpanzee, but with clever use of LAIs and speech modulators, she found that they could briefly fake sapience nearly as well as the average geist.

Though Pupniks' physical forms trended towards the humanoid, the Black Labs continued churning out customised horrors for the few clients willing to pony up the cash for something unique. From Bengal tigers, to mythical guardians such as basilisks, custom abominations were quietly made available for the discerning client, even as Schröder's pun-fuelled fondness for Black Labradors ensured that a slow trickle of Pupniks found their way into the black market. Arriving with Pupniks in tow soon became a favourite power play for *Bakunin's* Submondo elite. Flanked by the rare and dangerous creatures, gang bosses could communicate volumes about their power, wealth, and control without uttering a single word.

Meanwhile, certain organisations in and around Praxis were keen to adapt various abominations as a more controllable, less aggressive alternative to the volatile, unstable, and extremely illegal Pupniks. Plus, these abominations' voice modulators allowed them to recite scripted dialog, proving useful — if entirely unsettling — to informed and unwitting listeners alike.

Certain labs steered directly into this property, crafting sentry creatures who could not only inform trespassers to back off, customers of their appointments, and other such useful details, but would occasionally recite snippets of text, seemingly unbidden. Some favourites include:

- "Do you require each of your organs, human? No reason."
- "A word of advice: tread carefully. The master doesn't like surprises."
- "I was a man like you, once. It seems so long ago..."
- "Leave, if you can. No one deserves this fate."

...and other such macabre phrases, usually implying that the beasts had once been people who got on their owner's bad side. More than one would-be saboteur has thought better of their plans when encountering a Pupnik, guard-beast, or some other bioengineered horror. Whether that's due to their excellent sentry work, or a product of the existential terror they're created to instil, it's difficult to say. But one way or another, laboratories employing creations from Dr. Schröder's lab and their many imitators have a remarkable track record of failed break-ins.

PUPNIK, PET, OR SOMETHING ELSE?

Pupniks are categorically unruly. Stuffed with the most aggressive instincts and combative traits derived from dozens of predators, Pupniks are a murder waiting to happen if not constantly restrained and even that's no guarantee. Thus, even on *Bakunin*, creating a Pupnik is against the law, though owning one becomes more of a messy grey area. Genetically engineered pets, on the other hand, are a profitable export, and a part of many Bakunians' lives. They're entirely legal, and their creation is heartily encouraged. Between these two extremes lie a variety of genetic abominations, bioengineered animals that clearly aren't as aggressive as Pupniks but have a few more surprises to them than a typical house pet ought to.

"YOU'LL KNOW ONE WHEN YOU SEE ONE"

Pupniks are illegal. But since the very notion of a Pupnik is a social construct, enforcing that law is beyond tricky. The definition of what is, and is not, technically a Pupnik is a source of endless debate, and steady revenue, for Tunguskan lawyers.

Today, bioengineered invertebrates provide subsentient undersea sensor suites on planets like Varuna, blending into the local ecosystem. US Ariadnan engineers continue their grand tradition of using whatever they can get their hands on, like implanting primitive GPS trackers and automated recorders in their local wildlife.

No one has embraced the idea of augmented fauna quite to the degree that Praxis has. From the monstrous Pupniks, to subsentient organic defence matrices, the Black Labs have the market cornered on made-to-order bioengineered creatures. Subsapient by design – though an experiment occasionally surprises them – Praxis's mad scientists can create anything from sentries to pets, and they often combine the two.

HUMAN EDGE REMOTE LABS

While *Bakunin* is the undisputed leader in animal bioengineering, it's far from the only location, even among the Nomads. The Radical Mothership offers incredible freedom, access to resources, and a ready market for your wares, but it also operates under numerous restraints. Namely, there's only so much room to work, and the Moderators tend to get cranky when an experiment destroys a chunk of the ship. Smaller ships in the Black Fleet provide a way to work in peace, but are no less space-constrained, and have the unfortunate side effect of dooming all its inhabitants if significant hardware failure occurs.

In the Human Edge, there are any number of unpopulated asteroids and planetoids, ripe for the taking. Constructing a habitat that can stand up to the rigors of its environment is expensive and time-consuming, but the Human Edge is littered with abandoned mining bases, providing the sturdy construction necessary for volatile research.

If a Fixer is trying to fill a request for say, a domestic Neoterran Emerald Dragon, delivering a dozen or so to a remote lab with instructions that at least one needs to be a family pet when this is done can usually produce the desired result, with the rest either being sold as sentries, opponents for underground fighting rings, or used for parts. More than one Pupnik comes from similar origins, frequently crafted from stock that is otherwise unusable – at least for legitimate purposes.

Of course, cut off from the rest of the Nomads, if something goes wrong, it can take significant time before anyone realises that something's gone wrong. More than one of these remote labs has unexpectedly gone dark, burying whatever research notes still exist in a tomb of metal and stone, prowled by whatever crimes against nature were created within.

TAMING THE BEAST

From the Morat's Oznat Huntresses to Ariadna's Antipode Assault Pack Leaders, the Human Sphere is replete with characters leading trained beasts into battle, and Praxis's Pupnik Factory is only too happy to throw its hat into the ring. However, the rules and guidelines in this section aren't exclusive to the Nomads. Any character can make use of the expanded context, new Talents, and guidelines outlined here.

BOUND VS. WILD

As anyone who's ever trained an animal can tell you, there's a world of difference between "your" creature and someone else's, even if they've both been trained in the same fashion. In game terms, this means that the creature is "Imprinted" on its handler. This bond between trainer and animal is usually the result of countless hours spent training, grooming, and otherwise caring for the creature, but many of the Pupnik Factory's clients simply don't have that kind of time. Thus, when building a creature to order, Praxis uses the purchaser's own DNA to create a kind of synthetic bond, an instinctual imprinting on the new owner, binding it to their authority.

All creatures purchased from the Pupnik Factory are considered to be Imprinted on their owner. If a character wishes to go about this the old-fashioned way, this is usually a complex **Animal Handling test** (D1, 6 Momentum, 2 failures) that takes place over the course of months, though spending Momentum can rapidly accelerate that process. If the character doesn't have that much time to spend, they can attempt the same complex test to have the creature be functionally Imprinted for the remainder of the scene, though they may need to repeat the test in future scenes, until the Creature has had time to acclimate to their new handler. And of course, invasive augmentations – such as Antipode Control Cranial Implants – effectively confer the same effect.

So, what's the difference in game terms? While anyone can use Animal Handling to try to instruct a creature, using the Direct Creature action and the associated talents requires that the Creature be Imprinted on the handler.

CONTROLLING CREATURES

Attempting to direct the actions of a non-Imprinted creature is a common use of the Animal Handling skill. In Action Scenes, this usually takes the form of

an Assist Action, providing direction and Momentum that the NPC can use on its turn. But for Imprinted Creatures, the handler has a few more options.

ACTIONS

The following Action is available to all characters, regardless of their Heritage or Faction.

DIRECT CREATURE (STANDARD)

You can direct the actions of an Imprinted Creature. Make an **Average (D1) Animal Handling Group test**, with the Creature assisting you. Increase the difficulty of this test by 1 step for every range increment beyond Close that you need to communicate across. If successful, the creature may immediately take its turn, using the Momentum generated on the Group test as its result for a single Standard Action.

TALENTS

The following Talents are available to all characters, regardless of their Heritage or Faction.

IMPRINTED BOND

Prerequisite: Wild Empathy

The character is particularly skilled at directing Creatures they know well. Once per round, they can use a Minor Action to grant an Imprinted Creature in line of sight an immediate Standard Action.

LEADER OF THE PACK

Prerequisite: Imprinted Bond

The character has a close bond with their Imprinted Creatures, and they'll leap to the character's defence if given the chance. The character can treat Close Combat tests as Group tests, with any Imprinted Creatures within Close Range providing assistance.

PACK COMMANDER

Prerequisite: Leader of the Pack

The character has a close bond with their Imprinted Creatures, communicating on a near-instinctual level. When the Creature takes a Reaction, the character can make an Animal Handling test in place of the Creature's usual skill test. Range penalties apply.

MONSTER MASH

But beyond simply interacting with NPCs, players might want to do more than just hear about the fantastical creatures, being custom-built in Praxis; they might want to place an order themselves. The

rules in this section make that a possibility. When creating a custom Creature, they are considered to be Imprinted on the buyer. One too many disasters has led to that particular feature coming standard.

Building a creature is essentially creating a custom adversary. As such, GMs are encouraged to use these rules for their own purposes, adding custom Special Abilities of their own, resulting in virtually limitless adversaries for their game.

STEP ONE: ADVERSARY CATEGORY

First, select the Adversary Category of the creature. In play, Creatures follow the same rules and guidelines as other Adversaries of their category, meaning that Troopers cannot attempt reactions, Elites cost 2 Heat to bring in as reinforcements, and so on. Additionally, Creatures use Fields of Expertise, rather than individual skills. Even so, building Creatures is a different endeavour than creating your own Adversaries. Follow the rules in this chapter when creating a purchasable Creature.

TROOPERS

Most creatures will be classified as Troopers. Pets, wildlife, guard animals, and even the unspeakable horrors coming out of Praxis's remote labs are still mostly Troopers.

- Troopers begin with an Intelligence of 3 and cannot use Intelligence-based skills.
- Troopers assign 40 points to their remaining Attribute scores, though an Attribute cannot be increased beyond 10 in this fashion.
- Troopers assign 4 skill ranks between their Fields of Expertise, though neither Expertise nor Focus can be increased beyond 2 in this fashion, and they cannot use skills based on Intelligence.

ELITES

Much more difficult to come by, these Creatures reveal a greater level of diversity, both in appearance, and in their capabilities. Praxis is more than happy to create truly spectacular creations for the corporate princess who absolutely needs a unicorn for her birthday or the mob boss who just can't live without a manticore in their office. Of course, plenty of Elites are still somewhat conventional in their appearance, but at this level, nature has less to do with the equation than engineering.

- Elites begin with an Intelligence of 5 and cannot use Intelligence-based skills.
- Elites assign 57 points to their remaining Attribute scores, though an Attribute cannot be increased beyond 12 in this fashion.
- Elites assign 8 skill ranks between their Fields of Expertise, though neither Expertise nor Focus can be increased beyond 3 in this fashion, and they cannot use the Technical Field of Expertise.

SURREPTITIOUS IMPRINTING (2-6 HEAT)

Given that the scientists creating the creature are synthetically binding it to its new owner, many have wondered if they're not also perhaps binding it to other people: such as the new owner's business rivals. Fortunately, outside of the scientist themselves and the occasional lab assistant, this almost never happens.

But rarely, it does happen. By spending an amount of Heat (2 if the Creature is a Trooper, 4 if Elite, and 6 if it's a Nemesis), the Creature can be revealed to be Imprinted on an NPC in the scene. This makes all Animal Handling tests to control the Creature into Face-to-Face tests – for either party – if they want to control it.

This should be used sparingly and as a major plot point if it does occur, but it can make for a memorable encounter.

PLAYTEST TIP

IS IT IMPRINTED?

The Imprinted keyword doesn't show up in previous *Infinity* RPG books. Rather than try to compile a complete list of what is and isn't Imprinted, a small dash of common sense can go a long way. When introducing NPCs, asking yourself if their creatures are Imprinted or not as a simple question of relationship. Wild animals, or Creatures just being introduced, are probably not Imprinted. Animal Companions, service animals, and obviously weaponised creatures almost certainly are. Imprinting isn't meant to be a limiting factor, just a way to clarify the relationship between Creature and Handler.

CAN MY CREATURE DO IT?

With the ability to command Creatures, players have the ability to send their animal surrogates to act in their stead. Especially in cases of heavily-modified, high-Intelligence Creatures, it can be easy to forget that these are still subsapient animals. There's a limit to what they can accomplish. Common sense should rule the day here. While your Elite cyber-ferret can certainly use the Thievery skill to pilfer a gem, they're not going to be contacting the black market.

Usually, Creatures – even very smart ones – can't handle terribly complex tasks. For example:

- At Intelligence 4, a Creature can follow basic commands – sit, stay, come here, etc. – without the need for an Animal Handling test.
- At Intelligence 6, a Creature can follow more complex instructions – wait for me, protect them, run home – if their handler makes a successful Animal Handling test.
- At Intelligence 8, a Creature can solve rudimentary puzzles, not unlike a chimpanzee or gorilla, by making an Analysis test. They could figure out a guard's rotation, or how to open a door latch; they could not, however, operate a Comlog, or enter a keycode.

Generally, a Creature can't use gear – including weapons – unless they're implanted. And even then, implanting a Killer Hacking Device in your cybernetic assault penguin isn't going to do anything other than give it a headache.

Ultimately, these are just guidelines. They're not meant to be absolute law but to give an idea as to what's possible for a Creature when using the person-centric *Infinity* skill system. Your own common sense is still the best tool when determining what a subsapient Creature, even a really intelligent, augmented one, can accomplish.

DIRECT CREATURE EXAMPLE

Sami's being attacked by some *Maras* gangsters. Lucky for him, he's got his trusty assault kitty, Mr. Fluff, nearby. He uses the Direct Creature action, and together he and Mr. Fluff generate 3 Momentum. He directs Mr. Fluff to attack the nearest gangster, an **Average (D1) Close Combat test**, spending 1 point of Momentum to succeed, leaving Mr. Fluff with 2 leftover Momentum to unleash his gene-modded poison sacs on the unsuspecting gangsters.

NEMESSES

Every now and then, there's a spark of twisted inspiration, a dark insight that elevates the fantastical into the realm of myth. Nemesis Creatures are what happens when that dark genius meets the appropriate opportunity and funding. Incredibly difficult to come by, these creations are each one-of-a-kind, unique even among bioengineered Creatures. If the aforementioned mob boss wanted their manticore to have integrated experimental bioweapons and a subsapient intelligence that allowed it to follow comparatively complex instructions, they'd want to splurge for a expensive but troublesome Nemesis.

- Nemeses begin with an Intelligence of 7 and cannot use Intelligence-based skills.
- Nemeses assign 63 points to their remaining Attribute scores, though an Attribute cannot be increased beyond 14 in this fashion.
- Nemeses assign 16 skill ranks between their Fields of Expertise, though neither Expertise nor Focus can be increased beyond 3 in this fashion, and they cannot use the Technical Field of Expertise.

STEP TWO: CUSTOMISATION

Next, select any desired customisations. Do you want a small creature? A durable one? How about one that can make close-range attacks for you? Or maybe you just want to augment the Creature with bioengineering like you would any other character.

BIOMODS

As part of the bioengineering process, you can have custom BioMod packages installed in a creature. These are added to the total cost in Step Three.

MONSTROUS CREATURE

The considerable bulk and mass of this creature makes it less agile and graceful than smaller creatures and hinders it moving through confined spaces.

- Add +1 difficulty to tests where great size or weight would be problematic.
- Suffer a Wound following seven or more Vigour damage (instead of five).
- Spend 1 Momentum before attacking to add Knockdown to its melee attacks for the current turn.

PERSONAL DEFENCE CREATURE

A *Bakunin* speciality, these Creatures often function more like gear than NPCs. Specifically, they allow their owner to essentially use them as a melee weapon, by attacking with the Animal Handling skill, rather than Close Combat. This can be done any time that the character would normally make a Close Combat attack, provided that their Personal Defence Creature (PDC) is still able to function. Given the proper training and augmentation, everything from sleeve-vipers and shoulder-cats to domesticated wolves and cyber-lions can be Personal Defence Creatures.

PDC's assign Attributes and skill ranks according to their Adversary tier, though functioning as a PDC requires a certain robustness across Attribute scores, otherwise the Creature operates at less than peak efficiency. Specifically, if a PDC is created with an attribute below the minimum Intelligence for its tier (3 for Troopers, 5 for Elites, 7 for Nemeses), then it cannot function as a PDC, and its handler cannot use it to make attacks until its Intelligence is increased to meet the minimum threshold.

- When treated as a weapon, PDC's deal $1 + \text{IN}$ equal to half of either their Agility or Brawn (rounded up) damage.
- When treated as a weapon, use the owner's Willpower in place of their Brawn when to calculating bonus IN .
- A PDC can benefit from the Enhanced Attack X and Venom Gland X modifications.
- A PDC must be in Reach of its handler to be treated as a weapon.

- When acting on its own, treat PDC's as any other Adversary of their tier, though they do not act on their own during action scenes.

SMALL CREATURE X

Some Critters are truly tiny, capable of being carried – and concealed – on their handler's person. Add Concealed X to the Creature. This customisation is incompatible with Monstrous Creature.

VOCAL MODULATOR

While subsapient creatures aren't capable of understanding speech to the degree that a sapient person is, they can certainly be modified to sound like they do. This augmentation allows the Creature to mimic human speech, to an intelligible and unsettling degree. They can be taught phrases, not unlike a parrot. And they can also be used to deliver pre-recorded messages, input by their handler, and synthesised, essentially using the Creature as an organic amplification system.

STEP THREE: DETERMINE COST

After you've assembled the Creature of your dreams (or nightmares), you need to determine how much it'll cost to have it made. First consult the *Creature Creation Table* and the *Bioengineering Modifications Table*, if necessary, and then tally up your Cost, Maintenance, Tariff, and Risk.

Next, consult the *Creature Customisation Package Table* to determine the Restriction of your Creature, and divide the cost accordingly. Finally, consult the *Creature Side Effect Tables* and roll on the appropriate column of the *Bioengineered Creature Side Effects Table* to determine the unintended consequences of asking a Praxis scientist to play Frankenstein on your behalf.

EXAMPLE

PERSONAL DEFENCE CREATURE

Yasmin wants to acquire a modified Funduq Viper as a Personal Defence Creature. She envisions the PDC living in her sleeves, ready to strike at anyone who gets too close. A Fixer puts her in contact with a Praxis lab that is only too happy to fulfil her request.

Yasmin's player acquires a Trooper PDC, assigns 4 points each to the Creature's Agility and Brawn by 2 (raising each to 6) and raises its Personality and Willpower by 4 (raising each to 8). They then assign 1 point each to the PDC's Combat, Senses, Movement, and Social Expertise.

Not satisfied with a stock PDC, Yasmin acquires the Venom Gland 2 modification (taking Vicious twice), which adds the Biotech, Toxic 2, and Vicious 2 Weapon Qualities to her new pet. When attacking with her Viper, Yasmin's attacks will deal 1+3 (N) damage, with the Biotech, Toxic 2, and Vicious 2, as well as dealing an additional +2 (N) of bonus damage from Yasmin's Willpower of 10.

CREATURE CREATION TABLE

CUSTOMIZATION	COST	T SPECIAL
Trooper	6+6 (N)	+1 Maintenance, +2 Risk, +1 Tariff
Elite	7+7 (N)	+2 Maintenance, +4 Risk, +2 Tariff
Nemesis	10+10 (N)	+3 maintenance, +6 Risk, +3 Tariff
Monstrous Creature	1+1 (N)	+2 Maintenance, +8 Risk, +3 Tariff
Personal Defence Creature	+1 (N)	+1 Maintenance
Small Creature X	X+2 (N)	+1 Tariff
Vocal Modulator	2+2 (N)	–
Bioengineered Modifications	See Entries	See Entries

CREATURE CUSTOMISATION PACKAGE TABLE

RISK	RESTRICTION	DIVIDE COST BY...
1-4	+1	1
5-10	+2	2
11-15	+3	3
16-18	+4	4
19+	+5	5

CREATURE SIDE EFFECT TABLES

RISK	CAREER
1-7	Side Effects Column A
8-14	Side Effects Column B
15+	Side Effects Column C

HEALTHY, GROWING CREATURES

Much like a Geist, Imprinted Creatures can be improved by spending Experience Points. The costs of these improvements are calculated in the same way that they would be for the player character themselves.

IT'S ALL BIOENGINEERING HERE

Creating a custom Creature is essentially like creating a BioMod package with a few extra options. Just like any other bioengineering project, they begin at a base value of 1+5 (N), T1. You can also reduce the Maintenance cost by increasing Risk and reduce Risk by spending Assets. The Maintenance cost of a Creature can never drop below 1; these things require a special diet and eat a lot. Every point of Risk past 19 is added to your result when rolling for side effects.



BIOENGINEERED CREATURE SIDE EFFECTS TABLE

ROLL D20			INCIDENT	EFFECT
A	B	C		
1	–	–	The Creature's Imprinting process went better than expected.	Increase the Creature's Morale by +3.
2	–	–	The bioengineer slips in a little something extra. To everyone's surprise, this goes quite well.	Add +1 to one of the Creature's Attributes.
3	1	–	It's... it's ADORABLE.	The Creature generates an additional Momentum for you on Persuade tests where a cute critter would be helpful.
4-5	2	–	The biochemistry is a near-perfect fit; the creature looks incredibly durable.	Increase the Creature's Vigour by 1.
6-7	3-5	1	Bad news: they needed to replace most of the creature's skull. Good news: its new, reinforced skull is clearly superior to the old one.	Add Armour Soak 1 to the creature's head.
8-9	6-8	2	It's got good eyes! Maybe too good, as it can't seem to stay out of trouble.	Increase the Creature's Awareness by 1 but reduce its Willpower by 1..
10-12	9-10	3-5	The creature's personality is a touch more timid than you might expect, though it's certainly every bit as tough as you might have hoped.	Reduce the Creature's Morale by 1 but increase its Vigour by 1.
13-15	11-12	6-8	The Creature is disciplined. Strong. Willful, but obedient. It's just a little more fragile than expected.	Reduce the Creature's Vigour by 1 but increase Morale by 1.
16-17	13-14	9-10	They had to get creative. The fruits of their labour aren't a total loss.	Reduce one of the Creature's Attributes by 2. Increase one of the Creature's Attributes by 1.
18-19	15-16	11-12	Some critters are just born ugly. This one was made that way. Nobody wants to be around it, which is problematic, but occasionally useful as well.	When the Creature is nearby, increase the Complication range on your Persuade tests by 1; unless you're using the Intimidate Psywar Technique, in which case, add +1 bonus Momentum on successful tests.
20	17-18	13-14	Due to the interaction of your requested components, you're going to need a special nutrient blend to keep the Creature well-fed.	Increase the Creature's Maintenance by +1.
–	19	15-16	Everything is exactly as promised, but you expected the creature to be a bit more nimble.	Reduce Agility by 1.
–	20	17-18	Everything worked fine: they just needed to scoop out some muscle tissue to make room. Let it run around, it'll be fine.	Reduce the Creature's Brawn by 1.
–	–	19	The Creature came out a little too agreeable, but they swear it can be trained.	Reduce the Creature's Morale by 1. The Creature does not begin Imprinted to the purchaser.
–	–	20	The Creature nearly died on the operating table. A last-minute injection of a small fortune in Silk saved it, though now you owe a small fortune to a loan shark.	Gain a debt worth 10 Assets. Increase the Creature's Maintenance by +1 until it's paid off.

CHAPTER 8

ADVERSARIES

REBELS, RENEGADES, AND RAMPAGING MONSTERS

They were sent into space to die. Instead, they carved out a place for themselves among the other mega powers. They refused to be subjugated and fought back against oppression. They continue the struggle against the omnipresent ALEPH that plays the G-5 nations as a puppeteer controls their toys. The crews of the Motherships include social revolutionaries, descendants of political prisoners, avant-garde philosophers, mercenaries, violent criminals, and dirty mobsters. In short, the Nomads are a besmudged mirror reflecting the entire Human Sphere. And it doesn't always like what it sees.

ELITE

BAKUNIN ZERO

Every army needs clandestine operation specialists, and the Nomads are no different. Each ship has a cell of trained agents, able to operate in hostile conditions and behind enemy lines. Those agents focus on harassing supply lines, destroying infrastructure, and assassinating key targets. On *Bakunin* such operators are nicknamed "Zeros," after their low count of failed missions and reported casualties. They achieve that through rigorous training provided by the different environmental hubs of *Bakunin*. The Mothership is a dangerous environment even for a well-trained operative, and the Zeros have earned a reputation as ruthless, dangerous individuals who don't shy away from violence. On a ship where anything is possible, these operators learn to expect the unexpected.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
10	9	9	9	10	8	8

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+2	1	Movement	+2	-	Social	+1	-
Fortitude	+1	-	Senses	+2	1	Technical	+2	-

DEFENCES

Firewall	10	Resolve	8	Vigour	9
Security	1	Morale	-	Armour	1

ATTACKS

- **Assault Hacking Device:** CLAW-3, SWORD-0, SHIELD-0, GADGET-0, IC-1, +3 bonus damage
- **Combi Rifle:** Range C/M, 1+6 damage, Burst 2, 2H, Expert 1, MULTI Light Mod, Vicious 1
- **Linkspike:** Melee, 1+5 damage, 1H, Piercing 1, Subtle 3

GEAR: Light Combat Armour (with Chameleonwear)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Multi-Environmental Training:** Zeros undergo extensive training in *Bakunin's* multi-environmental modules, giving them an adaptive edge across terrain types. When making an Acrobatics or Athletics test to move through difficult terrain, they reduce the difficulty by two steps, to a minimum of Simple (D0).
- **Predator:** Zeros prefer to strike first, giving their enemies no time to respond. When a Zero attacks from the hidden or detected stealth states, their target pays an additional +1 Heat to use the Defence Reaction against them. This lasts until the end of the scene.

ELITE

TUNGUSKAN NEGOTIATOR

When butting heads with the Nomads, much of the Human Sphere would describe them as radical hotheads and anarchic rebels who gleefully dive head-first into trouble. Both stereotypes make the job that much easier for Tunguska's Negotiators. While each Mothership has them, *Tunguska* famously deploys their Negotiators to unleash coercion, persuasion, bribery, and good old-fashioned intimidation on anyone standing in the Nomads' way. Only the best endure the work, but not because the job is dangerous. While individual Negotiators often find themselves imperilled, few want to risk angering a Chancellery by needlessly endangering its members. The work, by its nature, can be mentally exhausting. At Chancelleries like *Wysocki & Synowie* or *Pravova dopomoha bidnym*, the average employee quits after less than a year.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
8	9	7	8	10	11	10

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+1	-	Movement	+1	-	Social	+3	1
Fortitude	+1	-	Senses	+2	1	Technical	+2	-

DEFENCES

Firewall	10	Resolve	9	10	7
Security	-	Morale	2	Armour	1

ATTACKS

- **Pistol:** Range R/C, 1+5 damage, Burst 2, 1H, Vicious 1
- **Stun Baton:** Melee 1+4 damage, 1H, Non-Hackable, Knockdown, Subtle 1, Stun

GEAR: Recorder, Aletheia Kit, Negotiator's Suite, Armoured Clothing, Cosmetics Kit)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Backed by Muscle:** Sometimes, you have to conduct business the old-fashioned way. When spending Heat to call reinforcements, the GM reduces the total cost by 2 Heat, to a minimum of 1. If the Negotiator is incapacitated, the GM can no longer use their Backed by Muscle ability.
- **Greasy Palms:** The Negotiators know how to make others cooperative. When attempting a bribe, they gain two bonus d20s per Heat paid. The normal limit of three bonus d20s still applies.
- **Diplomatic Immunity:** Tunguskan Negotiators have a reputation that precedes them, a fact they exploit for all it's worth. They benefit from a 2 Morale soak, reflected in their profile.

ELITE

SWAST TASKMASTERS

Most policing on *Bakunin* is handled by the Moderator corps, which is usually enough to deal with whatever trouble appears in the Mothership's common areas. However, sometimes the Jurisdictional Command needs to pay an unexpected visit to one of the Black Labs located in the Praxis module, where more abstract and less humane experiments take place. Often, if a JC team is knocking on a laboratory's door, all hell is about to break loose. And that's where the Taskmasters come in. Clad in bleeding-edge powered armour, Taskmasters enforce the rules when no one else can, or will. Acting as judge, jury – and frequently executioner – once the Special Weapons and Suppressive Tactics team is called in, the situation's already gone off the rails, and the Taskmasters are making the rules now. And those rules usually involve a good old-fashioned bullet with your name on it.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
9	9	10	10	8	9	8

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+3	2	Movement	+1	–	Social	+1	–
Fortitude	+2	1	Senses	+1	–	Technical	+1	–

DEFENCES

Firewall	8	Resolve	8	Vigour	
Security	2	Morale	–	Armour	5

ATTACKS

- **Heavy Machine Gun (HMG):** Range L, 2+7 damage, Burst 3, Unwieldy, Spread 1, Unsubtle
- **Pistol:** Range R/C, 1+5 damage, Burst 2, 1H, Vicious 1
- **Modified Stun Baton:** Melee 1+8 damage, Unbalanced, Non-Hackable, Knockdown, Subtle 1, Stun, Vicious 2

GEAR: Powered Combat Armour (gain up to +3d20 on Brawn tests with +3 complication range, Kinematika), CrazyKoala)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Big Buddy:** Whether it's the Moderator Corps, Die Morlock Gruppe, or some other unit, Taskmasters are used to coordinating with other forces. When leading a fireteam, they can reroll up to 2 when making a ranged attack but must accept the new results.
- **Seen It All:** Some of it twice. When making an Observation test, the Taskmaster can reroll one d20 but must accept the new result.
- **Little Buddy (1–3 Heat):** Taskmasters are protective of their "little buddies," any smaller, less armoured forces they deploy with. So virtually all of them. By spending X Heat, they can reduce the difficulty of the Guard Reaction, and if they succeed in intercepting the attack, they also deal X Morale damage to the

ELITE

CORREGIDOR BANDITS

Sub-Saharan Africa's supernatural guardians traditionally protected tribal communities through a young, possessed host prepared by the tribe's shaman and masked to preserve their anonymity. If ever there was a time that protection was needed, it was during the massive refugee exodus to *Corregidor's* Lazareto module. Traditionally masked vigilantes arose to keep the *maras* in check, and while many died, Lazareto's shamans never lacked for youths eager to take their place. As life in Lazareto improved and work teams left to ply their trades, internal threats were replaced by exploitation from employers. But their guardian spirits began stealing the safety equipment they were denied, beating abusive foremen, and exposing or killing the executives responsible. Impressed by their skill, the Mexican General extended an offer: in return for a promise not to interfere with their activities, a select few guardians would undergo intensive training and work as deniable assets to protect the entire Nomad Nation. The project avoided codenames with tribal connotations, instead using old air force jargon for confirmed hostiles, one outsiders have learned to fear – Bandits.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
10	10	10	10	8	7	8

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+2	2	Movement	+2	1	Social	+1	–
Fortitude	+2	1	Senses	+1	–	Technical	–	–

DEFENCES

Firewall	8	Resolve	8	Vigour	10
Security	–	Morale	–	Armour	1

ATTACKS

- **Light Shotgun:** Range C, 1+6 damage, Burst 1, Unbalanced, Knockdown
- **Paired Tonfa Bangles:** Melee 1+5 damage, 1H, Concealed 2, Parry 2
- **Sword:** Melee, 1+7 damage, Unbalanced, Non-Hackable, Parry 2, Vicious 1

GEAR: Armoured Clothing (with Chameleonwear), Stims, Surge, Glavar Powder

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **My Life for the Helpless:** These masked vigilantes possess a selfless streak bordering on self-endangerment. They pay no Heat to use the Guard Reaction.
- **Violent Vigilante:** Bandits are trained to ignore pain and unleash vengeance upon their people's enemies. When making a melee attack, they can reroll up to 4 but must accept the new result.

ELITE

TUNGUSKAN INTERVENTORS

To many casual observers "Nomad" is virtually a synonym for hacker. And while it's certainly true that the Nomad Nation boasts more than its fair share of Infowarriors, not every Nomad is an elite system cracker. But among those who are, one name stands above the rest. Interventors. The true crème-de-la-crème of the Human Sphere's quantronic battlefields. *Tunguska's* economy relies on keeping its secrets secret, and so they need the best hackers the Sphere has to offer. While some members of the Interventor Corps trace their roots to *Tunguska's* first cryptomancers, many are reformed lawbreakers, black-hat hackers caught in the act and offered a deal they couldn't refuse. Many Interventors actually don't mind working for 'the establishment' that they used to fight against. After all, they are still doing what they do best, cracking code and kicking quantronic ass. While they happily don their white hats in the service of the Nomad Nation, a darker shade remains in reach at all times. After all, you never know when you'll need a bit of that old black-hat magic. They have a reputation as the best. And, they take their reputation deadly seriously.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
8	9	8	9	11	8	10

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+1	–	Movement	+2	–	Social	+2	–
Fortitude	+2	–	Senses	+2	–	Technical	+3	1

DEFENCES

Firewall	11	Resolve	10	Vigour	8
Security	2	Morale	1	Armour	2

ATTACKS

- **Combi Rifle:** Range C/M, 1+6 damage, Burst 2, 2H, Expert 1, MULTI Light Mod, Vicious 1
- **Killer Hacking Device:** CLAW-0, SWORD-2, SHIELD-0, GADGET-0, IC-1, UPGRADE Cybermask, Piercing 3

GEAR: Light Combat Armour, FastPanda, Deflector-1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **It Takes a Thief (1–5 Heat):** Interventors have been on the other side, and they know how to deal with it. When making a face-to-face Hacking test, they can spend X heat and reroll X d20s, though they must accept the new result.
- **Riding the Wave:** Interventors are the crème-de-la-crème of Tunguskan hackers, and they know it. They benefit from a Morale and Security soak, incorporated into their profiles.

ELITE

ALGUACILES

To many, the Alguaciles are the face of the Nomads. It happens only naturally, as most of the mercenaries sent to work outside of the Nomad Nation are recruited from among the ranks of the Alguaciles. Experienced and unrelenting, but also stubborn and sometimes foolhardy, the Alguaciles are the backbone of the Nomads. But, continuing with the metaphor, they could be also likened to the tired hands of the labourer, toiling for the betterment and comfort of the future generations. Many Alguaciles spend more time outside of *Corregidor* than they do at home, but they don't seem to mind. They work so that others may live, placing them squarely among the unsung heroes of the Nomads.

ATTRIBUTES						
AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
8	8	8	8	8	8	8

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE						
Combat	+1	–	Movement	–	Social	+1
Fortitude	+1	–	Senses	+1	Technical	+2

DEFENCES				
Firewall	8	Resolve	8	Vigour
Security	–	Morale	–	Armour

ATTACKS

- **Combi Rifle:** Range C/M, 1+5 damage, Burst 2, 2H, Expert 1, MULTI Light Mod, Vicious 1
- **Pistol:** Range R/C, 1+4 damage, Burst 2, 1H, Vicious 1
- **Knife:** Melee, 1+3 damage, 1H, Concealed 1, Non-Hackable, Subtle 2, Thrown, Unforgiving 1

GEAR: Light Combat Armour, Micro-torch, Powered Multi-tool

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **More Than a Job:** For many Alguaciles, being a mercenary is not a job, but a way of life. They travel all over the Human Sphere, picking up different skills as they go. Each point of Momentum or Heat spent to add dice to a test provides two d20s instead of one.

ELITE

MOBILE BRIGADA

If you wanted to describe the Mobile Brigada regiment with one word, it would be “reliable.” That’s what they are. Their weapons and armour can be depended on, their character and morale are exemplary, and their knowledge of squad-based combat is excellent. These qualities make them outstanding mercenary troops, often hired alongside regular Corregidoran workers and Alguaciles as part of a wholesale deal. However, the Brigadas know that with great power comes great responsibility. Their unspoken mission is to look out for mistreatment of hired Nomad labourers, and if the situation warrants it, they step in to “correct the error.” Sometimes it means slapping some people around; sometimes it means that the entire operation grinds to a halt as the facility is taken over by angry Nomads in power armour. *Corregidor* knows that in times of need, the Brigadas will be there for them. Members of the unit just smile behind their masked faceplates and continue doing their job.

ATTRIBUTES						
AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
9	10	9	10	8	9	8

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE						
Combat	+2	2	Movement	+1	Social	+1
Fortitude	+2	1	Senses	+1	Technical	+2

DEFENCES				
Firewall	8	Resolve	8	Vigour
Security	–	Morale	–	Armour

ATTACKS

- **Heavy Machine Gun (HMG):** Range Long, 2+8 damage, Unwieldy, Spread 1, Unsubtle
- **Light Flamethrower:** Range Close, 1+6 damage, 2H, Incendiary 3, Munition, Terrifying 2, Torrent
- **Modhand:** Melee, 1+8 damage, 1H, Concealed 2, E/M, Stun, Subtle 1, Vicious 2

GEAR: Powered Combat Armour (gain up to +3d20 on Brawn tests with +3 complication range, Kinematika)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Folk Heroes:** When the situation is dire, look to the Brigadas. A Mobile Brigada can be summoned as reinforcements for 1 Heat, instead of the usual 2. Brigadas coming in as reinforcements generate +1 additional Momentum on their first successful test.
- **Trained Leaders:** Brigadas usually lead smaller detachments of Corregidoran troops. When leading a Fireteam, the Brigada can reroll up to 2 when making a ranged attack but must accept the new results..

TROOPER/ELITE

PUPNIK

Hypoallergenic ferrets. Crazy-smart birds of paradise that alight on your shoulder and serenade you. Dogs that don't mess on the carpet. The Black Labs of Praxis have created some amazing and wonderful creatures, much to the delight of the wider Human Sphere.

They've also produced the Pupniks.

Borrowing their name from a moment of levity in Earth's Cold War, the Pupnik is a highly-aggressive, violently unstable, subsapient amalgamation of canid and humanoid features. About as intelligent as a clever chimpanzee, these creatures combine predatory instincts, vat-grown muscles, and a singular design aesthetic. Popular as “show muscle” for Submondo crime bosses, they've also seen increasing popularity as pit fighters, where their primal instincts drive them to fight, kill, mate, and eat – sometimes all at once. Their torturous creation ensures an always-violent killing machine, ready to explode at a moment's notice. Like a dog that was beaten in the womb, Pupniks are born with a mean streak. Though they can always be made meaner and often are.

ATTRIBUTES						
AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
10	10	12	6	7	8	4

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE						
Combat	+2	2	Movement	+1	Social	+1
Fortitude	+1	–	Senses	+1	Technical	–

DEFENCES				
Firewall	7	Resolve	4	Vigour
Security	–	Morale	–	Armour

ATTACKS

- **Claws:** Melee, 1+5 damage, Piercing 1 (Elites add the Grievous weapon quality)

GEAR: AR Eye Implants

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Common Special Abilities:** Fear 1, Keen Senses (Smell)
- **Crimson Rage (Elite Only):** No matter how well-behaved they may seem, Pupniks are never far from the edge. Whenever a Pupnik suffers a Wound or Metanoia effect, it flies into a violent rage, attacking the nearest source of agitation with terrifying abandon, usually the source of the Harm, but any living being will do. While in its rage, it gains +4 Morale and deals +4 damage to melee attacks, though it suffers +2 difficulty to all tests that don't involve dealing something bodily harm. Talking a Pupnik out of a Crimson Rage requires succeeding at a Dire (D4) Animal Handling test, with the difficulty reducing by 1 each round, to a minimum of Simple (D0).



TROOPER/ELITE

GENETIC ABOMINATION

Through a combination of genesplicing, radical augmentation, and biografted xenotissue, the Black Labs of Praxis can create any creature that their customers can dream up. Of course, not all dreams are pleasant and their Genetic Abominations cover the entire spectrum, from statuesque gryphons and regal unicorns, to twisted chimerical horrors best left unmentioned. Like Pupniks, these sub-sapient creatures are often employed as security. Despite lacking killer instincts, they're easier to control, are unsettlingly weird, and possess a near-human vocal range that has proven more than enough to frighten off many would-be trespassers. And what of those who decided to test their luck against these manifest nightmares? In most cases, they need to identify the remains by DNA sample. While a given Abomination might possess any number of different lethal augmentations, they are known to be remarkably thorough.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
10	10	10	5	8	8	9

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+1	1	Movement	+1	–	Social	+1	1
Fortitude	+1	–	Senses	+2	1	Technical	–	–

DEFENCES (TROOPER)

Firewall	4	Resolve	5	Vigour	5
Security	–	Morale	1	Armour	1

DEFENCES (ELITE)

Firewall	8	Resolve	9	Vigour	10
Security	–	Morale	–	Armour	–

ATTACKS

- Troopers have access to one of the following attack types; Elites choose two:
 - *Acidic Spit*: Range C, 1+5 (N) damage, Biotech, Breaker, Toxic 1
 - *Neurotoxic Bite*: Melee, 1+5 (N) damage, Biotech, Immobilising, Toxic 2
 - *Xenotissue Spines*: Melee, 1+5 (N) damage, Grievous, Piercing 1

GEAR: Stealth Repeater

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Abandon All Hope Ye Who Enter Here:** From remote-fed personal data, to uncanny body horror, Genetic Abominations are well-equipped to unsettle their targets. They generate an additional +1 Momentum on successful Psywar attacks.
- **Unexpected Metachemistry (1 Heat):** A Genetic Abomination's capabilities aren't always immediately obvious. By spending 1 Heat, the Abomination gains access to an additional attack type (see above) for one action.

ELITE

DIE MORLOCK GRUPPER

Life on *Bakunin* is a riot of colour, vibrance, and indulgence. For some, resorting to extreme violence is the only means of coping with the constant assault on the senses with the result that a few of these unhinged individuals become very good at it. Rather than lock them away and waste their talent, the Bakunians hook the worst of these vicious psychopaths on MetaChemistry compounds and assign them to one of the Morlock Groups. The MetaChemistry barely refrains their fury, however, so maintaining a safe distance at all times is highly recommended. Once they taste combat, the inhibitive control of the drugs in their systems releases and flips, working to further enhance the potency and violent natures of these inhuman beasts.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
10	9	10	10	7	6	7

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+3	2	Movement	+2	1	Social	+2	-1
Fortitude	+2	1	Senses	–	–	Technical	–	–

DEFENCES (TROOPER)

Firewall	8	Resolve	9	Vigour	10
Security	–	Morale	1	Armour	–

ATTACKS

- **Combi Rifle:** Range C/M, 1+6 (N) damage, Burst 2, 2H, Expert 2, MULTI Light Mod, Vicious 1
- **Pistol:** Range C, 1+5 (N) damage, Burst 1, 1H, Vicious 1
- **Morlock Blade:** Melee, 1+7 (N) damage, Unbalanced, Non-Hackable, Parry 1, Piercing 1, Vicious 1
- **Smoke Grenades:** 1H, Disposable, Indiscriminate (Close), Nonlethal, Speculative Fire, Smoke 2, Thrown

GEAR: Ballistic Vest

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **MetaChemistry Boost (1-2 Heat):** Thanks to their MetaChemistry, combat triggers physical changes that are unique to each Morlock. Once per combat scene, the GM can spend 1 or 2 Heat to boost one of the Morlock's physical attributes by 1 or 2 points.
- **Red Mist:** When their MetaChemistry unleashes their psychotic tendencies, Morlocks think of little else. They gain a Morale Soak of 3 and an Intransigence of 4 during combat scenes. Additionally, they can reroll up to 2 (N) when making a melee attack, but must accept the new results.

ELITE

KRIZA BORACS

Originally created to plug a perceived hole in the defences of *Tunguska*, the Specijalne Krize Jedinice (Serbian for Special Crisis Units) are a heavy infantry unit deployed to crisis points as a hammer blow to end the situation. Conceived as an unstoppable force that can respond to flashpoints with overwhelming firepower, the Kriza Boracs (Crisis Soldiers) enjoy the use of Praxis-designed power armour that enables them to perform both offensive and supporting roles during engagements. Professional, solemn (for Nomads at least), and adaptable, the Kriza Boracs have solidly earned their reputation for being in exactly the right place at just the very moment when their particular skills are needed.

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
9	10	9	9	8	8	10

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+2	1	Movement	+2	–	Social	–	–
Fortitude	+1	1	Senses	+2	1	Technical	+1	1

DEFENCES (TROOPER)

Firewall	8	Resolve	9	Vigour	10
Security	3	Morale	2	Armour	5

ATTACKS

- **Heavy Machine Gun (HMG):** Range L, 2+8 (N) damage, Burst 3, Unwieldy, Spread 1, Unsubtle
- **Heavy Pistol:** Range C, 2+6 (N) damage, Burst 1, Unbalanced, Unforgiving 1, Vicious 1
- **Knife:** Melee, 1+7 (N) damage, 1H, Concealed 1, Non-Hackable, Subtle 2, Thrown, Unforgiving 1

GEAR: Powered Combat Armour (Comms, Exoskeleton 3, Kinematika, Self-Repairing)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Crisis Response:** Kriza Boracs are ready to move at a moment's notice and prepare for the worst scenarios. They have a Morale Soak of 2.
- **Superior Firepower (1 Heat):** Overwhelming firepower heads the doctrine for the Kriza Boracs. When operating a Chain Rifle, HMG, or MULTI Rifle, the GM may spend 1 Heat to increase the Spread quality of the weapon by 1 for a single ranged attack.



ALEXANDER SHVARTS

NEMESIS

ISAAC STRAVHS

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
8	12	8	8	14	8	12

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

	+	1		+	-		-	-
Combat	+1	1	Movement	+1	-	Social	-	-
Fortitude	+2	1	Senses	+3	3	Technical	+4	4

DEFENCES

Firewall	18	Resolve	14	Vigour
Security	-	Morale	-	Armour
				10
				2

ATTACKS

- **Hacking Device Plus:** CLAW-2, SWORD-1, SHIELD-2, GADGET-3, IC-2, UPGRADE Cybermask, Fadeware, Sucker Punch, White Noise; +4 (N) bonus damage
- **Pistol:** Range R/C, 1+7 (N) damage, Burst 1, 1H, Vicious 1

GEAR: Light Combat Armour, FastPanda, Deflector-2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **All Ears. All Thumbs, Too:** Whip-smart and eagle-eyed, Stravhs doesn't miss much. That hasn't made him any less clumsy, however. When making a test based on Awareness, he can reroll one d20, but must accept the new result. However, he suffers an additional +1 complication range to actions based on Agility, Brawn, and Coordination.
- **Embedded Asset:** Stravhs spends an inordinate amount of time planetside, and as such, is used to passing as janitors, security guards, and other innocuous professions. He reduces the difficulty of Lifestyle or Stealth tests to blend in by two steps, to a minimum of Simple (D0).
- **Smiley Was Here (1-5 Heat):** Even by the standards of the Interventors, Stravhs is something of a hotshot. But it's not bragging if you can back it up. When making a Hacking test, he can spend X heat and reroll X d20s, but must accept the new results.

ISAAC STRAVHS
(INTERVENTOR/SPY MASTER)

The official operation to guarantee the prospecting encampment a security detail was a front for the real operation: securing a Max-Seal data-package from the client and uploading it into the Crypt for safekeeping. Stravhs was certain that several dozen such contracts had been signed between different Hyper-corps, the Ariadnans, and the Nomad Nation in the past few years. There was no conflict of interest, just business as usual for the information brokers of Tunguska and their allies.

And this was how the young hacker was now planetside with a mild case of agoraphobia, supervising security in a Teseum prospecting camp. The hit and run attacks on the encampment had all been repelled thanks to the Alguaciles' combat experience and Stravhs's superior tactical coordination skills. Still, he remained restless while waiting for the client to deliver the data-package. No mere data jockey, he had accessed the satellite feeds to gain awareness of the position and movements of their attackers, which allowed him to coordinate the defence of the encampment. He'd even had the unit's engineer booby trap the main access to the camp. Luckily, the client's data-pack courier arrived minutes before the main attack began.

The timing couldn't be mere coincidence, and Isaac realised that the true motive for the Nomads' presence had been leaked by someone intent on seizing the information by any means possible. The entrance flooding with attackers seemed the perfect time to activate those explosives. "Chang! Activate the bombs! Let's give them a nasty surprise!"

Nothing happened. The aggressors kept pushing toward the gate and the beleaguered defenders. Stravhs worriedly ran a quick survey on the camp, looking unsuccessfully for the engineer as he nervously activated the remote he used for surveillance, an old transducer unit. On a hunch, he instructed the small unit to check the comms station where the data-pack was being uploaded. Isaac then returned to coordinate the now-failing line of defence of the camp.

A few seconds later, Stravhs heard a loud explosion coming from the comm station. Running clumsily and drawing his pistol, he saw black smoke emerging from the tent

that housed it. He immediately regretted rushing in as his lungs began to fill with oily smoke. A shot whizzed past his head as he doubled over to cough. This was exactly why he hated being planetside.

APPEARANCE

A lanky man with a rather mysterious air and ever-present hacking goggles, Isaac tends to press his lips together and narrow his eyes when dealing with people. When working with Ariadnans, he crosses his arms and frowns often.

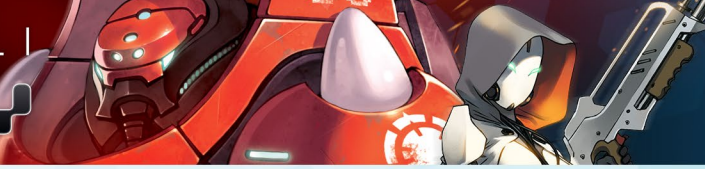
ROLEPLAYING

- Although fit, he is clumsy when performing physical chores (which he avoids).
- He is very haughty to the point of being rude.
- He despises Ariadnans, even though he sometimes works with them.

BACKGROUND

After signing a contract with Dragnet, "Smiley" (due to his electronic signature) quickly found his place in on-the-field counter-intelligence. His first assignment to track a series of apparently random glitches in Arachne's sub-systems led to him exposing an incipient AI program that had already killed several high-profile programmers on Tunguska. The Black Hand assigned a more complex challenge with a squad of Securitate. He came out of that exercise with flying colours and secured a future as one of the most efficient field specialists.

Repeatedly assigned to high-risk missions planetside, Isaac took it as a sign of the Black Hand's trust in him. Recently, however, he is starting to feel like somebody is either toying or wants him dead. A proud man intent on a first-rate job, his skills have so far kept him ahead in his is currently assignment to a multi-ship unit that poses as a standard *Corregidor* security team. Coordinating with agents from all three Motherships makes the missions assigned to the team even more challenging and dangerous.



ERIC CHOU

NEMESIS

ERNESTO CHANG

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
9	11	10	9	10	9	12

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

	+2	1	Movement	+1	1	Social	+1	1
Combat								
Fortitude	+2	1	Senses	2+3	1	Technical	+3	3

DEFENCES

Firewall	13	Resolve	14	Vigour	12
Security	-	Morale	-	Armour	2

ATTACKS

- **D-Charges:** Explosive Charge, 2+6 (N) damage, 1H, Anti-Materiel 2, Comms, Disposable, Piercing 3, Spread 1, Unsubtle, Vicious 2
- **Pistol:** Range R/C, 1+6 (N) damage, Burst 1, 1H, Vicious 1
- **Punishing Flames (Special):** Explosive Charge, 1+4 (N) damage, 1H, Anti-Materiel 1, Incendiary 2, Spread 2, Unsubtle, Vicious 2

GEAR: CrazyKoala, Light Combat Armour, D-Charges, Smoke Grenades

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Covering with Fire:** Ernesto interprets certain terms very literally. If he succeeds at a Daunting (D3) Tech test when using the Covering Fire Reaction, he can deal his Punishing Flames attack to anyone attacking the ally being assisted until the beginning of his next turn.
- **Fire in the Hole (2 Heat):** Ernesto isn't an arsonist, he just so happens to have various and sundry explosives. For 2 Heat, he detonates a device and deals his Punishing Flames attack to anyone in its zone. Until the end of the scene, anyone traveling through or ending their turn in the zone must succeed at a Challenging (D2) Acrobatics test, or suffer the attack.

ERNESTO CHANG (ARIADNAN SABOTEUR)

He had to admit to himself that, until now, this mission had been a blast – literally. He was finally back home after almost two years of blowing up stuff across the Human Sphere with the security team he had been assigned to. The new mission for a Teseum mining company seemed simple enough. Chang's job likewise seemed simple: supervise the installation of the comms rig, secure the perimeter, then try to seem busy.

Ernesto wasn't too keen on blowing his Ariadnan comrades on Dawn to bits, particularly as they would be part of the real mission. Chang had discreetly received instructions right after the comms array was up and running, just before putting it online for the Tunguskan Interventor to take the helm. And that was the rub, the Tunguskan hacker in charge of operations. Apparently he wasn't the only one running a double scheme, and the Nomads were expecting some high-end with valuable information. The fact that they had taken so much care to disguise this transaction clearly meant it would be invaluable to whomever controlled it. If Stavka wanted it, then it was Chang's job to obliterate every single piece of equipment in that camp in order to retrieve the data.

Stravhs, the engineer turned spy, had already rigged and booby trapped most of the installations. It sounded as if Stavka had sent a full regiment to storm the camp, and this kept the Tunguskan officer focused on the defences. Ernesto had direct access to the communications arrays.

"Chang! Activate the bombs!" Chang cut the communication short. His time was up. No bombs detonating as expected had just played his hand. He had to think fast! Looking around, he found some equipment crates near the tents and lugged them to the mine entrance. He fixed a custom-made proximity charge to it just as he saw one of the Nomad remotes heading at full speed to his location. Cursing, he barely had time to dive behind the comms array before the remote entered and set off the explosive, filling the station with smoke and small fires, and his ears with a constant beep.

Ernesto crawled dazedly from behind his cover and retrieved his weapon. He aimed at the tent's entrance while someone, a Nomad for sure, entered the tent. Fired half-blind, he hoped to gain time to recover and figure out where the data-pack was.

APPEARANCE

Ernesto wears standard-issue Alguacil fatigues under a battered blue jacket and a yellow vest with the word "Dozer" embroidered on it. He carries several grenades with him and what looks like a detonator is hanging from his belt. Although smiling, there is something off-putting in his eyes.

ROLEPLAYING

- He constantly uses puns and references to explosions.
- He is slightly hard of hearing (on account of too many explosions at close quarters).
- He speaks with a strong USAriadnan accent.

BACKGROUND

Not considering himself a pyromaniac, Ernesto prefers to think of himself as someone inclined towards explosives and is liberal with their usage. Still, he couldn't blame his CO for court-marshalling him after he blew up a building of smugglers instead of opening a breach on the wall for the special-ops teams to capture them. He was waiting in a Fairview military prison for a long sentence to be handed to him when a high-ranking visitor made an offer he simply couldn't turn down. Rumours of undercover specialists recruited by Stavka drifted through the lockup, but Chang gave them little consideration and certainly never thought he would be forced into service as one of them!

Ernesto no longer reports to his superiors regarding his use of explosives, but he finds himself in ever more dangerous situations. There are always perks to be found when passing for a disenfranchised mercenary capable of piercing the toughest vaults and adamantite armours. His new job is definitely cut out for him, but it is getting harder for Chang to remember where his loyalties are. He's more preoccupied than ever as his superiors are making the consequences for failing to deliver quite clear. For now, he takes every new mission one explosion at a time.

ZANA (HACKER)



ERIK REIERSEN

NEMESIS

ZANA

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
9	10	8	9	13	10	11

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

	+	1		+	1		+	1
Combat	+1	1	Movement	+	1	Social	+1	1
Fortitude	+3	1	Senses	+2	1	Technical	+3	3

DEFENCES

Firewall	16	Resolve	14	Vigour
Security	-	Morale	-	Armour
				11
				1

ATTACKS

- **Hacking Device Plus:** CLAW-2, SWORD-1, SHIELD-2, GADGET-3, IC-2, UPGRADE Cybermask, Solifugae, Sucker Punch, White Noise; +3 (N) bonus damage
- **Nanopulser:** Range C, 1+5 (N) damage, 1H, Biotech, Subtle 3, Torrent, Vicious 2

GEAR: Armoured Clothing, Stealth Repeater, Stims

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Fidgety:** Zana hates to sit still, and in a conflict, this keeps him on the move. He gains X (N) Morale and Security Soak, where X equals the number of zones he's travelled since his last action (excluding zones travelled by vehicular movement).
- **Hacker:** When making an Infowar attack, Zana can reroll up to 5 (N) but must accept the new result.
- **Sharp Senses:** Zana's eyes may dart around like a caffeinated hummingbird, but he's surprisingly adapt at processing what he sees. He can reroll one d20 when making an Observation test but must accept the new result.

Zana uploaded the firewall program and made sure the repeater was running correctly. Somehow during the night, the brand-new repeater had burned out.

Segal, Zana's Alguacil escort, clapped his hand on Zana's shoulder. "When you are done, I'll be outside in the street. I think someone was following us, so we better return fast to the Mission."

Segal left the building while Zana finished and hurriedly gathered his remaining tools. The Nomad hacker rushed out of the repeater's building to where his escort would be waiting.

Zana found Segal, bending over and incessantly coughing. The Alguacil tried to draw his pistol, but the cough prevented him, and he clumsily fell to the floor.

"Segal! What happened? Are you alright?" Zana asked, cradling his friend and colleague.

"Zana... I think... we are made... you have to get... to the ..."

Blood trickled from Segal's mouth as the coughing ceased, and he closed his eyes one last time.

"Segal!"

Zana's eyes darted around the growing crowd, his mind racing, and he gently lowered Segal. Segal had no signs of open wounds, so the culprit had to be someone nearby. Someone who had gotten close to him.

Hacking into Maya, he filtered, on a hunch, all comlogs with open access and uploaded a personal quantum malware to overload all users' reception channels. This immediately generated the response Zana was looking for. Almost everyone on the street stopped to check their malfunctioning comlogs. With only a few seconds before they reset, Zana frantically scrutinised the crowd. Then he saw him: a single man walking hurriedly away from the confused crowd.

Zana had the killer, now it was a matter of action.

APPEARANCE

Zana is young man from Corregidor with nervous mannerisms who is constantly immersed in his comlog. Unlike other Nomad hackers, his clothing and gear all are immensely practical, yet advanced and sophisticated. Zana can blend in with a crowd and uses this anonymity when dealing with would-be ALEPH attackers.

ROLEPLAYING

- He cannot keep still for long periods and is always doing something with his hands.
- Zana constantly cleans his hands with antiseptic spray.
- He does not have a sense of privacy and tends to hack even his friends' personal devices.

BACKGROUND

Zana never thought much about the Phantom Conflict nor the struggle between ALEPH and the Nomad Nation. He learned the histories and legends of the struggle of the Nomads and their heroes against the AI, but he never saw it as anything beyond that: history. As a Corregidorean hacker attached to the Alguacil Security detachment in the Commercial Mission, he assumed his work would be ensuring Arachne's repeaters were up and running. Simple.

That is, until the Commercial Mission was targeted by cyber-attacks, assassinations, and sabotage runs. Though in shock from the attacks, it would take the death of one of his squad mates for Zana to realise that ALEPH and its threat to all Nomads in the Human Sphere was real. He was in a war of extermination, and he would not fail his people, no matter what it takes!



ROBONRAGE

NEMESIS

ROBERT DI GIOVANNI

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
8	10	12	11	8	8	13

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

Combat	+3	3	Movement	+1	1	Social	+1	-
Fortitude	+5	1	Senses	+2	2	Technical	+1	-

DEFENCES

Firewall	9	Resolve	18	Vigour	17
Security	-	Morale	-	Armour	2

ATTACKS

- **Mk12:** Range M, 2+7 (N) damage, Burst 3, 2H, Salvo (Knockdown)
- **Nemesis Gloves:** Melee, 1+6 (N) damage, Covers Hands, Anti-Materiel 2, Backlash 1, Monofilament, NFB, Vicious 22

GEAR: Medium Combat Armour, Ritual Knife

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Bodyshield:** Completely unconcerned with his own safety, Roberto will gladly take a bullet for his charges and often has. He can only designate a single individual, including a character, at a time; as his charge. When used to protect his charge, Roberto does not pay Heat to use the Guard Reaction.
- **Continuous Catechism:** Roberto has committed Our Lady of Mercy's doctrine to heart, reciting it high-unconsciously. His unwavering dedications grants him a Morale Soak of 3.
- **Suffer For Your Sins:** Roberto's not much for dodging: it interferes with his aim. He does not pay Heat to use the Return Fire Reaction, but when he uses it, his opponent gains +2 (N) on their attack

ROBERT DI GIOVANNI (SIN EATER)

The Sin Eater and the smaller woman evaluated the abandoned smelting facility from a hidden position.

The Reverend Moira, Julia, instructed the huge man besides her. "Stay here and guard our back. I will locate the operative and rendezvous as soon as possible."

"May Our Lady of Mercy find me useful."

"May you atone for our weaknesses, Sin Eater."

With that, Reverend Julia went into the ruined building, leaving Robert di Giovanni on top of a ramshackle hut where he could oversee the entrance to the building.

He was in the second mystery of the Observance Litany, when a transport arrived at the building, unloading seven armed men. Somehow, they knew the Moira were here.

"Sinful men," Roberto thought.

He aimed at the vehicle's pilot, who never got a chance to repent of his sins. The rest of the men immediately took cover, firing blindly at Robert's position. He kept firing his Mark 12, not bothering to cover himself, and each shot found its mark on the enemies of the Observance.

The attackers were well equipped and organised, Robert acknowledged in the haze of his faith-induced trance, but he had the higher ground and clear lane of fire. He fired the last round of his magazine and started reloading when he heard the distinctive sound of a grenade launcher. He saw the trajectory of the grenade heading his way, as in slow motion, hitting squarely in the parapet he was stationed.

Shrapnel hit the Sin Eater in the chest and neck. Robert grimaced at the pain, finished reloading, and got on his feet to shoot the doomed soul.

Afterwards, he approached the vehicle, took out what was left of the driver, and climbed in his stead. The Reverend then came out of the building, helping a limping man climb into the vehicle.

"Thank Our Lady for her intervention! Get us out of here!"

Roberto tried to answer but blood gurgled out of his wounded throat. Resigned, he hit the accelerator and headed to the docks.

APPEARANCE

An imposing man in impeccable white uniform, Robert is armed with a huge rifle. This impatient man is covered in scars that riddle his face and neck, as if they follow some kind of secret pattern.

ROLEPLAYING

- He is constantly whispering Our Lady of Mercy catechism.
- He has wild, enervating eyes, and he tends to stare directly into whomever talks to him.
- He has an electronic voice, due to damage to his vocal chords.

BACKGROUND

Robert di Giovanni had many flaws, one of them was his condition as a sinful man. He indulged in every sin he had access to – and on *Bakunin*, there are more than just seven! He never gave a moment's thought to consequences or even a Social Energy decline.

During the Violent Intermission, he was in one of the first modules attacked by the AIs infiltrators, and he would have died a horrible nano-tech death had it not been for the reverends and their pious purge of the Evil that is ALEPH.

With his dying breath, he begged for the purification of his sins to one of the Reverend Healers. That day, he died and was reborn as a Sin Eater, taking on the sins of others and searing them into his flesh, his thoughts, his very soul. Thus does he serve the Observance and the Nomad Nation in atonement, trusting that even if his suffering never cleanses his dissolute soul, it at least serves a higher purpose.

JAKE SHEPERD (CLOCKMAKER)



NERRU

NEMESIS

JAKE SHEPERD

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
9	10	8	11	10	12	9

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

	+	1		+	-		+	3
Combat	+1	1	Movement	+1	-	Social	+3	3
Fortitude	+1	-	Senses	+1	1	Technical	+4	4

DEFENCES

	13		10		9
Firewall	13	Resolve	10	Vigour	9
Security	-	Morale	3	Armour	1

ATTACKS

- **Combi Rifle:** Range C/M, 1+7 (N) damage, Burst 2, 2H, Expert 1, MULTI Light Mod, Vicious 1
- **D-Charges:** Explosive Charge, 2+6 (N) damage, 1H, Anti-Materiel 2, Comms, Disposable, Piercing 3, Spread 1, Unsubtle, Vicious 2
- **Foomp Flinger:** Range M, Burst 1, 1H, Munition, Speculative Fire

GEAR: Armoured Clothing, FFP Repeater Rounds 2, Freedom Kit, Powered Multitool

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Lust for Life:** Shepard's *joie de vivre* can border on the absurd, but it seems to suit him just fine. He gains a Morale Soak of 3.
- **Stone Free:** Even by Bakunian standards, Shepard is an independent soul. Command tests against him are made at +2 difficulty.
- **Under Pressure:** For whatever reason, Jake finds his rhythm when the heat is on. During action scenes, he reduces the difficulty of Tech tests by two steps to a minimum of Simple (D0).

"Sheperd! The remote got blown again! We need your help!"

"Again?! What are you doing with it?"

"Stop wasting time! We need the REM's repeater up and running or our support will crash into the jungle, and then we are done for!"

Gritting his teeth, the engineer took a deep breath and jumped out of his cover. The beleaguered Nomad unit was ambushed by the Shasvastii, and Jake had been in charge of the remotes. They detected the Shasvastii moments before the attack, allowing the Nomads precious seconds to prepare and take cover.

Now, the skirmish was at a standstill, and it was a battle of attrition. The faction that received reinforcements would wipe out the opposing unit. Sheperd shivered at the thought of what kind of reinforcements the aliens would bring.

Tumbling, dodging, and somersaulting, he somehow managed to avoid getting killed while reaching the wrecked remote, right in the middle of the battlefield.

Throwing himself to the ground, Sheperd assessed the remote. It had received a direct blast, but the repeater was surprisingly intact. He just needed to jumpstart the unit.

During the boot cycle, he heard a guttural scream from above. Instinctively, he rolled to the side while a Shasvastii Seed Soldier launched himself at the Nomad. Jake barely had time to sweep the lanky alien's legs while getting up on his feet. The alien crawled back and drew a wicked knife. Full of adrenaline, Jake rushed and kicked the alien, diving under the Shasvastii's reach and connecting with its abdomen. The invader grunted and fell back. It recovered but before it could skewer Jake, the alien's head exploded.

Stunned, Jake looked around until he saw an Alguacil hacker giving cover fire to his position.

"Quit wasting time, Sheperd!"

Jake, covered in alien blood, smiled at the hacker and turned on the repeater.

"Ready to go! Call in the cavalry!"

APPEARANCE

A man of indefinite age, neither young nor old is usually found in his workshop, rhythmically moving to some inaudible tune. While he tinkers, Sheperd tends to chew on whatever is at hand, edible or not. He has unusual cortical implants on the back of his head and wears the distinguishing white and orange uniform of a Clockmaker of *Bakunin*.

ROLEPLAYING

- Jake is always chewing something.
- He is constantly offering to "upgrade" any technological contraption he sees.
- He likes music and is constantly humming and dancing by himself.

BACKGROUND

The best part of being a Clockmaker is the constant challenge of rearranging stuff in order to improve it. For Jake Sheperd, doing this while in extreme conditions like on the field repairs only add zest to his life. Sheperd works best under pressure, truly happy when he finds his rhythm under enemy fire or the impending menace of a ship to ship boarding action.

Although his contraptions are sturdy, and his repairs always help his Nomad comrades to carry the day, they are not as long-lived as one would expect from a renowned engineer. It is unknown if this is his first incarnation or if he has been resurrected before, but Jake lives this life to the fullest and enjoys it with a *joie de vivre* rarely seen even in a Bakunian.



GRIGORI VEGA (HACKER)



TILL SCHLUSEN

NEMESIS

ROBERT DI GIOVANNI

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
9	11	8	9	14	7	12

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

	+	1		+	-		-	-
Combat	+1	1	Movement	+1	-	Social	-	-
Fortitude	+2	1	Senses	+3	3	Technical	+5	3

DEFENCES

Firewall	19	Resolve	14	Vigour	10
Security	-	Morale	-	Armour	1

ATTACKS

- **Hacking Device Plus:** CLAW-2 (CLAW-2 Black Widow, 1+3 (N) damage), SWORD-1, SHIELD-2, GADGET-3 (GADGET-1 Lockpicker), IC-2, UPGRADE Cybermask, Fadeware, Sucker Punch, White Noise; +4 (N) bonus damage
- **Heavy Pistol:** Range R/C, 2+6 (N) damage, Burst 1, Unbalanced, Unforgiving 1, Vicious 1

GEAR: Adhesive Solvent, Armoured Clothing

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Hacker:** When making an Infowar attack, Grigori can reroll up to 3 (N) but must accept the new result.
- **One Step Ahead of the Machine:** Grigori knows all the tell-tale signs of AIs, and he's good at exploiting them. He adds Vicious 3 to Infowar attacks against Aspects, geists, Rogue AIs, and other artificial intelligences.
- **Paranoid:** Grigori is constantly expecting ALEPH, or its minions, to come after him. But it's not paranoia if you're right... He pays two less Heat to use Reactions, to a minimum of zero.

11110N's name flashed every 3.33 nanoseconds, a rather annoying advertising of the hacker's abilities. The backdoor program was so loaded with booby traps and defence bots that it even included a transit gauge, which made any effort to analyse it a dangerous affair to explore.

This only made the Nomad hacker, Grigori Vega, more determined to crack the cyber-safe. He was happily charging every second he worked on this job to Lawson, the suave investor who had approached him with the job of writing up a key that would bypass this type of security.

But first, Grigori had to neutralise the piece of code 11110N had written as a failsafe that would erase all the information contained in the program.

This was probably the toughest security array Grigori had encounter in his life, yet there was something strange in the code and the quantronic arrangement in general, like a pyramid of data packs, different from the carefully structured Yu Jing firewalls or the monolithic PanOceanian locks and bots. This was something else, the appearance of disarray but carefully orchestrated.

That was when Grigori understood it. "Of course! It's all a front!" All that security, the undecipherable programs and bots were just that, a trap by itself.

* * *

"Here you go. A trinary-quantronic lockpick program, perfect for hacking into any magenta-level security system in Human Edge."

"I have to say, I am quite impressed! Only a Tunguska hacker..."

Lawson's speech was suddenly interrupted by a huge gun pointed at his too perfect face.

"Yeah, only a Nomad hacker would see your trap for what it is, program. The next time you dumb AIs try to ambush us with such lame tactics, try not to be so obvious. Remember, 11110N: we are smarter than you." He smirked. "Which is why you're not going to find any nearby Proxies to jump into. See you around."

The Posthuman's face contorted in a rictus full of hate before disappearing in a red mist.

It had been a close call this time. If Grigori hadn't noticed the pattern, ALEPH

would at the very least have killed him. At worst, ALEPH would have acquired access to Arachne and the location of the Nomads nodes in the Orbital where he was located.

"Just keep one step ahead of the machine. That's all I have to do."

APPEARANCE

Grigori Vega is dressed in very worn clothes but carries a highly sophisticated hacking device. His eyes are bloodshot, and he clearly hasn't bathed in a while. Vega has the appearance of a genius or a mad man, but it is not clear which it is.

ROLEPLAYING

- Vega always tries to make a profit from every situation.
- Nobody is as good as him, and if they are it's because they are cheating.
- He is very secretive and gets defensive if anyone asks about his life.

BACKGROUND

"Who is the target?"

"One Grigori Vega, of Tunguska."

"Never heard of him..."

"He is the one who took out Project: Illium."

"I thought Illium had gone rogue."

"That's the official version. Turns out he found about Illium, took him out and took over his persona for almost two hours..."

"Last known position?"

"One of the Commercial Missions on Paradiso. Could be a red herring though..."

"Perhaps. But that's the only clue we have. If he took out Illium, there is no way I'll be able to crack him down. I'll have to do it old school, in real space."

"Never let it be said that we fail to offer challenging work opportunities."

CORBIN MADDROX (MODERATOR INVESTIGATOR)



MADROX

NEMESIS

CORBIN MADDROX

ATTRIBUTES

AGI	AWA	BRW	COO	INT	PER	WIL
10	13	8	9	10	10	10

FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

	+	1		+	-		+	2
Combat	+2	1	Movement	+1	-	Social	+2	2
Fortitude	+1	1	Senses	+4	2	Technical	+3	1

DEFENCES

	12		11		9
Firewall	12	Resolve	11	Vigour	9
Security	-	Morale	3	Armour	1

ATTACKS

- **Combi Rifle:** Range C/M, 1+8 (N) damage, Burst 2, 2H, Expert 1, MULTI Light Mod, Vicious 1
- **Hacking Device Plus:** CLAW-2, SWORD-1, SHIELD-2, GADGET-3), IC-2, UPGRADE Cybermask, Sucker Punch, White Noise; +2 (N) bonus damage
- **Modhand:** Melee, 1+4 (N) damage, 1H, Concealed 2, E/M, Stun, Subtle 1, Vicious 2

GEAR: Armoured Clothing, SecurCuffs, Recorder

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Too Old for This (X Heat):** Even if he's comparatively young, within Maddrox's chest beats the heart of an authentically grumpy old man. As a Reaction, he can mutter, grumble, and curse his way to +X (N) Morale Soak for himself and all allies in his zone until the end of his next turn.
- **True Moderator:** Maddrox may look like he's about to fall asleep, but he's deceptively sharp behind those bloodshot eyes. As a Reaction, Maddrox can respond to any Infowar attack with an Infowar attack of his own, made at +2 difficulty. This attack is resolved before the enemy attack, and if it causes a Breach, then the original attack is prevented.
- **Seen It All:** Most of it twice. Some of it thrice. When making an Observation test, Maddrox can reroll one d20 but must accept the new result.

The androgynous Moderator adjusted their white, grey, and red uniform and stared at Corbin Maddrox, the Moderator Investigator assigned to the case. Reaching for a cup of coffee, Maddrox yawned and checked the holo-files on his station in the small cubicle he called home.

He looked as if he hadn't had much sleep lately, if ever.

"So?" Myr's voice wasn't prying, but it was insistent. "You are going, right?"

"There is nothing to work with here. It is all circumstantial! I am not going into Moreauvia just because the brass thinks we are expendable!"

Myr frowned. "But, they took Olivia. It's right there in the hologram!"

Maddrox rubbed his eyes, brow furrowed. "Perhaps they did. Perhaps they were just helping her. You know exactly that's what the Doctor or whatever weird clone she sends to deal with us will say! Plus, it was inside the Commune, and you know how that goes. Their house, their rules! There is no way they will allow us to perform any kind of investigation within its confines."

He sighed. "Sorry, Myr. You know I'm always here for you, but there's nothing I can do with this case... and you know I liked that Olivia reporter. She had spirit, but this case is as good as closed"

Myr smiled slightly at Maddrox. He returned to shuffling clutter in the chaotic room, as if that would somehow cause the white-haired moderator to leave and hopefully take this problem with them.

"I am sorry, detective. But you fail to notice the fact that we have jurisdiction on this one," Myr said, a smirk emerging on their face.

Maddrox gave up the busywork and sighed: Myr was right.

"The Neoterran... he is dead?"

"On the contrary! Very much alive and demanding we turn over his associate!"

Myr was enjoying every bit of the exchange.

"Dammit! If he'd just had the common sense to get killed by that Pupnik." He closed his eyes, pinching the bridge of his nose. This was already a headache. "Myr? We are screwed. And it looks like I'm off to Moreauvia, Commune A/121, and into the jaws of that crazy Doctor. I hope you still have that spitfire with you?"

APPEARANCE

Maddrox is dishevelled man wearing a Moderator's uniform. Despite dark circles under his eyes, Corbin's eyes are sharp, and his hands are steady. The Moderator has a genuine smile and make eye contact when speaking, although he has a snarky tone.

ROLEPLAYING

- Corbin always complains about everything.
- He acts as if he is hungover, and perhaps he is most of the time.
- He loves coffee and is always searching for his next caffeine fix.

BACKGROUND

Corbin Maddrox really enjoyed being a regular Moderator and every day grumbles at having applied to the evaluation program. Thinking he would be assigned to a fast reaction team like the Taskmasters or even in Vice, he instead was assigned to detective status, and his life got complicated since then. Apparently the only one he fooled acting dumb all this time was himself.

A grumpy old man at heart, Maddrox is a true Moderator, caring for the wellbeing of *Bakunin* and its inhabitants. He gives 110% in each of his cases, which leaves him exhausted and slightly depressed after facing the worst *Bakunin* can offer humanity.

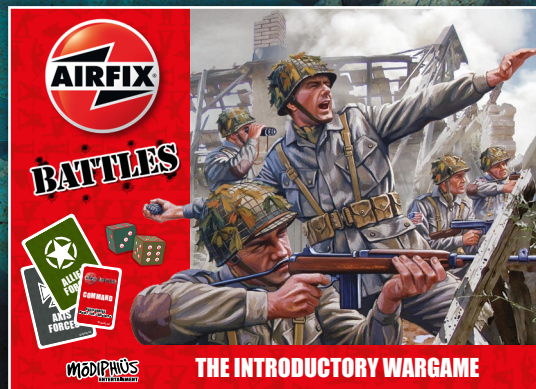
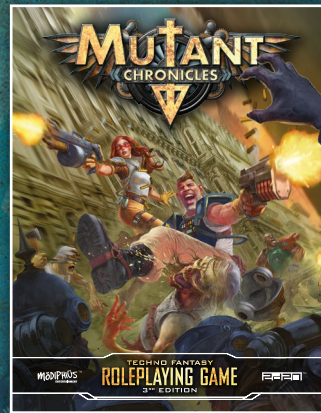
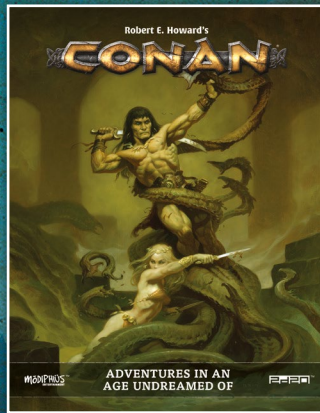
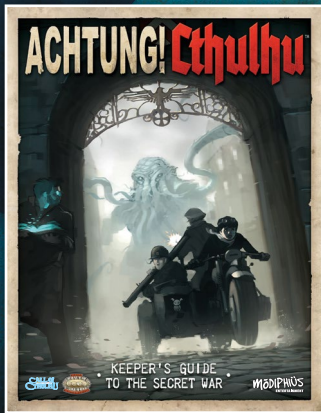
He constantly strives to maintain the balance and the Social Energy between the different Communes and *Bakunin*, but sometimes this proves to be more than even the veteran Moderator can take.



INFINITY
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