

EXTREME CYPHERS

NUMENÉRA™

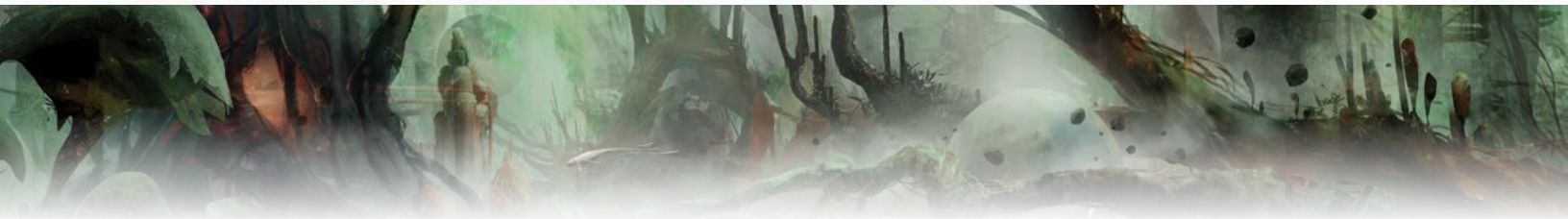
CYPHER
SYSTEM™

THE
STRANGE™



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EXTREME CYPHERS



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Numenera, The Strange, and Cypher System games all use the Cypher System. The system is named for one of the most ubiquitous elements that players can interact with: the cypher. Cyphers are one-use abilities that characters gain over the course of play. They are usually physical, manifest items, like magic potions or bits of alien technology, though they can be subtler and appear as inspirations or blessings. The important thing about cyphers is the fact that they generally can be used only once, which is why a Cypher System game assumes that the characters will frequently discover and use them.

In fact, the game both implicitly and explicitly promises that, because cyphers are one-use items, an individual cypher could do almost anything. One cypher might allow a character in your game to walk through a wall, another might create a large explosion, and a third could give a character telepathy for an hour. True, all of these are incredible effects. But the GM can allow them without worrying about the long-term ramifications of such power. Why? Because each cypher grants the ability only once.

Of course, if cyphers really can do anything, wouldn't we expect that some could trigger more extreme effects, such as create a volcano, cause an eclipse, or spawn a tornado? Yes, we *would* expect that, even if the effects might have longer-term ramifications.

Guess what? *Extreme Cyphers* is the production of that expectation. This supplement provides forty such cyphers that can achieve exactly those noted effects, and more.

A GM can allow PCs to discover extreme cyphers randomly, but she may be less inclined to do so because they can have longer-term consequences than regular cyphers. But just as she might do with regular cyphers, a GM can place extreme cyphers in an adventure or scenario as important rewards. In fact, entire adventures could be based around obtaining an extreme cypher. In fiction, whole chapters (or episodes, if you're watching instead of reading or listening) often revolve around overcoming a series of amazing obstacles to find the magical elixir, the divine water, or the alien unobtainium. Overcoming such odds makes finding an extreme cypher all the more special. And what could be more special than when a character finds a cypher that allows her to summon a level 10 creature to fight on her behalf—or better yet, to become such a creature herself?



At several locations in this supplement, you'll see page references accompanied by this symbol. These are page references to the *Cypher System Rulebook*, where you can find additional details about that item, place, creature, or concept. It isn't necessary to look up the referenced items in the corebook; it's an optional way to learn more about the game and provide additional information to your players.

EXTREME CYPHER TABLE

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| 38–40 | Multibooster | 88–90 | Universal expertise |
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| 46–47 | Power shift (accuracy) | 97–99 | Vanish volume |
| 48–50 | Power shift (intelligence) | 00 | Volcano |

ANOETIC AND OCCULTIC CYPHERS

Some Cypher System settings—including Numenera and The Strange—differentiate cyphers as *anoetic* or *occultic*. If you're using *Extreme Cyphers* with those settings, refer to the lists below to distinguish between the two kinds.

EXTREME ANOETIC CYPHERS

Certain attack
Complete restoration
Distant summons
Effortless
Evacuate air
Far traveler
Indestructible item
Instant friends
Instant tower
Lethal upgrade
Limitless
Massive destruction
Multibooster
Multiport
Physical upgrade
Power shift (accuracy)

Power shift (intelligence)
Power shift (resilience)
Power shift (single attack)
Quell
Ray emitter (extreme)
Replacement
Shadow body
Super champion
Survive
Temporal escape
Transcendence
Universal expertise

EXTREME OCCULTIC CYPHERS

City communion
Disciple
Eclipse
Rage unending
Resurrect
Transformation extreme
Twister
Ultimate acquisition
Unlock latency
Vanish creature
Vanish volume
Volcano



Anoetic cyphers are simple to use: a pill to swallow, a small handheld device with a switch to flip, or a bomb to throw.



Occultic cyphers are more complex and more dangerous, but they often have better and more interesting effects. An occultic cypher counts as two cyphers for the purpose of determining how many you can bear at the same time.



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CYPHER FORMS

All cyphers in this supplement can be manifest cyphers, which take physical form. A few can also be subtle cyphers, which are not physical; these are marked with an orange symbol.

What does an extreme cypher look like if it's a manifest cypher? That depends on the genre. For example, an anoetic physical upgrade might take the form of a pill on modern-day Earth, an elixir in the magical realm of Ardeyn, or an injector in the Ninth World. GMs can choose a form for flavor or roll randomly based on the setting. Even then, most extreme cyphers can exist in more than one form, but all forms work the same way.



NUMENERA (SCIENCE FICTION— FAR FUTURE)

| d10 | Form |
|-----|-------------------|
| 1 | Crystal nodule |
| 2 | Handheld device |
| 3 | Immobile device |
| 4 | Ingestible liquid |
| 5 | Injector |
| 6 | Metallic disc |
| 7 | Metallic sphere |
| 8 | Spray canister |
| 9 | Synth gauntlet |
| 10 | Wristband device |

EARTH (MODERN)

| d10 | Form |
|-----|----------------------|
| 1 | 3D goggles |
| 2 | 3D printer |
| 3 | Biofeedback glove |
| 4 | Button pin |
| 5 | Computer |
| 6 | Electronic module |
| 7 | Multifunction remote |
| 8 | Old book |
| 9 | Pill |
| 10 | Rare coin |

ARDEYN (FANTASY)

| d10 | Form |
|-----|-----------|
| 1 | Amulet |
| 2 | Candle |
| 3 | Elixir |
| 4 | Figurine |
| 5 | Periapt |
| 6 | Ring |
| 7 | Runestone |
| 8 | Scroll |
| 9 | Urn |
| 10 | Wand |

RUK (SCIENCE FICTION— BIOENGINEERED)

| d10 | Form |
|-----|------------------|
| 1 | Adhesive patch |
| 2 | Eyelike graft |
| 3 | Froglike graft |
| 4 | Pod attachment |
| 5 | Skin graft |
| 6 | Slime aliquot |
| 7 | Spiderlike graft |
| 8 | Spine |
| 9 | Tattoo graft |
| 10 | Umbilical |

THE CYPHERS

CERTAIN ATTACK

Level: 10

Effect: For the next round, when the user attacks a target with an ability, weapon, or device, regardless of the range or any barriers separating them, the attack succeeds (treat as a routine task). The user can attack any target, but only if she knows that the target exists; the GM will decide if she has enough information to confirm the target's existence.

CITY COMMUNION

Level: 10

Effect: All creatures within a 2-mile (3 km) radius gain telepathy for a few rounds and can speak to each other regardless of any interceding barriers or language barriers. Though the effect is potentially overwhelming for those few rounds, the follow-on effect allows all connected creatures to gain a brief sense of each other and each other's point of view. For the next ten days at least, the difficulty of any positive interaction tasks attempted between affected creatures is reduced by three steps.



COMPLETE RESTORATION

Level: 10

Effect: User's Pools are completely restored, she becomes hale on the damage track, and she is cured of all diseases, poisons, and other ongoing deleterious effects.



DISCIPLE

Level: 9

Effect: A creature about the size of the user and whose level does not exceed the cypher's level becomes convinced that the user is worthy of service and sacrifice. The creature gives up whatever occupation and life it previously pursued to become the user's follower. It continues to serve the user gladly, unless or until the user does wrong by the creature, as determined by the GM.

DISTANT SUMMONS

Level: 9

Effect: A named target the user knows to exist is summoned from wherever it is, even if it's unwilling to be called. The user can summon any target, but only if she knows that the target exists; the GM will decide if she has enough information to confirm the target's existence.

ECLIPSE

Level: 12

Effect: A location up to 10 miles (16 km) away is shadowed in darkness in an area 3 miles (5 km) in radius for one day, during which time all natural sources of light are absent. Light sources produced by technology may also be affected, especially if they are normally the only "natural" sources of light in the chosen area.



EFFORTLESS

Level: 9

Effect: For the next hour, the user doesn't spend points from her Pools when applying Effort. Other normal limits for applying Effort remain in effect.

LEVELS ABOVE 10

In Cypher System games where power shifts or similar mechanics are in play, difficulty caps at 15 instead of 10. Difficulty 10 is labeled "impossible," but that label is for "normal" creatures and PCs. For settings that support superheroes and gods, "impossible" means something different. Think of each difficulty above 10 as being one more step beyond impossible. Even if you're playing in a Cypher System game like *The Strange* or *Numenera* where levels are normally capped at 10, extreme cyphers with levels that go all the way to 15 might still be found.



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LIMITLESS

Level: 10

Effect: The user succeeds at any one knowledge task whose difficulty is equal to or less than the cypher's level.

MASSIVE DESTRUCTION

Level: 1d6 + 9

Effect: Projects a destructive pulse up to 3 miles (5 km) away that explodes in a 1-mile (1.5 km) radius, inflicting damage equal to the cypher's level. The type of damage is informed by the genre setting where this cypher is deployed.



MULTIBOOSTER

Level: 9

Effect: Adds 3 to the user's Might Edge, Speed Edge, and Intellect Edge for one hour.

MULTIPOINT

Level: 8

Effect: User and all allies within short range are instantly transferred to any location the user designates within 100 miles (160 km), as long as she has previously visited the location and the location still exists.

PHYSICAL UPGRADE

Level: 10

Effect: User permanently adds 3 points to one Pool.

POWER SHIFT

A power shift is like an applied level of Effort that is always active, but which doesn't count toward a character's maximum Effort use (nor does it count as a skill or an asset). A power shift simply reduces the difficulty of tasks that fall into a specific category, like accuracy or intelligence.

POWER SHIFT (ACCURACY)

Level: 15

Effect: For three days, the user gains a power shift to accuracy, which reduces the difficulty of any attack he makes by one step.

POWER SHIFT (INTELLIGENCE)

Level: 15

Effect: For three days, the user gains a power shift to intelligence, which reduces the difficulty of any Intellect defense roll and all knowledge, science, and crafting tasks he makes by one step.

POWER SHIFT (RESILIENCE)

Level: 15

Effect: For three days, the user gains a power shift to resilience, which reduces the difficulty of any Might defense roll he makes by one step and adds 1 to Armor.

POWER SHIFT (SINGLE ATTACK)

Level: 15

Effect: For three days, the user gains a power shift to a single attack (chosen when the cypher is used), which reduces the difficulty of that particular attack by one step and adds 3 points of damage on a successful attack.

QUELL

Level: 10

Effect: All chosen targets within long range fall unconscious or become inoperative for one hour or until a target sustains damage, which wakes that particular target.

RAGE UNENDING

Level: 10

Effect: Targets within a 200-foot (60 m) radius up to 1 mile (1.5 km) away become raging psychopaths, with no thought for their own safety. Affected targets seek out and make melee attacks on the nearest creatures and continue to do so until they are killed or one day passes.

Depending on the genre, a massive destruction cypher could inflict damage by launching a mini-nuke in a modern Earth setting, reciting an Incarnation's curse in a fantasy world like Ardeyn, triggering an earthquake by causing an ancient buried installation to rise in the far-future sci-fi setting of Numenera, triggering a genetically engineered flesh-melting virus in the bioengineered sci-fi world of Ruk, or through some other agency.



Power shifts, page 270

Depending on the genre, a rage unending cypher might produce its effect via a canister of chemical warfare gas in a modern Earth setting, the utterance of a divine curse in a fantasy setting like Ardeyn, a zombie-apocalypse virus in a zombie-themed setting, or through some other agency.

Depending on the genre, a super champion cypher could produce a creature by printing it in a near-modern setting of Earth, summoning it from Hell in a setting inspired by biblical stories, releasing it from a psychic prison in a sci-fi setting, calling it from a recursion of the Strange, growing it from nanoparticles in the far-future sci-fi setting of Numenera, or through some other means.

A temporal escape cypher should be made available to PCs only if the GM is willing to end the current campaign or update it in potentially significant ways.

RAY EMITTER (EXTREME)

Level: 1d6 + 9

Effect: Allows the user to project a ray of destructive energy up to 3 miles (5 km) that inflicts damage equal to the cypher's level. Roll a d100 for the type of damage:

| | |
|-------|---------------------------|
| 01–50 | Heat/concentrated light |
| 51–60 | Cell-disrupting radiation |
| 61–80 | Force |
| 81–87 | Magnetic wave |
| 88–93 | Molecular bond disruption |
| 94–00 | Concentrated cold |

REPLACEMENT

Level: 10

Effect: Target within long range disappears for one hour, while the user gains the target's features, general mannerisms, and trivial surface knowledge (such as the names of friends). This lowers the difficulty by four steps of the user's attempts to pass himself off as or disguise himself as the target.

RESURRECT

Level: 13

Effect: Dead creature within immediate range is returned to life in full health, relative youth, and complete possession of its faculties and memories up to the point of death. To ensure success, some remnant of the target creature must remain, such as hair, skin, or bone.

SHADOW BODY

Level: 9

Effect: For one day, the user and all her equipment becomes equivalent to an animate shadow. As a shadow, she can flicker between two shadows within 300 feet (90 m) of each other as part of another action (regardless of interceding barriers), and she gains +15 to Armor against all sources of damage other than those generated by light. In addition, the difficulty of all stealth tasks is reduced by two steps.

SUPER CHAMPION

Level: 10

Effect: A level 10 creature is produced within long range and fights on behalf of the user for one minute.

SURVIVE

Level: 10

Effect: For one minute, the user regains all points to his Pools each round while he has at least 1 point in any Pool. If he dies, he instead regains all points to one Pool and the effect ends.

TEMPORAL ESCAPE

Level: 10

Effect: User and all allies within long range are instantly transferred 1d20 + 5 years into the future. For them, no time elapses. For all other creatures, it's as if the targets ceased to exist during the intervening period.

TRANSCENDENCE

Level: 11

Effect: For the next minute, each of the user's actions is treated as if the player rolled a 20.

TRANSFORMATION EXTREME

Level: 10

Effect: For one minute, the user gains the form and attributes of a creature of up to level 10 that she knows to exist. The GM will decide if she has enough information to confirm the creature's existence.

TWISTER

Level: 8

Effect: Launches a small tornado that travels a short distance each round in the direction determined by the user. The tornado persists for five minutes, leaving a swath of destruction 300 feet (90 m) wide in its wake by destroying structures whose level is less than the cypher's level. Each round a creature is caught in the area, it is stunned (losing its next turn), it sustains damage equal to the cypher's level, and it could be flung a short or long distance in a random direction.



ULTIMATE ACQUISITION

Level: 9

Effect: A named object of the user's size or smaller that she knows to exist is drawn immediately to her, no matter the range or interceding barriers. The user can summon any object, as long as she knows it exists; the GM will decide if she has enough information to confirm the object's existence.



UNIVERSAL EXPERTISE

Level: 10

Effect: For the next hour, the difficulty of all tasks the user attempts is reduced by three steps.

UNLOCK LATENCY

Level: 10

Effect: User permanently gains one special ability from any available focus. The GM determines what foci are available to choose from. The user can choose any ability, but the difficulty of using an ability whose tier is higher than her tier is increased by a number of steps equal to the difference between the tiers.

VANISH CREATURE

Level: 11

Effect: One creature within immediate range that is of the user's size or smaller permanently vanishes.

VANISH VOLUME

Level: 11

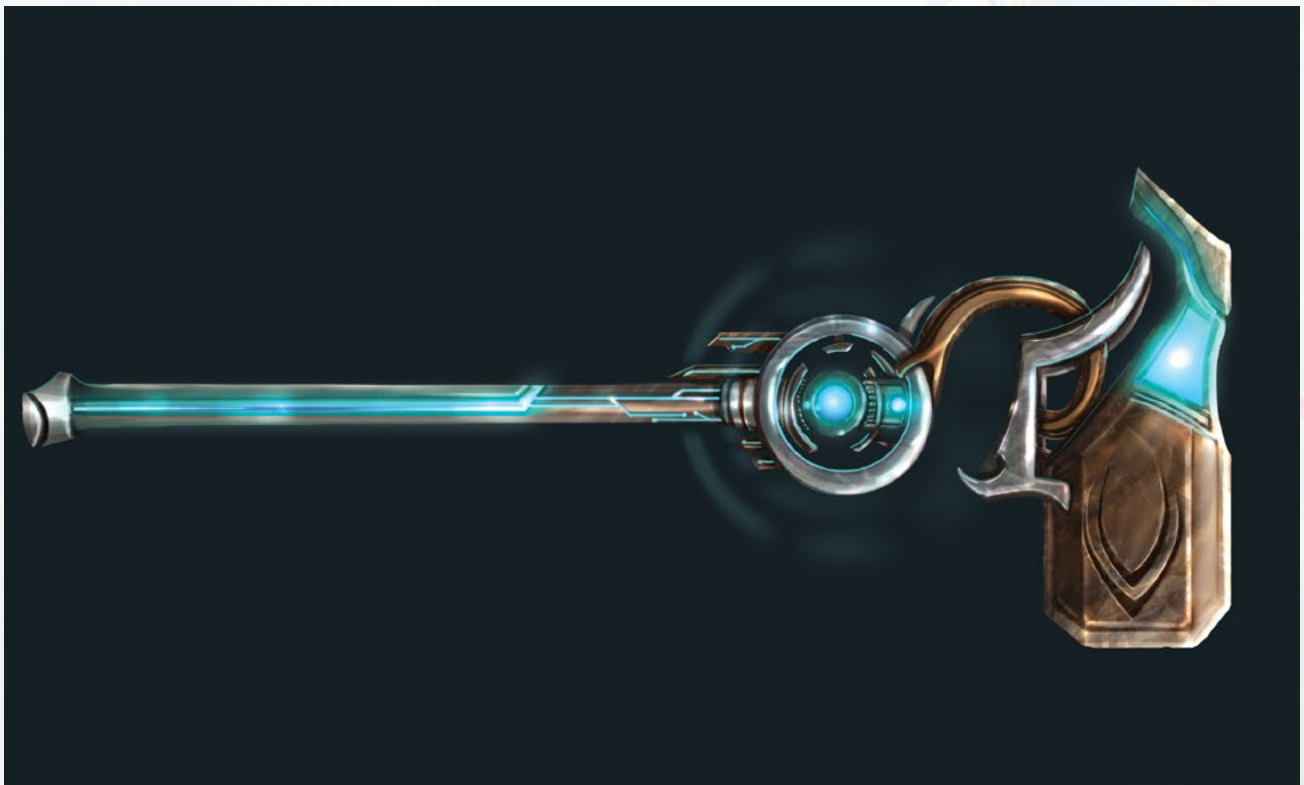
Effect: One or more objects, a structure (and all its contents), or a portion of a structure able to fit in a 10-foot (3 m) cube permanently vanishes.

VOLCANO

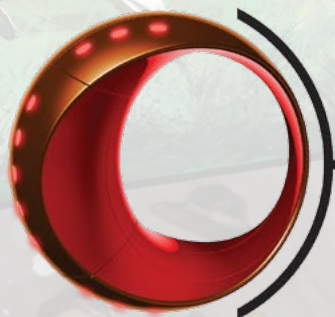
Level: 15

Effect: Over the course of thirty hours, a volcanic dome grows beneath the point on the ground where the cypher is activated, which likely destroys most structures in the area over time. When finished growing, the upthrust area is 6 miles (10 km) across at its base and has an elevation of 4,000 feet (1,200 m). When the growth phase ends, the dome erupts as a volcano for ten hours, threatening to destroy an additional area up to 5 miles (8 km) in radius around the base.

A volcano cypher should be made available to PCs only if the GM is willing to end the current campaign or update it in potentially significant ways.



WHERE WILL YOUR GAME TAKE YOU?



CYPHER SYSTEM



Hundreds of new abilities, cyphers, descriptors, and foci—plus the complete Cypher System rules, including special rules for a variety of genres. Build new recursions for The Strange—or whole new worlds for whole new campaigns!

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