



SHADOWRUN[®]

PARAZOOLOGY

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Connecting JackPoint VPN ...
... Matrix Access ID Spoofed.
... Encryption Keys Generated.
... Connected to Onion Routers.
> Login
*****
> Enter Passcode
*****
... Biometric Scan Confirmed.
Connected to <ERROR: NODE UNKNOWN>

Don't look under the bed. No, really. Don't look.
```

JackPoint Stats

33 users currently active in the network

Latest News
They keep changing the protocols al-most as fast as I can hack them, so it's making me a little pre-occupied. At least, that's the excuse I'm using right now. -Slamm-0!

Personal Alerts
Camera drone 4 confirms sighting of Squatch. Squatch is presenting a rude gesture to drone. Do you wish to reply?
* You have 2 new private messages.
* You have 4 new responses to your JackPoint posts.
* Eight people have added you to their list of contacts

First Degree
Six members are online and in your area.

Your Current Rep Score:
2 (51.2% positive)

Current Time: August 3, 2075 06:28

- PREFERENCES
- FEEDS
- TASKS
- LINKS
- HISTORY

Welcome back to Jackpoint, chummer; your last connection was severed: 16 hours, 37 minutes ago



Today's Heads Up

* I finally had time to compile the rest of Dr. David Wright's work on paranormal animals. It's a good continuation on what he has compiled about our Awakened world. -Glitch

Incoming

- * Get back on the street fast after you get hurt--no one's giving us any sick pay, after all. [Tag: [Bullets and Bandages](#)]
- * Whatever it was that got FastJack? It isn't gone. Brace yourself. [Tag: [Stolen Souls](#)]

Top News Items

- * New York Police clash again with GreenWar over preserving the population of stryx in Manhattan. Police counter that all this fervor is to introduce a new drug to New York. [Link](#)
- * The montauk strikes again! The victim, a resident dog walker of East Hampton, said that it scared off all six of her dogs. She only managed to recover two. Police are still trying to track the others through RFID chips. [Link](#)

- CHAT
- MESSAGES
- FILES
- POSTS
- NEXUS
- SEARCH

System status icons: Active (ComStar Firewall), Active (Jack-in-the-Box Antivirus), Active (SpamWitch Filter), On/Receiving (Commcode), Excellent (Signal), Active (Hidden Mode), Local Map.

PARAZOLOGY 2
Posts/Files tagged with "Parazology 2":
* Ammit
* Aerial Lionhead
* Bahari
* Bombardier
* Brucha
[More]

CONTINUE
ADVANCED SEARCH
SAVE

THE WORLD, A BIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

The world has been going through a unique extinction phase, one that man engineered. For the first time, one species on earth has been able to manipulate the environment on a global scale, while other species are unable to evolve fast enough to survive. Since the 1600s there have been over a thousand species of plants and animals documented that have gone extinct due to the actions of humans, with probably five to ten times that number of undocumented species also vanishing.

On top of this, the world is also going through what has been designated as the Sixth World. During this event, species have rapidly diversified through the infusion of magic into the environment, manifesting unique and sometimes mythical creatures. It is estimated that within a span of seventy years, two to four thousand Awakened plant and animal species were born. To date, less than a quarter of them have been documented.

Between these two global events there may be an unfortunately small time window to find these fantastic creatures before they become extinct. My work, and the work of others, will do as much as possible to document and present these Awakened species, which I hope will inspire others to preserve what ecological environments we have in order to save the Awakened and mundane species that remain.

PARANORMAL CRITTERS

AMMIT

CROCODYLUS FURTIM

Habitat: Swamps, creeks, lagoons, and rainforests

Range: West Africa (particularly in the Kingdoms of Nigeria)

Frequency: Uncommon

Identification: The ammit is a reptile that averages four meters long in length from nose to tail with a bronze-colored scales on its back and a dark purplish color on its belly scales. It weighs in at 250 kilograms. It has a v-shaped snout, and four of its lower teeth protrude over its upper lip.

Habits: The ammit Awakened from the common crocodile (*Crocodylus niloticus*). Unlike its brethren, the afanc and behemoth, the ammit relies more on speed and intelligence than brute strength, though they are considerably strong. They have chromatophores in their thick, armored hide, allowing them to get quite close to their prey before striking. They have been known to knock over small boats in order to eat the metahumans inside. Ammits survive in brackish waters of river deltas and use the muddy waters as part of their camouflage while hunting for prey. They are carnivorous; they generally prefer to kill their own prey, but they will not pass up a chance to consume carrion.

The ammit reaches maturity at ten years. Females mate during the dry season and lay clutches of up to sixty eggs. Both parents take care of

the young, with the female directly watching them while the male stays close in case of intruders. The ammit is very aggressive and dangerous. It has been recorded that a mated pair of ammits will surprise and flank an enemy, using an empty nest as bait.

Young ammits leave their parents' care after two years. By then they are almost a meter long, weigh thirty kilograms, and have grown into their abilities.

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|------|----|
| 7 | 5 | 4 | 7 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 6 | 9 | 2 |

Movement: 15/35

Skills: Perception 3, Infiltration 2, Shadowing 3, Tracking 3, Unarmed Combat 3

Powers: Adaptive Camouflage, Enhanced Senses (Smell), Hardened Armor (4), Natural Weapon (Bite DV 6P, AP -2)

- Lagos has gangs named after this beast—be wary of them as they are about as tricky as the real thing.
- Am-Mut



AERIAL LIONHEAD

CYANEA TASSIN

Habitat: 60+ kilometers in the atmosphere

Range: Global

Frequency: Very rare

Identification: 2.3 meter diameter bell-shaped body with over a dozen eight-meter-long tentacles. Its skin is a transparent blue with some opaque spotting. Its body is divided into six gas-filled chambers. A collection of sensory cells (optical and electric sensing) ring the edge of the body.

Habits: The aerial lionhead is one of the weirdest extremophiles in existence, and it's the most complex organism of this type known. It is classified as a large jellyfish but doesn't live in the ocean. It floats in the atmosphere with chambered sacs of hydrogen giving it lighter-than-air capabilities like a weather balloon. The aerial lionhead can be found as high as ninety kilometers in the air. It is here where it was first sighted by a satellite tasked with recording any lifeforms it could find in the stratosphere. The aerial lionhead feeds on electrical charges built up in the atmosphere. Its trailing tentacles have fine hairs that can generate power through static electricity. The electrical current combined with the gases and liquids it collects provides the nutrition it needs to survive. While hydrogen is an explosive compound, especially around lightning, the aerial lionhead's body chambers contains the hydrogen in bubbles of thick soapy material to prevent a catastrophic explosion.

While their mating rituals have never been seen, there have been discoveries of immature aerial lionheads descending from storm clouds. Observation has shown that these creatures migrate along the tradewinds, and we assume that large storms will attract them so they can descend to feed or mate.

While not a direct danger to metahumans, they can be a hazard to flying vehicles carrying a large amount of electrical equipment, power stations, and even some radio towers, since they are attracted to high EMFs. There have been occasional encounters with these creatures, and they are physically strong unlike their mundane jellyfish brethren. The tentacles have powerful muscles that allow them to grab or pull on

things much like an octopus can. The aerial lionhead can generate and discharge electricity as a defense mechanism, though we have yet to see what kind of predator feeds on them.

| B | A | R | S | C | I | L | W | Edg | Ess | M | Init | IP |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|---|------|----|
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 5 | 8 | 1 |

Movement: 5/10 (Flying)

Skills: Flight 2, Unarmed Combat 4

Powers: Energy Aura (Electricity), Energy Drain (Electric), Enhanced Senses (Electrosense), Immunity (Electricity, Cold), Natural Weapon (Tentacle, Reach 5, DV 3, AP —)

- To be clear, the satellites that found this thing were not looking for lifeforms. They were spy satellites recording the Tir?
- Stone
- No, they were looking for elves and sprites, where "elf" is "emissions of light and VLF perturbations from EMP events," and "sprite" is "stratospheric/mesospheric perturbations resulting from intense thunderstorm electrification."
- Orbital DK
- That's how Matrix creatures migrate around in the real world ...
- Plan 9
- Don't start. I don't want to see a 10 megapulse argument on the life of e-critters.
- Netcat
- Wait, Plan 9's back?
- Pistons
- Provisional basis. Long story. I'll explain later.
- Glitch



AETHERPEDIA: PARAZOOLOGY TERMINOLOGY

Awakened Animal/Species

“Awakened animals” is the all-encompassing category covering metaspecies as well as paranormal animals. “Awakened” is used as the determinant of the species from which the new species has originated (e.g., the ammit is an Awakened crocodile). The term Awakened could be used to describe species that can use magic (e.g., an emperor hawk is an Awakened hawk because it can cast magic), though it is used less frequently in this situation.

Metaspecies

Metaspecies are various animal species whose genetic diversity sprung from the Awakened world. These genetic changes can be as minor as a digestive protein, which changes the species' diet, to color, size, or other physical changes. There is a grey area between mutation and meta, but with extensive genetic and environmental study, mutations can be weeded out quickly, especially non-seed mutations. While metaspecies and paraspecies can be interchangeable terms, metaspecies is used most often to categorize animal species that do not manifest extraordinary powers or abilities (e.g., a Russian grand silkie is a metaspecies of chicken, while a cockatrice is a paraspecies). Metachicken is acceptable substitution for the term “metaspecies of chicken,” but parachicken is not acceptable terminology for describing a cockatrice.

Paranormal Animal/Paraspecies (also Paracritter)

Paranormal animals are various animal species that have been able to manifest some fantastic changes and/or extraordinary abilities. Over time, the definition of what an “extraordinary ability” is has become more lax, with dual-natured abilities now falling into the metaspecies category instead of paraspecies. “Paracritter” has become acceptable slang term for any animal exhibiting unusual traits or abilities, including metaspecies. It is also used erroneously for mutants and warforms.

Scientific Naming Conventions

To help name new species and subspecies, especially after the SURGE effects, the Combined International Committee of Zoological and Botanical Nomenclature designed a streamlined classification of subspecies of paranormal animals. All such subspecies add the additional scientific name “*novo*” along with a greek letter in order of their official classification. (e.g., the demon rat *Rattus diabolis novo* is a subparaspecies of the devil rat). This was also an accepted practice for various metaspecies (e.g., the Morpheus, the parchment, and Ekman's butterfly were classified *Papilo antimachus novo alpha*, *beta*, and *gamma* respectively). However this has led some parazooologists to lazy practice of classifications, such as when two paraspecies of click beetle (capacitor bug and caustic beetle) were labeled *Elateridae novo alpha* and *Elateridae novo beta*.

BAHARI

TRICHECHUS BAHARI

Habitat: Rivers and coastlines

Range: West Africa

Frequency: Uncommon

Identification: The bahari grows up to four meters long and weighs around six hundred kilograms. They are nearly hairless, with grey skin mottled by brown spots. They have a thick hide with a thin layer of fat for protection against varying degrees of water temperatures. Their jaws are like that of a bear, with a large canines, and its front flippers end in short claws. The bahari has a rounded tailfin like its progenitor.

Habits: The West African manatee (*Trichechus senegalensis*) was believed extinct until two decades ago, when scientists reported seeing an Awakened form of the creature in the coastal swamps and rivers in the area. Locals call this species the bahari, or “sea man,” as it has the ability to disguise itself as a metahuman. Unlike its progenitor, the bahari is carnivorous and will attack full-size crocodiles and even challenge the hippopotamus in territorial disputes. It has the ability to compel prey into the water and then drag them under to drown before eating them. They can appear to be slow swimmers, but the rounded tailfin provides

boosts of speed like that of the dolphin. Bahari are normally found in rivers but have also been seen along ocean coasts. Rumors state that the bahari can change its hunting habits to that of a nocturnal predator, and it will stalk metahumans, luring them from houses and fishing boats into the water.

The bahari live in harems with one male for every twenty females. Young bahari males have to compete for any females. While such challenges don't lead to a fatality, they typically end with serious scarring on the combatants' backs and bite marks on their tails. The ability to change into a metahuman form allows males to migrate farther out to find better challenges for mates or to move the harem across the land to other territory.

| B | A | R | S | C | I | L | W | Edg | Ess | M | Init | IP |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|---|------|----|
| 8 | 5 | 5 | 8 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 4 | 9 | 2 |

Movement: 20/60 (swimming)

Skills: Diving 2, Gymnastics 4, Perception 3, Spell Casting 3, Swimming 4, Unarmed Combat 4

Powers: Aura Masking, Compulsion, Dual Natured, Innate Spell (Shapechange (metahuman form)), Natural Weapon (Bite/claw, Reach —, DV 5P, AP —)

- I've not seen these things myself, but I got a good story anyways. There was this small-time pirate on the Skeleton Coast making a living off kidnappings and small-arms deals. Pathetic really, as he was content selling pistols and automatics and not going for the brass ring with explosives and rockets. Anyways, one night after hard drinking he spotted a woman, naked and running along the beach. Him and his crew got up to investigate and found a dozen naked women running along the beach playing in the water. So they went to pursue the women. They get to this cove where the women were all swimming. Being drunk, they dived in to “play” with them. Unfortunately the women shifted to their bahari form and had a midnight snack. Bahari don't like the taste of cyberware, which is how I got hold of a cybereye recording of the whole thing.
- Kane



BOMBARDIER

GLAUCOMYS TELIDYTUJ

Habitat: Forested areas

Range: North American east coast

Frequency: Common

Identification: Its fur is light tan, with a shading to white on the belly and a black stripe along the spine. The bombardier is fifty centimeters long with a five-centimeters-wide, flat tail. It weighs an average of 175 grams. Between its limbs is a flap of skin allowing it to glide short distances between trees instead of traveling along the ground.

Habits: The bombardier is the Awakened version of the flying squirrel (*Glaucomys volans*), though its size is similar to the extinct woolly flying squirrel. Like other squirrels, it is an omnivore eating anything from insects to berries to young birds and eggs, but those that live on the outskirts of an urban environment have found soy products irresistible. The bombardier's special ability is psychokinesis, which it uses to steal food from trash cans or any other unattended morsels. As a defensive tactic, it will use its power to throw anything it can at the predator to give it time to flee.

The bombardier lives in loose colonies of up to fifty individuals in the trees, and they build multiple nests or dens for specific purposes (such as food, sleeping, raising young, and defecation). On occasion they will occupy bird nests and kill or evict the young birds within. Year-old bombardiers sleep with adults and younger bombardiers in the same nest. During the winter, the bombardier hibernates on a store of hoarded food. These food stores can be several kilograms worth of food that the whole colony will help create.

The average lifespan of the bombardier is four years.

| B | A | R | S | C | I | L | W | Edg | Ess | M | Init | IP |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|---|------|----|
| 1 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 6 | 3 | 7 | 1 |

Movement: 5/10 (can also glide at speed 10)

Skills: Climbing 5, Infiltration 2, Perception 2

Powers: Enhanced Senses (Smell), Psychokinesis

- Cute little things.
- /dev/grrl
- That's until you find that they lifted your soy chips while you weren't looking.
- Cosmo



JOURNAL EXCERPT FROM DR. DAVID WRIGHT: AMAZON JUNGLE

FIELD JOURNAL, JUNE-2063

In my effort to find the mythical Napoleon Rex and finish the *Paranormal Guide to South America*, I secured permission from the Amazonia government for a three-week excursion into the Amazon jungle, and also received funds for extra security. We started our travel by heading upriver from Belem.

The exact nature of the Napoleon Rex is up for speculation; some say it's a large veloceraptor, others believe it's a pygmy tyrannosaurus, and still others believe it's some Awakened lizard or alligator, though until we get hard evidence, it may well be just a case of mistaken identity.

Rumors describe the Napoleon Rex as a two- to four-meter-tall reptile that walks on two legs. Terrified natives have brought stories to the outside world. The creature is said to have attacked villages and chased hunters from their kill. We managed to find some poor-quality surveillance footage released by the Amazonian government of some large creature running away from the drone through the jungle on thermal.

Three days into the trip, our boats were ambushed by a school of Amazonian flying candriu. These Awakened little fishes have adapted themselves with strong, wide fins to launch themselves one to two meters out of the water. With a primitive bony head plate and needle-shaped head, they can imbed themselves in skin and clothing. They are parasitic, with specialized gills allowing them to receive oxygen, and they can consume nutrients from the host's blood. If not treated immediately, they can bore their way further into the victim's body. The candriu is very painful to remove as the head is covered in barbs. It took the doctor two hours to surgically remove the dozen or so fish from my team's bodies. Unfortunately, two members contracted malaria from the candriu even though precautions were taken.

After arriving at Coari, we trekked six days into the jungle and then established base camp. This was relatively close to where the drone sighted the creature a month earlier. The rigger team sent out drones to patrol the area as well as drop sensors for the hacking team to watch for signs of life. This gave us a sensor net of about one kilometer in radius.

Day eleven

Weather was bad, and I wish Dr. Bogue was here to do the cooking. I've always been impressed with his culinary skills and use of native edibles. The trideo footage taken so far of wildlife, Awakened or not, will prove invaluable to zoologists. Still nothing on Napoleon. We'll expand the sensor net a little wider before moving north to another site. One of the riggers found some equipment, uncovered by the rain. A small security detail went to investigate this equipment. One of the engineers jury-rigged a metal detector just in case there's anything metallic buried. They were out for more than three hours in the rain. When they returned, they found trid equipment and camping gear, most of which had been destroyed by jungle rot. The data crystal for the trid recorder was still intact. My team worked to recover the data. When they got it to play, I was shocked; here displayed was a pale hologram of Dr. Paterson, my mentor. He was discussing the various beetles that live in the underbrush of the Amazon jungle and how the Awakened world meant nothing to the evolution that has diversified this species. I was dumbfounded. He was some three hundred kilometers from his last reported position. Fast forwarding through the trid to get some bearings, I paused, seeing something moving above Dr. Paterson. It was a helicopter, and men were coming down ropes. It was an extraction job. Fast forwarding again showed several explosions and a very disorienting change of perspective as Dr. Paterson held onto the trid recorder while he was lifted into the air. Apparently whoever was taking him didn't know that it was still recording or didn't care. The trid showed the helicopter heading south, deeper into the jungle, then there was an interruption in the projection. Apparently someone turned off the trid recorder, because in the next instance it was dusk. Something was going on as people were shooting from the helicopter. Something was attacking the helicopter. Then Dr. Paterson and the recorder exited the helicopter in a dizzying freefall. Something grabbed the professor, while the recorder descended through the canopy where we found it.

Day twelve

Daniel, the lead hacker on the team, used many of our tools and some of his tricks to edit and analyze the footage, comparing it with the drone surveillance of the canopy. He was able to get a bearing for us as to the direction that Dr. Paterson was taken. As for what took him, it appears to be a giant green spider-like creature that was able to walk on top of the trees. Towards the evening, we made camp near the remains of the helicopter. My wife checked out the remains within the vehicle. After five years, not much remained but a few bones and implants. She discovered it was three people, with one highly probable match to the masked person on the trid. One was a troll, and by the look of the bones it had titanium bone lacing, which discouraged scavengers. It does not appear that any of the kidnappers survived. There were some cybereyes, but the components were too damaged to extract data. We continued to press on, hoping to find Dr. Paterson and bring him home.

Day fifteen

We're at the limits of the projected area where Dr. Paterson was taken. I've asked the rigger team to make a detailed surveillance of the area. Maybe we can find a body, but it's highly doubtful.

At 0900, Mike was in hysterics. He said the drones found a man-made structure within a few hundred yards of our position. It didn't look old. I couldn't wait for the whole crew to pack up. My wife, two security guards, and I led the way to the structure. When we got there, I saw the drone perched on top of an A-frame house made of logs and overgrown with a fuzzy moss. There was a stone table outside near a tree. The table was empty except for a few wooden bowls and gourds, the contents of which ranged from beetles to flowers. Things were fairly recent; there were even ashes from a campfire close to the structure. As I approached the house, something walked out of the jungle into this small clearing. He was hardly recognizable with animal hides and a long dirty beard, and he was carrying a small cage with good sized rodent within it. He was startled by our presence and dropped the cage. One line came to mind, "Dr. Paterson I presume?"

Day sixteen

We moved our camp to the clearing. The doctor checked out Dr. Paterson as my mentor related a fantastic story. While he didn't know who tried to kidnap him, he was saved by a spirit of the woods who was fascinated by his care and study of nature. The spirit did not understand civilization or much of anything outside the jungle. The spirit helped build this campsite for Dr. Paterson and showed him where to find food and water. The spirit stayed for a year, showing Paterson many of the wonderful worlds of the jungle that Paterson couldn't help but study. After that year, the spirit just left. Only the occasional tribal hunter would come by. There was a language barrier, but Paterson understood that the "Great Spirit" asked them to check on him.

Day seventeen

Perimeter motion sensors were triggered by something big, just to the north of the camp. Dragonflies were sent out to flank whatever the target was with a silent blimp above the canopy with a thermal scan. A small team led by me got ready to move just in case it was Napoleon. At 1.1 kilometers north of our position, the drones found a pair of bipedal reptiles between three and four meters tall with a brilliant feathered crest. They were there only for a few moments, and then something startled them and they ran southwest.

Day eighteen

Our last day before having to head back to the river. While I didn't get as much as I wanted about Napoleon, I had found a greater treasure on this expedition.

BRUCHA

ERINACEUS FERRIS

Habitat:

Range: Northern and western Europe

Frequency: Uncommon

Identification: The brucha is a large hedgehog, weighing in at twenty kilograms. It is fifty centimeters long and thirty centimeters tall at the shoulder. It is covered in brown fur with five thousand long reddish quills, and it has thick, digging-style claws. The brucha has a pig-like snout and black beady eyes.

Habits: This very large hedgehog has become a nuisance for much of Europe and an invasive species to Tír na nÓg, much like that of the wild hog of the Americas. It eats insects, eggs, roots, fruit, or vegetables—essentially anything it can dig up or pull out. It is very destructive as it digs up young trees or creates furrows in search for food. Its quills are modified hairs with a high concentration of iron, making them strong. When it is frightened, it flexes special muscles to point its quills at the threat. If cornered it attempts to charge, attempting to maim or injure the attacker's legs. The quills are red in color due to oxidation of the iron in them. Because it digs in dirt, the quills are a perfect environment for tetanus bacteria, so small scratches can become infected. Brucha perform the same "anointing" behavior of taking a new scent and coating one of their quills with it. This also gives rise to other infections if a predator gets stuck by a quill. Brucha can live up to ten years. Brucha breed in May and April and can have litters of four to six young.

| B | A | R | S | C | I | L | W | Edg | Ess | Init | IP |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|------|----|
| 4 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 6 | 7 | 1 |

Movement: 10/40

Skills: Perception 2, Running 1, Tracking 3, Unarmed Combat 2

Powers: Enhanced Senses (Smell), Natural Weapon (Bite/Quill, Reach —, DV 3P, AP -1)

- They are a menace. They can knock over rocks and eat all the herbal reagents in no time, disrupting hours of ritual preparation. There's been suspected cairn disturbances blamed on the brucha, and there's a fifty nuyen bounty for each body delivered to the Seers' Guild.
- Arete
- The brucha is a driving hazard—those quills can do serious tire damage.
- Turbo Bunny



Ki

CUERO

ENTEROCTOPUS TRANSPARE

Habitat: Rivers

Range: South America

Frequency: Rare

Identification: The cueros is an octopus just over a meter wide and practically transparent. It has eight two-meter-long tentacles, each with suckers and small hooks. The octopus' beak is more than thirty centimeters in diameter. Cueros can weigh over seventy kilograms.

Habits: Awakened from the giant octopus (*Enteroctopus dofleini*), the cuero is the first known freshwater octopus. It is able to survive a wide range of water salinity. It lives in large rivers, crawling along the river bottom with its powerful tentacles, and will grab and eat whatever swims or floats by. It uses the flow of the river to distort and hide its movements. Once it finds prey, it uses four of its tentacles to float to the surface, grab the prey, and pull it underwater. The other four tentacles are used to brace itself under water while keeping the prey submerged. With its powerful beak, it tears through flesh, bone, and even plastic. If there is too much to eat in one sitting, it grabs large stones and covers the remains underwater. The cuero is smart for an animal, able to solve simple levers and latches. It lives in small caves, squeezing its large body through small openings that it digs out.

| B | A | R | S | C | I | L | W | Edg | Ess | Init | IP |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|------|----|
| 5 | 3 | 3 | 8 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 6 | 7 | 2 |

Movement: 15/25 (swimming)

Skills: Escape Artist 3, Infiltration 2, Perception 3, Shadowing 3, Swimming 3, Unarmed Combat 4

Powers: Adaptive Coloration, Gills, Natural Weapon (Bite, Reach —, DV 4P, AP -1)

Note: +2 Reach to grab with tentacles. The tentacles are not used for damage, but rather to drag prey to the beak.

- This thing's like glass on water. I first saw the cuero in Chile, on the Rio Malleco. My team and I were doing a little sightseeing before finishing gathering materials at the Tolhuaca hot springs. We took kayaks out to cruise the whitewater rapids. It was a great afternoon—until Phillip fell out of his kayak. We watched for him to surface, but he didn't. Jesse summoned a water spirit to help locate him. It turned out he wasn't that far away. His body was wedged between rocks fifty meters downstream and four meters underwater. Jesse had the water spirit calm the waters so that we could retrieve him. That's when I saw—or rather felt—a shape clinging to the body. It was hard to see the cuero before it grabbed my wrist and tried to drown me. I just about blacked out before the rest of the group came to my aid. The creature jumped out of the water and momentarily changed appearance. It was leathery brown with long arms like an octopus, then it disappeared again into the water.
- Glasswalker
- There's a similar monster species called the guanapipi in the Outback. It lurks in the brackish water in the remaining rivers and lakes there. And supposedly someone put a few in Lake Oolagah in CAS as a security measure.
- Stone



JOURNAL EXCERPT FROM DR. DAVID WRIGHT: AOTEAROA (NEW ZEALAND)

When I traveled to Aotearoa, instead of taking my usual expedition crew, I brought twenty of my students on a trip of a lifetime. Aotearoa doesn't have the dangerous predators that I normally deal with, so I only have a skeleton crew to help with documentation while also assisting the students with their own projects. I was hoping to get footage of the elusive taniwha sea monster of Gore Bay.

I normally try not to leave trash behind on my expeditions, especially with an anthropologic wife who nags me about cultural contamination and cargo cults. Aotearoa, however, has even stricter clauses with bans on certain alternate fuels and even packaged foodstuffs. Apparently even if we bury our bowel movements it wouldn't decompose properly. So it ended up being a fine deal for the students, as I had to purchase food stuffs from the local farmers markets.

Day 1

We set up some remote sensors around the bay and cliffs for continuous recording. I had to make sure they were sensors with biodegradable parts to comply with environmental regulations. This had the positive effect of freeing up time for the students to collect and document the flora and fauna.

Day 4

On the northern coast we were startled to find a "herd" of giant carnivorous hermaphrodite snails the size of bowling balls in the camp. They apparently were "chasing" slugs and beetles that were seeking refuge. Mr. Larson, being the first with his recorder, got to document the Awakened species for his project. Mr. Larson noted later that day that they didn't eat the soy crumbs but loved roasted crickets. He also noted that he had to be careful of his fingers.

Day 7

Bad weather lifted and gave the students a chance to do some tracking and checking of the trid traps. Two students got some great imagery of the native wildlife. Three of them studied a flock of kaka (*Nestor regalis*), which are Awakened kea. The students noted how through teamwork, the birds broke into the land rover, popped open the simple locks on the cooler, and snagged all the grapes. All the kids are on their way to be becoming solid biologists and parabiologists.

Day 10

Software monitoring in Gore Bay alerted us to something moving in the bay matching our relatively generic parameters. Seeing how we were close to the bay at this time, we crossed Port Robinson Road and traveled down to the beach to discover not a taniwha, but a Maori whale-rider. It was a father-and-son team swimming with a pod of right whales. My wife tells me they could be from the Ngāti Porou iwi, or folk from the northern island, maybe Wellington. When the father and son swam to shore to eat, my wife and I walked out to greet them. My wife was right of course, though I don't know how she did that. There was a bit of a language barrier that needed the commlink to translate, but I explained to them that I'm teaching a group of students in the study of biology, both Awakened and mundane. I added that we picked this location to record the taniwha sea monster. He smiled and told me that he was teaching his son about the life in the ocean. He told us that he'd return to Gore Bay by evening and would like us to return with all the students.

That evening we found, to our surprise, a dozen men and women from the iwi who shared a feast and celebration with us on the beach. They shared stories of the sea monsters, and in return they wanted the students to show them what they have learned. It was a great evening, even without footage of the sea monster.

FIJI MERMAID

MERHOMO FORSTERI

Habitat: Temperate, subtropical, and tropical oceanic waters

Range: South Pacific islands with the largest colonies in Fiji

Frequency: Common

Identification: The Fijian mermaid has the lower body like that of the mundane species, but then has a pair of arms that end in four-fingered webbed and clawed hands that replace their front flippers. Its head has a dense mane of fur, which crowns its head like a lion; males occasionally having longer fur growing from their chin. The Fijian mermaid has a shorter nose and more pronounced canines than other known species. They average 100 centimeters in length and 150 kilograms in weight.

Habits: While the mermaid is known to have Awakened from the California sea lion, the Fiji mermaid Awakened from the Southern fur seal (*Arctocephalus forsteri*). It has similar features as the mermaid, such as having arms with four-fingered webbed hands, but it is not as large, nor as feminine-looking as the mermaid. They also have primitive use of tools when they hunt. The Fiji mermaid colonies are specific only to the islands east of Australia. Compared to other mermaids, the Fijian breed is not as aggressive, but that doesn't make them less dangerous. The Fijian mermaid feeds on fish, crustaceans, and sea birds if it can catch them. They are very territorial of their island breeding ground, even against the larger mermaids. Fijian mermaids are not monogamous, with the females able to choose their partners based on a matriarchal social structure. After the pups are born, the females do the hunting, while the males stay and protect the young. Fijian mermaids are sometimes poached for food, and their dense fur is used by island pirates. "Scalped" Fijian mermaids have washed up on Australian beaches.

| B | A | R | S | C | I | L | W | Edg | Ess | Init | IP |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|------|----|
| 2 | 5 | 7 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 11 | 1 |

Movement: 10/50 (swimming)

Skills: Perception 2, Shadowing 2, Swimming 5, Tracking 3, Unarmed Combat 4

Powers: Enhanced Senses (Hearing), Natural Weapon (Claws, Reach —, DV 2P, AP —)

- Not much fur on them or meat, so not worth my time. The "pirates" he's referring to are more local like the Huk. They're small-time rebels looking for bush meat and quick cash.
- Kane
- Matriarchal mermaids? So I am woman, hear me bark?
- Slamm-O!
- You really like sleeping on that couch.
- Netcat



KF

THE OFFAL TRUTH

Posted by: Ecotope

As the adage goes, “You are what you eat,” which of course means that the majority of us are a bunch of vegetables living in a corp-controlled environment being fed shit every day by corporate labs. Yeah, that’s a joke, but it kind of hits close to home, doesn’t it?

You may think that the world’s wealthy are chewing on real steaks and burgers every night, but the offal truth is that the lower end of the rich spectrum may eat cow and pigs more frequently, but their meals are made with parts of the animals that a century ago would have been thought of as either delicacies or discards, depending on the culture. From head cheese to ox tail, from blood to tripe, all of these are sold at high prices in limited markets.

On the bright side of this lopsided farming catastrophe, the third of the land mass that was devoted to feeding and caring for livestock has been freed up for other uses, though most of those corporate uses continue to trash the land (what else did you expect?). Additionally, moving from meat to soy has cut a significant amount of fat out of metahuman diets, and resource scarcity has cut even more, leading to significant drops in obesity rates. That doesn’t mean people are healthy, of course—just that they aren’t eating as much fat. They’re still not getting enough basic nutrients. Vat-grown foods provide a slightly cheaper alternative to meat. Synthetic food and bottled meat from Natural-Vat and Soba Foods (labeled under

more palatable names) are products resulting from efforts to grow cows (or parts thereof) without the expense of the farm. Sometimes people are able to stomach the stuff, as long as they aren’t exposed to trideo footage of how it is made.

High prices have fueled black markets to supply goods to the carnivorous clientele. Some small labs reproduce blood products that can be used in soy-processing units. These labs stay small to fly under the corporate radar, and it’s easier to grow and move quantities of cells rather than whole organs. Besides outright theft of old Betsey, some runners have resorted to hunting animals lower in the food chain so they can be sold on the black market. In many cities, urban poaching of rats and pigeons is not an unheard way to supplement both income and nutrition. I say “poaching” because the better catches can be found on corporate territory or in corporate-owned buildings, and they don’t take kindly to people setting up traps in the vents and such. Wild game, if found, are more increasingly toxic with heavy metals and other pollutants making the meat possibly deadly. Plus, it tastes terrible. Hunting pets may be an option for some, but cats and dogs are frankenmeat, genetically tailored for social appeal than for consumption. And pets that disappear tend to be missed. For those looking for recipes, there’s a cookbook floating around out there with recipes for dressing and cooking devil rat and other common fauna. [LINK](#). If hunting isn’t an option, there are DIY farming kits to help you raise crickets or other insects, which can provide a relatively cheap—and crunchy!—food supplement.

GREATER DANCING WHITE LADY

CARPARACHNE AUREOGRANDI

Habitat: Desert

Range: Namib Desert, southern Africa

Frequency: Rare

Identification: The dancing white lady is an arachnid, 12 to 30 centimeters from leg tip to leg tip, weighing 30 to 75 grams. It has eight legs, eight eyes, and a pair of venomous fangs. The dancing white lady is covered in fine white hair.

Habits: An Awakened version of the white lady trapdoor spider (*Carparachne aureoflava*) native to the Namib Desert, greater dancing white ladies dig fifty-centimeter holes into the sand, bracing the walls with spidersilk and constructing a trap door of sand and silk. They feel for prey walking past their door and surprise their victim, lunging out and paralyzing it with their touch. Once the victim is immobilized, they are poisoned. The spider then waits for the venom to burst the body’s cells, digesting the victim from the inside. The greater dancing white ladies then drink and drain the corpse of fluid.

Dancing white ladies are semi-communal, and the face of a sand dune may contain dozens of these Awakened spiders, which can work together to take down larger prey such as metahumans. If threatened, the greater dancing white lady can curl into a ball and roll away at incredible speeds.

While the spiders are called “ladies,” there are of course both male and females of the Awakened species. In one of the gruesome cycles of life, once the male mates with the female, the male is paralyzed and eaten by its mate. The female deposits an egg sack in the back of its lair until it hatches. When it does, the young spiders eat the mother. It is hypothesized that there could be some transfer of knowledge in this act of cannibalism.



| B | A | R | S | C | I | L | W | Edg | Ess | Init | IP |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|------|----|
| 1 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 6 | 7 | 1 |

Movement: 2/20

Skills: Climbing 1, Infiltration 2, Perception 2, Unarmed Combat 1, Swimming 5

Powers: Enhanced Senses (Tremor Sense), Fragile 2, Movement (Self Only), Paralyzing Touch, Venom

GIANT BOAR

SUS SCROFA LOEFFENSIS

Habitat: Forests and woodlands

Range: AGS (Eastern Germany)

Frequency: Very rare

Identification: The giant boar resembles its mundane relatives except for its size and a small horn crest that runs from neck to tail along the spine. On average, giant boars have a height of 1.5 meters at the shoulder, a body length of 2.4 meters, a corresponding weight up to 400 kilograms, and a pair of sharp tusks. The giant boar is covered in dark grey fur and stiff bristles. The tusks can grow up to twelve centimeters long, and the horned crest has an average height of 5 centimeters.

Habits: The first sighting of this direct relative to the common wild boar (*Sus scrofa*) was confirmed in January 2062 near Ribbek in Brandenburg (AGS). Their natural range appears to be the forests of Saxony, Brandenburg, and Thuringia, although single animals have been observed in Polish woodlands in recent winters. While no large-scale field studies of the giant boar have been undertaken, observations and reports suggest that the species is extremely resistant to environmental toxins, natural pathogens, and physical trauma from larger

predators (including human hunters and rangers), indicating that they are not just a gigantic variant of the common boar, even if their behavior appears to be similar.

There have also been reports of whole sounders of common razorbacks headed by a giant boar. Due to their size and aggressiveness, they are particularly dangerous during mating (November to January) and breeding season (March and April), with sows displaying very strong territorial and protective demeanor. The females have litters of three to five piglets during this time. The piglets' coloration is more brown and striped, and they do not have the characteristic horn crest. After six months, when their coloring changes to grey, they start developing the crest.

| B | A | R | S | C | I | L | W | Edg | Ess | M | Init | IP |
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| 7 | 5 | 4 | 9 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 4 | 8 | 1 |

Movement: 10/45

Skills: Perception 2, Running 2, Tracking 1, Unarmed Combat 3

Powers: Immunity (Pathogens, Toxins), Natural Weapon (Tusk, Reach —, DV 5P, AP —), Regeneration



HOOFOE

UPUPA MYOPS

Habitat: Lightly vegetated ground, lightly forested areas, savannahs, and grasslands

Range: Throughout Europe, southern Asia and North Africa.

Frequency: Uncommon

Identification: The hoofoe is a long-billed, thrush-like bird with an erect golden crest. It is 25 centimeters long with a wingspan of 48 centimeters, and it weighs about fifty grams. The hoofoe plumage is a striped pattern of black and gold with its crest and tail tipped in black.

Habits: Awakened from the hoopoe (*Upupa epops*), this is a somewhat annoying little bird that loves human speech. It loves it so much that it integrates it into its song. This has proven to be both startling and embarrassing when the bird calls out. While a parrot has the comparative understanding of language as a two-year-old metahuman, the hoofoe has no understanding of anything besides phonetics. The hoofoe's song is babbling nonsense, but there are those who have found use for its behavior. In Israel, the government has trained the hoofoe to listen for certain words and repeat the phrase containing those words. They are not the most accurate or intelligent spies, but they can go places no other agents can penetrate.

The hoofoe, like its progenitor species, is a beneficial insectivore, as it eats the bugs and pests that plague metahumans. This has made the hoofoe a rather popular bird to keep around. It also is a long-distance migratory bird. The hoofoe nests in Europe in the summer and migrates to Africa and southern Asia in the winter. The female nests in cliff faces, rocky outcroppings, or even building rooftops. The female can lay up to a dozen small blue eggs, which hatch after twenty days, and the fledglings can fly after an additional thirty days. As a side note, the hoofoe has a preening gland that it uses to care for itself and its young. The preening oil has a bitter taste that predators dislike, and it is also a natural insecticide.



| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|---|------|----|
| B | A | R | S | C | I | L | W | Edg | Ess | M | Init | IP |
| 1 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 6 | 4 | 6 | 1 |

Movement: 20/40 (flying)

Skills: Flight 4, Infiltration 2, Perception 3, Shadowing 2, Unarmed Combat 1

Powers: Enhanced Senses (Hearing), Fragile 2, Mimicry

Note: Reach -1

- Ooo ooo, I want one! Mix its vocabulary with heavy rap and I could make a fortune ...
- Slamm-0!
- The hoofoe being trained in espionage is more prevalent than people think. It often can be cheaper to train an animal than build biodrones or construct warforms.
- Thorn

JENNY HANIVER

CEBUS AQUATA

Habitat: Coastal areas, rivers

Range: South and Central America and Southern Asia

Frequency: Common

Identification: The jenny haniver is a small humanoid, fifty centimeters long and weighing 1 kilogram. It has smooth leathery skin, with color ranging from a bluish grey to brownish tan. Its hands and feet are webbed and its short, ten-centimeter-long tail is flat. It has small fin-like protrusions on either side of its head that can stand erect, giving it a triangular shape. The face is round with large eyes, small nostrils, and small ear holes. The jaw projects out slightly, and the mouth contains small razor-sharp teeth.

Habits: The jenny haniver, or haniver as it is more commonly called, appears to be an aquatic, Awakened capuchin monkey (*Cebus paella*), though similar species of haniver has been found in the islands of southern Asia, such as in the Sumatran Alliance and Dayak Council. They are foragers and scavengers along the beaches and rivers. They eat crustaceans, seaweed, fruit, and fish. The hanivers of South America are a freshwater species, able to travel far upriver, eating whatever drops in the water. The Asian species are saltwater species, living along the coast. Both have been a nuisance to metahumans. Like the land-bound monkeys, they are both curious and territorial. Boats that cruise close to their territory have their holds carefully inspected, as the hanivers have learned to associate food with metahumans and are quite crafty in finding where it's stored. They can stay out of the water for brief periods of time, up to thirty minutes, thanks to their rudimentary lungs.

| B | A | R | S | C | I | L | W | Edg | Ess | Init | IP |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|------|----|
| 1 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 6 | 1 |

Movement: 10/25 (swimming)

Skills: Athletics skill group 3, Clubs 2, Infiltration 4, Perception 3, Unarmed Combat 3, Thrown Weapons 1

Powers: Fragile 1, Gills, Natural Weapon (Bite, Reach -1, DV 1P, AP —)

- I thought someone was pulling a prank on me or some other bullshit when I heard about the haniver. I thought it was all some trick to get tourists to buy seashells and other shanty crafts. But then, three years ago, I found myself out near Cape Horn and came face-to-face with the buggers. They are sea monkeys from hell, with needle-like teeth and a pointy tail. A whole gang of them got on board my ship and started rummaging through the cargo and the galley. A few of the bastards even got into my bunk! They chewed on everything, trying to see if it was food. When they found something good, they marked it as their own, rubbing strong-smelling shit on it. When I got alerted by my navigator that we had intruders on board, it was too late. We ran back to the docks, but the hanivers heard us coming. Dozens of them were jumping off back into the water, carrying whatever tasted good to them. We only managed to salvage a few things they were carrying that floated to the surface because they were more buoyant than the hanivers. They left behind a ship reeked like a cross between monkey diarrhea and rotting fish.
- Kane
- You should write a children's book with all of these colorful stories.
- Slamm-O!
- Only if you don't leave any of the words out reading it to your kid.
- Kane



KARKADANN

DICEROS KARTAJAN

Habitat: Deserts, Savanah

Range: From Eastern Africa to Southern Asia

Frequency: Rare

Identification: The karkadann is 250 centimeters tall at the shoulder and 350 centimeters long, with a weight of just over 1,000 kilograms. It has a rough, thick, black hide, three-toed feet, and a short, bristly mane. It is equine in shape with an 80-centimeter-long black horn at the end of its nose.

Habits: While the karkadann looks more like a horse, its progenitor appears to be a black rhinoceros (*Diceros bicornis*). Its name is a variation of Sanskrit, which means "lord of the desert." The karkadann is fiercely territorial and marks the borders with long furrows and a slashed "X" on trees. The horn is shaped like a large blade and is made of an organic composite, making it stronger than normal horn. There is a scent gland at the base of the horn, which wicks up the horn blade and helps identify its own markings. It doesn't like man-made structures, presumably because of the smell, and will kick and strike at walls and vehicles. This attitude hampers construction of network towers in the area.

While they normally solitary, during the raining season the karkadann migrate together in herds heading to Eastern Africa to mate. The largest herd size seen has been just shy of one hundred head. Such herds are dangerous to cross, as they tend to damage anything in their way.



| B | A | R | S | C | I | L | W | Edg | Ess | Init | IP |
|----|---|---|----|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|------|----|
| 12 | 3 | 4 | 16 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 6 | 6 | 1 |

Movement: 20/75

Skills: Counterspelling 4, Perception 3, Running 2, Unarmed Combat 3

Powers: Armor (2/4), Magic Guard, Natural Weapon (Horn, Reach —, DV 10P, AP -2)

- Wait, wait, wait. The black rhinoceros went extinct in 2006. Aetherpedia said so. How can the karkadann manifest from something that disappeared before the Awakening?
- Slamm-O!
- If it's on the Matrix, it must be true right? What I heard is that two years after the successful cloning of the Tasmanian tiger, some biocorp tried cloning the black rhino. This wasn't some altruistic save-the-species-type company; this was for black market pharmaceuticals made with real black rhino horn. The company had a herd of over a thousand head ready for slaughter when an ecoterrorist group blew the hell of the facility and released them into the wild. At least a few of the critters managed to survive to become the karkadann we have today.
- Ecotope

DO ANIMALS GOBLINIZE AT A CERTAIN AGE OR ARE THEY BORN THAT WAY?

Posted by: Dr. Paterson

Existing evidence tells us that most Awakened animals are born that way. Initially they were born from mundane species when the world Awakened, then they were Awakened children of Awakened parents. This makes their origins similar to human transformation into the variety of metahumans. In the early days of the Sixth World, there was general panic over pets and livestock turning into monsters, and this led to many people abandoning them. Though their reasons for doing so were generally unfounded, wild stories kept their panic alive. Take the case of the cockatrice. Studies show that eighty-five percent of the time, this animal Awakened from Red Jungle fowl in Asia rather than from the subspecies *Gallus gallus domesticus*, also known as the domestic chicken. The low chance that their chickens would become cockatrices did not prevent millions of people from killing or abandoning their birds in an attempt to keep cockatrices away from them.

While most critters are born Awakened rather than being "goblinized," there are exceptions. For example, grandfather elk does not exhibit Awakened traits until it becomes leader of the herd; the hellcow is believed to goblinize within the womb before birth; and the vorpal beaver is one of the few documented animals that goblinizes in maturity.

KLUDDE

UNCLASSIFIED

Habitat: Rural and light forested areas

Range: Northern Europe (United Netherlands, France)

Frequency: Rare

Identification: The kludde has three forms. The first is a large black dog, two meters long from nose to tail and a meter tall at the shoulder. It is covered with thick black fur, has a short tail, thick neck and jaw, and a pair of vestigial leathery wings at its shoulders. In this form it weighs approximately sixty kilograms. The second form is that of a black domestic cat with long black fur that weighs approximately four kilograms. The third form is a large raven with a one-and-a-half-meter wingspan. All three forms have the same unique red corneas.

Habits: The kludde is an interesting shape-shifting creature that can take three specific forms. It uses these forms along with its paranormal abilities to stalk and capture prey. It primarily hunts in its canine form, while scouting and avoiding other predators in other shapes. In its canine form it hunts large game mammals such as deer or pig, complementing its diet with the occasional bird. With the encroachment of metahumanity into its habitat, it has also been known to hunt metahumans, livestock, and pets. The kludde has an unusual fighting style of walking on its hind legs like a bear, presumably to strike at vulnerable areas of the face and neck. It is a nocturnal carnivore.

Not much else is known about the kludde due to the difficulty of tracking it through its multiple forms. It's only seen as a solo hunter, never in packs. Both male and female specimens have been found, but the young have never been spotted. We have yet to determine if there is a specific form for breeding or how it takes care of its young.

| B | A | R | S | C | I | L | W | Edg | Ess | M | Init | IP |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|---|------|----|
| 4 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 5 | 6 | 2 |

Movement: See Notes

Skills: Counterspelling 3, Infiltration 2, Perception 2, Tracking 2, Unarmed Combat 3

Powers: Blinding, Desired Reflection, Enhanced Senses (Low-Light Vision), Magic Sense, Magical Guard (Self Only), Psychokinesis, Shift (see notes)

Weakness: Allergy (Sunlight, Mild)

Notes: The Kludde has three forms it can shift to, each with additional power and/or skills associated with that form:

Canine Form:

Movement: 10/50

Powers: Enhanced Senses (Smell), Fear, Natural Weapon (Bite, Reach —, DV 3P, AP —)

Raven Form:

Movement: 20/40 (flight)

Skills: Flight 4

Powers: Hypnotic (Audio)

Feline Form:

Movement: 10/40

Skills: Climbing 2



KFI

MADAGASCAR JELLY

CASSIOPEA MACOMBAE

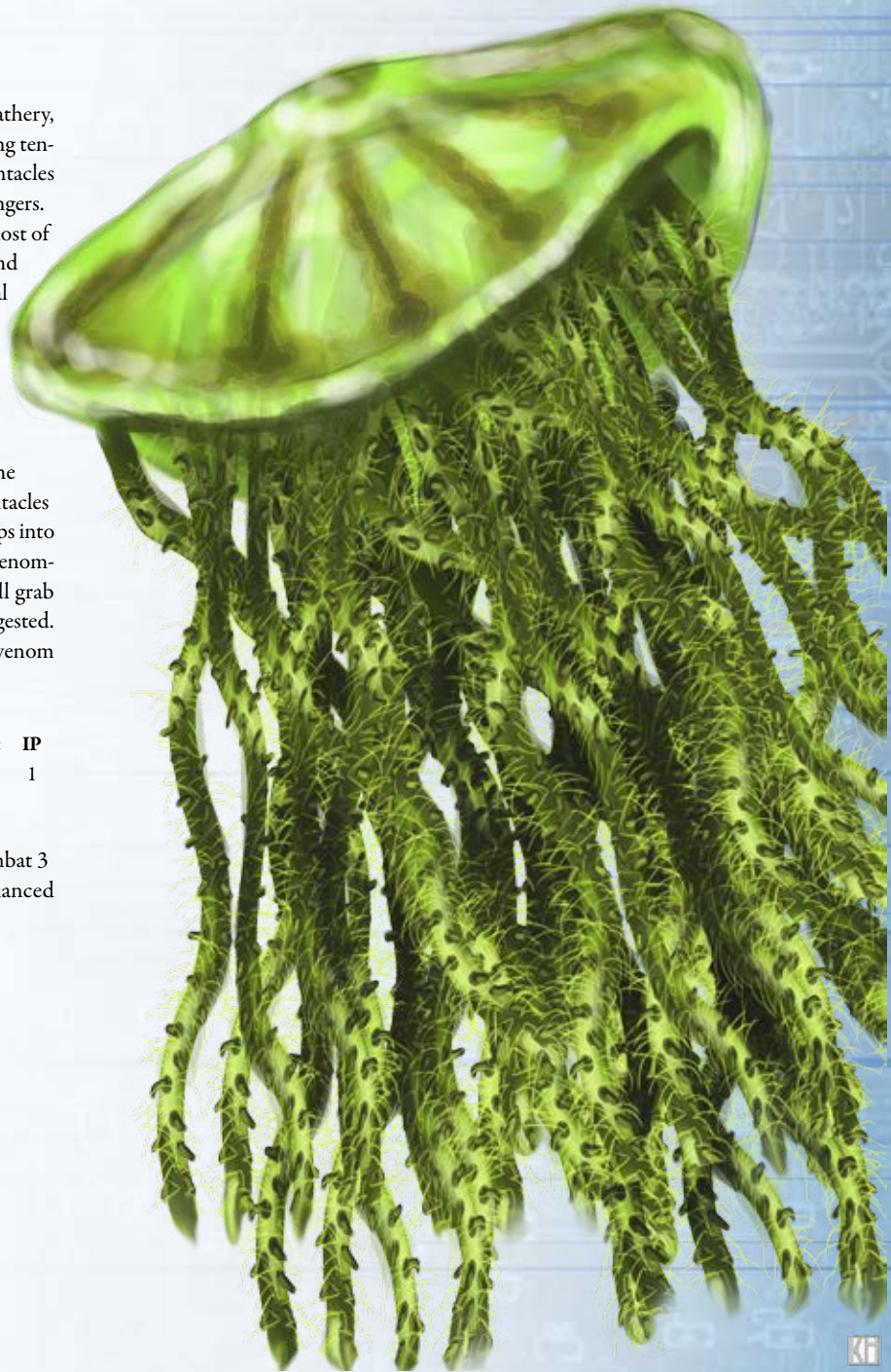
Habitat: Jungle canopy

Range: Coastal Madagascar

Frequency: Uncommon

Identification: The Madagascar jelly can be recognized as a leathery, disk-shaped, gelatinous mass with multiple, up to four meter long tentacles. The body is green variegated in brown striations. The tentacles are tough and ropy looking, with millions of tiny, venomous stingers.

Habits: The Madagascar jelly is an unusual species in that for most of the year it stays on land. It survives due to the high humidity and long rainy season on the island of Madagascar. Most of its skeletal hydrostat has been replaced with muscular hydrostat, like that of the octopus, for strength. It moves slowly as it pushes its tentacles out, then retracts them to lift or drag the body. It migrates on land in early spring, climbing into the jungle canopy; there it collects rainwater within reservoirs within its body to keep hydrated. Most of the skin is thicker to prevent evaporation. The Madagascar jelly is a fisherman as it extends four-meter-long tentacles from its perch and waits for passing animals. If some animal bumps into or grabs onto one of the tentacles, they feel the sting of its many venomous barbs, which will paralyze it. Sensing this, the tentacles will grab hold of the victim, and pull it up to the body, where it will be digested. While the jelly may not be strong enough to lift large prey, the venom is still powerful enough to paralyze it.



| B | A | R | S | C | I | L | W | Edg | Ess | M | Init | IP |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|---|------|----|
| 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 4 | 6 | 1 |

Movement: 1/3

Skills: Infiltration 4, Perception 2, Swimming 1, Unarmed Combat 3

Powers: Concealment (Self), Paralyzing Touch, Engulf, Enhanced Senses (Motion Detection), Regeneration

Note: +4 Reach

JOURNAL EXCERPT FROM DR. DAVID WRIGHT: MADAGASCAR

Madagascar, the island of mysteries. I was hoping to be the first to document the legendary seven-headed hydra, Fanany, but it was pretty dangerous just getting a team and hardware there without every pirate challenging us. I made contact with a man named Sea Ghost, and in exchange for building material and supplies, he helped expedite and support our trip into Madagascar. My team of twenty men traveled deep into Madagascar, from Ft. Dauphin north to Betroka, which was just west of Farafangana. We will try and take the old freeway if possible.

Day 2

Traveling was difficult, and the path was overgrown with dense jungle. What was left of civilization has disappeared. The freeway was barely identifiable as a grassy river. Dr. Javier "Rockhound" Roma, a parageologist, was with my team and took notes on this rapid growth. I had several linguists on my team, which made it easier to communicate with the few tribes that survive on the island. They are surprisingly primitive, with a generation or two that has never seen technology. Their language, such as it is, blends several different dialects. Too bad I didn't think of having an anthropologist with me. My wife wanted to come, but I thought this place was a bit too dangerous. If I make a return trip, I'll ask her to come along to study these tribes

Day 8

There were so many new species that it will take months to complete the genetic cataloging. Some of my favorites include: the cloud spiders, brightly colored spiders that float webs up into the air like nets to catch birds; larger-than-normal fossa (I'm calling them dire fossa) that take advantage of the Madagascar jelly by chasing larger game into its tentacles; and the ablative millipede, which has a secondary shell armor that can shatter into razor-sharp pieces in a predator's mouth or paw.

Day 14

We have set up camp high on hillside near a stream, hoping to find signs of Fanany. In our travels, we have had our share of injuries; four of the crew got sick with some jungle virus, and eight others were injured by various Awakened critters.

The chupacabra was the most common aggressive predator here. We've had to delay our travels deeper into the jungle until the men recuperated

Day 16

In the heart of the jungle we saw the silhouettes of large flying creatures. I thought they might be a dragon or drake species, but no one recorded any good footage. In fact, our rigger lost most of his flying drones at this point and was saving his last two till we approached to the next viewing point. An hour after the flying creatures left, six large bird-like creatures charged through the camp carrying a lot of speed. They were around four meters tall with powerful legs. We managed to fend them off, but there were some serious injuries. This definitely was not a trip for my wife, and after this she'll probably not let me travel here again. The creatures fled into the jungle as fast as they came in, but I collected some blood and feather samples to return with me. If I'm right, this may be another member of the Aepyornis family.

Day 20

We were close to the GPS location of our objective, but the terrain became too difficult to cross thanks to an irregular cliff face and a dense canopy of trees. We could have attempted to go around, but Javier and the other mages started feeling uncomfortable with so many spirits encroaching on our location. He didn't know if they would become hostile and if he could keep the team safe. With this being the last stage of our journey, I told the rigger to send up his drones for a final reconnaissance.

Returning home, I reviewed the footage. It was very pristine above the canopy. There was a larger plateau that we were close to, with small waterfalls and a variety of grasses and brush that wasn't consumed by the jungle. There was a few large caverns that could house a large beast, but I didn't see any sign of Fanany. There was, however, an unusual rock formation within the high grass. Javier said they could be ovoid geodes, but the surrounding geology doesn't support that, nor does their perceived large size. Sadly, I'm out of time and funding. This will probably be the closest I'll come to making this discovery.

MINHOCÃO

CAECILIA DURATII

Habitat: Subterranean

Range: South America

Frequency: Rare

Identification: A long, snake-like amphibian, six meters long and fifty centimeters in diameter. It has dark-red scales, small black eyes, and vestigial legs.

Habits: This large, legless South American amphibian Awakened from the *Caecilia tentaculata*. It burrows up to fifty meters beneath the ground and occasionally comes to the surface, eating rocks and organic matter. The minhocão can digest large amounts of toxic runoff from mining without ill effects. The earth in the excrement from the minhocão is cleaner than when it was consumed.

This creature was first discovered running across an old mine. In its aggressiveness and hunger, the critters collapsed the mine in on itself as the rock walls seemingly melted. The minhocão could be seen occasionally coming to the surface to breed. They would deposit four to six eggs in rotting vegetation, then return underground. The eggs are glossy black and five centimeters in diameter, and they have a sticky coating that allows them to pick up debris for use as camouflage. The eggs and resulting young are not protected by their parents, but the terrain around the nest is modified with various sinkholes to deter potential predators. The eggs hatch within four weeks. Baby minhocão travel into these sinkholes to grow and develop, feeding on decomposing organic matter contained within.

- Normally this species is never seen, only "heard" through geophones recording the tremors they cause. Lately they've been coming up to the surface, and not just for breeding. Something is agitating them to travel shallow. I'm guessing they are attracted to or bothered by chemicals seeping into the water table.
- Glasswalker

| B | A | R | S | C | I | L | W | Edg | Ess | M | Init | IP |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|---|------|----|
| 3 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 6 | 4 | 5 | 1 |

Movement: 2/10

Skills: Exotic Ranged Weapon 4, Spellcasting 3, Unarmed Combat 3

Powers: Armor (4/4), Corrosive Spit, Immunity (Toxins), Innate Spell (Clean Earth, Shape Earth)



MINI MOKELE-MBEMBE

DIPLODOCUS MU

Habitat: Tropical Savannah

Range: West Africa

Frequency: Common

Identification: The mini mokele-mbembe is a sauropod in shape, ranging in size from twenty-five to sixty centimeters long, with half of that length being the neck and tail. It weighs between one and four kilograms. The mini mokele-mbembe's skin is scaly and ranges in colors from deep blue and green to pink and tan. The head has a wedge-shaped horn protrusion on its nose. Its feet are broad, like a gecko, and the pads are lined with Velcro-like hairs.

Habits: While the giant mokele-mbembe continues to be elusive, the miniature version of this dinosaur is quite common. The mokele-mbembe is actually closer genetically to a reptile. Its diet includes invertebrates, grub, plants, and insects. Its long neck allows it to get to hard-to-reach places for food. The wedge on its nose allows it to dig its head into the earth, pulling out worms or burrowing insects. It has strong neck and tail muscles so that it can whip its head around with a sticky tongue to grab flying insects or crack its tail like a whip in defense. They creatures have been used as pest control in many rural areas in West Africa and are quite friendly; sometimes they are kept as children's pets.

The mokele-mbembe can climb up walls and ceilings because of the hairs on its feet. They can also be found in tall trees or along rooftops. The female mokele-mbembe makes a nest of leaves in trees and lays eight to ten jellybean-sized eggs. Only the female takes care of the young. The eggs hatch in fifteen days. The young grow fairly rapidly to adult size within thirty and sixty days depending on breed. It has few predators as its flesh is toxic, hence the brightly colored warning patterns on its skin.

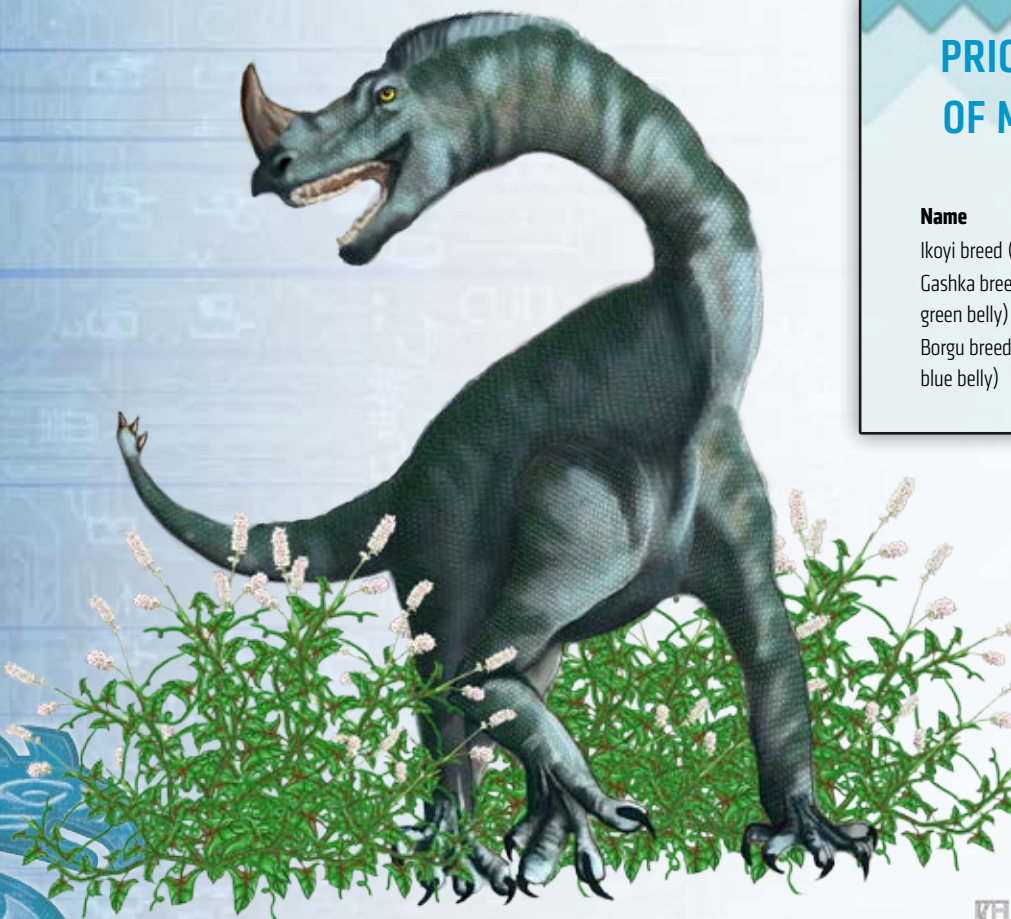
| B | A | R | S | C | I | L | W | Edg | Ess | Init | IP |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|------|----|
| 1 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 3 | 2 |

Movement: 5/8

Skills: Perception 2, Unarmed Combat 1

Powers: Fragile 2, Wall Walking

- They are so cute! I have to have a pink one!
- /dev/grll
- Well, you've come to the right spot. Forget those Matrix catalogs, I can get you real Ikoyi breeds, not those knock-off skin-dye jobs.
- Traveler Jones



PRICING AND AVAILABILITY OF MINI MOKELE-MBEMBE

| Name | Availability | Price |
|--|--------------|--------|
| Ikoyi breed (pink skin with tan belly) | 13 | 10,000 |
| Gashka breed (dark blue skin with green belly) | 9 | 5,000 |
| Borgu breed (dark green skin with blue belly) | 9 | 8,000 |



PARROT FOX

VULPES MIMOS

Habitat: Forests, rural environments

Range: AGS and bordering countries

Frequency: Rare

Identification: The parrot fox is slightly smaller than the mundane red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*). While its lower legs, mouth, and ears are dark brown or black, the rest of the body has a reddish-brown fur. The parrot fox measures thirty centimeters tall at the shoulder and ninety to one-hundred ten centimeters in length, including its thirty- to forty-centimeter-long tail, and it weighs between four and six kilograms. While all of its senses are excellent, the fox's larynx and accompanying neural structures are particularly exceptional.

Habits: The parrot fox can mimic sounds it has heard only once. If the fox is accustomed to certain acoustic stimuli, it can reproduce them perfectly, including complex sound patterns not usually found in nature. In the wilderness, the fox uses this ability as a hunting strategy to attract his prey by imitating bird or mating calls. Attracted victims are usually killed by a quick bite in the neck.

While parrot foxes have been primarily observed in the AGS, single sightings in other countries indicate a European distribution. The parrot fox is mostly crepuscular, though it can adapt to the behavior of its prey if necessary. Its territorial defense habits are poorly

developed, and infighting between different members of the species are rare. Recent studies have found lifelong partnerships between mates, with mating season taking place between February and April. Gestation time is about two months and results in litters of three to six fox kits. While its diet is mainly carnivorous, the parrot fox can also consume fruit.

- As you might guess, this is another animal that has been trained for espionage. After a few generations of domestication, their appearance alters, giving them floppy ears like a canine. Makes them a dead giveaway, if you know what you're looking for.
- Thorn

| B | A | R | S | C | I | L | W | Edg | Ess | M | Init | IP |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|---|------|----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 3 | 6 | 1 |

Movement: 10/30

Skills: Perception 2, Tracking 2, Unarmed Combat 2

Powers: Enhanced Senses (Low-Light), Mimicry, Natural Weapon (Bite, Reach -1, DV 2P, AP —)

Weaknesses: Fragile 1

Notes: -1 Reach



PIT BADGER

MELES DIRE

Habitat: Woods and rural environments

Range: Central Europe

Frequency: Uncommon

Identification: The pit badger is a powerfully built animal with a small head, thick, short neck, wedge-shaped body and short tail. It is 1.7 meters long, sixty centimeters at the shoulder, and weighs forty to fifty kilograms. It has long, coarse hair on its back and flanks with a soft undercoat. The pit badger is black on its belly and legs, with grey on its flanks that blends into the brown/black of its back. White stripes alternate with brown on its face and head.

Habits: This larger version of the ordinary badger (*Meles meles*) originated in the SOX but has escaped the confinement of that area, spreading its habitat extensively over the last thirty years until it covered most of Central and Northern Europe. They are a social group, living in groups of six to twelve adults. Their communities inhabit natural or self-dug caves, though occasionally they settle in abandoned basements or mines. Unlike the European badger, they are not afraid of humans, dogs, or wolves. In fact, they behave similar to wolves, hunting in small groups of up to six members. While omnivorous, they prefer prey such as rabbits, foxes, and larger prey like deer. They have strong jaws and stomach, allowing them to gulp down smaller prey, since they do not drag off food for later. The enzymes in the stomach also help protect the pit badger from poisons. While it has the ability to conceal itself, it does so as a means of escape rather than for hunting. One interesting note is that multiple pit badger groups often build a communal latrine convenient for all groups as they like to keep their territory tidy. The latrine can be several meters

long and a meter or two deep. Every year or so they collapse the latrine and dig a new one.

Pit badgers mate in the spring and typically mate for life. The boar can have one to five cubs after ten months of gestation. The young pit badgers stay with their mom for four to five months before being allowed to venture on their own, and three months later they are allowed to hunt with existing packs or form a new pack. Pit badgers have a hierarchal ranking, with an alpha male leading hunts and an alpha female managing the den.

- A pit badger latrine normally means lots and lots of crap, but sometimes, if they don't like some metahuman trash or junk in their territory, they will haul it off to the dump. That mostly means plastic things they couldn't chew up. Also, don't get in between a pit badger and his latrine, as there's no good way out.
- Picador
- LOL. And you were holding the last roll of toilet paper?
- Slamm-0!

| B | A | R | S | C | I | L | W | Edg | Ess | M | Init | IP |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|---|------|----|
| 4 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 8 | 2 |

Movement: 10 / 35

Skills: Dodge 3, Infiltration 3, Perception 4, Unarmed Combat 3

Powers: Accident, Concealment, Enhanced Senses (Smell, Low-Light Vision), Immunity (Toxins), Natural Weapon (Claws/Bite, Reach —, DV 3P, AP —)



JOURNAL EXCERPT FROM DR. DAVID WRIGHT: SOX

In my most dangerous adventure to date, I planned a ten-day journey into SOX to document a beast called the death knell that flies around voids and foveae. Unfortunately I was not able to acquire corporate support in this endeavor, so I resorted to hiring from the shadows.

- **Aufheben? Haze? Anyone know who he hired?**
- **Slamm-O!**

- **Rasputin. He arranged a whole tour-guide package.**
- **Haze**

My security team and Rick were nervous about the dangers we would encounter, as well as the fact that we lacked proper paperwork. The university, for its part, was nervous about the amount of equipment I requested. But I had to go—the toxic and radioactive waste, astral anomalies, and dangerous critters of the area, not to mention some of the meanest gloopunks on Earth, make the area alluringly untouched by science. I told Dr. Bogue of the trip, and he said I was crazy to go. I reminded him that both of us had been mentored by Dr. Paterson, whom Dr. Bogue himself followed into Chicago. Dr. Bogue capitulated and sent me two large boxes of herbs, reagents, medicines, and magical compounds. He had included a rare crystal orchid.

- **2 boxes ... an alchemist's dream ...**
- **Winterhawk**

My itinerary was to travel to France and into Arlon. From there we'd enter the Luxembourg side of SOX to check the waste dumps near Ettelbruck. Then we'd head by rail to the Cattom ruins. This is the most dangerous area for my magic team, as it is where we'd be likely to find voids, and we'd also risk running into mobile foveae. I enlisted the Charognards and a couple of hover trucks to escort us over the wall. Rick pulled a few strings with MET 2000 to allow passage through the wall. It was a pricey favor, one that hopefully will be worth it.

The wall was impressive; five meters tall, three meters wide, topped with monowire and an array of sensors to launch rockets and other ordnance at intruders. After a cursory look at our trucks and equipment, we were allowed through the gate at Arlon so we could see the devastation beyond. Entropy has taken over. Abandoned and ruined buildings and infrastructure are rarely functional. Daniel told me that there are spotty wireless connections, so we'll have to rely on the satellite connection. Andy took one look and said that it's just ugly all over. With the gates closing behind us, we proceeded down the remnants of the road.

Traveling through the overgrown woods has been dangerous. Herculean stranglenknots have left puddles of caustic acid after an afternoon of light rain and fog. Several crew members have been treated for light chemical burns from splashing of water or leaks in the protective clothing. In three days of misty weather through the overgrown woods near Mersch have cost me more equipment than any other two excursions combined. Daniel lost one camera and cannibalized it to fix the second. Herculean stranglenknots are probably the worse plant to deal with aside from Sangre Del Diablo.

We made camp near an abandoned complex by Mersch. Security reported that there didn't seem to be any inhabitants, and I'm told one of the buildings is structurally sound and should keep us dry. The building looks like a mall complex. While the glass center has broken and exposed the interior to the elements, the concrete buildings along the perimeter are still in good shape. So far we haven't encountered any high radiation, but hopefully this will help if we do. It is surprising that with such an intact structure, survivors didn't claim it as a residence. Security worried that the spot would

attract inhabitants looking for shelter, so Rick established drone overwatch to keep an eye on things.

With no approaching dangers found, we set up camp to dry out our gear. After a week of MREs, I was already eager to get back home. Even a Stuffer Shack reheated burrito is better than this. For fun, we organized an Iron Chef contest with three of my crew trying out with their culinary skills: Johnny Rae, a hacker, who apparently worked the grill at McHugh's in his younger days; Lars, with security, who bragged about his barbeque skills with ordnance; and the surprise contender, Rasputin, who said he had two years of culinary school at Kochen und Würzen in Berlin. With MREs from Ares, Aztechnology, and UCAS, they each had to create a meal for a third of the crew. Johnny Rae combined crunchy peanut butter, Atzlan pitas, and hydrated "fruit" preserve to make toasted sandwiches. Lars mixed beef brisket, mixitops, and powdered eggs into a meatloaf seared on the grill with the help of gunpowder and phosphorus. Rasputin used some of his AGS rations of potatoes and vegetables and combined them with the various "chicken soup" MREs and boiled up a hearty stew. The meatloaf was pretty good and maybe would have been a contender if it had catsup. The stew was tasty enough to be gone before people could have seconds. But it was the comforting toasted sandwiches that won the Iron Chef. After dinner, patrols checked the perimeter and we set up a couple of stationary sensors set to capture any wildlife. Then we settled in for the evening.

The next morning we awakened to a cacophony of whispers like a loud wind. From the open roof came a massive flock of cuckoo-like birds. These buggers swarmed like bees, circling and slashing with their claws and beaks. Security was overwhelmed; the scariest thing was the maddening voices speaking in German, French, English, and other languages I did not recognize. Our magic support was too limited in skill to do much good, and shooting them was tricky as they were as fast and agile. With the help of Lars' leftover meatloaf and his "special seasoning," security made a spectacular fireball that scared off the cuckoos. I was later told that they creatures are called whisperers, and they are an Awakened species that developed a taste for flesh. Four of the crew were moderately scratched up, with one guard receiving severe eye damage. Andy performed healing since we were way too far away from proper medical attention.

After a few days we headed north to the first location of the toxic waste dump. We took a cautionary approach to this. Andy rummaged through the box of alchemical materials, pulling out various seeds and crystals. Daniel and his team put up a network of drones to monitor radiation and other pollutants. Rasputin and Rick planned out a route to the dump. The landfill site, now abandoned, is a field of artificial lakes and hills, which were supposed to manage all the hazardous wastes with high-temperature incendiaries, gas collectors, and enhanced bacteria. As we can see, pools are breached and there are groves of dead trees mixed with more of the mutated flora.

Setting up an observation point to watch the site was difficult. While we had drones to do most of the work, someone had to get close astrally to observe voids and foveae so that the drones could steer clear. Some of Rick's men volunteered to escort Andy toward a high hill to get a good view of the dump. At the top, Andy directed Daniel's attention to the northeast, where the vid footage showed a shimmering distortion with lightning streaking from, flying over a muddy lake. It was a mana storm so there was the possibility of foveae. We continued to observe it for several hours waiting for the death knell, but toward dusk, something was grunting in the woods. The drones spotted a stone biter, but it already started charging Andy and the rest of the party. Stone biters are an Awakened boar species that have developed numerous bone deposits around the spine and thorax, making it almost unrecognizable as a boar and damn hard to kill. The volunteer security did

not fare well; Mr. Baxter and Mr. Carson were badly maimed after the first charge. Daniel diverted some of the drones to distract the beast, while more security tried to get closer to the hill. It took Mr. Gress and his Panther cannon from on top of the hover truck to take out the beast before it could harm any of the others. As short as the combat was, we now had two more severely injured men, this time with broken legs. Using thermographic vision, the drones were left to continue watching the toxic dump. Reviewing the footage in the morning, we found nothing. I decided to head back south to the Cattom ruins. We know that the void exists there, which may give us a better chance to find the death knell.

The day after as we drove down the tracks to Luxembourg, one of the hovertrucks broke down. While it wasn't unexpected, it was still annoying. The Charognards weren't as prepared as I thought they were going to be for this trip, and it appeared that we were going to lose a whole day as they jury-rigged a replacement part.

Not wanting to waste the time just sitting, I decided to set up camp and send out the drones to check out the flora and fauna. Daniel alerted me to a few large things moving less than one hundred meters from us at an old culvert. Not taking any chances, Mr. Gress got up on the hovertruck with his Panther cannon. What emerged was horrible; four malformed creatures, half-men, half-insects. They charged the trucks with ferocity. Mr. Gress was good enough to start shooting, though his first shot looked as if it just missed one of them off. Enough firepower was brought to finally kill them; I even had to fire a shot with my pistol, which I haven't had to use in a while. The Charognards took the brunt of the attack, with two wounded and two killed. My team had three wounded and only one killed, though unfortunately that one was Mr. Gress.

This will be the only time I travel to the SOX, as the price has become too high. The hovertruck repairs were good enough to get us away from the possible bug hive, and we made it to the outskirts of Cattom after dark. Earlier, Andy told us to slow our approach and continually throw seeds out in front of the truck. Sometime around one in the morning, the seeds started popping like popcorn. Andy immediately told us to back the trucks up at least fifty meters. Rick posted sensors around the perimeter, and Daniel put out drones with thermal sensors for round-the-clock overwatch. Andy went through the medical and alchemical supplies to ward off infection with the wounded. We won't be able to stay very long; Andy and his team look very ill and nervous being this close. He told me that some are experiencing vertigo and nosebleeds because of the void.

At dawn we heard a long, mournful wailing sound. The drones triangulated on a grey-colored bird that blended in with the clouds. With the exception of color, it looked like a vulture. We watched as it circled overhead. At one point it dove into a grove of trees with a high-pitched wail, startling the animals within. A flock of starlings flew up, and it circled around to herd them toward Cattom. Suddenly the death knell veered off from some unseen object, and a few of the starlings began to plummet lifelessly. It turned back towards the dead starlings, plucking one from the air and landing twenty meters away in the trees. There it ate. We watched a little longer, then started packing up. While we were packing up, in a quick burst of speed, it landed and picked up a second starling that was lying dead on the ground and back up to the tree. Our best guess is that it can sense the void but isn't dual natured, as brief contact with it had no noticeable effect.

With our trid footage of the whispers and the death knell in hand, we headed back to Arlon as quick as we could. Rick's contact allowed us out of the SOX. MET2000 medics were brought in to check them out as soon as we made contact with the mercenaries. While the Charognards left without notice, my team was detained for a brief time to answer some questions while also undergoing decontamination procedures. I spent some of this time writing letters to the families of those lost in this endeavor.

SHASTA DEER

ODOCOILEUS SHASTA CALIFORNICUS

Habitat: Woods

Range: Deep forest throughout Shasta County. None have yet been spotted more than half a day's walk from Mount Shasta.

Frequency: Extremely rare

Identification: Shasta deer are Awakened creatures that live around Mount Shasta and the Shasta Dam. They greatly resemble ordinary mule deer. They appear reddish-brown in the summer and blue-grey in the winter, with a white rump patch and a black-tipped tail. Males have ivory colored branched antlers, rather than tines extending from a single antler.

Habits: An extremely rare and elusive creature, the Shasta deer is believed by some to be a manifested spirit. In any case, here's what I've gathered from my own and other observations. They are highly intelligent, able to avoid traps and hunters. According to many accounts, the deer possess multiple spell-like abilities, though there is no consistency with each account on what the deer can do. They are about as possible to track as the snow moose, with little physical evidence of their movement. Astrally there have been several attempts to track it based upon the assumption of it being magically active. This, however, has been hampered by the mountain containing other magical entities.

There is still a fifty thousand nuyen reward issued by the T'ir Tairngire border patrol for the capture of the Shasta deer. Because of this reward, our expedition wasn't the only one on the mountain, though it was probably the only one that asked for permission from the Shasta Shamans. There were four other groups on the mountain, one with helicopter support, all trying to get a glimpse of or capture the deer. Our expedition ended up with a few constructed trid shots and my own early morning observance. To add to the difficulty of seeing the Shasta deer, none of the other teams got any footage even being close proximity of our camp site.

| B | A | R | S | C | I | L | W | Edg | Ess | M | Init | IP |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|---|------|----|
| 4 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 6 | 6 | 8 | 1 |

Movement: 25/100

Skills: Counterspelling 4, Perception 2, Running 4, Spellcasting 5, Unarmed Combat 2

Powers: Aura Masking, Concealment, Fading, Magic Guard, Natural Weapon (Horns: Reach —, DV 4P, AP —)

Note: Each Shasta deer has an additional three powers from this list: Empathy, Innate Spell (Clout), Innate Spell (Detect Enemies), Magic Sense, Silence



STORM WOLVES

CANIS ATMOS

Habitat: Forests

Range: Pockets of southern Europe, from the Czech Republic to the disputed Bosnian Territory. Most sightings are in the area called the Devil's Garden.

Frequency: Uncommon

Identification: They are large canine species with black to grey shaggy fur. They grow to 1.5 meters in length and weigh between fifty and eighty kilograms. Storm wolves have relatively large teeth compared to other wolf species.

Habits: There is a place between the mountains of Mala Kapela and Plješivica where there are sixteen interlinked lakes called Devil's Garden. This primal forest is the home to dozen or so packs of storm wolves. These wolves are extremely territorial and can bring down the force of nature upon intruders with rain, wind, and lightning, giving them their name. Storm wolves only use this ability when threatened, not while hunting. When hunting, the pack can blend in with the shadows as they flank their prey. Storm wolves are an elusive and deadly prey living in dangerous territory. One of the last teams to try to study the storm wolf and other Awakened creatures in the Devil's Garden in 2063 did not return. This means that information about the wolf remains sketchy, but it is assumed that the storm wolf has some of the same inherent social and biological connections as other wolf species.

It is rare to see storm wolves outside the Devil's Garden, but they do travel. It is presumed that their population has been growing and the individual packs need more territory for hunting. Packs of twenty individuals have been seen as far north as the Czech Republic.

| B | A | R | S | C | I | L | W | Edg | Ess | M | Init | IP |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|---|------|----|
| 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 6 | 3 | 6 | 2 |

Movement: 10/50

Skills: Infiltration 2, Perception 2, Tracking 2, Unarmed Combat 4

Powers: Natural Weapon (Claws/Bite: DV 2P, AP 0), Shadow Cloak, Storm

Note: Force of the Storm is equal to the storm wolf's Magic rating

- The Devil's Garden is not a safe place to travel whether you meet storm wolves or not. There are many requests for gathering talisman from the pristine lakes and forests, which can seem alluring, but there's a considerable dark side to the location. There are some spirits living around there that don't like visitors. It's high risk, high profit if you got the balls for it.
- Hard Exit



Ki



STRIX

ATHENE VAMPYRE

Habitat: Urban areas and woodlands

Range: Global

Frequency: Uncommon

Identification: A small owl, 23 to 25 centimeters in length with a grey and black dorsal plumage and grey to white feathers on its belly. It has a large head, long legs, and orange eyes.

Habits: Since the Awakening, there have been several Awakened species that have similar traits in the food web to a previously active or extinct species. One theory is that this is a result of Gaiā's work in healing the world. Another is that this is a super-Darwinism, where Awakened and non-Awakened species fight it out for control of the planet. Regardless of the theory, the strix has taken the role of the vampire bat and has spread across multiple continents. This owl, identified as the progeny of the little owl (*Athene nocture*), has also appeared in North America. This owl feeds on blood. With a serrated beak, it slashes a small cut in the victim, and then applies its saliva, which prevents the blood clotting and gives the victim a sense of numbing euphoria. The Strix lives in cliff faces, cave entrances, and buildings. The female strix lays four to six red-speckled eggs and incubates them for up to forty days. Both parents take care of the young, regurgitating partially digested blood. Strix are an interesting owl species because while they eat small vermin, the owl pellet (a noticeable characteristic of a place inhabited by owls) is significantly smaller than might be expected, and there's a concentration of strong-smelling ammonia byproducts below their roost.

Movement: 20/60

Skills: Flight 3, Infiltration 2, Perception 3, Spellcasting 4, Tracking 2, Unarmed Combat 2

Powers: Concealment, Enhanced Senses (Low-Light Vision), Fragile 1, Innate Spell (Touch Sense Removal, Enabler), Natural Weapon (Bite/Claw: Reach —, DV 2P, AP —), Venom

Weakness: Dietary Requirement (blood)

- There are groups of drug addicts that, lacking money for drugs, have resorted to finding where the strix roosts and leaving an arm or leg exposed to the elements to attract the strix to feed so that they can get high. Some have gotten addicted to strix venom—you can recognize them by the multitude of cuts on their arms and legs, discolored by bruises from the venom.
- Stone

| B | A | R | S | C | I | L | W | Edg | Ess | M | Init | IP |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|---|------|----|
| 1 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 6 | 3 | 7 | 1 |

STRIX VENOM

Vector: Injection

Speed: 1 Combat Turn

Power: 6

Effect: Anticoagulant and opiate (Pain Resistance 1)

Duration: (6 - Body) hours, minimum 1 hour



KFI

SWAMP LIZARD

LACERTA HALLENSIS

Habitat: Swamps

Range: AGS (Eastern Germany, especially Saxony)

Frequency: Very rare

Identification: The swamp lizard possesses blue-grey scales and a whitish-green belly. Adult animals reach a length of up to four meters, with the tail encompassing half the body length. The heaviest specimen caught so far weighed 800 kilograms. In comparison to their other proportions their legs are exceptionally long with leg length of 150 centimeters not being uncommon. The most intriguing part of the species is however the fact that it lives in symbiosis with a plant growing on its back and head, giving older lizards a rather plant-like appearance when remaining still due to dense vegetation originating from the critter. It has been speculated that it this relationship and exchange of nutrients that enable the swamp lizard to reach this size.

Habits: In contrast to the colloquial name (“swamp crocodile”), the swamp lizard is not a crocodile but a gigantic variant of the *Lacertidae* family of lizards. The recognizable scale drawings and color indicate a relationship with the European green lizard (*Lacerta viridis*), but the swamp lizard is much, much bigger. The lizard appears to be an exclusive swamp dweller without any typical circadian rhythm. Territorial boundaries don't appear to exist. Swamp lizards live in loose social associations in which hierarchies are determined by battles. Mating season is in April, with egg-laying following shortly after. Parabiologist from

the University of Leipzig have determined that nests consist of about 30 ostrich-egg-sized eggs on average. Most of the hatchlings die—not due to natural predators, but because of the lack of symbiotic organisms without which the swamp lizards cannot survive. Swamp lizards are carnivores, feasting on both carrion and freshly hunted prey. In addition to their strong limbs and fierce bite, swamp lizards secrete a weak neurotoxin from an oral gland that immobilizes victims (often leading to lizard-related drownings). Like most members of the their genus, swamp lizards are moderately intelligent. In winter, lizards withdraw to caves and underground shelters to hibernate, making them vulnerable for capture.

| B | A | R | S | C | I | L | W | Edg | Ess | M | Init | IP |
|----|---|---|----|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|---|------|----|
| 10 | 4 | 4 | 10 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 4 | 8 | 1 |

Movement: 20/45 (Swimming)

Skills: Perception 2, Swimming 3, Unarmed Combat 4

Powers: Enhanced Senses (Smell), Hardened Armor (2), Natural Weapon (Bite: Reach 1, DV 7P, AP -1), Poison

Weaknesses: Dietary Requirement (Symbiote)

Notes: +1 Reach



SWAMP SWALLOWS

PETROCHELIDON PHOSPHI

Habitat: Swamps

Range: South Africa

Frequency: Common

Identification: Tiny brown and tan birds with a eight- to ten-centimeter body and fifteen-centimeter wingspan. Their wing and tail feathers contain a phosphorescent material.

Habits: Awakened from the South African swallow (*Petrochelidon spilodera*), the swamp swallow is a nocturnal version of the species. The glowing feathers are used to attract insects at night. A flock of swamp swallows coordinate their hunt in a dazzling display of light patterns, drawing insects ever closer to the swirling birds. The insects are mesmerized by the hypnotic net, then eaten as the swallows fly by. This moving light display also helps two-fold against owls and other predators. The display can hypnotize them, giving them pause from attacking, or can disorient them enough during an attack that they miss their kill. Flock sizes range from two hundred to a thousand individuals

Swamp swallows build mud nests in the crooks of trees or high rock faces. The decomposing feathers in the nest release their phosphorescence into the mud, giving the nests a faint glow. Swamp swallows lay up to two small brown eggs twice a year. The coloring helps mask the eggs within the nest. Swamp swallows take six weeks to grow big enough to fly, with both parents feeding the child. It is only after the last molting, when they are out of their baby fluff, that they start to glow. Some tribes close to swampy areas build scaffolding to help attract swamp swallows to nest there. This can help protect the tribe against disease-carrying mosquitoes and ghede flies.

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Movement: 20/40 (Flying)

Skills: Flight 2, Perception 2

Powers: Gestalt Consciousness, Hypnotic (Visual)

- What ... is the air-speed velocity of an unladen swamp swallow?
- Slamm-O!
- What?
- Turbo Bunny
- Nevermind, very old vid joke.
- Slamm-O!



JOURNAL EXCERPT FROM DR. DAVID WRIGHT

Africa

With all the hype around the squiddoth, I planned an expedition to find it. While the squiddoth is not an Awakened animal, I was curious as to how the creature mutated, and if it's either a seed or environmental mutagen. After several months I received a trid contract with Horizon's Educational Media to contribute to the series *Awakened Kingdom*.

We headed first to the Asante nation following rumors of squiddoth attacks. Border crossings were the most difficult part of this journey; smuggling and poaching have continued unabated thanks to corrupt security and government officials. Bribery is rampant, to the point that checkpoint guards entering and leaving Asante expected us to pay them a "tip" before we crossed. A military presence of LAV-98s and 103s, ten kilometers inside the border bearing Saeder-Krupp logos, suggest a renewed interest for trading arms in Asante. We off-roaded most of the journey following the rumors, most of which were fairly old; too old, as it turned out, for us to gather any forensic evidence. Wrecked vehicles, supposedly damaged by a squiddoth, were already picked over for fuel and parts.

After the third day, we crossed into the tribal lands. Rick, my security chief, was on edge the few days it took to get to Asamondo. My rigger spotted a recon drone following us. They didn't respond to any of our hails and broke off pursuit when my crew sent up a pair of hellcats to judge the pursuer's intent. There were no identifying marks, so it could have been sent by a corporation or runners watching where we were heading.

We started to head up the river Volta. During one night of camping, as the crew was unloading the boat, security was ambushed by the smaller African harpoon leech while watching the river for large and deadly creatures. These things can grow up to a foot in length, much like their Amazonian counterparts. They are called harpoon leeches because they can project their pharyngeal jaw twenty centimeters on a tongue-like muscle. Instead of pulling its prey toward it, it pulls itself out of the water to the prey so that it can latch on and feed. Luckily the crew had taken medicine for malaria, as these are potential carriers.

By day eight, we were nearing the Asamondo border. I was able to secure permissions to cross through the university. They were happy to accommodate our travel through Asamondo, though there were a few conditions. The biggest was that the security and rigger crew were not allowed in. Rick was not happy about leaving my team in the hands of a strange crew. When we got to Asamondo, we were greeted by Vesgul, our official ghoulish guide. He showed Rick the accommodations at the border where he and his team could stay, away from disputed tribal lands. Vesgul introduced me to Kwame and his team, who would provide rigger and security services for me in Asamondo. Kwame will also be in charge of sanitizing any trideo his team records before handing footage over to me. That first night we stayed in Abo-denbo. While there, we stuck to the hotel, but I couldn't help but look out the window to observe the streets outside. I mainly watched for urban wildlife and what attracted my attention was the hairless cat and dogs that I saw as pets. They were blind and hairless. I originally thought they were sphynxes and hairless Kakah breeds, but the truth was more intriguing. I suspect the animals were Infected, but there have never been any such cases documented. I asked

Kwame about it the next day as we left the city, and he claimed the constant exposure to the HMHV has given rise to symptoms of exposure, but not infection.

The following day, outside the city, Kwame presented me with a list of reported sightings of the squiddoth and even projected a planned route to visit the sightings. I was impressed. He said that Asamondo is not a primitive country of mindless ghouls as many believe. One of the first priorities of the queen was to establish wireless connectivity for the nation. Kwame's team was much smaller than Rick's, with three members with assault rifles for security, one rigger, and one hacker, who apparently was networking with surrounding villages announcing our presence; I'm not sure if the results of this were good or bad for me.

For four days we followed and talked to witnesses, who recorded images through drone companions, cybernetics, or trideo-linked cameras. The hacker had done his job, sanitizing the video clips before presenting them to myself and the team. There were enough clips for editing into a trideo composite, so I sent them to Rick so that his team had something to do. So far the evidence suggested an eastern origination of the squiddoth, but the attacks were random with no known provocation. Following this assumption, we camped a few kilometers from the eastern border. The sky was clear and not obscured by urban pollution or AR-verts commercializing the heavens.

I recorded a recap of our day, and while I reminisced on the hospitality of the villagers, an alarm went out from security. I asked Kwame what was going on. He smiled at me and said, "Get ready for firsthand experience."

In the distance, what appeared to be a bull elephant with a weird splay of trunk/tentacles and corkscrew-twisted tusks roared and charged our camp. Two of the guards took firing positions, while the third and the rigger herded everyone into the vehicles. Gun fire rang out as the trucks were started. At one hundred meters, I witnessed the feral side of ghouls as Kwame and the two guards charged the squiddoth. The beast hesitated momentarily as the ghouls ran to intercept him. It was a bloody battle of tooth and claw with all three clamoring onto its head. The squiddoth managed to grab a guard's leg, and it shredded flesh as the tentacle pulled the ghoulish creature from the beast's head and tried to maneuver it to its mouth to bite it. The guard was saved by Kwame as he gouged out one of the beast's eyes, causing the squiddoth to drop the guard. After a failed attempt to trample the guard on the ground, the squiddoth retreated, shaking its head in an attempt to remove the other two ghouls. The guard in one of the trucks went to take care of his partner, and the hacker, Onabe, got into the driver's seat to pursue the squiddoth. He drove into the savannah for almost twenty minutes before the last guard was located. He was bloodied and walking back to camp. He politely refused an invitation to get into the vehicle and said he would wait for another vehicle. It was almost another half hour of driving around before Onabe stopped. He said the tribal land's border was up ahead, and crossing it was above his pay grade, especially after dark. It seemed like forever before Onabe was able to find Kwame. He was finally found when he walked out into view of the headlights carrying a bloody tusk.

After that I had already guessed that the greatest footage of a squiddoth would not be available for my documentary due to how feral the ghouls looked during the attack. Kwame did, however, present to me the squiddoth tusk as a gift and compensation for the "lost" footage.

TALIS CAT

ACINONYX LYCOS

Habitat: Jungles

Range: Southern Asia

Frequency: Uncommon

Identification: There are two forms to the talis cat. The larger form is that of a great cat, weighing forty to seventy kilograms with a body length of 135 centimeters and a shoulder height of seventy to ninety centimeters. Its other form is closer to that of a large domestic cat, with a body length of fifty centimeters, a shoulder height twenty-five centimeters, and an average weight of seven kilograms. Both forms have the same distinctive coat of swirling black lines with a convergent “M” mark on its forehead. Both forms have a broad, dark triangular nose, giving it a more “great cat” appearance, though the ears on the larger form are round, while the smaller form has pointed ears.

Habits: When shapeshifters were first identified, there were a few elusive and puzzling species. One of them was the talis cat, originally mistaken for a shapeshifting cheetah. It wasn't until 2049 that a parazology student discovered that it was an Awakened animal with both a larger and smaller form. It was generally assumed for a few years that the talis cat's ability was an illusion, masking the larger form from detection by prey. This was later dismissed when captured species of talis cats were able to escape after they shifted forms and walked between the bars.

Talis cats can breed all year round, with the females having litters between one and three kittens. They have an unusually wide range of vocalizations, including purrs, whistles, yaps, chattering sounds, and even a bird-like chirp that they use to communicate with each other. Talis cats live in small prides of four to six adults with a dominate female.

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| 5 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 6 | 7 | 2 |

Movement: See Notes

Skills: Climbing 2, Infiltration 2, Perception 2, Running 4, Tracking 2, Unarmed Combat 3

Powers: Astral Mask, Enhanced Senses (Low Light Vision), Movement (Self Only), Shift (see Notes)

Notes: The talis cat has two forms it can shift to:

Cheetah Form

Movement: 15/80

Powers: Natural Weapon

(Claws/Bite: Reach —, DV 3P, AP —)

Domestic Cat Form

Movement: 10/40

Powers: Desired Reflection



TINPUK

CORVUS REX

In other languages, the tinpuk is known as the gwagwakhwalanooksiwey, nunyenunc, and tinmiukpuk

Habitat: Mountains and hills

Range: Northern North America (Algonkian-Manitou Council and Quebec)

Frequency: Rare

Identification: The tinpuk is a large raven with a wing span of three meters. It weighs eight kilograms and has a body length of just over one meter. It is coal black with the exception of its yellow eyes.

Habits: The tinpuk is Awakened from the common raven (*Corvus corax*) and is the rarest of the giant Awakened birds, especially in North America. In other North American tribes, the tinpuk is known as the gwagwakhwalanooksiwey, nunyenunc, and tinmiukpuk. Since the Awakening, it has had serious competition with rocs and thunderbirds both lesser and greater. It also has lost some of its territory due to Quebec's bounty of 400 nuyen per beak. This raven normally scavenges off carrion or steals kills from other raptors. When that is unavailable, it will hunt for its own food. The tinpuk hunts its prey by swooping

in and pecking at the target's head or back. While its attack and small size may not seem dangerous, it channels the force of its strike past the hide and muscle to hit internal organs. It is fearless of metahumans and, if possible, will hunt and eat one. Tales of it cracking open skulls and eating people's brains are largely exaggerated, though these rumors have led to it being hunted to virtual extinction. This will probably be the first documented Awakened animal to go extinct.

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|---|------|----|
| 3 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 6 | 4 | 8 | 1 |

Movement: 5/15 (flight)

Skills: Astral Combat 2, Flight 4, Perception 4, Unarmed Combat 3

Powers: Dual Natured, Natural Weapon (Bite/Claws: Reach —, DV 2P, AP -3)

Note: The tinpuk has the adept power Penetrating Strike at level 3

- And you wonder why Quebec hates paracritters. I swear that in the local dialect, its name means, "Shoot me so you don't have to spell it anymore"
- Slamm-0!



YALE

ORYX GANGLI

Habitat: Grasslands and arid plains

Range: Ethiomalian Territories and Kenya

Frequency: Uncommon

Identification: The yale looks similar to that of a goat with cloven hooves, but with a shoulder height of 140 centimeters and weighing in at around 350 kilograms. It is very muscular with black fur with a few white stripes on its face, a leathery tail, and broad shoulders. Its head is crowned by a pair of tan, segmented horns, each 90 centimeters long, that move independently. Its jaw has two tusks that protrude away from its face.

Habits: The yale is an Awakened oryx (*Oryx beisa*). It spends most of the day in wide grasslands, eating and drinking. While other large herbavores are more timid and fearful of predators, the yale has more “fight” mentality than “flight.” This is because of its special weaponry. The yale’s horns are unique muscle and nerve appendages covered in a thick, segmented, chitinous material. This allows almost 360 degree maneuverability with the horns. So when it drinks from a watering hole or grazes, the horns are up at various angles to impale any charging lion or crocodile. The yale’s brain also has extra matter in the frontal cortex, which allows for each horn to work independently, in cases of multiple predators.

The yale travel in herds of just over two hundred. When yale are first born, their horns are soft, floppy stubs. It takes a few weeks for them to grow and become armored. Some of the older yale have horns exceeding 110 centimeters. If a horn is damaged, it takes several weeks to heal and form new armored coating. Some poachers take yale horns and try to pawn them off as unicorn horns. If a yale loses a horn, it

doesn’t grow back, which hinders the injured yale in challenging other males for mates.

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| 8 | 3 | 3 | 8 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 6 | 5 | 1 |

Movement:

Skills: Perception 2, Running 2, Unarmed Combat 3

Powers: Natural Weapon (Horn/Tusk: Reach +1/—, DV 4P, AP —)

Note: Horns have +1 reach. The horns move independently and negate the first bonus dice pool modifier for “friends in combat”

- These guys present an instance of art imitating life, as the design of the horns was inspiration for the mobility of medusa extensions.
- Kat o’ Nine Tales
- I though that came from, um, Medusa.
- Pistons
- Myth was the inspiration for the idea, nature the inspiration for the design.
- Kat o’ Nine Tales
- The king of Spain has procured a sustainable herd of yale. He has found that the yale was the perfect improvement to the fading bull-fighting sport, bringing in urban brawl enthusiasts. Now the bullfighter wears light armor so he doesn’t get disemboweled in the first two minutes. The “Running of the Bulls” festivities also has been scaled up, challenge wise, with the inclusion of the yale.
- Snopes



Kf

TOXIC CRITTERS

MONTAUK

PROCYON LATRI GEMINUS

Habitat: Urban and rural areas

Range: Northeastern North America

Frequency: Uncommon

Identification: This creature is approximately one meter in length with short black fur, and it weighs between five and ten kilograms. The rounded ears and tail are nearly hairless, and the creature has leathery black skin. Its muzzle has the appearance of a beak. The montauk has a venomous bite with a large venom sack beneath its pallet that feeds its upper and lower incisors. Its forelimbs are slightly longer than its hind legs, and it has hands with fully functional opposable thumbs.

Habits: A rash of missing pets has led authorities to the discovery of this toxic threat. First sighted in Montauk, New York in 2032, this beast has been invading people's homes in search of easy prey: the household pet. Residents were terrified of this beast at night. It can scale buildings, climb fire escapes, even sneak through open doors or windows. The corpse of one has been found and genetically identified as related to an Awakened raccoon, most likely a bandit (*Procyon latri*), though

the physical transformation is disturbing. It has no fear of dogs or cats, and it appears that they don't have a defense against whatever power it has over them. One of the first reports of missing pets was of a pair of Dobermans at the recycling yard. Their partially eaten remains were found two hundred meters away in a drainage tunnel. Authorities don't know how many montauks are in the area, but they are recommending that people lock their doors and keep their pets inside. Although there haven't been any metahuman attacks as of yet, the mantauk is very resourceful. More reports of their activities have been coming from New York, Manhattan Island, even as far north as Boston.

- Scary things. People still talk about them like they are New York's adopted bastard pet. Me-feeds occasionally pop up with video surveillance of them running around. The only thing I've heard they're good for is bringing down the population of stray animals and vermin.
- Pistons
- When their current food supply starts to run low, the montauk will just move up the chain. First the pets, then the pet owners.
- Ecotope

| B | A | R | S | C | I | L | W | Edg | Ess | M | Init | IP |
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| 2 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 4 | 8 | 1 |

Movement: 3/20

Skills: Athletics 3, Infiltration 3, Locksmith 2, Perception 4, Unarmed Combat 1

Powers: Accident, Animal Control, Enhanced Senses (Hearing, Low-Light Vision, Smell), Venom

Weakness: Allergy (Sunlight, Mild)



MONTAUK VENOM

Vector: Injection
Speed: 1 Combat Turn
Power: 5
Effect: Physical Damage, Malaise

THE HAPARANDA ZONE

The Haparanda Skärgård (archipelago) covers roughly sixty square kilometers of land in the north of the Gulf of Bothnia. The two main land masses are Sandskär and Seskar Furö, with several smaller islands and skerries (small rocky islands) in between. Since the Awakening, a dense forest of vegetation has grown rapidly on Sandskär, right up to the coast, making landing and camping much more difficult. Seskar Furö also transformed as it rose further out of the sea with a host of close islands, along with an increasing amount of grassland and towering sand dunes.

Normally the larger herbivores such as the moose and reindeer traverse the winter ice back and forth to Haparanda from the mainland, but a combination of pollution and astral phenomena have prevented the ice from permanently forming. This has isolated some unique Awakened species. The astral phenomenon is a cross between the veil and a mana storm, as extreme tidal surges can emanate from the archipelago and strike the nearby mainland.

In the years following the Euro Wars, however, an influx of pollution from the Baltic Sea countries drifted in on the currents into Haparanda. The small island of Mali between Sandskär and Seskar Furö reacted negatively, transforming into a vast shallow swampland almost as big as Seskar Furö. Species, both Awakened and otherwise, have developed strange mutations on Mali, though the whole Haparanda Zone connects the species in a strange symbiotic relationship. For example, venerable reindeer (an Awakened species similar to grandfather elk) has a dietary need to feed on Mali's black Bothnia wormwood, which would be deadly to other herbivores. The mutated Bothnia wormwood, whose fruit would not otherwise be distributed, is then spread by venerable reindeer. The opposite is also true for the toxic spitting terns who feed on schools of ethereal candlefish, which neutralize pollutants in the waters between the islands. Many scientific and magical research groups are interested in this archipelago and its unique inhabitants. Travelers have to face fierce storms and confusing fog before even reaching the island.

PROTEAN

ENTAMOEBIA THINGII

Habitat: Any

Range: Global

Frequency: Rare

Identification: In its natural state, the proteanis an amorphous grey mass weighing between 500 grams and 125 kilograms. The protean can also look like any creature it has consumed, provided it has enough mass to change shape.

Habits: The protean is believed to be an Awakened form of the amoeba that causes human dysentery (*Entamoeba histolytica*) that somehow became toxic by the addition of the Boltzmann-Schneider virus's DNA. This mutation has made the individual amoeba work collectively as one creature. This carnivorous mass hunts by concealing itself into the form of a creature it has most recently eaten. Professor Andreas Szerinski at Moscow University postulates that the Boltzmann-Schneider virus's engineered ability to detect cancer cells has somehow allowed the protean to replicate an engulfed organism's physical outward appearance in what he calls a "metamorphogenetic field." This field can, in theory, be disrupted by a strong enough electromagnetic field. Very few measures can destroy a protean, including fire, alkaline chemicals, etc.

The protean is a very dangerous predator to even metahumans, as it can mimic metahuman form. Luckily its intelligence is limited, so it cannot speak, nor is it skilled in using technological devices.

- Boltzmann-Schneider virus was intended for genetic therapy; adaptable for various hereditary diseases. It was and still is a widely used medical tool.
- KAM
- And human dysentery isn't hereditary. So does this lead to the conclusion the protean was created purposefully?
- Nepheline

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* See notes



KFI

Movement: *

Skills: Infiltration 3, Shadowing 2, Spellcasting 4, Unarmed Combat 3

Powers: Adaptive Coloration, Corrosive Secretions, Engulf, Innate Spell (Shape Change, see notes), Invulnerable (Normal Weapons)

Weakness: Vulnerable (Fire, Water, Alkaline Chemicals, EM Weapons)

Notes: The protean's initial form has a Body and Strength of 0 with a movement of 1/3. Once it has killed and engulfed a creature, it can absorb one half of the subject's Body and Strength into its own (round up). When its shape changes, the protean's movement speed and abilities are that of the new form. When its Body reaches twice its Essence, it splits into two proteans, each at half Body and Strength of the parent at the time of the split.

For every 3 boxes of fire or chemical damage, reduce the protean's Body and Strength by 1. While normal weapons may not do any damage, they can disrupt the protean's shape if the damage would have caused knockback, causing it to fall apart. The protean then needs an Agility + Willpower (3, Combat Turn) Extended Test to pull itself back together.

MICRO AWAKENINGS

Posted by: Dr. Paterson

The CDC has been very active in watching the many new Awakened species that have emerged and/or been discovered. It is frightful to think of avian or swine flu virus having extra chances to mutate as it passes through these new species. There are several microorganisms that have been identified, including the organism that served as the progenitor of the protean.

TZARRATH (AWAKENED LEPROSY)

Vector: Contact

Speed: 1 Month (Incurable)

Penetration: 0

Power: 12

Nature: Bacteria

Effect: Agony, Malaise

Tzarrath was first documented by Dr. Liron Phalen when he and his wife contracted the disease. It is a very rare and incurable disease. Dr. Phalen and his wife died in a house fire that started in their home lab as they searched for a cure. The bacteria cause abnormal growths in organic material through random duplication of the body's tissue (bone, nerves, skin, etc). It's a slow and painful death. The bacteria are dangerous, as contact with dead organic material such as wood and cotton results in the same abnormal growths. Sterilization procedures must be taken when dealing with tzarrath.

PYREXIA (AWAKENED DYSENTERY)

Vector: Ingestion

Speed: 8 Hours (4)

Penetration: 0

Power: 10

Nature: Parasitic

Effect: Physical Damage, Agony

Pyrexia, the protozoan from which the protean mutated, is deadly on its own. Pyrexia causes a high fever and bloody stool as the protozoan puts holes in the intestines. In later stages, as the protozoan develop in greater numbers, they generate their own heat, causing burns as they exit the body.

Pyrexia was first identified in Central America on a tour boat. It was originally considered Montezuma's Revenge and was treated as such. Unfortunately pyrexia's genetic signature is much different, and so none of the standard treatments worked. eventually more than two hundred tourists were hospitalized and six of them died before pyrexia was understood. Now travelers to Central and South America are warned of Camaxtli's revenge (named for the Aztec god of fire).

NANOPLASMOSIS (AWAKENED TOXOPLASMOSIS)

Vector: ingestion

Speed: 1 Day (8)

Penetration: -2

Power: 10

Nature: Parasitic

Effect: Special

This unusual protozoan infects nanosystems, destroying the nanites as if it were a competing species. This protozoan not only feeds off the organic compounds found in soft nanites, but it has the ability to resonate a field that jams individual nanites.

Nanoplasmosis degrades nanites faster by any remaining Power rating it has after a disease Resistance Test. If the Power is reduced to 0, one nanosystem is still permanently reduced by 1. If an infected subject has a nanohive, the protozoans infiltrate the system, preventing the creation of new nanites. The going hypothesis is that the protozoan Awakened within a netzumi and is transmitted through fecal matter.

MUTANT CRITTERS

ANGELENO COCKROACHES

PERIPLANETA CALIFORNIA

Habitat: Urban areas near the coast.

Range: Los Angeles, PCC, and nearby coastal areas

Frequency: Uncommon

Identification: An abnormal sized cockroach, growing up to 10 to 12 centimeters long

Habits: One of the unfortunate features of Southern CFS is the florescent coastline due to the "Green Tide." The green glow comes from an extremophile phosphorescent fungus discovered in the SOX. It was developed by Pacific Foods as an improvement to mycoprotein due to its nutritional value and rapid growth, but as reported by INN, the power plant at the offshore platform had faulted, and automatic systems scrambled to shut down but failed to contain a power spike that caused an explosion and a release of the fungus into the world. It survived on brackish water along the tidal edge and started growing on a few beachfronts in Los Angeles. It was isolated until the twin quakes struck, and it now edges most of Los Angeles and grows as far as sixty kilometers south of the city. One of the elements that keep it from spreading is that cockroaches have found it very tasty. Unfortunately the roaches (*Periplaneta Americana*) have mutated from long-term consumption. After several generations, this mutation has become dominate. The Angeleno cockroach, as this new mutation is called, feeds almost exclusively on macroprotein-based foodstuffs.

CFS and now the PCC have laws effectively making it illegal to own/possess an alufyr in the city of Los Angeles or any coastal location within one hundred kilometers of Los Angeles, because of the possible escape and mutation.

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| 1 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 5 | 5 | 1 |

Frequency: Common

Movement: 2/5

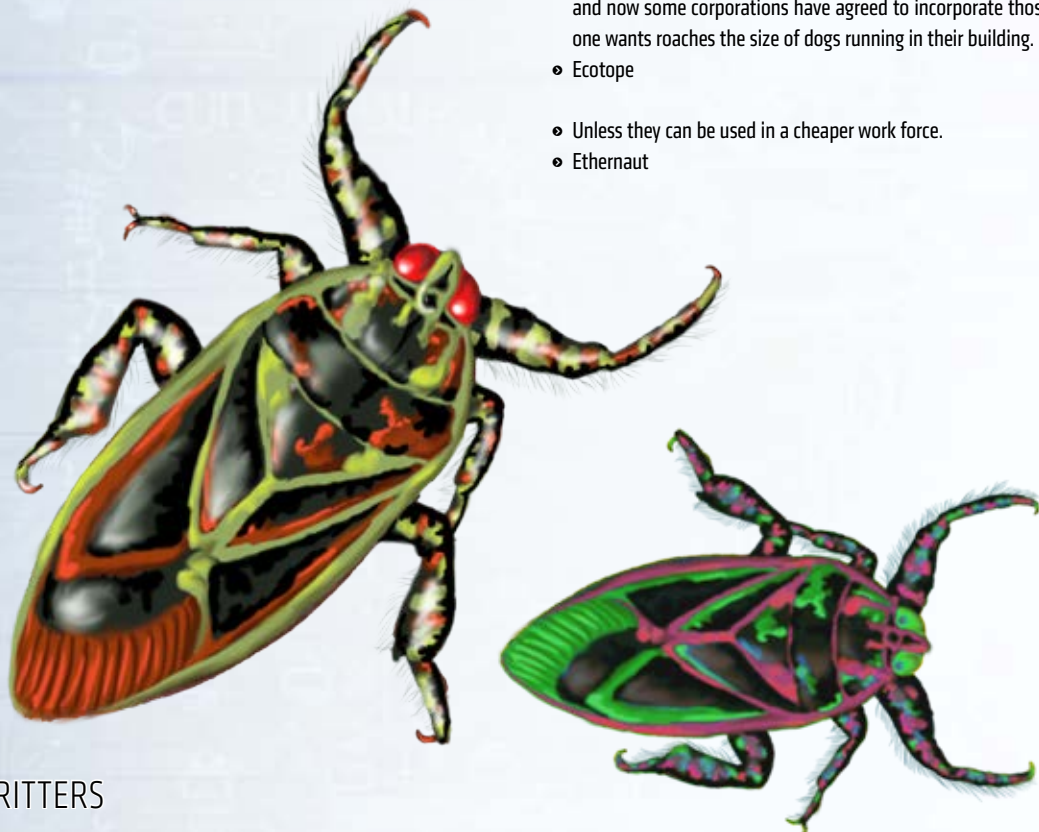
Skills: Dodge 3, Infiltration 3, Perception 2,

Powers: Gestalt Consciousness, Wall Walking

Weaknesses: Fragile 2

Note: -1 Reach

- Yeah judging by the size of the Angeleno cockroach, a mutated alufyr would be scary.
- Slamm-0!
- CFS has one of the most rigid restrictions of the import and ownership of pets with bans on alufyr, century ferrets, and most genetically altered pets due to fear of escape and mutation of other species through association. Of course, the bans don't apply in corporate enclaves. Then you had the twin quakes and the reclamation of Los Angeles by the PCC. PCC has kept some of these restrictions, and now some corporations have agreed to incorporate those restrictions. No one wants roaches the size of dogs running in their building.
- Ecotope
- Unless they can be used in a cheaper work force.
- Ethernaut



MALL HAWK

FALCO DREWNOVO

Habitat: Urban areas

Range: North America, parts of Europe, Australia

Frequency: Common

Identification: A blue-grey falcon, 50 centimeters long with a 120 centimeter wingspan. Both male and female falcons weigh in at a hefty 1.5 kilograms.

Habits: In the early days of megamalls and arcologies, to help keep the population of rodents and birds that would eventually infiltrate the structure, one corporation bred falcons to live in the structures. There was some genetic manipulation, but not at the cost or scale of warforms. The changes were made so that they could survive better in an indoor environment. These falcons were bred and sold in Europe, North America, even Australia. They were much cheaper to maintain and were quite popular with visitors as they watched the falcon hunt down pigeons. Mall hawks, as they are mistakenly called, live in colonies of ten to twenty five mating pairs per building. Multiple generations of the falcon have lived in these structures for well over forty years. Mall hawks have learned and passed on tricks to get through doors, snag food from vendors, and take advantage of flying drones. Recently, whether due to a mistake within their genetic engineering manifesting or something introduced by external sources, the mall hawk has begun to show more aggressiveness and speed, and has also developed bone spurs on its feet and wrists. While they have not left the large structures to find new homes, they have damaged ventilation shafts and glass windows in order to hunt prey outside. They have not been a threat to metahumans, but they become very protective during the breeding months of February and March. In several malls, a few areas are temporarily off limits as hawks living there will attack anyone who gets close to the nests.



| B | A | R | S | C | I | L | W | Edg | Ess | Init | IP |
|---|---|------|---|---|---|---|---|-----|-----|------|----|
| 2 | 4 | 3(5) | 2 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 7(9) | 1 |

Movement: 20/60 (flight)

Skills: Flight 3, Perception 3, Tracking 2, Unarmed Combat 2

Powers: Natural Weapon (Bite/Claw: DV 5P, AP 0), Enhanced Senses (Low-Light), Fragile 1

Qualities: Bone Spikes, Lightning Reflexes

MANUFACTURED MUTATIONS: LOGO TURTLES

Posted by: Ecotope

A little known Japanese corporation learned to manipulate the colors and patterns of turtle shells by 2020, selling customizable turtles, called logo turtles. In an odd twist of events, more than twenty startup companies bought into the logo turtles, ordering designer shells with their company logo on it. Almost all were augmented painted turtles (*Chrysemys picta*) that were customized, though there was at least one company who ordered a modified African spurred tortoise (*Geochelone sulcata*) for the larger shell. There was a rise in sales to corporate employees, spin-off corporate turtle farms, even a few legal twists as the logo turtle was considered "corporate intellectual property." For nine years, it was good for a few turtle species until the Crash of '29. None of these corporations making the turtles survived. The turtle farms simply released their inventory into the wild. After fifty years, wild painted turtles have been found with corporate logos or fascinating new symbols from generations of different altered corporate turtles.

- I've heard of these things. Turtle sanctuaries were really a tax write-off, putting a "give back to the environment" spin to balance out a whole bunch of corporate exploitation.
- Dr. Spin

NEW CRITTER POWERS

ENERGY DRAIN (ELECTRIC)

This Energy Drain ability affects devices, drones, and vehicles. When an attack is made, the device uses its Device Rating or vehicle/drone Body to resist. Successful net hits create temporary damage as the power supply is drained. Once vehicles and drones fill all their condition monitor boxes become “dead,” needing a recharge. This may cause the vehicle or drone to crash, causing real damage. Devices without condition monitors become non-functional after the total net hits exceeds the device’s rating.

HYPNOTIC (SENSE)

Affecting a particular sense, such as visual or aural, this power mesmerizes all who see/hear it. The creature makes a Magic test, and the hits add to the subjects’ threshold for any relevant Perception Tests the target makes while entranced by the creature. The maximum duration a critter can hypnotize a subject is equal to its Charisma x 10 minutes.

ADVANCED METAMAGICS

There are some adepts who continue to advance the magical bond between them and their animal companions, as reflected in the following metamagic.

LYCANTHROPE (ANIMAL)

Prerequisite: Attunement (Animal) (p. 53, *Street Magic*)

Many adepts who have attuned to an animal companion through initiation often say that they can sense a primal energy just beyond their reach. With this initiation rite, the adept taps into that power to become the beast to which they have bonded.

With a successful twenty-minute ritual, the adept can shift into animal form, matching the abilities of the animal to which they are attuned. This transformation is not the temporary suspension of human form that magicians do with their spells. It is more akin to a shapeshifter’s ability. This ability has the drawback of making it difficult for the adept to shift back into human form, since their metahuman mind slowly becomes more primal while in the animal body. If an adept spends weeks or months in the animal shape, they may become permanently lost in the animal.

It takes a successful Willpower + Magic (1) Test to shift into animal form at the end of the ritual. The adept can stay in animal form for as long as they wish. Returning to human form is more difficult, requiring a Willpower + Magic (5 – net hits from the initial test) Test. Failure means that the adept must wait another two hours to gather his thoughts and override the increasing animal form’s instincts. For every twenty-four hours the adept spends in animal form, increase the threshold by 1. If the threshold exceeds the sum of the adept’s Willpower + Magic, the adept cannot leave the animal form. Once the adept is back in human form, they must repeat the ritual to shift again.

ATTUNEMENT RITUALS

AWAKEN THE BEAST (AWAKENED ANIMAL)

Prerequisite: Attunement (Animal) (p. 53, *Street Magic*)

This ritual channels qi energy conforming to the adept’s companion animal. In doing so, the companion may shift into an Awakened, non-sentient form of the species designated by the ritual. The adept completes the one-hour ritual by resisting Stun damage equal to twice the Willpower of the Awakened form with Willpower + Magic Test. At the completion of the ritual, the animal may shift to the Awakened form for a number of hours equal to the grade of the initiate. As the ritual is taxing on both the adept and the animal, any damage is applied to both the adept and animal.

If there is no Awakened animal related to the attuned animal, the gamemaster may create an Awakened creature by giving the animal up to two paranormal powers (p. 204, *Running Wild*). Since there are many Awakened creatures that the gamemaster may not want to release on the players (i.e., an attuned armadillo shifting into a behemoth), the gamemaster may exclude them from the list or use an alternate attribute of the Awakened beast to calculate damage. If the Awakened form has a shifting power, it is superseded by this shifting ability.

Attempting to empower an Awakened beast is almost impossible and quite dangerous. Every point of Magic that the adept tries to shift to the attuned animal in the duration of this ritual causes immediate physical damage equal to the drain of the ritual, unresisted, to both the adept and animal.

Vegas entertainer Prince Adam and his golden lab, Yeller, get ready for a little run against the Onyx Dragon. Adam prepares the awakening ritual in his hotel room. With Yeller in the center of painted glyphs (which housekeeping will undoubtedly complain about mopping up), Adam devotes magical energy into his companion. After resisting 6 boxes of Stun damage (the Willpower of a barghest is 3, times 2 equals 6), the energy coalesces into Yeller, briefly outlining him as a larger mastiff. And they said you couldn’t teach an old dog new tricks.

DOMINATE (ANIMAL)

Prerequisite: Attunement (Animal) (p. 53, *Street Magic*)

Entering into connectivity to one animal opens the door to a general connection to other animals. With this ritual, the adept can adjust their aura and pheromones to be primal and predatory. While not seeming different to metahumans, animals sense the adept as an apex predator or an equal. Unlike reactions to the Critter Spook quality (p. 117, *Runner’s Companion*), prey animals go still and quiet, trying to avoid the adept. Security animals and predatory species must make an Opposed Willpower Test to engage or obey a command to attack the adept. Failure means that they become submissive and will not attack, nor will they obey any commands by the adept. If the adept attacks the animal, the animal attacks back. Awakened critters get a two dice bonus to their Willpower Tests. The ritual takes twenty minutes to perform and lasts for a number of hours equal to the adept’s Initiative rating.

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