

SHADOWRUN



THE WAY OF THE ADEPT

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Featuring Art From:

Shadows of Europe; Shadowrun, First Edition; Grimoire; Shadows of North America; Shadowbeat; Shadowrun, Second Edition; Corporate Security Handbook; Primer Runners; Loose Alliance; Tir na nOg; and Rigger 2

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CATALYST
game labs

SHADOWRUN OPTIONS FOR ADEPTS



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>
 "No matter how narrow the path, walk it with a purpose."

JackPoint Stats

7 users currently active
in the network

Latest News

The individual who left a sprite to trace the network has been taken care of. Let that be a lesson to the rest of you. - FastJack

Personal Alerts

- *Your downloaded copy of MilSpecTech is corrupted.
- *You have 5 new private messages.
- *You have 9 new responses to your JackPoint posts.
- *The Klondike diamond collection is now scheduled for auction in seventeen hours.

First Degree

One Member is online and in your area.

Your Current Rep Score: 517
(72% positive)

Current Time: 30 Aug 2072,
2100 hrs

- PREFERENCES
- FEEDS
- TASKS
- LINKS
- HISTORY

Today's Heads Up

We have an important announcement from Ma'Fan regarding the ever-changing Awakening. Keep your eyes out, adepts are even more deadly, sneaky or smooth than ever before.



Incoming

- *Sometimes it's about the clothes, sometimes the "I can take you, chummer" strut, but it's always about the Attitude. [Tag: [Attitude](#)]
- *Learn about the hiding spots and routes of the Free Traders amongst us. There is also a blurb or two about the police that try to stop them and the tools of the trade. [Tag: [BorderRunners](#)]
- *Stories from the decadent cites of Asia don't always involve drunk tourists and sex parlors in dark alleys. [Tag: [99 Bottles](#)]

Top News Items

- *Four masked terrorist walk in Seattle Knight Errant Precinct #8, no police walk out. Reports indicate all officers were maimed, but none were slain. Forensic testing indicate the assailants were Awakened. [Link](#)
- *Lone Star private security thwarts break in attempt on Fed-Boeing Facility, Everett. The five unidentified orks were transferred to a holding center for identification. [Link](#)
- *Two young trolls were found slain this morning in Manhattan. Initial reports indicate this was another case of race-related violence. [Link](#)

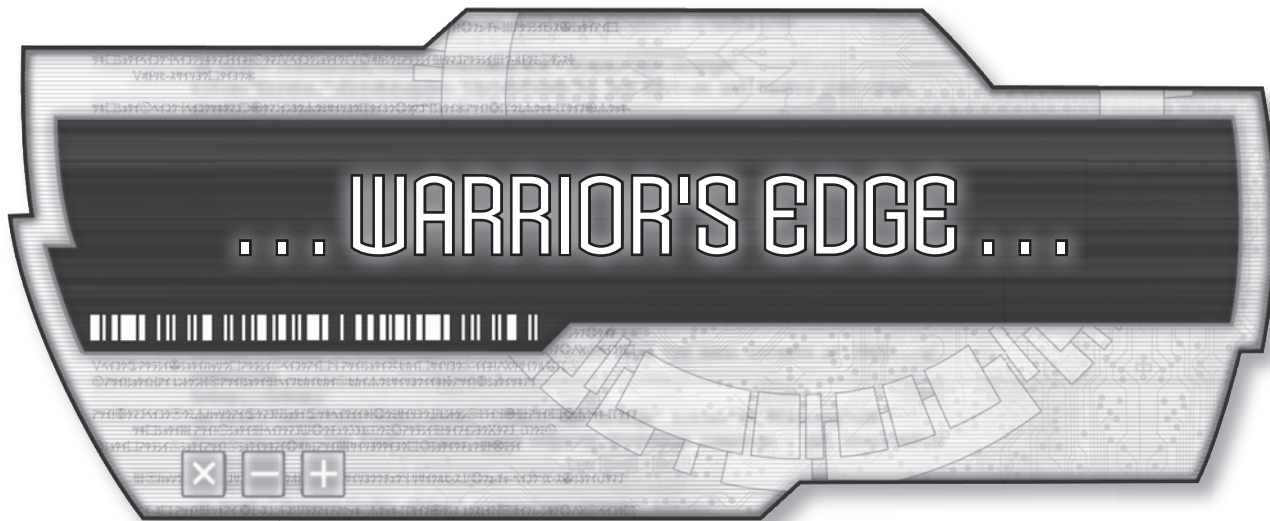
- CHAT
- MESSAGES
- FILES
- POSTS
- NEXUS
- SEARCH

- Active ComStar Firewall
- Active Jack-in-the-Box Antivirus
- Active SpamWitch Filter
- On/Receiving Commcode
- Excellent Signal
- Active Hidden Mode
- Local Map

SHADOWRUN OPTIONS

The Options line is intended to introduce new concepts, play styles, or abilities to a group. While all rules in this series go through playtest, they are not considered official, and all groups are encouraged to read and discuss them thoroughly before incorporating them into a campaign. They will not be used in official products, Missions, or allowed for tournament play.

- CONTINUE
- ADVANCED SEARCH
- SAVE



The elf had taken the name Talondel after his Rite of Passage. He had shivered in the cold rain of the wilderness and survived his Bridging. Talondel then stood proudly in front of his parents, the Paladin he would serve alongside, and Count McCoy—a representative from Prince Ni'Fairra, who sadly could not attend that day—as the elf renamed himself for all to witness. Alongside that name came a purpose; with that purpose came service to his nation and ultimately his Prince.

The Warrior served Ni'Fairra still, these decades later. His Oaths demanded it.

His orders had been broad, and they left quite a bit of leeway as to how to carry them out. To sow discord, advance elvenkind, and disrupt Hestaby's plans, whatever they might be. He'd been given the initial assignment years ago, and hadn't heard from Prince Ni'Fairra since the great coup and upheavals. Talondel took pride in the Prince's trust and was quietly reassured by her confidence in his abilities. She was his Prince, still, politics and orkish upstarts be damned; by Oath he served her, and one day she would be a Prince in name again.

As he had years ago, he lurked in the cold rain and waited for midnight. He'd chosen his target two days earlier when a police-band scanner reported a "weed eater gypsy punk" being incarcerated. He was on a roof in a small town between Redding and Shasta. Talondel had spent the previous night performing reconnaissance work, reminding himself that skulking around in shadows wasn't cowardice when it was part of his duty. It was merely preparation for the fight to come, and he shaped the battlefield to his liking. The filthy round-ears of Wolverine Security hadn't seen or heard him, meaning that they did not know about the planted charges, the placed electronics, the ranges he'd measured, the head counts he'd taken, or the plans he'd made. They didn't know they stood against a trueborn Warrior in service to his Prince. They didn't know they would all die.

At midnight he heard muffled explosions and smiled grimly. One charge cut off the building's external power supply, while the other destroyed the emergency generators in the basement. Darkness smothered the small security station, and Talondel's

delicately pointed ears heard the first confused cries: the heckling to hide fear from the prisoner cell, the shouts from one Wolverine officer to another within the building. Even his magically enhanced hearing couldn't pick up the sound of the directional jammer, but he had set the timers and knew it had begun at the same instant as the detonations.

Talondel married his cheek to the stock of his HK PSG Enforcer. The scope's magnification was set low, because the range was ridiculously short. More important than the Zeiss optics was the time that he had invested into this rifle. The Warrior had used it for years, taken it apart and reassembled it more times than he could count. He knew the balance, trigger weight and recoil like it was an extension of his body. He had trusted his life to this Enforcer at least a hundred times, and it had never let him down. He knew it would not tonight.

Talondel leaned, shoulder snug against the stock and swung the muzzle around on a compact bipod that held the rifle. When he saw a security officer, he quickly caressed the trigger, twice, and then checked for movement at another window. The silencer and flash hider performed as they should have; no one outside the three-story police station would know what was going on. The signal jammer, not just his silencer, ensured that. He continued to shoot as targets presented themselves.

Magic fueled him, and he fired the rifle quicker than anyone wholly human. Two shots, find a target, adjust aim, repeat; several heartbeats later he thumbed a small lever on the precision rifle and engaged the second magazine to continue sniping. Silencer or not, the Wolverine thugs knew where he was firing from, but Talondel didn't let that stop him. Another pair of shots, and another; the targets were more careful now, giving him only wary heads and half-covered shoulders to fire at, peeking at him through shattered windows. They were easy targets, like an afternoon at the range, until finally the second magazine was empty.

Talondel ducked below the lip of his building and quickly locked his rifle into its armored, padded case. It was tethered to a grappling hook by a slender line of stealth rope, and the elf



hurled the locked case over the rear of the building. He had pre-measured the line and spooled out just enough that the rifle would be dangling a meter off the ground, two meters away from his waiting coupe when the night's work was done. His movements were calm, seemingly lax, but every action had been meticulously planned in advance. Warriors were not sloppy in service to their Prince.

He took a single, calming breath and then whispered to himself in Sperethiel as he leapt over the rooftop's low wall. He recited his Oaths as the pavement rose up to meet him, twisting cat-like and effortlessly absorbing the landing's impact with his legs, magic, and faith. Talondel glanced up as he darted across the street, spotting a round-ear who'd mustered the courage to stand in a window and level a shotgun. The elf snorted at the inelegance of the man's weapon, the ugly sound of the slide, and the slowness with which the muzzle tracked him. His left arm swung up, and a sliver of steel leapt from his hand. Talondel's eyes weren't even on the target as the corpse fell; he was already scanning the other windows. There were none. Wolverine Security agents were only fearsome when attacking. Their brutality and bluster left them when they were on the defensive.

A ripple of energy rolled off his shoulder as he slammed it into the front door of the station, buckling the metal as it gave way from the force of his magically enhanced impact. The door crashed off the hinges, but even before it clattered to the ground he was tumbling, rolling to one side, avoiding the fire he knew to expect. Talondel then sprang to his feet meters away from where they expected. His wrist flicked again, and a handful of sharp steel whistled through the air. Two more bodies slumped to the floor.

A pair of ugly policemen died to throwing blades before he ran dry. Talondel relished the opportunity to rely on his Warrior's training and steel. A sword leapt into his hand, too quick for the next officer's eyes to register. It was a short blade, something like a gladius, but leaf-bladed like an old xiphos. It was similar to a secondary weapon that an Old-World archer might carry, but graceful runes etched in orichalcum ran the length of its blade ensured lethality despite its size. The edges were lined with monofilament wire; combined with the enchantments and Talondel's ability, it was enough to separate the surprised guard's head from his shoulders easily. As a boy, he'd been a master

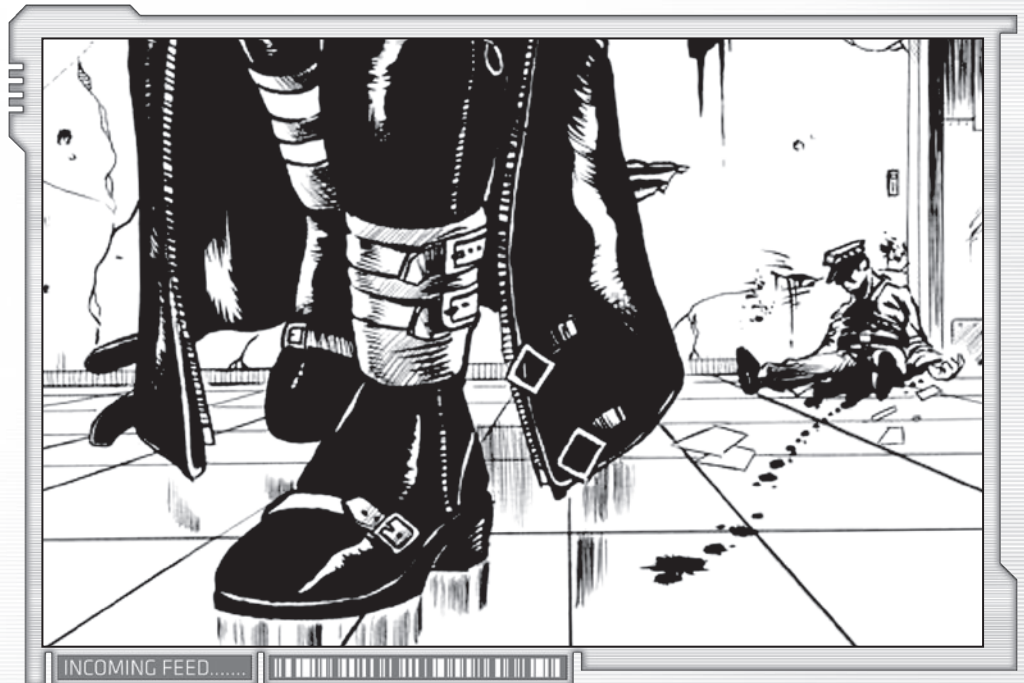
with a well-balanced hurley. After his Naming, Talondel had an altogether more lethal weapon.

The sword wasn't just a thing of metal, monofilament, rubber grips and orichalcum. It was his Prince's will made manifest, a gift from her hand, a symbol of his fealty and of his place. He wielded it as she wielded him; and they were unstoppable. The blade sang in the darkness of the security station, led unerringly from room to room by his flawless vision, making examples of every night-blind, ugly human that dared to stand in the way of a thrice-Oathbound Warrior. It was more than a sword, just as he was more than a swordsman; they were symbols, and symbols do not die easily.

The slaughter finished as quickly as it started. Talondel had barely broken a sweat.

He dipped gloved fingers in the pool of blood left by his last victim and swiped it across a bare spot of wall. He was not an artist, but within moments the sketch was complete. He tilted his head and narrowed his eyes in mute critique, but there could be no mistaking the graffiti's sinuous neck, slashing tail, or broad-spread wings. A dragon, painted in the blood of slain humans, would send a message. Hestaby and her followers would take the blame for the night's slaughter and for the escape of the prisoners he was about to set loose. The gypsy boy hauled in by the locals would go free, and the Bitch-Wyrm's symbol on the wall would muddy the waters of responsibility.

He took stock; humans were dead and an elf had been freed from a cage. Hestaby and her minions would, at least briefly, bear the blame for it. Talondel smiled. His orders had been carried out, and his Oaths fulfilled. His Prince's plans moved forward yet again. It had been a good night. He was content. He remained pure. He was a Warrior, and none could stand before him.



INCOMING FEED.....



CURRENTS OF POWER

Posted by: Ma'Fan

- Some of you might have heard about the recent splash surrounding the latest Visionary Academic Journal. Some of you haven't, but should. A grad student started the ball rolling in a journal four months ago, and speculation intensified when an MIT&T reviewer couldn't fault the kid's logic, and a major S-K research team confirmed it. Adepts are now functioning in noticeably different ways than they were a few years ago. Plenty of our regular posters are busy, but I was able to get Ma'Fan to share some information with the rest of us. If you've got an adept in your crew, it'd be a good idea to listen up.
- Fastjack
- Of course they're functioning differently. We're all functioning differently, all the time! Upgrading is kind of what shadowrunners do, after all. I don't see the academic community all abuzz every time some chromeass gets a new arm or hacker upgrades his 'jacks.
- Slamm-0!
- That's not quite what the researchers mean, lad. There have been startling changes in how individual adepts have handled themselves under controlled conditions, breaking the norm regarding established progression rates. People have gotten tangibly better at the things they practice the most, and they have done so faster than they should.
- Thorn
- Uhh, so? Doesn't that make sense?
- Slamm-0!
- Wouldn't you be surprised if one of your commlinks suddenly got harder to trace, or started processing commands faster, all without you mucking about with the wiring, new software, or upgrading a processor? If, just from you using it, one of your programs started to run more smoothly? You might be glad for the change, but still a little curious about how and why it happened, aye?
- Thorn
- Oh. Uhh, yeah. I can see how that might be something folks would want to talk about.
- Slamm-0!
- I can see why they wouldn't. Keep the edge, stay alive.
- Dr. Spin

Link: ["Walking a Way, or Sprinting Along It: Specialization Among Adepts" Visionary Academic Journal, November, 2073](#)

And this is where I will begin. FastJack asked for me to talk to you because I have a little downtime on my hands, thanks to a broken leg, and because I'd come across some of this recent adept research as part of a job. Since I had some familiarity with the subject at hand, and some time to kill, I was more than happy to help out.

- Aww, kitty got hurt?
- Mika

- Hush. You would have taken the landing a lot harder than I did if your grapple harness had fallen apart in mid-climb. I, at least, landed on my feet.
- Ma'Fan

S-K's interest had been piqued by the doctoral dissertation I just linked to, and they conducted experiments on young adepts, trying to find out exactly where one Way stopped and another began. They confirmed that there were, indeed, tangible benefits to focusing their company adepts along a Way. They installed implants on research volunteers to see when—*exactly* when—they stopped walking the Ways of Warriors and Athletes and found themselves, instead, dark shells on the way to being Burnouts. Quite tellingly, even amidst a corporation the size of Saeder Krupp, they have been unable to recruit a single Invisible Way for these experiments, or to convince any of their corporate Speaker's Way initiates to take part. As Totemic Way followers are almost unheard of in corporate circles, it is unsurprising that only those with more direct, physical powers were experimented upon.

- That doesn't make any sense.
- Black Mamba
- I agree. Taking perfectly functional adepts and tearing them apart to replace parts of their body with machinery, just to see how much they can take before their magic deteriorates, is a nonsensical waste.
- Ma'Fan
- No, I mean I don't know what the fuck you're talking about with all these different Ways.
- Black Mamba

As wasteful as I felt those experiments were, my curiosity was piqued by their results. The findings seemed accurate, and matched with the theories put forth by the academic journals. Formal research is confirming what Cat whispers to me in private; quite simply, adepts who are dedicated to a Way are rewarded for their dedication.

- It is no surprise. The totems are loyal to those who show them loyalty.
- Man-of-Many-Names
- So all this buzz is over crazy shaman-adepts who hear voices? Really?
- Black Mamba
- No, not really. *Most* adepts follow a Way, even if they don't know it. Think about the adepts you've worked with. They focus on kicking ass, or talking their way out of trouble, or not getting spotted in the first place, right? "Ways" are just how they classify themselves, or how the academics classify them. Some do consider themselves followers of a Totem, who are we to disagree? It seems to work for Ma'Fan.
- Riser

Cat looks after me while I pursue secrets and remain dedicated to stealth. Basically, as long as I look after myself instead of relying



on technology, Cat is with me. Cat helps those who help themselves, and I've felt that help. It was my fault I tried to break into the fifth floor of a building a few weeks ago. It was also my decision to trust in a stealth line instead of securing myself with my own hands and feet. It was my skill, and Cat's gifts to me, that let me survive that fall and that kept me from making a sound as I hit the ground. Cat lent me the speed and quickness I needed to escape after the job went sour, and the episode served as a warning about trusting in technology.

- Yeah. Or maybe you just screwed up and hit the quick-release feature on your harness, then broke your leg thanks to your lifelong dedication to the Way of gravity.
- Mika

Prior to that, I'd barely been able to handle second floor jumps. If I'd fallen five stories a year ago, I wouldn't be alive to post this. I've been feeling Cat more strongly for months, more in tune with my mentor's desires and motivations, and just all-around better as a result of it. Until that slip up with the stealth line, I'd been on top of my game for most of the last year. I was able to jump farther, run faster, and make less noise while doing so. Cat was pleased with my progress, and rewarded me with her gifts.

That's what's happening to these other adepts. The more they focus and the harder they work at what they were meant to be, the better they get at it. Not just in the traditional sense or even in the way adepts have become expected to excel. Those watching these adepts work from the astral have been impressed with what they've seen, and the study even shows some visible changes in their auras as they changed from tasks suited to their Way to tasks that run counter to it—check page eight in that study, and look at how the researcher describes the difference between that test subject running a lap versus playing a memory game. The differences are especially keen among Initiates.

- Anyone that watches the UFC can vouch for that. The more hard-core fighters have been absolutely kicking ass lately, and there have been some really amazing highlight reels. Even for guys already that good, there's been some amazing action lately.
- Hard Exit
- I'm still trying to figure out who determines what they are supposed to be. Is there something like the Insect Spirits working here?
- Clockwork
- In a publication that should hit the news in about two weeks, some researchers are linking this with fundamental changes in how magic and metahumanity interact, not just individual adepts' understanding of themselves. Particularly telling is the portion of the article dealing with Burnouts, and how they seem to be losing their focus as a result of too much augmentation.
- Winterhawk
- Not every shortcut is worth taking.
- Thorn

As for me, I know to listen to Cat a little more, and the latest catalog a little less. I know what works for me, whether the gear

reviews say that it should or not. The cast will be off next week and I plan on getting back to basics after that. A little roof-running by moonlight to get me back in shape, and then back to work. Last I heard the goody I was after hadn't actually been moved from that facility; they just ramped up security a little. Any of you hackers want to take a little job, and check up on the eighth floor security for me?

- Depends, as always, on how much you're paying.
- Glitch

WAYS AND MEANS

Posted by: Mika

- As a follow up to Ma'Fan's article, another contributor wanted to chat about the current classifications being assigned to adepts, and I gave him the go ahead. The ideas behind Ways are nothing new; the theories go back dozens of years to the first time someone used the term "physical adepts." No one argues like academics argue—except us. Have at it, kids.
- FastJack

To help some of you get up to speed on the topic without having to resort to your own Matrix searches, I put together the current batch of official classifications for adepts. It might help you make more sense out of Ma'Fan's post or better understand the adept with whom you work. I'm going to do my best not to let biases show and present a fair evaluation of how the academic community classifies adepts. Some of this information on Ways is going to be old news or feel elementary, but just bear with me. Thorn, Ma'Fan, and I may not have our eye on the cutting edge of your field of expertise, so no insult is intended when I assume that many of you don't keep an eye on what's going on in our specialties.

- We do if the "field of expertise" is infiltration, don't we?
- Ma'Fan
- B&E experts, among Shadowrunners? Who would've thought?
- Thorn

The simple truth is that adepts can be good at almost anything they put their mind to. We can be stronger, faster, tougher, see more sharply, hear more keenly, run faster, jump farther, dodge better, punch from across the room, adjust our body language to show people what they want to see, modulate our voices, light our hands on fire, walk without leaving footprints, and more. We can't do all of it at once, but if you look at the ranks of adepts in the world you'll be looking at some of the world's best at whatever it is that adept has chosen. By nature, we focus and specialize.

- Full of himself, isn't he?
- Pistons
- You have no idea.
- Ma'Fan

Group together a handful of those specializations, and you've got the Ways. Most of them are pretty self-explanatory, but there



are distinctions in mindset that distinguish one Way from another. Corporate and national militaries are full of guys who can run fast, jump high, and never seem to run out of fuel. I'd say most of them are Warriors, not Athletes, because they use those abilities to get into tactical positions, navigate battlefields, and be better trigger men. Athletes are more likely to use those powers because they love to run fast, want to break the world record for a jump, and they train all day. The distinctions may seem subtle, but they're there.

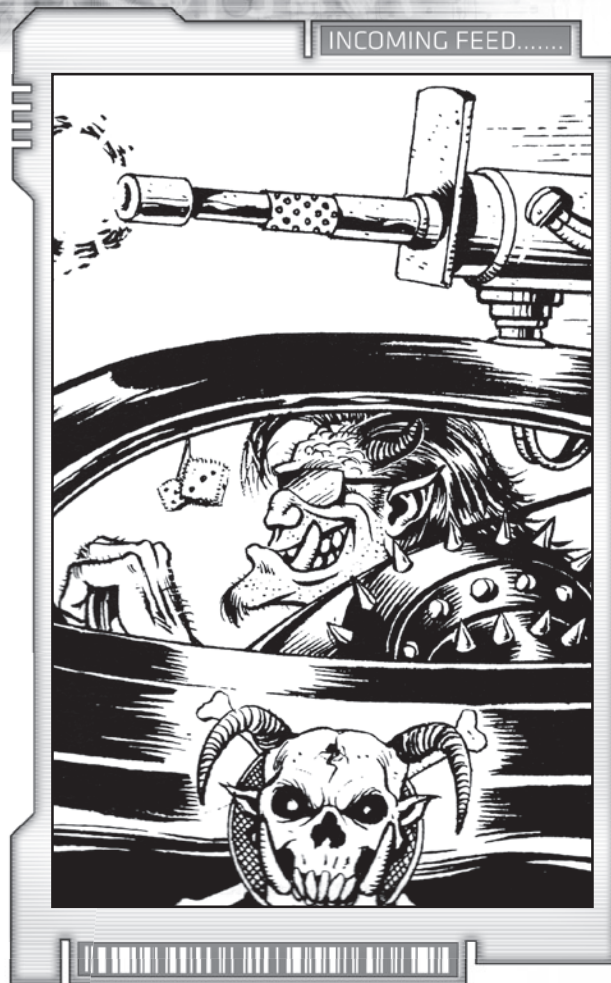
- He may not have meant it to be, but Mika's example here is telling. Athletes and Warriors are the two most common Way followers. As a matter of fact, back in the '20s and '30s, every adept was called a physical adept. It's a trend that continued well into the '50s. Prominent researchers stubbornly insisted that any adept who could see in the dark, or who was a superhumanly skilled technician, was only acting out fringe impulses of some ancient warrior tradition or was "striving for the peak of physical perfection" like an athlete. It has only been during the last decade or two that the one-word title has really caught on. The world has begun to accept that not every adept is out to run a marathon or punch people in the brain.
- Thorn
- So just how often do you feel really old?
- Slamm-0!

With that preamble out of the way, here is a summary of some of the major Ways that adepts follow.

Game Information

ON SHADOWRUNNING

Adepts are a varied lot, and nowhere is this more apparent than in the shadows. Talented experts can find themselves filling a variety of roles on a shadowrunning team, whether it be as infiltrators, frontline fighters, tech experts, drivers, or magical support. Keep in mind, however, they can fill the same roles as NPCs. Not every corporate security guard needs to be a cybered or combat-drugged mundane, and gangs, syndicates, and other criminal organizations recruit adepts as eagerly as corporate and government militaries do. A Speaker's Way follower could make for a powerful fixer ally (or rival), Artisan's Way adepts often make their living repairing and customizing gear, and who knows what sort of trouble a talented Artist rocker could get into, diving headfirst into the shadows to research for a new album? Remember that the options available in Way of the Adept aren't for player characters alone.



The Artisan's Way: This is the latest Way to be formally recognized by the research community, in large part because followers tend to keep a low profile in comparison to the equipment they use. They were considered followers of the Artist's Way until very recently. In several key debates the Artisans and their proponents insisted that it was function that mattered most, not form. The Artists collectively recoiled in horror, and the argument was over.

I like my gadgets, but my heart's just not in it like an Artisan's would be. These are the guys who live and breathe their tech. Their hand-eye coordination is second to none, and they've got creative streaks a kilometer wide. When they take something apart it's indelibly printed into their memory where all the pieces will go back together. Some of them focus on the hardware side of things, designing or tweaking things for the rest of us. Others like to get their hands dirty by grabbing the wheel and doing the driving themselves, or leaping into the Matrix and making it look easy.

The long and short of it is that those who follow the Artisan's Way see technology as an augmentation, but not a replacement, for magical talent. They focus their magic on improving and utilizing metahumanity's toys, and they're very good at it.

- Way of the Wheelman, anyone?
- Hard Exit
- Among other things, yes. A guy I used to work with made his drones almost dance for him. It was unreal.
- Rigger X

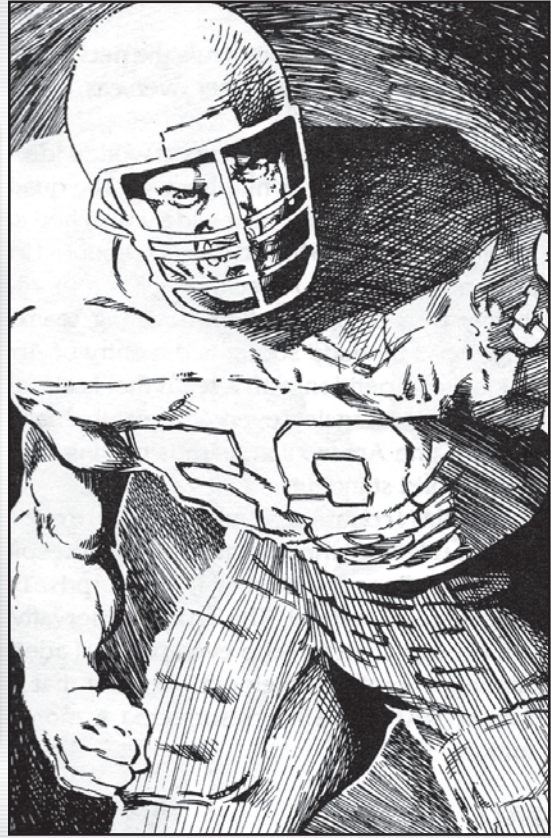
INCOMING FEED.....



The Artist's Way: What I do best, I do in the dark. But that's not the case for adepts who focus their powers on pleasing a crowd. These are people who have taken their creative focus and pushed it to an inhuman level. Some of them have a keen eye and can see the world in ways no one else can; others see a world they want to change, and set out to do so in ways a mundane could not. I know a gentleman named Talks With the Stone who uses adept powers to sculpt granite and marble with just his bare hands. Artist adepts are big hits in the entertainment industry, for good reason. A musician that cannot only read his crowd's mood, but also affect it directly through his music, is bound to be pretty popular.

- Artist's Way followers are also naturals when it comes to Centering, with an ability to focus themselves while performing that's second to none. Meditation through action comes very easily to most Artists.
- Thorn

INCOMING FEED.....



The Athlete's Way: All adepts are known for internalizing their power and using it to increase their natural abilities. Those who do so as Athletes are the poster-boys of adepts. They run faster, jump farther, lift more, and never get tired. Acts of athleticism have often been how humanity measures itself, and the fact is Athlete adepts just raise that bar, sometimes literally.

- Which is, of course, why they've had such a rocky relationship with professional sports. It took a long time for adepts to get accepted into some of the big-name games out there, and for years they had to make do with only competing against one another in adept-only leagues or not play at all.
- Sticks

Athlete's Way followers are in it to push their abilities and show they're the best. Warriors may see conflicts that need to be resolved, but Athletes see challenges to be overcome. It might be their opponents in a race, it might be a clock as they strive to beat their own best time, it might be a weight to be lifted, or it might be a cross-town courier run as the deadline draws near. What counts is that they're striving hard and improving themselves.



INCOMING FEED.....



The Invisible Way: While fairly well known in the criminal community, Invisible Way followers are largely ignored in popular culture outside of the clichéd “ninja assassin” stereotype.

- And line of video games.
- Slamm-O!

Invisible Way followers appear to like it that way. Spies and thieves as much as assassins, Invisible adepts are happy when the popular media either ignores them in favor of the more physically imposing types, or makes people expect them to be wearing black pajamas and throwing smoke bombs. In reality most Invisible Way followers are what the spook community would call “Gray Men.” You look right at them every day, you just never see them.

- It’s funny how he keeps saying “them” instead of “us.”
- Bull

While most Invisible Way adepts are skilled at skulking around in the dark, crawling around in air ducts and climbing up the side of buildings, others are invisible simply by blending in. They wear bland clothes, adopt a nondescript hairstyle, show little body language, and just live their lives in the background.

- They aren’t all benign thieves in the night or harmless infiltrators, either. Cat burglary is all well and good, but I know several militaries around the world that snatch up Invisible Way adepts as eagerly as they do Warriors. Kill teams and black ops squads are as happy to recruit quiet murderers as they are razor-sharp, gung-ho assault specialists.
- Hard Exit

The Magician’s Way: These guys are a lot easier to classify than any other type of adept, but a whole lot harder to categorize. If an adept can cast spells and doesn’t ramble on about Bear, Lion, Cat, or whatever all the time, odds are good they’re on the Magician’s Way. For versatility these guys can’t be beat. For specialization, they’re not in the same league as most adepts.

- Not every adept who listens when the spirits talk is capable of spell-casting. There are those who heed a Totem’s calls without sorcery being involved.
- Man-of-Many-Names
- And not every Magician’s Way adept is a Hermetic mage, either. It looks to me like Mika is letting his personal biases show here.
- Kat St. Irregular

Personality-wise, these guys are hard to pin down. Many Athletes, Warriors, and Artists are very obvious about who they are and what they do. With a Magician’s Way adept, it’s easy to blur the lines a little more. Many just use minor spells to augment their already-considerable adept powers, while others just look and work like a mage with a knack or two.

- Belial, Crown Prince of the Ancients, must be on this Way. That boy can sling fire spells with the best of ‘em, but he’s also got some powerful adept mojo working. There’s no other way to describe him on stage than “magical.”
- Turbo Bunny
- Bunny, it must’ve been a while since Belial dragged his bike into your shop for a tune-up; you’re a little out of the loop. Word is he’s more than “Crown Prince” lately.
- Riser



INCOMING FEED.....



The Speaker's Way: Second to Invisible Way adepts, Speakers are toughest to spot. With few exceptions, their powers aren't very flashy or obvious. If they're doing their job right, you won't remember being sweet talked, you won't think anything was unusual about the conversation, and you won't wonder what it was the public speaker said that made you change your mind. You'll remember a terribly charismatic figure, sure, but you won't remember the particulars of their message.

- That thing they do where they just shout at people and they do whatever they say? I'll admit I'm jealous of it, but it's kind of flashy and obvious.
- /dev/grrl
- I said there were a few exceptions.
- Mika

Their unique skill set is part of the reason why they weren't recognized as a Way for so long. If a guy sprints faster than a street bike or punches a truck to death, people notice, and you get the old "physical adept" label slapped on. If someone's just very likeable and able to talk circles around everyone they've ever met in their whole life? It's not as easy for the academic community to pin them down.

- Their covert nature is half the reason so many thrive in the shadows.
- Sticks
- Their ability to almost talk a Fixer into a fair wage is probably the other half.
- DangerSensei

INCOMING FEED.....



The Totem's Way: These are the rather odd adepts who can do the same amazing stuff as all the rest of us, but they thank Gaia, Coyote, Wolf, or whatever for it instead of acknowledging their own abilities.

- Do you honestly think I won't know who you're talking about if you don't say "Cat?"
- Ma'Fan
- I have no idea what you're talking about.
- Mika
- It poisons your soul to no end that I can do everything you can without relying on the same crutches you do; so you belittle what you do not understand. We barely get a single sentence in your "fair" and "unbiased" JackPoint document, and you don't know what I'm talking about? You are unbelievable.
- Ma'Fan
- What, you'd prefer I go on for a couple paragraphs about how I think you're all sadly deluded and play some weird "credit-shift" game, where you attribute all your talents to an external force instead of being proud of the skills you have? I can go back and edit this if you really want me to give you people more attention.
- Mika
- Shut it, both of you. Mika, you're supposed to be here to give the rest of us the lowdown on how adepts work, not to pass

judgment. Stay on topic or you're wasting bandwidth. Ma'Fan, carefully reread his last post, dwell on the compliment he gave you (no matter how backhanded) instead of the rest of it, and just move on. You two aren't going to see eye to eye on this one, and the rest of us don't want to hear the bickering. Take it to private messages or just fuck each other and get it over with. I don't care which. Just be prepared for your rep scores to take a nosedive if the arguing keeps up.

- FastJack
- Some people consider Totem's Way followers to be something like the shaman among adepts, and that's not far from the truth. Mika's got a point in that they often have similar talents to more orthodox-minded adepts from other Ways. For example, Wolf adepts are as nasty as Warriors, Monkey and Raccoon adepts can break into anywhere an Invisible could, Horse adepts can keep pace with any Athlete you'd want to name. Still, it's oversimplifying things a bit to say there aren't any significant differences. Similar to how a shaman functions, an adept's Totem meshes with his outlook, not just his abilities. Totem's Way adepts often have access to some interesting powers that other adepts don't grasp as easily, and also their own unique spin on traditional powers. An enhanced unarmed ability may manifest itself as a temporary transformation to sharp claws. Totemic masks aren't uncommon when an adept really pushes himself, and it seems like many Totem Way followers are more comfortable on the astral than traditional adepts. There are some interesting trends. In reality it's still anyone's guess about whether it's how a Totem's Way adept believes power flows to him, or if it's actually how the magic works.
- Winterhawk

The Warrior's Way: Up next, we've got some of the most common adepts around, or at least some of the most common adepts in our line of work—the Warriors. These guys are the kung fu experts that can unleash actual fists of flaming fury from across the room, the gunslingers that make even the most hardcore street sammy's smart-link hardware jealous, and the wicked swordsmen that get paraded around on the Tir news all the time. Depending on who you ask and how they specialize, they can kill with a touch, shoot the wings off a fly, or knock bullets out of the air with a sharp enough sword.

- The lad does have a flair for the dramatic.
- Thorn

We know them, we love them, and we're all a bit scared of them. Warrior adepts thrive in violence, with as many coming up through the bloody gutters as being honed in corporate or government programs. Where Athletes enjoy the challenge, Warriors enjoy the conflict. Whether it's the Zen-like focus of a supernaturally dangerous archer, or the more obviously manic edge of an underground pit fighter, the long and short of it is these aren't people you want to mess with.

- It's worth pointing out that not everyone who's developed some magic that helps them survive a fistfight or a shootout is really a Warrior. It takes more than owning a piano to make you a musician, and it takes more than owning a gun to make



you a gunfighter. The same is certainly true of actually honing an adept's talents towards walking the Warrior's Way.

- Thorn
- In the end, like so much else about adepts, it comes down to mindset and outlook. Two adepts might manifest the same supernatural toughness, strength, and speed, and they might even both use those powers to punch people in the face, but one could easily be an Athlete and the other a Warrior. The difference is that the Athlete probably got into boxing to appreciate the sweet science, improve himself physically, master the technical skills of the sport, and make money while pleasing a crowd.
- Winterhawk
- The real difference is that at the end of the fight, the Warrior adept would still be breathing.
- Sticks

... is Rich Simone reporting live from the Renton Mall. Knight Errant spokesman Raymond Abott just announced a press conference to recap the scene of today's Best You massacre that has portions of the mall cordoned off, leaving investigators with a real mess on their hands. For those of you just tuning in thanks to your live broadcast update reports, authorities are saying now that an unidentified ork made his way into the Best You cyberfeature store and "went berserk." Eyewitness reports say the man was screaming that he needed "more, more," and "couldn't get it back," while attacking Best You patrons with his bare hands.

"He totally trogged out," said one young shopper, "and he was wicked strong."

Authorities say nine shoppers are dead, along with the ork who Knight Errant officers engaged shortly after their arrival. KSJF has exclusive footage from Renton Mall security cameras and will show them at tonight's news at 11, along with a related broadcast featuring looks at metahuman crime rates throughout the Downtown region. And now we'll send you back to the studio, where we'll take a look at tonight's Urban Brawl schedule! Exciting night for the Screamer, right Bill?

Urgent Message...

INCOMING FEED.....



The Way of the Burnout: Last, and least, there are the guys who are barely adepts any more. All of the Ways we've talked about so far are for folks who are dedicated to their abilities; they practice, work hard, and turn natural talent into supernatural skill. Burnouts are the guys who try to skip that and replace their innate abilities with transhuman enhancements. They turn their back on who they are by taking shortcuts, and in the long run they cheat the world of their true potential.

- They're not even a Way, in any wholesome sense. People don't step onto the Burnout's Way, they fall onto it.
- Ma'Fan

Not everyone has the patience and dedication to reach the real heights of their ability as an adept. When they cut too many corners, they find that they have become a Burnout. Ways are for disciplined adepts that throw themselves headfirst into their magical training. Now more than ever, the benefits of a Way are there for those who work to get them.

RULES: QUALITIES AND POWERS

The Way of the Adept sets out to reward adept players and Gamemasters for communicating with each other and fleshing out an adept's personal interpretation of their Way. The listed Qualities detail the bonuses characters may receive for following each Way, granting them a tangible and powerful bonus for their dedication to their chosen path.

NEW QUALITIES

The Artisan's Way

Cost: 10 BP

Followers of the Artisan's Way have embraced modern technology and their adept powers alike, constantly augmenting one with the other. They are drivers, pilots, hackers, mechanics, and gunsmiths without peer. Characters with this Quality may purchase the following powers at a 25 percent discount (rounding as normal), selecting one power for every two Magic points: Analytics, Eidetic Sense Memory, Improved Ability (Technical and Vehicle Skills), Improved Physical Attribute (Reaction), Improved Reflexes, Multi-Tasking. They may also subtract one from the Karma cost to attune any item, via the Attunement (Item) metamagic. In addition, Artisan's Way followers may choose to alter the standard metamagic technique of Adept Centering so that, rather than applying to Physical and Combat Skills, it applies instead to either Vehicle Active Skills *or* Technical Active Skills.

The Artist's Way

Cost: 10 BP

Not every adept focuses their mind, spirit, and body toward martial or nefarious ends. Some use their supernatural talents to find or create beauty in the world around them, enthrall audiences, see what others cannot, or to do the artistically impossible on a routine basis. Characters with this Quality may purchase the following powers at a 25 percent discount (rounding as normal), selecting one power for every two Magic points: Astral Perception, Eidetic Sense Memory, Enhanced Perception, Enthralling Performance, Improved Ability (Artisan), Improved Senses, Kinesics, Piercing Senses, Voice Control. In addition, they receive +1 to Initiate grade for purposes of any two of the Adept Centering, Divining, Psychometry, or Sensing metamagic techniques.

The Athlete's Way

Cost: 10 BP

Adepts who follow the Athlete's Way are the unrivaled masters of their own bodies. They manipulate their physical forms with amazing grace and power. Characters with this Quality may purchase the following powers at a 25 percent discount (rounding as normal), selecting one power for every two Magic points: Attribute Boost, Freefall, Gliding, Great Leap, Improved Ability (Physical Skills), Improved Physical Attribute (Any), Pain Resistance, Rush, Sustenance, Wall Running. In addition, they receive a +1 to effective Initiate grade for the Adept Centering technique (for Physical Active Skills only, not Combat Active Skills), and for the Infusion Advanced Metamagic technique.

The Burnout's Way

Cost: 10 BP

This is not a true Way, but rather a path upon which adepts find themselves only after tripping and falling. Burnouts are those who have turned their back on their Way. The Burnout's Way is available to adept and mystic adept characters who have lost two or more Magic points to mundane augmentations, be it from bioware, cyberware, or any other method of Essence-invasive augmentation. In addition to the standard loss of adept powers due to such magic loss, Burnouts must lose powers or lower their ranks in their powers to "pay back" any discounted powers they received from being followers of their previous Way. In exchange, they are treated as having the Biocompatibility Quality, receiving a 10 percent discount on Essence loss from either Cyberware *or* Bioware augmentations. Adepts who have Initiated prior to becoming a Burnout, or who Initiate after becoming a Burnout, may still retain their favored metamagics from their old path (or may choose favored metamagics upon Initiation, as if they were on a "true" Way rather than being a Burnout).

The Invisible Way

Cost: 10 BP

Spies and thieves of the highest order, the adepts who stalk along the Invisible Way are not to be underestimated. Characters with this Quality may purchase the following powers at a 25 percent discount (rounding as normal), selecting one power for every two



Magic points: Cloak, Enhanced Perception, Facial Sculpt, Improved Ability (Physical Skills), Freefall, Great Leap, Improved Senses, Melanin Control, Nimble Fingers, Rush, Traceless Walk. In addition, they receive a +1 to Initiate grade for purposes of the Masking and Flexible Signature techniques.

The Magician's Way

Cost: 10 BP

Mystic adepts are, by definition, less focused on their own physical and mental abilities than their "pure" adept brethren. By investing their magical power on sorcery and summoning instead of honing their own skills, they have taken at least a small step off any adept's Way. Mystic adepts with this Quality may choose one other Way's list of favored powers, and purchase those following powers at a 25 percent discount (rounding as normal), selecting one power for every two Magic points. They do not get the other benefits of that Way. They also may choose to accept either both metamagical increases from that other Way, or instead gain +1 to Initiate grade for purposes of the Centering (non-adept) metamagic only. They must make a choice between being exceptionally focused adept Initiates, or mastering Centering for sorcerous purposes.

The Speaker's Way

Cost: 10 BP

Whether they are bounty hunters that juggle a hundred contacts, fixers that juggle a thousand shadowrunners, or spies that juggle a million lies, Speaker's Way adepts are renowned for their unshakable calm, the loyalty they engender in others who should know better, and for being able to talk their way into and out of any situation. Characters with this Quality may purchase the following powers at a 25 percent discount (rounding as normal), selecting one power for every two Magic points: Astral Perception, Improved Ability (Social Skills), Commanding Voice, Cool Resolve, Facial Sculpt, Kinesics, Linguistics, Melanin Control, Mind over Matter, Voice Control. In addition, they receive a +1 to Initiate grade for the Flexible Signature and Cognition metamagical techniques.

The Totem's Way

Cost: 15 BP

Adepts who follow the Totem's Way have chosen to follow an animal or other mentor spirit, and are sometimes called followers of the Animal Way. They are often aware of the spiritual side of their magic, rather than the practical when compared to other adepts. Adepts with this Quality may choose one other Way's list of favored powers as appropriate to their Mentor Spirit, and purchase those powers at a 25 percent discount (rounding as normal), selecting one power for every two Magic Points. They do not get the other benefits of that Way. In addition, the following powers are available to them as discounted powers: Animal Empathy, Astral Perception, Berserk, Improved Senses. They also receive +1 to Initiate grade for purposes of the Attunement (animal) and Empower Animal metamagical techniques, and subtract one from the Karma cost to attune any animal that corresponds with the adept's Shamanic totem via the Attunement (Animal) Metamagic.

FAVORED POWERS

Way bonuses and discounted powers exist partially to help adepts "keep up with the Joneses" as a counterbalance to the discounts available to other characters for cyberware packages, grades of augmentation, Qualities, and other methods available to lower the Essence cost of various implants. Favored power discounts work similarly to the optional rule *Adepts and Geasa* (p. 31, *Street Magic*), though no Geasa is required.

Keep in mind that only one power may be chosen for every two full Magic points an adept or Mystic adept should possess. The number of discounted powers available to a given character is likely to change over the course of a game, with "refunds" needing to be paid due to Magic loss (similar to the loss of power due to entering an area with a high background count), or additional powers able to be discounted, as a character's Magic score fluctuates. Remember, that favored powers are chosen based on Magic attribute, not Power Points (for those using the optional rule that allows adepts to gain a Power Point rather than a Metamagic upon Initiation).

Urgent Message...

The Warrior's Way

Cost: 10 BP

Warrior adepts are the elite combatants of the Sixth World; accomplishing through will and talent what others do through expensive augmentation. Characters with this Quality may purchase the following powers at a 25 percent discount (rounding as normal), selecting one power for every two Magic points: Combat Sense, Counterstrike, Critical Strike, Improved Ability (Combat Skills), Improved Physical Attribute (Any), Improved Reflexes, Killing Hands, Missile Mastery, Mystic Armor, Quick Draw. In addition, they receive a +1 to effective Initiate grade for the Adept Centering technique (for Combat Active skills only, not Physical Active Skills), and for the Attunement (Item) Metamagic. Also, subtract one from the Karma cost to Attune to any weapon via the Attunement (Item) Metamagic.

NEW POWERS

Confidence Man

Cost: 1

Speaker's Way Adepts Only

Adepts of the Speaker's Way are known for being able to make their marks believe in anything. Those with this power have the particular ability to make their allies believe in themselves. It may affect one friendly target per use, supplying them with increased effectiveness as the adept increases their confidence in their own abilities. Using this power requires a Full Action, and allows the adept a Charisma + Leadership roll, with a threshold equal to the threshold of the test they wish to help with. If the test is successful, the targeted ally may improve their position on the "Buying Hits" table (p. 62, *SR4A*) by one column (for example, a character with an 8-11 die pool would buy 3 automatic hits, not 2).





Creative Eye

Cost: 0.75 per level

Artist's Way Adepts Only

With this power, you can raise your Intuition attribute. Each level increases Intuition by one. If you later want to increase Intuition using Karma, the cost is based on the total attribute, including the magical improvements. This power allows you to exceed your natural attribute maximum up to the augmented maximum, but each point over the maximum costs double (1.5 Power points per level).

Keen Wits

Cost: 0.75 per level

Artisan's Way Adepts Only

With this power, you can raise your Logic attribute. Each level increases Logic by one. If you later want to increase Logic using Karma, the cost is based on the total attribute, including the magical improvements. This power allows you to exceed your natural attribute maximum up to the augmented maximum, but each point over the maximum costs double (1.5 Power points per level).

Natural Survivors

Cost: 0.5 per level

Totem's Way Adepts Only

Adepts with this power have an innate knack for adapting to their environment, whether it be by taking on the survival skills of a canny urban Mentor Spirit like Cat or Rat, or through natural link with the elements due to the wild places being home to Eagle, Mountain, Wolf, or any other wilderness Totem they follow. Each level applies a +1 bonus when making Navigation, Survival, or Tracking skill checks *or* a +1 bonus when making Shadowing, Survival, or Street Knowledge skill checks (choose which skill set receives a bonus at the time each level of this power is purchased).

Prodigious Physicality

Cost: 0.5 per level (max 3 levels)

Athlete's Way Adepts Only

Characters with this power are capable of tremendous feats of talent and ability beyond the ken of other adepts. Their balance, endurance, strength, and explosive agility are the thing of legend. Each level applies a +1 bonus when making Climbing, Gymnastics, Running, or Swimming skill checks.

Sorcerous Parry

Cost: 0.5 per level

Magician's Way Adepts Only

Mystic adepts with this power are experts at snuffing out enemy spells with tremendous ease. It increases the rating of the Counterspelling skill by 1 per level. Like any skill, the maximum modified rating equals the base rating x 1.5.

Swift and Terrible

Cost: 0.5 per level

Warrior's Way Adepts Only

Warrior cultures around the world glorify in crushing foes in close combat, and adepts with this power are emboldened toward greater victory or are more swiftly able to reposition tactically every time they best a foe. For every enemy combatant beaten in close combat (be it armed or unarmed) during a single combat round, apply a +1 to the adept's Initiative attribute (to a limit of levels taken in this power) for the next round only.

Unseen Hands

Cost: 0.5 per level (max 3 levels)

Invisible Way Adepts Only

Adepts with this power are masters of remaining hidden, whether it be by clinging to shadows or remaining unseen in the midst of a crowd. Each level applies a +1 bonus when making Disguise, Infiltration, Palming, or Shadowing skill checks.